

US rulers form new Asia bloc against Beijing

BY ROY LANDERSEN

President Joseph Biden hosted a first-ever joint meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., at the White House, April 11. The three government heads announced increased military and economic cooperation.

To defend U.S. ruling-class interests, Washington is bolstering its alliances in the Pacific, centered on its imperialist allies in Japan and Australia, against the rising power of Beijing.

Growing militarization and realignments among rival ruling classes are pulling apart the imperialist world order put together by the U.S. rulers after they came out on top at the end of the second world war. Moscow's war against Ukraine, Hamas' Oct. 7 pogrom and a sharpening global capitalist crisis have accelerated these fissures.

For decades, Washington has sought to contain Beijing's challenge to its supremacy in the Pacific. A flashpoint today is Biden's threats to respond militarily if the Chinese rulers carry through on their threat to

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Support Israel's right to exist, defend itself as a refuge from Jew-hatred and pogroms!

Working people need to reject Biden's demand that Israel not respond



Reuters/Amir Cohen

Reactionary Iranian capitalist regime launched 170 drones, 150 missiles in massive barrage against Israel April 13. Above is wreckage of Iranian ballistic missile. Israel has an unconditional right to take all steps needed to stop Tehran's attacks, future Hamas pogroms against Jews.

LA, Oakland SWP speak out against Tehran's war moves

BY BERNIE SENTER

LOS ANGELES — “Yesterday and last night Tehran launched 320 drones, ballistic and cruise missiles at Israel. Almost all of them were shot down,” said Socialist Workers Party National

Continued on page 4

Tehran's aerial barrage marks new stage in assault on Israel

BY SETH GALINSKY

The barrage of 320 drones and missiles unleashed by Tehran April 13 is the first attack on Israel launched directly from Iranian soil. It is a deliberate and dangerous escalation of the reactionary Iranian regime's decades

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Statement released April 15 by Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president of the United States.

The Socialist Workers Party calls on working people in the United States and the world over to condemn pressure by the U.S. government of

SWP presidential candidate Rachele Fruit is working-class alternative to capitalism's march to depression and war

Joseph Biden to dictate to Israel what it must or must not do to defend itself as a refuge for the Jews.

The Iranian government's April 13-14 missile and drone onslaught was the first direct attack on Israeli territory by Tehran's capitalist rulers, who until then had relied on armed and financed proxies such as Hamas, Hezbollah in Lebanon, militias in Iraq and Syria, the Houthis in Yemen, and others. The massive aerial assault was a dangerous escalation of Tehran's unrelenting drive over decades to destroy the state of Israel and the Jews — to bring about “the disappearance of this entity from the face of the earth,” as

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Flight attendants protest at airports nationwide for better pay, conditions



Militant/Carole Lesnick

Flight attendants at San Francisco airport April 11, part of protests around the country, as well as in United Kingdom and Guam, demand better pay for all hours worked and safer schedules.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Flight attendants and their supporters rallied at 16 airports across the U.S., as well as in the United Kingdom and Guam, in spirited protests against United Airlines and other airline bosses April 11 called by the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA. The unionists have been fighting and

demonstrating for months demanding wage raises to cover inflation, full pay for all hours worked and limitations on the length of their shifts and on-call hours.

Three unions represent flight attendants — the AFA, Association of Professional Flight Attendants at Ameri-

Continued on page 2

Baltimore bridge collapse highlights profit-driven infrastructure crisis

BY JAMES HARRIS

BALTIMORE — The collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge here March 26 caused the death of six construction workers and widespread port-related job losses. This social disaster for tens of thousands of working people was predictable and didn't need to happen. It was a direct result of the capitalist bosses' unceasing drive for profit, over and above all else, casting aside the safety of workers or concern for the consequences to their lives.

Similar disasters are waiting to happen around the country.

There was no warning system or evacuation plans in place for the six Key Bridge workers who were killed. There were no safety boats as legally required in case of emergency.

More than 15,000 jobs and over 139,000 related jobs are supported by the Baltimore port. International Longshoremen's Association Local 333 here reports that at least 1,800 of its members are out of work, with no callback date. The port is a major hub for the transport of automobiles, farming equipment, construction machinery and coal.

The ILA local is covering workers' pension payments and health care benefits. “We're not looking for somebody

to cover everything” President Scott Cowan told the Afro, an online newsletter, “but at a time like this we do need help with some supplemental wages.”

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 Opening chapter - pages 7-10

The fight against Jew-hatred and pogroms in the imperialist epoch

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Flight attendants union protests

Continued from front page
can Airlines, and the Transport Workers Union at Southwest, JetBlue and Allegiant. They organize the more than 100,000 flight attendants across 24 airlines who have been fighting for new contracts for over two years. According to the AFA, thousands took part in the actions overall.

Using the excuse that airline workers' labor is "essential" transportation, the government imposes the notorious anti-labor Railway Labor Act on them. This bars most strikes and entails endless delays from government interference in negotiations.

"We work all day, we work all night, side by side we're ready to fight!" chanted a spirited group of 25 Association of Flight Attendants members outside the United Airlines terminal at Dulles International Airport, which serves the Washington, D.C., area. "Some of the most important work we do, the boarding and unloading of planes, we don't even get paid for," Stephanie Martin, a flight attendant for 14 years, told the *Militant*. "We're only paid for the time from when the plane door closes to when it opens. Everything before and after that we're basically working for free."

Chip Lowe, a flight attendant for seven years, described the onerous schedules many workers face. "When we signed the last contract most shifts were in the eight-hour range, but in extreme circumstances longer shifts were allowed," he said. "Now the company has taken advantage of this and imposed many shifts of 13 or even 16 hours. That can mean three onboardings and three deplanes in one shift and then having to drive home in rush hour."

Lowe pointed to some of the danger-

ous conditions flight attendants have worked in, including when the panel-size door plug tore off a Boeing-built Alaska Airlines plane in flight and a United plane rolled off the runway in Houston. "We're responsible for dealing with evacuations and medical emergencies on planes," he said, "and the length of shifts just isn't safe. It's a public safety issue."

Some 100 unionists picketed at Chicago O'Hare International Airport, mostly United Airlines flight attendants, plus a few pilots and flight attendants from other airlines. Sara Nelson, the international president of the AFA, joined the picket line there. Signs carried by the unionists included "Ground time pay leads the way" and "Corporate greed doesn't fly."

Haven't received raise in years

United saw record profits in 2023 and all the company's top executives received double-digit pay raises, Nelson told the pickets. The last time the association negotiated a contract with the airline was in 2016. The last time flight attendants at United received a pay raise was 2020.

"We have flight attendants who are eligible for food stamps because they haven't seen any raises even though the cost of living has gone up," Scott Pejas, AFA Local Council 8 president, told the media.

One picket brought a dog that wore a jacket saying, "We will NOT roll over!"

"We're out here picketing today because United Airlines refuses to negotiate with us. It's about respect," Loren Darkes, a flight attendant for 39 years, told the *Militant* at the Cleveland Hopkins International Airport protest.



Militant/Illona Gersh

Some 100 Association of Flight Attendants members and supporters picket at Chicago's O'Hare airport April 11, demanding higher wages, full pay for all the hours worked, livable schedules.

"Prices for everything have gone up through the roof since 2020, the last time we got a raise, but not our wages," Melinda Beal, president of AFA Local Council 63, said. She also said United wants to increase the time flight attendants must make themselves available on call from 15 to 18 hours.

Flight attendant Rocky Harris said he had to be at the airport available to work recently when there was a five-hour delay. "I don't get paid for those five hours."

"The hardest part of our job is boarding, and we don't get paid for it," Darkes added.

William Nix, a retired member and former president of Amalgamated Transit Workers Local 268, joined the protest to bring solidarity. "When workers anywhere are hit we all are hit, that's what solidarity means," he told John Hawkins, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Ohio, who joined the action.

"Workers have power," Nix said. "We could shut the world down if we are united." He got a copy of *Teamster Rebellion* to learn more about the history of the labor and socialist movements. Two flight attendants bought introductory subscriptions to the *Militant*. Others said they had subscribed at similar protests at the airport in February.

Chanting "Contract now! Whatever it takes!" over 100 United Airlines flight attendants and supporters

marched and rallied at San Francisco International Airport, pointing to the long-stalled negotiations between the union and company. They were joined by United workers at the airport who are members of the International Association of Machinists union and the Teamsters, as well as area members of UNITE HERE Local 2; Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union; and the San Mateo County Labor Council.

"I came out to support my fellow union brothers and sisters because they're abused by management," Roberto Mendes, 73, a member of Machinists Local 1781 who has worked on the ramp at United for 37 years, told the *Militant*.

When Kristie Rivera, president of AFA Local Council 11, told protesters, "Some new flight attendants can't afford rent!" the crowd responded with chants of "When we fight, we win!"

Other airports where flight attendants held pickets that day included New York, Los Angeles, Boston, Denver, Houston, Phoenix and Honolulu.

As negotiations drag on, flight attendants have voted by over 98% to authorize a strike at Alaska Airlines, American and Southwest. And more protests are in the works.

Carole Lesnick in San Francisco and Betsy Farley in Cleveland contributed to this article.

THE MILITANT

Turkish workers deal blow to Erdogan regime

Working people in Turkey, angered by worsening economic conditions, handed President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's party a nationwide defeat in municipal elections March 31. Support for Kurdish rights forced government to recognize victories of Kurdish candidates.

SOPA Images/Mehmet Masum Suer
Thousands of supporters of Kurdish national rights rally April 5 in Van, in eastern Turkey.

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—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Food workers strike Aramark in Philadelphia over wages, benefits

PHILADELPHIA — Hundreds of exuberant food service workers at the Wells Fargo Center here went on a one-day strike April 9 against their boss, Aramark. The workers staff concession stands at Philadelphia Flyers, 76ers and Wings games, as well as concerts and other big events at the stadiums in South Philadelphia.

Cooks, servers, bartenders, concession staffers and other members of UNITE HERE Local 274 started picketing early at the stadium, several hours before the Philadelphia 76ers were due to play the Detroit Pistons in an NBA game. The strikers urged fans to support their fight by spreading the word and not buying food or drinks from Aramark stands.

Aramark workers at the Wells Fargo Center and neighboring Lincoln Financial Field and Citizens Bank Park, where the Philadelphia Eagles and Philadelphia Phillies play, say their wages and benefits aren't keeping up with inflation. Workers at the three stadiums make different hourly wages, and union members told the *Militant* they're treated as seasonal workers rather than year-round employees.

"I'm out here fighting for health care for everyone and better wages. I make \$8 an hour, we live off of gratuities," Randi Trent, a caterer for Aramark, said. Several strikers said that because they aren't considered full-time workers they have no health care coverage.

"We're looking for humane treatment. We work for a multibillion dollar company and we have no health care offered to us. We have no paid sick time, we get no paid time off," bartender Carlton Epps told the media.

Aramark bosses count the hours employees work at each building

separately, even though they're doing the same jobs for the same employer. This means they don't get enough hours to get health care.

Philadelphia-based Aramark is an international conglomerate that raked in over \$18 billion last year.

"You got my support," said Phil Watkins, a welder, who was going to the basketball game. "We all have to stand up together."

— Chris Hoeppner

Molson Coors workers stand strong in Texas strike

SOUTH FORT WORTH, Texas — Members of Teamsters Local 997 at Molson Coors here are standing firm in their strike against the brewery bosses. The strike began Feb. 17 after 93% of the local's members voted to reject the bosses' contract proposal. The workers are fighting for pay raises and the elimination of two-tier health care and retirement benefits.

The brewery produces Miller Lite, Coors Light, Yuengling, PBR, Topo Chico and Simply Juices for the entire Western U.S. region.

Negotiations broke down March 28 when management added just 5 cents an hour to its original proposal of a 99-cent-an-hour raise. The union rejected this, saying it was a slap in the face, and continues to picket 24/7.

