

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Join 'Militant' to campaign in defense of unions, rights

— EDITORIAL PAGE 9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 87/NO. 28 JULY 31, 2023

Biden's witch hunt against Trump attacks political rights

BY TERRY EVANS

The ever-expanding number of "investigations" and charges being filed against Donald Trump is unparalleled. This highly partisan operation against the likely nominee of one of the bosses' two main parties is being carried out by President Joseph Biden, Trump's likely opponent in 2024.

This is a serious threat to constitutional protections that workers need. Efforts by one of the capitalist rulers' parties to criminalize another always end up being turned against the working class.

And it's a direct attack on tens of millions who voted for Trump and say they will consider doing so again next year. The *Los Angeles Times* ran a July 9 article headlined, "The lasting threat is not the 'next Trump' but the MAGA base." In it Miles Taylor likens anyone who

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What is road forward in the Middle East?

BY SETH GALINSKY

The spread of terrorist attacks against Jews in Israel and the West Bank by supporters of Hamas and Islamic Jihad — backed by the bourgeois-clerical regime in Iran — along with thuggish actions by rightists among Israeli settlers against Palestinians in the West Bank, have increased the obstacles to working-class solidarity in the region.

It's the absence of a leadership that points a road forward that has led to the spiraling violence. That road starts with the need for Palestinian organizations and Arab governments to recognize the existence of Israel as a refuge for Jews — especially in the face of a rise in anti-Semitism in today's world — and for the Israeli government to recognize an independent Palestinian state.

Prominent Sunni cleric Maulana Abdul-Hamid, a central leader of the

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Teamster 'practice pickets' prepare for national strike

UPS breaks off talks as July 31 deadline looms



Militant/Eric Simpson

UPS workers at "practice strike picket" outside depot in Fremont, California, July 18. Thousands of Teamster members have joined similar actions outside UPS facilities around the country.

BY OSBORNE HART

PHILADELPHIA — Teamsters at UPS held two "practice pickets" here July 13, part of similar actions across the country in preparation for a potential strike at the end of the month. The package delivery outfit is the largest unionized private employer in the U.S., with over 340,000 Teamsters on the job, including 6,000 in the Philadelphia area.

Several hundred Teamsters Local 623 members demonstrated during the morning shift change at the company's south-city hub, then at the afternoon one at the huge Philadelphia International Airport facility. UNITE HERE

members and striking members of the Writers Guild joined the picket in solidarity. Passing drivers honked and shouted support.

The last UPS strike was 26 years ago, lasting more than two weeks.

Tentative agreements reportedly had been reached on some union demands

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Unions, East Palestine residents fight ongoing effects from Ohio derailment



Kaila Jones/TCPALM

Freight train blocks traffic at Vero Beach, Florida, rail crossing March 2. Note that crossing gates remain upright as the train passes. Such faults add to inherent dangers of unprotected crossings.

BY CANDACE WAGNER

BEAVER, Pa. — "We've been talking about how important it is to get the unions involved in our fight," Hilary Flint, vice president of the Unity Council for the East Palestine Train Derailment, told delegates at the July 17 meeting of the Beaver/Lawrence Counties Central Labor Council here, after being introduced by its president, Rick Galiano.

The council includes unions in northwestern Pennsylvania, including United Steelworkers at the Tenaris mill and pipe plant, some 800 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers at the Beaver Valley nuclear power plant and others.

Flint lives in Enon Valley, Pennsylvania,

nia, a largely farming area that was hit hard by the fire and toxic burn-off that followed the Feb. 3 Norfolk Southern train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio.

"I participated in the Pittsburgh rally for the Wabtec strikers last week and met Steve here," she said, pointing to Steve Kocherzat, the editor of the council's newsletter, *Union Bug*. "He asked if I could speak to your council, and I replied yes!" She said she and other members in her group are now planning a solidarity trip to Erie to visit the United Electrical Workers picket line at Wabtec again.

Flint invited the unions to join in a

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Back Ukraine's fight to defend its sovereignty

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The Ukrainian counteroffensive aimed at turning back Moscow's invasion is "a bit disappointing," complained retired U.S. Marine Col. Mark Cancian on NPR June 24. His remarks were typical of recent comments by the military brass and officials of President Joseph Biden's administration.

"The slower than expected pace of the counteroffensive," Ivana Kottasova said on CNN July 4, means Washington's support "could become increasingly unsustainable if the conflict drags on."

These remarks reflect the fact that the U.S. rulers' response to Moscow's invasion has always been focused on advancing their own imperialist interests, despite the crocodile tears they shed about the first full-scale land war in Europe in nearly 80 years. Washington has boosted its vast military forces since the start of Moscow's invasion in prepara-

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160,000 actors join Writers Guild in nationwide strike

BY NORTON SANDLER

LOS ANGELES — A spirited picket of 300 actors and writers carried signs and chanted outside Netflix's office here July 17. Daily protests are being held outside major studios across Southern California, the heart of the movie industry. Actions are also being held outside production facilities in New York and across the country.

Some 160,000 members of the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of

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Delta workers march in Minneapolis, fight for a union

Steelworkers strike over wages, workers' deaths in Ontario

Actors, Writers Guild on strike

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Television and Radio Artists went on strike July 13 after a breakdown in negotiations with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers.

They joined more than 11,000 members of the Writers Guild of America, who have been on strike since May 2.

SAG-AFTRA represents actors and other performers in what is in fact a hardscrabble industry. For every performer who has been successful there are hundreds driving cabs, waiting tables or trying to hold down some other job to make ends meet. The union members are striking for higher minimum pay; increased residuals (a complex system that pays actors and writers for repeat showings of movies, television shows, commercials and other productions); and revenue sharing for the increasing percentage of streamed entertainment.

They're demanding protections against the use of "artificial intelligence" to simulate background actors or extras. Increasingly, when a producer gets a picture of an extra's face on the set, they then use it repeatedly instead of hiring the actor for subsequent performances.

"If we don't stand tall right now, we are all going to be in trouble," union President Fran Drescher said announcing the strike. "We are all going to be in jeopardy of being replaced by machines and big business."

"They want me to work one day, pay me one day's pay, scan my face and then they own it and use it without paying me," a young woman who has worked seven years as an actor told the *Militant* at the picket in front of Netflix.

Her friend, who has been a member of SAG-AFTRA since 2011, explained if you say no to being scanned they don't

want to hire you. "And we don't get any health care. We have to make so much a year to be eligible for the union's plan. Eighty percent of us can't get it. Why can't this be our daily job? The producers aren't in it to make a good movie. They're in it to make money."

Writers have made similar demands, saying that since the rise of streaming, mid-level writers have struggled to make a living wage.

Eric Edelstein still collects checks from cable reruns of the 2015 film "Jurassic World," in which he had a small role as a caretaker for the dinosaurs. In a recent quarter, he said, his cable residuals for showing the movie totaled \$1,400. By comparison, he received only \$40 for reruns on streaming platforms.

And companies like Netflix don't show reruns, their content is always available on their website.

Constantin Sieve, who came to Los Angeles from Germany, told the *Militant* he had just finished school for dramatic arts. "I look to the future and being part of a union. It's important for workers and the community not to be exploited by the companies.

"What astonished me is that unions aren't mandatory like in Germany where I'm from," he said. "It makes the relationship between workers and companies worse. The consequences



SAG-AFTRA

Some 160,000 members of Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists went on strike July 13, joining Writers Guild of America members who struck May 2.

of fighting for a union in the U.S. is you have a target on your back. It's risky. So since there is a union here we should keep fighting and supporting it. We already have the union so we have to fight to keep it.

"The work is project to project," he added. "If you're regular on a series people expect you to be rich, but it's not true." Like the writers, actors work job to job.

If you earn \$25,950 in covered earnings or work 100 days in the industry

within a one-year span, you can qualify for the SAG-AFTRA Health Plan. Estimates are that 75% to 90% of members are not able to reach this threshold.

SAG-AFTRA and Writers Guild strikers have been joined on picket lines by workers in other industries fighting for contracts that can sustain them and their families, like hotel workers here organized by UNITE HERE, Teamsters at UPS and others. This unity has helped boost the spirit and confidence of workers in all these fights.

