Belarus strikes, protests call on brutal regime to step down

**BY ROY LANDERSEN**

Tens of thousands of people converged in Minsk, the capital of Belarus, Aug. 30, chanting and flying white-red-white opposition colors, as they demanded the resignation of President Alexander Lukashenko on his birthday. Blocking their way to his palatial residence were riot police and armored vehicles.

This popular upheaval erupted Aug. 9 after Lukashenko moved to prolong his 26-year rule by claiming victory in a blatantly rigged election and then arresting thousands and unleashing cop violence on protesters.

Strike committees were formed leading to a wave of industrial strikes in major state-owned factories and mines. These, along with a mass walkout at Belaruskali, hit the heart of the regime’s economic base. Belaruskali is a huge salt mine and processing plant in Soligorsk, which produces a fifth of the world’s potash.

The key issues are low wages and for the protests demanding new elections, the release of all the detainees

Continued on page 6

Kenosha rally says, ‘Charge cop who shot Jacob Blake!’

**BY DAN FEIN**

KENOSHA, Wis. — Some 2,000 demonstrators marched and rallied here Saturday, Aug. 29, to demand “Justice for Jacob,” in what was described as a “Peace March” hosted by the family of Jacob Blake Jr.

Kenosha cop Rusten Sheskey shot 29-year-old Blake Jr. seven times in the back Aug. 23, leaving him paralyzed from the waist down. In a cell-phone video recorded by an eyewitness, Blake walks around the front of his SUV to the driver’s side door as cops follow him with their guns drawn. As Blake opens the door, Sheskey grabs his shirt from behind and opens fire.

“There were seven bullets in my son’s back,” Blake’s father, also named Jacob Blake, told the rally. “Hell yeah, I’m mad.”

“I ask the police in this town what gave them the right to attempted murder on my child?” he said. “What gave them the right to treat my son like an animal?”

After his son was taken to a hospital

Continued on page 6

Back Canadian grocery workers on strike against disparaging wage cut

**BY BEVERLY BERNARDO**

“I don’t know, but it’s been said, Galen’s pockets are lined with gold. I don’t know, but it’s been said, it’s time for workers to get ahead,” strikers at a St. John’s, Newfoundland, Dominion grocery store chanted, kicking off a solidarity rally streamed live from three Unifor picket lines in the Canadian province Aug. 31. Galen Weston is the owner of the Dominion chain stores and his family is the third richest in Canada.

On Aug. 22 some 1,400 Unifor Local 597 members at 11 Dominion stores across Newfoundland went on strike. The key issues are low wages and for reinstatement of 40 full-time jobs that were eliminated in 2019. Unifor Local 597 President Carolyn Wrice told the rally.

Continued on page 5

Fight for gov’t-funded public works program to create jobs

**SEIU 32BJ union members demand jobs back, safe conditions, unemployment pay Aug. 13, after Delta airlines contractor Eulen America laid off 100 workers at Ft. Lauderdale airport.**

**THE MILITANT**

INSIDE

Gov’t tells Hurricane Laura victims, ‘You’re on your own’

**Cut the workweek with no cut in pay to stop layoffs!**

Alyson Kennedy. Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, issued this statement Sept. 2. Malcolm Jarrett is the SWP candidate for vice president.

**SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT**

The Socialist Workers Party’s 2020 candidates are campaigning around a program of working-class action centered on the need for the labor movement to mobilize workers in their millions to fight against the scourge of widespread unemployment.

Continued on page 8

**Letters urge Florida prison authorities to overturn ban on 3 issues of ‘Militant’**

**BY SETH GALinsky**

Authorities at the Florida State Prison have now banned three of four issues of the Militant since July 31, falsely charging that each one contains an article that is “dangerously inflammatory” and “advocates or encourages riot, insurrection, rebellion, organized prison protest, disruption of the institution, or the violation of the federal law, state law, or Department rules.”

If the impoundment of an issue by one Florida prison is not overturned, the paper is banned in all of the state’s 143 prison facilities.

