

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

While Tehran backs Hamas, Iranian workers fight for pay
— PAGE 7

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 87/NO. 42 NOVEMBER 13, 2023

Tentative auto contract goes to UAW members to be voted on

BY EDWIN FRUIT

HUDSON, Wis. — United Auto Workers Local 722 held a rally in front of the General Motors Parts Distribution plant here Oct. 30. Steve Frisque, the local's president, told participants that picket lines would come down that evening after the union announced a tentative agreement with GM earlier in the day. He thanked everyone who supported the strike.

UAW members struck the Big Three auto companies for six weeks, winning solidarity from unionists and fellow working people around the country. The union announced a tentative deal with Ford Oct. 25 and Stellantis three days later. Some 16,600 union members at Ford have returned to work and 14,000 strikers at Stellantis have begun going back. The 18,000 striking workers at GM will return to their jobs in the coming days.

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Wave of drug store closures deepens crisis workers face

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

As thousands of the Big Three chain drug stores close across the country, millions of working people face increased difficulties in filling prescriptions and getting other medical supplies. More than 40% of all U.S. counties have now become what is known as "pharmacy deserts," deepening the blows of the capitalist crisis on the working class.

Over the past two years, Rite Aid, CVS and Walgreens began shuttering over 1,500 stores. CVS, the largest drug-store chain, began closing 300 stores a year in 2021, with 900 projected gone by 2024, after eliminating 244 the previous three years. Rite Aid filed for bankruptcy Oct. 15, with hundreds of its 2,200 stores set to be closed. Walgreens said in June it will eliminate 150 stores, after shuttering 200 others since 2019.

These three pharmacy giants raked in huge profits during the COVID-19

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Defend Israel's right to exist! Call for cease-fire is support for Hamas



Antisemitic mob surrounds airplanes on tarmac at Makhachkala airport in Russian republic of Dagestan Oct. 29 in hunt for Jews. Hundreds more thugs invaded airport terminal or pelted buses of passengers with rocks, seeking out those with Israeli passports.

Antisemitic mobs riot in Dagestan, attack Jews

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Encouraged by Moscow's support for Hamas, a Jew-hating mob terrorized Israeli passengers disembarking from a plane in the Russian republic of Dagestan Oct. 29, just a few weeks after Hamas' murderous assault on Jews in Israel. Some 1,200 young men stormed the region's main airport looking for Jews to kill.

Carrying banners with antisemitic slogans, they broke through airport security in Makhachkala, Dagestan's capital. Some were armed with knives. They hurled rocks at a bus carrying Jews from a plane that had just arrived from Tel Aviv. The mob boarded the bus, demanding passengers say whether they were Muslim or Jewish.

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BY SETH GALINSKY

The Israel Defense Forces are advancing on the ground in northern Gaza with the aim of eliminating Hamas, the Tehran-backed terror outfit that tore through southern Israel Oct. 7, killing some 1,400 Jews and maiming thousands more. Middle-class radicals and other supporters of Hamas and its reactionary, anti-working-class course are being joined by Democratic Party leaders and liberal media like the *New York Times* in pressing for an immediate cease-fire.

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SWP campaigns against Jew-hatred, for working class to strive for power



Militant/Roy Landersen

Lea Sherman, SWP candidate for New Jersey General Assembly, discusses fight against Jew-hatred with high school students in Livingston at Oct. 15 rally defending Israel's right to exist.

BY ROY LANDERSEN

As the Nov. 7 elections near, Socialist Workers Party candidates and supporters are taking the party's program and activities to working people on their doorsteps, on strike picket lines and at public actions against Jew-hatred. They find one of the big questions working people want to discuss is the barbaric Hamas pogrom Oct. 7 in which over 1,400 Jews in Israel were slaughtered.

Along with members of the Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada and the U.K., SWP members and their

supporters are using the campaign statement by Rachele Fruit, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Florida. It was issued three days after Hamas' killing and hostage-taking of Jews and is still prominently featured on the *Militant's* website. Campaigners use this statement alongside ongoing coverage in the paper and books by leaders of the SWP and other revolutionaries.

Party members and supporters are also discussing the need for solidarity with today's labor struggles, from the

Continued on page 3

As the capitalist economy declines, women can't afford to have children

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

In the 12 months following the U.S. Supreme Court's Dobbs decision that ruled *Roe v. Wade* unconstitutional, there was an increase in the average number of legal abortions to 82,298 each month. This rise takes place while steady jobs with wages high enough to start and sustain families is less and less available for tens of millions of workers.

And the rise in the number of abortions refutes the false claim made by Democrats and liberal women's groups that the Dobbs ruling outlawed abortion. By overturning the *Roe* decision the court handed the issue back to the

Continued on page 2

Democrats' drive to impose 'gag' orders on Trump is blow to free speech

BY TERRY EVANS

Frontal assaults on free speech are being carried out through a barrage of court cases driven by the Joseph Biden Justice Department seeking to imprison former President Donald Trump and crush his 2024 presidential run.

Gag orders on the former president undermine his legal defense, muzzle what he can say during the campaign and lay the groundwork for pliant judges

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Inside

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—On the picket line, p. 5—

Nurses picket at Minnesota hospitals for safe staffing levels

Women can't afford children

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people and their state representatives to settle.

The rising demand for abortion is deeply intertwined with the broader social crisis workers face. More of us are struggling to pay the rent or afford medical care, food and other essentials. The decision to start families has become increasingly difficult. Workers with children in many cities are forced to choose between cutting back on work hours, relying on relatives to take care of their kids or moving away, hoping to find a place to live and work where child care is cheaper.

More women find themselves forced to consider abortion when faced with an unplanned pregnancy.

"I'd like to have three kids," Hannah Puckett told *New York Magazine*. "But I can't imagine trying to bring a child into the world with the economy the way it is. I'm scared. I couldn't give them an education and a house to stay in." The 21-year-old student is from West Virginia, one of 35 states with fewer children today than five years ago.

The decline in availability of afford-

able health care exacerbates the challenges workers face. Fewer than half of women in rural areas can find prenatal care within 30 miles. In 2021, more than 1,200 women died while pregnant or shortly after giving birth, the highest number since 1965.

Central to union struggles taking place today is fighting for conditions that would make starting and building families easier. Ending draconian work schedules and mandatory overtime, demanding cost-of-living increases to keep up with rising prices and putting an end to divisive multitier contracts are a growing part of many strikes. Working-class struggles to change these conditions are an indispensable part of building the unions and fighting for women's emancipation.

Since the Dobbs decision, 20 states, along with Washington, D.C., have expanded abortion access, while 21 states have increased restrictions on the procedure. At the same time, the Democratic Party is moving to narrow the room for the needed debate on this issue.

They're pushing to change state constitutions to "enshrine" the right to abortion forever, making it harder to address a hotly disputed issue with deep moral implications involving human life.

Such constitutional changes have been passed in California and are on the ballot in Ohio this November and in Maryland next year. Democrats in New York have raised \$20 million to put the issue on the ballot in 2024 in a bid to attract voters and aid the Biden reelection effort.

The Socialist Workers Party in Ohio is urging workers to vote no on the referendum.

Neither the Democratic nor the Re-



Central to union struggles is fighting for conditions where workers can afford to sustain their families. Above, protest against onerous BNSF railroad attendance policy in Fort Worth, Texas.

publican Party offer any road out of the deteriorating conditions of life and work that make starting families ever harder. Both parties stand with the bosses in their rapacious drive for bigger profits at workers' expense.

Only the working class acting in our own interests can begin to change this and provide a road to ending the second-class status of women. That requires addressing the challenges and responsibilities that fall overwhelmingly on women as the bearers and nurturers of new life.

Whether or not to have an abortion is a medical decision that should be in the hands of the woman alone, without any state, federal or municipal restrictions on the safe availability of the

procedure. The fight for widely accessible medical care, child care, and other social steps to reinforce the care and feeding of the future generations is key. Abortion should be something needed only when all other things fail.

That course is inseparable from the struggle to replace the profit-driven rule of the capitalist class with workers taking political power into our own hands. This is the only road to end exploitation and oppression and create the material and social conditions that will enable women and men to realize the basic conditions of our humanity. That's the road to the emancipation of the working class, to eradicate the historical roots of women's oppression for all time.