Maine authorities bar aid to Catholic schools yet again

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

On June 13 Keith and Valori Radonis, parents in rural Maine, filed a lawsuit against the state, challenging discriminatory school funding policies. This was the sixth lawsuit filed

since 1994 against state officials seeking to uphold freedom of religion protected by the U.S. Constitution.

The Radonises and others had hoped a June 2022 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court meant they could use state-funded tuition aid to send their children to nearby St. Dominic Academy, a prestigious co-ed Catholic school.

The court had ruled that since Maine's laws required the state to pay tuition for students to attend private schools in rural areas where there were no public schools, they could not discriminate and exclude schools from the program just because they are religious.

But Maine officials, anticipating the ruling, changed the state laws in an attempt to make the Supreme Court decision moot. State legislators added a

so-called religious neutrality rule to its Human Rights Act, saying faith-based schools had to teach all religious views equally or be barred from state funding.

And it granted Maine's Human Rights Commission — not parents or the schools — the final word on what schools teach about marriage, gender and family life. State law had previously exempted religious schools from those rules.

The impact was immediate. The two parochial schools at issue in last year's Supreme Court case said they would not accept state funds under those conditions.

"What's happened here is another set of unconstitutional hurdles have been put in place to prevent folks from access-

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THE MILITANT

Cuba's unions strengthen socialist revolution

In Cuba, where working people hold power, the government encourages unions to improve working conditions, raise production, build solidarity with unions abroad. The 'Militant' demands an end to the U.S. embargo, gets out truth about Cuba's socialist revolution.

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Militant/Róger Calero

Workers and union leaders from Cuba and abroad discuss place of unions today, gains of Cuba's socialist revolution, April 29.

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Derailment threatened toxic release in Philadelphia suburb



July 17 CSX freight train derailment north of Philadelphia.

BY OSBORNE HART

WHITEMARSH, Pa. — Shortly before 5 a.m. on July 17, more than 15 cars on a 40-car CSX freight train, including at least one marked as hazardous, derailed here, 16 miles north of Philadelphia.

This led to the immediate evacuation of 12 houses in the heavily wooded area and local road closures, as a hazmat crew rushed to the scene. The tracks are owned and maintained by Norfolk Southern.

The cause of the derailment? Norfolk Southern officials say the train hit a sinkhole after days of rain and flooding.

Drone camera footage shows tracks mangled and deformed, looking like spaghetti. Other photos show cars scattered on top of the rails.

One of the derailed cars carried tetrachloroethylene,

a hazardous chemical used as an industrial degreaser. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, tetrachloroethylene can affect your health. Breathing it can lead to dizziness or unconsciousness, and it can cause cancer, liver and kidney damage, as well as birth defects.

Authorities were concerned about this. “Everything is contained in the car,” Ben Russell, emergency response program coordinator with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection said, “but it is sitting not like it normally would.”

“I don’t know much about what caused the derailment,” Audrey Jones, a nurse’s assistant here, told the *Militant* near the Whitemarsh Elementary School. “My question is what is being done to prevent the next one?”

“We got off easy as far as I can tell, no toxic material spilled,” Russ Brown said at the Flourtown shopping center. “But this is a flood-prone area. Were the tracks checked?”

In the past Norfolk Southern had assigned inspectors to check tracks in flood-plane zones when there were flood watch warnings. Was this pro-

cedure followed here? Like other rail companies, Norfolk Southern has eliminated jobs and cut crews, including track workers, in search of higher profits in recent years. In the 20 years since 2002, Norfolk Southern slashed its workforce by 33%.

Rail bosses are trying to shift the responsibility for the derailment onto “climate change.”

“Flooding can wash out trail beds, and extreme heat causes rails to swell and tracks to buckle,” the American Railroad Association said.

But many area residents are aware of the derailment and ensuing disaster in East Palestine, and see Norfolk Southern as the culprit. Their questions concern what can be done to protect rail workers and the communities they travel through?

What was the central concern for the rail bosses?

“They want to move through this methodically but quickly to keep the commerce moving on that rail line,” Whitemarsh Township Police Chief Christopher Ward said.

Norfolk Southern expects the track to be operational July 19, two days after the accident.

Unions, residents fight effects from Ohio derailment

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July 22 solidarity rally in nearby Lisbon, Ohio, demanding the federal government cover the area with special, free Medicare funding available to victims of environmental disasters.

Another upcoming protest is set in East Palestine Aug. 3 to make the six-month anniversary of the derailment.

One council member asked whether they’ve gotten support from local politicians. “In the beginning, yes. Now, no support,” Flint said. “They tell us everything is OK on the Pennsylvania side. Believe me, it’s not.”

In the meeting and afterward, union members pledged to spread the word about the ongoing fight and encourage union participation in the protests. The council has up on its website a video that portrays how the “devastating aftermath of the train derailment in East Palestine is the most recent tragedy caused by corporations putting profits before people.”

Fight continues in East Palestine

Many area residents fear that Norfolk Southern bosses are just waiting for public attention to wane to move to drop any further responsibility for the disaster. But, as Flint indicated, local residents plan to continue making waves, and looking for allies, including from rail and other unions.

Norfolk Southern recently filed a lawsuit demanding that other companies — including those that built the cars that derailed and Oxy Vinyls and Dow Chemical that manufactured some of the toxic chemicals that got dumped on the soil, streams and into the air — share the cost of the cleanup. It also moved to have a class-action suit filed by people there seeking damages thrown out of court.

The company has poured money into public relations gestures, donating \$25 million for renovation of the city park, lunch for 16 postal workers, donations for a community volunteer day and the like. “Some in town are echoing what the company and Environmental Protection Agency are saying, ‘Everything is fine now,’” Jami Wallace, president

of the Unity Council, told the *Militant*. “But there are many needs unmet. People are still getting sick when they return to their homes. The Norfolk Southern Help Center is already telling some that the company won’t reimburse them for further expenses.

The *Salem News* reported July 18 that the EPA confirmed that both Sulphur and Leslie Run creeks continue to show signs of “gross” contamination. And contaminated soil near the tracks is still being dug up and hauled away.

Rail unions fight blocked crossings

Prominent articles in newspapers from the *New York Times* to the *Fort Worth Report* have highlighted the challenges facing working people from trains blocking road crossings across the country. In response to TV videos of children risking their lives climbing under and through stopped rail cars in Hammond, Indiana, Jared Cassity, assistant national legislative director for the SMART-TD conductors’ union, told the media that the problem has been made more dangerous by increasingly long trains that stretch for miles. SMART wants to see train length limited, he explained, but until that happens, the union wants train crews to be able to separate stopped trains that block crossings.

“It’s not a big deal, but because they want the train to move when they want the train to move,” he said, “they don’t want to lose the time of separating it and putting it back together.”

Kamron Saunders, SMART’s Texas state legislative director, told the *Report* that the blocked crossings also can occur when the crew has worked the legal limit of 12 hours but has not been relieved by the railroad. Or there wasn’t a big enough siding to put today’s lengthy trains out of harm’s way. He said the bosses insist on these longer trains. “It’s all about making money for the stockholders and that’s their only care.”

“Railroad employees do their very best to stay off the crossings,” Chris Bond, Local 513 SMART-TD local chair in Gainesville, Texas, told the *Fort Worth paper*. “But when the railroad re-

fuses to listen to what we tell them about train lengths, and stuff like that, we can’t really do much about it.”

One-person train ‘crew’?

Union Pacific rail bosses announced July 17 they are launching a “pilot project” in August to prepare for running their freight trains with a one-person crew. This has long been their cost-cutting, profit-boosting dream.

The plan is to start assigning conductors to follow trains in trucks in Nebraska and Colorado, ready to respond if a problem comes up. For now there would still be a two-person crew on the train, but their goal is “to eliminate conductors on trains,” The Associated Press reported. They claim modern technology has made conductors superfluous.

Rail workers are all for technology, but they can’t replace human operation. Conductors help monitor track conditions and radio communications. In case of derailment, conductors are the first ones to respond before other help can arrive.

Conductors in trucks would never be able to operate in all kinds of weather and traffic conditions, and to follow trains whose tracks aren’t near modern roads.