Readers of the Militant can help defend the constitutional rights of the Militant and its subscribers behind bars by getting co-workers, church groups, 

Continued on page 2

**Action needed now against impact of mass joblessness**

Massive unemployment is not going away. It’s increasing competition among workers for jobs, as millions face devastating conditions, including the spectre of eviction. Rising numbers are forced to “choose” between paying medical bills, putting food on the table or covering transportation costs.

These same “choices” also face millions of those still holding a job

Continued on page 7

**Yakima workers, SWP candidates talk union building**

**BY EDWIN FRUIT**

YAKIMA, Wash. — Socialist Workers Party presidential and vice-presidential candidates Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett, on national tour across the country, explain that the party’s

Continued on page 3

**Inside**

Thousands join D.C. march against police brutality

Haiti garment workers protest deaths of co-workers denied care

Is ‘Militant’ wrong about UAE-Israel pact? Reply to a reader

On the picket line, p. 5

Seven-month ‘truce’ ends Montreal port strike

DSI strikers keep up picket lines, win support in contract fight

Continued on page 8
Letters say, ‘End Militant ban’

Continued from front page union officials and locals, and other organizations to send letters to the prison system's Literature Review Committee, calling for it to lift the bans.

The first issue banned was no. 30, for the article “Prisoners Demand Release from Overcrowded Jails” by Jeff Posner, which describes the protests aimed at alleviating prison conditions in California amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Issue no. 33 was banned for an article on the ban on issue no. 30.

“The Militant has a right to publish factual information, and Florida prisoners have a right to access it,” James Tagg wrote the Literature Review Committee from PEN America, the U.S. branch of the international literary and human rights organization. The charge prison officials used to impound issue no. 30 “is unfounded and infringes upon the Militant and its readers’ First Amendment rights.”

The Militant's lawyer, David Goldstein, has formally appealed the ban on Stein, has formally appealed the ban on issue no. 30 and is preparing appeals for isms. Stein’s lawyer, David Goldstein, has formally appealed the ban on issue no. 30 and is preparing appeals for issue no. 30. Stein’s lawyer, David Goldstein, has formally appealed the ban on issue no. 30 and is preparing appeals for issue no. 30.

“Human and constitutional rights” A number of California supporters of prisoners' rights have written to the Literatur Review Committee. “Prisoners have both a human and a constitutional right to think, study and read about things that matter — even if the things in question are ‘sensitive’ or controversial,” wrote Carl Jech, a humanities professor in Cupertino, California. “Florida prison officials know their denial of the rights in question are ‘sensitive’ or controversial,” wrote Carl Jech, a humanities professor in Cupertino, California. “Florida prison officials know their denial of the rights in question are ‘sensitive’ or controversial,” wrote Carl Jech, a humanities professor in Cupertino, California. “Florida prison officials know their denial of the rights in question are ‘sensitive’ or controversial,” wrote Carl Jech, a humanities professor in Cupertino, California.

The ACLU Foundation Florida, Amnesty International USA, Florida Press Association and Reporters Committee on Freedom of the Press are among the groups that have written to the Literature Review Committee calling for lifting of the ban on the socialist newsweekly.

“Nobody has the right to know what is going on in the world, to consider all sides to debates about the way forward for working people, to form their own opinions,” Studer said. “They also have the First Amendment right to petition the government for redress of grievances, including on conditions in the prisons. The Militant like other papers across the country has the right to protest on this when they do so. Florida prison officials should lift the bans on the Militant.”

“Prisoners have the right to know what is going on in the world,” said a letter to the prison system. “Florida prison officials know their denial of the rights of both prisoners and of the press are increasing notice and opposition.”

Thousands join DC march against cop brutality

Thousands converged on Washington, D.C., to voice their outrage at cop brutality, at the “Get Your Knee Off Our Necks” march Aug. 28. Sponsoring Al Sharpton, his National Action Network and Martin Luther King III, the march was held on the anniversary of the historic 1963 civil rights march on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

March organizers were focused on getting out the vote in the Novem-

ber election to defeat President Donald Trump. Kamala Harris, Demo-

cratic nominee for vice president, spoke to the crowd by video.

Family members of those killed and brutalized by cops filled the stage, including relatives of Jacob Blake, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Ah-

moud Arbery and many more. Many participants carried homemade signs with the names of victims of police brutality who were family mem-

bers or lived in their town.

