

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
SWP leader discusses Constitution
during trial against FBI
— PAGE 9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE VOL. 86/NO. 33 SEPTEMBER 12, 2022

‘Conspiracy’ frame-up in Michigan is blow to rights

BY TERRY EVANS

The retrial of two men ensnared by FBI agents in an alleged “plot” to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer ended in their conviction Aug. 23 on frame-up conspiracy charges. The scheme never came close to being acted on. The government had failed to convict the two — Adam Fox and Barry Croft — in an earlier trial on the same charges when the jury was deadlocked after acquitting two other defendants.

The government brings conspiracy charges in cases where they want to nail someone but have no evidence they actually did anything illegal.

Democrats, anti-Trump Republicans and the liberal media hailed the conviction. They don’t care if it was a frame-up. They lump the case together with the Democrat-run show-trial hearings in Congress on the Jan. 6 break-in at the Capitol. Their goal is to find a way to bar former President Donald Trump from ever running for office again and,

Continued on page 4

Back rail workers’ fight over pay, time off, right to strike

Board offer doesn’t meet workers’ need for livable schedules



Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees
Rail workers protest in Galesburg, Illinois, July 30. Main rail unions say Aug. 16 proposal of Presidential Emergency Board doesn’t meet workers’ needs on key “quality of life” issues.

BY CANDACE WAGNER

PITTSBURGH — Over 115,000 rail workers across the U.S. — members of 12 operating and maintenance unions — can legally go on strike Sept. 16. These workers have spent

two years trying to negotiate a contract against a bloc of five Class 1 rail companies and 30 local railroads. Under the anti-working-class 1926 Railway Labor Act, the unions were barred from striking and forced into mandatory mediation with the bosses.

As a “cooling off” period under the act expired in July, President Joseph Biden appointed a Presidential Emergency Board to avert a strike. The board published recommendations for a five-year contract Aug. 16, proposals that are widely viewed by rail workers as unacceptable.

Three of the rail unions, representing some 15,000 workers — the International Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, the Brotherhood of Railway and Air Transport, and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America — are demanding a better deal. **Continued on page 11**

Join Labor Day actions! Solidarity with union battles!

Unions are organizing Labor Day marches, rallies and picnics around Sept. 5 across the country, an important opportunity to spread the word about union struggles and build solidarity that is vital to bringing home victories.

Workers today face a wide range of attacks by the employers and their gov-

EDITORIAL

ernment in Washington. The crisis of the propertied rulers’ capitalist system — wracked by skyrocketing inflation at the same time as a slowdown in production — drives them to target workers and our unions to try and protect their profits and power. This has led to a growing number of strikes, battles that have big stakes for all working people.

Labor Day actions provide us an opening to better prepare to join these struggles. One key nationwide conflict pits tens of thousands of freight railroad workers against the industry. **Continued on page 11**

Join fight against ban on ‘Militant’ by federal prison officials in Arizona



The two issues of the *Militant* that were banned at the U.S. prison in Phoenix and a sampling of letters sent to the Federal Bureau of Prisons calling for overturning suppression of the paper. Outcry against ban drew protests from Arizona newspaper association and constitutional rights groups nationwide.

The two issues of the *Militant* that were banned at the U.S. prison in Phoenix and a sampling of letters sent to the Federal Bureau of Prisons calling for overturning suppression of the paper. Outcry against ban drew protests from Arizona newspaper association and constitutional rights groups nationwide.

BY SETH GALINSKY

The June 29 banning of two issues of the *Militant* by the warden at the Federal Correctional Institution in Phoenix is a blatant violation of constitutional rights. It tramples on the *Militant*’s right to reach its readers behind prison walls, and on the right of workers behind bars

who’ve subscribed to the paper to read material of their choosing.

“Constitutional rights only have meaning if they are defended,” *Militant* editor John Studer said Aug. 29. “That’s why the letters from organizations and individuals demanding the ban be over-

Continued on page 4

Support Ukraine independence! Demand Russian troops out now!

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Moscow’s murderous assault on Ukraine, aimed at destroying the country as an independent nation, annexing large hunks of it, especially its resources and productive capacity, and destroying the government in its capital, Kyiv, and other key cities, like Kharkiv, has been prevented by the courageous resistance of the Ukrainian people.

But Moscow’s forces took and still hold hunks of eastern and southern Ukraine. The regime of Russian President Vladimir Putin continues its drive to subjugate as much of Ukraine as possible, with devastating consequences for Ukrainian troops and civilians, as well as the lives of tens of thousands of working-class Russian troops.

Continued on page 10

Cuba solidarity brigade in Puerto Rico demands end to FBI harassment

BY SETH GALINSKY

FBI agents have been using a variety of ploys since Aug. 23 to try and interrogate more than 35 people in the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico who were part of a recent solidarity brigade to Cuba. The FBI has a long and sordid history of frame-ups and harassment of supporters of independence, defenders of the Cuban Revolution, union militants and others on the island.

Some 90 people took part in the monthlong Juan Rius Rivera Brigade to Cuba. **Continued on page 6**

Inside

Labor actions spread in UK as prices, capitalist crisis grow 2

Inflation, production slowdown hit workers, families in Europe 7

Albert Woodfox, political fighter held in solitary for 44 years 7

—On the picket line, p. 5—

LA unionists bring solidarity to Corn Nut strikers in Fresno

After nine-day strike Maryland transit workers win wage raise

Labor actions spread in UK as inflation, capitalist crisis grow

BY HUGO WILS

MANCHESTER, England — The drive by bosses and their government in the U.K. to put the burden of the capitalist crisis on the backs of working people is fueling union actions across industry, as well as widespread discussion among workers about what we can do to defend ourselves. Workers and our families are being battered by inflation that has soared to 11.7%.

Following several one-day walkouts by 40,000 rail workers in July and August, 115,000 postal workers struck Aug. 26 after Royal Mail bosses imposed a meager 2% pay increase. Three more strike days are planned.

“More people understand why we are taking action now with how hard things are for everyone,” Jimmy Jacob, Communication Workers Union shop steward at the Royal Mail sorting depot on Oldham Road here, told the *Militant* on the picket line. “It’s important that we stick together and build solidarity.”

A strike by refuse workers in Edinburgh has spread across Scotland. Dockworkers in Liverpool’s container port have voted to strike in the wake of an eight-day strike at the end of August by workers at the U.K.’s largest container port in Felixstowe.

Household energy bills increased a whopping 54% in April and a further rise is due in October. The government has lifted the cap it imposes on what energy companies can charge from 1,971 pounds (\$2,286) per household per year, to 3,549 pounds, blaming Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine and a worldwide rise in natural gas prices. Energy companies

have jacked up their prices accordingly.

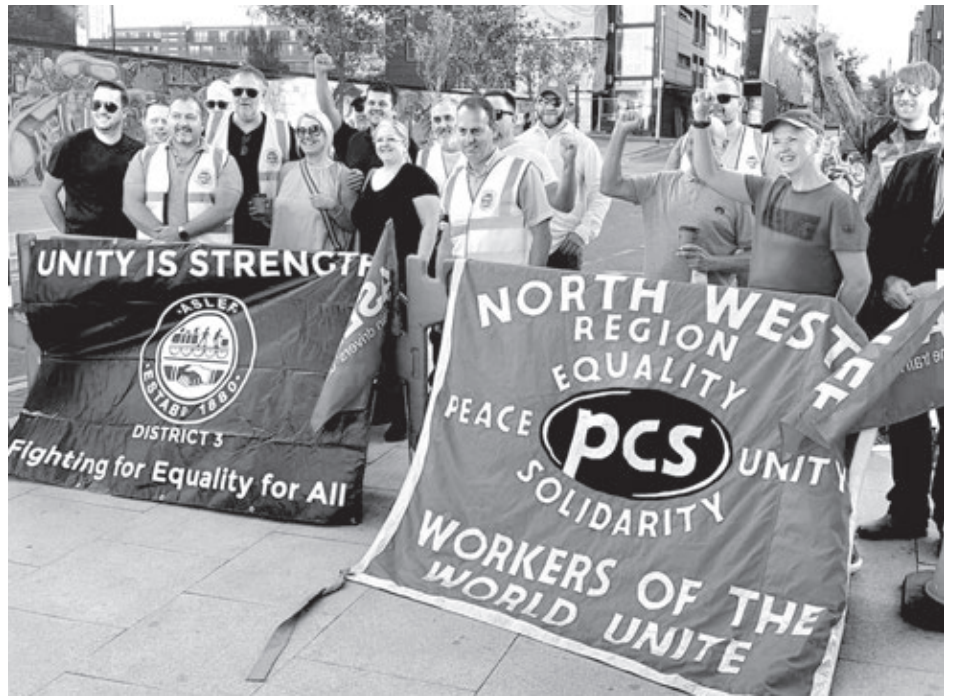
“On my current wages, I will have to work for a whole week just to pay the energy company’s monthly bill,” Tatiana Maylett, a worker at the Pilgrim’s meat-processing plant here, told the *Militant*.

The government estimates inflation will rise to 18.6% by January. The price of many necessities is already much higher — milk, cheese and eggs went up 19.4% in July; meat by 13.1%. The U.K. has the highest inflation rate within the G-7, a group of governments of the largest imperialist nations.

In the face of this crisis, capitalist politicians of all stripes are offering palliatives to soften the blows, as they defend the bosses’ drive to profit at our expense.

After Boris Johnson quit as prime minister amid a scandal in July, acrimonious debate about economic policy has flared among Conservative Party candidates vying to replace him. Foreign Secretary Elizabeth Truss calls for removing the “green levy,” a Johnson-imposed tax on energy bills, and reversing a recent increase in National Insurance, an income tax. Her main rival, former Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak, claims her plans will force millions into destitution and says the government should instead borrow 10 billion pounds to subsidize energy bills. Labour Party leader Keir Starmer calls for extra taxes on energy companies and freezing the government’s energy price cap at under 2,000 pounds per year.

Scotland’s First Minister Nicola Sturgeon calls for nationalizing the energy



ASLEF/Jim Hopkins

Public and Commercial Services unionists bring solidarity to picket of train drivers in Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen during one-day walkout in Manchester Aug. 13.

companies. Her proposal has nothing to do with putting the control of vital energy resources in the hands of working people and our unions, but safeguarding them for the capitalist class as a whole through state ownership.

None of these proposals offer hope to workers and their families. “I’m worried about this energy price rise,” former coal miner Tom Graham told Communist League member Pete Clifford when CL members campaigned in his neighborhood here in Manchester. “I think Labour is right to put a cap on price rises and increase taxation on the energy companies.”

Clifford disagreed. “We call on the unions to fight for automatic cost-of-living adjustments in every contract,” he responded. “When inflation goes up our wages should go up automatically to match every price rise. Our proposal is to rely on our own strength as workers using our unions.” There is no way to prevent bouts of inflation under capitalism, he added, but by joining together workers can fight for protection from its effects.

Graham wasn’t convinced that unions would lead a fight for cost-of-living adjustments. “Maybe, not yet,” replied Clifford, “but as our struggles deepen this course will gain a broader hearing.

“And this is a question for our class worldwide,” he said. “Working people across Europe, the U.S. and elsewhere also face skyrocketing prices.”