"I am out here for everyone else," mechanic Chad Jones told the *Militant*. "My Dad worked here and he retired after 30 years. He would be walking the picket line with us, but he's recovering from cancer. We've gotten a lot of support. Three weeks ago, eight members of the United Auto Workers at a Coors brewery in Trenton, Ohio, rented a van and drove here. They brought tents, coolers and pizza.

"We haven't had a pay raise since



Militant/Chris Hoeppner

Hundreds of Aramark food service workers who staff concessions at stadiums and arenas in South Philadelphia hold one-day strike April 9 demanding better wages, health care.

2010," he said. "We work under different contracts depending on when you were hired. We want to get rid of the tiers. A guy coming in now has to work two years just to get a week's vacation. I want all of us to be under the same contract.

"Only two union members have crossed," he said. "The company has hired temp workers, but this is the season they usually hire temps."

Jones pointed to a smokestack and said, "If those stacks are making clouds then they're brewing beer. We haven't seen any clouds since the beginning of the strike."

"At the beginning of the strike we stopped trucks for five minutes," Justin Southern, president of Teamsters Local 997 with 18 years as a packaging operator, told the *Militant*. "The company has taken us back to court two times and got temporary restraining orders. The first order said we could stop trucks for no more than 90 seconds. The latest one said we can't hold up trucks at all.

"We've gotten a lot of solidarity. The United Auto Workers has been out here, the Texas AFL-CIO from Austin just came out," he said. "The Teamsters in Dallas and at UPS have come out to picket."

"I support everything they are doing. I stand behind my husband," said Carrie Southern. "He is just trying to support his family. A lot of families come out here. My daughter is here today."

— Alyson Kennedy

Walkouts at 34 Los Angeles hotels win contracts, fight on at others

LOS ANGELES — UNITE HERE Local 11 has signed contracts with 34 hotels since they began a series of walkouts here last June. A couple dozen hotels are holding out. A target of organizing efforts by the union is the downtown Hotel Figueroa where 300 union members and their supporters rallied April 5.

This hotel is owned by BentallGreenOak, a private equity outfit. In February, workers at the hotel's five restaurants organized to join the union. The subcontractor that was operating the restaurants — Noble 33 — then closed down, eliminating workers' jobs.

"They put them out on the street and many of them are still looking for work," Noelia Gonzalez, a housekeeper at the hotel told the rally. "The hotel and company would not exist without our hard work and effort — that's why we deserve what we are fighting for.

"On many occasions during our pickets we've been attacked," added Gonzalez.

A featured speaker at the rally was Bernie Sanders, U.S. Senator from Vermont. Other speakers were UNITE HERE presidents Ada Briceño and Kurt Petersen, as well as Yvonne Wheeler, head of the Los Angeles Federation of Labor.

The following day, UNITE HERE Local 11 members walked off the job at the Sheraton Hotel in Phoenix. The hotel was designated as a host hotel for the NCAA Final Four basketball tournament. The union's contract with the hotel expired last June. Workers were protesting hotel management's interrogation and surveillance tactics designed to limit workers' rights to participate in labor demonstrations.

— Norton Sandler

Memphis BCTGM workers return to work, fight goes on

BY AMY HUSK

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — After almost 10 months of a hard-fought strike battle, members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 390G at International Flavors and Fragrances here decided March 28 to return to work and continue their fight inside the plant.

They are now working under the "last, best and final offer" from the company, which had been voted down by the membership last June.

The imposed conditions include an end to paid lunch breaks, no overtime pay after eight hours, and a cut in contributions to workers' 401(k) retirement plans. Health care costs went up dramatically after the company changed insurers three years ago after merging with Dupont.

"It's not over, we're still in the fight," maintenance worker Andrew Peña said. Peña, Clarence Terry, a union member who has just returned to work, and Cedric Wilson, a dryer operator and president of Local 390G, met with *Militant* worker-correspondents April 10 to discuss their fight. Also joining the discussion was Kayla Chunn, Peña's fiancée and an active strike supporter.

Terry reported not much new production has begun yet and the company has had returning workers completing computer training modules before they start back on their old jobs.

Some 200 union members went on strike last June when the company refused to bargain. About 100 workers were still on strike when they decided to return to work. As the company calls back union members it continues to employ replacement workers hired during the walkout.

"We made the decision to go back unconditionally because the National Labor Relations Board said it wouldn't consider the 13 charges we made against the company until we agreed to return," Wilson said. "More people were crossing the picket line and others were taking other jobs."

The union has a tentative agreement from the company to begin negotiations again around the end of April.

Workers at International Flavors and Fragrances make soy protein products that are used in baby formula, pet foods and nutritional powders. IFF is an international conglomerate, with 158 plants and 51 laboratories worldwide. Bosses raked in \$11.7 billion in profits in 2021.

"I wouldn't call this a win yet, but it's not a loss either," said Wilson, "It's not over. They didn't think we would put up a fight and we did. The company put all its eggs into getting rid of the union and they weren't able to.

"Folks who crossed the line or who went to other jobs now have a better understanding of what it's like to not have a union," he added. "We can win these

people to be union supporters."

A drive in December raised thousands of dollars to give out toys to the children and grandchildren of strikers. "It was really successful and we appreciated all the support," IFF lab worker Glenda Sumner told the *Militant*. She hasn't been called back to work yet.

Local 390G won widespread support for its strike from many other workers and area civil rights organizations. The picket line was visited by BCTGM members from 12 different states, as well as local members from Kellogg's and from Blues City Brewery. Other supporters sent donations and solidarity messages.

A conference of Dominican and Haitian sugarcane worker unionists sent a solidarity message to the strike.

Members of United Auto Workers Local 2406 who work at the GM parts warehouse here came by the picket line regularly and the two unions held a joint rally when the UAW members walked out as part of the nationwide auto strike.

Other labor battles continue in the area. Local 2406 members at the huge Daimler truck parts warehouse here are part of the company's 7,000 workers nationwide. The UAW members voted by 96% to strike if a new contract isn't reached by April 26.

Ned Measel contributed to this article.

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LA, Oakland SWP speak out

Continued from front page

Committee member Norton Sandler to an April 14 meeting here. Sandler presented opening remarks to a previously planned Militant Labor Forum.

In face of that massive onslaught, Israel's government is now considering what to do to defend itself from even more far-reaching assaults on its right to exist as a refuge for Jews, Sandler said.

But President Joseph Biden had a different take, based on Washington's imperialist interests. He called the shooting down of Tehran's barrage a "great victory" for Israel. "We've got your back," he claimed.

Just don't do anything, Biden warned the Israeli government.

"But this *isn't* a great victory," Sandler said. "It's a challenge to Israel and to Jews by the reactionary regime in Iran, which admits it was centrally involved in orchestrating the Oct. 7 Hamas pogrom that killed 1,200 Jews, wounded over 5,000 and kidnapped over 240 to torture, rape and use for extortion."

The aim of Tehran and its so-called axis of resistance — Hamas, Hezbollah, militia forces in Iraq and Syria and the Houthis — is to make Israel "unlivable for Jews," said Sandler. "Already 60,000 Israelis in the northern part of the country have had to abandon their homes and relocate."

"And keep in mind," he said, "that the missiles and drones were fired by a rising nuclear power."

Following the Oct. 7 pogrom, Sandler continued, "Washington stated repeatedly they had no evidence that the Iranian regime had anything to do with it. That was a lie. The Iranian general Israel killed in Syria — the pretext for Tehran's aerial onslaught — was intimately tied up with planning and executing Hamas' pogrom, Tehran now admits."

"Washington's attempt to impose marching orders on Israel is a continuation of the treacherous role played by the Biden administration in demanding that the Israeli armed forces not carry out military operations to defeat Hamas in Rafah, where the Jew-hating terrorist group has its last stronghold. If Hamas survives, it will fulfill its promise to launch pogrom after pogrom to kill Jews."

Sandler noted that the entire pro-Hamas mob that has been condemning Israel in the U.S. and around the world — claiming to be fighting for a ceasefire — is now celebrating the armada of missiles and drones launched by Tehran on Israeli soil.

During the discussion, a participant asked, why did Iran tell the U.S. government ahead of time about their attack? Why would they do that?



Militant/Kathie Fitzgerald

"Fight against Jew-hatred is a life-or-death question for the working class worldwide," Candace Wagner, SWP candidate for Congress from Pittsburgh, told rally in defense of Israel March 31.

Sandler responded that Iran had been announcing for days they were going to retaliate. It was no secret. "U.S. and Israeli intelligence were well aware of their preparations to launch the assault," he said. "The Iranian regime is trying to advance its position while avoiding direct conflict with the U.S."

Another participant pointed out that just because there was minimal damage this time, it doesn't mean the result will be the same next time.

The dictates to Israel by the U.S. rulers and Biden White House, Sandler said, simply embolden Iran's rulers and their proxy forces to launch further, more murderous assaults on Jews in Israel.

Oakland forum

SWP members in Oakland had planned a forum that same day to launch the campaign of Eric Simpson as Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress there. After Tehran's aerial assault on Israel, organizers asked Betsey Stone, a member of the party's National Committee and organizer of the Oakland party branch, to open the meeting by outlining the party's response.

Simpson also addressed the unfolding developments. "Iran's assault on Israel was deadly serious. It comes from a capitalist regime whose rallying cry is destruction of Israel, driving out and killing Jews," Simpson said. "This is the regime that helped organize the Oct. 7 slaughter of Jews in Israel by Hamas, that is organizing proxy forces throughout the Middle East to attack Israel, that is developing nuclear weapons, and that carries out brutal exploitation and repression on workers, oppressed nationalities, and women in Iran itself."

Simpson held up "The Opening Guns of World War III," a book featuring a talk given by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes in 1991 on what Washington's war on Iraq foretold for future conflict.

"You saw the face of U.S. imperialism in that war, the massive carnage, the destruction of Iraq, the tens of thousands of Iraqis killed in one of the most cold-blooded slaughters in modern history, with millions left homeless, starving and vulnerable to cholera," Simpson said.

"The Socialist Workers Party campaign explains the U.S. government bears the responsibility for the escalation of attacks against Israel," he said. "The U.S. rulers don't care if Hamas continues to exist to plan more killings, if Hezbollah continues to lob missiles, making normal life in northern Israel impossible. They don't care about protecting Jews. What they do care about is protecting U.S. imperialist economic and political interests in the Middle East and beyond."

"And they're prepared to do whatever it takes to do so."

Betsey Stone contributed to this article.

Who is Robert Kennedy Jr., why is he running for president?

BY TERRY EVANS

Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s campaign for the White House — polling just under 10% — presents a third capitalist candidate alongside President Joseph Biden and former President Donald Trump. A decadeslong Democrat from a well-known wealthy ruling-class family, Kennedy often echoes views found on the right of bourgeois politics. But his campaign is aimed primarily at taking votes away from Biden.

The Democratic and Republican parties have dominated bourgeois politics for well over a century, telling workers their only choice is to pick the "lesser evil." From time to time, third capitalist parties add another evil to the "choice," but the electoral system is always rigged to assure the propertied ruling families retain control over the reins of power.

Kennedy initially challenged Biden for the Democratic Party's nomination, but then switched gears, announcing in October he would run as an "independent." He said he had no choice, the Democrats' primary race was controlled by the party's leadership.

Kennedy makes no attempt to present his campaign as a break from capi-

talist politics, just from its two major parties. "We declare independence from the two political parties and the corrupt interests that dominate them and the entire rigged system, of rancor, of rage," he said when he announced his switch.

But the bitter factional warfare waged by the Democrats and Republicans isn't the fundamental conflict in U.S. politics. Class divisions between the working class and the capitalist rulers are at the heart of all political questions. The profits of the bosses and bankers depend on increasing the exploitation of the toilers amid deepening competition worldwide in an increasingly unstable world.

This pushes workers to join together to resist, to build unions and to advance toward our own independent class organization in the political arena.

Like the Greens, Libertarians and other capitalist parties, Kennedy's claim to "independence" masks these decisive class divisions.

Kennedy espouses Jew-hatred

Kennedy presents himself as a long-standing fighter for the environment and opponent of oppression. But he

laces his views with bigotry, conspiracy theories and Jew-hatred.

