

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

California referendum is blow to women's emancipation

— PAGE 4

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 86/NO. 42 NOVEMBER 14, 2022

## Back Ukraine independence! Protest Putin's mass bombing

BY ROY LANDERSEN

For over eight months, Ukrainian working people have pushed back the assault by the KGB-police-state regime of Vladimir Putin on their country's independence. Moscow is retaliating with a brutal bombardment of Ukrainian cities and power infrastructure. After battlefield defeats, Putin's mobilization of reservists to his depleted and demoralized army has heightened opposition to the war across Russia.

The Russian president Oct. 27 said the world is entering the "most dangerous ... decade since the end of World War II." But it was his invasion of Ukraine, aimed at conquering its people, that unleashed the first major land war in Europe since that imperialist conflagration.

This means that the German rulers face their "deepest crisis" since reunification, said the country's president, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, the next day.

This crisis contains "the seed of new wars within it," he said, pointing to Putin's imperial designs from Moldova and Georgia to the Baltic region.

Continued on page 6

## Support, vote for the Socialist Workers Party!

Join the fight for a working-class road forward



Militant/Laura Anderson

Rachele Fruit, SWP candidate for governor of Florida, talks to Duchelande St. Fleur, a cook, and her husband, Peter Carmant, a trucker, in North Miami Oct. 31, explaining SWP program.

BY TERRY EVANS

In the final days of the 2022 campaign, Socialist Workers Party candidates are advancing a fighting working-class program, backing rail workers' battle for livable working conditions and explaining why opposing government

assaults on constitutional freedoms is central for working people.

Free speech and assembly, the right to worship, protection from unreasonable search and seizure and other rights codified in the Constitution are in the interests of all working people. That's true whether we're building unions to fight employer assaults on wages and conditions; joining actions in solidarity with working people worldwide like the struggles unfolding in Iran today; or protesting the U.S. rulers' foreign policy, such as their brutal embargo of Cuba.

President Joseph Biden's administration is dealing blows to these protections as it tries to crush its political opponents. Democrats are trying to drive

Continued on page 5

## Help expand the reach of the SWP and the 'Militant'

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

Days before Nov. 8 elections, the Socialist Workers Party and its candidates are making a final push to reach working people with the party's program and activities.

Gabrielle Prosser, SWP candidate for governor of Minnesota, spoke at a candidates' forum sponsored by the Fairmont Area Chamber of Commerce Oct. 27. "Prosser with the Socialist Workers Party is a union member who works at a bakery in north Minneapolis," the *Duluth News Tribune* said, reporting on the forum.

"The prospect for young people to move out, let alone raise a family, is being undermined by the current moral, economic and social crisis of capitalism," Prosser said. The *Minneapolis*

Continued on page 4

## Gov't violence fails to stop Iran protests, int'l solidarity

BY SETH GALINSKY

"Do not come to the streets. Today is the last day of riots," Hossein Salami, commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in Iran, said Oct. 29, threatening protesters across the country that continuing their actions "will bring no happy ending to you."

His threats had little impact. The next day daily protests continued on college and high school campuses and in small rural towns and big cities across the country, from provinces populated by oppressed nationalities to those that have a Shiite majority. Protesters chanted "Women, life, freedom!" and "Down with the dictator!" and sang protest songs.

The same day there were solidarity actions in some 30 cities around the world from Germany to the U.S. and Canada.

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi made slanderous claims that protests "pave the ground for terrorist acts," after an Oct. 26 terror assault on a Shiite Muslim shrine in the city of Shiraz left 14

Continued on page 9

## Signalmen vote down proposed rail contract as workers' fight continues



Amtrak train hit truck in Missouri June 27 with four killed. Bosses stalled on putting in warning signals there. Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen voted down proposed contract Oct. 26.

BY JOE SWANSON

LINCOLN, Neb. — "Railroad union members continue to organize protests to demonstrate their dissatisfaction with the bosses in their fight to get a contract that the membership will approve," Jakob Forsgren, chair of local Lodge 1320 of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees here, told the *Militant*. He works as a welder and track repair worker.

Forsgren is aggressively building a

Nov. 2 informational picket by fellow rail unionists on the BNSF Railway and their supporters on the walkway bridge that spans the tracks between Pinnacle Bank Arena and the University of Nebraska football stadium.

"The union recently learned that Katie Farmer, the CEO of BNSF, will be traveling in her private rail car that day through the yard," he said. "We are organized to let Katie know we aren't

Continued on page 9

## NY meeting hits FBI harassment in Puerto Rico

BY SARA LOBMAN

NEW YORK — "The FBI will not intimidate us!" Milagros Rivera, president of the Cuba Solidarity Committee in Puerto Rico, told an audience of 120 people here Oct. 28.

"We will continue to fight for the freedom of our homeland," she said, "and we will vigorously defend the legacy of reciprocal and centurylong solidarity between the Cuban and Puerto Rican people."

The meeting was held in East Harlem at the First Spanish United Methodist

Continued on page 7

### Inside

Workers protest in Haiti as crisis deepens on the island 2

Communist League: 'Repeal Canada's Emergencies Act!' 3

Illinois ballot measure weakens labor movement 3

—On the picket line, p. 8—

Northwest woodworkers settle strike against Weyerhaeuser

Nurses strike for pay parity, better conditions in Oakland

# Workers protest in Haiti as crisis deepens on the island

BY JANET POST

Thousands marched in the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince, Oct. 17, the latest in months of protests demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Ariel Henry amid Haiti's deep political, economic and social crisis.

With Washington's backing, Henry became prime minister in July 2021 after the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse. Haiti has not held an election since 2016 and the terms of the members of the National Assembly expired in 2021. Henry, like Moïse — who was elected president in 2015 with just 10% of the eligible voters casting ballots — rules by decree.

Competing bourgeois forces are vying to replace the current government, promising a road to elections and capitalist stability.

Trying to keep his grip on power, Henry has called on the United Nations and Washington to intervene. Washington's proposal, supported by U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, is for a multinational force — but not U.S. troops — to be deployed to “assist” Haiti's national police. The Canadian government sent officials to Haiti Oct. 27 to make an “assessment.” The prime minister of the Bahamas, Philip Davis, said he would be willing to send troops if the U.N. asks.

Among the backers of the Oct. 17 protest was Jean-Charles Moïse, former mayor of Milot and the 2015 presidential candidate of Pitit Dessalines (Children of Dessaline), a bourgeois party with roots in the popular Lavalas movement that brought Jean-

Bertrand Aristide to the presidency in 1991. There have also been protests in Cap-Haitien, Gonaïves, Petit-Goave, Jeremie, Les Cayes and Jacmel.

Inflation in Haiti has hit 30%, a 10-year high, and the currency has lost 40% of its value this year. The cost of rice has quadrupled. The garment and textile workers' unions took to the streets in February demanding an increase in the minimum wage.

After Henry announced the government would end \$400 million in fuel subsidies, doubling the price for gasoline, diesel and kerosene, the United Front of Transporters and Workers of Haiti, and the Association of Owners and Drivers, organized a two-day nationwide strike. They joined in demanding Henry's resignation.

Armed street gangs are in command of entire neighborhoods, controlling up to 40% of the capital. In July over 470 people were killed amid gang warfare.

Many of these gangs have ties to the police and competing wings of the capitalist class. Jimmy Cherizier, a former police officer, heads the “G9 Family and Allies” coalition of gangs that dominates in Port-au-Prince.

“The gangs were created by the same system that is now saying, ‘Oh, you must send intervention because they're out of control now,’” Leonie Hermantin of the Sant La Haitian Neighborhood Center in Miami, told WLRN radio Oct. 12. “The same people who are asking for intervention are the same people who created, fueled, incubated those gangs.”

In September the G9 used bulldoz-



AP/Odelyn Joseph

Thousands demonstrate Oct. 17 in Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, demand resignation of Prime Minister Ariel Henry, oppose calls for U.S., UN intervention. Protests there continue.

ers to create trenches to blockade the port, the Varreux fuel terminal and warehouse district in Port-au-Prince where imported food and fuel arrive. As a result, gas stations have closed, hospitals have cut back on critical services, and groceries and banks have curtailed their hours.

Cherizier is using his siege to press for the G9 to have cabinet seats. He claims he is a “revolutionary” fighting for “a new Haiti where everyone can have food and clean water.”

Sixty percent of the population lives on less than \$2 a day. Nearly half of Haiti's 11 million people face malnutrition. With a lack of food, safe drinking water and soap, health care and regular garbage collection,

cholera has begun to spread.

