

Amanda Gorman: A vital new voice of the struggle



By Tim Wheeler

The minute Amanda Gorman stepped to the microphone Jan. 20, 2021, and started reciting her poem, “The Hill We Climb,” the crowd fell silent on the West Steps of the U.S. Capitol. It was Joe Biden’s presidential inauguration. The audience, separated by COVID-19 protocol, was overcome with awe.

Gorman is such a slender, small, young person. Yet her voice, her words, the meaning of those words, were so poignant, cut so deep—it was like giant waves crashing on a shore.

Her poem has been published in a book by Viking, an imprint of Random House. My son Nick and his wife Maureen and their three children gave me a copy for Father’s Day, the best gift I ever received.

Why did Amanda Gorman and her poem steal the show that day? I think it is because we are the “we” in the title of her poem. It is all of us who have joined together to fight COVID-19; to turn out those 81,000,000 votes to defeat Donald Trump and put Joe Biden and Kamala Harris in the White House; to turn out the votes in Georgia to elect Rev. Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff to the U.S. Senate.

And now we fight to defend the right to vote that the Republicans—and two pseudo-Democratic U.S. Senators—seek to steal from us. Gorman’s poem is about overcoming all the other reactionary diseases that afflict us—the white supremacy that

Derek Chauvin takes as a license to murder African-American George Floyd in plain sight; tens of millions of unorganized workers toiling at jobs that pay so little you have to have one or two of them to pay the rent and put food on the table; the obscene income gap between the one-tenth of one percent billionaires and the other 99.9% of us; millions homeless, without health care, while the wealthy wallow in their ill-gotten billions; Planet Earth getting hotter and Trump and his fossil-fuel minions

T H I S W E E K :

- **Amanda Gorman: A vital new voice of the struggle**
- Chinese Communists prepare for 100th birthday, take stock of achievements
- **U.S. loses Cuba vote — again**
- El derecho de los trabajadores agrícolas a organizarse amenazado
- **Peru: Communists rally to protect the vote**

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denying reality; the U.S. a “global cop” spending nearly one trillion every year to keep the world safe for U.S. multinational banks and corporations.

Not forgotten is that two weeks before the Inauguration, domestic terrorists screaming “Stop the Steal” stormed the U.S. Capitol, broke windows,

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beat to death Capitol police officers, threatened to lynch lawmakers. It was an abortive coup d'état by fascists waving the Confederate and Trump flags, an attempt to nullify the votes of the multiracial majority who elected Biden-Harris in the biggest, cleanest election in U.S. history.

Paradox, tragic irony, is part of the power of Amanda Gorman's poetry. It is a paradox that African Americans, descendants of chattel slaves, targets of brutal oppression today, are the best at conveying joy, hope, defiance in their music and art. She recited that day:

We've braved the belly of the beast.
We've learned that quiet isn't always peace.
And the norms and notions of what "just is" isn't always justice. Somehow we do it.
Somehow, we've weathered and witnessed
A nation that isn't broken, but simply unfinished....

Echoes of Langston Hughes ring in these lines, his immortal poem "Let America Be America, Again."
He writes:

O, yes. I say it plain America never was America to me
And yet I swear this oath America will be!

Echoes, too, of spirituals, struggle contained in songs that seem reverent and ascetic on the surface but roar like a lion:

Go down, Moses, Way down in Egypt land
Tell ole, Pharaoh Let my people go

Gorman's poem overflows with direct, immediate, political admonitions aimed at everyone listening—the entire nation:

We will not be turned around
Or interrupted by intimidation
Because we know our inaction and inertia
Will be the inheritance of the next generation
Our blunders their burdens.
But one thing is certain:
If we merge mercy with might, and might with right
Then love becomes our legacy,
And change, our children's birthright.

Buy this book and read it. It should be in the library of every family in this nation and beyond.

Chinese Communists prepare for 100th birthday, take stock of achievements

By Morning Star

The Communist Party of China (CPC) remains committed to serving the country's 1.4 billion people, the party's Central Committee said as it prepares to celebrate the centenary of its founding on July 1.