"Covid-19 is targeted to attack Caucasians and Black people," he claimed in a video released by the *New York Post*. "The people who are most immune are Ashkenazi Jews and Chinese."

At an anti-vaccination rally in 2022 he claimed government COVID lockdowns were somehow worse than the Holocaust. "Even in Hitler's Germany you could cross the Alps into Switzerland. You could hide in an attic like Anne Frank," he said. Frank was one of the 6 million Jews slaughtered by the Nazis during the second imperialist World War.

These are views that call for condemnation by working people and the labor movement.

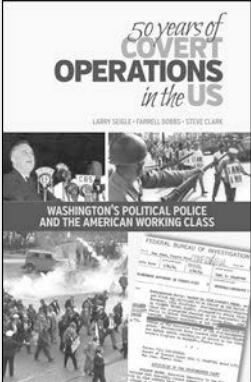
Kennedy has embraced other conspiracy schemes, blaming high school shootings on the availability of drugs like Prozac, and insisting the CIA was behind the assassination of his uncle, former President John F. Kennedy. This infatuation with conspiracies and cabals aims to divert attention from the reality that dog-eat-dog capitalism works through the class exploitation of the big majority by the propertied few. Such "theories" are aimed at sending working people on a fool's errand searching for the "dark state" and other bogeymen rather than recognizing our own capacities to join together to change the world.

On April 1, Kennedy aimed his fire at Biden, saying he is "a worse threat to democracy" than Trump. His evidence is that in 2021 White House staff demanded social media companies take down Kennedy's posts denouncing COVID vaccines, which they did.

Kennedy's themes echo some of Trump's policies and rhetoric — like calling for the sealing of the U.S.-Mexico border and condemning

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By Jack Barnes, Farrell Dobbs and others — \$17

50 Years of Covert Operations in the US: Washington's Political Police and the American Working Class

By Larry Seigle, Farrell Dobbs and Steve Clark — \$10

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SWP candidate Rachele Fruit

Continued from front page
Supreme Leader Ali Hussein Khomeini put it last January.

That assault was another step in the mounting Jew-hatred and violence that deals a dangerous blow to the interests of the working class, labor movement, and the oppressed everywhere.

On Oct. 7 Hamas carried out a pogrom in Israel slaughtering 1,200 Jews, wounding 5,000, and seizing over 240 hostages, most of them still in captivity or subsequently killed. The action was planned, financed and directed by the Iranian government.

Tehran, which welcomed the massacre from the outset but denied any involvement, now acknowledges that Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Brig. Gen. Mohammad Reza Zahedi, the main target of Israel's strike on an Iranian annex in Damascus April 1, played "a strategic role" in "planning and executing" the Oct. 7 pogrom.

Ever since then, as cover for its pressure on Israel to bow to orders from the U.S. rulers, Washington has publicly insisted that Tehran had no foreknowledge of the massacre — not just a lie, but one the U.S. rulers know full well to be a lie.

Moreover, the Iranian rulers' accelerated drive to develop nuclear weapons raises the danger of their use against Israel, a deadly peril to all those in the region.

The capitalist rulers in the United States are out to defend their own imperialist interests throughout the Middle East. They don't act out of concern for Israel, for Jews living there or anywhere else, for the Palestinian people, or anyone except the propertied families whose class interests and privilege Washington serves and protects.-

Since Hamas launched its war Oct. 7, Israel has been acting to defeat Hamas, to prevent it from carrying out its stated goal. That genocidal

goal is one that Hamas shares with the reactionary rulers in Iran: to drive out the Jews, exterminate them and destroy the state of Israel.

Tightening sanctions against Iran, as proposed by Washington and other imperialist powers, hits working people there the hardest. Meanwhile, those very same workers, exploited farmers, and others — of Persian, Kurdish, Arab, Azerbaijani, Baluchi, and other national origins — have repeatedly found ways to express their opposition to Tehran's repressive policies and expansionist anti-Israel course.

Almost half the world's Jews today live in Israel. Washington and other imperialist governments shut their doors to Jews before, during, and after the Nazi Holocaust and after World War II, as 40% of the Jewish population on earth was slaughtered. There was nowhere for the survivors to go but to what became Israel.

The fight against Jew-hatred and pogroms is decisive for the working class the world over. As Washington — humanity's final empire — declines; as class struggles deepen; and as the U.S. and other ruling families fear working-class challenges to capitalist rule itself, growing layers of this class will turn to fascist forces to divide, attack, and seek to crush workers, the oppressed, and the unions. The rulers will raise the banner of Jew-hatred to scapegoat Jews as the enemy, not the capitalist system whose dog-eat-dog quest for profits is the inevitable root of social



Militant/Eric Simpson

Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate, in Los Angeles. "The SWP calls on working people to condemn pressure by the U.S. government of Joseph Biden to dictate to Israel what it must or must not do to defend itself as a refuge for the Jews," she said April 15.

breakdowns, depression and wars.

The labor movement must organize and unite the working class, strengthen our capacity to fight, and chart a course in action to take state power into our own hands. Along that road, the banner of the working class must call for an uncompromising fight against Jew-hatred.

My party's continuity goes back to V.I. Lenin and the Bolshevik Party, which led the working-class and other exploited toilers in making the October 1917 socialist revolution in Russia. The fight against national oppression of every kind, including Jew-hatred and pogroms, was key to that victory and to the revolutionary government and world movement it gave birth to.

In face of privileged, counterrevolutionary social layers in the Soviet Union headed by Joseph Stalin, the struggle to continue Lenin's proletarian internationalist course, led by Leonid Brezhnev, also championed the battle to end capitalist exploitation and all national oppression, including persecution of the Jews.

Contrary to the capitalist tickets of Democrat Joseph Biden, Republican Donald Trump, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., and others, my campaign, the Socialist Workers Party campaign, offers the only working-class alternative to combat imperialism's march toward economic and social catastrophe, fascism, and a third world war.

Join us!

SWP campaigns to win ballot status in New Jersey

BY TERRY EVANS

BLOOMFIELD, N.J. — Israel's right to exist and to defend itself as a refuge for Jews, and the importance to the working class everywhere of the fight against Jew-hatred were central to discussions that Socialist Workers Party campaigners had knocking on doors and introducing themselves at supermarkets.

They described the SWP program, offered the *Militant* and books by SWP leaders and other revolutionaries and signed people up to win ballot status for Rachele Fruit, the party's candidate for president, and Joanne Kuniansky for U.S. Senate. These teams campaigned across New Jersey April 15, two days after the reactionary Iranian regime's drone and missile assault on Israel.

"The most important thing is getting peace in the world," Joanny Montesino told Kuniansky.

"I've heard that from many people," Kuniansky said. Israel's war to defeat Hamas, and Ukraine's efforts to defend its independence are just wars.

"But more wars are inevitable under capitalism. It's a system driven by competition to maximize profits. We're building a movement that can lead workers to take power out of the hands of the capitalist class in the U.S. and join

the worldwide struggle for socialism."

Montesino signed to put Fruit and Kuniansky on the ballot.

A woman from Nigeria stopped by to hear about the SWP campaign.

"Hamas must be defeated and dismantled," Kuniansky explained.

"Tell me about it. We know all about these kinds of groups, we have Boko Haram where I come from," she replied, referring to the reactionary Islamist terrorist outfit based in northern Nigeria.

"I wish the world could be at peace," Tyrique Blount told Kuniansky. "As long as U.S. imperialism exists that won't be possible," Kuniansky said. "Israel is a refuge for the Jewish people, its fight to defeat Hamas is in the interests of all workers."

"Yes, Israel must defend itself," Blount agreed, as he signed the petition. "Hamas has brought no benefits to the Palestinians."

Not everyone agreed with what SWP campaigners had to say.

"I empathize with the Jewish people because of the history of antisemitism," one woman told SWP campaigner Sarah Ullman. "But today Israel has its fist on the necks of the Palestinians, so they're bound to resist."

"What happened on Oct. 7 had nothing to do with resisting oppression. It was a pogrom orchestrated by the regime in Iran," Ullman replied. "Hamas is not a liberation organization. It is a reactionary Islamist threat to Jews and Palestinians alike, and has to be defeated."

'US war in Iraq was for rich people'

Iraq war veteran Shaeyne Clark stopped to talk. "As soon as I got to Iraq I realized this was a war for rich people, it was a war for oil," he told

Kuniansky. "The opening guns of a third world war were sounded by the Iraq war," she replied. "The only way to end war is for workers to take power from the capitalist class. The SWP exists to lead that struggle in the U.S."

"I don't agree with the way they dumb down what children learn at schools today," Clark, who is now a science teacher, said. "Kids need to be taught problem-solving and critical thinking."

"The rulers don't recognize the capacities of working people to learn, much less the capacities of workers to organize society," Kuniansky said. "These are things workers learn about ourselves in the class struggle." Clark signed to put the SWP on the ballot.

Several people who stopped to talk to party campaigners wanted to discuss the challenges workers face starting families. "I'm a single mother, it's overwhelming," Minerva Antoine, a children's teacher, said as she signed. "The conditions in so many jobs are hard and the wages aren't enough to survive."

"It doesn't have to be like this," Kuniansky said. "Conditions can be

Continued on page 13

Campaign to expand reach of 'Militant,' books, fund						
March 9-May 7 (week five)						
Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	Fund received
UNITED STATES						
Atlanta*	55	30	55	30	\$10,250	\$5,774
Chicago	100	39	100	41	\$14,000	\$5,777
Cincinnati	50	21	50	23	\$5,000	\$2,028
Dallas-Ft. Worth	60	34	60	35	\$5,000	\$3,385
Lincoln	15	9	15	11	\$500	\$404
Los Angeles*	120	62	120	44	\$16,000	\$2,500
Miami	35	13	35	24	\$5,000	\$2,255
Minneapolis	70	34	70	24	\$5,500	\$1,845
N. New Jersey	75	40	75	41	\$7,500	\$5,558
New York	100	53	100	56	\$20,500	\$13,692
Oakland	80	54	80	50	\$15,500	\$9,578
Philadelphia	55	30	55	37	\$6,000	\$4,121
Pittsburgh	45	23	45	21	\$6,000	\$2,268
Seattle	70	42	70	26	\$14,500	\$7,698
Washington	60	29	60	26	\$5,000	\$2,235
Other	0	1	0	0	\$0	\$1,750
Total U.S.	990	514	990	489	\$136,250	\$70,868
Prisoners		61				
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	45	25	45	22	\$2,560	\$1,080
Manchester	35	27	35	21	\$1,200	\$165
Total U.K.	80	52	80	43	\$3,760	\$1,245
Canada	90	57	110	70	\$12,150	\$8,150
Australia	30	20	30	27	\$5,000	\$2,700
Total	1,190	704	1,210	629	\$157,160	\$82,963
SHOULD BE	1,350	844	1,350	844	\$165,000	\$103,125
* Raised goal						

—MILITANT
LABOR
FORUMS—

CANADA
Montreal
Tehran Escalates War to Destroy Israel. The Stakes for Workers in Fighting Jew-Hatred in the Imperialist Epoch. Speaker: Steve Penner, Communist League organizer. Sat., April 20, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5. 7107 St. Denis, Suite 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

US rulers form new Asia bloc

Continued from front page
invade Taiwan.

Biden, Kishida and Marcos jointly denounced Beijing’s “dangerous and aggressive behavior” and announced plans for combined naval patrols. Biden reiterated that “any attack on Philippine aircraft, vessels or armed forces in the South China Sea would invoke our mutual defense treaty.” The U.S. rulers deploy 54,000 troops in Japan, 24,100 in South Korea, 2,243 in Australia and more across the region.

Kishida denounced Beijing as the “greatest strategic challenge” to the Japanese rulers’ interests. This is behind Tokyo’s sharp shift toward rearmament and intervention in the region after decades of reliance on Washington under a U.S.-imposed “pacifist” constitution from its 1945-1952 occupation.