Since the disease was first reported on Oct. 2, there have been more than 2,000 suspected cases and an estimated 41 deaths. In Haiti's largest prison, the National Penitentiary in Port-au-Prince, there were reportedly at least 21 deaths and 147 hospitalizations from cholera Oct. 4-11.

Many Haitians reject the idea of another international intervention, noting that in 2010 U.N. peacekeepers were responsible for sparking a cholera epidemic that killed nearly 10,000 people.

U.S. troops have intervened in Haiti many times to defend U.S. imperialist interests. In 1994 U.S. forces restored Aristide to power, and in 2004 they forced Aristide out again.

## Donate your California gas-tax rebate to the 'Militant'

Workers are being hard hit by soaring prices for food, gas, rents, medical expenses and more. The *Militant* newspaper — which fighting workers and trade unionists depend on for clarity on politics and as a guide to action — is also being hit with rising printing costs and postage expenses for getting the paper to its subscribers and distributors. That's why supporters of the paper in California launched a fund to contribute payouts from the state's so-called Gas Tax Relief rebate to the paper.

The governor and the Democrat-controlled legislature claim the payouts relieve the “pain” Californians have felt at the gas pump. But \$350 for an individual or \$700 for a couple is a drop in the bucket compared to what workers have paid for gas! There is no better way to use this payment than sending it to the *Militant*.

Mail checks to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018 or donate online at themilitant.com.

— NORTON SANDLER

## THE MILITANT

### Australia protests demand visas for refugees

For years, the Australian government has denied permanent visas for thousands of asylum-seekers. Rights groups cite ongoing abuses against Indigenous and refugee detainees. The *'Militant'* supports the recent protests in support of refugees' demands.



Al Jazeera/Zoe Osborne  
Rally in Canberra, Australia, Sept. 6 demands visas for thousands seeking asylum.

## 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](http://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)

## The Militant

Vol. 86/No. 42

Closing news date: November 2, 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](mailto:themilitant@mac.com)

Website: [www.themilitant.com](http://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: 'Repeal Canada's Emergencies Act!'

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL — Last February the government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau implemented the draconian Emergencies Act to suppress the “Freedom Convoy” of hundreds of truckers and supporters who gathered to protest in Canada’s capital.

The federal Public Order Emergency Commission began hearings Oct. 13 in Ottawa to determine if the Canadian government’s decision to invoke the act was justified. They will run through Nov. 25 and the commission is required to submit its report by Feb. 6.

Already the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, Ontario Provincial Police and others have spoken out opposing the invoking of the act.

The Freedom Convoy of tractor-trailers and other vehicles traveled from western Canada to Parliament Hill, protesting job-threatening COVID vaccine mandates. They were joined by others opposed to a wide range of government policies and together blocked the streets and rallied for three weeks. During that time convoy supporters organized truck blockades at several Canada-U.S. port-of-entry border crossings.

Following the imposition of the law, the federal government mobilized over 3,000 police from across the country into Ottawa to shut down the protest. This was the first time the act has been used since its adoption in 1988.

“I really think that was an irresponsible and harassing act by the government,” Walmart worker Gurdeep Singh told the *Militant* Oct. 21. “The people there did nothing wrong except stand up for their rights.”

## Communist League speaks out

The Communist League submitted a statement to the commission Oct. 19. “It rejects the framework of the great majority of those who have been called to appear at the public hearings,” Steve Penner, organizer of the Communist League and one of the authors of the statement, told the *Militant*. “They all accept the legitimacy of the Emergencies Act. Their differences are only over whether the Trudeau government was justified in using it against the Ottawa protest.” The League rejects as well “the premise of the commission itself.”

Confirming Penner’s point, *Globe and Mail* columnist Andrew Coyne wrote Oct. 14, “Whatever else the public inquiry into the Trudeau government’s decision to invoke the Emergencies Act ... may or may not determine, it has triumphantly vindicated one thing: the Emergencies Act itself.”

“To the contrary,” Penner said. “The Communist League explains that the Emergencies Act is nothing but a camouflaged version of the discredited War Measures Act. We call for our unions and all supporters of democratic and political rights to demand its repeal and to campaign against it.”

The massive cop mobilization unleashed by the law was “one of the largest acts of police repression in modern Canadian history,” the CL statement says. It lists the use of “military-grade weapons, and armored vehicles, elite sharpshooters, horse cavalry, stun grenades, anti-riot weapon launchers, batons and pepper spray” and the arrest of over 200 participants, including its

main organizers. The Trudeau government coupled its assault on political rights with slander, calling the truckers “white supremacist, swastika-waving War Memorial desecrators.”

“Ottawa’s aim was to criminalize a political protest that challenged government policies,” the Communist League said. “It used its assault to establish a precedent to be used against future protests, against our unions and against working-class and political parties that the government considers a threat.”

Some 65 witnesses, including Trudeau, will testify. The list also includes three of the leading convoy organizers, Tamara Lich, Chris Barber, and Pat King, who still face criminal charges. Lich and King have done significant jail time without ever having been tried or convicted. They are free under onerous bail conditions.

The Communist League calls for dropping all charges against the convoy organizers and others arrested during the February police assault.

“The politically motivated charges against them were nothing more than legal cover for the government’s frontal assault on basic democratic and political rights,” the Communist League says. The “continued violation of their rights by Ottawa, police and the courts constitutes a threat to the democratic and political rights of all.”

The Emergencies Act “is rooted in over 100 years of repressive laws enacted by Ottawa together with provincial governments going back to World War I when the War Measures Act was first adopted and used to push back the rise of union struggles, the resistance of Quebecois to their national oppression, and efforts to organize a mass working-class political party,” the League says.

The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia inspired revolutionary-minded



Canadian police attack truckers, other protesters with pepper spray in Ottawa Feb. 19. Justin Trudeau government used Emergencies Act to scuttle democratic rights, break up protests.

workers worldwide, leading to the founding of the Communist Party in Canada in 1921. At the same time, growing labor struggles culminated in the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike. In response, Ottawa formed a national political police force to defend capitalist rule, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1920.

The War Measures Act was imposed with the same purpose in World War II and again in 1970 when the Pierre Trudeau government used the pretext of a nonexistent “insurrection” by the Quebec Liberation Front — a tiny terrorist organization — to flood Quebec with 6,000 troops. Ottawa’s claim of a “national public order emergency” today to justify its declaration of the Emergencies Act echoes the “insurrection” pretext used in 1970.

Emergency Preparedness Minister Bill Blair had charged the U.S.-Canada border blockades amounted to a “foreign-funded, targeted and coordinated attack, which was clearly and criminally intended to harm Canada, to harm Canadians, to interrupt vital supply lines, to idle our workers and close our factories.” But Ottawa’s Canadian Security and Intelligence Service was

forced to admit to the commission that there was no evidence of any of this.

“We explain that the entire framework for the Emergencies Act stands on decades of continuity with the efforts of the ruling capitalist families to defend their wealth and political power,” Penner said.

The dictatorial powers embedded in the Emergencies Act are in harmony with the so-called Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which was added to the constitution by the Pierre Trudeau government in 1982. The charter allows Ottawa and provincial governments to override basic democratic rights enumerated there at their discretion.

Such rights include freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press, assembly, and association, and the right to be presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

As the worldwide economic, moral and political crisis of capitalism deepens, working people need “democratic and political rights to defend and strengthen our unions and forge a labor party based on mobilized union power to fight to replace the rule of the billionaire capitalist families with a workers and farmers government,” Penner said.

## Illinois ballot measure weakens the labor movement

BY NAOMI CRAINE

CHICAGO — The Nov. 8 ballot in Illinois includes Amendment 1, a referendum to change the state constitution that many union and Democratic Party officials promote as a “Workers Bill of Rights.” In fact, it does nothing to advance workers’ self-confidence and organization, to promote solidarity and thereby strengthen our unions. The Socialist Workers Party recommends workers not vote on this proposition.

The measure was placed on the ballot by the Democratic majorities in the state legislature. It would add to the state constitution, “Employees shall have the fundamental right to organize and to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing for the purpose of negotiating wages, hours, and working conditions, and to protect their economic welfare and safety at work.”

It would also prohibit passing so-called right-to-work legislation. Some neighboring states have these laws, which prohibit unions from winning a “closed shop” where union membership is mandatory.

“I voted for it, because workers need to have rights,” Delores Ramos, who works in the office of a paper plant and had already sent a mail-in ballot, told Socialist Workers Party campaigners who knocked on her door Oct. 24.

