

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Dominican, Haitian sugarcane workers discuss road forward
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 87/NO. 45 DECEMBER 4, 2023

UP rail bosses furlough 1,350 track workers, risk disaster

BY JOE SWANSON

LINCOLN, Neb. — After Union Pacific Railroad bosses announced in October they were going to furlough 1,350 track-maintenance workers in the next month, Tony Cardwell, president of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division union that organizes these workers, sent a letter of protest to the Surface Transportation Board. The furlough of union members will “put the safety and reliability of our nation’s railroad network at risk,” he said.

In mid-2015, “the BMWED had 8,791 members employed on Union Pacific Railroad,” Cardwell said. “By September 1, 2023, BMWED membership on Union Pacific was at 6,087. Furloughing an additional 1,350 Maintenance of Way employees will shrink Union Pacific BMWED employment numbers down to approximately 4,737, far below the minimum needed to op-

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‘Bidenomics’: A boon for the rich, poorhouse for workers

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The Joseph Biden administration boasts its economic policies — dubbed “Bidenomics” — will lead to the president keeping the White House in 2024. But the real-life experience of tens of millions of workers is increasing their uncertainty about the future, and is in sharp conflict with Democrats’ rose-tinted view.

The fact is people see the state of the economy from sharply divergent class realities — with the capitalist rulers and their upper-middle-class hangers-on getting richer and working people living paycheck to paycheck.

“Income inequality” — an inevitable consequence of bosses’ drive to maximize profits off the exploitation of workers — is now bigger than ever. According to the Federal Reserve, the top 10% of households now own 69% of all wealth in the U.S., while the bottom 50% can access a paltry 2.5%. The top

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Join fight against Jew-hatred! Back Israel’s right to defend itself



YNET/Yoav Zeyton

Israeli soldiers emerge from one of numerous tunnels beneath Al-Shifa Hospital, Gaza, Nov. 22, part of proof that Hamas base operated there, using patients and staff as human shields.

Hamas uses hospitals as bases, armories, prisons

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Since thousands of Hamas thugs swept out of Gaza Oct. 7 — carrying out the worst pogrom against Jews since the Holocaust — one pointed question is, where is Hamas based?

The answer? Their command posts, bases and arms depots are in wards, basements and tunnels underneath hospitals, schools, mosques and other civilian structures. This was true before Oct. 7 and remains so today.

“About 100 of us took control of Rantisi Hospital in Gaza,” a captured Hamas operative named Abdelrahman Alaa Ibrahim Samur said in one of a number of filmed interviews made by the Israel Defense Forces and released Nov. 20. They “operated from the hospital,” he

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Israelis fight to prevent modern-day Holocaust

BY SETH GALINSKY

More facts continue to come out that highlight the depravity of the Hamas death squads, financed and orchestrated by Tehran, that murdered 1,200 people in Israel Oct. 7, wounded 5,400 more and kidnapped 240 hostages to Gaza.

It was the largest single-day murder of Jews since the Holocaust, when the Nazis slaughtered 6 million Jews. While the overwhelming majority of those killed, wounded or seized in southern

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SWP over the top in ‘Militant’, books, fund drive, plans to keep campaigning



Militant/Tony Lane

SWP member Candace Wagner talked to Mykhailo Olkhovskiy, a taxi driver originally from Ukraine, at his doorstep in Parma, Ohio, showing him party statement in Ukrainian against Moscow’s invasion. He subscribed to *Militant*, got *On the Jewish Question* by Leon Trotsky.

BY ILONA GERSH

Since Hamas’ Oct. 7 massacre of Jews in Israel, members of the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada and the U.K. have been using the *Militant* to explain why workers and our unions have a stake in fighting Jew-hatred wherever it appears, and discussing what can be done to end it for all time.

In every area, party campaigners are

joining protests backing Israel’s right to exist as a refuge for Jews, bringing solidarity to union picket lines, and knocking on doors in working-class neighborhoods in cities and rural areas.

They completed an eight-week fall campaign by selling 1,423 subscriptions to the *Militant*, 1,870 books by SWP and other revolutionary leaders and raising \$145,942 for the SWP’s annual Party-

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NY forum: Stakes for the working class in the fight against Jew-hatred

BY PAUL MAILHOT

NEW YORK — Two major recent events around the world are shaping the consciousness of millions of working people in the U.S., Peter Thierjung of the Socialist Workers Party told participants in a Militant Labor Forum here Nov. 18.

The first is “the determination of the Ukrainian people to stand up to the brutal invasion and war by the Putin regime of Russia,” he said. “The second is the fight by the Jews of Israel against Hamas who, with the aid of the government in Iran and Hezbollah, killed over 1,200 Jews and

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Moscow sentences protester against war on Ukraine to 7 years in prison

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Ukrainian people are unbending in their courageous fight to defend their people and their country’s independence against the genocidal onslaught by invading Russian forces, who have suffered heavy losses. Despite Vladimir Putin’s brutal clampdown at home, popular opposition to the carnage is mounting among Russian working people.

This has become the biggest war
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Flight attendants at American Airlines rally, ‘ready to strike’

‘I need enough to live on,’ Detroit casino strikers say

Ohio abortion referendum was blow to women, working class

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

CINCINNATI — After a national campaign organized by the Democratic Party, drawing in tens of millions of dollars, an amendment to enshrine the right to abortion in Ohio's state constitution passed Nov. 7. The campaign had nothing to do with the fight for women's rights — including the decriminalization of abortion — nor defending working-class interests.

The yes campaign was openly tied to getting President Joseph Biden reelected in 2024. After the vote, Biden declared, "Ohioans and voters across the country rejected attempts by MAGA Republican elected officials to impose extreme abortion bans." He added, "The only reason abortion is banned in America is because of Donald Trump!"

This is patently false. Prior to the vote, abortion was legal in Ohio up to 22 weeks of pregnancy. After the vote, abortion is legal in Ohio up to 22 weeks of pregnancy. But Democrats mounted a scare campaign, claiming that the U.S. Supreme Court's Dobbs ruling that Roe v. Wade was unconstitutional last year meant that all access to abortion was under dire threat.

In fact the Dobbs ruling made no restriction on abortion, but returned decisions on this issue from unelected judges to state governments. Abortion remains legal in more than 20 states and Washington, D.C. In the year since the Dobbs ruling the number of women having legal abortions rose, as more women found themselves forced to consider ending an unwanted pregnancy as a result of the

fact that today's crisis of capitalism makes it harder and harder for workers to sustain families.

Democrats are already organizing campaigns to get similar amendments adopted in Arizona, Florida and other states. In Ohio they hired an army of volunteers who campaigned for a constitutional guarantee, claiming it was the only way to stop the possibility of future restrictions on abortion access.

Using referendums to change state constitutions this way — to try to prevent the issue from ever being reconsidered — has only one outcome. It makes it harder for working people to try to change any law we oppose by entrenching it in a state constitution and closing down debate. Discussion and debate are vital on all political questions, especially one that involves human life.

Families face growing challenges

By centering their campaigning on abortion, Democrats hope to divert attention from the fact that the Biden administration has done nothing to reverse the broad social disaster working people face. Challenges mount daily in meeting the growing costs of housing, food and transportation, let alone medical care and child care.

Most organizations claiming to speak for women say little about this reality and reduce women's rights to abortion access, getting more women into professional and managerial jobs and electing Democrats. They present abortion as an issue on its own, not part of the broader fight to advance the in-



Militant
United Food and Commercial Workers Local 23D members struck Heaven Hill distillery in Bardstown, Kentucky, September 2021, for better work schedules, family time, overtime pay.

terests of women and the working class.

The Republican Party, including Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine, opposed the amendment. It passed with 57% voting in favor.

Yes votes were concentrated in the main cities, including Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati. Exposing a sharp divide, rural counties overwhelmingly registered no votes.