Thomas O’Sullivan, a handyman in Manchester, told Clifford he “supported strikes by bus drivers near me. They won 11% through their action, but with inflation rising that can still end up as a cut in real pay. The system is rigged against us.”

“The capitalist ruling class needs to go after our wages and working conditions,” Clifford replied. “Today’s union fights help workers see ourselves as part of a class with common interests. We need to break from the bosses’ Conservative and Labour parties, and build a party of labor that can fight for all working people, a necessary step on the road to overturning capitalist rule and replacing it with workers power.”

THE MILITANT

Federation of Cuban Women defends revolution’s gains

Federation of Cuban Women members joined discussions in 78,000 meetings earlier this year over new Families Code. Cuban leader Fidel Castro fought for a “revolution within the revolution,” founding the FMC in 1960 to advance the fight for women’s emancipation.



Circulo Infantil La Nueva Flor, Sandino, Pinar del Rio Federation of Cuban Women has organized literacy drive, child care, other advances.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

\$5 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

\$10 for 12 weeks

\$20 for 6 months

\$35 for 1 year

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION _____

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT, 306 W. 37TH ST., 13TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018. OR SUBSCRIBE ONLINE AT: WWW.THEMILITANT.COM

12 weeks of the *Militant* outside the U.S.: Australia, A\$10 • United Kingdom, £4 • Canada, Can\$7 • Caribbean and Latin America, US\$10 • Continental Europe, £8 • France, 8 euros • New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, A\$10 • All other areas, US\$16 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

Special Offer

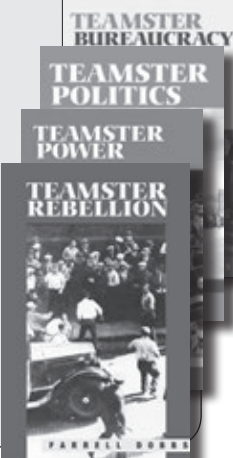
Teamster Series

Lessons of US labor battles from 1930s
by Farrell Dobbs

“The principal lesson of the Teamster experience is not that under an adverse relationship of forces, the workers can be overcome, but that with proper leadership, they can overcome.”

\$16 each or all four for \$50

pathfinderpress.com



The Militant

Vol. 86/No. 33
Closing news date: August 31, 2022

Editor: John Studer
Managing Editor: Terry Evans

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Emma Johnson, Martín Koppel, Roy Landersen, Jacob Perasso, Brian Williams.

Published weekly except for one week in January, two weeks in August, one week in September.

Business Manager: Bob Bruce
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.
Telephone: (212) 244-4899
Fax: (212) 244-4947
E-mail: themilitant@mac.com
Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.
Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: For one year send \$35 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Africa, Asia, and the Middle East: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Canada: For one year send Canadian \$45 to the Militant, 7107 St. Denis #204, Montreal, Quebec H2S 2S5.

United Kingdom: Send £30 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, 5 Norman Road (first floor), Seven Sisters, London, N15 4ND, England.

Republic of Ireland and Continental Europe: Send £85 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London at above address.

France: Send 100 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15.

Australia: Send A\$70 for one year to P.O. Box 73 Campsie, NSW 2194 Australia.

New Zealand and the Pacific Islands: Send A\$70 for one year to above address.

Submissions to the *Militant* may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant*’s views. These are expressed in editorials.

Communist League candidates in Canada push to get on ballot

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

MONTREAL — The Communist League candidates in the Oct. 3 Quebec provincial elections — Katy LeRougetel and Félix Vincent Ardea — are winning a hearing from working people who are looking for a road forward in the face of today's deepening capitalist crisis.

LeRougetel, a bakery worker and member of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union, is running in the riding of Anjou-Louis Riel for the Quebec National Assembly. Vincent Ardea, a train conductor at Canadian National Railway and a Teamsters union member, is running in Marquette. Supporters of the Communist League campaign are organizing to turn in well over the 100 signatures needed in each riding by Sept. 1 to be on the ballot.

Gabrielle Prosser, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Minnesota, and Sara Lobman, SWP candidate for US. Senate from New York, joined in campaigning here over the Aug. 13-14 weekend. By Aug. 28, campaigners had already collected 92 signatures for LeRougetel and 104 for Vincent Ardea.

The CL candidates are using the campaign to promote solidarity with workers on strike around the country, including some 530 Rolls-Royce workers here who have been locked out for five months fighting for a decent pension for all the workers in the plant. They are also championing the strike of maritime workers in Sorel, Quebec. They explain that out



Félix Vincent Ardea, left, Communist League candidate for Quebec National Assembly in Marquette, and Gabrielle Prosser, SWP candidate for governor of Minnesota, join picket line in solidarity with striking maritime workers at Ocean Towing in Sorel, Quebec, Aug. 16.

of struggles like these, workers will see the need and gain the confidence to form our own party, a labor party based on the unions, and point the way to bringing to power a workers and farmers government in Canada.

"I was expecting lots more negative comments, but people could see the common sense of what we're saying," CN train conductor Alexandre Jacob told the *Militant* after his first experience campaigning door to door with LeRougetel in Anjou Aug. 26. In a little under an hour, six people signed to put LeRougetel on the ballot, one bought a copy of the *Militant*, and they got almost \$10 in donations for the campaign.

Solidarity with Rolls-Royce strikers

The next day, LeRougetel met Merite Lubeya, a worker for a cleaning company who is also going to school. LeRougetel described the League's working-class program, including the importance of building solidarity with workers in struggle like those at Rolls Royce. Lubeya said she had worked at the Rolls-Royce plant cleaning the building before the strike. "For real, I support that strike," Lubeya said.

LeRougetel proposed they go to the picket line together. "Sure, I could go but I'm nobody," Lubeya said.

"That's the most powerful weapon the bosses use against us, to convince us we aren't worth anything and that we can't change anything," LeRouge-

tel said. The two are organizing to visit the Rolls-Royce picket line together Sept. 2. Lubeya signed to put LeRougetel on the ballot and got a copy of the *Militant*.

When CL campaigner Philippe Tessier met Ben Ahmed, a meatpacker in Drummondville, originally from Tunisia, on his doorstep and handed him the League's campaign leaflet, Ahmed read it and said he didn't agree with the plank that called for solidarity with the Ukrainian peoples fight to defend their independence against Moscow's invasion of their country. "I don't want any of this, I'm for Russia in the war," he said. "Why should I pay high gas prices for the sanctions that Canada, the U.S. and others are putting on Russia?"

"The U.S. and Canada are ruled by the capitalists, who are looking out for their own pocket. But who is Putin ruling for? The same class of people," Tessier said. "Workers need our own independent working-class foreign policy."

"At the same time our campaign is completely with you on the sanctions. They hurt workers and farmers harder than anyone else, making it more difficult to win Russian soldiers and



CL candidate Katy LeRougetel campaigning to get on ballot Aug. 27 in Anjou-Louis Riel where Mohammed Traoré signed petition.

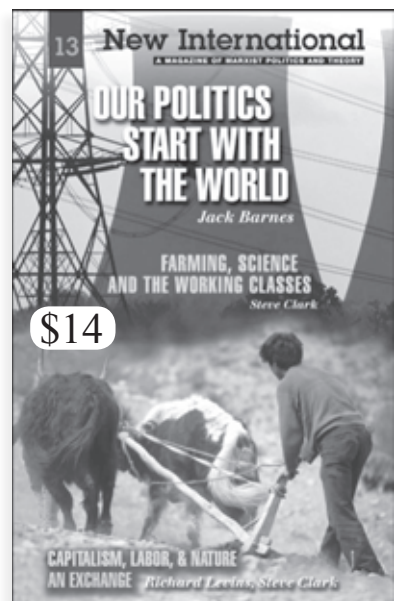
workers to join with Ukrainian toilers to fight to stop Putin's war."

"Whose side are you on? The president of Ukraine who is banning opposition parties?" asked Ahmed.

"We are on the sides of workers and farmers in Ukraine fighting for their independence. We are also on the side of those in Russia fighting against the war. They are the ones used as cannon fodder. A new revolutionary leadership will be born out of those fighters," Tessier said.

Ahmed noticed the campaign flyer promotes solidarity with the Rolls-Royce strikers. He told Tessier that he supports them and honks every time he passes their picket line. By the end of the discussion he took the CL campaign leaflet, the Socialist Workers Party statement backing the fight to defend Ukraine's independence and bought a copy of the *Militant*. He also bought a copy in Arabic of *Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun* by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes.

To find out more about the Communist League campaign and to get involved, contact the League at 7107 St. Denis #204, Montreal, Quebec H2S 2S5, Tel: (514) 272-5840.



www.pathfinderpress.com

Socialist Workers Party 2022 candidates

California

Eleanor Garcia, US Senate
Joel Britton, Governor
Deborah Liatos, US Congress

Florida

Rachele Fruit, Governor
Steve Warshell, Senate

Georgia

Lisa Potash, US Senate
Sam Manuel, Governor

Illinois

Naomi Craine, Governor

Minnesota

Gabrielle Prosser, Governor
Kevin Dwire, Lt. Governor
David Rosenfeld, US Congress

Nebraska

Joe Swanson, US Congress

New Jersey

Joanne Kuniasky, US Congress
Lea Sherman, US Congress

New York

Sara Lobman, US Senate
Willie Cotton, Governor

Ohio

Samir Hazboun, US Senate
Jacquie Henderson, US Congress

Pennsylvania

Osborne Hart, US Senate
Candace Wagner, Governor
Chris Hoepfner, US Congress

Texas

Alyson Kennedy, Governor
Gerardo Sánchez, US Congress

Washington, DC

James Harris, Mayor
Arlene Rubinstein, Delegate to House

Washington state

Henry Dennison, US Senate

Join fall drive to get out the 'Militant'

BY JOHN STUDER

In two weeks members of the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada and the U.K. will launch an ambitious drive to further expand the reach of the *Militant*.

Coupled with the bold use of SWP election campaigns, SWP supporters plan to sell 1,750 subscriptions and 1,850 books by SWP leaders and other revolutionaries. The eight-week drive — Sept. 17 to Nov. 15 — will run alongside the SWP's annual Party-Building Fund, with a goal to raise \$145,000 to finance the work of the party.

The goals, modestly higher than those for the paper's spring campaign, reflect new openings to discuss a working-class road forward in the midst of spiraling prices and worsening conditions bearing down on millions, the Joe Biden government's assault on constitutional rights, and Ukrainians' courageous resistance to Moscow's invasion. The *Militant* and SWP candidates will be campaigning to build solidarity with union strike

struggles across North America and around the world.

Help get out the *Militant* and books that explain why capitalist rule is the root of the crisis workers and farmers face and what we can do to build our own party, a labor party, to fight to take political power into our own hands! Contact the nearest party branch listed on page 6.

Gibsons win another round!

The Ohio Supreme Court in a 4-3 decision announced Aug. 30 that it had rejected hearing an appeal by Oberlin College and former Dean of Students Meredith Raimondo from lower court judgments holding them liable for a malicious race-baiting slander campaign against the Gibson family and their store that has brought the store owners to the brink of bankruptcy. This means the court judgment of \$36 million against the college stands.

FBI frame-up blow to rights

Continued from front page
if possible, to put him in prison.