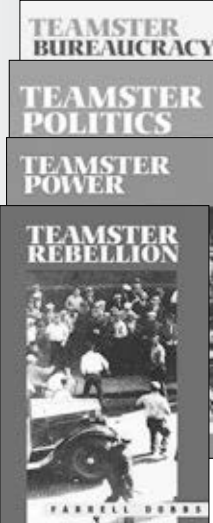
“I would not feel safe with a 3-mile-long freight train carrying the most dangerous hazardous material on the planet through my community with only one set of eyes,” Greg Hynes, SMART’s national legislative director, told a Federal Railroad Administration hearing last December.

“The rail unions, as well as other unions need to look to using union power to exert workers control on the job,” Tony Lane, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for Allegheny County Executive in Pittsburgh and a former rail worker, told the *Militant*. “The unions should fight for trains no longer than 50 cars and for a crew of four with two on the rear of the train. Those two rear crew members can watch out for train malfunctions and assist in separating a train that’s blocking crossings.”

Lessons of Teamster battles from 1930s

4 books by Farrell Dobbs

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Supreme Court ruling for web designer is win for free speech

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The U.S. Supreme Court in a 6-3 vote June 30 ruled that a Colorado commercial website designer has the right under the First Amendment — which protects free speech from government interference — to refuse to endorse messages she disagrees with. This is an important victory for working people.

The case involves Lorie Smith, who runs her own business, 303 Creative, in the city of Littleton. In addition to graphic design and social media services, she began organizing a project to create websites for couples planning their weddings. While providing services to customers regardless of their race, creed, sex or sexual orientation, Smith drew a line at being forced by state law to design anything that could make it appear she espoused ideas she did not hold.

She believes that marriage is a union between one man and one woman and sued so she would not be forced to do anything that would indicate she opposed that view.

Concerned that she would face prosecution under Colorado's far-reaching Anti-Discrimination Act, Smith filed a preemptory lawsuit in 2016 in federal district court seeking an injunction to prevent the state from forcing her to create wedding websites celebrating marriages that contradict her views.

The Colorado law bars discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in public accommodations, like housing and transportation. Penalties under this law are far-reaching, including fines for each violation as well as being forced to undergo mandatory state educational programs and submitting ongoing compliance reports to state officials. Both state authorities or private citizens may bring actions to enforce the law.

The district court ruled against Smith, as did the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit Court. She appealed to the Supreme Court.

In 2018 the High Court had ruled on a similar case, in favor of Colorado Masterpiece Cakeshop owner Jack Phillips. He had refused to create a cake for a same-sex couple because of his religious beliefs. But the ruling didn't address the free speech questions posed, sending the case back to lower courts for further consideration.

'Free to speak, not as gov't demands'

In the majority opinion for the court in Smith's case, Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote for the majority, "The First Amendment envisions the United States as a rich and complex place where all persons are free to think and speak as they wish, not as the government demands." Both sides in the case had agreed the websites Smith creates "express" her message.

Holding the key issue at hand was constitutionally protected free speech, Gorsuch's ruling expressly differentiated it from an earlier ruling that barred employers' from discriminating against gays and lesbians in employment and promotions. In a 2020 ruling that Gorsuch also wrote, the

majority held the 1964 Civil Rights Act bars any such discrimination.

In a dissenting opinion in the Colorado case, Justice Sonia Sotomayor, joined by Justices Elena Kagan and Ketanji Brown Jackson, wrote the ruling was "a backlash to the movement for liberty and equality for gender and sexual minorities," claiming it was a "message that we live in a society with social castes."

Gorsuch wrote, "A commitment to speech for only *some* messages and *some* persons is no commitment at all. By approving a government's effort to 'eliminate' disfavored 'ideas,' today's dissent is emblematic of an unfortunate tendency by some to defend First Amendment values only when they find the speaker's message sympathetic."

The ruling points to the importance of earlier decisions barring discrimination in places of public accommodation. These were won through working-class struggles like the Black-led civil rights battles of the 1950s and '60s that transformed the attitudes of millions.

"At the same time," the ruling noted, Colorado has expanded its definition of "public accommodations." "[T]his Court has held, public accommodations

Witch hunt against Trump attack on constitutional rights

Continued from front page

thinks there were problems with the conduct of the 2020 election to millions in the 1930s who "believed Hitler's lie."

Taylor's commentary is one of many that dismiss so-called election deniers as rightist lunatics. Biden himself said so-called MAGA Republicans are "semi-fascists." What's at stake has nothing to do with whether Trump's unproven claim the 2020 election was rigged is true or not.

Every election under capitalism is "rigged," rigged on behalf of the propertied rulers. The entire purpose of the assault against Trump and his supporters by Biden, the Democratic Party, liberal media and the middle-class left is to do just that.

And the elections under capitalism are rigged big-time against any working-class party, like the Socialist Workers Party, being able to present an alternative. Onerous requirements are imposed on working-class parties to bar them from the ballot, and the big-business media moves might and main to keep them out of the press.

Whenever the Democrats or Republicans get a majority, they push gerrymandering and other schemes designed to give them an advantage over their electoral rivals. To this day millions believe that voter fraud by Mayor Richard Daley's Democratic machine in Chicago churned out ballots to throw the 1960 presidential election to John F. Kennedy.

Underlying Democrats' smear campaign is the rulers' fear of working people. For decades, the capitalist two-party system has delivered nothing but crushed expectations to workers, farmers and other exploited producers. Millions recognize that the government will continue offloading the capitalist crisis onto our shoulders whether a Democrat or a Republican is in the White House.

Today more workers are turning to the unions to resist bosses' assaults



Reuters/Kevin Mohatt

Colorado web designer Lorie Smith won her Supreme Court case June 30 on her right, under First Amendment protections of free speech from government interference, not to endorse messages she disagrees with. This victory defends constitutional liberties for working people.

statutes can sweep too broadly when deployed to compel speech." It said, "When a state public accommodations law and the Constitution collide, there can be no question which must prevail."

Kristen Waggoner, an attorney for Alliance Defending Freedom, which helped bring the case, told the *Wall Street Journal*, "Disagreement isn't discrimination, and the government can't mislabel speech as discrimination to censor it."

Also on June 29, the Supreme Court

ruled unanimously that postal worker Gerald Groff, an evangelical Christian, should be allowed to have Sundays off to observe his religious faith. Groff said he had been forced to quit his job because the Postal Service kept scheduling him to work Sundays to deliver Amazon packages. He filed a lawsuit under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The decision is a gain for working people, who should find it easier to keep their jobs without boss interference with their religious beliefs.

and to fight for our class interests. Through strikes and other struggles, workers are winning solidarity from fellow unionists and discovering what we can do when we unite and act together against the exploiting class.

Gov't prosecutors expand probes

Democrats' efforts to jail Trump are expanding. Jack Smith, the Biden Justice Department's special counsel, has widened his moves to generate new charges against Trump in Arizona and Georgia, issuing subpoenas, grilling witnesses and offering immunity to anyone who will finger the former president.

Trump's lawyers filed a motion July 10 for an indefinite delay to his trial on Smith's charges he unlawfully held onto a few dozen of his presidential papers, charges based on the notorious World War I-era witch hunt Espionage Act. The trial is set to begin in December and run into the 2024 electioneering, when "opposing candidates are effectively (if not literally) directly adverse to one another," Trump's lawyers say. Such a schedule "will impact both the outcome of that election and, importantly, the ability of the Defendants to obtain a fair trial."

Any delay is abhorrent to Smith. The purpose of the prosecution and accompanying hoopla is to have the trial run during the campaign, in hopes of swinging the vote for Biden. Smith insisted the trial begin Dec. 11. He claimed a "speedy trial is a foundational requirement of the Constitution."

That's not accurate, as any attorney surely knows. "In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial," says the Sixth Amendment. That right belongs to the *accused*, not the accuser. It's a protection *from* the government, not a weapon to aid the Democratic Party's electoral chances.

In a related development, the Justice Department unsealed an indictment

against Gal Luft July 10 charging him with being an unregistered agent of the Chinese government and illegally trading in oil and arms. Luft denies the charges and has gone incommunicado.