“My party is taking a position of not voting for or against,” I said. “The biggest problem with the amendment is it reinforces the illusion that we can look to the state to guarantee our rights, it demobilizes us. But it’s a government that represents the capitalist rulers, whichever of their parties, the Democrats or Republicans, is in office. The working class makes real gains when we organize and rely on our own strength, like the battles that built unions in the 1930s, that brought down Jim Crow segregation.”

“Well, that’s true,” Ramos said. “I don’t think it will actually do anything.”

“What’s needed is to use union power to fight for wages and working conditions in face of the bosses’ attacks,” I said, “to build solidarity with strikes and other struggles. And we need to organize politically as a class. To rely on ourselves, not their state. We’re for building a labor party, based on the unions, that breaks with the bosses’ parties.”

Signs and speeches promoting Amendment 1 have been prominent at Labor Day parades and other labor actions in recent months, along with calls to elect Democrats in November. Supporters of the measure are running TV ads claiming the law will lead to improved wages and safety for health care workers, firefighters and others.

Most opponents of Amendment 1 put

forward typical anti-union arguments claiming public workers’ unions are already too strong and cause higher taxes.

The campaign for Amendment 1 is part of the overall course advanced by the labor officialdom of relying on the capitalist state and “friends of labor” in the Democratic Party — a course that has weakened unions over decades. They are requesting the capitalist government solve workers’ problems, rather than the unions fighting for jobs, safe working conditions, cost-of-living raises to keep up with inflation and more.

It’s similar to the campaign by the AFL-CIO on a national level for Congress to pass the “Protecting Workers Right to Organize Act.” Its provisions include increasing fines the National Labor Relations Board can levy on bosses’ who illegally fire workers and prohibiting bosses from forcing workers to attend anti-union meetings at work.

But workers can’t look to the NLRB to protect our interests either. In August, for example, one of its regional boards ordered the United Mine Workers to pay Warrior Met Coal \$13.3 million for losses the bosses suffered from the miners going on strike!

*Naomi Craine is a rail conductor and the Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Illinois.*

# Expand reach of SWP, 'Militant'

Continued from front page

*Star-Tribune* also reported on the SWP candidate, saying she is “zeroed in on supporting workers and unions.” In an interview, Prosser told the paper, “The choice between the DFL [Democratic-Farmer-Labor] and Republican parties is a trap. Neither one of them has working people’s interests in mind.”

There are only two candidates on the ballot in Pennsylvania’s 3rd Congressional District in Philadelphia: the SWP’s Chris Hoepfner, who is a rail worker in the SMART-TD union, and Democrat Dwight Evans. The state’s voters’ guide asks candidates to list their education, and Hoepfner says: “March on Washington 1963; participation in movement against the Vietnam War from high school until its ending; decades-long education in the labor movement.”

The SWP’s campaign goes hand in hand with efforts by party members, along with Communist League members in Canada, Australia and the U.K., to get 1,350 *Militant* subscriptions and the same number of books by SWP leaders and other revolutionaries into the hands of working people by Nov. 15.

Rachele Fruit, SWP candidate for governor of Florida, welcomed people to the SWP’s new hall in Miami Oct. 28. “The SWP demands that the U.S. government end its 63-year-long economic, trade and financial war against the people of Cuba. Immediately!” she said. “Their hatred — and fear — of the working people of Cuba and their socialist revolution is an extension of their contempt for workers here fighting to defend our constitutional freedoms against assaults by the White House.”

Olivia Ortiz met Joanne Kuniansky, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress from New Jersey and a member of the Bakery Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union, and party member Terry Evans in Garfield Oct. 30. Ortiz is a construction worker.

After discussing what workers face,

Evans said, “Democrats and Republicans defend the bosses and ask you to choose which of them is a lesser evil.”

“That’s no choice!” Ortiz said. “They make promises they’ll never keep because they just want to stay in power.”

“We need to chart a course toward working people taking political power into our own hands,” Kuniansky added. Ortiz liked the *Militant*’s coverage of the protests in Iran and got a subscription.

The SWP Party-Building Fund, with a goal of raising \$140,000, is key to financing the party’s work. In Dallas a participant in a demonstration in solidarity with protests sweeping Iran kicked in \$100 after talking with party members. To help make the campaign successful, contact the SWP or Communist League branch nearest you, listed on page 5.



Olivia Ortiz, left, shows Joanne Kuniansky, SWP candidate for Congress in New Jersey, a video of her working construction job. Ortiz appreciated *Militant*’s coverage of Iran and subscribed.

## California referendum is blow to women’s emancipation

BY BETSEY STONE

OAKLAND, Calif. — The Socialist Workers Party has a long history of backing decriminalization of abortion, a part of the broader battle to advance the rights, interests and fighting capacity of women and working people as a whole. But Proposition 1, an amendment to the California Constitution its Democratic Party authors and backers claim will “enshrine” the right to abortion in law forever, is an obstacle to this fight. The SWP urges you to vote “No.”

Democrats here have made abortion the central issue in their campaign, using it as a vote-getting ploy. In the process they are seeking to close down political space working people sorely need today.

They claim that the Supreme Court’s Dobbs decision overturning *Roe v. Wade* struck down a woman’s right to choose. But Dobbs didn’t ban a single abortion. In accordance with the U.S. Constitution, the high court turned the issue over to the people and their state representatives. It is in the

interest of working people to oppose legislation by the courts, as was the case with *Roe v. Wade*.

Abortion remains legal in most of the states with the largest populations, like California, and is being fought out, state by state, in others. In Kansas, a majority voted down a state referendum aimed at placing greater limits on the legality of abortion.

Nor is the Dobbs decision leading toward the banning of same sex marriage, as Democrats predicted. Polls show a solid 70% of the population support keeping it legal.

We’re told the amendment is needed to prevent the issue ever being revisited again. Using a referendum to change the constitution in this way is a blow to our rights. If the anti-abortion referendum in Kansas had been passed, which like the referendum in California aimed to change the state constitution, it would have been a similar blow. Making it harder for working people to try to take on

laws they oppose by “enshrining” them in the state constitution is the opposite of what’s needed. It closes down room to debate and discuss the road forward for women and working people.

The Democrats’ central campaign nationwide is an assault on the millions of working people President Joseph Biden has dubbed “MAGA Republicans” and labeled “semi-fascists.” Behind this is the belief that workers they don’t agree with must be prevented from having an influence on politics.

Supporters of Proposition 1 reinforce the reactionary scare campaign targeting working people with the argument that even though abortion is legal in California we need the amendment because our rights are in imminent danger of being “stripped away.”

### Deepening social crisis today

Democrats say openly they are using the abortion issue to win votes. They are trying to divert attention from inflation that has skyrocketed under the Biden administration, along with the many economic and social problems confronting workers today. Increasing numbers cannot afford the basics of rent, medical care and food. It’s harder for working people to maintain a family, or even start one, with a record number of young people still living with parents. The U.S. birth rate is going down. Suicides and overdoses are going up.

Draconian work schedules imposed by the bosses make needed family time impossible. All this, including the rising costs of child care, medical care and elder care hit working-class women especially hard.

By focusing on abortion, the Democrats imply that it is a solution to these problems. When Stacey Abrams, Democratic Party candidate for governor of Georgia, was asked how to control inflation, she pointed to abortion as an answer — cutting short a pregnancy is the way to cut costs!

Masses of working people reject this. Union struggles today, like the battle being waged by rail workers across the country, are focused on winning wages that can support a family and hours that allow for family life. There is no road to women’s emancipation, or for Black liberation, separate and apart from working-class struggles against capitalist oppression and exploitation. This includes addressing the challenges and responsibilities that fall overwhelmingly on women as the bearers and nurturers of new life.

As Frederick Engels, a founder of the communist movement, said in 1885, “True equality between men and women can become a reality only when the exploitation of both by capital has been abolished, and private work in the home has been transformed into a public industry.”

### A working-class road forward

This means fighting for a government-funded public works program to create jobs to build child care centers, housing and other things workers need. It means fighting for publicly financed cradle-to-grave medical care.

We need to form our own party, a labor party based on our unions, that can chart a course to take political power. It is along this road that we can advance the fight for women’s freedom from all the political obstacles to full and equal participation in social and economic life.

Whether or not to have an abortion is a medical decision that should be in the hands of the woman without veto from anyone else. We need contraception that is safe and affordable. We should also reject the push to use abortion as a means of contraception.