Japan’s rulers are engaged in a major expansion of their military forces, becoming the world’s third-biggest military spender after the U.S. and China. Tokyo is developing long-range missiles capable of reaching targets in China.

At the summit the three government heads also announced a project to expand infrastructure in the Philippines connecting four areas — Manila, Batangas, Subic Bay and Clark. The latter two are sites of former U.S. bases. U.S. and Japanese capital will invest in railways, the modernization of ports and semiconductor supply chains. The plan seeks to counter the Chinese rulers’ Belt and Road Initiative, which extends loans and infrastructure projects around the world.

Four days before the Washington summit, the first-ever joint naval and air exercises in the South China Sea were held by the armed forces of the three governments along with that of Australia. Beijing said its forces would conduct their own maneuvers elsewhere in the waterway.

Days later a U.S. carrier strike force joined Japanese and South Korean warships for drills in the East China Sea April 10-12.

For their part, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and his Russian

counterpart Sergei Lavrov met in Beijing April 9, pledging to work more closely together against Washington and its allies.

The Chinese government asserts ownership of some 90% of the resource-rich South China Sea. The governments of Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia and the Philippines also have overlapping rival claims. Beijing has built up and fortified various islets there as military outposts since it brushed aside a 2016 Hague arbitration court ruling against its claims.

About one-third of seaborne world trade each year passes through the South China Sea. Two-thirds of China’s maritime trade, 42% of Japan’s and much of Taiwan’s and South Korea’s shipping pass through the waterway.

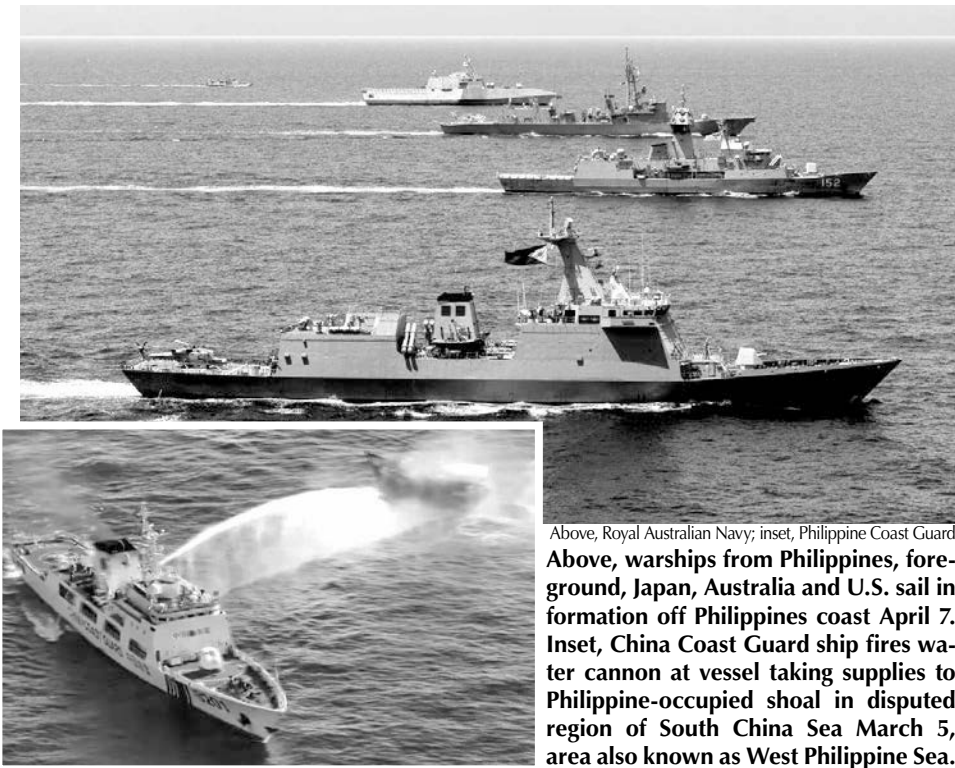
Washington has long considered control of the Pacific as one of its central prizes coming out of its victory in World War II.

Frictions grow in South China Sea

Since Marcos’ 2022 election, the Philippine rulers have deepened military and other ties with Washington, amid growing frictions with Beijing. This reverses the course of the previous president, Rodrigo Duterte, who distanced the Philippine rulers from Washington, the former colonial power. Manila, like other smaller capitalist powers, is forced to try to maneuver between Washington and Beijing.

In March, China’s coast guard ships rammed and fired water cannons at Philippine vessels taking supplies to Second Thomas Shoal in the South China Sea. The reef, called Renai Jiao by China, is claimed by both governments. Another disputed reef nearby, Scarborough Shoal, was wrested from Philippine control by Beijing in 2012. Both shoals are within Manila’s proclaimed economic zone, in what it calls the West Philippine Sea.

Beijing’s coast guard ships blocked two of Manila’s research vessels April 13 only 40 miles from the Philippine coastline. It has similarly harassed survey vessels from Vietnam and Malaysia.



Above, Royal Australian Navy; inset, Philippine Coast Guard
Above, warships from Philippines, foreground, Japan, Australia and U.S. sail in formation off Philippines coast April 7. Inset, China Coast Guard ship fires water cannon at vessel taking supplies to Philippine-occupied shoal in disputed region of South China Sea March 5, area also known as West Philippine Sea.

The Vietnamese government is also seeking ways to counter the Chinese rulers’ expansionist course, raising its formal ties with Washington to a “comprehensive strategic partnership” last year.

Tokyo has signed a reciprocal troop access agreement with Manila, following similar deals agreed with Washington and the Australian government. A year ago, Manila allowed U.S. forces access to four more bases in the Philippines.

Biden and Kishida announced April 10 that Canberra would be included in three-way cooperation on a

new air and missile defense system.

Washington, London and Canberra want to include Tokyo in the part of their AUKUS alliance that covers joint development of advanced military technology. The pact will equip Australia’s rulers with long-range nuclear-powered and conventionally armed submarines. Canberra recently unveiled plans to more than double the size of its navy.

Each of these steps underscores the instability afflicting capitalist powers across the region and signals the threat to working people of more military conflicts and wars to come.

Who is Robert F. Kennedy Jr?

Continued from page 4
Washington’s “endless wars.” Trump cheerfully urges liberals to vote for Kennedy rather than Biden.

Sometimes Kennedy presents himself as the continuity with his uncle and his father, former Attorney General Robert Kennedy, both of whom claimed the mantle of President Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal. He also portrays himself as an outsider who stands up to the “corrupt” Democratic and Republican parties.

But his campaign is far from “out-

side” the capitalist class. *Forbes* says Nicole Shanahan, who Kennedy picked as his running mate and is the ex-wife of Google founder Sergey Brin, would be one of the wealthiest vice presidents ever. When Kennedy introduced her, she claimed they’d be taking on “greedy profiteers.”

Kennedy’s campaign has provoked a furious response from Democrats who want him — and other third parties — kicked off the ballot. The Democratic National Committee filed a complaint with the Federal Election Commission accusing Kennedy of violating campaign disclosure laws in his ballot efforts.

Kennedy’s campaign is “dangerous,” four other Kennedy family members wrote shortly after he announced as an independent. By “dangerous,” they mean to the Democrats’ prospects of reelecting Biden.

For working people, Kennedy’s campaign has nothing to offer. Conspiracies, anger at secret antagonists and the like, point no road forward.

To advance an independent working-class course, we need to build our own working-class party, a labor party based on the unions, to offer an alternative to all the capitalist parties and their candidates.

There is no serious motion toward a labor party yet. But millions of workers are looking for ways to resist falling real wages, and grueling working and living conditions. They’re increasingly looking to use the unions to fight for a better life. Rachele Fruit, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, gives voice to these struggles and presents a road toward taking political power into our own hands. That’s the campaign to join.

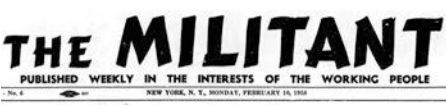
25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 3, 1999
SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — David Sanes, a resident of the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, was killed April 19 when two U.S. Navy warplanes on a training mission for the U.S. bombing campaign against Yugoslavia dropped 500-pound bombs on a lookout post there. Four other Vieques residents were injured. A U.S. Navy spokesman called Sanes’s death “an unfortunate accident.”

The same night of the bombing, 200 angry protesters demonstrated at the entrance to the U.S. Navy’s Camp García. The next day 300 people picketed in front of City Hall to demand that the Navy leave.

Vieques is a small island east of the main island with a population of 9,500. The U.S. Navy has occupied two-thirds of the island since World War II. It is the only place in the world where ships, aircraft, and submarines can all fire live ammunition in the same general area.



May 3, 1974
On May Day, tens of thousands of workers are expected to fill the streets of cities in Quebec. They will be marching for regular wage increases tied to the rise in the real cost of living and for reopening all contracts to implement this demand.

This action was called by a united front of the three main trade-union federations. The front demanded an increase of the minimum wage and the tying of the minimum wage to the cost-of-living index. They also demanded that pensions, unemployment insurance, welfare payments, and family allowances rise with the cost-of-living index.

On March 29, the united front turned out more than 8,000 demonstrators in front of the United Aircraft plant near Montreal. A major issue in the long fought strike there is the refusal of United Aircraft to grant the workers’ demand for a cost-of-living escalator clause.



May 2, 1949
Signs of growing resistance to the witch hunt are beginning to appear. This past week has seen two significant challenges against those who would stifle free speech and free thought.

At the University of Chicago, 105 professors and educators have attached their names publicly, in the midst of a “subversive” probe of their own institution, to a statement in defense of James Kutcher, the legless veteran fired from his job for membership in the Socialist Workers Party.

And the members of the National Maritime Union in New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore, have condemned the proposal of their National Council to introduce the witch hunt and “loyalty” purge into the NMU by constitutional amendment.

The defense of democratic rights must be waged on every front by the united efforts of all to whom civil liberties mean more than a catch-word.

The fight against Jew-hatred and pogroms in the imperialist epoch

Stakes for the international working class

Below is the opening chapter by Socialist Workers Party leader Dave Prince of the new book, *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class*.

Other chapters feature writings by revolutionary Marxist leaders V.I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Farrell Dobbs, James P. Cannon and Jack Barnes. The book tells the truth about Hamas' fascist roots, and presents excerpts from its top leaders in their own words and from its founding Covenant. Copyright © 2024 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY DAVE PRINCE

The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class is published as hundreds of millions are being drawn into world politics by the unfolding crisis of the imperialist system and its ramifications in every corner of the globe. The rise in Jew-hatred and violence that has marked the opening decades of the twenty-first century — from the Middle East to North and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific — is deeply rooted in this global crisis.

Jew-hatred is a world question. The fight against it is decisive to every working-class battle today against the brutal consequences for humanity of imperialism and its convulsions.

This book presents the political foundations and continuity of the Marxist program and course — in history and in action — on these questions. Jew-hatred is not eternal; it is rooted in class-divided society and the class struggle. And the authors answer the all-important question: *What is to be done to end it* — for all time.

The pages that follow include excerpts from articles and speeches by V.I. Lenin, the central builder of the Bolshevik Party and leader of the October 1917 Russian Revolution. Lenin addresses the decisive place of the battle against Jew-hatred and pogroms in the fight for the socialist revolution neces-



Pogroms, yesterday and today. Top, Hamas parades Jewish man murdered by death squad Oct. 7 past cheering supporters in Gaza City. Massacre in southern Israel was deadliest single attack on Jews since Hitler's "Final Solution." Bottom, using what Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin called "the most savage and furious methods," tsarist-inspired pogromists in 1906 murdered 80 Jews in Belostok, in what is now Poland. Photo shows Jewish family after assault.

sary to overturn the tsarist empire. Under Lenin's leadership, the Bolshevik Party placed itself on the front lines of that battle, from its formation in 1902–03 to Lenin's death in 1924.

The battle against persecution of Jews was intertwined with the fight for the right of all oppressed nations to self-determination. It was intertwined with the fight against reactionary bourgeois nationalism and chauvinism — in the young Soviet republic and in other lands where revolutionary struggles inspired by the victorious October 1917 revolution exploded.