The victorious referendum does not decriminalize abortion. It leaves it with the same restraints as before, guaranteeing it up to fetal viability, a medical criterion usually determined to be 23 to 24 weeks. After that time a woman's request to have an abortion will require her physician's decision.

The Socialist Workers Party called on working people to vote no.

"The SWP champions the decriminalization of abortion as part of the broader fight to advance the rights and lives of women and working people as a whole," said John Hawkins, the party's candidate for U.S. Senate from Ohio. "That includes full and equal participation in social and economic life."

"The crisis of capitalism is making it harder for workers to support families. We need a union-led fight for a government-funded public works program to provide jobs at union-scale pay to build child care centers, housing, public kitchens and schools," said Hawkins. "And a fight for publicly financed cradle-to-grave medical care."

"We need contraception that is safe and affordable, and work schedules that allow us time to raise our families, with wages that make this possible."

The answer to inflation and growing pressures on families is not more abortions, as many Democrats argue. This is a woman's medical decision. Workers should reject the push to use abortion as a means of contraception. At issue with abortion is a potential human being. Abortion should be a fallback, something that is needed when all else fails.

"This year workers have learned more about how to fight for better conditions, from striking autoworkers, casino workers, bakery and other unionists," Hawkins said.

The SWP points to the powerful example set by the leadership of Cuba's socialist revolution.

Fidel Castro led working people to conquer power. Millions of women participated in the defense and advance of the revolution, breaking down barriers to full involvement in economic, social and political life. The revolutionary government organized child care, school and workplace lunch and after-school programs to help overcome the inequality women face. Along the way they decriminalized abortion.

The SWP exists to forge the kind of leadership needed to make that possible in the U.S. and open the door to the final struggle to end women's subjugation.

THE MILITANT

Workers need to lead fight to end Jew-hatred

While Hamas' main goal Oct. 7 was to kill as many Jews as possible, it also killed Arabs and immigrant farmworkers living in Israel. The *'Militant'* explains why fighting Jew-hatred, taking power out of hands of capitalists is only road forward for working class in Middle East.



Iris Ginzburg
Arabs, Jews pack supplies in Rahat, Israel, for Bedouins, Jewish Israelis after pogrom.

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Subs, books, fund over the top

Continued from front page

Building Fund.

The final campaign chart will be printed in next week's issue of the *Militant*.

In the coming days party members will build on that success, taking the paper far and wide to discuss the party's working-class program and its activities.

Several hundred students, mostly Jews from Concordia and McGill universities, rallied at the Concordia campus in downtown Montreal Nov. 16. They were protesting a wave of antisemitic attacks against synagogues, Jewish schools and on campuses in the wake of Hamas' Oct. 7 pogrom.

Participants chanted "Bring them home!" referring to the 240 Israeli hostages taken by Hamas.

In the weeks before the action, one McGill student attending a pro-Hamas action had boasted, "We have terrified them. We will make them afraid, make them feel uncomfortable."

"I am not afraid," Julia, a McGill student, told the crowd. "I am here to bring a simple message from Jewish McGill students. We are not Jews with trembling knees! This is not 1933, this is 2023 and antisemitic hatred is not welcome!"

As Communist League members set up a table to display the *Militant* newspaper and books on revolutionary working-class struggles, a cop demanded they move the table because he claimed it wasn't part of the action. One protest organizer came over to the table, attracted by signs carried by the CL members that said, "No to

Jew-hatred. Defend Israel's right to exist!" and "Call for cease-fire = Support to Hamas."

"I really like your slogans," he said. The cop left.

The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation by Abram Leon caught the attention of many participants. The book explains the roots of Jew-hatred, its virulent character in the imperialist epoch, and why it will take a struggle of millions to make a socialist revolution to end it once and for all.

Ukraine, Israel: Two fronts, one war

SWP members Candace Wagner and Tony Lane from Pittsburgh went to Parma, Ohio, where they spoke to Mykhailo Olkhovskiy, a taxi driver originally from Ukraine, at his doorstep. He described waking up Feb. 24, 2022, in Kharkiv to the sound of bombing. "I looked out my window and realized that the war had started. I didn't think this could be happening in the 21st century."

Wagner asked him if he thought there were similarities between the Vladimir Putin regime's assault on Ukraine and Hamas' war to exterminate Jews.

"Russia is terrorist. Hamas is the same thing. They don't want peace; they want to destroy," Olkhovskiy said. But following Oct. 7 "the focus of the world will be on Israel, not on Ukraine."

"The fight by Ukrainians for their sovereignty helps the defense of Israel," Lane replied, pointing out that workers had an interest in the defeat of both genocidal assaults.

"At the beginning of the war, Zelensky tried to speak with Putin, but he



Militant/John Steele

Communist League members in Montreal Nov. 16 discuss fight against Jew-hatred with students protesting attacks on synagogues, Jewish organizations in city and on campuses.

didn't want to," Olkhovskiy said. "Russia had the second-strongest army in the world; now you see they're not so strong." As a result, "we don't need to give up territory in Ukraine."

He told the SWP campaigners his first job in the U.S. was at Amazon, where it was "work, work, work, just like a robot. They said you would be working 10 hours a day for a 40-hour week. Then they wanted a 50-hour week."

Olkhovskiy decided to subscribe to the *Militant* and got *On the Jewish Question* by Leon Trotsky.

Bringing campaign to truck drivers

Socialist Workers Party campaigners from Washington, D.C., went to a

truck stop in Jessup, Maryland, Nov. 20. Truck driver Justin Rios rolled down his window to talk with SWP members Arlene Rubinstein and Glova Scott. "I grew up in a small town in North Carolina and joined the army," he said. He left the army three weeks before Oct. 7. "I was glad about that, big time. There's not much discussion in the army about U.S. wars, but there needs to be."

"The wars to defeat Hamas and against Moscow are in the interest of workers everywhere," Rubinstein said.

"I support Israel. They have a right to defend themselves," Rios agreed.

A copy of *The Jewish Question* was sold to another trucker "who told us he had friends in a kibbutz who were murdered by Hamas," SWP member Arrin Hawkins said. All told, truckers got three subscriptions to the *Militant*; two copies of *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; and a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Barnes.

To join members of the SWP or CL campaigning, contact the nearest branch listed on page 8.

Aborigines in Australia join in fight against Jew-hatred

BY JANET ROTH

SYDNEY — Some opponents here of Israel's right to exist and defend itself portray the conflict since the Hamas slaughter of Jews Oct. 7 as a fight between "indigenous Palestinians" and "colonizing Jews." They seek to link it with the just fight for Aboriginal rights in Australia.

The day after Hamas' pogrom, Aboriginal Sen. Lidia Thorpe, who speaks for the "Blak Sovereignty" movement in Parliament, announced on social media, "I stand with Palestine!" One indigenous community organizer, Meriki Onus, told the *Australian* Nov. 15, "Almost every Aboriginal person I know understands the position of Palestinian people experiencing genocide and dispossession."

Marcia Langton, a long-time fighter for Aboriginal rights, answered these statements in that paper the same day. She expressed horror at Hamas' murder and kidnapping of Israelis, and its using innocent Palestinians as human shields. It is "simply untrue," she wrote, that "indigenous Australians feel solidarity with Palestinians."

"It is the view of a tiny few, if put in those words. Most of us are aware of the complexity and that there is very little comparable in our respective situations, other than our humanity."

"I am aghast and embarrassed," Langton wrote, at the refusal of "Blak Sovereignty" advocates to condemn Hamas for what they did to the Jews in "the largest loss of life in a day since the Holocaust." She referred to "people deluded about terrorism who have used their protests as a cover for anti-

semitism," adding, "No legitimate Aboriginal leader will permit our movement to be associated with terrorists."

On Nov. 9, a meeting of 600 people was held here by the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies marking the 85th year since Kristallnacht, "the Night of the Broken Glass." Nazi thugs launched a murderous nationwide pogrom Nov. 9-10, 1938, targeting Jewish shops, synagogues and homes. Many were killed and hundreds sent to concentration camps.