Their real target is the working class, famously described by Hillary Clinton as “deplorable,” who they despise and increasingly fear. Their central weapon in the Michigan case, like in their six-year-long campaign against Trump and the unconstitutional raid at his Mar-a-Lago Florida home, is the FBI, Washington’s political police.

The question for working people in these cases has nothing to do with Trump, or the political views of Fox and Croft. It has to do with defense of fundamental constitutional rights, rights that working people fought and died for, rights that are crucial for our ability to fight for our class interests.

Officials in Michigan claimed Fox and Croft, and those who were acquitted earlier, were affiliated with an “anti-government, anti-law-enforcement” militia, the Wolverine Watchmen.

But this wasn’t a group run by rightist terrorists. Unknown to Croft, Fox and the others, dozens of undercover FBI agents and snitches were members and leaders of the outfit. They led in discussing how to abduct Whitmer, a Democrat, just weeks before the 2020 presidential election.

The group’s second-in-command was Daniel Chappel, an FBI informant, who prodded Fox to run surveillance on one of Whitmer’s homes, promoted firing a shot through her window, and offered Fox a credit card with \$5,000 on it to get anything he needed. Fox rejected the “offer.”

Another FBI-run spy offered to provide the group with explosives.

Government snoops recorded thousands of hours of the group’s discussions, but only an hour and a half was played to the jury. Fox’s lawyer, Christopher Gibbons, called the judge’s ruling to restrict the playing of the snoops’ tapes “limited and manipulative.” The FBI “shook them up, popped the top and nothing happened,” Gibbons said of the “conspiracy.”

Most of the time, defense lawyers explained, the men were stoned and dreamed up fantastical plans like getting hold of a helicopter to carry out their scheme. No kidnapping ever took place and no date was ever set for one.

Despite this, Judge Robert Jonker instructed the jury not to consider this a case of entrapment by the political police agents as long as the defendants were “willing to commit a crime.” And he told them they could find Croft and Fox guilty “even if it was impossible for them to successfully complete the crime.”

Croft and Fox were convicted for what they thought and said, under urging from FBI plants, not anything they did.

Without mentioning the conviction,

President Joseph Biden told a Democratic Party fundraiser Aug. 25 that the “philosophy” of Trump and his supporters was “semi-fascism.” Liberals and the middle-class left throw around charges of “fascism” as if it meant “bad.” They don’t explain that fascism is a bloody movement aimed at crushing the working class when the capitalist rulers become convinced their system is threatened by a working-class-led revolution. This is a far cry from the reality of the class struggle. There is no serious fascist movement — “semi” or otherwise — in the U.S. today.

Conspiracy charges target workers

Thought-control conspiracy frame-ups, like those used to convict Croft and Fox, have long been used to victimize union militants and communists.

Eighteen leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and the Teamsters union were framed up under the thought-control Smith Act, charged with conspiracy “to advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government” in 1941. Their actual “crime” was opposing the Franklin Roosevelt administration’s drive to take Washington into the second imperialist world war over markets, resources and profits.

Other victims of U.S. government conspiracy charge frame-ups include Oscar López, a fighter against U.S. colonial rule in Puerto Rico, and the Cuban Five — revolutionaries imprisoned by the U.S. government for defending Cuba from violent attack by rightist groups operating out of Florida.

An FBI covert operation was key to setting up Croft and Fox. Underhanded methods are necessary when the government deploys its political police against those it believes stand in its way. This was underlined by the release of the “redacted” affidavit used to get a warrant for the FBI raid on Trump’s Florida residence. The core of the docu-



Carole Kabrin/for Michigan Radio

Michigan frame-up trial found Barry Croft, seated left, and Adam Fox, next to him, guilty of “conspiracy” Aug. 23. In attack on constitutional rights, FBI undercover agents entrapped them. Rulers’ political police use precedents like this to frame up working-class fighters.

ment containing Attorney General Merrick Garland’s justifications for the break-in is nearly all blacked out.

This opens the door for liberal media insiders to claim to have the real story, leaked by nameless “people in the know.” Just hours after the affidavit’s release, the editors of the *Washington Post* alleged documents Trump held contained material “from surveillance of foreign spies.”

The warrant used in the raid cites probable crimes under the 1917 Espionage Act, a law to suppress constitutional rights that was used to target opponents of Washington’s entry into World War I and supporters of the Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution.

None of what Trump is accused of comes close to what was done by former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton during her presidential run in 2016. She set up a private email server to handle a mass of classified material she appropriated, but her home was never raided and she never faced the threat of charges.

When the FBI discovered the setup,

Clinton and her team destroyed tens of thousands of emails, as well as phones and other devices that held government communications, many classified. No FBI investigations were launched. In fact, FBI Director James Comey took it upon himself to foreclose any investigation of the whole affair, after admitting what she did was likely criminal.

No matter who the FBI targets, a capitalist politician like Trump, or people like Croft and Fox, such assaults inevitably set a precedent for government attacks and frame-ups against workers and our unions. In a social system based on the exploitation of workers and farmers by the handful of propertied ruling families, the FBI — their political police — with its spies, informers, provocateurs and compliant allies on the courts, is vitally important for the rulers.

Working people need to speak out against FBI assaults on constitutional rights, no matter who they target. This is key to defending rights we need and will have to use.

Fight ban on ‘Militant’ in Arizona federal prison

Continued from front page

turned are so important. And it’s why we’re getting a good response from groups like the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, civil rights groups, union members and more.”

“Pushing back this ban will be a victory not just for the *Militant* and our subscribers,” Studer said. “It will be a victory for all those who believe in free speech and freedom of the press, and the fights of people behind bars to follow and debate the big political questions of the day, to be part of the world.”

In banning *Militant* issue no. 23, the warden violated the U.S. Bureau of Prison’s own rules, which state that a publication may not be rejected “solely because its content is religious, philosophi-

cal, political, social or sexual, or because its content is unpopular or repugnant.”

The rules also state that the rejection “notice must contain reference to the specific article(s) or material(s) considered objectionable.”

But the warden didn’t cite a single word, phrase or article in the issue. Instead the notice states, “this publication contains political extremism and is detrimental to the security, good order, or discipline of the institution.” And issue no. 25 was returned to the *Militant* without any notice or explanation at all.

The front page of no. 23 features an article opposing Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine and another titled “Gun violence, crime are result of today’s crisis of capitalism.” Inside is a feature explaining the importance of working people in opposing antisemitism. There is also coverage of a strike by members of the United Mine Workers in Alabama, who have been on strike at Warrior Met Coal for 16 months, and other labor battles. Are these what the warden considers “political extremism”?

The *Militant*’s lawyer David Goldstein, of the prominent constitutional rights law firm of Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky & Lieberman, appealed the ban, but as of Aug. 31, hasn’t received a response from the Bureau of Prisons.

Goldstein noted in the appeal that the

Militant has had inmate subscribers in numerous federal prisons for over 60 years without incident. An attempt to ban the *Militant* in a federal facility in Colorado in 2014 was reversed.

Justin Mazzola, deputy director of research for Amnesty International, wrote the Bureau of Prisons Aug. 31 that the ban on two issues of the paper “infringes upon prisoners’ rights to freedom of expression” and violates United Nations standards on treatment of prisoners.

PEN America, the U.S. branch of the international literary and human rights organization; the National Coalition Against Censorship, an alliance of national nonprofit groups; and the Arizona Newspapers Association, representing more than 80 newspapers across the state, are among the organizations that have sent letters calling for the ban of the socialist newsweekly to be reversed.

The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press posted its letter prominently on its website.

Help get letters protesting the ban on the *Militant*! Raise this fight with your union or union officials, and other groups and individuals. Send the letters to Melissa Rios, Western Regional Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons, 7338 Shoreline Dr., Stockton, CA 95219, or via email to WXRO-ExecAssistant@bop.gov. Send copies to themilitant@mac.com.

Taking the Socialist Workers Party’s program to the toilers

Conference discusses working-class response to capitalist crises, sets party convention

Feature reprint available in English, Spanish and French

Download at themilitant.com



LA unionists bring solidarity to Corn Nuts strikers in Fresno

BY BERNIE SENTER

FRESNO, Calif. — Striking bakery workers at Corn Nuts got an important boost of solidarity when nine fellow Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union members from Los Angeles traveled here Aug. 27 to join their picket line.

“You did the first and best part,” Elvia Castillo, who had been on strike for 113 days at the Rich’s Jon Donaire Desserts plant in the L.A. area earlier this year, told the strikers. “You stepped out. You are human beings, not machines. You have rights. Feel proud of yourselves. Fight for what is right and don’t be afraid. You’re going to win.” Four others on the trip were also veterans of the Jon Donaire strike.

Jerry Gil, financial secretary of BCTGM Local 85, explained that all 48 workers at the Hormel-owned Corn Nuts plant went on strike Aug. 15.

“In June 2021 Hormel bought Corn Nuts and changed the medical plan,” he said. Workers are being charged \$420 a month and thousands in deductibles and copayments for medical care. “Hormel has refused to recognize the union or the contract we had with Kraft Heinz. They said you either accept our terms and conditions or don’t come to work.”

“We make 2 million pounds of Corn Nuts a week,” Oscar Tabarez, a maintenance mechanic at the plant, told the *Militant*. The Fresno facility is the only location where the snack is made.

Apolinar Marquez said he had been working at the factory for four months doing packing and sanitation, and he decided to join the strike. Castillo told him, “We had a lot of people like you who had the courage to come out with us. It made our strike strong.”

“When you go on strike you see things you don’t see otherwise,” striker Curtis Williams said. “You see how you are treated badly, aren’t appreciated. The strike has changed us big time, woke us up. We’ve become better people and proved to ourselves we could do better.”

Roxana Rosales, a striker from Jon

Donaire, said, “When I talked with them on strike at Corn Nuts, it was like a mirror. The same things happened to me.”

Lourdes Chavez, who organized the delegation from L.A., also was a striker at Jon Donaire. She now works at Bimbo in Orange County and brought a co-worker with her. She told the Corn Nuts strikers how important it is that they have everyone out on strike and the factory isn’t operating. “We had 80% out and the company was able to keep producing,” she said.

Join the picket line at 4343 E. Florence Ave. in Fresno! Get out the word and send support to Jerry Gil at Jerry@BakersUnion85.com. Follow the strike on the BCTGM website, its Facebook page and #CornNutsStrike.



Militant/Bernie Senter

Bakery workers on strike against Corn Nuts in Fresno. They’ve won solidarity, including Aug. 27 visit from BCTGM members who struck Rich’s Jon Donaire Desserts earlier this year in L.A.

ON THE PICKET LINE

Calif. mental health workers: ‘We fight for our patients’

OAKLAND, Calif. — More than 2,000 mental health care workers, including therapists, psychologists and social workers, went on strike Aug. 15 at the HMO giant Kaiser Permanente in northern California. The key issue is inadequate staffing.

A California law that took effect in July requires health care providers to offer timely appointments to mental health and addiction patients, including scheduling follow-up visits within 10 days. The striking workers, members of the National Union of Healthcare Workers, say patients may wait as much as two months for follow-up appointments.

After years of protesting understaffing, union members voted by 93% to go out on strike, determined to stay on the picket lines until Kaiser agrees to address their concerns.