The book includes Leon Trotsky's international fight in the 1920s and 1930s to defend Lenin's communist continuity against the political counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and Communist Party led by Joseph Stalin. The articles and interviews by Trotsky excerpted here were written during the years when mounting Jew-hatred and anti-Semitic violence were harbingers of what was to be the second inter-imperialist world war and the Holocaust.

There are writings by central leaders of the Socialist Workers Party from its founding onward — James P. Cannon, Farrell Dobbs, and Jack Barnes

— presenting the course of action that guides the SWP to this day.

Imperialism and Jew-hatred

The persecution of Jews goes back two millennia.

But with the dawn of the imperialist epoch in the final years of the nineteenth century, the weight and place of Jew-hatred in social relations changed. It became an *international* question, an expression of the intense virulence of the capitalist economic and social convulsions that erupted in the imperialist First and Second World Wars.

The "international Jewish conspiracy" became the common banner of fascist movements. Under that banner, they sought to justify attacks on the working class and its political vanguard, as well as other toilers, and to smash their unions and parties. The triumph of fascism across much of Europe, intertwined with the advancing Stalinist political counterrevolution in the USSR, guaranteed the conflagration to come. Over these decades there was a sharp rise of po-

groms — the brutal slaughter of Jews — and then the intensified assault with Adolph Hitler's "Final Solution," the mass extermination of six million Jews, in the final years of the war.

So long as the dictatorship of capital remains — based on class exploitation and capitalist control of production and exchange — there is no solution to imperialism's recurring march toward fascism and war. Modern capitalism's international domination, and the fight among the main imperialist powers and their ruling families to partition the world, makes recurring social crises and wars inevitable. And it also makes inevitable resistance and revolutionary upsurges by the working class and all the exploited.

The Jewish question itself is a class question.

As we are seeing again today, Jew-hatred has a permanent place and function for the propertied ruling families in the imperialist epoch.

The way forward for the international working class is through building revolutionary proletarian parties, communist parties, in the countries where we live. Revolutionary leaderships that have unshakeable confidence in the working class and oppressed to take their destiny in their own hands. To organize along the working-class line of march toward engaging the propertied ruling classes worldwide, taking state power, and transforming society.

The October 7 pogrom

The October 7, 2023 slaughter of Jews in Israel carried out by Hamas's squads of murderers and rapists was a pogrom, reactionary to the core.

It was made possible by the advance planning and full financial and logistical support from the counter-revolutionary capitalist regime in Iran. Tehran and its top government and clerical leaders publicly celebrated the massacre, which also involved several smaller Jew-hating groups, primarily

Continued on page 8



Militant/Mary Martin
Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, speaks to press at Oct. 10 event at Miami's Holocaust Memorial to condemn Hamas pogrom in Israel. SWP is part of decadeslong continuity of communist movement in fight against Jew-hatred, she said.

The fight against Jew-hatred and pogroms in the imperialist epoch

Stakes for the international working class

Special offer: \$5

V.I. LENIN
LEON TROTSKY
FARRELL DOBBS
JAMES P. CANNON
JACK BARNES
DAVE PRINCE

The fight against Jew-hatred in our epoch

Continued from page 7
Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

The new stage of the war against Jews and the State of Israel launched by Hamas that day still rages as this book is published. In addition to the battles being fought in Gaza, attacks on civilian populations in Israel have been launched from Lebanon by Hezbollah, Hamas's Tehran-spawned ally. There are ongoing terrorist operations by groups tied to the Iranian regime operating in Yemen, Iraq, and Syria.

These events mark a watershed in the worldwide imperialist crisis, with unknowable consequences. They are part of the profound shift already registered by the first large-scale land war between two state powers in Europe since World War II, opened by the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine by Vladimir Putin's Great Russian chauvinist regime. Moscow's aim is to drown in blood the Ukrainian people's independence and sovereignty, their existence as a nation.

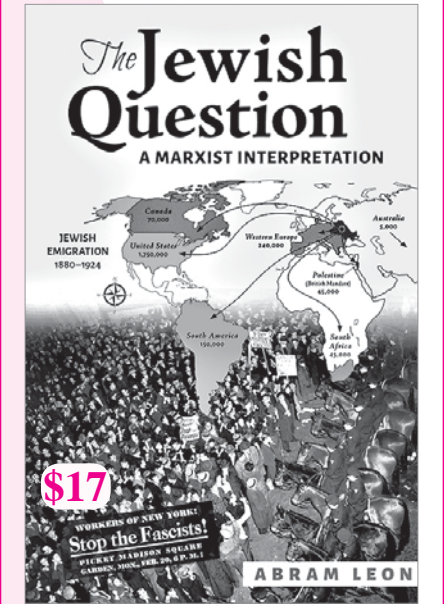
Contrary to the claim by the Hamas organizers, and by supporters and cheerleaders of the October 7 pogrom, that mass slaughter of Jews was not an anti-imperialist action in any sense. It had nothing to do with advancing the interests of the Palestinian people, or of the exploited and oppressed anywhere in the world.

October 7 was not a military operation in a national liberation war. To the contrary. The pogrom was organized and carried out by trained death squads — thugs, murderers, rapists — indiscriminately slaughtering, maiming, torturing, and sexually abusing individual Jews, regardless of nationality, age, or sex.

The victims were Jewish men, women, children, and infants from kibbutzim near the border between Israel and Gaza, as well as those attending a large international music festival. The death squads murdered some 1,200 people, wounded more than 5,000, and took hostage more than 240.

Jewish women were raped and then murdered, often gang raped, sometimes in front of family members to further degrade and humiliate them. Women's bodies were mutilated and desecrated.

“There is no solution to the Jewish question under capitalism, just as there is no solution to other problems before humanity...”
— Abram Leon



The Jewish Question
A MARXIST INTERPRETATION
by ABRAM LEON
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Lenin speaks at Second Congress of Communist International, July 1920, in Petrograd, Russia. Combating persecution of Jews, said Lenin, is vital to advance socialist revolution as only road to ensure rights of all oppressed nations. Under his leadership, Bolshevik Party was on the front lines of the fight to end pogroms.

Hostages have been, and are being, subjected to further torture and abuse.

Hamas also killed, brutalized, or took hostage several dozen migrant workers from Thailand, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and elsewhere, as well as a number of Israeli Arabs. That was not a mistake by Hamas. These workers were considered a legitimate target of the pogrom simply because they had associated with Jews.

This was a pogrom like those instigated against Jews by the tsarist regime in Russia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Russian monarchy's only answer "to demonstrations of the people demanding freedom," wrote Lenin in 1911, "is to let loose gangs of men who seize hold of Jewish children by their legs and smash their heads against stones, who rape Jewish and Georgian women and rip open the bellies of old men."

Nothing had changed on October 7 from the Bolshevik leader's description more than a century earlier.

The October 7 slaughter was the worst single act of violence against Jews since the Holocaust carried out by the Nazis. It has irrevocably shaken hopes and illusions of Jews and others that escalating acts of Jew-hatred are a historical aberration, a thing of the past. That they are exceptions to the rule. That they will die down. Or that Washington and other "democratic" imperialist governments can be counted on to defend Jews at home or anywhere in the world.

What does the future have in store? Is Jew-hatred eternal?

The global order imposed by the victors of the imperialist slaughter of World War II has been breaking down. For decades US imperialism, the earth's final empire, has been weakening. But the US rulers' existence is based on two interlinked goals. One is their ceaseless rivalry to dominate all their imperialist competitors. The other, vital to capitalism's survival, is to crush the development of revolutionary struggles by the toilers anywhere in the world. That includes Washington's multifaceted, "never forgive and never forget" efforts over decades to punish Cuban working people for their audacity in making Cu-

ba's socialist revolution.

Washington's 1991 war against Iraq — ending with the US Command's infamous "turkey shoot" of tens of thousands of retreating Iraqi troops and civilians — sounded the opening guns of World War III. That prospect is not an anticipation; it's an unfolding reality. Only the pace and how it will unfold are still to be resolved. Only the working class, through victorious revolutionary action, can take the power and wrench the ability to make war out of the hands of the propertied rulers.

There have been two such great proletarian revolutions in the past century. The first was the October Revolution in Russia led by Lenin and the Bolshevik Party he forged. The other was Cuba's socialist revolution led by Fidel Castro and the cadres of the Rebel Army and July 26 Movement he commanded.

Each of these revolutions set an example of the political character of proletarian leadership that can and must be forged — communist leadership, tested in struggle, and acting with confidence in the revolutionary capacities of the working class and the oppressed.

Fascist roots of Hamas

Hamas, founded in 1987, has its roots both in the landed classes and monarchies in the Arab world of the 1920s and 1930s, and in anti-working-class bourgeois nationalist currents and parties across the region ever since.

These ruling classes stood in opposition to revolutionary developments among working people in Palestine and elsewhere in the Middle East, developments that were inspired by the example of the Russian Revolution and were welcomed by its Bolshevik leadership. Communist parties, which initially drew together revolutionary-minded workers of Jewish, Arab, and other national origins, were formed in Palestine, Egypt, and elsewhere in the Middle East.

In the 1930s and 1940s, the Egypt-based Muslim Brotherhood and related reactionary currents forged direct relationships with fascists in Italy and especially Adolph Hitler's Nazi party in Germany.

Trotsky's description of the culture of

fascism in a May 1940 manifesto, "The Imperialist War and the Proletarian World Revolution," is accurate, more than eight decades later, as to how Hamas and its backers function today. "The sole feature of fascism that is not counterfeit is its will to power, subjugation, and plunder," Trotsky wrote. "Fascism is a chemically pure distillation of the culture of imperialism."

Tehran, Hezbollah, Hamas, and their supporters proclaim to the world their commitment to more pogroms. Their banner is Jew-hatred: another Holocaust, completing the unfinished "Final Solution." They reject any "solution" other than the physical elimination of Jews, not just in the Middle East but the world over. Seven million of the earth's 15.7 million Jews today live in Israel, and a similar number in the United States, with smaller but significant numbers in other countries.

Jew-hatred is the banner under which the bourgeois-clerical regime in Iran justifies its expansionist drive — often carried out by terrorist groups that Tehran arms and funds in neighboring countries — to extend the regime's counterrevolutionary military and economic domination across the Middle East. Tehran's declared aim of getting rid of the Jews and eliminating Israel is made even more dangerous for toilers everywhere by its accelerated course toward developing and deploying a strategic nuclear arsenal.

The Palestinian people have paid an enormous price for this genocidal Jew-



Left, 50,000 people join action called by Socialist Workers Party February 1939 in response to pro-Nazi meeting of 20,000 at Madison Square Garden, reported by party's paper, center. Above, Union Defense Guard initiated by Teamsters Local 544. It defeated bosses' effort to use fascist Silver Shirts to bust up union and target Jews. SWP's working-class program and composition were decisive.

hating course of "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free." Their lives and futures are sacrificed by Hamas leaders, who organize their operations centers and artillery installations inside, nearby, or underneath hospitals, schools, and apartment buildings in Gaza. They use civilians as human shields. They educate children to aspire to "martyrdom," not to life. They organize and act with the collusion of United Nations agencies and personnel. In order to meet Hamas's own needs, its armed thugs seize relief supplies, including food and medicine, intended for the Palestinian people.

The greatest danger to Jews and all the oppressed in the region and worldwide is the call for a ceasefire *before* Hamas has been defeated and its leadership and command structures demolished. Far from being a "pacifist" response to war, the international propaganda clamor for a ceasefire had been planned by Hamas and its cohorts years before October 7, 2023. *It's a Hamas campaign.*

And the Democratic Party administration of Joseph Biden — confirming once again the anti-working-class foundations of the US imperialist government — is bringing to bear its weight against Israel's right to defend itself as a refuge for Jews, demanding that it declare a ceasefire before the command structures of Hamas have been destroyed.

Only the unequivocal defeat of Hamas, however, can open up space for

Jewish, Arab, and other working people to find a way forward, together, in revolutionary struggles against the capitalist rulers of Israel, Palestine, and elsewhere in the region.