The meeting honored the Aboriginal leader and trade unionist William Cooper. His great-great-grandson, Michael McDonogh, attended.

Cooper worked as a farm laborer and sheep shearer, and took part in the giant strikes in that industry in the 1890s. He later wrote, "I was a member of the Shearers Union from the time of its organisation until I got too old for work."

"I am now retired and for the last 10 years I have devoted my energies to the emancipation of my people," he wrote at that time. He helped to found the Australian Aborigines' League in 1933.

After reading about the horrors of the Kristallnacht, Cooper organized the League on Dec. 6, 1938, to march from his home to the German Consulate in Melbourne to deliver a protest letter against the pogrom.

"On behalf of the Aboriginal inhabitants of Australia, we wish to have it registered and on record that we protest wholeheartedly at the cruel persecution of the Jewish people by the Nazi government in Germany," it said. They

demand that the Jew-hating violence "be brought to an end."

But the consulate's doors were locked, the letter was passed on to a guard, and it was not delivered. In 2017, nearly 80 years later, Cooper's grandson, Alf Turner, and others delivered it to the German government in Berlin.

'Militant' editor: Special features coming up

The *Militant* will be presenting a series of special features related to unfolding events in world politics following the slaughter carried out by Tehran-backed Hamas in Israel Oct. 7. The first is the article by Roy Landersen in this issue laying out the facts on Hamas' proven use of hospitals, schools and other structures for its operations.

The next feature will be an account of the integration of Haj Amin el-Husseini, known as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, into the murder machine of the Nazi regime in the second imperialist world war. He recruited Bosnian Muslims to form a special SS regiment that was to be unleashed against Jews in North Africa and the Middle East on the heels of a victory by German Gen. Erwin Rommel to implement the "Final Solution" there.

While Rommel was defeated, and this plan was unable to be implemented, el-Husseini returned to Egypt, then Palestine, after the war. He played a central role in leading the five feudal Arab regimes in their war against the new nation of Israel in 1948, which he saw as an opportunity to deal with the "Jewish question."

Further features will follow.



We have successfully completed our fall campaigns, but the need to expand the reach of the *Militant* to get out the truth about world developments, the fight against Jew-hatred and defense of the right of Israel to exist as a refuge for Jews remains crucial. It is the best tool to answer the worldwide campaign by some capitalist governments, Stalinist parties and other forces to back Hamas by clamoring for a cease-fire. Join in using the *Militant* to lay out a class-struggle road forward for working people.

John Studer

John Studer
Militant editor

Dominican, Haitian sugarcane workers discuss road forward

BY RACHELE FRUIT
AND RÓGER CALERO

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic — Members and supporters of the Sugarcane Workers Union (UTC) held a conference here Nov. 6-11 to discuss and win support for their fight for retirement pensions.

Dozens of Haitian and Dominican sugarcane workers, women as well as men, traveled long distances each day from different sugarcane communities (bateyes) around the country to take part. International guests from the United States, Canada and Uruguay also participated.

Founded in 2009, the UTC has mobilized thousands of sugarcane workers in more than 450 marches and pickets at the Presidential Palace, National Congress, Ministry of Labor and Social Security offices to demand pensions, medical care and rights for undocumented Haitian immigrants and their Dominican-born descendants. They have won broad sympathy among workers, as has their initiative to organize both Dominican and Haitian workers regardless of their legal status. Their slogan, “Without sugarcane workers there is no sugar!” is very popular.

While the UTC has won pensions for hundreds of workers and made other gains over the last 14 years, it has had to fight every government administration, which loyally defends the interests of the sugar barons and other capitalists.

“The picture has been even more grim under current President Luis Abinader,” said Jesús Núñez, UTC’s national coordinator, at the opening of the event. “Haitian immigrant sugarcane workers are not even being allowed to apply for long-overdue pensions,” he explained. “There is also growing anti-immigrant demagoguery peddled by the Abinader government and other bourgeois politicians.” The number of Haitians who have been deported has risen sharply.

Fighting for our rights

Thousands of sugarcane workers and their families are affected by the discriminatory practices of the government and the sugar companies. The majority are Haitian immigrants and their children and grandchildren born here, but denied citizenship and subject to deportation.

Many conference participants have been working in the cane fields for de-

cadecades, some going back to the 1960s. Thousands came originally as part of binational agreements to supply contract labor. Haitian migrant workers were assigned by the Dominican government agency overseeing the sugar industry an employee card, known as a ficha, with a number used to track a worker’s contribution to their retirement fund.

“Now they are being told that the fichas are not good to apply for their pensions,” Micely Díaz Espaillat, author of a report on the issue, told the conference. If the cards “were good to take the money from them they should be good for them to get their pensions.”

“They take your application and throw it at the bottom of the pile,” said Andrés, who is 80 years old and has been waiting 14 years for documents required by authorities.

“Our struggle is for a right we are entitled to,” said Núñez. “The government is now demanding a national ID card that it denies to undocumented Haitian workers.”

Solidarity from U.S. workers

Among international guests at the conference were Gerardo Sánchez, an organizer for Local 111 of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union in Dallas-Fort Worth; Rachele Fruit, a hotel worker and member of Local 355 of UNITE HERE in Miami; and Róger Calero, from New York, who along with Sánchez and Fruit is a member of the Socialist Workers Party. Fruit is also the SWP’s 2024 candidate for U.S. Senate from Florida. Many of her co-workers in Miami are Haitians and were glad to hear that she was bringing solidarity to the cane workers.

Sánchez brought a message to the conference from David Menefee, financial secretary-treasurer of Local 111.

“We send you our greetings, solidarity, and appreciation” for inviting a member of our local, read the message. It “has encouraged us to learn more about your struggles in the Dominican Republic” and “in Latin America.”

“We look forward to sharing with you the experiences of our union in struggles around the United States, like the ongoing strike of workers at International Flavors and Fragrances,” in Memphis, Tennessee.



Militant/Róger Calero

Sugarcane workers send solidarity message to strikers at International Flavors and Fragrances in Memphis, Tennessee, from Nov. 6-11 conference in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

In return, sugarcane workers at the conference voted to send a solidarity message to striking IFF workers, which they enthusiastically lined up to sign. “We have learned about the struggle at IFF,” it reads. “We are also fighting for safer working conditions, better pay, pensions and against discrimination.”

Conference participants were interested in the descriptions of struggles by working people against the devastating consequences of the capitalist crisis in the U.S. and Canada.

“Thousands of workers in the U.S. have begun to fight to defend themselves from conditions that make it impossible to raise a family. The birth rate is down, as well as life expectancy,” Róger Calero said. Many participants nodded in agreement.

Calero and the other SWP members at the conference described the work they are doing to build unions and revolutionary parties that can lead the working class to take political power.

They explained the stakes involved for the working class worldwide in opposing Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine, and the massacre of Jews by Hamas in Israel on Oct. 7 and the ensuing explosive rise of Jew-hatred around the world. “As in the 1930s, the ultimate target of these Jew-hating reactionary forces is the working class itself,” Calero said. “Jew-hatred will be used to spearhead attacks against the labor movement and its vanguard. Unions must be part of the fight against it.”

A feature presentation was made by Rafael Chaljub Mejía, an author and a leader of the Communist Party of Labor,

who spoke about the impact of U.S. interventions in the Dominican Republic on the development of the sugar industry and the labor movement.

“Simultaneous with the land grabs and expulsions of peasants off the land and consolidation of capitalist production around sugar, also came the development of the working class,” he said. This history has been marked by several periods of strikes and uprisings by workers and peasants, including a sugarcane workers strike during the 1965 popular rebellion that was crushed by a U.S. invasion of 42,000 troops.

Several speakers also addressed the need to build and strengthen unions as they exist today, rather than form separate unions.