The real reason he's been indicted is to help paint Trump as a threat to "national security," a charge that harks back to the fake "Russian collusion" accusations of 2016. It's the real reason they charged Trump under the Espionage Act.

The opening paragraph of the Luft indictment says that in 2016 he acted on orders from Beijing to try to recruit a "former high-ranking U.S. Government official, including while the former official was an adviser to the then-President-elect," i.e., Trump.

Luft is also targeted by Democrats because in 2019 he made accusations about corrupt financial dealings by Hunter Biden, the president's son. Republicans had wanted to call Luft before Congress and say the charges were made to try to silence him.

The Foreign Agents Registration Act was adopted in 1938, part of a raft of laws aimed at outlawing opposition in the unions to the U.S. rulers' drive to enter the second imperialist world war. Ever since, it has been used to attack political targets of the capitalist rulers and undermine free speech protections. It enables the government to target anyone whose views appear similar to those of some foreign government.

Today three members of the African People's Socialist Party have been charged as "Russian agents" under the witch hunt law. They were indicted after an FBI SWAT team raided their headquarters and residences in St. Louis and St. Petersburg, Florida, last year, using flash-bang grenades and carrying automatic weapons.

The fight to end the frame-up of the APSP and its members is an important part of the defense of constitutional freedoms today. So too is demanding the charges against Trump be thrown out.

The 'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

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

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Delta workers march in Minneapolis, fight for a union

MINNEAPOLIS — A rally was held on July 14 at Minneapolis-St. Paul airport by Delta Air Lines workers in a number of crafts fighting for a union. The action was organized by a coalition of ramp workers wanting to be in the Machinists union; flight attendants seeking to join the AFA; and mechanics seeking to join the Teamsters union, James Carlson, Air Transport Coordinator of Organizing for the IAM, said.

Kel Smith, an organizer for the Association of Flight Attendants at the airport, gave the *Militant* a statement calling for union representation.

“Minneapolis is a union town! Delta Flight Attendants, fleet service, and mechanics are organizing to join their unions,” it quotes Sara Nelson, president of the Association of Flight Attendants-Communications Workers of America, saying. “The workers at Delta won’t let the corporate leaders who come and go with their millions define who the airline really is. The workers are organizing to make sure their airline operates with open arms to the world and respect for everyone in it.”

— Mary Martin

Casino workers in Quebec on strike for higher wages

MONTREAL — Some 1,700 workers at four casinos and gaming halls owned by the government corporation Lotto Quebec have been on strike since June 23 across the province.

The strikers, members of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN), work in casino restaurants, maintenance and security. They are demanding wage increases equivalent to the rise in the cost of living, plus \$1 more an hour.

“It’s really the question of wages that’s at the heart of the conflict,” explained Pierre Roy, vice president of grievances for the restaurant section of the CSN’s Union of Casino Corporation Employees, during a solidarity visit by this worker-correspondent to

a lively picket line involving some 100 strikers in front of the Montreal Casino July 9. “All employees are offended and insulted that Lotto Quebec’s top executives are giving themselves 34% increases when they’re offering us 2.5%.” After reaching 8.1% in 2022, Canada’s official inflation rate was still 4.3% in March.

Some 2,000 casino workers and supporters from across the province demonstrated July 5 in front of Lotto-Quebec’s main office in downtown Montreal.

— Michel Prairie

Steelworkers strike over wages, workers’ deaths in Ontario

HAMILTON, Ontario — Some 1,450 members of United Steelworkers Local 7135 went on strike here June 29 against National Steel Car, a major railroad freight car manufacturer in Canada. A wage increase that covers inflation and the dangerous working conditions maintained by the bosses are key issues in the strike.

The company is offering workers a pay increase of only 10% over three years. While the official inflation rate here has fallen to 4.4% this year, price increases in food, gas, rent and other essentials are much higher. The union is demanding a 7% per year wage hike.

“We’re not asking for doubling our wages, we’re asking at least to meet what inflation has done,” Local 7135 President Frank Crowder said at a July 6 rally in front of the plant. In addition to striking workers, members of the Hamilton and District



Militant/Mary Martin

Rally at Minneapolis-St. Paul airport July 14 organized by Delta Air Lines workers fighting for union representation for ramp workers, flight attendants and mechanics who work there.

Labour Council, other United Steelworkers locals, the Canadian Labour Congress and the Congress of Union Retirees took part.

Safety is another major issue for the workers. Welder Quoc Le was crushed to death June 6, 2022, when the wall of a rail car weighing 2,000 pounds fell on him. Workers rallied outside the plant three days later, calling for a criminal investigation.

Le was the third worker to die in the plant in less than two years. Crane operator Fraser Cowan was killed in September 2020, and painter Collin Grayley died in April 2021.

Last December, the Ontario government Ministry of Labour laid three non-

criminal charges against National Steel Car for violations of the Occupational Health and Safety Act in the death of Cowan. The company pled guilty to one charge and paid a fine. The other charges were dropped.

This past May, the government laid three charges against the company in the death of Quoc Le. That trial is pending.

No criminal charges against the bosses have been filed, the July 6 *Hamilton Spectator* reported.

Strikers are picketing 24/7 in front of the plant at 600 Kenilworth Ave. N. Messages of solidarity can be sent to info@usw7135.ca.

— Al Cappe

Maine authorities bar aid to Catholic schools yet again

Continued from page 2

ing their town tuition and to send their children to the school of their choice,” Keith Radonis told the press. The state basically said, “Even if we lose this, we’re going to make sure that people of faith will never get to use this money.”

Maine legislators have publicly boasted about what they did. State Attorney General Aaron Frey has

vowed to work with the governor and state legislature to prevent money from ever going to faith-based schools.

The state’s move was also applauded in the liberal press. In an opinion piece in the *New York Times*, law professor Aaron Tang, a former law clerk to Justice Sonia Sotomayor, tossed aside any concern for constitutional

protections. He wrote, “The legislative fix made by Maine lawmakers offers a model for lawmakers elsewhere who are alarmed by the court’s aggressive swing to the right.”

As the Radonis suit points out, actions against the Catholic Church and schools have a long history in Maine and elsewhere. In the mid-19th century, as waves of immigrants arrived, particularly from Ireland, bosses posted “Irish Need Not Apply” at workplaces across the East Coast, to whip up anti-Catholic sentiments and divide working people.

Maine officials in 1854 declared that all students were required to read the Protestant Bible in school. In response, Catholic Bishop John Bernard Fitzpatrick tried to form a separate school for his parishioners. A mob stripped, tarred and feathered him.

In 1859, a Boston teacher whipped a 10-year-old Catholic student’s hands until he fainted for refusing to read from the Protestant Bible. Over the following days hundreds of Catholic students walked out in what became known as the “Eliot School Rebellion.” The incident helped spark the parochial school movement.

As more Catholic schools opened, bigots pushed government moves against them. In 1875 Maine politician James G. Blaine championed an effort to amend the Bill of Rights to bar any funding for Catholic schools. It narrowly failed. Today 37 states still have some form of “Blaine amendments” on the books.

Anti-working-class discrimination against Catholics continues today. In the first quarter of 2023, 69 Catholic churches were vandalized.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



July 28, 1998

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — Chants of “Huelga! Huelga!” (Strike! Strike!) thundered at dawn as close to 1,000 unionists blocked the highway entrance to the Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport here July 7. It was the first day of a 48-hour general strike in this Caribbean nation and U.S. colony.

A coalition of about 50 trade unions organized the island-wide strike, involving hundreds of thousands of workers, to support striking telephone workers in their fight to oppose the sale of the state-owned Puerto Rico Telephone Co. to a private consortium led by U.S. telecommunications giant GTE.

It was the first strike of this magnitude since the 1930s. Besides affecting air traffic at the airports in this city, unionists paralyzed the docks, city buses, a few factories, banks, major shopping centers, university campuses, and government offices.



July 27, 1973

NEW YORK, JULY 18 — The Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance filed suit here today in federal district court against Richard Nixon and other officials and former officials of the U. S. government.