A revolutionary proletarian party

Lenin's course in combating the persecution of Jews was part of forging the proletarian program, organizational norms, and habits of conduct of the Bolshevik Party.

That course guided the party's actions before, during, and after the October 1917 revolution in Russia, both in the young workers state itself and through the Communist International founded at the Bolsheviks' initiative in 1919 to build proletarian parties dedicated to extending the world socialist revolution.

The tsarist empire's ousted capitalist factory owners and landowners organized a murderous three-year-long civil war to reclaim their property and power, with decisive assistance from the invading armies of London, Paris, Berlin, Washington, and other imperialist governments.

As part of the battles that crushed the counterrevolution, the Red Army — initiated and led by Lenin, and under the command of Leon Trotsky — fought and defeated the pogromists. Those victorious battles inspired Jews and other toilers not only in the former tsarist empire but around the world.

"The tsarist police, in alliance with the landowners and the capitalists, organized pogroms against the Jews," explained Lenin in a 1919 speech reproduced on a phonograph recording that was widely distributed across the Soviet republic.

"The landlords and capitalists tried to divert against the Jews the hatred of workers and peasants who were tortured by want. In other countries too, we often see the capitalists fomenting hatred against the Jews in order to blind the workers, to turn away their attention from the enemy of working people, capital," the Bolshevik leader said.

"Shame on accursed tsarism which tortured and persecuted the Jews. Shame on those who foment hatred towards the Jews, who foment hatred toward other nations. Long live the fraternal trust



Amin al-Husseini, grand mufti of Jerusalem, salutes Waffen SS troops in Bosnia, where he launched Muslim division of Nazi forces. Husseini worked closely with Egypt-based Muslim Brotherhood, from which Hamas emerged in 1987 as armed wing in Gaza. Their common goal? Exterminate the Jews.

and fighting alliance of the workers of all nations in the struggle to overthrow capital."

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," declared the SWP in its very first statement on Hamas's October 7 pogrom. That statement — issued by Rachele Fruit at a protest of the slaughter held at Miami's Holocaust memorial — is reprinted in this book. Fruit is currently the SWP's 2024 candidate for president of the United States.

This Bolshevik continuity was carried forward by Trotsky in the fight in the late 1920s and 1930s to maintain Lenin's proletarian internationalist course against the bloody political counterrevolution led by Joseph Stalin. In materials in this book, Trotsky describes how the Stalinist bureaucracy fostered anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, targeting those defending Lenin's program and actions. Many of them, including Trotsky, were Jewish. Anti-Semitism was used against those targeted by Stalin's notorious Moscow frame-up trials and executions between 1936 and 1938, during which virtually the entire remaining central leadership of the October Revolution was killed.

The SWP in those years — working closely with Trotsky, then living in exile in Mexico — took on the struggle against the devastating social consequences for working people of the deep worldwide capitalist depression and social crisis and the march toward a second imperialist war. Trotsky warned of rising fascist movements among the panicked petty bourgeoisie and middle classes, driven by their fear of the abyss, accompanied by "a monstrous growth of violent anti-Semitism in all the world."

At the close of the 1930s, as the US rulers prepared to enter the spreading world war in defense of their own capitalist interests, communist workers in the SWP fought and won a political battle against a minority faction in the party who were caving to the pressures of escalating war propaganda and the social milieu of the rulers' middle-class mouthpieces. The opposition broke from Marxism over the inseparable questions of opposing US imperialist war aims and deepening the party's proletarian composition and orientation to the working class and unions.

The SWP's successful struggle for a proletarian party was decisive to its re-

sponse to efforts among the propertied ruling families to unleash fascist thugs and scapegoat Jews for capitalism's mounting ills. They sought to divert the anger of the insecure or ruined middle classes and layers of working people away from the capitalist rulers responsible for the unemployment, farm foreclosures, and other consequences of the social and economic crisis of the 1930s.

Included here are accounts by two former national secretaries of the SWP, Farrell Dobbs and James P. Cannon. They describe the broad-based union defense guard organized in Minnesota in 1938 that defeated employer-instigated efforts by a US fascist organization, the Silver Shirts, to break the Teamster union and stop developments toward independent working-class political action. Promoting Jew-hatred was an integral part of the fascists' demagoguery, of course. After catching wind of the Silver Shirts' union-busting plans, Minneapolis rabbi Albert Gordon turned to the Teamsters to respond to this rightist danger. A public display of the workers defense guard with broad support in the working class led the fascists to scuttle their plans and get out of town.

Workers and trade unionists in New York subsequently sought collaboration with the Minneapolis Teamsters leaders to resist union busting and Jew-hatred by fascist forces there and in neighboring New Jersey. They mobilized for a demonstration of 50,000 in New York City, initiated by the Socialist Workers Party, that countered a rally of 20,000 by the fascist German-American Bund at Madison Square Garden.

No refuge in imperialist epoch

"From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" is nothing new. In the words of Hamas's 1988 founding covenant itself, the Jew-hating premise of that slogan "has been laid out in the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*," the notorious 1905 forgery by the tsarist secret police allegedly proving "plans for universal domination by international Jewry."

From Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and Nuremberg rallies, to the Hamas Covenant, and today's rationalizations for October 7 — it all has the same anti-working-class foundations.

The message is clear: *Drive out the Jews! Kill the Jews!* From the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea — and anywhere else on earth Jews can be tracked down and targeted, from a syna-

Continued on page 10

Fight against Jew-hatred

Continued from page 9

gogue to a kosher grocery, from a dance festival to a nursery or schoolyard. Destroy Israel as a refuge for the Jews.

In the imperialist epoch, there can be no permanent refuge for the Jews. That can only be changed with the victory of proletarian revolution in decisive parts of the world.

The “river-to-the-sea” campaign has nothing to do with the national aspirations of any oppressed people — in Palestine, Iran, the Middle East, North Africa, or elsewhere. Nothing to do with the fight against imperialism by oppressed and exploited toilers. Nothing to do with the working-class struggle for emancipation from the dictatorship of capital and the exploiting ruling classes.

To the contrary, the international campaign for an immediate cease-fire serves only the class interests of the reactionary bourgeois-nationalist leaderships of the regime in Iran, as well as Hamas, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad, and a handful of others. And it is used by the world’s most powerful, ruthless ruling classes, led by those in the United States, to advance *their* global economic, military, and political interests and class domination.

What is to be done?

The establishment of Israel became inevitable with the Second World War.

In the years leading up to and during World War II, the dominant imperialist powers slammed the doors on all but marginal Jewish immigration. That was the course of Washington and London, led by Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, and followed by the ruling classes of Canada, Australia, and others.

In the aftermath of the war — after Hitler’s genocidal extermination of 40 percent of the world Jewish population, six million human beings — the imperialist victors in Washington and London kept their own borders shut tight for three more years. They pushed more than 250,000 Jewish survivors into barely livable “displacement camps” in the defeated European countries of Germany, Austria, and Italy.

Where were the Jews to go?

Prospects for an extension of the socialist revolution in Europe were betrayed by the Stalinist regime and its national Communist Parties. In the early 1930s they sabotaged revolutionary opportunities that could have united the workers movement in Germany and defeated the Nazis in Germany before their consolidation of power. In 1936–37 they undermined a prerevolutionary situation in France by joining a so-called Popular Front government in alliance with a wing of the capitalist class. They turned their guns against revolutionary-minded workers fighting the fascist forces in Spain that triumphed over the toilers in 1939. Proletarian victories in one or more of those countries could have stopped the human catastrophe of the Second World War.

After the war, revolutionary struggles in Greece, France and Italy by armed workers, looking to find a road toward socialist revolution, were blocked by Stalinist-led parties, in order not to disrupt the postwar carve-up of “spheres of influence” across Europe by Moscow, Washington, and London. On the ashes of the war, the

imperialist Democratic and Republican Parties established a new Washington-dominated world order — one that has now begun to fracture.

Under the mantle of the fight against fascism, the imperialists rationalized their rapacious war aims by portraying the populations of both Germany and Japan as uniformly reactionary. But the fire bombings by the US and British imperialist armed forces of working-class neighborhoods in major German and Japanese cities were aimed at blocking workers’ struggles after the war. As was Washington’s dropping of atomic bombs on both Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

It was this history, these class-struggle realities, that made the establishment of Israel inevitable. Not a “realization of Zionism.” Despite efforts by London and Washington to use divide-and-rule policies against Jews and Arabs alike (as the colonizing powers did in India and Pakistan, across Africa, and elsewhere), Israel’s existence was not the imposition of a “colonial settler state.”

Israel became inevitable as a *refuge* for the Jews. But not a *solution* to Jew-hatred or pogroms. There is no safe haven for Jews in the imperialist epoch, anywhere in the world.

Defense of Israel’s right to exist is based on that history. It is a country that offers sanctuary to Jews, anywhere, anytime, in face of persecution and violence.

Only under such conditions will working people in Israel and the region — of Jewish, Palestinian, and other national origins — have the political space to build mutual trust and unity in common struggle. And such class solidarity, in turn, opens the road to forging a communist party, a proletarian party, capable of leading the working class and its oppressed and exploited allies toward a socialist revolution.

Various Zionist currents today wrongly persist in the claim that Jew-hatred is eternal. Some also argue that the persecution of Jews has its roots in inherent prejudices in the working class, permanently necessitating an insular bourgeois Jewish state. But the opposite is true.

In fact, the deepest *abhorrence* of the October 7 pogrom is found in the working class in the United States and



Road from Kuwait to Basra, Iraq, where U.S. bombs and shelling slaughtered thousands of retreating Iraqi soldiers and civilians, February 1991. So long as dictatorship of capital remains — based on class exploitation and capitalist control of production and exchange — there is no solution to imperialism’s march toward fascism and war.

elsewhere. It is there — *not* among privileged professionals and the middle classes, or on university campuses, where Jew-hatred is flourishing today — that communist workers find the greatest openness to the fight against the persecution of Jews. It is among working people that communists get a hearing on why the stakes for the labor movement in fighting Jew-hatred and pogroms are so great.

Lenin was right in 1903 when he insisted on “the link that *undoubtedly* exists between anti-Semitism and the interests of the bourgeoisie, and not the interests of the working-class sections of the population.”

In 1937 Trotsky posed the question of whether or not a world socialist federation would make it possible “for those Jews who wish to have their own autonomous republic as the arena of their own culture” to do so. A proletarian government would never “resort to compulsory assimilation,” he said, and it might “very well be that within two or three generations the boundaries of an independent Jewish republic, as of many other national regions, will be erased. . . .”

“I have in mind a transitional historical period when the Jewish question, as such, is still acute and demands adequate measures from a world federation of workers’ states,” Trotsky added. An autonomous Jewish republic “under the regime of a socialist federation [would] take on a real and salutary meaning. . . . How could any Marxist, or even any

consistent democrat, object to this?”

In Trotsky’s 1938 “Appeal to American Jews Menaced by Fascism,” he explained that the most virulent anti-Semitism can be expected in the strongest imperialist powers, “above all in the United States.” Amid world capitalism’s deepening economic and social catastrophe and fascist advances, Trotsky said, “It is possible to imagine without difficulty what awaits the Jews at the mere outbreak of the future world war. But even without the war the next development of world reaction signifies with certainty the *physical extermination of the Jews*.”

“Now more than ever,” the Bolshevik leader concluded, “the fate of the Jewish people — not only their political but also their physical fate — is indissolubly linked with the emancipating struggle of the international proletariat.”

Those words remain true. A victorious socialist revolution in the United States is both necessary and possible. What’s needed, what must be built, is a revolutionary working-class party politically armed with a communist program and a battle-tested proletarian leadership.

That is what the Socialist Workers Party is fighting to build. The party of the American socialist revolution. A revolutionary transformation — part of an expanding *world* socialist revolution — that opens the road to rebuilding society on foundations of human solidarity.

March 30, 2024

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New stage in assault on Israel

Continued from front page

of assaults on Israel and its right to exist as a refuge for Jews.