“The labor movement needs to be rebuilt,” Chaljub said. “A tiny amount of workers are in the unions in the Dominican Republic. And you have separate union federations fighting for the same demands in the same country.”

“A key question for building the labor movement in the U.S. is the fight for amnesty for undocumented workers, and the need to reject bosses’ attempts to divide workers, as we strengthen efforts to organize the unorganized,” said SWP candidate Fruit. “This is true everywhere.”

As part of the conference activities, international participants visited several bateyes that belong to the Central Romana Corporation, a giant sugar and real estate emporium, known for its anti-union practices. The *Militant* will have further coverage on the visit in the next issue.

‘I need enough to live on,’ Detroit casino strikers say

BY NED MEASEL

DETROIT — “Housekeeping is on the streets! Dirty beds, dirty sheets!” was the chant by strikers outside Hollywood Casino’s hotel in Detroit’s Greektown Nov. 15 when *Militant* correspondents from Cincinnati joined in. Some 3,700 workers, members of five unions, struck MGM Grand Casino, MotorCity Casino and Hollywood Casino at Greektown Oct. 17.

The unions’ Detroit Casino Council is made up of UNITE HERE Local 24, Teamsters Local 1038, United Auto Workers Local 7777, Operating Engineers Local 324 and the Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters.

After a tentative contract was reached Nov. 17, the unions kept picket lines up until members voted. The Casino Council announced the agreement in-

cludes an immediate 18% average pay raise, no increase in health care costs, workload reductions for housekeeping and some other jobs, retirement increases, and requires boss notification of new technology, with retraining, severance pay and continuing health care for those laid off as a result.

Workers at the MotorCity and Hollywood casinos voted up the contract Nov. 19, but strikers at MGM Grand voted it down and are still on the picket line.

While the *Militant* worker-correspondents were on the picket line Nov. 15 they saw tents set up outside the MGM Grand and a bustling picket line. Housekeeper Esperanza Garcia explained she is fighting for a wage increase, a bearable workload and no increase in her insurance premium. She said she learned English on the job.

“This is my job, and has also been my

school. I appreciate it, but I need enough to live,” she said. Hotel housekeepers are expected to clean 12 rooms in eight hours. “You need a half hour to clean a room right. A suite can take two hours. It’s not easy to go on strike. This is my first time, but I’m not scared.”

When the previous contract expired in 2020, the unions agreed to an extension with only a 3% pay increase. Inflation has run many times that and the casinos have realized record profits since the end of the pandemic, as bookings soared after it ended while the workforce remained down by 1,500.

“I’m proud of my job but we need more people. We do the work of two. We’re breaking down our bodies,” Mary Luna, a cashier in the MGM Grand coffee shop, said.

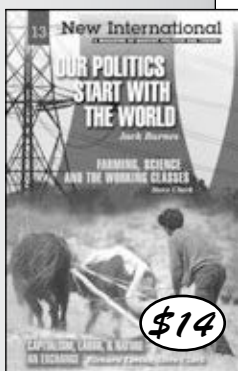
She said some of her co-workers don’t

Continued on page 5

New International #13

Our Politics Start With the World

“All the questions posed by the ongoing crises and breakdowns of international capitalism can only be understood clearly, and answered in practice, if we start from a world perspective.”



— Jack Barnes, Socialist Workers Party

pathfinderpress.com

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Flight attendants at American Airlines rally, 'ready to strike'

CHICAGO — “Overworked! Underpaid!” chanted hundreds of American Airlines flight attendants, members of the Association of Professional Flight Attendants union, as they rallied outside of Chicago O’Hare Airport Terminal 1 Nov. 16. The boisterous and spirited pickets carried signs saying, “Ready to strike!” They cheered, banged their signs with paint sticks and shook pompoms as passing drivers blew their horns in support.

The union organized protests here and at American terminals in 10 other cities, at the airline’s headquarters in Fort Worth, Texas, and the statehouse in Massachusetts. Several pilots, employees of other airlines and retired flight attendants joined the Chicago picket line in solidarity. Some veteran flight attendants recalled the last time there was a strike at the airline, in 1993. “Here we go again!” said one.

The 26,000 American flight attendants have gone without a pay raise since 2019, under pay rates negotiated in 2014.

In addition to substantial raises and a cost-of-living clause to boost wages whenever inflation goes up, the flight attendants are pushing to get paid for substantial work time they now are forced to perform for nothing. They’re only paid when the plane is in the air,

not for time spent boarding the plane or other duties on the ground.

They also face schedules that leave them exhausted. “We are working 12-plus-hour days with minimum rest,” flight attendant Kathrin Leefers told reporters at the Charlotte, North Carolina, airport picket line.

“We are ready to back our words with action. We are ready to strike,” Julie Hedrick, president of APFA, told the media. “This fight goes beyond us. It is a fight for all working-class Americans who are fed up with being forgotten and neglected while companies report record profits.”

American CEO Robert Isom hauled in a base salary of \$1.3 million this year, along with a \$2.75 million bonus and \$8.25 million worth of stock.

— David Rosenfeld



Militant/David Rosenfeld

American flight attendants rally at Chicago O’Hare Airport, 12 other cities, Nov. 16 demanding a pay raise, payment for work performed on the ground and more humane work schedules.

UP rail bosses furlough 1,350 track workers, risk disaster

Continued from front page

erate a safe and reliable railroad. It has done this with little regard for reliability, safety, or longevity.”

“I don’t look at our front-line employees as unionized,” Union Pacific CEO Jim Vena had told *Railway Age* a week earlier, displaying his disdain for them. “They understand how important it is to work in a safe manner. If we do that, we change the culture, we end up with a better employee. I want everyone in the company to be shareholders.”

“Union Pacific intends to defer much-needed maintenance on its right of ways, tracks, buildings, and bridges for the sole purpose of showing a larger profit to its shareholders in the fourth quarter,” Cardwell wrote the board. “As you are well aware, deferred maintenance will only lead to catastrophic outcomes.”

Jakob Forsgren, a track welder and chair of Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way’s Lincoln, Nebraska, local Lodge 1320, told the *Militant*, “After reading Vena’s *Railway Age* propaganda piece, what stood out, he wants everybody in the company to be ‘shareholders.’ The railroad bosses want everyone to think

in terms of ‘what will benefit the stock price?’ and as a result accept terrible pay, benefits and working conditions.”

Threat of more East Palestines

Railway Age did challenge Vena on safety, saying, “This year there have been a few high-profile accidents.” The pro-boss publication was referring to the disastrous derailment in East Palestine, Ohio. On Feb. 3, 50 cars of a Norfolk Southern train went on the ground there, including five tank cars containing toxic vinyl chloride.

Norfolk Southern bosses and government officials decided to drain and set on fire the toxic chemical, sending a giant plume of smoke into the air and contaminating the land, waters and air throughout the region. Residents were evacuated, fish in area creeks died by the tens of thousands and people began complaining of medical problems.

The railroad bosses’ goal was to get trains running again as fast as possible, immediately rebuilding the tracks on top of contaminated ballast and soil. They only reversed course after a mass outcry from area residents.

In hearings conducted by the National

Transportation Safety Board, rail workers and their unions have shown that the bosses’ greed caused the derailment. In their drive for profits over the last decade, Norfolk Southern and the other four U.S. Class 1 railroads have slashed their workforces, and now run fewer, longer, heavier trains, raking in cash by tossing safety concerns aside.

Deraillments continue to plague the understaffed railroads, threatening crews and area residents alike. The Federal Railroad Administration says it records at least two deraillments every single day.

“When I was working as a track inspector on the BNSF railroad,” Paul Swanson, a retired track inspector and Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way member in Colorado, told the *Militant*, “visual track inspection could not find internal defects in the rail. Those can only be found with detector trucks that use electronic signals to detect internal defects. They operated every four to six weeks on subdivisions with heavy tonnage.

“Those detector trucks usually found 10 to 20 defects every 100 miles.”