“We are fighting for our patients and our patients overwhelmingly support us,” Jesus Solorio, a therapist at Oakland Kaiser, told this *Militant* worker-correspondent while picketing at the San Leandro hospital Aug. 24.

The mental health workers have been

working under an expired contract for close to a year. The union has agreed to Kaiser’s offers on pay and benefits, but the bosses haven’t budged on staffing.

Kaiser Permanente bosses claim they’ve addressed this issue by hiring 200 therapists since January 2021. Strikers say many are leaving Kaiser due to the conditions.

At a San Francisco rally the first day of the strike, Willow Thorson, a clinician in Santa Rosa, told the *Militant* it was understaffing that led therapists to unionize in 2010. “Now the situation is worse,” she said. “Patients are getting hospitalized when more timely care would have avoided this. This is taking place when we need more mental health treatment and hospital beds, as well as housing and jobs.”

Some 22,000 registered nurses and nurse practitioners will begin holding informational pickets at 22 Kaiser facilities Sept. 1 to protest short staffing and other issues.

Stationary engineers carried out a 90-day strike at Kaiser hospitals last year, but still don’t have a contract. Some joined the National Union of Healthcare Workers’ picket at the San Leandro Kai-

ser hospital Aug. 24. “Union solidarity is important. Put that in the paper,” engineer Nelson Ocampo said.

— Betsey Stone

After nine-day strike Maryland transit workers win wage raise

FORESTVILLE, Md. — After nine days on the picket line, striking Amalgamated Transit Union Local 689 MetroAccess workers voted 91% to approve a new three-year agreement with Transdev Aug. 11. Transdev is one of four contractors that Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority hires to provide services for people whose disability prevents them from taking public transportation.

Strikers fought for higher pay and against forced overtime. The union reported the company has been 100 workers short for over year.

The strike was fueled in part by unsafe and inhuman work rules and lack of respect by bosses for workers and passengers alike. One rule denies bathroom breaks to drivers and to disabled passengers once a trip is in progress. Another gives passengers six minutes to get to the van or they’re denied service.

Two days before the agreement was reached, some 200 striking drivers, dispatch, maintenance and utility workers and their supporters held a spirited rally at union headquarters, then filled the auditorium there where an open bargaining session with Transdev negotiators took place.

Despite the hardships the strike imposed on passengers, the union won solidarity. “You make it possible for my friends to participate in the community — to go to school, to work, to see the doctor, to see our friends and family,” Carol Tyson, an activist with the Senior and Disability Community Group, told the rally.

The workers won wage increases, with starting pay now \$20.75 an hour, up from \$17 under the old contract. Most senior workers now top out at \$33.05, an increase of \$9 an hour.

“You can drain your body, and have no life, with as many as 12- to 13-hour shifts if you want, but what about time with your family?” Mischelle Woodfork, a paratransit driver with 12 years on the job, told the *Militant*. “I feel proud of everyone, uniting, and participating the way we did. I was surprised to see how strong we were.”

— Arlene Rubinstein

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



September 15, 1997

A long list of railroad accidents has made national news over the last several months. In response, the U.S. Federal Railway Administration announced it would step up investigations, putting the CSX and Union Pacific under particular scrutiny. Why the rail industry is becoming increasingly unsafe, and what to do about it, is a growing discussion among rail workers and others.

From 1993 through 1996, UP had 28 derailments, collisions, or other accidents involving chemical spills or releases. CSX has had 14 more reportable accidents than it had for the comparable period last year.

Reflecting workers’ concern over safety, members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers demonstrated in Washington, D.C., April 28 to protest the rising number of deaths of rail workers and the intransigence on the part of the rail bosses to the safety question.



September 15, 1972

From the Mekong Delta in South Vietnam to the Chinese border of North Vietnam, 1,000 miles away, the U.S. is pounding the Vietnamese countryside.

President Nixon is exerting immense pressure on Hanoi. This includes not only the heaviest bombing in the history of warfare and the naval blockade of North Vietnam but also pressure on Hanoi achieved in the summit agreements with Moscow and Peking. Nevertheless, a settlement acceptable to Washington has not yet been achieved.

“Unless there is progress on the negotiating front,” Nixon stated Aug. 29, “I am not going to put any limitation on when the U. S. activities in the air would stop.” Their inability to crush the North Vietnamese revolutionary offensive in five months of ferocious warfare has led to U.S. bombing at its most intense level in the history of the war.



September 15, 1947

The spotlight in Great Britain remained on 140 miners at Grimethorpe, a colliery in Yorkshire. The miners were holding out in a wildcat strike that began Aug. 11. What gave this strike dynamic impact was the rank and file solidarity of miners in other pits. As many as 60,000 downed tools in sympathy.

The strike began when the bureaucrats heading the union agreed to a Coal Board decision to increase the daily “stint” of the miners from 21 feet of coal face to 23 feet. These miners had already had their “stint” increased to the maximum.

The widespread sympathy shows how dissatisfied the miners are with the Attlee government. All they have given the workers is a bureaucracy intent on carrying out the will of the British capitalist class. But the miners want the people to derive the benefits from Britain’s coal resources.

FBI targets Puerto Rico brigade

Continued from front page

Cuba this July, including students and other youth, trade unionists, professionals and retired workers. It was the 31st annual brigade from Puerto Rico — after a two-year hiatus because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We go every year,” Milagros Rivera, president of the Committee in Solidarity with Cuba, which organizes the brigade, told the *Militant* by phone from San Juan Aug. 26. “Everything we do is public.”

Rivera received a phone call from Darío Ortiz, after two FBI agents knocked on his door at 8 a.m. Aug. 23. He refused to talk to them.

“It’s now 35 or 40 people,” Rivera said. Some were visited at home, the FBI called others by phone. Some were asked if they know Rivera. Others were told that “Cuban security agents” infiltrated in the brigade. When the agents told one of the activists that the FBI was investigating a “violation” of the law, the person asked, “What law?”

“We can’t tell you over the phone,” the political-police agent said. “But if you meet us for coffee we’ll tell you more.”

This year’s brigade met with a number of Cuban mass organizations to learn more about the socialist revolution there and to discuss the fight against the colonial status of Puerto Rico. They joined Cubans in voluntary work and brought medical supplies to help overcome shortages caused by Washington’s economic war on Cuba.

Like numerous brigades from the U.S. and worldwide, participants from Puerto Rico were hosted by the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples.

“The Cuban Revolution is a hope for the entire world, especially for Puerto Rico where the situation is very bad,” Rivera told the press in Cuba. “For 124 years we have been under the boot of U.S. imperialism.” Cuba shows it is possible to win real independence.

“We let everyone on the brigade know that they shouldn’t talk to the FBI. Period,” she said. “Tell them to talk to your lawyer or get the agent’s name and tell them you’ll give it to your lawyer.” And when the FBI puts on airs of “super cordiality,” don’t let them fool you.

“The FBI is an instrument to perpetuate colonialism in our country,” Rivera said. “They are trying to intimidate and frighten us and to criminalize our solidarity with Cuba.”

This attack comes as protests are taking place in Puerto Rico over worsening power outages, she said, since U.S.-Canadian owned Luma was given a lucrative contract by the government to run the island’s electrical grid. The U.S. rulers fear any move that strengthens the fight against U.S. colonial rule.

“We can’t be quiet in the face of this harassment,” Rivera said. “We have to let people know what is happening.”

FBI’s history in Puerto Rico

In the 1930s the FBI was used to help frame up and jail Nationalist leader Pedro Albizu Campos.

In the 1960s the U.S. government launched Cointelpro — Counter Intelligence Programs — that targeted the political activities of millions of people. These FBI disruption operations targeted Black rights organizations, the anti-Vietnam War movement, Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party, women’s rights groups and others. Its operations in Puerto Rico and against Puerto Rican independentistas in the U.S. were among the largest FBI Cointelpro campaigns, launching at least 37 disruption programs. This included participation in the entrapment operation and police execution of two young independentistas at Cerro Maravilla in 1978.

The FBI still refuses to release all its records on the 1979 assassination in San Juan of Carlos Muñiz Varela, who was part of a group of young Cubans in Puerto Rico and the U.S. who promoted normalizing relations with Cuba. What has been released revealed that the FBI had informants in the rightist group that planned the killing.

In 2000, in the midst of sustained protests against the U.S. military occupation of the island of Vieques and a campaign to release pro-independence political prisoners, then-FBI Director Louis Freeh was pressured to release thousands of previously classified documents.

Freeh admitted the documents showed the FBI violated the constitutional rights of Puerto Ricans and engaged in “egregious illegal action, maybe criminal action.” Freeh and the Bill Clinton administration tried to claim FBI operations like this were a thing of the past, that there was a “new,” “clean” FBI. But that was a lie.

In 2004 the FBI and IRS agents raid-

Protests demand: ‘End US embargo against Cuba!’



Militant/Sara Lobman

NEW YORK — Some 80 people participated in a spirited march and rally in East Harlem Aug. 27, protesting the over 60-year U.S. embargo of Cuba. The rally met at the First Spanish Methodist Church, known as the People’s Church, and marched to the “Dos Alas” mural seven blocks away.

The mural, dedicated to friendship between the peoples of Cuba and Puerto Rico, features paintings of pioneering Puerto Rican independence fighter Pedro Albizu Campos and of the Argentine-born Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara, along with a stanza from a poem by “Lola” Rodríguez de Tio, which refers to Cuba and Puerto Rico “as two wings of the same bird.” Opponents of the Cuban Revolution have defaced the mural several times. As the event was closing a team of volunteers began repairing the most recent damage.

The event also protested FBI harassment of participants in a recent Puerto Rican solidarity brigade to Cuba and celebrated the life of Frank Velgara, a long-time New York activist in defense of the Cuban Revolution and for Puerto Rican independence, who died the day before after a long illness.

Milagros Rivera, president of the Committee in Solidarity with Cuba in Puerto Rico, spoke to a rally at the end of the march by phone from Puerto Rico. She said that more than 30 people had been contacted by FBI agents seeking to interrogate them, including participants in the brigade, friends and family, and other activists. “No one is required to speak to the FBI. We are telling everyone to contact us right away if the FBI visits or calls them,” she said.

John Melendez from El Frente Independista Boricua pointed at the mural and told participants, “no one can tell the Puerto Rican community who our heroes are.” Other speakers included Pastor Dorlimar Lebrón Malavé of the People’s Church; Estela Vasquez, retired executive vice president of Local 1199 SEIU in New York; Ike Nahem from the Cuba Sí Coalition; Marina Ortiz, from East Harlem Preservation; Gail Walker and Rosemary Mealy from IFCO/Pastors for Peace; and Jaime Mendieta from Casa de las Américas.

Similar successful protests against Washington’s economic war against Cuba took place in Miami, Chicago and other cities.

— SARA LOBMAN

ed the headquarters of the water workers union during of a strike by 4,300 workers. In 2005 the FBI raided a farmhouse in Hormigueros, where they shot Filiberto Ojeda Ríos, a longtime figure in the struggle for Puerto Rico’s independence. They waited a day before entering the premises. He was dead.

The Committee in Solidarity with Cuba is calling on defenders of democratic and political rights from around

the world to demand the FBI cease its latest round of harassment. Send messages protesting FBI harassment in Puerto Rico to cscpr2020@gmail.com, attention Milagros Rivera.