“We need to end this kind of brutality and the conditions we work in today,” Yvonne Campbell, a 39-year-old machinist from Indianapolis, told the Militant.

— JAMES HARRIS

Fight prison ban on the ‘Militant’

Get letters of support from unions, churches and defenders of workers rights and free speech. Send to Dean Peterson, Literature Review Com-

mittee, Florida Department of Corrections, 501 South Calhoun Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399, or email to Allen.Peterson@fdc.myflorida.com, with copies to themilitant@mac.com

Send a check to the Militant, 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018, earmarked ‘Prisoners Rights Fight.’

The Militant

Vol. 84/No. 36

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Managing Editor: Terry Evans

Editorial volunteers: Roger Calero, Seth Ga-

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Workers in fight for a union at Allen Brothers in Washington, discuss with SWP candidates. Clockwise from right to left, unionist Agustín López; SWP candidates Alyson Kennedy, Malcolm Jarrett and supporter Edwin Fruit; unionists José, Angela Lara and Maribel Medina.

The candidates also campaigned at a shift change at Columbia Beach, one of the plants that had been on strike. Workers took the SWP platform and 15 bought copies of the Militant. Some workers greeted Kennedy, remembering her from when she was on their picket line in May.

Rebecca Williamson contributed to the article.
Gev't tells Hurricane Laura victims, ‘You’re on your own’

BY JANET POST

Hundreds of thousands of people in Louisiana and Texas remain without electricity and water, as the havoc caused by Hurricane Laura is turned into a social disaster, with working people being left to fend for themselves.

Residents returning to Lake Charles, Louisiana, should expect to live without water and electricity “probably for weeks,” Mayor Nic Hunter announced.

As of Aug. 27, some 460,000 remain without power in Louisiana. Two hundred and twenty thousand have no running water.

Nineteen people died during the storm. Most of the deaths were a result of carbon monoxide poisoning, emitted by generators used by residents when their electric power failed. At least 8,000 homes were destroyed.

State officials had ordered half a million people in Louisiana and Texas to “evacuate,” without providing transportation or plans for how to go to. Those with no means to flee in Vermilion Parish, Louisiana, received the following instructions from the sheriff’s office: “Please evacuate if you choose to stay and we can’t get to you, write your name, address, social security number and next of kin and put it in a ziplog bag in your vehicle.”

In sweltering heat, workers in Lake Charles are lining up in a Walmart parking lot for food and supplies from ad organizations. Some workers are living in their cars.

Gevv. Edwards told Louisiana residents a hurricane would be sent to hotels rather than shelters to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

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In Cuiba no one is left on their own.

As Laura tore through the Caribbean, at least 31 people died in Haiti and nine in the Dominican Republic. The storm also hit Cuba, Puerto Rico and Jamaica, but no casualties have been reported.

Workers in the region under capitalist ideology are left on their own, the opposite is true in Cuba where workers and farmers made a socialist revolution and hold political power.

To prepare for hurricanes Cuba’s Civil Defense Committees, working with trade unions, mass organizations and the government, minimize harm to working people.

Everyone knows in advance what shelter they will use or what friend or relative plans to take them in, what route the evacuation will take and which supplies to include in their emergency pack. Government authorities provide food and health care for evacuees. Special measures were taken for Laura because of COVID-19.

The Civil Defense Committees organize preparation drills, detailing what household and workplace needs to do. Before Laura reached eastern Cuba Aug. 23 they had led the safe evacuation of 334,000 people.

Pete Kennedy built the communist movement in UK over four decades

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — Pete Kennedy, a long-time member and supporter of the Communist League in the United Kingdom, died Aug. 19 a few months after being diagnosed with glioblastoma, an aggressive form of brain cancer. He was 61.

Kennedy joined the International Marxist Group, a forerunner of the Communist League in the United Kingdom, in 1982 and started working full-time for the group in 1993. He was National Secretary of the Communist League in Britain until his death.

For the last two decades he was part of the supporters auxiliary that is responsible for the production and distribution of the Militant, helping make it possible for the party to introduce its program to workers and youth.