Washington and other imperialist powers, however, arrogantly told Israeli officials they should call this onslaught a “victory” and let it go. Israel — with the assistance of military forces from the U.S., the United Kingdom, France, Jordan and Saudi Arabia — shot down 99% of the 170 drones and 150 missiles. Tehran’s assault was joined by its so-called axis of resistance partners, who launched attacks from Lebanon, Yemen and Iraq.

One Bedouin Arab girl in southern Israel was severely injured by shrapnel from an intercepted Iranian missile, the only reported casualty. The Israeli Air Force Nevatim Airbase sustained light damage.

Before the assault, President Joseph Biden told the press his response to Tehran’s threats was “don’t.” In reality his administration gave the Iranian rulers the green light. The implied “understanding” was that the attack would be carried out in a way that would allow for successful interception, and that no U.S. installations would be targeted.

The *Jerusalem Post* reports that U.S. officials had been “in constant contact” with Tehran prior to the attack. The White House promised that Washington would not join any Israeli counterattack.

The Iranian regime called the attack a “victorious operation” that would create “a new equation” that “taught the Zionist enemy a lesson.” They also knew that Washington would put maximum pressure on Israel not to respond.

The U.S. government and other imperialist powers accepted Tehran’s stance that the assault was “retaliation” for Israel’s April 1 targeted attack on a building adjacent to the Iranian Embassy in Damascus.

“We showed restraint for six months,” Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian told reporters April 14, referring to Israel’s efforts to destroy Hamas after its Oct. 7 pogrom. “It seems that the Israeli regime received the wrong signal from Iran’s restraint.”

The *Washington Post*, echoing the Biden administration, said that “the attack in Damascus was especially provocative because of its target — a diplomatic compound, traditionally exempted from hostilities — and because it killed two senior generals in Iran’s elite Revolutionary Guard.”

But this description turns reality on its head. The truth is that the building that Israeli forces struck was, in the words of Israeli Admiral Daniel Hagari, a “military building of the Quds Force,” the foreign operations unit of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. It was adjacent to the embassy, which wasn’t touched. And what was going on in that building had nothing to do with diplomatic relations. To the contrary, Iranian generals and leaders of Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad and other murderous opponents of Israel’s existence were meeting to plan a new round of terror attacks on Israel and Jews.

Hamas and Islamic Jihad death squads, organized and financed by Tehran, killed 1,200 people, mostly Jewish civilians, on Oct. 7, wounded more than 5,000 and took more than 240 hostage. It’s the largest massacre of Jews since the Holocaust carried out by the Nazis during World War II.

Major Gen. Mohammad-Reza Za-

hed, the highest ranking of those killed, was the Iranian commander in charge of Tehran’s operations in Lebanon and Syria. Immediately after his death the Coalition Council of Islamic Revolution Forces, one of the Iranian regime’s key political organizations, admitted that Zahedi helped lead the “planning and implementation” of the Oct. 7 assault on Israel. This exposed Tehran’s earlier denials of involvement — echoed by Washington to this day — as a lie.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken, U.K. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and French President Emmanuel Macron are all insisting Israel, in the words of Blinken, must “prevent escalation.” Macron said that world leaders should do “everything we can to avoid flare-ups.”

But the missile barrage wasn’t a “flare-up”! It’s not Israel that is being provocative, but Iran’s capitalist rulers — organizing pogroms and other terror attacks on Jews and Israel, which they call a “cancerous tumor” that must be “uprooted and destroyed.” And then claiming that any Israeli response targeting Iran’s murderous operatives crosses a “red line.”

It’s becoming clearer every day that the imperialist rulers in Washington are not a “friend” of Israel or the Jewish people. Like other capitalist powers, their overriding goal is to defend their own profit-driven economic, political and strategic military interests.

Growing opposition inside Iran

The *Washington Post* and other liberal media claim the regime in Tehran acted “under pressure” from working people demanding they retaliate against Israel for the death of Zahedi and the others.

But in fact, opposition to Tehran’s



Coordinating Council of Iranian Teachers Trade Union Associations

Retirees’ weekly pensions protest in Tehran, one of many across Iran April 14, day after regime attacked Israel with 320 missiles and drones. At similar protest in Kermanshah, speaker called for ridding Iran of “liars and warmongers.” Opposition to regime’s war on Israel is growing.

military adventures in the region and to the latest attack on Israel is widespread. Over the last several years hundreds of thousands of workers, farmers and youth have taken to the streets of Iran to challenge the repressive actions of the government, its trampling on democratic rights and its expansionary foreign adventures.

The Coordinating Council of Iranian Teachers Trade Union Associations issued a statement April 14 condemning the missile and drone barrage, saying war “is not in the interest of either of the two nations.”

That same day, hundreds of retirees protested across Iran. According to the Metalworkers union, one speaker at the protest of more than 200 in Kermanshah said workers should “pray that God will rid the earth of liars, warmongers, and those who cause famine and scarcity. ... Human society demands peace and reconciliation.”

Rallies organized by the regime to

celebrate its attack drew hundreds of loyalists, not thousands.

Worried about the growing opposition, the regime threatened that anyone who expresses support for Israel will face “swift and resolute consequences.”

Meanwhile, the Biden administration keeps its fire on Israel, demanding its government agree to a permanent cease-fire in Gaza and give up on defeating and dismantling the remaining Hamas battalions hiding in Rafah.

U.S. demands on Israel boost Hamas

Emboldened by Washington’s pressure on Israel, Hamas has become more intransigent. Its leaders rejected Israel’s offer to pause the war in exchange for the release of 40 of the remaining 95 hostages still believed to be alive. Hamas countered by demanding an immediate and permanent cease-fire with no hostages released until after six more weeks. Hamas claims it needs that time to locate them. This would just give Hamas and Tehran time to rebuild and plan new pogroms.

Biden’s efforts to push Israel back are being debated among his capitalist opponents in the U.S. presidential campaign, all from the standpoint of defending Washington’s imperialist interests. “God bless the people of Israel, they’re under attack right now,” presidential candidate Donald Trump told a Pennsylvania campaign rally April 13. He said Tehran launched its attack on Israel because “we show great weakness.”

Independent presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr., castigated Biden’s “failure” to talk to “the American public about the historical, moral, and national security imperatives” that has “allowed the Democratic Party to drift away from 80 years of support for Israel.” He added this has “driven the rising tide of anti-semitism nationally.”

“The capitalist rulers in the United States are out to defend their own imperialist interests throughout the Middle East,” Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Rachele Fruit said in an April 15 statement. “They don’t act out of concern for Israel, for Jews living there or anywhere else, for the Palestinian people, or for anyone except the propertied families whose class interests and privilege Washington serves and protects.”

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Profit-driven infrastructure crisis

Continued from front page

This is an important demand the labor movement should take up. Millions of working people need a government-guaranteed supplemental income for their families so they can keep working.

The factors that led to the Key Bridge collapsing from the strike by the container ship Dali aren’t unique. They’re found in bridges across the country.

Twenty-six barges loaded with coal broke loose on the Ohio River in Pittsburgh April 13. Drifting miles downstream as flood waters were rising, six went over the Emsworth Dam. The McKees Rocks Bridge was shut down due to the risk that the barges would hit and damage it. A close call.

The relentless drive for profits is why shipping magnates build ever-larger container vessels, and port bosses hurry to compete for their expanding business by dredging in harbors and under bridges that are not prepared for their size. Even with its massive size, the Dali is not one of the largest container ships on the seas. Some are nearly twice as big.

In 2016 the Panama Canal was expanded to allow passage of the larger container ships, and port bosses — like in Baltimore — hurried to dredge deeper channels to compete for their business. This made the long trip up the Chesapeake Bay more worthwhile to ship owners.

The port installed four massive new cranes to handle the increase in traffic from the bigger ships. But even after the dredging, the depth of the channel

reached only 50 feet. The hull of a ship like the Dali has only two feet of clearance from the river bottom. Complicating matters, a high-pressure natural gas line runs across the channel floor.

In another sign of the callous disregard by the owners and the government, the 21 crew members are still on board the Dali, which is encased in a twisted web of metal and broken roadway from the bridge.

FBI agents raided the ship April 15. Maryland Gov. Wes Moore praised their efforts, saying discovering who there was responsible for the accident would bring closure to the families of workers who died on the bridge. But what the FBI is really doing is looking for a worker to frame up, letting the bosses off the hook.

New disasters waiting to happen

The American Society of Civil Engineers and the federal government report 46,000 bridges across the country are aging and in poor condition. They say 17,000 are at risk of collapse from a single hit by a boat.

Over 300 major bridges in the U.S. have bridge foundations that are inadequate or deteriorating. A review in the *New York Times* found 193 bridges, each one of which carries 10,000 vehicles or more a day, have no protections for the piers at their base. The *Times* details “catastrophic failures” on bridges in Tampa Bay, Florida; Mobile, Alabama; South Padre Island, Texas; and Webbers Falls, Oklahoma.

How Cuba's socialist revolution transformed the working class

BY RÓGER CALERO

Trying to find out more about the photo on the cover of Pathfinder's new edition of *Che Guevara on Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism* by Carlos Tablada, I and other socialist workers from Australia, Canada, United Kingdom and the United States participating in the Havana International Book Fair in February learned more about the transformations carried out by working people in Cuba through their socialist revolution. And the central role played in them by Fidel Castro and the rest of its Marxist leadership.

The photo was taken in January 1961 when revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara visited the formerly U.S.-owned nickel mining processing operations in Nicaro, in eastern Cuba, that had recently been nationalized. Guevara was at the time head of the Industrialization Department of the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA), among other leadership responsibilities.

The INRA was created in June 1959 to implement Cuba's first agrarian reform. Large plantations owned by U.S. and Cuban capitalists were nationalized and turned over to thousands of landless peasants and their families. INRA's industrialization department was charged with coordinating production in the plants, mines and mills as workers in their tens of thousands were taking control over them.

We spoke with leaders of the National Energy and Mine Workers Union (SNTEM), and Association of Sugar Technicians of Cuba (ATAC), about the photo. They shared with us examples of the accomplishments made by workers in these industries in the opening years of the revolution, gains they continue to defend today.

"If there is a place where these achievements are very palpable it is in Moa," said Alfredo García, a member of SNTEM's national leadership. "Moa is the municipality with the second highest level of schooling in the country." He described Moa's economic, social and cultural transformation following the revolution's triumph in 1959 that changed it from a small saw mill and fishing town, dominated by a couple of stores, bars and brothels, to a city with its own university, airport, large hotel and hundreds of multifamily dwellings with access to free health and educational services.

Before the revolution, Nicaro and Moa, located some 50 miles apart, were the site of U.S. mining operations that enjoyed juicy concessions from the Fulgencio Batista dictatorship and its predecessors.

"It used to take four hours to travel the 36 miles between Moa and the closest town, Baracoa, because there was no bridge over the river or any good roads," García said.

As the new revolutionary government moved to fulfill its pledge to put Cuba's resources in the hands of working people, the U.S.-run mining monopoly decided to close down the Moa operations in April 1960. They did so in the face of 25% royalties imposed by the new government.

The U.S. mine bosses were used to tax exemptions and other privileges under Batista, because they were contributing "to hemisphere and free world defense." This was a cynical reference to their products going to supply Washington's war production during World War II and its 1950-53 intervention against the Korean people.

"Cubans will never be able to start and run the Moa plant," the U.S. bosses insisted as they left, García said. They left behind new technology they had just installed. The bosses hoped to return triumphantly in a few months, once the new popular government had been removed by pressure, cooption or military intervention by Washington. But those efforts were a total failure.

Victory vs. illiteracy, U.S. invasion

Following the nationalization of the Moa plant in July 1960, Guevara enlisted Demetrio Presilla, one of the plant's original engineers, to restart production. The Moa Bay Mining Company bosses had urged their engineers to join them in leaving. "They even took the plans and operation manuals," said García. Only two of the 10 engineers stayed in Cuba.

García said Che convinced Presilla and 17 other technicians to stay. "If you want to leave the country and use your skills somewhere else, fine," Che said, but otherwise you can stay and build a new Cuba.