Contribute to the SWP Party-Building Fund

Sept. 23 — Nov. 21

Contact the SWP branch nearest you on page 8.

Send contributions to Socialist Workers Party
306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor
New York, NY 10018

LETTERS

Thanks for 'Militant' coverage of Israel's right to self-defense

Thank you for your courageous, truthful coverage of the Hamas attacks and Israel's right to self-defense. I live in Sderot, in the shadow of Hamas-controlled Gaza. Every day for the last 20 years has been filled with anxiety and the very real possibility of being murdered by the Hamas fanatics. Then our worst nightmares came true three weeks ago.

You are correct to state, "Unlike Hamas — whose goal is to maximize civilian deaths, including of Palestinians, whose misery it uses to try and win sympathy for its Jew-hatred

— Israeli forces try to minimize civilian casualties." We have a liberal newspaper here, which is widely read (*Ha'aretz*), which disputes this and demonizes its own security forces.

A friend in the U.S. recently told me about your paper and I'm glad to become acquainted with it. It is hard to find a news source that is socialist, and that at the same time, stands up for Israel. Other "socialists" around the world have lent their support to anti-Israeli propaganda and untruths.

Shalom,
M.J.
Sderot, Israel

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

THE MILITANT

Fight for truth in cop killing of Elijah McClain!

Only through a fight by the family of Elijah McClain, backed by thousands of working people across the country, have Colorado police accused in McClain's 2019 death gone to trial. A jury convicted one cop in October. The *'Militant'* will continue to cover this fight.



Paul Becker/Becker1999
Demonstrators in Ohio play violins honoring Elijah McClain, killed by police in 2019.

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SWP campaigns against Jew-hatred

Continued from front page

United Auto Workers strike at the Big Three auto companies to the 15-week-long contract battle being waged by the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists.

Gabrielle Prosser, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Minneapolis City Council, and campaign supporter Joanne Murphy met nurse Pat Kohler when they joined a nurses' union picket line demanding safe staffing levels at Abbott Northwestern Hospital Oct. 26. Kohler heard about Prosser's campaign on Minnesota Public Radio.

Prosser showed her the *Militant* headline, "Fighting Jew-hatred is a union issue." Kohler said that after Hamas' massacre of Jews took place in Israel, she met with her neighbors who are Jewish and have family and friends in Israel. "They don't feel safe, they don't know who they can talk to," she said.

"Jew-hatred is a deadly threat to working people here. As the capitalist crisis deepens, the rulers will try to make Jews the scapegoats for the calamity being brought down on working people. Already we see an increase in antisemitic attacks since the Hamas pogrom," Prosser said. "Working people around the world need to organize to take power ourselves. It's the only road to stop the coming wars and worsening conditions for all of humanity."

Another hospital worker, also a member of the Minnesota Nurses Association, said, "What about the crimes of the Israeli government and the suffering of the Palestinian people?"

After discussing Moscow's inva-

sion of Ukraine and looking at the *Militant* article, "Ukraine, home of Babyn Yar pogrom, stands with Israel," she subscribed to the paper. She also bought *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward* by SWP leaders Jack Barnes, Mary-Alice Waters and Steve Clark.

Strikers back Jews under attack

Philip Laws, a UAW Local 2360 member at Stellantis' Carrollton, Texas, distribution center, and his wife, Melissa King, bought a *Militant* subscription on the picket line from SWP member Josefina Otero Oct. 9. Laws told Otero that he "absolutely supports the right of Israel to exist. Hamas is embedded in vengeance and they have hatred in them."

Laws said, "Almost everyone he works with supports Israel." But he is "concerned about the college students who are protesting in support of Hamas."

"Everyone I talked to on strike at both the Carrollton and Roanoke distribution centers over the course of three visits, Oct. 9, 14 and 20, was in support of Israel's right to exist and for defending itself against aggression by Hamas," Otero told the *Militant*. "Many saw it in the light of what they would do to defend themselves and their families. Some also expressed concern at the way Palestinians are being used as cannon fodder by Hamas."

One young African American woman on the Roanoke picket line asked the question on many workers' minds, "So why do people hate the Jews?"



Militant/Joanne Murphy

Gabrielle Prosser, right, SWP candidate for Minneapolis City Council, discusses need for unions to fight Jew-hatred with nurse Pat Kohler picketing at Abbott Northwestern Hospital Oct. 26.

Otero and SWP member Dennis Richter explained the historical roots of Jew-hatred and why this is different than racist prejudices against Blacks.

At times of severe capitalist crisis, they said, layers of the middle class, especially those facing economic disaster, look for someone to blame and the capitalist rulers find fertile ground to incite them against the Jews. Fascist forces use this toxic frenzy, which comes from outside the working class, to turn on Jews and the unions and other working-class organizations. The only social force that can stop it is the working class rising to take political power.

SWP campaigners Terry Evans and Craig Honts ran into a similar question when they visited truck driver and *Militant* reader Franklin Martinez at his

home in Passaic, New Jersey, Oct. 28.

"I was four years in the U.S. military and I don't like what I see in the Middle East right now," he said, adding, there are "problems on both sides, between Hamas and Israel."

"If Hamas isn't defeated there will be more pogroms," Honts said. "Standing up to Jew-hatred is a necessity for all workers. To end it, our class has to take power."

"It's not just in the Middle East. When I was growing up in the Dominican Republic, I heard people express antisemitism," Martinez said. "What has it got to do with people there?"

"Jew-hatred is worldwide under capitalism," Evans replied. "As the bosses' crisis deepens, the capitalist rulers will turn to fascist thugs and Jew-hatred to try to disorient and crush the working class and our unions."

Martinez said he appreciated the discussion, renewed his subscription to the *Militant* and got *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation* by Abram Leon.

The fall campaign to expand the reach of the *Militant* and books presenting a working-class line of march forward is finding greater receptivity among working people, shaken by world events. By the end of the fifth week, 886 subscriptions and 1,186 books have been sold, putting us ahead of schedule.

Many people SWP campaigners speak to are also making contributions to the party's annual Party-Building Fund to raise \$140,000. To join SWP or CL members in campaigning, contact the nearest branch listed on page 8.

Vile vandalism hits site of worst US antisemitic slaughter

BY DAVE FERGUSON

PITTSBURGH — In a particularly cruel act of anti-Jewish vandalism, signs in people's yards here saying "We stand with Israel" were defaced and

"Free Palestine from PGH to Gaza" painted on the local school wall Oct. 26. This was the day before a planned commemoration on the fifth anniversary of the murderous assault on the Tree of Life synagogue in Squirrel Hill neighborhood here that left 11 Jews dead.

"These incidents come on the heels of a sharp rise in antisemitic incidents following the Hamas terrorist attack on Israel that killed more than 1,400," Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh officials said in a statement released to the press.

"For a Jewish community still healing from the worst antisemitic attack in U.S. history in 2018 and now retraumatized by the worst single act of terrorism against Jews since the Holocaust, these acts of vandalism are particularly despicable."

"Antisemitic incidents, including rhetoric that delegitimizes Israel's right to exist, has gone up dramatically in the aftermath of the Oct. 7 massacre in Israel by Hamas," Anti-Defamation League Regional Director Kelly Fishman told the *Jewish Chronicle*.

Tony Lane, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Allegheny County Ex-

ecutive, and other SWP campaign supporters joined the commemoration of the Tree of Life shooting Oct. 27, holding signs saying, "No to Jew-hatred" and "Condemn Jew-hating pogrom; Defend Israel's right to exist."

They distributed a statement by Rachele Fruit, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Florida. "Working people cannot rely on democratic imperialism to protect Jews," she said. "Only the working classes of Israel, Palestine, Iran and the whole region can find a solution in their common interests. The same is true for workers in the United States."