“There is no such thing as ‘we’ on the railroad. There is the union workers and the bosses,” Swanson added, countering Vena’s claims they’re all one happy family. “Technology such as using electronic signals to find internal rail defects are important to make railroading safer, but more important is having more frequent worker inspections to find the defects and more workers to repair the tracks.”

The railroad unions need to use union power to fight for workers control over maintenance and operating conditions, so safety is first and foremost over profit. This is the only way to reverse the treacherous conditions rail workers and those that live and work near railroad property face.

Detroit casinos

Continued from page 4

see the importance of picketing. “They say MGM doesn’t care. I say you’re right, they don’t care, but do you care enough to be out here — for yourself?”

Outside the MotorCity Casino, pickets walked back and forth at the entrance to the parking garage and told everyone coming in why they’re on strike. Many pointed to the divisive effects of the hated tiered pay scheme.

Ned Measel is a member of UNITE HERE Local 24.

— 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO —



December 7, 1998

During the sixth national congress of the Union of Artists and Writers of Cuba, held in Havana November 5-7, Cuban President Fidel Castro talked with journalists from the Cuban press.

“In Cuba we had to create a new culture, beginning with political culture — a different one from the culture of exploitation of man by man, of imperialist domination.”

“If you want to make a revolution, if you want to change the existing economic and social order for an order based on equality and justice, you have to begin by changing the old culture of that society.”

“Capitalism is an enemy of national culture and a bearer of the culture of selfishness, exploitation, plunder, commercialization, and money grubbing. By definition, it’s a system that’s an enemy of culture.”

“We waged a tremendous cultural battle, in the field of ideas.”



December 7, 1973

LOS ANGELES — An open stairwell in a 64-year-old apartment house permitted a fire to burst through a three-story building here Nov. 15, taking the lives of 24 people. It was the worst apartment or hotel fire in the city’s history. The stairwell had been ordered enclosed in April 1972, but no work had been done on it.

“A building like the Stratford Apartments is nothing more than a furnace with a chimney,” says a fire department battalion chief, Eugene Schimtz. Fire in a similar building, the Ponet Square Hotel, took the lives of 19 people in September 1970.

There are still 1,450 similar buildings in the city with open stairwells. They are waiting to catch fire and kill while landlords rake in high rents. The people who lived at the Stratford; and the people who died there, were poor people, from babies to the very old. Many were from Mexico.



December 6, 1948

SAN FRANCISCO — The Pacific Coast maritime strike appeared near settlement as 6,000 members of the CIO International Longshoremen & Warehousemen’s Union voted overwhelmingly to accept a contract recommended by ILWU president Harry Bridges.

Inasmuch as the employers undertook to smash the maritime unions on this coast and restore open-shop conditions, this is considered a victory after nearly three months on the picket line. Still to complete negotiations are the CIO Marine Cooks, the independent Marine Firemen, and the CIO radio operators.

After nearly three months on strike the ranks of the seamen and longshoremen are as solid as the day the strike was called. The employers, who announced at the beginning of the strike that they would not negotiate with the present leaders of the unions, have been forced to negotiate and come to agreement.

Read about the battles that forged the US labor movement



\$27

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Israelis fight to prevent a Holocaust

Continued from front page
 Israel Oct. 7 were Jewish, the terrorists also brutalized Arabs and immigrant farmworkers.

The slaughter marked a turning point in world politics and underscored the deadly reality of Jew-hating violence amid the decay of the world capitalist order.

Apologists for Hamas around the world claim that reports of the massacre are fake news or greatly exaggerated.

But anyone looking at eyewitness reports and the photos and videos of the pogrom — including body cam film from Hamas itself — knows those claims are a lie.

The notebook of one Hamas terrorist recovered at the Beeri kibbutz contained their orders: "Kill as many people and take as many hostages as possible." That's what they did.

The death squads surrounded the Supernova dance festival, attended by some 4,000 people. More than 360 were killed, 100 more than first estimated.

Hamas thugs targeted women

A video just released by FirstReponders shows Hamas gunmen catching up to two women who were running away. They grab one by the hair and shoot her. One gunman shoots the other woman repeatedly while she is lying on the ground.

Going door to door in farming towns, the terrorists rounded up whole families, tied their hands behind their backs and then shot mother, father and children in the head. Others were burned alive when the group tossed grenades into their homes.

Abuse of women was a special feature of the Oct. 7 assault, as it always

has been with anti-Jewish pogroms, from Europe to the Middle East.

Hamas operatives gang-raped some women before murdering them. "Children through elderly women have been raped," an Israel Defense Forces reservist who helped recover remains told the *Times of Israel*. "Forcible entry to the point that bones were broken."

Despite Hamas' pretense that it is defending Palestinians, its thugs also brutalized, killed or took hostage Bedouin, Palestinian and other Arab citizens and residents of Israel. A dashboard camera Oct. 7 recorded them viciously beating Osama Abu Asa, a Bedouin who watched over stores at Kibbutz Reim, 5 miles from the Gaza border. He was later found shot dead.

Members of Kibbutz Nir Oz were proud of being peace activists. Many opposed the politics of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. They often volunteered to give Gazan residents who had been approved for medical treatment in Israel rides to the hospital and back to the border.

That didn't save them. The only thing that mattered to the death squads was that they were Jews or Jewish "collaborators." Hamas thugs murdered or took hostage one-quarter of the Nir Oz's 427 residents. Forty were murdered, including 11 Thai immigrant workers, and 79 kidnapped.

The Oct. 7 massacre could have been worse.

Hamas, which worked with Tehran and Hezbollah for over a year to plan the assault, caught the Israeli government by surprise with few troops in place near the border. Regardless of the lack of Israeli government preparation, the reason the slaughter happened was



AP Photo/Hatem Ali
 Hamas thugs kidnap young Israeli woman, one of over 240 hostages held in Gaza after massacre targeting Jews in Israel Oct. 7. Abuse of women is always part of anti-Jewish pogroms.

because Hamas exists and acts on its pledge to destroy Israel and kill Jews.

The death squads made it all the way to Ofakim, about 14 miles from Gaza. Israeli officials say these squads were prepared with several days of food and ammunition, hoping to make it all the way to the Palestinian West Bank, another 14 miles away, slaughtering more Jews along the way. One of Tehran's goals is to turn the West Bank into another Hamas-run dictatorship.

The invasion was intended to force Israeli government forces to bomb Gaza and sacrifice Palestinian civilians' lives so that Hamas could claim them as "martyrs" and provoke a wider war with Tehran and Hezbollah.

Outnumbered kibbutz community militias fought valiantly against the assassins. Some retired and off-duty soldiers, hearing about the attack, grabbed their weapons and headed to confront the thugs. This slowed them down, allowing the Israel Defense Forces to enter the fight.

Far from generating support, the pogrom has deepened opposition among Palestinians in Israel to the reactionary group. While the massacre was still going on, Bedouin Arabs along with Jewish Israelis risked their lives to save participants in the dance festival and on the kibbutzim.

Arabs in Israel reject Hamas

"Hamas terrorists did not harm only the Jewish citizens of the country, but all of us, Arabs and Jews," Ranin Bolous, an Arabic language news anchor at Israel Channel i24, told the daily *Israel Hayom* Nov. 16. She is an Arab-Christian citizen of Israel.

"Hamas expected and hoped that the Israeli Arabs would revolt from within," she noted. In 2021 there were clashes and riots in mixed Jewish-Arab cities after Hamas fired rockets into Israel. This time that didn't happen. "Even people who in the past presented Hamas as a resistance movement speak of them today as terrorists, as animals. Who does such things?"

Bolous says she tells fellow Palestinians that "there is no such thing as 'Palestine from the river to the sea' [Hamas' call to eliminate all the Jews] and there will not be."