The 91 million-strong Marxist party has led China through a transformation that took it from an impoverished nation to the world's second-largest economy. But its achievements of rapid growth, long-term economic stability, and eliminating absolute poverty are phenomena that Western political theories are not able to explain, the CPC said.

This spirit of unity was recently seen as Chinese Communists waged a people's war against poverty and COVID-19, according to the party, with more than 39 million people engaged in the successful containment of the disease.

Echoing the words of Mao Zedong, who stressed the importance of solving the problems of the masses including lack of food, shelter, and clothing, President Xi Jinping insisted that "the people's aspiration for a better life is our goal."

China has also declared a people's war against pollution, with a pledge to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060.

But China said that its greatest achievement was improving the wellbeing of its people, having lifted over 770 million out of poverty since the 1970s.

A 2020 report from Harvard University found that the Chinese people's overall satisfaction with the government had grown to more than 93%.

The party says it seeks to ensure mass engagement with millions of Chinese citizens through all processes, including elections, decision-making, administration, and supervision—a system the CPC traces to what Mao called the "mass line."

The drafting of the country's 14th Five-Year Plan for economic development involved a process which Xi said was "a vivid example of the CPC's intraparty democracy and China's socialist democracy."

The CPC is now well placed to lead the Chinese people in building "a great modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, harmonious, and beautiful, by the centenary of the People's Republic of China," according to the party.

"While a century of glory has been recorded in the annals of history, the CPC stands ready to write a new chapter for the people and by the people."

**The Communist
Party of China will
mark its centenary
on July 1.**

U.S. loses Cuba vote — again



By Communist Party USA

On June 23 the United Nations General Assembly condemned the U.S. blockade of Cuba by a score of 184 to 2. That is, 96% of humanity told the U.S. to take its knee off the neck of the 11.3 million Cuban people.

To the 99% of the people of its North American neighbor, Cuba represents absolutely no security threat. To the contrary, the Cuban government's example of healthcare, literacy, housing, and focus on the equitable human needs of its population actually embarrasses the über wealthy United States, a large percentage of whose population is ill-fed, ill-housed, illiterate, lacking health care, in debt, and suffering from overt racism and discrimination.

The insecurity of the U.S., a country that spends two-thirds of the budget Congress passes every year on merchandising slaughter around the world, state terrorism by any other name, does not result from anything Cuba does. The mass murders that take place in our communities, the gang violence, and the daily killings of innocent people of color make all of us insecure. But the U.S. cannot blame Cuba for that. It is homegrown and mirrors the actions of the "greatest purveyor of violence in the world," as Martin Luther King Jr. so accurately described U.S. global aggression over half a century ago.

Israel, which joined its murder-master teacher in upholding the blockade against Cuba, manages to kill all remaining Palestinians from their homeland, whereas the U.S. through its foreign policy of

multiple wars, and forced regime change kills in the thousands and forces millions to flee the resulting violence.

The goal of the economic sanctions (another name for hybrid war) that the U.S. imposes on Cuba is what the U.S. already does to its own poor — namely, starvation, ill health, and destitution. But for the U.S. Cuba is a special case. Its successful socialist society proves that a far better world is possible once the people eliminate the billionaire profiteers and throw off the chains of monopoly capital. And because Cubans have taken that great step, the U.S. hates and keeps trying to asphyxiate them.

In 2014 President Barack Obama reversed three quarters of a century of the U.S. foreign policy of using the blockade to force regime change on Cuba. His administration resumed diplomatic relations and reduced the economic sanctions. The succeeding Trump administration, deranged in so many directions, scuttled Obama's changes and tightened the noose on Cuba's neck. The current Biden administration, rather than following the policy of Obama, is shamelessly aping his immediate predecessor.

All who struggle for human rights, for human decency, for the right of Cubans, indeed any people including our own, to decide their own destiny will justly condemn the U.S. vote, will demand that the U.S. change course, relax and quickly bury the blockade, and establish normal relations with Cuba. Let us agree to send messages to Biden, to our members of Congress: End the Blockade! Let Cuba breathe!

The vast majority of humanity wants the U.S. to take its knee off the neck of the Cuban people.