Campaign to expand reach of *Militant*, books, SWP fund

Sept. 23 - November 21 (week five)

| Country | Sub quota | Subs sold | Books quota | Books sold | Fund quota | Fund received |
|-----------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|-----------------|
| UNITED STATES | | | | | | |
| Atlanta | 50 | 42 | 50 | 43 | \$9,500 | \$3,227 |
| Chicago | 100 | 68 | 100 | 66 | \$14,000 | \$6,445 |
| Cincinnati | 70 | 48 | 70 | 38 | \$6,000 | \$2,055 |
| Dallas-Ft. Worth | 60 | 35 | 60 | 36 | \$5,250 | \$2,345 |
| Lincoln | 15 | 11 | 15 | 10 | \$500 | \$250 |
| Los Angeles | 110 | 72 | 110 | 73 | \$15,000 | \$3,967 |
| Miami | 45 | 21 | 45 | 25 | \$5,500 | \$2,230 |
| Minneapolis | 70 | 49 | 70 | 38 | \$5,500 | \$1,726 |
| N. New Jersey | 75 | 45 | 75 | 41 | \$7,500 | \$3,727 |
| New York | 100 | 54 | 125 | 67 | \$20,500 | \$11,022 |
| Oakland | 90 | 71 | 90 | 75 | \$15,500 | \$10,169 |
| Philadelphia | 55 | 29 | 55 | 34 | \$6,000 | \$1,900 |
| Pittsburgh | 50 | 32 | 50 | 19 | \$6,250 | \$1,893 |
| Seattle | 75 | 37 | 75 | 28 | \$14,500 | \$3,942 |
| Washington | 50 | 30 | 50 | 19 | \$4,500 | \$880 |
| Other | | 40 | | 380 | | \$20 |
| Total U.S. | 1015 | 684 | 1040 | 992 | \$136,000 | \$55,798 |
| Prisoners | | 73 | | | | |
| UNITED KINGDOM | | | | | | |
| London | 45 | 22 | 45 | 34 | | |
| Manchester | 30 | 22 | 30 | 36 | | |
| Total U.K. | 75 | 44 | 75 | 70 | | |
| Canada | 95 | 70 | 120 | 105 | | |
| Australia | 30 | 15 | 30 | 19 | | |
| Total | 1,215 | 886 | 1,265 | 1,186 | \$136,000 | \$55,798 |
| SHOULD BE | 1,350 | 844 | 1,350 | 844 | \$140,000 | \$87,500 |

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Georgia

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Rebecca Williamson, City Council
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Alyson Kennedy, U.S. Senate

Thousands of LA hotel workers rally in fight over wages, dignity

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

LOS ANGELES — Thousands of strikers from 50 area hotels rallied and marched here Oct. 25 to back up demands for higher wages and to protest hotel bosses' attempts to pit recently hired immigrants against the striking workers.

UNITE HERE Local 11 represents 15,000 workers employed at 60 major hotels in Los Angeles and Orange counties, including cooks, room attendants, dishwashers, servers, bellmen and front-desk agents.

Strikers first walked off the job July 2. Since then, the union has organized rolling strikes at different hotels.

Today's action comes after a group of hotel employers presented a "new" proposal that didn't meaningfully improve upon their previous offers. It contained no new money for wages, pensions or health insurance.

As housing costs here soar, workers have been demanding wages high enough for them to live in the communities where they work. Many now have to commute hours each way to work, with some saying they sleep in their cars.

Adan Robles has been a union member for 32 years and works as a housekeeper at the Beverly Wilshire. He has worked a second job at the University of California at Los Angeles, for six years, where he is a member of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3299. "I'm proud to be a shop steward at both places," Robles told the *Militant*.

"Food, gasoline and rent is very expensive. I have two daughters — 5 and 19 years old. I also help my family in Mexico," he said. "I work 80 hours a week. I'm a full-time employee at both jobs. Still, I can barely pay my bills. I don't know how people with one salary can make it."

Marisella Hernandez has worked at the Hotel Mar Vista for seven years as a cook. "This is my third time on

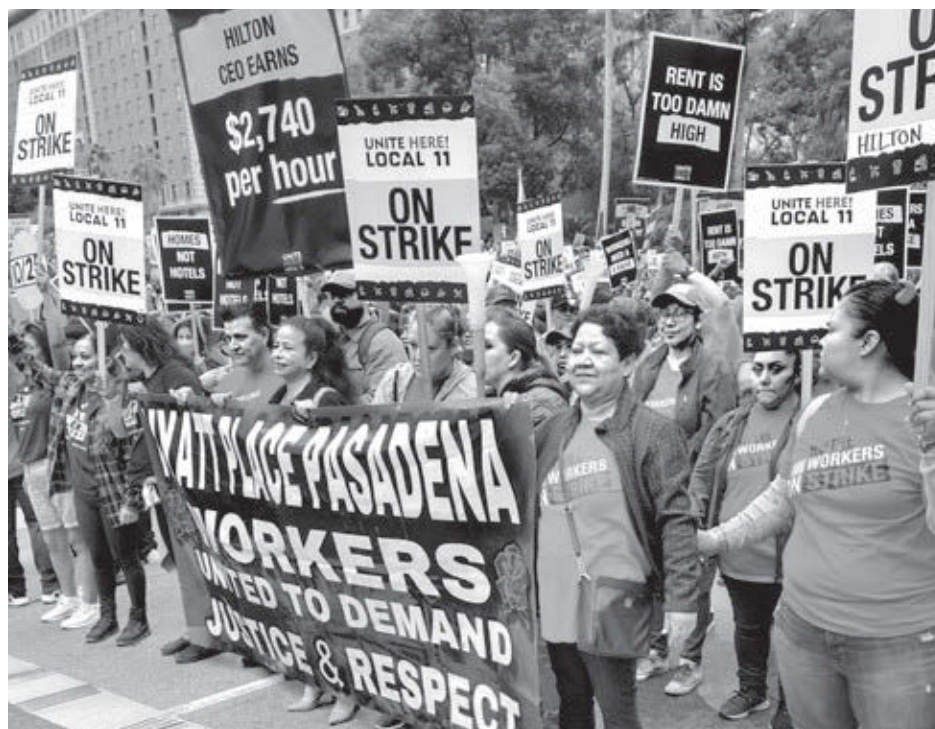
strike," she said, and explained how the bosses are trying to intimidate the strikers. "Human Resources came out at the last protest and said they would call the police."

"We are overworked," Carlos Lagos, a food runner at Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills, said. During COVID the hotels cut workers and they're not hiring people back. "I am doing the work of three people now."

The hotels have started to hire newly arrived immigrants to replace striking workers.

Maria Hernandez, communications representative of UNITE HERE Local 11, told the press at the rally that the union stands behind the immigrants as well as its members. "We won't let the hotel bosses divide us. We fight for all members and for all workers."

Also at the rally to support the hotel workers were members of the United Nurses Associations of California/ Union of Health Care Professionals. Union President Charmaine Morales told the *Militant*, "We represent workers at Kaiser and other hospitals in California and Hawaii. Fifteen of us are here. When we look at the cost of living, we want workers to get a good living wage



Militant/Bill Arth

Thousands of workers from 50 Los Angeles-area hotels rallied there Oct. 25. UNITE HERE Local 11 has organized rolling strikes since July 2 in a fight for higher wages and more workers.

and quality of life.

"We recently had a five-day strike, including at St. Francis hospital here, and our demands have still not been met."

The Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions, which represents more than 85,000 workers at Kaiser hospitals and clinics across the country, recently won a tentative agreement after a three-day strike.

Three of the nonchain hotels —

Loews Hollywood, Biltmore Los Angeles and Westin Bonaventure — have reached a tentative agreement with the union.

The same day, thousands of casino workers rallied all across Las Vegas. The contract covering some 40,000 members of the Culinary Workers Union there expired recently.

Norton Sandler contributed to this article.

Tentative UAW contract up for vote by membership

Continued from front page

The UAW National Ford Council has approved the tentative deal. It will now be presented to union members who will vote whether to ratify or reject it. Prior to the vote union locals will hold discussions on the contract. A similar process will take place at GM and Stellantis. Altogether some 146,000 UAW members would be covered by the three provisional agreements.

The union has begun releasing some of the details of the Ford contract, which lasts four years. It includes a wage raise of 25%, the restoration of cost-of-living adjustments and a reduction from eight

to three years in the time it takes for new hires to reach the top wage rate. Retirement tiers introduced in 2007 are not eliminated.

The Oct. 30 rally at the GM plant here included UAW workers and other unionists bringing solidarity. Teamsters Local 120 brought their union semitruck and provided lunch for everyone. Jennifer Grabezyk, financial secretary of Local 722, told the *Militant* that a food bank in Hudson delivered fresh vegetables to the picket line.