Speak out against FBI harassment

Edgardo Román Espada, a spokesperson for the Committee for Human Rights of Puerto Rico, said the FBI visits “are measures of intimidation that seek to stop the historic solidarity between the people of Puerto Rico and Cuba.”

Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel said, “We denounce the harassment of our brothers and sisters of Puerto Rico, members of the Juan Rius Rivera Solidarity Brigade with Cuba who just visited us. History has united us for 150 years. There is no force capable of dividing us.”

The latest FBI harassment of the Cuba solidarity brigade participants in Puerto Rico is not an isolated incident. It’s part of a series of attacks on constitutional protections against government interference, including the armed FBI raid on the Florida home of former President Donald Trump in Mar-a-Lago; the raid on the offices of the African People’s Socialist Party in St. Petersburg, Florida, and St. Louis. And U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio from Florida calling on the FBI to investigate Bridges of Love — which organizes monthly protests against the U.S. government’s economic war against Cuba — for prosecution as “foreign agents.”

IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

Where to find distributors of the *Militant*, *New International*, and a full display of Pathfinder books.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: Oakland: 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Zip: 94621. Tel: (510) 686-1351. Email: swpoak@sbcglobal.net **Los Angeles:** 2826 S. Vermont. Suite 1. Zip: 90007. Tel: (323) 643-4968. Email: swpla@att.net

FLORIDA: Miami: P.O. Box 381615. Zip: 33138. Tel: (305) 929-8966. Email: swpmiami@icloud.com

GEORGIA: Atlanta: 777 Cleveland Ave. SW Suite 103. Zip: 30315. Tel: (678) 528-7828. Email: swpatlanta@fastmail.com

ILLINOIS: Chicago: 1858 W. Cermak Road, 2nd floor. Zip: 60608. Tel: (312) 792-6160. Email: SWPChicago@fastmail.fm

MINNESOTA: Minneapolis: 2401 1/2 Central Ave. NE, Unit B. Zip: 55418. Tel: (612) 271-1930. Email: swpminneapolis@gmail.com

NEBRASKA: Lincoln: P.O. Box 6811.

Zip: 68506. Tel: (402) 217-4906. Email: swplincn@gmail.com

NEW JERSEY: 3600 Bergenline, Suite 205B, Union City. Zip: 07087. Tel: (551) 240-1512. swpnnewjersey@gmail.com

NEW YORK: New York: 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor. Zip: 10018. Tel: (646) 434-8117. Email: newyorkswp@gmail.com

OHIO: Cincinnati: 2300 Montana Ave., Suite 230. Tel: Zip: 45211. (513) 837-1038. Email: swpcincinnati@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia: 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite 16. Zip: 19149. Tel: (215) 708-1270. Email: philaswp@verizon.net **Pittsburgh:** 5907 Penn Ave., Suite 313. Zip: 15206. Tel: (412) 610-2402. Email: swppittsburgh@gmail.com

TEXAS: Dallas-Fort Worth: 6815 Manhattan Blvd., Suite 108 Fort Worth. Zip: 76120. Tel: (817) 899-6720. Email: dfwswp@gmail.com

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 7603 Georgia Ave. NW, Suite 300. Zip: 20012. Tel: (202) 536-5080. Email: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

WASHINGTON: Seattle: 650 S. Orcas St., #120 Zip: 98108. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Email: swpseattle@gmail.com

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: Suite 2, First floor, 275 George St., Liverpool. Postal Address: P.O. Box 73 Campsie, NSW 2194. Tel: (02) 8677 0108. Email: cl_australia@optusnet.com.au

CANADA

QUEBEC: Montreal: 7107 St. Denis #204 H2S 2S5. Tel: (514) 272-5840. Email: cllcmontreal@fastmail.com

FRANCE

Paris: BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15. Email: militant.paris@gmail.com

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND: London: 5 Norman Road (first floor). Seven Sisters. Post code: N15 4ND. Tel: 020-3538 8900. Email: cllondon@fastmail.fm **Manchester:** 329, Royal Exchange Buildings, 3 Old Bank St. Post code: M2 7PE. Tel: (0161) 312-8119. Email: clmanchr@gmail.com

Inflation, production slowdown hit workers, families in Europe

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The capitalist economic crisis unfolding today — rising prices combined with a downturn in manufacturing production — is heightening conflicts among rival powers that comprise the European Union and sharpening the strains tearing at the bloc of 27 governments.

The EU was established out of the carnage of the Second World War in hopes of rivaling Washington, which emerged as the world's dominant imperialist power. But prospects for forming a common European superstate were always a pipe dream given the intractable conflicts among the continent's ruling capitalist classes, which have sharply divergent interests in their competition for markets, resources and profits.

The establishment of the euro as a common currency — today used by 19 EU members — strengthened the ability of the rulers of Germany and France to use their superior economic and political clout to squeeze rivals, as well as the working classes in eastern and southern European nations where there is a lower level of industrial and economic development.

Annual inflation hit a record 9.1% in August within the eurozone, the highest since records began. But inflation varied widely among EU countries, up 25.2% in Estonia, 11.3% in Greece and 8.8% in Germany. This only tells part of the story about its impact on workers' lives. Throughout the eurozone essentials like energy prices surged 38.3% in August. Food, alcohol and tobacco rose 10.6%.

For the first time since 2011, the European Central Bank raised interest rates July 21 in an attempt to rein in inflation. This makes it more difficult for the more indebted capitalist powers in southern Europe, such as Italy, Greece and Spain, to repay their loans.

Leading European Central Bank officials are calling for greater "sacrifices," which governments and the bosses will impose on working people through job cuts as production slows.

Each EU member state can accumulate ballooning amounts of debt. But none of the capitalist rulers of these countries have the option of buffering economic crises by devaluing their currencies as they try to fuel exports and production, since only the European Central Bank can print money.

Being saddled with the debts of their weaker rivals conflicts with the drive of the dominant powers in the EU — Berlin and to a lesser degree Paris — to maximize profits off workers' backs.

Manufacturing production across the eurozone is falling with the biggest increase in inventories of unsold products from factories in over 25 years.

Some of the sharpest drops are concentrated in Germany, Europe's largest and most powerful capitalist economy. The country's biggest oil refinery has cut production at its Rhineland facility, and BASF, the country's largest chemical producer, is discussing similar steps.

The *Handelsblatt*, Germany's leading financial paper, says recession is not a matter of "if" but "for how long." Left unsaid is the impact this will have on working people who will face massive job losses at the same time that price rises escalate.

Some 12,000 dockworkers at three

ports across Germany's northern seaboard struck for 48 hours in July, their longest strike in 40 years. With goods from Europe's biggest exporting nation tied up, bosses got compliant courts to ban further strikes until Aug. 26. Last week the union announced a deal, giving container workers a 9.4% increase this year, with a pay raise linked to inflation for 2023. If inflation is above 5.5% next year, the agreement says, the union has the right to rip up the contract so it can fight for more.

Rising energy prices

The crisis facing EU countries' ruling families is deepened by Moscow's invasion of Ukraine and rising prices of oil and natural gas. But Germany's capitalist rulers have been especially hard hit. They're planning to close all of their nuclear power plants, becoming dependent on natural gas from Moscow. The Nord Stream pipeline from Russia is currently delivering just 20% of its capacity. German officials are already discussing rationing gas supplies this winter.

During a sweltering summer heat wave, the Spanish government banned anyone from setting air-conditioning units below 80 degrees Fahrenheit in an attempt to save energy. In Portugal and Italy, privately operated textile mills are cutting back production, reported the *Wall Street Journal*.

Albert Woodfox, political fighter in solitary for 44 years

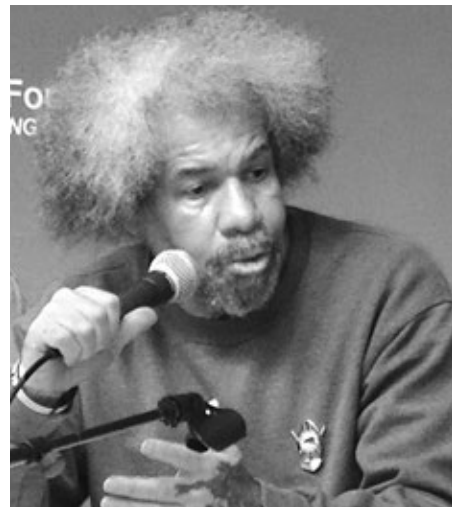
BY VIVIAN SAHNER

Albert Woodfox, a former Black Panther who emerged from nearly 44 years in solitary confinement as still a determined political fighter, died Aug. 4. He was 75.

Released from jail in 2016, Woodfox published a book, *Solitary: My Story of Transformation and Hope*, and toured the U.S. and worldwide, speaking out against the savagery of the U.S. "justice" system and calling for an end to solitary confinement, a brutal punishment used to torture 75,000 prisoners in the U.S. today.

Woodfox was open in his book about his youth. As a teenager in 1965, he was convicted for a series of petty crimes and sent to Angola, a notoriously racist prison in Louisiana. After his release, he was arrested again and convicted for armed robbery. "I stole from people who had almost nothing, my people, Black people," he said.

The turning point for him came in 1969 after he escaped from a courtroom and fled to New York, where he was



Militant/Seth Galinsky
Albert Woodfox speaks in New York, March 28, 2019. To confront prison conditions, "we turned toward society, not away," he said.



AP Images/Georg Wendt

Dockworkers in Verdi union protest in Hamburg, Germany, June 10, demand wage increase. Capitalist rulers in Europe call for "sacrifice" by working people as prices skyrocket.

The euro hit a 20-year low against the dollar Aug. 23, dropping to 98 cents. While Washington has been the EU's largest trading partner, this drop makes imports by EU countries from the U.S. more expensive. Last year the EU imported \$271.4 billion of goods from the U.S.

Conflict over Italy's unpayable debt

The huge unpayable debts facing the rulers of Italy are at the center of tensions between EU's rival powers. Italy's total government debt is now up to \$2.52 trillion, 150% of the country's gross domestic product. It's larger than combined government debts of

Greece, Portugal, Ireland and Spain, all of which were given loans by the European Central Bank following the 2008 financial crash on the condition they threw workers out of their jobs and slashed social services.

The political crisis facing Italy's rulers was highlighted by the July 21 resignation of Prime Minister Mario Draghi and the likelihood that a coalition of conservative parties more hostile to the EU will win elections set for Sept. 25.

These pressures are deepening the centrifugal forces inevitably pulling the EU apart. And they lead the capitalist rulers of each European power to deepen attacks on the working class.

caught and sent to "The Tombs" prison in Manhattan. There he met members of the Black Panther Party, who organized political discussions, treating people respectfully and intelligently.

"It was as if a light went on in a room inside me that I hadn't known existed," he wrote. "I had morals, principles and values I never had before."

He was sent back to Angola in 1971, where he helped set up a prison chapter of the Panthers with fellow inmates Herman Wallace and Robert King. "We were concerned with oppressed people," he told the *Militant* after his release, "not just oppressed Blacks and Hispanics." At the time Angola prison was segregated. "The one area where Blacks and whites were allowed altogether was in sports. "We came over with the idea that we could have football games and use that to communicate with each other."