On July 23, 1961, the Moa plant was running again, now named Pedro Sotto Alba, after a Rebel Army combatant who fell in 1958 fighting to take the town during the revolutionary war.

Three months earlier, Cuba's workers and farmers had crushed the U.S.-organized mercenary invasion at Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs). "Getting the Moa plant started became Girón's technological victory," said García.

Workers all across the island learned to run the nationalized factories. This required a battle to raise the



Minister of Industry Che Guevara presents literacy drive banner at paint factory in Havana in November 1961. Don't try to set "a world record," he said, but "combine study and work."

skill levels of a workforce that first had to learn to read and write.

In 1961 Fidel led working people in Cuba to carry out a massive campaign that wiped out illiteracy in city and countryside. That effort not only dignified generations of Cubans, it helped prepare them for the new tasks they were shouldering in Cuba's socialist revolution.

"We're not trying to set a world record," Guevara told a November 1961 ceremony held to present a "Territory Free of Illiteracy" banner to workers at a paint factory. "We're teaching people to read and write so you can learn other things, and combine study and work." A photo of that event is included in Pathfinder's new edition of Tablada's book.

"Building socialism is based on the capacity of the masses to organize themselves, to guide the economy, to improve their knowledge every day," explained Guevara. The methods used by Guevara, Fidel Castro and other central leaders of the revolution were aimed at raising the self-confidence and political consciousness of workers and rural producers.

Humanizing work

Guevara was also centrally involved in the mechanization of sugarcane harvesting. Under his direction, Cuban engineers and mechanics in the sugar mills built mechanical cane cutters and lifters for loading piles of cut cane onto trucks, based on tech-

nology from other countries.

"Fidel's view was that this work needed to be humanized," Miguel Toledo, ATAC's vice president, told us in February. "Fidel wanted to get rid of that symbol of slavery stamped into cane cutters."

Instead of intensifying their exploitation for cutters, as happens to workers when capitalists introduce new technology, in Cuba their workload was eased and their pay improved.

A lot of political work by the unions went into this transformation, to reassure workers the new measures would benefit them. They guaranteed workers year-round jobs, better housing and nutrition, Eduardo Lamadrid, ATAC's president, said. Workers in the sugar industry now earned 15% more than workers in other industries. "That's because it was hard work."

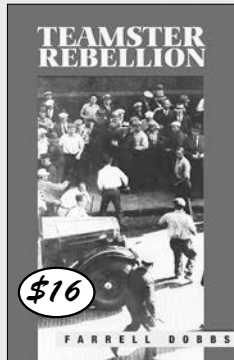
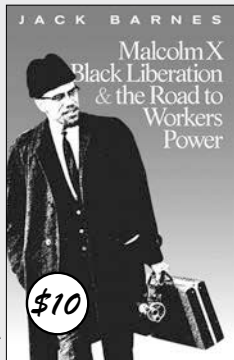
"The production goals as well as conditions, from wages to food for the workers, were discussed in giant workers assemblies at the beginning of each harvest," said Lamadrid. "These were very militant meetings in which commander Fidel would participate."

This revolutionary transformation of working people in Cuba — tied to their fight to wipe out racial discrimination, draw women into the workforce on a large scale, and support workers' struggles internationally — is why the capitalist rulers in Washington hate Cuba. Their revolution is an example for workers worldwide.



Worker drives harvester in Cuba in 1970s. Che Guevara championed the mechanization of cane cutting, freeing a million workers from back-breaking labor.

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Fight for workers control of production, safety

Year after year thousands of workers die on the job as a result of speedup and unsafe conditions pushed by the bosses. The lives of these workers will be commemorated by the labor movement on Workers Memorial Day April 28. Join union actions in your area!

There were 5,486 workers killed on the job in 2022, a government report issued last December reports, a 5.7% rise over the year before.

In 2023, 40 miners died on the job, the highest figure in a decade. In addition, black lung, a debilitating and often fatal disease caused by exposure to dust has risen dramatically as the coal bosses have driven the United Mine Workers out of the coalfields over decades.

Deaths of construction workers on the job increased for the third straight year in New York City in 2022. The number of construction workers in unions has plummeted, giving bosses a stronger hand. Many of those paying with their lives are immigrant workers with less protection from predatory bosses at nonunion sites.

Six construction workers died after the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore collapsed last month. The disaster was the result of the profit drive of the bosses — in the port, the shipping industry, road construction and others. Port authorities failed to construct protective barriers around the columns on a bridge with a “fracture critical” design.

Countless other workers are maimed or suffer debilitating repetitive motion injuries. Others, like rail workers, face “suicide work schedules,” on-call demands and forced overtime, increasing

the danger of a disaster.

On-the-job deaths and injuries aren’t “accidents.” They result from how capitalist production is organized to maximize profits by intensifying the exploitation of workers. In the employers’ eyes, we are expendable as long as there is a steady supply of new, cheaper workers.

All work can be performed safely. This never has and never will come from relying on the government, and its heaps of regulations, which always work to the bosses’ advantage. In 2022 the Biden administration, with bipartisan support, barred rail workers from striking for safer conditions. Airline flight attendants fighting to be paid for all the time they work are buried in government red tape.

No worker has to die! Using union power to fight for workers control over safety and production is the only way we can take measures needed to protect life and limb.

In the late 1960s and 1970s coal miners organized strikes and protests that led to a revolution in their union and establishment of health clinics in the coalfields. They established union safety committees in the mines with the power to shut down production — a power they used to enforce safety and save lives.

It will take a fight to replace capitalist rule with workers power and to uproot capitalist exploitation to ensure that work is organized in a way that values the life of every worker. And to make products that work, last and are safe. That’s what Cuba’s socialist revolution shows is possible. And what the Socialist Workers Party seeks to lead workers to accomplish.

SWP campaigns for ballot status in New Jersey

Continued from page 5

changed when workers join together and use our unions.”

“I pay \$250 a week to get the little one looked after and another \$300 for my other child,” single mom Karlas de la Cruz told Kuniansky. “That comes out of \$1,800 a week I take home as a health care provider. And I’m not eligible for food stamps.”

“It’ll take a fight by the labor movement to change this,” Kuniansky replied, saying she had joined flight attendants rallying for a better contract at Newark airport a few days earlier. “We need cost-of-living adjustments in all contracts so when prices rise our wages go up automatically.”

Kuniansky pointed to gains won by unions, from the autoworkers strike last year and the labor battles that built the industrial unions in the 1930s. “The bosses always try to take back what unions win. To make lasting gains we need to take political power into our own hands,” she said. She pointed to the example of Cuba’s socialist revolution. “As we lead toward that kind of mass movement, we join union fights for the things workers need today.” De la Cruz signed to put Kuniansky on the ballot.

“A lot of things don’t get talked about,” Veronda Clark, a nurse for 32 years who’s now on disability, told SWP campaigner Arrin Hawkins. Hawkins was describing how the bosses’ drive for profit led to the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore. Clark pointed to similar disasters in other cities.

Powerful record of working-class struggles

“It’ll take struggles by working people and our unions to win control over working conditions,” Hawkins replied, pointing to the experiences of previous working-class struggles, “like the movement for civil rights that got rid of Jim Crow segregation.” Clark signed up to get Fruit and Kuniansky on the ballot.

“I’m for Trump, I won’t sign for a socialist,” retired hairdresser Virginia Mondsini told this *Militant* re-



Militant/Terry Evans

Tyrique Blount in Bloomfield, New Jersey, signs April 15 to put SWP presidential ticket and Joanne Kuniansky, right, the SWP candidate for U.S. Senate, on the ballot.

porter on her way into the store. “If you disagree with his politics that’s fine, but what these judges are doing to him is all wrong,” she added.

“The cases against Trump are serious assaults on constitutional freedoms that all workers have a stake in defending,” I said, to her surprise.

“Well I hope more people see through the media facade,” she said. “What they’re doing to Trump is bad for future generations.”

When she finished her shopping, Mondsini sought out the SWP campaigners and got a copy of the *Militant*.

Campaigning here was part of a three-day effort in towns across the state during which 560 people signed to put the SWP candidates on the ballot.

To date, more than 1,200 have signed up to get Fruit on the ballot, toward the goal of 1,700, over double the state’s requirement of 800. A similar number have also signed for Kuniansky. Party campaigners also sold 22 subscriptions to the *Militant* and 20 Pathfinder books.

The New Jersey ballot drive overlaps with the SWP’s eight-week spring campaign to sell 1,350 *Militant* subscriptions, 1,350 books and to raise \$165,000 to meet the expenses of publishing the paper. There are three weeks left to make all three goals. To find out more or volunteer to help, contact the SWP branch nearest you listed on page 10.

Quebec farmers rally against gov’t policies

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

VAUDREUIL-DORION, Quebec — More than 65 tractors, with their front bumpers sporting signs such as “Feeding your family is our profession,” came from throughout the region to join a rally of over 300 farmers and their supporters here April 10. This city of more than 43,000 people is an hour west of Montreal.

Organized by the Union of Agricultural Producers, the protest was one of several held in Quebec demanding the government increase its spending on agriculture, currently less than 1% of the provincial budget. They also demanded an end to the abusive paperwork farmers have to fill out to meet government-imposed environmental regulations. “Less than 1% of the budget, but 8 million mouths to feed” and “Less paperwork” read many of the farmers’ signs.

During its 99th anniversary convention held in Quebec City last December, the Union of Agricultural Producers mobilized 1,000 farmers outside the Quebec National Assembly calling for more support to farmers. Beginning in March the organization has held sizable actions throughout Quebec — in Rimouski, Charlevoix, Alma, St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Laval, Saint-Hyacinthe, and here.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada has predicted the net income of farmers fell by 49.6% in 2023 and 86.5% so far this year. Meanwhile, the profits of supermarket giants like Loblaw and Metro who sell their produce have risen substantially.

The situation is particularly difficult for young farmers — 44% of whom hold jobs off the farm to feed their families. At the action in Vaudreuil-Dorion, these farmers were called up to the front of the crowd to show their signs.

All small farmers feel the impact of the crisis. “We’re here because of the interest rates and inflation plus the lack of certainty of our crops from year to year because of droughts or floods,” a tree farmer who also works off the farm in a union job told the *Militant*.

“Working farmers are workers’ allies on the land,” Katy LeRougetel, the Communist League candidate in the upcoming federal by-election in Montreal and a union bakery worker, told the *Militant*. “The Communist League explains that workers and our unions need to forge an independent working-class movement to back these farmers fighting for immediate government aid to guarantee them the costs of production and a decent living for them and their families. And we call for the nationalization of the land, guaranteeing its use by those who live on and till it.”

Help Militant fund drive

BY ILONA GERSH

As this issue goes to press, \$82,963 has been received toward the goal of \$165,000 for the Militant Fighting Fund, which covers the expenses of the paper. The *Militant* depends entirely on contributions from working people who value its reporting.

Supporters of the paper in Atlanta raised their quota from \$9,500 to \$10,250. “We’re getting a good response from longtime readers of the paper, as well as new contributions from workers we meet campaigning door to door,” writes Susan LaMont.

The fund is currently behind schedule but there is often a gap between when people make their pledges and when payments arrive at the *Militant*.

The *Militant* is the voice of the campaign of Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, the working-class alternative to the Biden, Trump and Kennedy campaigns.

The *Militant* speaks for the interests of workers striking for better wages and conditions. For fighters resisting the growing assaults on Jews. For opponents of Moscow’s war to conquer Ukraine. For workers angered at the rulers’ disregard for our lives, starkly illustrated by the deaths and impact on thousands resulting from the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore. And it presents a road forward that can make it possible to replace capitalist rule with workers power.

The Militant Fighting Fund ends May 7. Send a check or money order to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018, or make a contribution online at themilitant.com.

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

Makes it possible to send prisoners reduced-rate subscriptions. To donate, send a check or money order payable to the ‘Militant’ and earmarked “Prisoners’ Fund” to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor New York, NY 10018.