Striker Paul Copeland said the union had been resisting bosses' harassment of its members at the plant. "We had five workers fired last year and the union was able, so far, to get three of them their jobs back," he said. "We're supposed to work eight-hour days but it almost always ends up being between nine and 10 hours a day."

the wages we get.

"GM said it couldn't afford our demands. Their first proposal was to give a 2% wage increase. Now they are up to 23%," he said. "I've learned a lot on this job, how the company doesn't care about its workers, only about the bottom line. That's why the union is important."

Also on the forum panel was Brandon Orr, a member of UAW Local 125 who works at the Mopar Parts Distribution Center in Plymouth, Minnesota.

"Being on strike has been a learning experience," he said. Orr described grabbing half a dozen picket signs to take to participants at a union rally. When over 100 people showed up he was surprised. "I've learned the meaning of solidarity. This is an important fight we are waging, for us and for others."

Mary Martin spoke at the Oct. 21 forum for the Socialist Workers Party.

Side by side with building solidarity with the UAW strike, it's important for unions to oppose Jew-hatred, she said. The Oct. 7 slaughter of Jews in Israel poses a deadly threat to working people, she said. Martin described how the class-struggle leadership of the Teamsters in Minneapolis in the 1930s established a union defense guard. It mobilized to drive out of town fascist thugs who threatened the union and Jews. Israel has the right to exist as a refuge for Jews, she said.

In Canada 8,200 Unifor members at Stellantis plants in Ontario ended a brief strike Oct. 30 after the union reached a tentative deal with car bosses.

For COLA, against tiers

Frisque described to participants at an Oct. 21 Militant Labor Forum in Minneapolis the big concessions taken by the union after the 2008 recession. These included the tier system for wages and doing away with pensions and cost-of-living clauses. In 2007 the starting wage was \$19 an hour. In 2020, it was \$17. Meanwhile, inflation has gone up 19%, he said.

"Tiers bring divisions and that's what they want," he said.

Brett Carey, another member of Local 722, told the meeting that "some of my co-workers use food pantries as they can't afford to feed their families with

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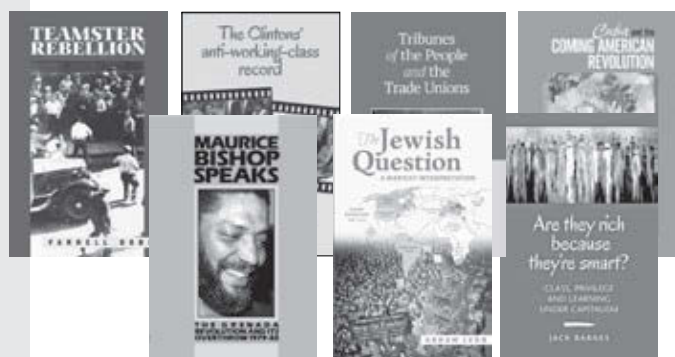
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Flight attendants picket United: ‘Pay us for all the time we work’

BY DAN FEIN

CHICAGO — Over 200 United Airlines flight attendants rallied and held an informational picket line at O’Hare International Airport here Oct. 26 to protest the lack of progress in negotiating a new contract. The action was one of some 20 held at United terminals across the country, including New York’s LaGuardia Airport, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Denver, Houston and Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Flight attendants, members of Association of Flight Attendants-CWA union, were joined by airline pilots, Teamsters and Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists strikers, as well as flight attendants from American Airlines.

They have been fighting for a new contract since 2021. One of the key demands is to be paid for ground time. “Even though their wages might seem high, they only get paid once the door closes on takeoff to when the plane rolls into the gate,” Timothy Trueman, AFA-CWA’s council vice president for Los Angeles and San Diego, told the *Whittier Daily News*. “So at the end of the day they might have worked 13 hours, but only gotten paid for seven.” This also means they don’t get paid for any delays, whether caused by the weather, staffing shortages or anything else.

“The company wants concessions from us while they are making record profits,” Scott Pejas, president of the union local here in Chicago, told the *Militant*. It raked in \$1.5 billion in the third-quarter of 2023 alone. “They have money for new planes, but say they can’t afford to pay us more.

“They cut staffing during the pandemic, but when travelers returned, the staffing didn’t,” he said, noting flight attendants often have to work up to 18 hours straight on domestic flights and 24 hours for international trips. And we have mandatory OT which can cut into our days off.”

The picketing began at airports in Guam and Heathrow in London before reaching the U.S. “We’re fed up with management’s greed,” the union said on its Facebook page. “There’s always money for C-suite raises, but it’s penny-pinching for the 26,000 Flight Attendants who make this airline fly.”

“We are doing a picket line on Nov. 16 to push for our demands,” said Katy Bengé, a member of the Association of Professional Flight Attendants at American Airlines who joined the United protest. The airline bosses don’t respect us. We are short staffed. We need wages that keep up with inflation.” Similar contract fights are underway at Alaska Airlines, Air Wisconsin, PSA, Southwest and other airlines.



FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — United Airlines flight attendants and supporters rallied here, part of the union’s national action to highlight their contract



SAG-AFTRA NY

Flight attendants picket United Airlines terminal at LaGuardia Airport in New York Oct. 26, one of some 20 protests in U.S. Striking members of Screen Actors Guild joined action in solidarity.

demands. As Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Florida, I and campaign supporter Chuck Guerra joined them.

We spoke with Kristin Orren, picket leader and vice president of AFA-CWA Council 22, which organizes flight attendants in Orlando, Tampa and Fort Lauderdale. She said it was her first time doing anything like this. “We aren’t paid for any work we do on the ground, and new hires, who start at \$24 or \$25 an hour, can’t pay their rent.”

Orren said the union is organizing similar protests every two months in different locations to help get out the facts

about what they face and to win support.

Flight attendants at the protest said United management “is toxic toward us.” Instead of treating their workers decently, they’re demanding even more concessions. They want to increase the number of flights that flight attendants can be assigned to each day, from four to five. They also want to eliminate having to pay for flight attendants’ parking at the airport and downsize crew lounges at the airports, or eliminate them altogether. And they want to eliminate the pensions for the few workers who have them.

— Rachele Fruit

ON THE PICKET LINE

Nurses picket at Minnesota hospitals for safe staffing levels

MINNEAPOLIS — At an informational picket at the Abbott Northwestern Hospital here Oct. 26, some 100 Minnesota Nurses Association members and Service Employees International Union members who work in the same hospitals got out the word about the dangers both nurses and hospital patients face from chronic understaffing. Pickets also took place at the two other Twin City area Allina hospitals, United in St. Paul and

Mercy in Coon Rapids.

“Allina tries to justify staffing cuts based on ‘benchmarking,’” Pat Kohler, a nurse at Abbott and member of the Minnesota Nurses Association, told the *Militant*. “That’s an algorithm that determines staffing number ‘best practice to best cost.’ But really it’s used by the hospital executives to cut staff and put more work on less individuals.

“It puts us at the same staffing levels with what nonunion nurses have to deal with in Arkansas,” she said.

“When something serious happens, it’s going to look like a mistake. It’s really the corporation cutting the number of nursing staff.”

“These profit-driven decisions deny nurses and patients the resources needed to ensure safe staffing and quality patient care at the bedside,” said the union press release announcing the picketing.

— Joanne Murphy

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



November 16, 1998

A series of demonstrations Nov. 7-21 will demand the release of Puerto Rican fighters locked up in U.S. prisons and call for Puerto Rican independence.

The actions are part of an upturn in the campaign to free the prisoners, reinforced by a resurgence of nationalist sentiment in Puerto Rico. In July, more than half a million workers took part in a general strike opposing the sell-off of the state-owned Puerto Rican Telephone Co. to a U.S.-based consortium. On July 25, tens of thousands demonstrated in Guánica, Puerto Rico, as well as in New York City, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., demanding Puerto Rico’s independence and the release of the prisoners.

The 16 Puerto Rican fighters incarcerated in U.S. prisons today, serving sentences ranging from 15 to 105 years, are a symbol of the unbroken battle for Puerto Rican independence.



November 16, 1973

NEW YORK, Nov. 7 — “Fun City” became “Strike City” this week. Firemen staged an unprecedented job action for higher pay; the Newspaper Guild shut down the *Daily News*; 5,000 stewards and stewardesses grounded Trans World Airlines; and employees of the Museum of Modern Art and the New York Philharmonic are on picket lines.