At issue with abortion is a potential human life. It is a fallback, something needed when other things fail. Contrary to it being a right to be “enshrined,” as supporters of the amendment advocate, we need to fight to make abortion rarer by changing the social conditions that have led to its widespread use.

We should look to the example of the Cuban Revolution when in 1959 the masses of Cuban workers and farmers defeated a U.S.-backed dictator and overturned capitalist rule. Women in large numbers joined in the revolution, creating and building the Federation of Cuban Women. Millions of women became a mighty force in transforming the country to the benefit of the masses of workers and toilers in the countryside.

The Cubans tried to act on Engels’ advice. They mobilized to put people and resources into child care, elder care, school and workplace lunch and afterschool programs, all things directed at overcoming the inequality women face because the burdens of housework and family care fall overwhelmingly on them. And they decriminalized abortion.

It is an example worth serious study of how progress toward the full emancipation of women requires ending the rule of the capitalists who are responsible for our oppression today.

## Campaign to expand reach of 'Militant,' books, SWP fund

Sept. 17 - November 15 (week six)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	Fund received
UNITED STATES						
Atlanta	75	41	75	35	\$9,600	\$3,978
Chicago	110	78	110	69	\$14,000	\$8,397
Cincinnati	70	34	70	19	\$6,000	\$1,783
Dallas-FortWorth	65	49	65	49	\$5,000	\$1,845
Lincoln	15	12	15	13	\$500	\$300
Los Angeles	90	62	90	86	\$15,250	\$3,290
Miami	45	19	45	26	\$5,750	\$2,993
Minneapolis	70	53	70	70	\$5,500	\$1,629
N. New Jersey	70	56	70	70	\$7,500	\$6,682
New York	115	85	115	124	\$21,000	\$9,799
Oakland	90	76	90	80	\$15,500	\$10,332
Philadelphia	50	35	50	40	\$6,000	\$1,850
Pittsburgh	65	39	65	19	\$6,000	\$2,902
Seattle	75	53	75	38	\$14,500	\$6,017
Washington	50	33	50	40	\$4,600	\$3,974
Other		11		89		\$750
Total U.S.	1055	736	1055	867	\$136,700	\$66,521
Prisoners	50	61				
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	40	32	40	57		
Manchester	40	28	40	44		
Total U.K.	80	60	80	101		
Canada	80	56	80	68		
Australia	30	22	30	24		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,295</b>	<b>935</b>	<b>1,245</b>	<b>1,060</b>	<b>\$136,700</b>	<b>\$66,521</b>
<b>SHOULD BE</b>	<b>1,350</b>	<b>1,013</b>	<b>1,350</b>	<b>1,013</b>	<b>\$140,000</b>	<b>\$105,000</b>

# Vote Socialist Workers Party!

Continued from front page

former President Donald Trump out of politics, using show-trial hearings on the melee at the Capitol last year and the FBI's armed raid on his Mar-a-Lago home. Trump ally Steven Bannon was sentenced to four months in prison Oct. 21, after he refused to appear before the House select committee.

Regardless of who is targeted today, the same and worse will be done to workers. Just weeks after the FBI's Mar-a-Lago raid, the political police began harassing members of the Cuba Solidarity Committee in Puerto Rico — who refused to be intimidated.

These attacks can be fought. SWP candidates explain the example their party has set, pushing back restrictions on rights through involvement in working-class struggles over decades.

This includes a political campaign and lawsuit by the SWP against the FBI that exposed the extent of the FBI's illegal wiretaps, burglaries, use of informants and disruption operations against the party and others. Judge Thomas Griesa ruled the FBI's invasive spy operation and Cointelpro interference violated the party's constitutional rights to free association and were illegal.

Today Democrats are trying to refurbish the FBI's image.

The party seeks to win support for pushing back the use of the political police. Sara Lobman, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from New York, helped build a meeting of over 100 in East Harlem Oct. 28 to protest the FBI's harassment of members of the Cuba Solidarity Committee in Puerto Rico.

"What the FBI did shows the scope of attacks on constitutional freedoms and the need for a fighting response," Lobman said.

## A class-struggle road forward

Soaring prices continue to squeeze workers' living standards, adding to the difficulties young workers face starting a family and providing for it. This comes on top of the heavy toll on working people of rising levels of drug, alcohol and gambling addiction. The capitalist class profits off these "industries," and their two main parties have no interest in eradicating them.

Central to changing these conditions are the union struggles unfolding today.

"Because of what millions of workers face there's more interest in working-class solidarity," Joel Britton, a member of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union Local 125 and the SWP candidate for governor of California, told the *Militant*. During his campaign Britton has walked picket lines by striking nurses, airport workers and confectionery workers.

"I've used my campaign to build support for the strike by fellow BCTGM

members at Corn Nuts in Fresno. Their strike showed that if you fight you can win," said Britton. The workers returned to work after winning a wage raise and pushing back the bosses' drive to worsen their medical coverage.

"Voting SWP is the only way you can cast a vote to support the fight to defend, extend and strengthen our unions," Britton said. "Only the SWP offers a working-class outlook and perspective, independent of the Democrats and Republicans and explains why workers need our own political party, a labor party based on the unions. Only the SWP advances a way forward for working people to take political power into our own hands, the only road to organize to conquer the problems we face."

SWP candidates explain that a union-led fight for employment is crucial — with wages, hours and conditions necessary for families to live instead of getting torn apart.

The labor movement needs to fight for a shorter workweek with no cut in weekly pay — with regular hours that workers can count on — to share the work around and prevent layoffs. Cost-of-living adjustments in all contracts and all benefits are needed to protect workers' living standards from soaring prices. Unions should fight for a basic income supplement for all families who need it, so workers can keep their jobs and participate in the workers' movement, as opposed to falling onto welfare.

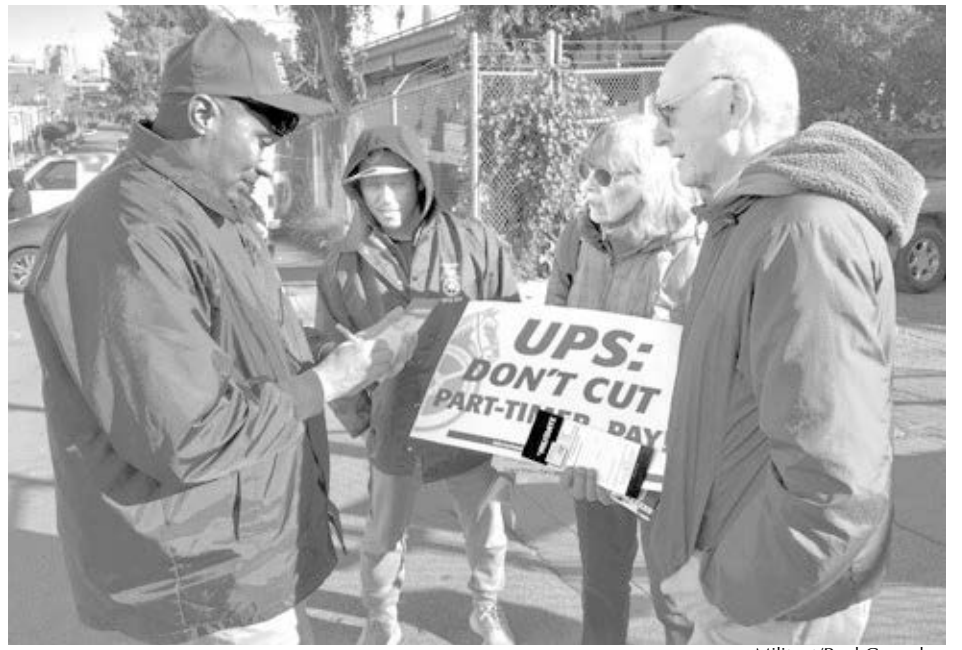
## Workers need our own foreign policy

The capitalist rulers' foreign policy is an extension of their assault on workers at home. Their wars — from Vietnam to Iraq and Afghanistan — use working people as cannon fodder against fellow working people worldwide.

"We back the toilers in Iran fighting against brutal repression by the reactionary regime there. We defend the Ukrainian people's battle to defend the independence of their country from Moscow's invasion," Alyson Kennedy, SWP candidate for governor of Texas, said. "The working class needs its own foreign policy based on solidarity with workers and farmers around the world."

"We point to the example of Cuba's socialist revolution as an example for working people worldwide."