Their political activities did not go unnoticed by the prison authorities. When prison guard Brent Miller was stabbed to death in a cell in 1972, prison officials framed Woodfox and Wallace for the killing, even though they knew neither man had anything to do with it.

"They pinned it on us, because we were militants," King told the *Militant* after Wallace's death. "We wanted to bring consciousness to our fellow prisoners that we are protected by due process, the 14th Amendment and other constitutional grounds."

King was framed up by prison officials and convicted of killing a fellow inmate in 1973.

Together they became known as the Angola Three, and opponents of injustice and prison brutality worldwide fought for their release. They spent decades in solitary confinement.

To confront their conditions, "we turned toward society, not away,"

Woodfox wrote. He became a voracious reader, reading everyone, including Frantz Fanon, Malcolm X, Mao Zedong, Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. "These books helped shape and change my way of looking at the world," he said. Woodfox studied law to be better able to fight and help others.

He organized games played up and down the line of solitary cells by shouting down the tier or banging on pipes — a way they held math tests and quizzes about Black history. Woodfox took special pride in helping several other prisoners learn how to read. "Our cells were meant to be death chambers but we turned them into schools, into debate halls," he told the press.

King was released after his conviction was overturned in 2001. Wallace died in October 2013, three days after he was released. Over the course of four decades, Woodfox's conviction was overturned three times.

After being released, Woodfox went on tour in 2019. "They say this system is democracy. Really it's all about class warfare," he told people. "They have perfected a way to get people to fight against their own interests. This economic system divides everyone by race, gender, class and sexual orientation."

At every speaking engagement Woodfox urged audiences to join in calling for an end to solitary confinement.

When back home in New Orleans, he enjoyed time with his daughter, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and with his partner, Leslie George.

He remained an optimist to the end. "I have hope for humankind," he wrote in his book. "It is my hope that a new human being will evolve so that needless pain and suffering, poverty, exploitation, racism, and injustice will be things of the past."

How the SWP forced out the truth about Washington's political police

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

There are stepped-up attacks today by the capitalist rulers, their political parties — the Democrats and Republicans — and the FBI against constitutional rights, rights that are crucial for the struggles of working people. These attacks can be defeated, and these rights can be used, as we go into combat to advance our own class interests.

The origins and character of the rulers' use of the FBI as their key political police force was most clearly revealed by the Socialist Workers Party's historic 15-year political battle, combined with legal action, from 1973 to 1988. Federal Judge Thomas Griesa ruled in 1986 that decades of spying, harassment, frame-ups and disruption against the party by the FBI and other federal agencies violated the party's fundamental right to carry out politics free from government interference.

The FBI violated the SWP's rights under the First Amendment to the Constitution, which guarantees freedom of speech and association, and the Fourth Amendment, which protects the privacy of groups and individuals against arbitrary search and seizure by government agents. It was an unprecedented victory, one that can be used today.

Griesa, a Republican appointed to the bench by President Richard Nixon, ruled that the FBI's use of informers against the SWP violated the rights of the party, and that covert wiretaps and break-ins of SWP offices and its Cointelpro disruption operation against the party were unconstitutional.

Government claims of legal authority — defended during the trial by top government officials — for their campaign of spying, disruption and provocation against the party were rejected by the court. This is a ruling that is of increasing importance today.

Shining a spotlight on this genuinely totalitarian expansion of executive power, and laying bare its deep roots, was one of the major accomplishments of the SWP's case.

Gov't fights for right to spy, disrupt

The government spared no effort in trying to win a different outcome. Robert Keuch, deputy assistant attorney

general and the third-ranking official in the Justice Department at the time, took the stand and testified that FBI operations against the party were constitutional because the president authorized them.

In September 1939 World War II broke out in Europe. President Franklin Roosevelt authorized the FBI to go after the SWP and other "subversives," Keuch testified, above all those "who were trying to influence public opinion to keep the United States out of war."

Within weeks of Roosevelt's decree, FBI agents simultaneously descended on the homes of Teamsters' union leaders in Des Moines and Sioux City, Iowa, and in Omaha, Nebraska. Seven union leaders were framed on charges of burning a bakery truck and sentenced to prison for two years.

"The FBI is systematically persecuting the labor movement as part of the Roosevelt government's preparations for dragging America into war," Thomas Smith, secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 554 in Omaha, said in the union's newspaper, the *Northwest Organizer*. "Roosevelt wants first to crush the labor movement, especially its most successful and progressive sections."

In June 1941, FBI agents and U.S. marshals raided the branch offices of the Socialist Workers Party in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, and arrested leaders of the party, many of them members of Local 544, under the newly adopted Smith Act, a gag law making the expression of ideas a crime. The government's goals were to purge the labor movement of those who would not go along with imperialist war goals, erase the stronghold of union power and democracy represented by the Minneapolis Teamsters and try to drive the SWP into functioning underground.

They completely failed on this last goal. One of the party's first responses was to nominate James P. Cannon, its national secretary and one of those facing trial, for mayor of New York City. The SWP used that campaign to publicize its revolutionary working-class program and, when the frame-up case went to trial, turned the Minneapolis courtroom into a platform from which to explain the party's views on the war



The *Militant* and union-published *Industrial Organizer* cover the start of frame-up trial that followed June 1941 FBI raid on Socialist Workers Party headquarters in Minneapolis. In blatant attack on constitutional rights, FBI seized boxes of communist literature freely available for purchase in the bookstore. Thirty-three years later SWP put FBI on trial, exposing decades of spying, disruption.

and initiate a nationwide defense effort that continued until the last of the 18 defendants was released from prison.

The SWP was not the only target of these government attacks, then or today. When Black newspapers, including the *Pittsburgh Courier*, launched the "Double V" campaign — calling for a fight for Black rights here at home at the same time as the war abroad — Attorney General Francis Biddle summoned several editors of Black weeklies to Washington, D.C., threatening "to shut them all up" on charges of sedition.

As the war continued, the FBI expanded its army of informers and provocateurs in the labor and Black movements. By the end of 1942, there were nearly 24,000 stool pigeons reporting on union and political activities in almost 4,000 factories, mines, and mills.

The government's use of the FBI to go after workers and others continued after World War II. In 1956, as the Montgomery Bus Boycott caught the nation's attention, the White House and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover launched its Cointelpro operations, first against the Communist Party, then against the SWP, Black organizations fighting Jim Crow segregation, and others.

FBI forced to admit spying on SWP

During the trial, the FBI admitted to maintaining 10 million pages on the SWP and YSA, files that contained evidence of thousands of unlawful acts committed by the FBI and its informers, including at least 208 burglaries of offices and homes of the SWP and its members, 12,000 days of listening "bugs" and 20,000 days of wiretaps — but didn't reveal a single instance of lawbreaking by the party.

Why was it the Socialist Workers Party that took the lead in this initiative, with no fear of what would be uncovered? Why not the Communist Party, which had suffered more than the SWP from the FBI's illegal campaigns of spying, harassment and disruption?

The SWP could take this step because, like any genuine communist organization, it has no program or policies kept secret from the working class. The party doesn't say one thing in public and something different in its closed meetings. The SWP's fight was widely covered in the press and won wide-ranging support from those of all stripes who supported constitutional rights. It inspired others — from Black Panthers to anti-Vietnam War fighters — to file

suits of their own aimed at forcing out evidence of FBI spying and disruption against them and barring such actions.

From the onset, one of the most important issues in the SWP's case was whether or not the FBI had the right to use covert informers to spy on and disrupt the party. To prove its case the party asked Judge Griesa to order the FBI to turn over files on government informers in the SWP. When the judge ordered a sample of 18 informers be produced, Attorney General Griffin Bell told the judge he was refusing to obey. The judge responded by finding him in contempt of court, the first such ruling in U.S. history.

Herbert Brownell, who had served as attorney general in President Dwight Eisenhower's cabinet, also took the stand. He argued that when "intelligence" is involved, the government had the authority to ignore the Bill of Rights. Glaring at Judge Griesa, he said pointedly, "So far there has been no court decision which prohibited such activities in the field of intelligence."

That ended with the ruling in the SWP's case finding the FBI's conduct illegal and codifying in court for the first time constitutional rights and liberties fought for over many years.

After Griesa's ruling, which included damages to the party of \$264,000, there was one more chapter in the fight. The FBI and other government cop agencies claimed they had a need to be able to rifle through the files they had assembled illegally if they suspected they would shed light on a crime in the future. The judge issued an injunction barring them from ever doing so.

"Lawyers are accustomed to describing cases in which they have been successful as 'historic,'" Leonard Boudin, the SWP's lead attorney, said of the fight. "But no one could challenge that description of Socialist Workers Party vs. Attorney General."

BOOKS WORKERS NEED TODAY...

...ABOUT BUILDING THE ONLY KIND OF PARTY WORTHY OF THE NAME "REVOLUTIONARY"



\$8 with subscription \$7 with subscription \$5 with subscription \$10 with subscription \$7 with subscription

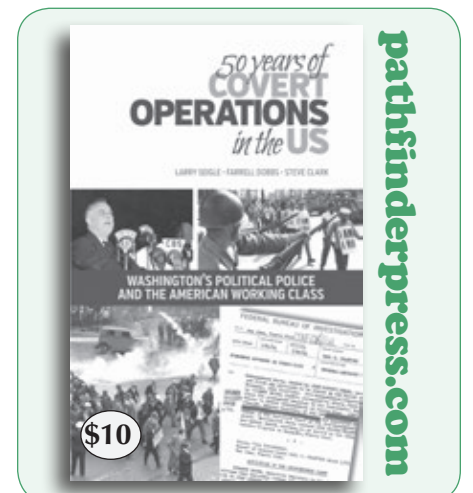
\$35 for ALL FIVE books above WITH A MILITANT SUBSCRIPTION



\$12 with subscription \$12 with subscription \$5 with subscription \$10 with subscription

SEE DISTRIBUTORS PAGE 6 OR VISIT PATHFINDERPRESS.COM

PLUS 20% OFF all other Pathfinder books



SWP leader discusses Constitution during trial against the FBI

Our book feature this week is *FBI on Trial: The Victory in the Socialist Workers Party Suit Against Government Spying*. Readers will find it of special interest in light of the latest assault on constitutional rights by the Biden administration authorizing an armed FBI raid on former President Donald Trump's Florida residence Aug. 8. Ten days earlier federal prosecutors in Florida sent FBI agents to raid the homes of Black rights groups Uhuru and the African People's Socialist Party in Florida and Missouri.

The excerpt from *FBI on Trial* contains federal court proceedings from the 1973-88 political and legal battle waged and won by the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance against decades of spying, harassment and disruption by the FBI and other federal agencies. This cam-

SPECIAL FEATURE: FBI ON TRIAL

aign helped educate millions about class "justice" under capitalism.

The FBI was tasked as the capitalist rulers' political police in the late 1930s as the Democratic administration of Franklin Roosevelt drove to take Washington into the second world imperialist war. Roosevelt signed into law the thought-control Smith Act and launched FBI raids and federal prosecutions against the SWP and leaders of the Teamsters union in the Midwest, seeking to silence their campaign for labor opposition to Washington's war aims.