The largest action came when 30,000 hospital workers walked off the job in an effort to win a wage increase already promised in their union contract. The target of the strike is [President] Nixon’s Cost of Living Council, which has refused to allow the raise.

This week’s strikes underline the problems of inflation and unemployment confronting workers, as well as the anti-labor role of government wage controls and court injunctions. But they also showed the militancy growing among many rank-and-file unionists.



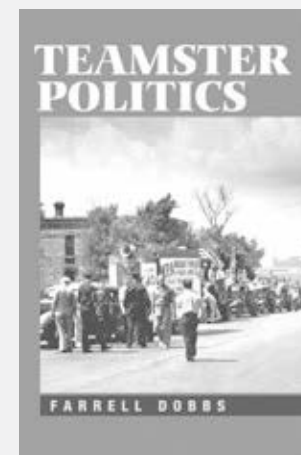
November 15, 1948

The case of James Kutcher, the legless Purple Heart veteran who was fired from the Veterans Administration at Newark, N.J. because of membership in the Socialist Workers Party, continues to attract nationwide attention and support.

At its meeting the State Executive Board of the Ohio CIO passed a resolution supporting the defense and calling on all affiliated bodies to back the case. Among the veteran, labor and liberal organizations that have endorsed the work of the Kutcher Civil Rights Committee are the American Veterans Committee, the National CIO Committee to Abolish Discrimination, the Baptist Ministers Conference of Newark and vicinity, the New Jersey CIO Council and the Newark AFL Teachers Union.

A broadcast sponsored by the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen over the ABC network strongly protested Kutcher’s firing.

Recommended reading



“Unionism and politics cannot be separated. Power generated at the trade-union level can be shattered by government blows. Workers must enter the political arena as an independent class force, with their own party.”

— Farrell Dobbs

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Defend Israel's right to exist!

Continued from front page

But a cease-fire would allow Hamas' leadership to survive, only to prepare endless new rounds of murderous anti-Jewish pogroms, while continuing to keep its boot on the neck of the people of Gaza. Hamas uses the disaster facing Palestinians under its rule to evoke sympathy abroad.

Its death squads still hold some 245 hostages that Hamas intends to use as bargaining pawns.

Hamas' goal, which it had been planning for years together with its backers in Tehran and Hezbollah in Lebanon, was to kill, torture and take hostage as many Jews as possible. It carried out the largest slaughter of Jews since the Holocaust. This highlights the necessity for working people to understand the special danger of Jew-hatred in the imperialist epoch and to fight it whenever it raises its head.

This poses the need to relearn the lessons of the rise of Hitler's Nazi power in the 1930s — the betrayals of Moscow and Stalinist parties in Germany and elsewhere that made it possible and the decision of Washington and other democratic imperialist regimes to shut their borders to Jews. These were the historical developments that led to the Holocaust and made the establishment of the state of Israel inevitable.

Liberal media like the *Times* have dropped most coverage of Hamas' bloody pogrom and the hostages. They now cover their front pages with photos of destruction and suffering of people in Gaza. There is real suffering, but it is the result of the actions of Hamas, which has controlled Gaza with an iron hand for nearly two decades.

Hamas has attempted to prevent people in northern Gaza from fleeing when the Israeli government urged them to seek refuge in the southern part of the territory. The *Times* echoes Hamas in saying Israel's moves to crush the Hamas organization is "collective punishment" of Palestinians, which it claims is as bad or worse than the Hamas massacre itself.

The simple fact is it is Hamas — whose stated purpose is to kill Jews and destroy Israel — not the capitalist government of Israel, that is responsible for the desperate situation in Gaza. Unlike Hamas, Israeli forces target military assets, not civilians.

If Gaza is a "prison," then Hamas is the warden. Israel unilaterally withdrew from Gaza in 2005. Hamas has been in control since early 2006 when it narrowly won elections and then militarily smashed its rival, Fatah, leav-

ing 600 Gazans dead. Hamas tortures its political opponents, busts labor unions, imprisons and beats gays and suppresses women's rights.

Hamas — which like its enablers in Tehran cares not one iota for the lives of Palestinians — has spent tens of millions of dollars a year, much of it sent to Gaza for civilian aid, to instead build tunnels, ammunition dumps and command posts, most deliberately placed underneath apartment buildings, schools, mosques and hospitals.

Israel Defense Forces spokesperson Daniel Hagari told the press Oct. 27 that Hamas' main command center today is underneath Shifa Hospital, the largest in Gaza.

Some Hamas supporters say that anyone who lives in Israel is a "legitimate target." In New York, Hamas supporters put up a poster, designed to look similar to posters Jews are putting up across the city of hostages held by the Islamist outfit, showing the face of an 8-year-old Israeli. But instead of the word "kidnapped" they called the child an "occupier!"

Others try to claim that reports of Hamas torture and murder are "fake news" or grossly exaggerated.

To counter the lies, the Israeli government has released videos filmed by the Hamas gunmen themselves along with photos Israelis took afterward of the destruction and death wrought in the pogrom.

Pro-Hamas antisemitism on campus

The Hamas slaughter has exposed the tuggish antisemitism that is increasingly widespread among "woke" middle-class leftists around the world, including many in the Democratic Party. This is especially true on university campuses.

At Cooper Union, a private college in New York City, a group of student demonstrators carrying signs that said "Zionism Hands Off Our Universities" and chanting "Free Palestine" saw some Jewish students in the campus library and began angrily banging on the glass walls. Library staff, fearing the worst, locked the doors to keep them from getting in.

At New York University defenders of Israel's right to exist as a refuge for Jews organized protests to answer the pro-Hamas chorus.

"Shame on all those people who speak in the name of their supposed values of human rights and clamor for a cease-fire, but don't have a single word to say for the Israeli hostages and the humanity of Israeli civilians," NYU researcher Mijal Bitton told an Oct. 27 rally. "Shame on all those who say 'believe women,' but whose feminism ends the second the rape victims are Jewish Israelis."

Most workers have a different reaction than the apologists for Hamas. When two construction workers, neither of them Jews, were in Forest Hills, Queens, the *New York Post* reported Oct. 28, they saw a man ripping down some of the posters demanding the release of Hamas' hostages. They got out of their truck and confronted him in an exchange caught on video. One construction worker named Paulie told him to stop, but the man insisted "there is no proof that Hamas is holding hostages."

"This is a free country," Paulie replied. "You can waive your Palestine



Protesters in New York City's Washington Square Park Oct. 17 hold posters displaying pictures of hostages seized by Hamas in bloody pogrom 10 days earlier. Protest demanded their release.

flag and say death to the Jews and America or whatever you want, but we can put up f--king signs."

For workers power, a socialist world

It should be no surprise Jew-hatred is once again raising its ugly head. It always does when the crisis of capitalism deepens. Just as boss attacks against workers are on the rise today, acts of intimidation and physical violence against Jews are also increasing, accelerated by Hamas' slaughter in Israel.

Homes of Jews in Berlin have been defaced, a Jewish man was punched in the face on a London bus and threats have been made against Jews in France. In San Francisco Jewish-owned Smiten Ice Cream closed after pro-Hamas thugs vandalized the store with graffiti and smashed the windows.

All capitalist regimes worldwide are looking for new allies and ways to defend their own economic and military interests and to prepare for new wars to come.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who in the past had cordial re-

lations with the Israeli regime, has denounced Israel and come out in favor of Hamas, claiming it "is not a terrorist organization, it is a liberation group." Russian President Vladimir Putin hosted a Hamas delegation in Moscow Oct. 26.

While Washington has publicly supported Israel's right to defend itself, the Joseph Biden administration is stepping up efforts to pressure Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to exercise "restraint."

Róger Calero, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York City Council, said the fight against Jew-hatred is crucial to building a movement that can defend the independent class interests of working people. "We cannot rely on Washington or any 'democratic' imperialist power to protect the Jews, or the interests of working people anywhere," Calero said. "It's in the interest of working people everywhere to defend the existence of Israel as a refuge for Jews and to stand up to Jew-hatred. We must fight for the working class to take political power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers and build a new world."