Working people on the land also face attempts by the capitalists to put



UPS worker Mark Rodriguez, left, renews *Militant* subscription at Teamsters protest Feb. 23 in San Francisco after discussion with Joel Britton, right, SWP candidate for California governor.

the crisis on their backs. Prices of fertilizer, animal feed, seeds, fuel and pesticides have soared.

Exacerbating these conditions in Texas is government indifference to the impact of a drought. Kennedy has visited rural areas of the state to learn more about what ranchers face and discuss the party's program.

"The land should be nationalized so it can be used by farmers and not treated as a commodity to be bought and sold at a profit," she told the *Militant*. "This is an important question for the entire labor movement — the fight to better the conditions of rural toilers, including both working farm families and farm-

workers, with or without papers. Workers and farmers have a common enemy, the capitalist class, and we need to fight for a government of our own."

Don't waste your vote on one of the bosses' parties, she said. "It's better to vote for something you're for and not get it than vote for what you don't want and get it."

"Democrats or Republicans represent some of the wealthiest people in the world, from Elon Musk to the older ruling families like the Rockefellers," Kennedy said. "Vote Socialist Workers Party! Join the only party that bases all its activities on confidence in the capacities of working people to change society."

## Socialist Workers Party 2022 candidates

### California

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

### Florida

Rachele Fruit, Governor  
Steve Warshell, US Senate

### Georgia

Lisa Potash, US Senate  
Sam Manuel, Governor

### Illinois

Naomi Craine, Governor

### Minnesota

Gabrielle Prosser, Governor  
Kevin Dwire, Lt. Governor

### Nebraska

Joe Swanson, US Congress

### New Jersey

Joanne Kuniansky, 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

Henry Dennison, US Senate

## 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:** 5711 NW 7th Ave. Unit B. Zip: 33142. 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: swplincoln@gmail.com

**NEW JERSEY:** 3600 Bergenline, Suite 205B, Union City. Zip: 07087. Tel: (551) 240-1512. swpnewjersey@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: dfswp@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: (61) 435-995-604. 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

pathfinderpress.com



# Back Ukraine independence!

Continued from front page

Germany's imperialist rulers are re-arming to prepare for greater conflicts to come like other contending capitalist rulers worldwide.

In the latest attack on Ukrainian energy facilities, another barrage of Russian missiles targeted Kyiv, Kharkiv and other cities Oct. 31, damaging over a third of the power network and causing more rolling blackouts.

Putin hopes the lack of heat and power in winter will force Kyiv to concede territory to end the conflict. But the more the war has gone on, the more it has stiffened the resolve of working people in Ukraine to resist his efforts to destroy their country and culture.

Some of the deadliest combat is taking place over control of Bakhmut, a Ukrainian-held city in the eastern Donetsk region, where Ukrainian forces are inflicting heavy losses on the invaders. To compensate for the weakness of its own military, Moscow is relying on a mercenary outfit, the Wagner Group, to spearhead its assault. Among the mercenaries are Russian convicts who the Wagner Group promised to get released from jail if they're willing to be cannon fodder on the frontlines for six months.

In the south, Ukrainian forces are closing in on Kherson, the only regional capital taken in Moscow's invasion. The Kremlin is sending thousands of newly called-up reservists, who are poorly trained and equipped, to reinforce its defenses there. Ukrainians living under Moscow's boot are sabotaging its positions as Ukrainian artillery pounds the Russian lines.

"The city is empty, as if it were dying. But we are alive," a woman who gave her name only as Katerina, told the *New York Times* Oct. 31. The remaining residents are waiting, she said, "to meet the Armed Forces of Ukraine."

Faced with large battlefield losses, Pu-

tin was forced to declare Russia's largest troop mobilization since World War II Sept. 21. Widespread protests from Moscow and St. Petersburg to the non-Russian people of Dagestan and Yakutia erupted but were suppressed.

## Call up targets migrant workers

Across Russia several army enlistment offices were firebombed. A disproportionate number of Moscow's troops — and combat deaths — in Ukraine are from ethnic minorities in regions from Siberia to the North Caucasus. About a fifth of the Russian Federation's population is spread among over 100 different oppressed nationalities.

After a recruitment office opened at Moscow's main migrant service center, lawyers were inundated with pleas for help from Central Asian immigrant workers. Some were caught up in raids on hostels. Others without documents were coerced into signing up for the army.

An electrician in Moscow who is Russian-Tajik told the *Washington Post* that he was arrested at the construction site where he works because of his Caucasian appearance. "I'm not going to serve," he told the paper. "Why take someone else's land for yourself in the first place?"

In Belgorod, near the Ukrainian border, three Tajik recruits refused to be deployed to Ukraine Oct. 15, saying the Russian invasion was not their war. An officer told them the operation was "a holy war," taunting the three Muslims that "Allah is a coward." At firing practice pounds the Russian lines.

# Putin's control over Central Asia 'allies' unravels

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Russian President Vladimir Putin's brutal invasion of Ukraine, meant to expand Moscow's territory and "sphere of influence," has had the opposite effect across the old Russian empire. In Central Asia and the South Caucasus, the Kremlin's political authority is shrinking. This is part of global shifts occasioned by the war that are affecting the capitalist "world order."

The former Soviet Socialist Republics of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, in a region bounded by Russia, China, Afghanistan and the Caspian Sea, gained independence in 1991 with the implosion of the USSR. Now, with Moscow increasingly bogged down by its war in Ukraine, the capitalist rulers in these countries are taking even more distance. None have supported Putin's "annexations" in Ukraine.

Beijing and Ankara, as well as Washington, hope to gain from the political space opening up in this vast resource-rich region.

"We want to be respected," not treated like part of the former Soviet Union, Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon told Putin at a summit of 27 Asian countries, including China, India and Russia, in Astana, Kazakhstan, Oct. 14.

The day before at the meeting, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan urged support for the "sovereignty and territorial integrity" of Kazakhstan and its neighbors.

During a visit to the country a month earlier, Chinese President Xi Jinping said Beijing was opposed to interference



Russian missiles hit Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, Oct. 10. Moscow hits power generators, aiming to make millions suffer over the winter, but just made Ukrainians more determined to fight.

By external forces in the internal affairs of Central Asian countries. The Chinese rulers are expanding investments in Central Asia. Today China's economy is 10 times bigger than that of Russia, and Beijing is now the main trading partner of these countries.

Xi has also taken some distance from Putin's assault on Ukraine's sovereignty. During the summit Beijing penned a pact with Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan for a proposed new rail line to carry Chinese exports to Europe, bypassing sanctions-hit rail links through Russia. This shorter route would break Moscow's stranglehold on land transport across Eurasia.

At the same time that the Central Asian rulers are embracing Beijing's trade, investment and security guarantees, they also face countervailing pressures. The mainly Muslim toilers in these countries identify with the Uighurs, who face brutal repression at the hands of Beijing's rulers in the adjacent Xinjiang region.

In January, Moscow rushed 2,000 mainly Russian troops to Kazakhstan to prop up the government against a wave of protest. Two years earlier Russian troops had been dispatched to the Caucasus to enforce a Moscow-mediated truce between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

But the Ukraine war has changed these relations. In September the Kremlin failed to intervene in a Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan border war. It also didn't act on the Armenian government's call for help to halt renewed attacks by Azerbaijani forces backed by the Turkish government.

torture and sexual abuse. Cut off from contact with Ukraine, the women saw only Russian television channels. But they soon detected signs of Moscow's battlefield reversals.

The angrier TV anchors got, "the better we understood that Ukraine was winning," Liudmila Guseinova said. That reality is clearer to millions more Russian working people too.

**New International**  
A magazine of  
Marxist politics and theory,  
1934-present  
**Intercontinental Press**  
International news magazine,  
1963-86  
Online at [themilitant.com](http://themilitant.com)  
and [pathfinderpress.com](http://pathfinderpress.com)

# NY meeting hits FBI harassment of Cuba supporters in Puerto Rico

Continued from front page

Church — also known as the People's Church. Rivera spoke as part of a panel discussion organized to educate about and protest FBI harassment of 62 people in the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico, mostly participants in the Juan Rius Rivera Brigade, which visited Cuba in July. The FBI has also harassed at least six Cuba solidarity activists in the U.S.

The event was sponsored by the People's Church and co-sponsored by eight Puerto Rican pro-independence organizations, including the Frente Independentista Boricua, together with IFCO/Pastors for Peace, Casa de las Américas, Socialist Workers Party, African People's Socialist Party, and the New York-New Jersey Cuba Si Coalition.