The Israel Defense Forces have made steady advances in Gaza since launching the offensive to dismantle Hamas. Northern Gaza is largely under its control — at least above ground. Major Hamas centers are surrounded in the south. The pressure on Hamas has led

to its offer to release some hostages in exchange for a pause in the fighting.

The Israeli government agreed to a deal Nov. 22. It will free 150 Palestinians held in Israeli jails; pause fighting for four days; and allow fuel deliveries to Gaza. In exchange Hamas will release 50 women and child hostages. A further 30 hostages could be released. Netanyahu says Israel will then resume its war on Hamas.

Debate in Israel

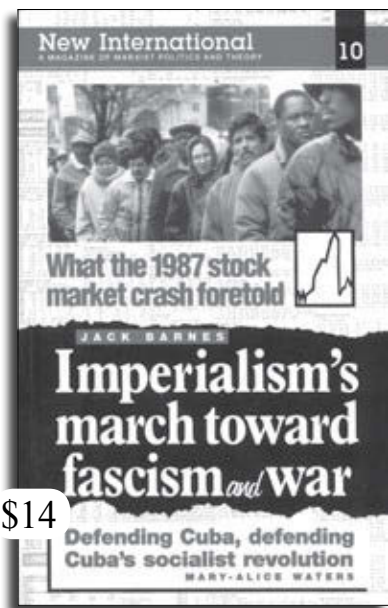
Like other capitalist countries around the world, there is debate in Israel over what is at stake with Hamas' assault, along with attempts by the government to use the war to make inroads on democratic rights.

The Israeli government at first banned a small demonstration that planned to call for a cease-fire, but then relented after the Association for Civil Rights in Israel filed a lawsuit.

The Communist Party of Israel, part of a coalition of Arab parties that has seats in the Israeli parliament, backs a call for a ceasefire issued by 35 Jewish and Arab organizations. While the groups said they were "stunned and shocked" by the Hamas massacre, they called the Israeli government's war on the group's tunnels and bases in Gaza "additional atrocities."

But Zazim, a group of Arab and Jewish Israelis that campaigns for "equality and joint civic engagement," refuses to back cease-fire calls, even though they have done so during previous rounds of fighting with Hamas.

"As we learn more about the horrors of that day, the situation is different," wrote Raluca Ganea, the group's head, in a column in *Haaretz*. "Hamas isn't a partner and we can't simply stop firing."



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Hamas uses Gaza hospitals as bases, armories and prisons

Continued from front page
 said, "because it was a secure place."

Another captured Hamas fighter said he was based inside Al-Shifa Hospital, the largest in Gaza. "They dressed as nursing staff but they were not nurses or doctors," he said. "Hamas operatives dressed as medical staff in order to blend in within the hospital wards."

In another video, Hamuda Riad Asad Shamalah, whose family sought shelter in a hospital, describes how Hamas used them as human shields. "It's obvious that the IDF would not strike a place with 40,000 people in it," he said.

"The doctors were furious because Hamas operatives and operatives of other terrorist organizations were inside the hospital," another captured Hamas fighter said.

"No one can tell them no. Who could do so?" Shamalah added. "If you would dare to confront a Hamas member, he may kill you."

While Hamas places its operations under or next to civilian sites, Israeli forces take steps to get civilians away from places they target. When they opened safe passageways for people to get out of Gaza City, Hamas tried to stop people from leaving, including firing on them. The IDF has literally made millions of phone calls to civilians to inform them of coming bombing and urge them to evacuate.

Once having left Gaza, numerous foreign reporters have confirmed what Israel said all along — that Hamas fires rockets out of densely populated



Reuters/Mohammed Al-Masri
 Parking lot of Al-Ahli hospital in Gaza City hit Oct. 18 by Islamic Jihad rocket that misfired. *New York Times*, other liberal media, repeated Hamas lies that Israeli strike hit the hospital.

areas, often from in or around U.N. facilities, and that it uses Al-Shifa Hospital as its command center.

A 2015 report by Amnesty International — no friend of Israel — said civilians were "interrogated and tortured or otherwise ill-treated in a disused outpatient's clinic within the grounds of Gaza City's main Al-Shifa Hospital." At least three people Hamas accused of "collaboration" died there.

The *New York Times* reported in gory detail in 2014 how Hamas murdered six suspected collaborators in a 24-hour span. A local Palestinian reporter, Radja Abu Dagg, reported how he was in-

Forum: Stakes in fighting Jew-hatred

Continued from front page
 seized 240 hostages Oct. 7 with the overall aim of annihilating Jews and eradicating Israel. Both the Ukrainian people and the Jews are fighting for their survival."

The Socialist Workers Party has been at the forefront of both battles from the beginning, Thierjung said, by telling the truth, promoting solidarity through talks like this at Militant Labor Forums around the country, circulating the *Militant*, SWP candidates for public office speaking out and the SWP joining in protests defending Ukraine and against Jew-hatred.

Hamas' Jew-hatred and political roots go back to Arab leaders like Haj Amin el-Husseini, known as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, who collaborated directly with Hitler during the Second World War and after to extend the "final solution" to the Middle East.

Thierjung quoted Hamas leaders who say the Oct. 7 pogrom against Jews was justified and they intend to organize more of them. "I hope that the state of war with Israel will become permanent on all borders," Hamas spokesman Taher El-Nounou told the *New York Times* Nov. 9.

Key question for the working class

Jew-hatred is not just a Mideast question, Thierjung explained. Today it has exploded across the U.S. in pro-Hamas protests organized by middle-class leftists and liberals here who call for a cease-fire, which they know would help Hamas reorganize and rear up to launch new assaults on the Jews. In New York, these groups

have publicized the names and addresses of businesses owned by Jews or do business with Israel to target them for attack.

These "shut 'em down" actions are a danger to working people. "We need the opposite. The more open discussion and debate, the better, to clarify the stakes for working people involved in the issues that Oct. 7 exposed and its aftermath."

"In working-class neighborhoods and on the job," Thierjung said, "supporters of the SWP have found a hearing for our working-class views and the political course we promote."

In concluding the program, Thierjung pointed to the ongoing discussion needed about the fight against Jew-hatred as the war continues. "This is not a Hamas vs. Israel issue," Thierjung said. "We are living through a world capitalist crisis in the imperialist epoch. There will be more and wider wars. Reaction and Jew-hatred are tied in with this world."

Thierjung said ultimately these biggest questions that confront humanity will be decided on U.S. soil by working people making a socialist revolution. "The Socialist Workers Party is a working-class party that aims to educate and mobilize the working class to take the power. Only through a socialist revolution by the working class and its allies can we end capitalism's dog-eat-dog competition, exploitation, wars of domination, class-based societies, Jew-hatred, racism and sexism."

"That's how a world based on solidarity can begin to be built — a socialist world."

released by Hamas authorities can't be independently verified. Nor does Hamas distinguish between its combatants, who wear civilian clothes, not uniforms, and noncombatants.

From the *New York Times* to CNN, the *Washington Post* and BBC, liberal media have slanted their news coverage to feed calls for a cease-fire in Gaza, a move that would give time to Hamas to regroup. They've cast doubt on Israeli evidence that an underground command post for Hamas exists below Al-Shifa Hospital.

The Israeli army released film Nov. 16 of a reinforced tunnel shaft in the complex beside a vehicle filled with deadly weaponry. A 32-foot reinforced shaft leads to an underground arched concrete passage 180 foot long ending with a blast-proof door and a gun hole.

Qatari-based Al Jazeera, which falsely accuses Israeli forces of purposely shelling hospitals, tried to suggest this might be a hospital bomb shelter! But by Hamas' own admission, no such shelters have ever been built for civilians in Gaza.

Three days later, Israeli authorities released CCTV footage from Al-Shifa showing Hamas members taking two bloodied hostages into the complex, having bypassed several other Gazan hospitals on the way from the Israel border, after the Oct. 7 pogrom. The captives were immigrant workers, one Nepalese and the other Thai. Behind one of them a terrorist wields a meat cleaver; others are armed with knives and guns.