Antisemitic mobs riot in Dagestan, launch attack on Jews

Continued from front page

"I answer that I'm Muslim," Shmuel told Israeli newspaper *Yedioth Ahronoth* afterward. "I saw death on that bus. If they had given me a serious interrogation they would have realized that I was Israeli. The police rescue us." More than 20 people were injured.

The same day, a Jewish center under construction in Nalchik, a city in the nearby republic of Kabardino-Balkaria, was set on fire. "Death to the Jews" was left scrawled on one of its walls. The day before, the Flamingo Hotel in Khasavyurt, Dagestan, was stormed by a group of men looking for Jews to attack.

The Israeli government issued a statement demanding Russian authorities "safeguard the well-being of all Israeli citizens and Jews wherever they are."

But after Hamas' Oct. 7 massacre, Russian President Vladimir Putin's regime hosted a Hamas leadership delegation in Moscow. The Kremlin calls for a "cease-fire" in order to prevent the Israel Defense Forces from defeating Hamas, the only way to stop it from carrying out more massacres of Jews. Moscow is expanding its ties with Tehran, which helped orchestrate Hamas' Oct. 7 killings. The Iranian regime supplies Putin's regime with arms to carry out its murderous war in Ukraine.

The Russian Foreign Ministry tried

to shift blame onto the Ukrainian government for the airport attack in Dagestan, preposterously claiming, "The criminal Kyiv regime played a direct and key role in carrying out the latest destructive act." Sergey Melikov, governor of Dagestan, also blamed so-called Ukrainian fascists, a slander frequently used by Putin as a pretext for his genocidal war against Ukraine.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said it was the Kremlin's war that had caused "hatred and degradation" to spread across Russia. He said this is what had allowed "a real pogrom" against Jews to unfold in Dagestan, and denounced antisemitic attacks elsewhere in Russia.

During the pogrom at the airport, "One woman turned to the local police officer for help," a representative of Ovadia Isakov, Dagestan's chief rabbi, reported. "But the cop blamed Jews, saying, 'Well, you see what you are doing to their children there [in Gaza].'"

For more than a year and a half, Putin has bombarded Ukrainian civilians in his attempt to crush the country and incorporate it into Russia. By siding with Hamas, he hopes to win allies for his expansionist capitalist regime among Muslim-majority countries across the Middle East.

Some 800 families of Gorskiy, or

Communist continuity in the fight against antisemitism

BY JANET POST

Since the Tehran-backed Islamists Hamas carried out its organized slaughter Oct. 7, killing over 1,400 Jews, many working people are thinking about why this attack was called a "pogrom." And they're seeking to learn more about the bloody history of Jew-hatred and its role under capitalism.

The Socialist Workers Party traces its revolutionary political continuity to the 1917 revolution in Russia and its leadership, the Bolshevik Party of V.I. Lenin. One key thread of that continuity is the relentless fight against antisemitism waged by the Bolsheviks.

Next week the *Militant* will run an article on the record of the Socialist Workers Party in fighting to arm the working class to take on the battle against Jew-hatred, a crucial question for making a socialist revolution in the U.S.

Pogrom is a Russian word, meaning the organized and bloody mas-

sacre of an ethnic group, in particular against the Jews.

Jews were increasingly driven from Western Europe amid the death agony of the feudal system as capitalist social relations became increasingly dominant. Millions fled to Eastern Europe and to Russia. Barred by czarist reaction from locating in the heart of Russia, the Russian rulers forced Jews to reside in what was called the Pale of Settlement beginning in the 1790s.

There they faced increasing explosions of Jew-hatred spurred by the czarist rulers. The term "pogrom" was first used during anti-Jewish rioting in the Ukrainian city of Odessa in 1821.

In the early 1900s, as workers and peasants in Russia were faced with extraordinarily harsh conditions under capitalism that would lead to the mighty 1905 revolution, hundreds of pogroms against Jews were organized by the czarist government and allied monarchist outfits.

During a "Passover pogrom" on Easter Sunday in 1903 in Kishinev, 49 Jews were killed, hundreds were wounded by gangs with knives and hatchets, an untold number of Jewish women were raped and 1,500 Jewish houses and shops were looted.

As part of these efforts, the czarist secret police forged a notorious book called the *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, used by murderous antisemites to today.

Bolsheviks fought Jew-hatred

"From their origins in 1903 as a politically distinct working-class current, the Bolsheviks had led the fight throughout the tsarist empire against pogroms and persecution of Jews," writes Socialist Workers Party leader Dave Prince in his introduction to the Pathfinder book, *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation* by Abram Leon.

"Among Jews and other oppressed peoples across Russia and Eastern Europe, Lenin and the Bolsheviks were held in high regard for their uncompromising combat against anti-Semitic persecution." They educated the toilers to see Jews as fellow victims of capitalist exploitation and oppression and allies in the fight to overthrow it.

This was a crucial plank in their successful fight to lead the workers and farmers to carry through a socialist revolution in 1917. "The new workers and peasants government in Soviet Russia established by the October 1917 Revolution not only ensured the political rights of Jews but also encouraged a Jewish cultural revival," Prince explains.

"It did so during the devastation of a three-year-long counterrevolutionary war waged by Russia's toppled landlords and capitalists, who joined forces with invading armies of fourteen imperialist powers — from London and Paris, to Tokyo and Washington," said Prince.

The Bolsheviks continued to fight antisemitism in order to take that reactionary tool away from imperialism's invading forces and their toppled Russian allies. In order to reach the broadest audience, the Bolsheviks set up a recording system to create records that

While Tehran backs Hamas, Iranian workers fight for pay



Retirees and oil workers across Iran are continuing weekly protests to defend living standards while workers elsewhere are striking in the face of an annual inflation rate of 46%. At the same time, working people in Iran have largely boycotted calls by the bourgeois clerical regime to show support for Tehran-backed Hamas' massacre of Jews and war against Israel.

Workers at the Shoniz chocolate and candy factory in Tabriz went on strike Oct. 28 to protest the lack of a salary increase and inadequate living conditions.

Oil workers on drilling platforms in the Arab-Persian Gulf and refinery workers in southern Iran have been demanding an end to wage and retirement caps and short staffing and the refund of what they say are "excess taxes" deducted from their wages.

Workers at the Oil Products Distribution Company said, "With a meager salary alongside the delay in payment, life has become unbearable."

Among the signs held by workers at the Continental Shelf Oil Company on Khark Island Oct. 22 were ones that said, "Salary caps = daylight robbery from employees' pockets." Above, another protest there the next day.

At the same time, an article in the reformist daily *Shargh* complained that "public opinion of Iranians has not come out against the crime of Gaza."

When the announcer at a recent soccer game at the Azadi Stadium in Tehran called for a minute's silence for Gaza, thousands of fans began booing and using their noisemakers. This is one more reflection of the growing opposition among working people to Tehran's backing of Hamas and the regime's military adventures aimed at extending its counterrevolutionary influence throughout the region.

— SETH GALINSKY

were sent to the farthest corners of the country to be played for working people. Lenin recorded 16 of them.

One of the first was "On the pogrom persecution of Jews," where he explained, "It is not the Jews who are the enemies of the working people. The enemies of the workers are the capitalists of all countries. The capitalists strive to sow and foment hatred between workers of different faiths, different nations and different races." ...

"Shame on accursed tsarism which tortured and persecuted the Jews. Disgrace and enmity to whoever sows enmity against Jews and hatred against other nations. Long live the fraternal trust and fighting alliance of the workers of all nations in the struggle to overthrow capital," Lenin said.

"The Bolshevik-led government put an end to murderous pogroms against Jews," Prince says. "The defeat of the counterrevolution and ending the pogroms at the same time was a momentous achievement of the toilers' Red Army under Leon Trotsky's command."

The Bolsheviks led in incorporating the fight against Jew-hatred and pogroms into the program of the Communist International, founded in 1919 as a world movement of

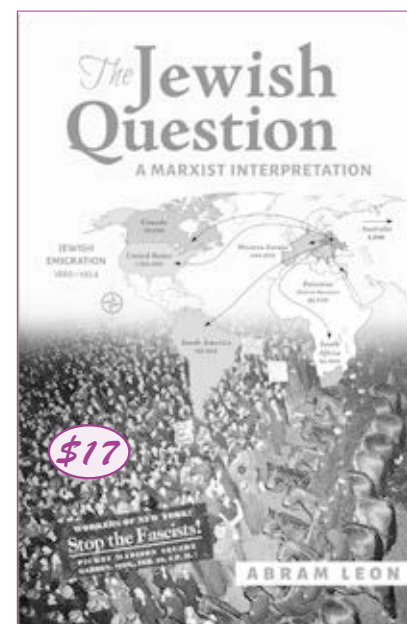
revolutionary parties determined to create in their countries what workers and peasants were striving to do in Russia.