The suit asks for a court injunction to halt all government harassment, intimidation, and illegal spying on the SWP and YSA. It also seeks to have the attorney general’s list of “subversive” organizations ruled unconstitutional. The SWP was placed on this list in 1948. In addition, the plaintiffs are asking for damages totaling more than \$27 million.

The suit documents wiretapping, tampering with mail, job discrimination, and harassment by government agencies, including the FBI. It also cites incidents of SWP headquarters being firebombed. The actions violate the first, fourth and fifth amendments to the U.S. constitution.



July 26, 1948

The following is [excerpted from] the address of Farrell Dobbs, SWP presidential candidate, broadcast over the CBS network on July 6th.

Working people of America!

Never were conditions more favorable for the launching of a national Labor Party. This party would command immediate response from 15 million unionists and their families who represent the mightiest organized force in this country.

An independent party launched by the unions will become the foremost party in the land. The Socialist Workers Party would support such a party. We would advocate that our program be made the program of the Labor Party.

Working men and women! Take the road of independent political action to establish a Workers and Farmers Government. You can set out on that road in the 1948 elections by casting your vote for the candidates of the Socialist Workers Party.

Road forward in Middle East

Continued from front page
fight for democratic rights in Iran and for equal rights for oppressed nationalities there, has repeatedly called for negotiations. “The government of Israel and the Palestinian people should make peace,” Abdul-Hamid told a large crowd in Zahedan in Iran’s Baluchistan region Jan. 27.

There are no prominent voices in Israel and the Palestinian territories that are speaking out along the same lines today.

On July 2-3, the Israel Defense Forces raided Islamic Jihad and Hamas centers in Jenin, with drones, missiles and as many as 1,000 soldiers — its largest operation in the West Bank in 20 years. This comes on top of a previous raid June 19.

As of July 15 at least 30 Jewish Israelis — almost all unarmed civilians — have been killed in terror attacks since the start of the year, close to the total number for all of 2022. The overwhelming majority of the 147 Palestinians killed this year were members of armed groups or involved in terror attacks. But some were civilian bystanders or killed in clashes with Israeli settlers.

Dead-end course of Islamists

Al Jazeera interviewed a member of one of the armed Palestinian groups in Jenin. He said negotiations are a waste of time and that there is no political solution. “We do not know where we are going,” he told Al Jazeera. “We are just waiting for death.”

That view is an accurate reflection of the reactionary perspective of Islamic Jihad, Hamas and Tehran, which put forward nothing except the desire to destroy Israel “from the river to the sea” and expel its Jewish inhabitants. Most Palestinians don’t share that view. It’s Palestinian workers and farmers in Jenin and Palestinians and Israelis throughout the region who pay for the unending cycles of violence.

The Israeli government knows that

its military operations against Islamic Jihad and Hamas offer no long-term solution.

The West Bank, occupied by Israeli forces since 1967, has been gerrymandered by the Israeli rulers into a patchwork of three areas: Area “A,” under control of the Fatah-led Palestinian National Authority; Area “B,” under Palestinian civil control and Israeli police authority; and Area “C,” under direct Israeli control.

For a number of generations, Israelis have lived in the West Bank. Today there are some 500,000 Israelis living in roughly 150 settlements, up from 350,000 in 2014. About 5 million Palestinians live there.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says he would support a Palestinian state. But the actual course of his government, including lifting some obstacles to expanding the settlements, go in the opposite direction. Rightists in his coalition want an even bigger expansion of the settlements.

Using the Islamist terrorist attacks as a pretext, some rightists among the settlers have burned crops and vandalized Palestinian homes and farms in the West Bank, while the Israel Defense Forces and police look the other way.

Recognize Israel, Palestinian state

Backers of reactionary groups like Islamic Jihad and Hamas, rightist forces in Israel, and the middle-class left in the U.S. all say the “two-state solution” is dead. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas says he favors it, but also says he won’t seek talks with the Israeli government to try to advance toward it.

In fact the latest terrorist attacks by Islamists and thuggery by rightists among the settlers show once again that recognition of Israel and negotiations to reach agreement on a contiguous, sovereign Palestinian state is the only way forward.

In 2020 the White House under

Veterans, retirees step up protests in Iran



Tasnim news agency

Dozens of veterans and their families rallied outside the Martyrs and Veterans Foundation in Tehran July 8, above, chanting, “Yesterday’s soldiers, today’s hungry.” They were protesting government plans to slash their pensions and other benefits amid the deepening capitalist economic crisis and sky-high inflation. They also pushed for Tehran to pursue getting compensation from the Iraqi regime for injuries suffered in the U.S.-backed invasion on the heels of the 1979 revolution that overthrew the shah.

Tasnim, the news agency of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, denied reports police attacked the protest with tear gas and beat demonstrators, but admitted the cops intervened and said, “The possibility that they used pepper spray is under investigation.”

Tens of thousands of Iranian volunteers who fought in the 1980 to 1988 war suffer chronic illnesses caused by chemical weapons fired by the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein.

Many veterans discourage their relatives from signing up for the Revolutionary Guard — today a hated repressive force against Iran’s working people — because they don’t want them sent off as cannon fodder in the bourgeois-clerical regime’s military adventures abroad.

Hundreds of retirees protested July 16, 17, and 18, part of weekly actions across Iran demanding the government increase their pensions.

— SETH GALINSKY

then-President Donald Trump brokered the “Abraham Accords” in which the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kosovo, Morocco and Sudan ended their decadeslong boycott of Israel and established diplomatic and trade relations. But President Joseph Biden has shown little interest in expanding the accords and the process

has stalled. Since Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine, conflicts have sharpened among rival capitalist powers intervening in countries across the Middle East. Each is jockeying for position and seeking new alliances.

Amid these conflicts, working people in the region will continue to seek a road forward. Some 20% of the population of Israel are Arab citizens. They work side by side, are members of the same unions, strike together and join the same picket lines.

Even in the West Bank, many Jews and Palestinians are getting to know each other. “They want to portray us as fascist anti-Arab right-wingers,” Rabbi Leo Dan, whose wife and two daughters were murdered in a terrorist attack April 7, told the press. “The truth of the matter is that we live very closely with our Arab neighbors and get along with them.”

A leadership worthy of the Palestinian people would advance their fight for national rights by winning allies among working people of all religions and nationalities in Israel and the region. It would tell inhabitants of Israeli settlements you are welcome to stay in the West Bank when it becomes an independent Palestinian state, with equal rights — the same rights that Arab citizens demand inside Israel. A leadership that took a similar stance inside Israel would reach out to Palestinian workers and farmers.

That would open the door to further joint struggles by working people — be they Palestinian, Jewish, Arab, Kurdish, Turkish, Persian, whatever their religious beliefs — against the capitalist governments and ruling classes that exploit and oppress them.

Atlanta forum: ‘Defend freedom of speech for everyone’

BY JANICE LYNN

ATLANTA — “We need to recognize the common interests of those whose freedom of speech is under attack,” Dr. Aisha Fields, a leader of the African People’s Socialist Party from Huntsville, Alabama, told participants at a July 16 Militant Labor Forum here. Also speaking was John Benson of the Socialist Workers Party.

The forum opened with a video of the FBI’s pre-dawn raids on the offices and homes of APSP and Uhuru Movement leaders in St. Petersburg, Florida, and St. Louis July 29, 2022. APSP Chairman Omali Yeshitela, along with APSP and Uhuru Movement members Penny Hess and Jesse Nevel were charged in April, Fields said. Akile Anai has been called an “unindicted co-conspirator.”

“They charge them with acting as agents of a foreign government. We reject any notion that we are agents of Russia or any other government. If anything we are agents of African peoples,” Fields declared, describing some of the projects they run in Black communities.

Fields was in St. Louis during the raid there. She described the FBI’s use of armored vehicles, flash-bang grenades, drones and battering rams. “When the

chairman and his wife came out of the house, laser targets were projected on their bodies. Files, hard drives, laptops were stolen,” she said.

“No date has yet been set for a trial,” she said. “We are focused on getting the word out. You can’t win legally without waging a political campaign.”

“Defending and extending the freedoms protected by the U.S. Constitution is at the center of the class struggle today,” Benson said.