Hamas has more than 300 miles of tunnels, some of them 20 to 30 stories below ground, known as the "Gaza metro." For years it has stockpiled fuel, food and medicine as well as ammunition and weapons, enough for months of war. Hamas has no intention of "ceasing fire."

Mousa Abu Marzouk, a senior Hamas leader, told RT-TV Oct. 30, "We built tunnels ... to protect us," not the people of Gaza. "75% in Gaza are refugees," he said. "It is the responsibility of the U.N. to protect them."

Contrary to media claims of an Israeli "siege" of Al-Shifa Hospital, it was the IDF, not Hamas, that made sure food and medical supplies reached the hospital in the midst of the fighting. The evacuation of medical staff and patients, including babies, was at the request of the hospital director, not by Israeli orders. Newborn and premature babies were safely transported out. Hamas resisted such transfers, preferring to keep patients — including babies — as shields, and to feed the liberal media frenzy.

Recommended reading

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Trotsky: 'Our hope rests on unleashing the European revolution'

Leon Trotsky Speaks is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for November. The excerpt is from "The Organization of Power," Trotsky's Oct. 26, 1917, defense of the Bolshevik Revolution, which he helped lead. The Second Congress of the Soviets, the councils of workers, peasants and soldiers that took the power, that day elected a Bolshevik majority in a new government led by V.I. Lenin. Declaring for peace, it pulled Russia out of the first imperialist world slaughter, decreed land to the peasants, proclaimed the right to self-determination for Russia's oppressed nationalities and set out on the world's first socialist revolution. Trotsky fought to continue that proletarian internationalist course after Lenin's death against a rising bureaucratic counterrevolution led by Joseph Stalin. Copyright © 1972 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Leon Trotsky, commander of the Soviet army after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, addresses Red Guard combatants in 1918. The Bolsheviks, Trotsky said, pinned their hopes on the Russian Revolution inspiring toilers across Europe to emulate their example and take political power.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

A few days ago when the question of an insurrection was openly raised, we were told we were isolating ourselves, we were heading for destruction, and in fact, if one were to judge from the political press what the class groupings were, then an insurrection threatened us with inevitable ruin.

Against us were counterrevolution-

ary bands and defensists of all varieties. One wing of the Left SRs worked courageously with us in the Military Revolutionary Committee. The rest of them took up a position of watchful neutrality. Nevertheless, even under these unfavorable conditions, when it seemed we were abandoned by everybody, the insurrection triumphed, almost without bloodshed.

If we had really been isolated, if the real forces had genuinely been against us, how could it have come about that we gained a victory almost without bloodshed? No, it was not we who were isolated, but the government and the democrats — the pseudodemocrats. It was they who were isolated from the masses. By their wavering, their compromising, they cut themselves off from the ranks of the real democracy.

Our great advantage as a party lies in the fact that we have formed a coalition with the masses, creating a coalition of the workers, soldiers, and poorest peasants.

Political groupings disappear, but the basic interests of classes remain. The party which prevails is the one that is able to understand and to satisfy the basic demands of classes. If a coalition was necessary then that coalition is the coalition of our garrison, chiefly composed of peasants, with the working class. We can be proud of such a coalition. This coalition has been tested in

the fire of struggle. The Petrograd garrison and proletariat, as one, entered into the great struggle which will be the classic example of revolution in the history of all peoples. . . .

They say that the split in the democracy is a misunderstanding. When Kerensky sends shock troops against us, when they deal us blow after blow, can one really talk of a misunderstanding? . . .

We must choose between the different elements of the peasantry. Today, and right here, a representative of the peasants of Tver province demanded the arrest of Avksentiev. We must choose between the Tver peasant who demands the arrest of Avksentiev, and Avksentiev who has filled the prisons with members of the peasant committees. We are with the Tver peasants against Avksentiev. We are with them to the end and indissolubly. We firmly reject coalition with the kulak elements of the peasantry in the name of coalition of the working class and the poorest peasants.

If the revolution has taught us anything then it is this — that it is only by way of agreement, by way of a genuine coalition of these elements that victory can be achieved. Those who chase the shadow of coalition are isolating themselves from life. The Left SRs will lose support among the masses to the extent that they venture to oppose themselves to our party; a party which opposes itself to the party of the proletariat, with

whom the village poor have united, isolates itself from the revolution.

Openly and in front of the whole people we raised the banner of insurrection. The political formula of this insurrection was: All power to the Soviets — through the Congress of Soviets. We are told: You did not wait for the congress. No, we would have waited for it but Kerensky did not want to wait; the counter-revolutionaries were not sleeping. We as a party considered it our task to create a real chance for the Congress of Soviets to take power into its hands. If the congress had been surrounded by junkers how could it have taken the power into its hands? To achieve this task, what was needed was a party which would wrest the power from the hands of the counter-revolutionaries and say to you: "Here is the power and you are obliged to take it!" [Stormy, continuous applause] . . .

For a successful struggle for peace, said Comrade Avilov, we must have a coalition with the Compromisers. At the same time he said that the Allies do not want to conclude peace; but if we rally to those who are betraying us everything will be fine. The Allied imperialists laughed, says Avilov, at the margarine democrat Skobelev. But nevertheless he advised us: If you form a bloc with the margarine democrats, the cause of peace will be assured!

There are two ways in the struggle for peace. One way is to oppose to the Allied and enemy governments the moral and material forces of the revolution. The other way is a bloc with Skobelev, which means a bloc with Tereshchenko, that is, complete submission to Allied imperialism.

It is pointed out to us that in our proclamation on peace we address ourselves at the same time to the governments and the peoples. This is only a formal equality.

We of course are not thinking of influencing the imperialist governments with our proclamations; but as long as they exist we cannot ignore them. But we rest all our hope on the unleashing of the European revolution by our revolution. If the insurrectionary peoples of Europe do not crush imperialism, we will be crushed — that is beyond doubt. Either the Russian Revolution will raise the whirlwind of struggle in the West or the capitalists of all countries will crush our revolution.

November
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY CAMPAIGN STATEMENT

Unions need to fight against Jew-hatred

Statement by Laura Garza, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from California, Nov. 21.

The systematic slaughter of 1,200 Jews by Hamas, backed by the counterrevolutionary regime in Tehran Oct. 7 marks a watershed in world politics, accelerating the crisis of the capitalist world order and forcing governments and all political forces to take a side. At issue is Jew-hatred — a deadly feature of the imperialist epoch that the working class needs to fight.

Workers and our unions have a vital interest in exposing Jew-hatred and defeating the reactionary forces that utilize it as a weapon here and worldwide.

The working class is the one social force that is capable of ending Jew-hatred for all time, by building a party that can lead the fight to replace capitalist rule with workers power, overturn the exploitation of the vast majority by the propertied few, and on that basis set out to lead the struggle to end all oppression.

Some union officials, like the leaderships of the United Electrical Workers and the American Postal Workers Union, put aside Hamas' slaughter to focus on calls on the Israeli government to agree to a permanent cease-fire. This has nothing to do with the pause in the fighting Nov. 23 to facilitate the release of hostages. Hamas leaders have made clear that as long as they exist, there will be more pogroms until all Jews are dead or driven out of the region.

Calls for a cease-fire are against the interests of *all* the toilers, including Palestinians in Gaza who suffer under Hamas' dictatorial rule. The reactionary Islamists use the misery they themselves have caused to get funding from the U.N. and elsewhere. A cease-fire would give a respite to Hamas so it can rearm and regroup, with backing from Tehran, and seek the destruction of Israel.

As the capitalist crisis worldwide deepens and revolutionary struggles by working people grow, sections of the capitalist rulers will turn to fascist thugs to try to crush the unions. Jew-hatred will be their banner. This is the lesson of the Hitler regime.