After the Hamas pogrom Oct. 7, the Socialist Workers Party campaigned all across the country distributing a statement by Rachele Fruit, the SWP's 2024 candidate for U.S. Senate from Florida.

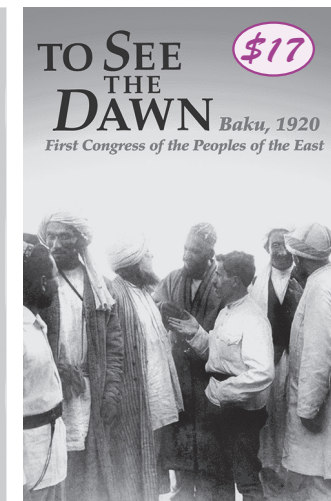
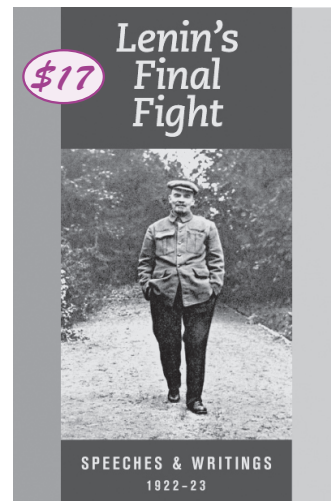
"The Socialist Workers Party is part of the continuity in the fight against Jew-hatred that goes back to Lenin and the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia," Fruit said. "Socialist should never support any crime against humanity in the name of revolution."



V.I. Lenin, leader of 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, used gramophone recordings to widely disseminate speeches against antisemitism. Bolsheviks educated toilers to see Jews as fellow victims of capitalist exploitation and oppression, as well as allies in the working-class fight to overthrow it.



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US rulers launch Palmer raids, seek to crush Communist parties

Revolutionary Continuity: Birth of the Communist Movement, 1918-1922 by Farrell Dobbs is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for November. The excerpt from "New capitalist repressions" explains how the U.S. rulers trampled on constitutional freedoms to crush union militancy and the young communist movement inspired by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. Assaults on political rights today again threaten rights workers need to fight boss attacks. A young leader of the Minneapolis Teamster strikes in 1934, Dobbs went on to lead the Teamster campaign to organize a quarter of a million over-the-road drivers across the Midwest. He was Socialist Workers Party national secretary from 1953 to 1972. The book is the second volume in Dobbs' series on Marxist leadership. Copyright © 1983 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Mass arrests of members of communist movement, union fighters during notorious raids carried out by Democrat Attorney General Mitchell Palmer. Special targets were newly formed Communist parties. Up to 10,000 worker militants were detained, many deported.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FARRELL DOBBS

The proletarian victory sweeping across the former Russian Empire enabled U.S. workers to perceive more clearly their inherent power as a class, and they wanted to use that power in their expanding fight to wrest concessions from the bosses.

Class-struggle actions of varying dimensions continued throughout

1919, reaching a climax in a huge autumn steel strike. ...

The ruling class parlayed its momentum from the victory over the steelworkers into a sweeping offensive against the entire labor movement. On the international arena the offensive coincided with, and was part of, the imperialists' military, economic, and political drive to strangle the fledgling Russian workers' state and thus reverse the most devastating blow ever suffered by capitalism anywhere. ...

The shock brigade of the government's vicious witch-hunting was the U.S. Department of Justice, headed by Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer. Acting for the [Woodrow] Wilson administration, Palmer launched an antired crusade with special emphasis on "alien anarchy."

For many years the ruling class had been planting spies and provocateurs in the Socialist Party to inform on its members and disrupt it. When the SP split occurred in 1919, the Justice Department's dirty work was extended into the two new Communist parties. These infiltrators were now used as bird dogs in a dragnet operation intended to tear apart the workers' vanguard organizations.

The operation was carried out under the immediate supervision of J. Edgar Hoover, who was later to become director of the antilabor, anti-Black Federal Bureau of Investigation.

In November 1919, during the steel strike, the political police had swooped down and arrested several hundred members of the two Communist parties, mainly in New York. This particular raid was intended, among other things, to buttress a phony charge that the steel strike was part of a "Bolshevik plot." The charges leveled against the Communists implied that they were masterminding the trade union struggles taking place, when in reality their sectarianism had isolated them from the labor upsurge.

Then, at the beginning of 1920, Palmer opened an all-out anticommunist offensive, extending from coast to coast. Federal agents invaded Communist meetings, party headquarters, and the workplaces and homes of individuals. They seized literature, party records, and private correspondence. Firings were encouraged, families were terrorized, and wholesale arrests were made. By the end of January thousands of political militants were in jail on framed-up charges.

Foreign-born workers bore the brunt of the attack. As the January raids began, the political cops were given packets of deportation warrants. These so-called John Doe warrants, issued without naming actual persons, were then used against noncitizens picked up by chance in the federal dragnet. Almost 3,000 alleged communists were arrested in that way. They languished in jails through-

out the country, except for those able to get out on bond; and several hundred of them were hustled to Ellis Island, where they were incarcerated pending final orders for their expulsion. In the end, some 750 immigrants were deported as a result of the 1919 and 1920 raids.

The vast scope of the government drive against the foreign born suspected of harboring communist ideas, together with the brutal manner in which it was carried out, sowed fear among immigrant workers generally. This wider consequence of the Palmer raids was, of course, exactly what the capitalist rulers sought to achieve. Basically, their antilabor-anticommunist campaign was intended to curb militancy throughout the entire labor force and keep the workers divided and docile to the boss class.

This colossal frame-up of immigrant workers was accompanied by widespread arrests of other communist leaders on "subversive" charges. When brought to trial in the witch-hunt atmosphere generated by the ruling class, they were usually convicted and given harsh sentences. ...

This assault on the communist movement added a new dimension to the general antilabor campaign. State power was used against the working class, as freedom of speech and freedom of assembly came under direct attack. The proletarian vanguard's right to maintain legal organizations was undermined.

Since a political party cannot exist without having an organizational form, party members have to function as a secret association under particularly severe conditions of repression. But Marxists retreat into such a clandestine method of organizing themselves only as a last resort. Before doing so, they mobilize the maximum support to resist in every possible way capitalist efforts to isolate them from legal, public political life. They fight to uphold their own democratic rights and those of the entire labor movement and its allies. Moreover, Marxists strive to win expansion of those rights for all the exploited and oppressed. They recognize that such a course is imperative if the working-class vanguard is to maintain close touch with the working class as a whole and carry out the all-sided political activity basic to its objectives.

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Workers need our own foreign policy

Statement by Lea Sherman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New Jersey General Assembly, Nov. 1.

The one thing all the Democratic and Republican candidates for president share in common is a foreign policy based on defense of the economic and political interests of the propertied capitalist rulers. They like to call this serving “our country.”

But the U.S., like all capitalist powers, is divided between two fundamentally antagonistic classes. Fierce competition for markets and profits drives the ruling rich to assault our jobs, wages, working conditions and the unions. Workers are forced to join together to fight for what our class needs. That irreconcilable class struggle is the starting point of all political questions.

The bosses have two main parties that loyally defend their interests at home and abroad, including their imperialist wars, from Korea, to Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan and many more. They use economic blackmail to enforce a damaging embargo against Cuba’s socialist revolution. Both Democrats and Republicans back Washington’s moves to expand its massive arsenal as the rulers prepare more wars. Without a party of our own, workers have no political voice. We need to build a labor party based on the unions and a working-class foreign policy.

Unlike the capitalists, who seek gains by conflicts and war with their rivals, working people worldwide have common class interests.

A working-class foreign policy today starts from the determined fight against the violent Jew-hating attacks that have risen from Dagestan, U.S. cam-

pus and elsewhere, following Hamas’ Oct. 7 massacre in Israel. Workers and our unions should join actions against Jew-hatred and defend Israel’s right to exist as a refuge for Jews.