Rev. Dorlimar Lebrón chaired the event. "Solidarity is being criminalized," she said in welcoming participants to her church and introducing the panel. "Today we are having an important conversation about what it means to stand for what we believe without fear and intimidation."

## FBI is U.S. 'political police'

"The FBI is the political police of the U.S. government, used to maintain the imperial order," Rivera said. She recalled the long history of FBI attacks on the pro-independence movement.

The activities of the annual solidarity brigade to Cuba are public and completely legal, Rivera noted. This year participants met with members of Cuban mass organizations to learn more about the revolution and discuss with Cubans the fight to end U.S. colonial rule in Puerto Rico. They also brought medical supplies to help overcome shortages caused by Washington's economic war on Cuba.

In Havana the brigade joined a public meeting featuring the Cuban Five, Cuban revolutionaries who were framed up and spent up to 16 years in U.S. prisons. There they also met Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel, and were joined by their compatriot, Oscar López, who was



Oct. 28 event in People's Church in New York. From left, Rev. Dorlimar Lebrón, chair; Milagros Rivera, Cuba Solidarity Committee in Puerto Rico; Gail Walker, Pastors for Peace; Oronde Lumumba Shakur, African People's Socialist Party; Ana López, Frente Independentista Boricua; and Martin Koppel, SWP.

imprisoned by Washington for nearly 36 years for actions in defense of Puerto Rico's independence. That meeting "must have quite upset the imperialists," Rivera said with a smile.

At the end of August, FBI agents began to visit and call brigade members in Puerto Rico. They claimed the brigade violated a federal law, "but never said which one," Rivera said. They alleged that the brigade "was infiltrated by Cuban security agents, and other such nonsense," she noted. Some FBI agents "did not even want to identify themselves." They were trying "to criminalize travel to Cuba and solidarity," she said.

The solidarity committee immediately made the FBI harassment public and explained that no one should speak to the FBI, she said.

## Importance of solidarity

Rivera underlined the importance of the broad support received by the brigade. She said the *Militant* newspaper, which sent a reporting team to San Juan within days of learning about the FBI harassment, helped to "keep the protests alive." The FBI hasn't contacted anyone in Puerto Rico since the end of August but we have to be prepared, she said, given its history of frame-ups.

We are going to continue the struggle to "end this U.S. criminal blockade against Cuba," Rivera said. The committee has announced that its 32nd brigade will go to Santiago de Cuba next July 26 to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the opening of the Cuban Revolution, as well as to mark the 125th anniversary of the U.S. colonial invasion of Puerto Rico.

Also speaking on the panel, Gail Walker, executive director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization, noted that after IFCO was formed in 1967 it was investigated by the FBI. In 2016 the IRS revoked the group's tax-exempt status. IFCO fought back, won support, and regained its status.

It's possible to push back government harassment if we "stand in solidarity with each other," Walker said.

On July 29, FBI agents broke down the doors of offices and homes of members of the African People's Socialist Party and Uhuru in St. Louis and St. Petersburg, Florida. They set off flash-bang grenades, and temporarily detained leaders of the group at gunpoint, slandering them as "unregistered foreign agents" of Moscow. The cops confiscated computers, cellphones and

financial records.

The FBI raid happened under the administration "of President Joseph Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris," said panelist Oronde Lumumba Shakur from the African People's Socialist Party. He noted both Democrats and Republicans serve the interests of the U.S. capitalist rulers.

Speaking for the Frente Independentista Boricua, Ana López, a professor at Hostos Community College, reviewed the long history of FBI attacks on the Puerto Rican independence movement. The FBI was key to railroading Pedro Albizu Campos, a central leader of the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico, to prison in 1937. It was Albizu Campos, she said, who established the principle that independence fighters "don't cooperate with Yankee imperialism and its agencies."

Martin Koppel, speaking for the Socialist Workers Party, explained that as Washington prepared to enter World War II, President Franklin Roosevelt signed an executive decree that transformed the FBI into a federal political police that immediately began to target the labor movement. Using the thought-control Smith Act, the government railroaded to prison 18 members of the SWP and the Teamsters union.

In 1973 the SWP filed a lawsuit against the FBI and other federal cop agencies. Combined with a public campaign, it helped expose the Cointelpro operations

that targeted the SWP, Communist Party, Black rights groups, Puerto Rican independence movement, labor unions and others, Koppel said. In 1986 a federal judge decided in favor of the party, ruling the FBI's spying and disruption were a violation of constitutional freedoms. "This was a victory for the rights of everyone," Koppel said.

The record of harassment presented by the panel "shows why the recent raid by heavily armed FBI and Secret Service agents on former President Donald Trump's estate in Florida should be opposed," Koppel said. "Working people and the oppressed cannot applaud the FBI when they trample on constitutional protections, no matter who the target is. If they get away with attacks on their own capitalist opponents, you know they're going to go after us even more brazenly."

In the discussion period, a participant asked the speakers to respond to accusations by U.S. government spokespeople that Cuba is a "failed state."

"The world has a lot to learn from Cuba," Rivera said. "It's U.S. imperialism that is the failed state." That's especially evident, she said, in the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico, where five years after Hurricane María the population still faces disastrous conditions that the colonial authorities are incapable of resolving.

"What do the speakers think about the efforts by many in the Democratic Party to refurbish the image of the FBI?" a member of the audience asked. During the 1960s and '70s, as a result of the fight for Black rights and against the Vietnam War, and the exposure of Cointelpro, the FBI was discredited in the eyes of millions of people, Koppel said.

"Today you see Democrats applauding the Biden administration for using the FBI to go after its opponents in capitalist politics, such as Trump," or seeking to brand some as "unregistered Russian agents," Koppel said. "In the end it's the working class that will be targeted."

Reverend Lebrón encouraged participants to join the march and rally against the U.S. embargo of Cuba the next day. Rivera also addressed a class at Hostos Community College.

# Working conditions, firing by UPS lead Kentucky worker to suicide

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

After being fired on Oct. 5, a pregnant UPS worker committed suicide in the company's huge Worldport facility in Louisville, Kentucky, the world's largest automated package sorting facility.

Twenty thousand workers, many of whom are members of Teamsters Local 89, unload, sort and reload packages on UPS planes at the 70 docks at the 5 million square foot warehouse. They work on 155 miles of conveyor belts where the company's production goal is to move 115 packages every second.

After news of her death broke, workers at Worldport spoke to the *Guardian*, without giving their names for fear of company retaliation. "She was pregnant and got fired because she fell asleep on the job," one worker said,

adding that when the distraught worker said she had to collect herself and went to the bathroom, the supervisor who fired her never checked back to make sure she was OK.

Workers described facing threats of termination for being late or for going to the restroom too often, all while working under constant surveillance. Others described the intense speedup and work intensity, often working with worn out, unsafe equipment and being pushed to do more with fewer workers.

Kaitlin Estill, who worked recently at the UPS Worldport facility in Cincinnati, told the *Militant* that one of the biggest challenges for the union was the company's efforts to exacerbate tensions between the drivers and loaders, the better to divide and exploit

Continued on page 8

## U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War

New International no. 11

Once Stalinism had transformed the Soviet Union into the

opposite of a voluntary federation of workers and peasants republics, its break-up, its disintegration from within, was inevitable."

Jack Barnes

## Lenin's Final Fight

Speeches and Writings 1922-23

"I declare war to the death on Great Russian chauvinism."

V.I. Lenin, 1922

pathfinderpress.com

SPECIAL OFFER FOR MILITANT SUBSCRIBERS

## Books workers need today

About building the only kind of party worthy of the name "revolutionary"

20% OFF ALL OTHER PATHFINDER TITLES



ALL 5 BOOKS ABOVE FOR \$40 WITH A MILITANT SUBSCRIPTION

- Teamster Rebellion / \$10
- The Jewish Question / \$12
- Tribunes of the People & the Trade Unions / \$7
- The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record / \$5
- Cuba and the Coming American Revolution / \$5
- October 1962: 'Missile' Crisis as Seen from Cuba / 60th Anniversary Edition / \$12

SEE DISTRIBUTORS ON PAGE 5 OR VISIT [PATHFINDERPRESS.COM](http://PATHFINDERPRESS.COM)

# —ON THE PICKET LINE—

## Northwest woodworkers settle strike against Weyerhaeuser

RAYMOND, Wash. — Over 1,100 members of International Association of Machinists District W24 struck Weyerhaeuser locations across Oregon and Washington six weeks ago in a fight against increased health care costs and for higher pay. Weyerhaeuser is one of the world's largest timber companies.