Kennedy also shouldered responsibility for leading the supporters monthly financial appeal in the U.K. and Europe.

Understanding the importance of mass organizing, Kennedy volunteered to work on the production of the audio version of the paper. This ensures it can be accessed by visually impaired readers and others who, for whatever reason, enjoy listening to the paper’s content.

Making use of newly acquired Spanish-language skills, Kennedy participated this year, for the first time, as an enthusiastic volunteer at the Pathfinder booth at the Havana International Book Fair, a major literary and cultural festival in Cuba.

He had been living on Fuerteventura in the Canary Islands over the past year, with his companion Faen de la Cruz.

Pete Kennedy built the communist movement in UK over four decades

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Damage at July 26 baseball stadium in Artemisa, Cuba, is inspected by local authorities after tropical storm Laura in August. Mass organizations respond immediately to impact of disasters.
Seven-month ‘truce’ ends
Montreal port strike

MONTREAL — A hard-fought 12-day strike for a new contract by 1,125 Montreal port workers against the Maritime Employers Association ended Aug. 21 following the signing of a seven-month “truce” between officials of the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 375 and the MEA. But as negotiators the main issue is unsafe and inhumane work schedules which force them to work 19 days straight out of 21.

Several workers who on Aug. 30 shift change told the Militant that the struggle is not over. “The union came out of this fight stronger,” port worker Claude Trépanier, who has been on the job, said.

The strike ended two days after the workers forced the port bosses to back down on plans to use scab labor to move cargo during the coronavirus pandemic. That important time-sensitive cargo was delivered.

Ottawa’s minister of labor, Filomena Tassi, who engineered the truce, called it a victory “for workers who negotiated with the bosses.”

The truce, which ends March 21, was not voted on by the strikers. It rules out any further strikes by workers or lockouts by the MEA. Negotiations take place for a new contact.

The old one that expired in 2018 will remain in place for now.

Canadian grocery workers strike

Continued from front page

The Militant/Kaitlin Estill

Walmart workers bring solidarity to DSI Tunneling strikers in Louisville, Kentucky, August 28.

Among them was a meeting organized by Japanese and Pacific Island activists to fight for women’s rights. A number of protests were organized on the issue of the comfort women — women forced to work in Japanese and Pacific Island bosses announced a July confrontation between strikers and port bosses.

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Local 375 President Martin Lapierre said the money that the union paid to settle the conflict “will remain on strike for nine strikers charged with criminal offenses in that incident.

The picketers have received solidarity from several local unions, including visits by workers at TARC, Louisville’s city bus service.

Workers began calling for a strike in June — in the middle of contract talks — when Wester’s Loblaw Companies Limited, Dominion’s parent company, ended a 2 Canadian dollar-an-hour wage increase (US$1.52) that had been granted for “essential workers” to keep them working during the pandemic. The company’s proposed contract — which would have restored only half of that CAS2 over the entire three-year contract — was rejected by 400 jobs, 70%, are to be cut. “Workers across the board are being hit, from ushers to cafeteria workers to librarians,” PCS chair Paul Valentin told the Militant. “This week we’re balloting for strike action too.”

The protest heard talks from union and cultural figures. Poet and Unite union representative Chris McCabe, a worker for 18 years in the poetry festival at the Library at the Festival, read his poem “Bottom Line,” blasting “the monetization of culture.” The people making the job cuts “have no poetry in them,” he said.

—Jonathan Silverman

25, 50, and 75 Years Ago

September 19, 1895

HAIROU, China — [At the] forum on women here, more than 20,000 have proceeded in holding discussions, Women’s Anti-Imperialism Association; debates, and distributing literature on the fight for women’s rights.

Daily protests have occurred on the conference grounds, from marches against nuclear weapons testing led by Japanese and Pacific Island activists to a demonstration protesting discriminate treatment of foreign troops. A number of protests were organized on the issue of the comfort women — women forced to work in Japanese and Pacific Island bosses forced the port bosses to back down on plans to use scab labor to move cargo during the coronavirus pandemic. That important time-sensitive cargo was delivered.