Hamas' torture, rape and murder of Jews and the continuing abuse of the over 200 hostages they seized is abhorrent to tens of millions of working people.

Fighting Jew-hatred is a life-or-death question for the unions. They should publicize and join actions against Jew-hatred and in defense of Israel's right to exist as a refuge for Jews, like the recent demonstration of almost 300,000 in Washington, D.C. They should join in defense of Jewish students under attack at a growing number of U.S. universities.

That is the road to building a labor movement that can defend itself against attacks by the bosses, their government and the ultra-rightist thugs they will unleash. This is the road to taking political power and championing the interests of all the oppressed.

Moscow gives 7 year sentence to anti-war protester

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in Europe since the second inter-imperialist world slaughter. The Russian army has suffered staggering losses in the last few weeks as the brass sends conscripts in "human waves" trying to encircle Ukrainian defenses in Avdiivka in the Donetsk region.

At least 1,330 Russian troops were killed or wounded on Nov. 16 alone. Since Sept. 1, there have been over 51,000 casualties among the Russian workers in uniform, who Russian President Putin uses as cannon fodder. During this period, Moscow has lost some 2,400 tanks and armored vehicles. The outnumbered Ukrainian forces have stood tall.

As many as 17,000 Russian soldiers have deserted during the war. Many others have been executed for refusing to take part in suicidal frontal attacks. Russia's prison population has almost halved as inmates are "recruited" for the war, with an offer of freedom for those who survive six months at the front.

Battle losses are disproportionately higher from non-Russian regions of the Russian Federation. Casualties from other regions, proportional to population, are 18 times greater than from Moscow. In republics like Buryatia and Dagestan or North Ossetia, 70% of the deaths of young men today are battle casualties.

Several weeks ago Ukrainian forces succeeded in crossing the wide Dnipro River near Kherson to create several beachheads on the Russian-held east bank. Despite heavy Russian shelling, hundreds of Ukrainian marines are fortifying these advanced trenches.

If these gains can be reinforced and advanced, they are poised to drive forward to the border with occupied Crimea, cutting key supply lines to Moscow's forces.

In a sign of working-class sentiment building across Russia, relatives of draftees have called for a national day of protest Nov. 19 to demand, "Bring our men home." Their manifesto, *The Way Home*, declared, "There are many of us and there will be even more."

The statement says the signers aren't for "destabilizing the political situation" but are "determined to get our men back at any cost." It denounces the army for treating "military personnel as consumables" under conditions akin to "legalized slavery."

Russian artist Alexandra Skochilenko was sentenced Nov. 16 to seven years in a penal colony for opposing Putin's war. "Despite being behind bars, I am freer than you. I can make my own decisions and speak my mind," she said in the St. Petersburg courtroom. The 33-year-old artist and musician has been detained since April 2022, charged with spreading "fake news" about the military.

The Kremlin imposed the harsh sentence to try to break Skochilenko and intimidate others. The prosecution claimed her anti-war position "undermines the foundations of the state order." She is being denied treatment for her autoimmune and heart problems, and her health has deteriorated.

Her "crime" was to cover price tags at a St. Petersburg supermarket with tags citing the human costs of Moscow's war. One note highlighted the number of civilians killed in the besieged city of Mariupol.

"Back then, it seemed safe," Skochilenko's girlfriend, Sofia Subbotina, told the *Moscow Times*. "But these past one and a half years have shown us that nothing in Russia is secure."

Putin's Justice Ministry announced that the *Moscow Times* was now on the government's list of "foreign agents," subject to harsh restrictions. This law is based on a similar witch hunt law still on the books in the U.S., used to frame up workers and political activists.

Skochilenko's high-profile fight received backing from public figures in Russia and around the world. The feminist activist group Pussy Riot held a protest action demanding her release. More than 100 Russian doctors signed an open letter Nov. 18 calling for her to be freed.

"Thanks to my case," she said, the information against the war "has reached thousands of people in Russia and around the world."

'Bidenomics' hits workers

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1% lays claim to 31.4%.

"The percentage of Americans who told the Federal Reserve they were worse off in 2022 than the previous year increased by 75 percent," the *New York Times* reported Nov. 16. This is "the highest level since the Fed started asking the question in 2014." Only 19% say they're better off now.

The article, "Why Voters Aren't Buying Biden's Boasts About Bidenomics," by guest columnist Karen Petrou, expressed the concerns of the owners and editors of the *Times*, and other fanatical backers of the Democratic Party who are increasingly worried about Biden and 2024. If the president doesn't stop touting "prosperity" based on government statistics at the expense of what working people actually face, Petrou says, he'll lose the election.

Among those particularly hard hit by the capitalist crisis are older workers who are no longer employed. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 14.1% of adults aged 65 and older live in poverty. That's about a 50% jump in just three years, meaning roughly 8 million older adults now live in poverty.

While the Consumer Price Index slightly declined to an annual rate of 3.2% in October, prices for necessities, including food, energy, housing and health care, have been steadily rising over the past three years, making it increasingly difficult for working people to cover basic expenses.

Grocery prices rose 5% over the past year, but they're up by 20% since January 2021. Gas prices have risen by 43% over this period.

The Biden administration has been hailing the Oct. 26 Department of Commerce announcement that the gross domestic product rose at an annual rate of 4.9% in the third quarter. But this doesn't put food on the table for over two-thirds of U.S. households.

Being able to cover house payments, as well as rising rents, have put starting and raising a family out of the reach of millions of working people and increasing numbers in the middle class. Many youth in their 20s and 30s find themselves forced to live with their parents, relatives or others.

Rents have risen 22% and home prices 29% over the past three years. Mortgage rates have nearly tripled to close to 8%, so the buyer of a typical home faces a monthly principal and interest payment of nearly \$2,200, more than double the level of early 2021.

Millions without full-time work

And now jobs are starting to disappear. The official unemployment rate for October went up to 3.9%, an almost two-year high. Unemployment rolls increased by 1.86 million the first week of November, the highest in two years. There are 4.3 million workers who want full-time jobs but can only get part-time work. Another 5.4 million are counted by the government as wanting a job but aren't in the labor force. They've given up looking.

With higher prices and tighter budgets, U.S. retail sales fell last month for the first time since March. End-of-the-year holiday season hiring is far below previous years at major retail outlets, including Macy's and Dick's Sporting Goods.

Factory production declined 1.7% on a year-on-year basis in October.

Biden claims his policies benefit all Americans. But like any capitalist nation, the U.S. is divided into two main, sharply hostile, classes. What is called "the economy" is based on the more and more brutal exploitation of the vast majority by the propertied few. Both of the bosses' two main parties serve the interests of the ruling class — against workers and our unions.

A recent *New York Times*-Siena College poll reported 59% of voters in six key swing states — Nevada, Georgia, Arizona, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin — have more confidence in Donald Trump's ability to manage the economy over Biden's, regardless of who they'll vote for. In fact, Trump comes out on top in every category of the people surveyed — by age, education and income levels.

The only 2024 candidates offering a political course independent of the bosses are those of the Socialist Workers Party. They start from the capacities of working people to fight for protection from the current crisis, to advance our own class interests on all political questions and to lead millions to replace capitalist rule with workers power.

Thousands rally in London against Hamas pogrom

LONDON — "Never again is now" and "Bring them home now" were raised by thousands at a lively rally on Whitehall here Nov. 19 demanding the release of the hostages seized by Hamas Oct. 7.

The vigil was called by Christian Action Against Antisemitism and supported by a number of Jewish organizations. Members and supporters of the Communist League joined in.

The signs on the CL table, "Oppose Jew-hatred" and "Never again is now" drew much interest. Over 100 copies of a CL statement were distributed and two subscriptions to the *Militant* sold. Discussions were wide ranging — from thanks for our participation to why the fight against Jew-hatred is essential for the working class, part of building our unions and a class-struggle leadership that can take on and defeat the forces of reaction on the road to socialist revolution.

— PAMELA HOLMES