Freedom of speech and assembly, as well as protection from unreasonable search and seizure, are rights conquered in the American Revolution, registered in the Constitution, and extended by struggles of working people since. The use of these rights by millions in hard-fought class battles has been integral to building unions, organizing opposition to Washington's wars, bringing down Jim Crow segregation and fighting for women's emancipation.

The excerpt is from the testimony by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the SWP, at the close of the 1981 trial of the party's lawsuit, which had been underway for three months. Barnes was questioned by Margaret Winter, chief



Part of 1883 painting by Howard Pyle, "The Mob in Shays' Rebellion in Possession of a Courthouse" In 1786, Massachusetts farmers staged Shays' Rebellion. Many, like their leader, Daniel Shays, were veterans of Revolutionary War. Their uprising opposed unfair tax burden imposed by new government. Such plebian revolts helped force addition of amendments, known as the Bill of Rights, that strengthened the Constitution and its protections against government intrusions.

counsel for the SWP. *FBI on Trial* also contains excerpts from the testimony of Farrell Dobbs, Barnes' predecessor as national secretary, who in the 1930s was the central leader of the Teamsters organizing drive and anti-war campaign mentioned above.

Copyright © 1988 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



MARGARET WINTER: Mr. Barnes, I hand you the copies of the Constitution of the United States and the Declaration of Independence.

Does the Socialist Workers Party believe that their ideas are consistent with the philosophy underlying the United States Constitution?

JACK BARNES: Yes, in the sense that a republican form of government — in the sense of a rule of law, which has elected officials that govern — is the only possible basis for socialist democracy, for the extension of democracy, as counterposed to any authoritarian and totalitarian mode of functioning.

That philosophy is similar to the philosophy of those who held that in the

writing of the Constitution.

I leave aside the complexities. There were big differences among the framers of the Constitution.

I am especially saying yes in the sense of taking the Constitution as amended with the Bill of Rights, with the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments, the amendments on the franchise, on the poll tax and so forth, all of which substantially in our opinion democratize the Constitution. Some took mighty struggles. Three took a civil war of the most horrible kind to accomplish.

Without an extension of those conquests all talk about socialism is a mockery.

But the answer has to also be no in this sense. The Constitution was written with the philosophy which did not see a contradiction between the republican forms and checks and balances of the Constitution and chattel slavery for millions of human beings; for property requirements for the electorate; for the lack of franchise for more than half the population, the female half, until the

twentieth century; for no rights for the original native residents of the continent; the original absence of the Bill of Rights itself; the absence of even direct elections of senators; and a number of things like that.

But to that degree the philosophy is in contradiction completely with the philosophy of Marxism, which would define a workers' and farmers' republic, our concept of democracy, as being combined in a constitution which would be in contradiction to chattel slavery, property requirements, restriction of franchise for any reason of sex or age or anything like that. It would also include the fact that the prerogatives of the largest property owners, the largest productive property owners, the owners of the big mines, mills, and factories would be subordinate to the development and extension of the democratic rights of the great majority of the citizenry.

In some ways maybe the Civil War is the best example of this — the blood that was necessary to eliminate chattel slavery and get the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments. But the fact that it took until 1964 to get the poll tax to be unconstitutional [the 24th Amendment to the Constitution] and 1965 to, by law [the federal Voting Rights Act], guarantee the franchise without any restrictions because of anything to do with color to the adult citizens of the American South —

JUDGE GRIESA: Look, I respect those views, you know. I mean we are really not here debating about slavery or anything like that and let's bring this to a close.

BARNES: All right.

The yes and no can be indicated maybe in one other thing. That's the evolution toward greater and greater concentration of executive power, which has been a tremendous change since the drafting of the Constitution and the original first ten amendments. We feel there is a growing contradiction from even the constitutional viewpoint — talking politically, not as a lawyer — between executive decision, orders, even up to a declaration of war and the total protections guaranteed by the amendments to the Constitution.

Visy workers in New Zealand strike for pay raise, shorter hours

BY FELICITY COGGAN

AUCKLAND New Zealand — Some 75 workers from two packaging companies here — Visy Board New Zealand and its subsidiary, Charta Packaging — picketed outside the Visy plant Aug. 24, while cars and trucks honked their horns in solidarity on this busy industrial road.

The workers, members of the E tu union, struck for 24 hours after the company refused their demand for a one-year contract with a 10% pay raise.

"At the end of the day their offer wasn't enough," union delegate Donnie Tuhi told the *Militant*. Official figures show inflation running at 7.3% in New Zealand. "Everybody is feeling the pinch at the moment." He said this is the first strike in his 20 years at the plant.

Many workers put in over 60 hours over a six-day week, and are asking

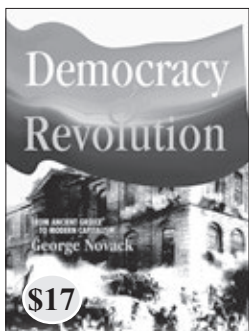
that overtime rates of time and a half kick in after 40 hours worked, rather than 50, as it is now.

"We are doing long hours to survive. I work around 64 hours to 70 hours a week," delegate Manu Filimoekava said in a union press release. "We've got no time with family, no time with friends, no happy hour. It's no life."

Owned by one of Australia's richest men, billionaire Anthony Pratt, and his two sisters, Visy is one of the world's largest packaging and recycling companies. It has 120 operations in Australia, New Zealand and Thailand, employing 900 people in New Zealand alone.

"I saw from the company magazine that they made millions in profits last year. But they are crying to us that they are poor," Tuhi said. "People have just had enough."

Books for further reading...



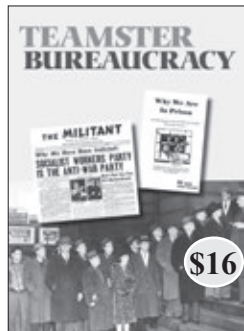
The 1988 victory in 15-year SWP political and legal battle against the FBI expanded space for practicing politics and using constitutional rights. These books describe that fight, and those that came before it — from the American Revolution, to the Civil War, and in the building of the modern working-class movement.

**FBI on Trial:
The Victory in the Socialist
Workers Party Suit Against
Government Spying**

Democracy and Revolution
by George Novack

Teamster Bureaucracy
by Farrell Dobbs

**America's Revolutionary
Heritage**
by George Novack



For special offers see list of distributors on page 6

Defend Ukraine independence!

Continued from front page

Putin signed a decree Aug. 25 to expand the million-strong Russian military by over 10%. He is trying to replenish his depleted forces and demoralized ranks after a six-month conflict that Moscow expected to win within weeks if not days. He still hopes to reimpose the Russian prison house of nations that existed for centuries under the czars, with himself as the ruler.

Moscow's relentless bombardment of industrial areas and ports in Ukraine's southeast has cut the country's economic production in half. The Kremlin hopes that drawn out economic and political pressures will, over time, lead to increased conflicts among and between Washington and imperialist powers in Europe, especially Berlin and Paris, and sap their resolve to back Ukraine. Moscow has further constricted its gas supplies to Europe as energy costs there are soaring.

In addition to conquering Ukraine and crushing its people, the Russian rulers hoped to seize the country's resources, like the rich iron ore deposits and immense ArcelorMittal steel plant at Kryvyi Rih in south central Ukraine. Moscow's forces were driven back there as Ukrainian forces reinforced by volunteer detachments of steelworkers and miners used heavy construction equipment to block airport runways and roads and dig defensive lines. Russian rockets still target the city from 30 miles away.

Moscow's war has ensured the near-total shutdown of the steel mill and mines. Coal imports to the plant from Kazakhstan via Russian rail lines ended, while Moscow's naval blockade of Black Sea ports prevents exports from the plant. And bosses cut wages by a third to workers there idled by the war.

Russian protests against the war

Despite the mass arrest of opponents of Putin's war inside Russia, protests among soldiers and others continue, highlighting openings that exist to forge unity against the war among working people in Russia and Ukraine.

The Aug. 24 detention of Yevgeny Roizman, former mayor of Yekaterinburg, Russia's fourth largest city, was met with protests by a handful of the city's residents. Roizman was charged with "discrediting the Russian army" for stating the war was an "invasion," and not "a special military operation" — the Putin-sanctified doublespeak for the war.

"I was saying that everywhere and I will say it now," Roizman said defiantly after his arrest. He was released a day later, pending a trial. Courts had fined him three times for his outspoken opposition to Moscow's war.

Elmira Rahmatullina was arrested in early August after holding a one-woman protest in Ufa, in the Volga region. She carried a placard in the colors of the Ukrainian flag that read, "Give them peace, and us, freedom of speech."

Statements by Ukrainian leaders

denouncing the entire Russian people as the enemy are a deadly obstacle to building solidarity between workers in the two countries and increasing pressure on Moscow. So are the biting sanctions imposed by Washington and other imperialist powers, which impose hardships that are overwhelmingly inflicted on working people.

Now European Union foreign ministers are debating whether to ban or restrict tourist visas to Russian citizens. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky urges them to do so. The Estonian government has barred Russians who already have visas from entering the country. The German rulers say they're opposed to a European-wide ban.

In the early stages of the war almost a million Russians, horrified by the war and Putin's repression, fled to Europe. Closing off this "escape route" by restricting visas would just penalize "critics of the regime" and do "the Kremlin's work for it," Anna Arutunyan wrote in the *Moscow Times*.

In early August Moscow's forces in Russian-occupied Donbas in eastern Ukraine stepped up enforced conscription of male residents of the region. Thousands have been rounded up to be used as cannon fodder. Just prior to the invasion, pro-Moscow authorities in Donetsk and Luhansk barred working people from leaving the cities.

Since then company bosses have been ordered to provide the names of "volunteers," under threat of conscription of entire workforces. Bosses at the Alchevsk iron and steel plant have laid off



Activatica/Elmira Rahmatullina

Despite mass arrests against anti-war demonstrations across Russia, protests continue. In recent public action in square in Ufa, in the Volga region, Elmira Rahmatullina holds sign in Ukrainian colors of blue and yellow, saying, "Give them peace, and us, freedom of speech."

3,600 workers, helping authorities fulfill their quotas.

Moscow has unleashed masked gangs to carry out street ambushes on those local men who had stayed home for months to try to avoid being drafted. They also raid homes at night, beating those they capture as they cart them away. Draftees are routinely thrown into the most perilous areas at the front with little training and poor equipment.

These parts of Donbas are the very regions where the Kremlin plans to

hold sham referendums on "joining" the Russian Federation Sept. 14. Originally, Putin justified the Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine days after recognizing the separatist Donetsk and Luhansk "people's republics" as independent states.

Similar referendums in Russian-occupied Kherson and Zaporizhzhia have been postponed, given the depth of popular opposition. The Ukrainian government claimed Aug. 29 that a "grinding counteroffensive" to retake the Kherson region had begun.

Lenin led the fight for Ukrainian self-determination

When Russian President Vladimir Putin launched Moscow's invasion of Ukraine over six months ago, he argued that the country was never a sovereign nation at all, but a "creation" of V.I. Lenin, central leader of the Bolshevik Party that led millions to overturn capitalist rule, bringing to power a workers and farmers government in 1917.

What the revolutionary government Lenin led actually did was recognize that a Ukrainian nation — along with a number of other peoples who suffered under czarist domination — had been forged over centuries in struggles against foreign occupation, including against the Russian czars. Lenin fought for their right to self-determination.