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—Jonathan Silverman

Walmart workers bring solidarity to DSI Tunneling strikers in Louisville, Kentucky, August 28.
The rally was hosted by the independent trade union of miners in Belarus. The rally was called to protest against police brutality and to demand a peaceful transition of power. The rally was attended by thousands of people who were demanding their rights and freedoms. The rally was peaceful and was attended by people from all walks of life. The rally was a success and was held in solidarity with the Belarus protests. The Belarus protests have spread throughout the country, reaching 55 different cities and towns. The protesters are demanding their rights and freedoms and are calling for a peaceful transition of power. The protesters are demanding their rights and freedoms and are calling for a peaceful transition of power.
Act now against joblessness

Continued from front page

because of wage cuts, the slashing of work hours and increased prices for basic necessities.

Many others know that while they can scrape by on what they make today, there is no guarantee that will be true next month or even next week.

The labor movement needs to organize a serious fight to overcome the biggest division we face today — between those with jobs and those without.

According to the U.S. government there were more than 27 million people collecting either unemployment benefits or “Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.” as of Aug. 8. Countless others applied but haven’t been able to get through the bureaucratic maze. Others, including undocumented immigrants, are denied any government assistance.

Those collecting unemployment benefits saw their income plummet when the weekly $600 “enhanced” benefit program ended in early August. Meanwhile, the price of beef has gone up more than 20%, eggs 10.4% and poultry 8.6% since February.

Unemployment is officially at 10.2% after peaking at 15% in April. But this figure excludes some 7.7 million people who call “disappearing” to not “magnified attached” as well as 8.4 million who are working part time, but need a full-time job to survive.

The Labor Department says that 1.8 million jobs were added in July, the third month in a row of new hiring or bringing people back from furlough as government-imposed lockdowns are lifted.

More layoffs on the way

While many businesses are re-opening, others are closed for good.

Major companies, including MGM Resorts, Stanley Black & Decker, Salesforce.com, Coca-Cola, American Airlines and United Airlines, say they will soon lay off thousands.

The layoffs are not necessarily because the companies aren’t doing well. Salesforce.com, which provides software for accounting, just posted record quarterly sales and then announced it plans to lay off 1,000 of its 54,000 workers.

In tourism and air travel in the drudgery, American Airlines says that unless the government gives the company more handouts, it plans to lay off 17,500 union workers and 1,500 managers.

Unions say airlines were forced to furlough 2,850 pilots and eliminate as many as 36,000 workers overall by Oct. 1.

Aircraft company Boeing got rid of 5,500 workers earlier in the year by offering buyouts, another 6,800 were laid off in May, and says it plans even more cuts.

At the same time, with tax revenues down many local and state governments and public transportation systems are threatening big layoffs.

The pandemic accelerated cutthroat competition among capitalist businesses, leaving winners and losers. J.C. Penney, Neiman Marcus, J. Crew and Men’s Wearhouse ended up in bankruptcy, as did Burlington, as New York City said it would furlough 2,850 pilots and eliminate as many as 36,000 workers overall by Oct. 1.

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Govt’s execution rejects Navajo Nation protest

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Federal authorities Aug. 26 executed Lezmond Mitchell, a 38-year-old Navajo, despite strong objections by the leaders of the Navajo Nation. This is the only time U.S. authorities have executed a Native American for a crime committed on a Native American reservation. It is an outrage.

The decision by federal officials to go ahead with this execution — the fourth this summer after 17 years without any — signifies a further chipping away of sovereignty of indigenous peoples living on tribal land. Appeals to the U.S. Supreme Court to halt it and to President Donald Trump requesting clemency were made, all to no avail.

In 2001, 11-year-old Tanya, and then 20, and Johnny Orsinger, a teenager at the time, were hitchhiking from Round Rock, Arizona, to the Navajo Nation to Gallup, New Mexico. They were picked up by Alyce Slim, 63, who was traveling with her 9-year-old granddaughter, Tiffany Lee. After Slim stopped to let them out of her pickup truck on the reservation, the two men proceeded to kill both of them.

In federal court, Mitchell was convicted of first-degree murder, forcible murder and “carjacking resulting in death” and was sentenced to die. Orsinger, a minor at the time, was sentenced to life in prison.