He described how the party defended its members and Teamster unionists who were railroaded to jail for their opposition to Washington’s entry into the second imperialist world war. In the 1970s, he said the party won a lawsuit against the FBI for decades of spying, harassment and its SWP Cointelpro disruption operations.

“Today the Biden administration is trying to rehabilitate the FBI and attack constitutional rights,” Benson said. “It is not unrelated that shortly after the raids against the APSP, the FBI raided Donald Trump’s Mar-a-Largo estate. And within weeks, FBI agents visited solidarity activists who had participated in a brigade to Cuba. The real targets are workers’ organizations and the or-

ganizations of the oppressed,” he said.

“The APSP is standing up and fighting back,” Benson said. “This is the only way the government will be pushed back.”

“Yes, there are vast differences within the African liberation movement, within the socialist camp,” Fields said. “But people see clearly the bogus attacks. We are winning support even though we have political differences on some things.” She thanked the Militant Labor Forum for holding programs like this around the country. A collection was taken for the APSP’s legal and political defense.

Benson underscored the importance of defending everyone whose constitutional rights are denied. “That is why we oppose the government’s attacks on Trump’s constitutional rights. There is a law of history that no matter whom the attacks on political rights are first directed against, in the end they will always fall on the working class.

“We say drop all charges against Trump and drop all charges against the African People’s Socialist Party.”

For more information on the APSP defense campaign, go to handsof-fuhuru.com.

Teamster's UPS 'practice strike pickets' prepare for July 31

Continued from the front page

prior to July 5 when the bosses walked out of talks, leaving negotiations between the union and UPS in limbo. These include an end to two-tier pay for drivers; no more forced sixth day of work after a five-day workweek; no subcontracting out work to the U.S. Postal Service; and for Martin Luther King Day as a paid holiday.

Key outstanding issues include higher wages for all UPS workers, especially part-timers, more full-time jobs, an end to boss harassment, and resolution of safety issues for sorters and loaders.

"We're ready. We need to show we're ready to strike," Local 623 officer Richard Hooker said at both actions. Nationally, the Teamsters voted by 97% to strike if an agreement isn't reached before the contract runs out July 31.

Contract rally in New York: This is for entire labor movement

NEW HYDE PARK, N.Y. — A couple hundred members of Teamsters Local 804 and supporters came together July 15 for a Contract Unity Rally. "We are on the verge of a tremendous victory or a tremendous fight," Teamsters General President Sean O'Brien told the rally. "We'll get what we want through negotiations, or we'll strike. Either way we will win."

"This isn't just about the Teamsters, it's about the entire labor movement," he said. "There are battles going on all over." This includes strikes at Wabtec in Erie, Pennsylvania; National Tank Car in Ontario; and by the Writers and Screen Actors Guilds nationwide.

He pointed to one of the biggest issues. "In the last two contracts, part timers have been left behind." Not this time,



Militant/Osborne Hart

UPS workers "practice picket" in Philadelphia July 13 drew striking Screen Actors Guild members, UNITE HERE unionists and others who joined in solidarity with the Teamsters.

he said. Most part-timers work sorting packages or loading trucks.

Audrey Johnson works part time at the Secaucus Meadowlands Depot in New Jersey. "They only guarantee three and a half hours a day," she said. "So I only work 17 and a half hours a week. Everyone has to work a second or third job to get by." She also works in a cafe.

Phil Rubianes, a UPS driver for two years, described the long hours he works, often starting at 9 a.m. "You have to stay out until all your packages are delivered or it gets to be 11 p.m.," he told the *Militant*. "The bosses will follow the truck to spy on you."

"I hope we do strike," Rubianes said. "Because we'll win big."

— Joanne Kuniansky and Sara Lobman

UPS workers hold 'practice strike picket' in Ohio

SHARONVILLE, Ohio — For an hour, 50 drivers, members of Teamsters Local 100, conducted a "practice strike picket" outside the UPS warehouse in this Cincinnati suburb July 15 before reporting to work.

Chants included "Harassment must go or we vote no!" and "Just practicing for a just contract."

Jonathan Williams, a driver for five years, told this *Militant* worker-correspondent how UPS bosses use the "22.4" provision in the last contract to combine jobs, making workers load trucks and then drive the trucks to get more hours.

"I did this for several years and they wouldn't even let me in the warehouse

to load," Williams said. "I just drove, but for less money than they pay a full-time driver. This will be gone in this contract."

"When you go back in, tell everybody this is practice now, but Aug. 1 the game will be on if the company doesn't budge," Bill Davis, president of Local 100, told workers.

Last week a practice picket was held at the Gest Street facility in Cincinnati. One is projected in Walton, Kentucky.

A rally in Atlanta July 22 at 10 a.m. at Lakewood Ave. SW will feature Teamsters General President O'Brien.

— Ned Measel

Fight for higher pay for part-time UPS workers a big sticking point

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — About 200 Teamsters Local 89 members held two rallies here in front of the UPS Louisville Centennial and Worldport hubs July 18. Teamsters Secretary-Treasurer Fred Zuckerman, Local 89 President Avral Thompson and other local union officials spoke.

Worldport is the largest UPS facility in the U.S., handling more than 400,000 packages an hour. The vast majority of its 10,000 workers are part time.

"You have to be here 20 years to have enough seniority to go full time," Danielle Saunders, who has worked there for 25 years, told the *Militant*. "After 25 years most of us make just a little over \$20 an hour."

Perri Cole said UPS recently raised pay for new hires from \$14.50 an hour to \$21 an hour, in an effort to recruit more workers, but the more senior workers didn't get a raise.

"We're demanding higher wages for all part-time workers," Zuckerman said, one of the big sticking points in negotiations. "They have record profits and they tell us they don't have the money to pay workers more."

Charlie Fitz-Gibbons, a 25-year-old part-time worker, said that UPS has been cutting hours. "Two months ago they forced us on a Sunday to Thursday schedule instead of Monday to Friday. Many people go to church on Sundays but they don't care," he said.

"There are more than 100,000 part-time UPS Teamsters making less than \$20 per hour," President O'Brien wrote in *Newsweek* July 17. "Wages for these workers went from \$8 an hour in 1982 to just \$15.50 today."

— Amy Husk

Bipartisan attack on Boris Johnson imperils rights in UK

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — In a bipartisan assault on political rights, a parliamentary committee moved to suspend former Conservative Prime Minister Boris Johnson from Parliament before he resigned June 9. The move threatens freedoms that are needed and used by working people.

Some members of Parliament's Privileges Committee, including its chair, Labour's Harriet Harman, had openly declared Johnson guilty before working up evidence to remove him. The committee's majority is from Johnson's own party.

Johnson was targeted for his political course both as prime minister and subsequently. He decided to quit and not fight the attempt to drive him out. There will now be a by-election July 20 in the Uxbridge and South Ruislip constituency where he was elected to Parliament in 2019. He will not be a candidate.

"I'm no Johnson supporter," telecommunications engineer Saqib Faizi told this worker-correspondent at his doorstep in the constituency. "But I think it's up to the people who vote to decide whether he's an MP, not a parliamentary committee."

Johnson resigned after the Privileges Committee found him guilty of misleading Members of Parliament when he was prime minister over his attendance at parties that didn't comply with pandemic lockdown regulations. The committee also found Johnson guilty of

"being complicit in a campaign of abuse and attempted intimidation of the committee." The "evidence" for this was Johnson calling the committee a "kangaroo court" that was carrying out a "witch hunt." This legislative body said it would have suspended Johnson from Parliament for 90 days had he not quit.

It also recommended he be stripped of a pass to enter Parliament that is usually issued to former MPs, barring him from automatic entry into the building.

In their drive to oust him, Johnson's opponents took advantage of the fact that millions of working people were angered that Johnson refused to abide by the same kind of harsh lockdown restrictions imposed by his government that prevented them from having contact with one another. This included the separation from loved ones at death's door in hospitals or attending funerals.

It was the third move against Johnson since fellow Conservatives forced him out as prime minister. He was fined by the police and then condemned in a report by a senior civil servant, Susan Gray. A campaign targeted Johnson for his alleged "immoral" character. The Privileges Committee report was adopted by Parliament, with six Conservatives voting against, while 225 MPs, more than a third of the body, stayed away on the day of the vote, or abstained.