On Oct. 7 strikers at a number of company log yards and mills in Washington and Oregon voted down a second contract offer from Weyerhaeuser by 90%. After further negotiations and three more weeks of strike action the company made some concessions. The third offer was then voted up by 55% Oct. 27. Strikers here told the *Militant* that no union members had crossed the picket lines.

"The main issue was the bosses' proposal to raise health care premiums. We should fight for a percent raise increase to cover that," striker Ron McGough told the *Militant* at the union hall before the company's third offer came in.

"In the contract four years ago we got a higher deductible. Now they want us to pay for a percentage of the health care costs and increase the amount we pay by 1% per year," striker Mark Barnard said. "We could be going backwards."

"We think it's the best that we can get at this time," Brandon Bryant, the union district representative, told workers before the vote.

The agreement that was voted up got rid of the percentage, replacing it with a fixed amount workers will pay toward the health care plan. It includes 14% in wage increases over four years

and some additional vacation time, sick leave pay and shift differential pay.

"I voted against the contract proposal," Barnard told the *Militant* after the vote. "I thought we could have pushed for more. But we did get the percentage taken out."

"When we started, the vote against the contract and for the strike was impressive. I'm proud of these kids. The community support is huge," said Steve Steiger, a union officer and striking worker.

Strike supporter Bethany Barnard said she had posted "Solidarity Sundays" on her Facebook page to get more people to the picket lines. "Facebook shut the page down!"

"We want to thank the numerous people and businesses that have supported our members on the picket lines," Bryant said in a union statement. "Your boxes of donuts, pizzas, homemade cookies, firewood, handmade picket signs, donations and gas cards inspired our members to hold the line."

— Jacob Perasso

## Nurses strike for pay parity, better conditions in Oakland

OAKLAND, Calif.—Nurses working at Sutter's Alta Bates Summit Medical Center organized by the California Nurses Association conducted a weeklong strike here Oct. 24-28 demanding a substantial wage increase and better working conditions. Pickets told the *Militant* they wanted parity with other nurses in the Bay Area.

"We are seeing a mass exodus of nurses from the medical center due to the poor working conditions," Mike



The Stand

IAM District W24 strikers, supporters picket at Seattle headquarters of timber giant Weyerhaeuser Sept. 20. Strike by over 1,100 workers won advances in wages and benefits.

Hill, a registered nurse in the intensive care unit, said in a nursing association press release. "We have nurses working overtime, and even double shifts day after day to keep the hospital running."

Ann Gaebler, an RN with 40 years in the neonatal intensive care unit, said, "Nursing is a tough profession. It demands the ability to understand and retain complex medical knowledge, an ability to stay calm when things get difficult, a compassionate nature and emotional resilience. It takes time to master the nursing profession and it takes mentorship from experienced nurses to get there."

— Jeff Powers

## Mental health workers make gains in strike against Kaiser

OAKLAND, Calif. — More than 2,000 mental health workers in North-

ern California organized by the National Union of Healthcare Workers settled their 10-week-long strike with Kaiser Permanente Oct. 21.

The strike was hard fought. The union organized weekly rallies where patients and their families spoke in support of the union's demand for more staffing. They described how Kaiser's failure to hire more clinicians routinely caused a two-month wait to see therapists. This critically impacted their lives, and children of more than one of the speakers had committed suicide.

Kaiser agreed to a number of concessions. They include nearly two additional hours per week for therapists to perform patient care, a \$1 to \$1.50 per hour extra pay for bilingual therapists, a commitment by Kaiser to work with therapists on a plan to expand crisis services in nearly all of its clinics, an agreement to increase from 60 to 90 minutes the time therapists have to conduct initial assessments of children, and a commitment by Kaiser to hire more therapists.

Five separate labor-management committees will meet over the next six months to make recommendations on critical aspects of Kaiser's service. Kaiser is not in compliance with the state law requiring all health insurers to provide therapy sessions within 10 business days, unless the treating therapist permits an exception.

— Jeff Powers

# Conditions, firing by UPS bosses leads worker to suicide

Continued from page 7

them. The computer system often directed loaders to overload trucks, she said. As a seasonal loader, she got one 10-minute break on an eight-hour shift.

UPS profits grew nearly tenfold in 2021 over the year before. The company says its revenue should top \$100 billion this year. UPS told the *Guardian* "the health and safety of our employees is our first priority."

Several reports in the press paint a different picture. "Culture of Fear? Grips UPS; Workers Say Injuries Underreported," was the headline of a Bloomberg Law article in late 2019. It describes how a worker in New Hampshire fell from a loading dock and broke his hip, pelvis, wrist and elbow. Managers put him on a cart and rolled him to the parking lot before calling for an ambulance. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration fined UPS a paltry \$13,260, and then dropped the fine entirely when the company agreed to review its procedures.

To increase profits UPS does not air-condition facilities like Worldport, or most of its trucks where cargo areas can go above 120 degrees on hot days. Between 2015 and 2019 at

least 107 UPS workers in 23 states were hospitalized for heat prostration. These kinds of working conditions are familiar to millions of workers.

Thousands of union members over the past year have taken up the fight for work schedules that allow for time for a family life and to participate in union and other activity in defense of the working class; for pay increases to

keep up with inflation so they don't find themselves one or two paychecks away from being homeless; and for safer working conditions.

The contract for the 400,000 Teamsters at UPS expires next July 31. Among the union's demands are an end to excessive overtime, two-tier wages, subcontracting and company harassment.

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



November 17, 1997

Washington's latest military threats against Iraq show the weakness of U.S. imperialism. In 1991 the U.S. rulers broke their teeth in Iraq. After organizing one of the most monstrous carnages in the history of modern warfare, they were unable to replace the regime in Baghdad with one completely subservient to Washington's interests and get control over the oil wells of that country.

Ever since, the U.S. government has used its military and economic muscle to punish the Iraqi people. The embargo continues to deprive millions of food, potable water, medicines, seed and agricultural supplies.

Working people the world over should demand that the U.S.-engineered sanctions be lifted immediately, the "no-fly" zones imposed by Washington over large parts of Iraq be ended, and the U.S. and other "arms inspectors" get out of the country now.



November 17, 1972

Native Americans whose Trail of Broken Treaties Caravans converged on the capital Oct. 30 continued today to occupy the offices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Approximately 1,800 Native Americans have come to the seat of their government overseers to protest U.S. violation of 387 unequal treaties imposed on them.

The occupation was touched off by an unprovoked police attack on a group of Native Americans inside the BIA offices. The police were then driven off by Native Americans who had been negotiating with BIA officials.

Coming from reservations and urban slums across the country, the Native Americans demanded justice for the 800,000 Indians in the U.S., survivors of centuries of white oppression and genocide. "The governmental agencies are the prime offenders in the total neglect of Indian people," they said.



November 17, 1947

During the second week of September the British Military Government ordered the dismantling of the Holmag plant in Kiel, Germany. When the workers learned of the decision, their factory committee decided unanimously to refuse to collaborate in any way with this demolition decree. All the workers immediately went out on strike. Foreign workers employed in the plant participated solidly in the strike.

The action of the Holmag workers is of historic importance. It constitutes the first public and organized demonstration by the working population against the savage plundering measures imposed on vanquished Germany by the Potsdam agreement.

For the first time since 1945 German workers' organizations have called into question the "right" of the conquerors to dispose as they please of the lives and belongings of the vanquished people.

**'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](http://www.themilitant.com)

# Protests: End US embargo of Cuba now!

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

NEW YORK — Opponents of Washington's six-decade-long economic war against Cuba demonstrated here and across the country Oct. 29. Some 200 people from New York, New Jersey and cities as far away as Boston and Miami marched from Times Square to the United Nations.

The actions were timed to draw attention to the upcoming vote in the U.N. General Assembly on a resolution, presented by Cuba's revolutionary government, that calls for "ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba." Similar resolutions have been adopted every year by a resounding margin over the past three decades.

Demonstrators carried signs and banners calling on the U.S. government to end its sanctions against Cuba, get out of Guantánamo, lift restrictions on travel to the island and take Cuba off its despicable "state sponsors of terrorism" list.

Among them was a lively delegation of more than 20 Cuban Americans who have held monthly car caravans in Miami calling for an end to the U.S. embargo. Other Cuban Americans came from Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C. One group carried a huge Cuban flag down the march route.

## Signalmen vote down proposed rail contract

Continued from front page

happy with the way we've been treated up to this point in negotiations."