Lenin "was the most ardent adherent to the real equality of nations not only during his prerevolutionary activities, but also during his work as head of the Soviet government," wrote Christian Rakovsky, a leader of the Bolshevik Party, in a 1924 tribute to Lenin after his death. Rakovsky headed the Soviet government in Ukraine from 1919 to 1923.

"It is due to his firm leadership," Rakovsky wrote of Lenin, "that the old Russian empire, which was previously strangling scores of nationalities, has now been transformed into the Union of independent autonomous republics."

Those conquests — and Rakovsky's position — were overturned in a counterrevolution led by Joseph Stalin after Lenin's death.

Below are excerpts from the November 1919 draft resolution of the central committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) on Soviet rule in the Ukraine and the "Letter To The Workers and Peasants of the Ukraine Apropos of the Victories over Denikin," written by

Lenin Dec. 28, 1919, marking the defeat of the army of czarist general Anton Denikin. The two pieces are in Vol. 30 of Lenin's *Collected Works*.



The C.C., R.C.P.(B.), having discussed the question of relations with the working people of the Ukraine now being liberated from the temporary conquest of Denikin's bands, is pursuing persistently the principle of the self-determination of nations and deems it essential to again affirm that the R.C.P. holds consistently to the view that the independence of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic be recognized. ...

In view of the fact that Ukrainian culture (language, school, etc.) has been suppressed for centuries by Russian tsarism and the exploiting classes, the C.C., R.C.P. makes it incumbent upon all Party members to use every means to help remove all barriers in the way of the free development of the Ukrainian language and culture. Since the many centuries of oppression have given rise to nationalist tendencies among the backward sections of the population, R.C.P. members must exercise the greatest caution in respect of those tendencies and must oppose them with words of comradely explanation concerning the identity of interests of the working people of the Ukraine and Russia. R.C.P. members on Ukrainian territory must put into practice the right of the working people to study in the Ukrainian language and to speak their native language in all Soviet institutions; they must in every way counteract attempts at Russification that push the Ukrainian language into the background and must convert that language

into an instrument for the communist education of the working people. Steps must be taken immediately to ensure that in all Soviet institutions there are sufficient Ukrainian-speaking employees and that in the future all employees are able to speak Ukrainian. ...



We Great-Russian Communists must repress with the utmost severity the slightest manifestation in our midst of Great-Russian nationalism, for such manifestations, which are a betrayal of communism in general, cause the gravest harm by dividing us from our Ukrainian comrades and thus playing into the hands of Denikin and his regime. ...

And what the bourgeoisie of all countries, and all manner of petty-bourgeois parties — i.e., "compromising" parties which permit alliance with the bourgeoisie against the workers — try most of all to accomplish is to disunite the workers of different nationalities, to evoke distrust, and to disrupt a close international alliance and international brotherhood of the workers. Whenever the bourgeoisie succeeds in this the cause of the workers is lost. The Communists of Russia and the Ukraine must therefore by patient, persistent, stubborn and concerted effort foil the nationalist machinations of the bourgeoisie and vanquish nationalist prejudices of every kind, and set the working people of the world an example of a really solid alliance of the workers and peasants of different nations in the fight for Soviet power, for the overthrow of the yoke of the landowners and capitalists, and for a world federal Soviet republic.

Socialist Workers Party statement

Defend Ukraine's independence!
For defeat of Moscow's invasion!

US troops, nuclear arms out
of Europe, all of Europe!

Online at themilitant.com

Join Labor Day actions! Build solidarity with union struggles!

Continued from front page

workers against the nation's biggest rail bosses, backed by the government and its notorious anti-working-class Railway Labor Act. This conflict calls for the attention — and active support — of all working people. While we can't predict what will happen, these unions on Sept. 16 will be free to strike should workers decide to do so.

Labor Day events also provide an opportunity to meet other workers, discuss what we all face, and prepare for battles today and to come. You can help get out the word about the 16-month-long strike by the United Mine Workers of America at Warrior Met in Alabama; the strike by the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers at Corn Nuts in Fresno, California; by United Auto Workers union members at Case New Holland in Iowa and Wisconsin; and other union struggles. Make plans with fellow workers and unionists to send messages of support, contribute to strike funds and visit the picket lines.

As these fights continue, the bosses turn to their government, the National Labor Relations Board and the courts to attack our unions. The UMW faces a \$13.3 million fine by the NLRB for the "crime" of exercising its right to strike. Defeating this assault is in the interests of all unions.

Employers are determined to make workers bear the brunt of the crisis of their system. Bosses face sharpening competition, driving them to squeeze more out of us, through longer workdays, shift schedules that trample on family life and by cutting jobs. Striking mental health care workers at Kaiser in California are demanding bosses hire more workers to provide the care patients require.

Bosses do everything possible to turn workers against each other, looking to divide and conquer. They try and set workers with jobs against those without, native-born workers against immigrants, Black against Caucasians, women against men, workers in the U.S. against fellow workers abroad. We are all part of the same working class and must stand together. Today's battles are class against class.

Despite the hefty resources deployed by the bosses, and the support they get from the government, we can be victorious. We have the advantage of our far greater numbers and our power to bring production to a halt. Labor produces all wealth. We win when we are united, disciplined and organized, and have the backing of our entire class and our natural allies — farmers, immigrants, independent producers and more. At the

heart of that is using working-class solidarity — no worker fights alone.

The labor movement needs to break with the Democrats and Republicans — the parties of the bosses and bankers. We need our own party, a labor party, to chart a course forward toward taking political power into our own hands. To form a workers and farmers government and take control over the mines, mills, fields and factories and run them ourselves.

All out Labor Day!



Militant/Eric Simpson
Mental health workers strike Kaiser San Francisco hospital Aug. 15.

Support rail worker unions' fight over pay, livable schedules, right to strike

Continued from front page

al Association of Machinists, Transportation Communications Union and Brotherhood of Railway Carmen — have reached tentative contracts with the carriers, including a 24% pay raise.

But the largest rail unions, representing the operating crafts, as well as the majority of others, haven't signed on. Jeremy Ferguson, president of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers — Transportation Division (SMART-TD), told the media that the Presidential Emergency Board didn't agree with the unions' call for "improvements to quality-of-life issues, including addressing the draconian carrier attendance policies and the need for more paid and scheduled time off."

"A fair and appropriate contract would address what matters to us: quality of life," Michael Paul Lindsey II, a 17-year employee of Union Pacific in Pocatello, Idaho, wrote in the online industry journal *Railway Age*. "At the end of the day, quality of life was the goal of this contract, not a 24% taxable pay increase that actually lowers our pay by 2% when adjusted for inflation."

Under the Railway Labor Act, the unions can strike or the bosses can lock out workers if no agreement is reached within 30 days after release of the Presidential Emergency Board's recommendations. However, Congress has the power — which it used against rail workers in 1991 — to end a strike, order the union

members back to work and impose a settlement.

This meant workers had the rail companies' demands for a three-year-long wage freeze and other concessions shoved down their throat.

"The raise recommended isn't enough given the fact that our health insurance payments would rise considerably under these recommendations. And the price of everything is going up," Zack Jameson, a locomotive engineer working out of western Pennsylvania and member of Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, told the *Militant*. "And the companies claim that our labor makes 'no contribution' to their extraordinary profits, and that we face none of the risks. But the profits don't exist without us! And we're risking our physical well-being and our lives out there."

Jameson also pointed to recently installed Positive Train Control technology, designed to automatically slow or stop a train under certain conditions. The rail bosses claim this makes it safe now to eliminate conductors on road trains, and run them with an engineer-only "crew." Rail workers strongly oppose the bosses' push to slash more jobs, putting profits over safety. Crew size isn't addressed in the national contract.

Even without imposing one-person "crews," the rail bosses have cut the workforce by 29% over the last six years, leading to unlivable schedules and increased danger to workers and those who live near the rails.

No relief from onerous schedules

"There are no paid sick days in the recommendations, which our unions had demanded," Robin Smith, a locomotive engineer working out of Harrisburg and member of the SMART rail union, said. "The company claims that we don't suffer fatigue. They claim that train service crews only worked an average of 33 hours a week this year. This month I've worked an average of 51 hours per week! And they don't take into account all the hours we spend 'on call,' waiting to come to work at any time of the day or night, and the hours we spend away from home. Last week I sat in the hotel for 23 hours and then got called to work for my seventh shift in a row."

"I've heard that the unions are organizing rallies in other areas to gather support for our demands," Smith said. "I'm dying to have one. I'm organizing a one-woman rally with signs on my car denouncing the

PEB's pro-company recommendations."

One of the bargaining unions, the Brotherhood of Maintenance and Way Employees, has led in organizing recent protest actions, drawing in other rail unions in Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois and Wyoming. Another rally has been called for Sept. 10 in Toledo.

Rick Leschina, a locomotive engineer in the Chicago area, said that he participated in the rally in Galesburg, Illinois, July 30 "to stand in solidarity with brothers and sisters in rail in all crafts. We show the companies that we're standing in unity, that's where we have our strength."

In response to the Presidential Emergency Board proposals, he said, "all the comments I've heard are negative, especially taking the cap off health premiums. People are saying we don't want more concessionary contracts."

"I don't think this contract will be ratified by rail workers," Pete Gushwa, a conductor and member of the SMART-TD union in Spokane, Washington, told the *Militant*. "But it will go to Congress, who will impose the final settlement."

"And I don't think the PEB recommendations are going to stave off people quitting or attract new hires," Gushwa added. "We're all forced to work overtime whether we want it or not. Issues like that will now have to be fought out locally rather than nationally."

"The problems we face, particularly the challenges of having a life outside of work, of spending time with our families, is widespread in the working class," Chris Hoepfner, a conductor working out of Philadelphia and member of the SMART union, told the *Militant*. Hoepfner is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress from District 3. "Rail workers need to get our voices heard. The big-business media is only going to tell the companies' side of the story, to try and cut us off from winning allies. There are already stories in the press about how a rail strike will threaten farmers."

"A central way we can prepare to use our unions to fight the rail bosses is giving solidarity to other union strikes and social struggles," Hoepfner added. "We'll strengthen their fights, learn important lessons and gain allies. The strike of coal miners against the deep concessions demanded by the bosses at Warrior Met in Alabama, just like our fight on the railroad, is critical to the whole working class. They need more people to hear about what they face and to win more support. Our unions should step up. We'll all be the stronger for it."

Candace Wagner is a freight conductor and member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen.

LETTERS

'Inhumane capitalist prison'

Thank you for the *Militant*, which I look forward to each week and share with my neighbors here at Scotland Correctional Institution. It's my primary source of information about what's going on in the world outside.

Your reasoned and accurate reporting on events in Ukraine, the U.S.A. and elsewhere continues to surprise me. Recently, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a couple of decisions in favor of Christians who had been victims of religious discrimination. While progressives ranted about separation of church and state (an organizational ideal that appears nowhere in the Constitution), you continued to support democracy and fundamental human rights. You maintain your focus on one issue: what's best for workers.

Thank you from all of us in this inhumane capitalist imperialist prison.

*A prisoner
Laurinburg, North Carolina*

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

The fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. Send a check or money order payable to the 'Militant' and earmarked "Prisoners' Fund" to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Or donate online at www.themilitant.com