As a result of the committee's decisions "no MP is free from vendetta, or

expulsion on trumped-up charges by a tiny minority," Johnson said.

Cop operation targets SNP leaders

In a separate probe two days later, Nicola Sturgeon, the former Scottish First Minister and Scottish National Party leader, was arrested. She was held for questioning for seven hours June 11. The operation was part of a two-year-long state probe into the Scottish National Party.

Sturgeon's political opponents accuse SNP officers of misusing money raised by the party for a future referendum campaign on Scottish independence. As part of the cop operation, Sturgeon's husband, Peter Murrell, who was the party's former chief executive officer, and former Treasurer Colin Beattie were arrested in April. Cops raided Murrell and Sturgeon's home that month, carting off boxes of material and seizing a camper van. They set up an "investigation tent" in the couple's front garden.

Crises tearing at the capitalist parties unfold with governments in London and Edinburgh having no answer to the weakness and volatility of the U.K.'s capitalist economy, the British rulers' declining international role, nor the mounting social crisis facing working people. Growth, trade and business investment have declined. Inflation remains at 11.3%, 9 million are jobless and the crisis in health provision, hous-

Continued on page 9

— CALENDAR —

NEW YORK

New York

Celebrate 70th Anniversary of the Cuban Revolution. Keynote speaker: Gerardo Penalver Portal, Cuban Ambassador to the U.N. Sat., July 29. Reception, 6 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. Malcolm X and Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center, 3940 Broadway (at 165 Street). For more information, www.us-cubanormalization.org.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

Moncada 70th Anniversary Lunch Gala. Hear two Cuban youth leaders: Marianniz Diaz Hernandez, chemical research scientist; Ivan Barreto Lopez, international relations expert. Sun., Aug. 6, 12 p.m. Greek buffet lunch. Presold tickets only, \$35; unemployed, \$25. *Greek Community Club, 206 Lakemba St., Lakemba.* For tickets: www.trybooking.com/CJLUS. Tel: 614 2266 5099. Organized by Australia Cuba Friendship Society.

How Cuba's revolution established 'order and the rule of law'

One of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for July is *Soldier of the Cuban Revolution: From the Cane Fields of Oriente to General of the Revolutionary Armed Forces* by Luis Alfonso Zayas. This year is the 70th anniversary of the Fidel Castro-led July 26, 1953, raid on the Moncada Barracks, launching the modern Cuban revolutionary movement. Zayas joined Castro's Rebel Army as a teenager. In 1959, the revolutionary war culminated in a successful popular uprising. Castro led Cuban workers and farmers to take power into their own hands, leading to the first socialist revolution in the Americas. It has withstood Washington's threats and relentless economic war ever since. Mary-Alice Waters, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, conducted the interview. Copyright© 2011 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Wide World Photos

Fidel Castro addresses popular outpouring in Colon on "Liberty Caravan" to Havana, Jan. 7, 1959. When Batista's murderous henchmen were tried, punished, U.S. press screamed "bloodbath!" The opposite was true, Castro said, the Cuban Revolution ensured "no lynchings, no people dragged through the streets."

with a group that included his escort of Antonio Núñez Jiménez, Oscar Fernández Mell, Harry Villegas, Leonardo Tamayo, Alberto Castellanos, and others. On January 2, they took over the La Cabaña fortress, which dominates the entrance to Havana harbor. We arrived at 3:00 a.m. on January 3.

As soon as Che occupied the garrison at La Cabaña, he put all the soldiers and officers of Batista's army quartered there on leave for a month. The soldiers' weapons were to be left behind, as well as all other state property. They left with just the clothes on their backs and a few personal items. The officers were allowed to keep their revolvers. A month later, when they came back from leave, they learned they'd all been discharged from the armed forces.

Che put me in charge of the military prison at La Cabaña. Running a jail was something I knew absolutely nothing about.

There weren't many prisoners at first, but they quickly started to arrive. On January 1, in response to Fidel's call for a general strike and a popular insurrection, police stations and garrisons all across the country had been taken, and in the days that followed many of the regime's henchmen were captured. I'm talking about the ones who didn't escape with Batista — the ones who had to pay for their crimes. From all directions, at all hours of the day and night, patrol cars began to arrive at La Cabaña. In the end,

more than a thousand of these thugs and murderers had been turned over.

They included Hernando Hernández, the head of the national police, as well as Jesús Sosa Blanco, Merob Sosa, Pelayo Alayón, and Pedro Morejón. There was also Ricardo José Grau, a general related to former Cuban president Grau San Martín, and other officers of the navy, the police, and the army. Ernesto de la Fe, Batista's mafia-style information minister, was brought in. There were all kinds of people who had committed every type of atrocity.

One of the most notorious criminals captured and tried was Jesús Sosa Blanco. This was a man who had set fire to houses with families inside. So many victims demanded to testify against Sosa Blanco that the trial was held in the Ciudad Deportiva stadium. It was open to the public and televised.

WATERS: In the United States and elsewhere at that time, a campaign attacking these trials as violations of human rights began immediately. The charge was that the revolution simply executed its enemies without due process.

ZAYAS: All kinds of accusations were made by enemies of the revolution. But no one was executed without having a trial with all

established guarantees.

Charges were brought against these criminals by the victims of their outrages, including some whose families had been murdered. Torture victims came to testify: "This man tortured me. See the scar on my back from the beatings." Or "That man tore out my fingernails." Some victims had had their eyes gouged out.

As prison chief at La Cabaña, I attended the trials of these murderers. I was also on the tribunal that judged Alayón and Morejón.

WATERS: In the book *Cien horas con Fidel* [*One Hundred Hours With Fidel* or *My Life* in English], journalist Ignacio Ramonet asks Fidel about these trials. Fidel's answer was very good. Some mistakes were made in the way

a few of the trials were conducted, Fidel said — mistakes the revolutionary leadership rapidly corrected. But the revolutionary tribunals, he explained, were established precisely to prevent the criminals from being dragged through the streets by angry mobs and executed without due process. The truth is the opposite of what Washington charged. The revolutionary tribunals brought order and the rule of law.

ZAYAS: Had these individuals been released, they would have been lynched in the street. We had to protect them from the population. The people wanted justice for the deaths of their family members, their loved ones.

This may have been the only revolution in which the main war criminals were tried and brought to justice, the only revolution that didn't rob or steal, didn't drag people through the streets, didn't take revenge, didn't take justice into its own hands. No one was ever lynched here. Not that some people wouldn't have liked to. Because the crimes committed by Batista's thugs and henchmen, those people who thought they could get away with anything, had been horrible. And if there were no lynchings, no bloodbaths it was because of our insistence and our promise: "War criminals will be brought to justice and punished, as examples."

— FIDEL CASTRO, *MY LIFE*, 2006

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

MARY-ALICE WATERS: Did you leave Santa Clara for Havana with Che [Guevara] on January 1?

LUIS ALFONSO ZAYAS: No. Che had me stay to help organize the column. By then it was very large, with almost two thousand combatants, and it had to be taken to Havana. Che went on ahead

July
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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8 The Militant July 31, 2023

Join ‘Militant’ campaign for unions, rights

The *Militant* tells the truth about all the key working-class questions today — from the strike battles taking place to the fight to defend crucially needed constitutional freedoms. We urge our readers to join with us to get the broadest readership possible.

The paper is an indispensable tool for building the labor movement and organizing solidarity with today’s strikes. This issue brings news from the picket lines of dockworkers in British Columbia, Canada; actors and screenwriters around the U.S.; and 340,000 Teamsters preparing for a strike against UPS. It’s a voice for rail unionists fighting for control over safety, training and job conditions — a fight that is vital to the well-being and lives of workers and anyone who lives near the tracks.

If you’re on strike or involved in any other working-class struggle, send in a report to the *Militant* and we’ll spread the word.

Every one of these battles requires freedoms of speech, assembly and other constitutional rights won over centuries of struggle. They provide protection from government attempts to frame up working-class fighters, to suppress discussion or freedom of worship, to use their courts and cops to weaken our strikes and other struggles, to deny us due process and much more.