Calls for a cease-fire in the Middle East are a call for the Israeli government to leave Jews defenseless in the face of more inevitable bloody pogroms. Hamas must be soundly defeated or antisemites everywhere will be emboldened.

Workers and our unions should demand the unconditional withdrawal of Moscow’s forces from every inch of Ukraine. Back the courageous struggle of working people in Ukraine to defend their independence and defeat Moscow’s genocidal war!

As long as the capitalist rulers hold power in the U.S. their system of exploitation and oppression will suffer economic breakdowns, mounting conflicts and more wars. As their fear of workers’ struggles deepens, they’ll turn to fascist gangs to defend their rule.

But the epoch of imperialism does not preordain the triumph of fascism. Above all, today is the epoch of world revolution. Capitalism breeds working-class struggle and battles to end national oppression. Workers will have our chance to take power into our own hands, before the rulers plunge us into another Holocaust, third imperialist world war and nuclear annihilation.

Taking on the most violent imperialist ruling class in history and replacing its rule with workers power is the only road forward. A party and leadership capable of this challenge can and must be built in the U.S.

Join the Socialist Workers Party!

‘Gag’ orders on Trump are blow to free speech

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to jail him, disenfranchising the tens of millions who want to vote for him. When the rights of a capitalist politician like Trump are trampled on, it’s inevitable the same and worse will be done to the working class.

New York Supreme Court Judge Arthur Engoron has fined Trump twice already, during the former president’s trial on charges of overestimating the value of his properties. Democrat New York Attorney General Letitia James is using the case to try to ruin Trump and prevent him from operating any business in the state.

Violating the constitutional right to confront your accusers in a trial, Engoron found Trump guilty in summary judgment before the trial began. The largest fine was imposed after Trump said that Engoron, who is a Democrat, is “a very partisan judge, with a person who’s very partisan sitting alongside of him.” Engoron claims those remarks were a threat against his law clerk. In fact, when Trump was called to the stand to explain his remarks, he said he was referring to Michael Cohen, who was on the witness stand. Cohen, Trump’s former lawyer, is now a prominent and “very partisan” prosecution witness against him.

The heart of Biden’s reelection strategy is railing at Trump and his “semi-fascist” supporters. Jack Smith is the special prosecutor the Justice Department has tasked with bringing down Trump. At Smith’s urging, District of Columbia Judge Tanya Chutkan lifted a temporary stay on a gag order she imposed on Trump during his trial for so-called election interference.

“Trump is a criminal defendant,” Chutkan said. “First Amendment freedoms do not allow him to launch a pretrial smear campaign against participating government staff.” In fact a presidential candidate has a right to say what he thinks about government staff. People have a right to hear him.

Before the trial has even begun, the judge’s gag order and “smear campaign” accusation are designed to undercut Trump’s right to a fair hearing.

Even the American Civil Liberties Union — a staunch anti-Trump group — found this gag order too much. They filed a friend-of-the-court brief urging the order be thrown out. It says, “Trump retains a First Amendment right to speak, and the rest of us retain a right to hear what he has to say.”

“If we allow his free speech rights to be abridged,” it adds, “we know that other unpopular voices — even

ones we agree with — will also be silenced.”

It also says the Constitution protects “the defendant’s right to a fair trial under the Sixth Amendment, a right the government does not have.”

To strengthen his push to ban Trump from speaking out, Smith cites Trump’s Oct. 24 comments about Mark Meadows, his former White House chief of staff. Meadows had just taken a plea deal in another prosecution against Trump, in Georgia.

“If you say BAD THINGS about that ‘MONSTER’ DONALD J. TRUMP, we won’t put you in prison,” Trump wrote. “Some people would make that deal but they are weaklings and cowards. ... I don’t think that Mark Meadows is one of them. But who really knows?”

Smith claims this is witness intimidation. He also argues Trump “does not need to explicitly incite harassment or violence” for the court to gag him!

Long history of gag laws against communists

Attempts by the Democratic and Republican parties to silence political opponents are nothing new. In 1940, on the eve of Washington’s entry into the second imperialist world war, Congress adopted the Smith “Gag” Act, which makes advocating the revolutionary overthrow of the government a federal crime.

President Franklin Roosevelt’s administration first use of the law was to railroad to prison 18 leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and the Teamsters union in the Midwest. The SWP had the temerity to explain the only means to end imperialist war was to replace capitalist rule with workers power. In 1949, 11 leaders of the Communist Party were convicted under the Smith Act. The SWP opposed the CP members’ conviction, calling for the law to be abolished.

By 1957 some 140 U.S. communists and unionists had been arrested under the Smith Act. Although the law has not been used since 1961, it remains on the books, ready for use to attack the rights of new generations of working-class fighters.

Unequivocally opposing the Biden administration’s attacks on free speech and other rights is crucial to safeguard protection workers need whenever our unions go on strike, or we organize opposition to the capitalist rulers’ wars, or take steps toward a break with their two parties — the Democrats and Republicans — and fight for working people to take political power into our own hands.

Drug store closures

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pandemic in handouts from the government for giving vaccine shots.

In addition, the chains have faced hundreds of lawsuits over their role in over-dispensing opioids, which contributed to the overdose deaths of more than 300,000 people since 2000.

In response to deteriorating work conditions as drug-store bosses implement “cost saving” measures, pharmacists and technicians at more than 500 Walgreens stores around the country went on strike Oct. 9-11. They were protesting understaffing, speedup and low pay. Similar protests took place at CVS stores in Kansas City, Missouri, the month before. On Oct. 30, pharmacy workers at Walgreens and CVS in several states began another three-day walkout.

The drug-store closures have the biggest impact in small towns and rural areas. Many towns across the Midwest and the southern part of the U.S. are at least 10 miles — and often much farther — away from the nearest pharmacy. Nearly 200 rural hospitals have been shut down since 2005, with hundreds more on the chopping block.

The pharmacy closures make it much more difficult for older adults, many of whom require a number of medications, to get them.

In the 1990s and early 2000s, CVS and Walgreens moved into cities and towns, using their sheer size to crush independent local pharmacies. Nearly 50% of these outlets have disappeared in the past four decades. They’re no longer available as an alternative as the retail giants are closing down.

Class-divided capitalist crisis

The effects of today’s deepening capitalist economic crisis are sharply class-divided. While the ruling rich are spending like there is no tomorrow, working people are tightening their belts. This means all claims by the government that the economy is booming are a lie for the vast majority of us.

More than 44.2 million people lived in households that struggled with hunger last year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture had to admit, an increase of 10.3 million over the previous year. This affected 13.4 million children in lower-paid working-class families. Fully one-third of single-parent households headed by women don’t have enough food.

This crisis was exacerbated when state and federal governments closed down pandemic programs last year that provided free school meals to families during the first two years of school and emergency funds from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

“Our food banks across the country have been reporting exceedingly high demand,” Claire Babineaux-Fontenot, chief executive of Feeding America, told the *Washington Post*, with “50 million visitors last year and about close to that this year — a third more than before the pandemic.”

With food prices rising and real wages declining, increasing numbers of workers are also struggling to cover monthly rent.

With interest on home mortgages reaching nearly 8%, the average monthly house payment is now 52% higher than it costs to rent an apartment — even though rents have soared 22% over the past three years. This situation makes it more difficult for young people to move out of living with their parents or other relatives and to get their own place to have and raise a family.

While many workers are forced to retrench to make ends meet, the bosses, bankers, graft-enriched politicians and upper-middle-class layers, who’ve amassed hoards of funds, are spending big time.

This includes splurges on \$40,000 watches, private planes, bloated concert ticket prices, private suites at sports events, fancy vacations and other baubles.

To service this lucrative market, the *Financial Times* publishes a weekly high-end ad-crammed glossy magazine called “How to Spend It.” The Oct. 29 *New York Times* included a special magazine entirely devoted to high-end watches.

But under this class-divided capitalist system, workers face an entirely different reality. These conditions — exacerbated by boss attacks on wages and working conditions — have fueled strikes by auto-workers, hospital workers and more. And they feed a discussion among workers today over the need to break from the rulers’ main parties — the Democrats and Republicans.