Getting out the facts about what rail workers face is what the action is aimed at. "A lot of fiction is being promoted by the media and the railroad employers," Forsgren said.

The BMW is one of 12 rail unions that have been tied up in years of contract negotiations with the five U.S.-based Class 1 railroads and a number of smaller lines. They have been wrapped up in red tape and mandated "cooling off" periods under the anti-labor Railway Labor Act. All of them now face an agreement imposed by a Presidential Emergency Board appointed by Joseph Biden.

More than anything, rail workers have expressed anger and frustration over their lack of paid sick leave, harsh attendance policies with little time off, schedules and working conditions that are onerous and pose the danger of working even when exhausted.

BMW members voted down the rail bosses' contract offer Oct. 10.

On Oct. 26, the 6,000-strong Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen announced that nearly 61% of its members voted down a proposed five-year contract. The two unions represent some 25% of the 115,000 rail workers.

Railroad signalmen members install and maintain high voltage electrical lines, complex telecommunications equipment, and install and maintain the signal network crucial for safe movement of trains. These signals and road crossing warning devices are life and death questions for conductors, locomotive engineers and working people who live and work near the tracks.

Both the freight railroads and the government board "failed to recognize the safety-sensitive and highly stressful job BRS members perform," union President Michael Baldwin said after the vote. "Without signalmen, the roadways and railroad crossings would be unsafe for the traveling public."

The White House responded. "As the president has said for months, any shutdown would be completely unacceptable," Biden's press secretary, Karine Jean-Pierre, said.

Rail bosses, shipping associations and capitalist media are warning that a rail shutdown is increasingly possible, which demonstrates once again the potential power of rail workers. With industry and agribusiness dependent on the railroads and many profit-driven factory bosses operating on just-in-time inventories, a shutdown of the rail system for even a short duration would have a big impact on the economic life of the country. The boss class wants the White House and Congress to be ready to intervene on its behalf.

A coalition of 322 business associations sent a letter to Biden Oct. 27 demanding he take whatever steps are necessary to prevent a strike. All 12 rail unions

Speakers at the opening and closing rallies included Carlos Lazo of Miami-based Puentes de Amor (Bridges of Love), Medea Benjamin of CodePink, Angie Langdon of IFCO/Pastors for Peace, and Ike Nahem of the New York-New Jersey Cuba Si Coalition.

Also participating were two members of the Cuba Solidarity Committee in Puerto Rico, including its president, Milagros Rivera, who spoke at the rally across from the U.N. building. She pointed to the example of Cuba's socialist revolution for those fighting for Puerto Rico's independence from U.S. colonial rule, and condemned the FBI's harassment of a Puerto Rican solidarity brigade that visited Cuba in July.

More than 75 people rallied at the Federal Building in Los Angeles Oct. 29 and marched in the neighborhood. Among the speakers were Floyd Bryan from the Southern California District of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union and Mike Vera, a business agent with the ILWU's Inland Boatmen's Union; James Lafferty of the National Lawyers Guild in Los Angeles; Diana Cervantes of the L.A. Hands Off Cuba Committee; Ysabel Gonzalez from CodePink; and Elie Garcia from the Socialist Workers Party.

Vera announced that the Inland Boatmen's Union in Southern California has passed a resolution calling for lifting all U.S. sanctions on Cuba.

must approve their agreements to prevent a strike later this month. Six smaller unions have approved the agreements to date.

### Dockworkers pledge support

Bosses across the country are also worried about the possibility of a West Coast longshoremen's strike. Dockworkers there have been embroiled in extended negotiations since May with the Pacific Maritime Association — a bloc of port bosses and seagoing shippers — and are getting increasingly angry over lack of an acceptable settlement.

For the first time, more goods are being shipped from East Coast ports than those on the west, as bosses nationwide look to avoid the impact of a possible strike.

In mid-September the 22,000-member International Longshore and Warehouse Union, which organizes the docks, spoke out in favor of the rail workers' fight.

ILWU officials described what rail workers live with. "No weekends, no holidays, getting fired for getting sick or attending funerals, three worker fatalities in 10 days. No one should be forced to accept intolerable working conditions in 2022," ILWU International President Willie Adams said.

"The ILWU supports the workers who are standing up not only for their own working conditions, but against the erosion of rights for all workers nationwide," Bobby Olvera Jr., the union's vice president, added.

The two largest rail unions — the Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers — Transportation Division (SMART-TD) and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, who together represent over 60,000 conductors and locomotive engineers — say they mailed out ballots on proposed contracts Oct. 31 and will announce the results of the votes Nov. 21. The presidents of the two unions have been touring the country, explaining the vote is in your hands but the agreement might be the best you can get.

The Nov. 21 announcements will come two days after the BMW "cooling-off" period ends.

A major concern for many conductors and engineers is language in the tentative agreements that would allow the carriers to expand use of "automated bid scheduling" and "self-supporting pools." These are systems for scheduling work, already in place in some areas, that workers explain help bosses intensify pressure for them to be available for work all of the time. Most conductors and engineers are on call now 24/7.

Debate on the contract proposals — and actions like the Lincoln protest Nov. 2 — show that regardless of how the votes turn out, rail workers intend to continue to find ways to fight to defend themselves.

Naomi Craine, a SMART-TD conductor in Chicago, contributed to this article.

## Iran protests continue

Continued from front page

dead. The Islamic State took credit for the massacre.

Over the course of the following weekend, thugs from the Basij, a paramilitary force run by the Revolutionary Guard, stepped up their attacks on demonstrators. In some cases they fired live ammunition. But the protest movement continues.

Protests began after the Sept. 16 death of Mahsa Amini. The young Kurdish woman died three days after she collapsed following her arrest by the "morality" police in Tehran for allegedly not hewing to the reactionary regime's dress code. Few believe the official story that the police did not beat her.

Her death unleashed pent-up anger at the bourgeois clerical regime's trampling on basic democratic rights and the oppression of women, as well as discrimination against oppressed nationalities and religious minorities. The protests also reflect deep opposition to the deadly toll of the regime's military adventures throughout the Middle East.

Amini's real first name is not Mahsa, but Jina — which means "life" in Kurdish. But to be legally recognized, names in Iran have to be approved by the Supreme Council of Registry. Because the council routinely rejects names it views as encouraging Kurdish national identification, many Kurdish families give their newborns two names, one for official registration and one for family and friends.

### Oppression of the Kurds

Thirty million Kurdish people live in Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Armenia and Syria — the largest nationality in the world without its own country. In Iran, like elsewhere, they face discrimination in jobs, housing and the use of their language in school. Nearly half of Iran's political prisoners are Kurdish. The regime's rulers have been bombing camps of Iranian Kurds across the border in Iraq.

Thousands turned out for the 40-day mourning ceremony in Amini's hometown of Saqqez in the Kurdish region of Iran Oct. 26. This was despite the government blockading roads leading to the cemetery, and its claims that the family didn't want the event.

An article published by the government-funded Iranian Students' News Agency reflects the depth of the growing movement. "People have become distrustful of many things and do not believe the words of the official media," the reporter wrote. "I did not expect such a large crowd," which he estimated at 10,000 strong.

The reporter noted that along with the slogan "Women, life, freedom!" there were also chants in support of Kurdish rights. Some youth raised the Kurdish flag.

"I had come to Kurdistan before," the reporter wrote, "but today I saw a new attitude among the people."

The ongoing nationwide protests show that the "new attitude" is not just among the oppressed Kurdish, Azerbaijani, Arab and Baluch peoples.

The government has been stepping up its actions against the protests. On Oct. 31 the chief justice of Tehran announced that public trials for 1,000 of those arrested in the capital will begin this week. Thousands more have been arrested across the country, including students, workers and journalists. Rap musician Toomaj Salehi is one of them. He recorded a song supporting the freedom fight.

Basij thugs and student protesters clashed at Tehran University Oct. 31. When the Revolutionary Guard surrounded the university blocking the protesters from leaving, parents and family members rushed to the campus to prevent more violence.

In an Oct. 30 statement, the Organizing Council of Oil Contract Workers announced it was temporarily postponing a nationwide strike set to begin Oct. 29, called to demand the release of all political and union prisoners. "A large number" of union members had been arrested, the union said, and they need time to allow for "more preparations." The union said, "We declare again that the workers will not remain silent. The oil workers ourselves are part of the same people who are protesting against poverty, the oppression of women and to have a decent life."

Subscribe, contribute to the  
'Militant' online at  
[themilitant.com](http://themilitant.com)