The federal government didn’t have any jurisdiction on tribal lands. The Tribes and the 1940s Federal Criminal Code Act in 1985. This law was put in place after the Supreme Court two years earlier ruled that federal officials had no authority to prosecute and sentence to death a Native man for a murder committed on the Great Sioux Reservation.

Since then the federal government has increasingly seized more and more control over tribes’ sovereign legal proceedings.

While the Major Crimes Act gave federal authorities jurisdiction over certain crimes committed on tribal land, including murder, Native American tribes under federal law can decide whether their members are subject to federal justice. While carjacking wasn’t covered under the 1885 law, as cars didn’t exist then, the administration of President Bill Clinton expanded use of the federal death penalty to cover “carjacking resulting in death” and about 60 other offenses.

“Such a decision to reject the death penalty in federal cases remains a Navajo decision,” said a statement issued by Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer, “but in this instance the federal government ignored the Navajo Nation. This is an affront to our Nation because we should be the ones to decide these matters. The federal government charged a crime that was added in 1994 to the Federal Death Penalty Act and blind-sided the Navajo Nation’s position.”

The National Congress of American Indians, 13 tribal governments and Native Americans from more than 90 tribes across the country supported Mitchell’s request that his death sentence be commuted to life without parole.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights also urged the U.S. government to stay the execution of Mitchell.

All these objections were dismissed with disdain and the execution took place as scheduled.

LETTERS

‘Militant’ wrong on Israel-UAE pact

The Militant is mistaken when it claims that the Israel-Unated Arab Emirates pact is a step forward towards recognition of “an independent Palestinian state.” Normalizing relations with Israel is good. However, it does nothing to accept the death penalty in federal cases remains a Navajo decision,” said a statement issued by Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer, “but in this instance the federal government ignored the Navajo Nation. This is an affront to our Nation because we should be the ones to decide these matters. The federal government charged a crime that was added in 1994 to the Federal Death Penalty Act and blind-sided the Navajo Nation’s position.”

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We welcome your letters. Where necessary your letter will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Was ‘Militant’ wrong on Israel-UAE pact?

BY TERRY EVANS

Does the recent pact signed by the governments of Israel and the United Arab Emirates make it more likely that other Arab governments in the region will do the same? Does it increase or decrease prospects for talks by Arab governments, Israel and the main Palestinian groups to recognize both Israel and a Palestinian state? Would this open the door for working people in both Israel and Palestine to “speak, organize and begin redressing the blood-drenched legacy of imperialist domination and capitalist exploitation”?

These questions were addressed in an Aug. 31 Militant article on the pact by Seth Galinsky.

Reader Yonatan Mosquera from London challenges Galinsky’s article, saying the agreement “does not do the same.” Does this increase or decrease prospects for talks by Arab governments, Israel and the main Palestinian groups to recognize both Israel and a Palestinian state?

But this misses the point.

It’s true that the recognition by Israel’s Arab political parties of Israel and the Jewish state is something new. No one gets thrown to the street during the many working people in the Middle East. But this is not the case with Israel.

This pact further opens the breach in what has been a common front of Arab regimes that held Israel up to be a pariah nation. It reflects developments in the region that make it more likely other Arab governments will follow suit.

This was furthered Aug. 29 when UAE rulers scrapped their longstanding economic and trade boycott of Israel.

Days after the deal was signed, the Sudanese government refused to hold denial holdings talks over normalizing its relations with Jerusalem. Talks between Israel and the Gulf states Bahrain and Oman are on the agenda. Israeli officials said.

As Galinsky explains, one of the pressures pushing these developments is that these governments and the rulers in Israel are part of an international network defending themselves against the expanding military and political influence of the Iranian rulers in the region.

The Bosses are using layoffs and other schemes to confront workers. Such gains can only come as a result of class struggle battles. That’s why the headline of the Militant article, “Israel-UAE Pact Is Step Forward in Middle East,” isn’t accurately express what the article actually says.

Pacts between different ruling classes can start things in motion. But it will all come down to the terrain on which working people organize and fight.

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