Week in and week out the *Militant* explains the stakes for working people in defending constitutional protections, whether it’s opposing the state of Colorado’s attack on the free speech rights of a web designer;

the frame-up of members of the African People’s Socialist Party under witch hunt “foreign agent” registration laws; moves by the state of Maine to ignore the Supreme Court and discriminate against Catholics; or the yearslong attack on our rights by the Joseph Biden administration, as it and its allies try to criminalize political discussion and send Donald Trump — the leading candidate against Biden in 2024 — to jail.

Safeguarding every one of these protections and seeking to extend them is vital to the political struggles that lie ahead.

The *Militant* gives voice to the Socialist Workers Party candidates, who present the program needed to advance the class interests of workers and farmers. With the costs of food, health care, housing and child care rising, they explain why a union-led struggle for jobs at wages sufficient for workers to start and sustain families is needed. SWP candidates point out that fights against racist discrimination, Jew-hatred, attacks on immigrant workers and the second-class status of women are deeply in the interest of all workers and help unify and strengthen the labor movement.

They explain why breaking from the bosses’ twin parties, the Democrats and Republicans, is essential, and why workers need to build our own party, a labor party based on the unions.

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Back Ukraine’s fight to defend its sovereignty

Continued from front page

tion for bloody conflicts to come. Every cent spent on its military is to bolster its forces for use against workers at home and against Washington’s rivals and working people abroad.

The pressure from Washington for Kyiv to rush into combat coincides with the stepping up of campaigning for the 2024 election. Biden’s eyes are on the ballot box.

The reason for caution shown by Ukrainian forces is not difficult to see. Moscow has overwhelming air superiority, a much larger army and weapons supply, and has heavily mined its defenses. Despite this, Russian President Vladimir Putin’s regime has been unable to make any serious gains in over a year and continues to get pushed back from areas around Bakhmut, having captured the city only in May.

“We cannot use meat-grinder tactics as the Russians do,” Oleksii Reznikov, Ukraine’s defense minister, told the *Washington Post*. He was referring to the sacrifice of the lives of tens of thousands of conscript soldiers by the Putin regime in human wave attacks.

What has been decisive in preventing Putin’s regime from seizing Ukraine has been the determination of Ukrainian forces, and of workers, farmers and others who have volunteered for the territorial militias, as well as widespread support from the civilian population.

Their morale is exemplified by Ukrainian filmmaker Oleh Sentsov, who is now a soldier.

Wounded by shrapnel and lying on the ground, Sentsov recorded a video of himself July 8, saying this is the price Ukrainians pay for victory.

He had been injured on the southern front along with two of his comrades. “That was yesterday. It’s better today,” Sentsov commented as the three recovered in the hospital.

Crimean-born Sentsov joined millions of workers and young people who took to the streets for months during the 2014 Maidan uprising. They stood up to deadly assaults from thugs and cops of the pro-Moscow regime of Viktor Yanukovich, eventually overturning his rule. That struggle strengthened the confidence of working people and their determination to defend Ukraine’s independence. It also deepened their concerns about the trustworthiness of the country’s capitalist rulers.

Afterward Sentsov joined protests against the annexation of Crimea by Putin’s forces later that year. He was arrested on trumped-up terrorism charges and

sentenced to 20 years imprisonment.

In a penal colony in Siberia, he staged a 145-day hunger strike. An international campaign, in which the *Militant* participated, helped secure his release in 2019.

“From the first days of war,” Sentsov said, “I joined the Territorial Defense,” helping to repulse Russian tank columns converging on the capital. Ukrainian officials offered him work in the press office “because of my famous name,” he said, “but this was not my path.” He added, “It does not matter if you are a filmmaker or a bus driver or a simple worker — we are all soldiers.”

Thousands of volunteers like him have helped push back Putin’s drive to occupy the country and crush its people. Their morale is in marked contrast to the disaffection spreading among Russian soldiers as well as their families at home.

Heavy Russian casualties

A joint investigation by Russian independent media Meduza and Mediazona, with the BBC, shows that at least three times more Russian soldiers died in Ukraine than Soviet troops over 10 years of war in Afghanistan. And not included are foreign nationals or those mobilized into the proxy units of the self-declared “people’s republics” in Luhansk and Donetsk. Nor does it count the large number of prison inmates lost by the Wagner mercenary forces.

In a July 10 video clip Russian soldiers complain about being punished by a commanding officer. They say they are “locked in this pit for refusing to go the zero line,” the Russian army term for the front. “With a rifle against a tank,” one said, “Army of Russia, this is how we fight.”

In a June 28 video soldiers from another company declare they would refuse to obey orders to return to the “meat grinder” of the front lines.

“Initially,” a soldier said, “we had 150 people. After brutal fights, this is all what’s left us,” gesturing to some 20 men around him.

They feared being “nullified,” he said, without food or water or enough ammunition and they had “never been paid.” The clip, sent to their relatives in Russia, was so they would know “if any of us die,” it would mean “we were killed by our own here, not in combat.”

Putin fears the impact that protests like this can have on wider layers of the Russian population. Backing for the war among working people has never been enthusiastic and continues to wane.

Canada ILWU dockers set new strike deadline

BY JOE YOUNG

MONTREAL — Some 7,400 longshore workers on Canada’s West Coast docks, members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada, were set to go back on strike July 19, after the union’s leadership rejected a tentative deal that had ended a 13-day strike the previous week.

Then the Canada Industrial Relations Board intervened, demanding the union give 72-hours’ notice and instructed workers to go back to work. Hours later the union announced workers would strike on July 22.

“Employers have not addressed the cost-of-living issues that our workers have faced over the last couple of years as all workers have,” Rob Ashton, president of ILWU Canada, told the press. Nor did the contract “protect our jobs now or into the future.”

The four-year proposal, “with today’s uncertain times, is far too long.” The union had proposed a two-year contract.

Twice in the recent past the Liberal Party-led federal government has imposed strikebreaking laws on workers — outlawing strikes by postal workers in 2018 and the longshore union in Montreal in 2021.

The widespread impact of the strike shows the key role the dockworkers who load and offload ships play in production and trade. The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade estimated the strike affected over \$9.6 billion of cargo. Among the ports shut down were those in Vancouver and Prince Rupert, the biggest- and third-biggest ports in Canada.

The ILWU raises three key demands: ending the contracting out of maintenance work, protection from job loss due to automation, and wage increases.

The offer the union rejected was for a 5% raise in each of the first two years and 4% for each of the final two years — below the rate of inflation.

The strikers had received widespread solidarity. The ILWU, the main port union on the U.S. West Coast, refused to handle ships bosses tried to divert there. Unions across Canada, and from around the world, pledged support. Longshore union leaders from Australia and New Zealand came and spoke at a Vancouver strike rally of 2,000 July 9.

The *Militant* will provide reports from the picket line.

UK attack on rights

Continued from page 7

ing and child care is tearing families apart.

Johnson was elected in a landslide in 2019, winning support in areas where workers had previously voted Labour. He pledged to boost workers’ living standards, “level up” regions of the country where workers were hardest hit by the capitalist crisis, engage in a massive hospital-building program and “get Brexit done.”

Major sections of the ruling class opposed him for carrying out the 2016 referendum decision to get out of the European Union; his government’s post-Brexit inability to reverse the fortunes of British capital; and, after returning to the back benches, his campaign against the Rishi Sunak government’s agreement with EU member states and Washington over trade relations with Northern Ireland.

So too, British ruling class forces have rounded on the Scottish National Party, scenting an opportunity to do damage to the party as support for its call for a referendum on Scottish independence has eroded. The SNP has also lost support, especially among working people, as a result of attacks on women’s rights that it orchestrated in the Scottish government’s Gender Recognition Act.

“What Johnson or Sturgeon are accused of is not why they’re under fire,” said Peter Clifford, Communist League leader and candidate for Manchester Central in next year’s general election. “Their political opponents have used these accusations to target them and those who voted for them because of what they stand for.

“Working people should oppose the use of parliamentary suspensions to try to settle political differences and cop intervention into political parties. No matter who their attacks are aimed at today, such anti-democratic methods have been used — and will be used again — against working-class organizations.”