Peru: Communists rally to protect the vote

By Emile Schepers

On June 16, Peru's two major communist parties, the Peruvian Communist Party (Partido Comunista Peruano) and the Communist Party of Peru-Red Homeland (Partido Comunista del Peru-Patria Roja), joined worker and peasant organizations for mass rallies in Lima and elsewhere under the slogan "Protect the Vote."

In the first round of the presidential election held on April 11, the two communist parties had supported left-of-center candidate Veronika Mendoza. But in the runoff on June 6 between leftist schoolteacher Pedro Castillo and Keiko Fujimori, the far-right daughter of the former dictator Alberto Fujimori, the communists firmly backed Castillo. Castillo won a narrow victory, based on massive support from poor indigenous farmers in the southern part of the country.

Fujimori, however, is claiming fraud, despite unanimous reports by international observers that the election was clean and fair. Worries are rising not only in Peru but regionally that some sort of coup d'état against President-Elect Castillo may be brewing. This is why the June 16th mobilization to "protect the vote" took place.

El derecho de los trabajadores agrícolas a organizarse amenazado

BY Mark Gruenberg

El fallo de 6-3 de la Corte Suprema de los Estados Unidos, en líneas partidistas, que amenaza el derecho de los trabajadores agrícolas a organizarse en los campos de California, es malo para los trabajadores, dice el presidente de AFL-CIO, Richard Trumka.

Pero podría haber sido peor, agrega.

Eso es porque lo que realmente querían los derechistas que se unieron al caso en el Tribunal Superior era que los jueces prohibieran no solo a los organizadores sindicales, sino que permitieran a los propietarios y jefes prohibir a todos, incluidos los inspectores gubernamentales de salud, seguridad y lugar de trabajo, de su propiedad cuando lo deseen como una "toma" ilegal de los derechos de propiedad.

Los ideólogos que buscaron esa enorme prohibición no la consiguieron, dice la opinión de la mayoría nombrada por el Partido Republicano, escrita por el presidente del Tribunal Supremo John Roberts. Trumka, que tiene un título en derecho, estuvo de acuerdo.

El caso de los trabajadores agrícolas fue un fallos importantes que los jueces dictaron el 23 de junio mientras se apresuraban a terminar su trabajo antes de fin de mes.

El caso de California, Cedar Point Nursery v. Hassid, enfrentó a dos productores contra la Junta de Relaciones Laborales Agrícolas del estado, que regula las relaciones entre trabajadores y jefes, incluida la organización sindical, en la enorme industria agrícola de Golden State.

En otra parte, en una reliquia racista de 1935, los trabajadores agrícolas,

que entonces como ahora tenían una gran proporción de hispanohablantes, no están cubiertos por la legislación laboral y carecen del derecho de sindicación.

En California, tienen ese derecho. El problema para la United Farm Workers, que estaba tratando de sindicalizar a los trabajadores en las dos granjas, era que el único lugar donde los organizadores podían contactarlos era mientras estaban en la hora del almuerzo y físicamente en los campos de los agricultores.

La junta estatal otorgó a los organizadores ese derecho, pero estableció límites estrictos, de solo unas pocas horas a la semana durante la temporada de crecimiento. Eso no impidió que las granjas desafiaran sus reglas como una "toma" inconstitucional de su derecho de propiedad, específicamente su derecho a prohibir el acceso de personas externas.

El juez Stephen Breyer, que lidera a los tres disidentes nombrados por los demócratas, dijo que la amenaza mayor aún existe.

"Nuestros casos anteriores dejan en claro que la regulación que tenemos ante nosotros permite solo una invasión temporal de la propiedad de un terrateniente y que este tipo de invasión temporal equivale a una expropiación solo si va 'demasiado lejos', escribió.

"En mi opinión, la conclusión de la mayoría amenaza con hacer que muchas formas ordinarias de regulación sean inusualmente complejas o imprácticas. Y aunque la mayoría intenta crear excepciones para restringir su regla, la necesidad de viabilidad de la ley sugiere que el marco de la mayoría es incorrecto".

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