

THE MILITANT

EDITORIAL

Solidarity with flight attendants fight for a contract!

— PAGE 9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 88/NO. 16

APRIL 22, 2024

Erdogan regime faces widespread election defeats all across Turkey

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The two-decades-long domination of Turkish politics by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was shaken March 31 when his Islamist-based Justice and Development Party (AKP) suffered an unexpected and unprecedented defeat in nationwide municipal elections. For the first time the secular opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) gained the largest share of the vote countrywide and control of all of the five largest cities, including Istanbul.

The vote reflected growing dissatisfaction among working people over the worsening economic crisis, as well as Erdogan's tightening centralized control aimed at stifling opposition. It showed support to actions in defense of the national rights of the Kurds and other public protests.

And it reflects the increasing political volatility today as the capitalist "world order" and its conflicting alliances are shaken by Moscow's war against Ukraine and Tehran-backed Hamas' deadly pogrom against Jews in Israel. These watershed developments accelerated

Continued on page 7

SWP campaigners fan out to put Rachele Fruit on New Jersey ballot

Working-class alternative to Biden-Trump-Kennedy



Militant/Mary Martin

Rachele Fruit, front, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, joined hotel workers, other unionists at UNITE HERE Local 11 picket line at Hotel Figueroa in Los Angeles April 5.

Rachele Fruit campaign wins wide interest from workers

BY JANET POST

The Socialist Workers Party campaign of Rachele Fruit for U.S. president is at the heart of an eight-week international drive by the party and Communist

Continued on page 5

New Jersey, New York SWP candidates explain program

BY ROY LANDERSEN

UNION CITY, N.J. — "Every four years the Socialist Workers Party has a special opportunity to contest with the capitalist rulers' candidates to become president of the United States, the highest office of the most powerful and last world imperialist power," Joanne Kuniansky, the SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from New Jersey,

Continued on page 4

Tehran admits 'strategic role' in deadly Oct. 7 Hamas pogrom

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Coalition Council of Islamic Revolution Forces, one of the key political groups in Iran's parliament, admitted April 3 that Tehran played a "strategic role ... in planning and executing" the Oct. 7 pogrom in Israel, giving the lie to the regime's previous denials.

The announcement came after Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Brig. Gen. Mohammad Reza Zahedi and 15 others, including additional Iranian commanders, Syrian forces and a representative of Hezbollah, were killed when Israeli missiles destroyed the building where they were meeting in Damascus April 1. Zahedi was the central organizer of Tehran's military interventions in Lebanon and Syria. They were planning new terror attacks against Israel.

On Oct. 7 Hamas and Islamic Jihad death squads killed some 1,200 people — mostly Jewish civilians — left more than 5,000 wounded, seized 250 hostages and raped scores of women. It was the largest anti-Jewish pogrom since the Nazi Holocaust.

Tehran officials claimed the massacre was the work of Hamas alone and not coordinated with the Tehran-led "axis of resistance," which includes Lebanon-based Hezbollah, the Houthis in Yemen and Tehran-financed and trained Shiite

Continued on page 6

After bridge collapse, longshore and other workers face devastating crisis



Militant photos

Cranes work to remove collapsed pieces of Francis Scott Key Bridge April 9, after container ship, right, collided with it March 26. Inset, nurse Nicole Hickson, left, told SWP campaigner Arlene Rubinstein her grandmother was woken "at 1:30 a.m. as ground shook from the crash."

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

BALTIMORE — The extent of the social disaster for working people here caused by the March 26 collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge — a result of the bosses' dog-eat-dog drive for profits at all costs — is becoming clearer. The catastrophe took the lives of six construction workers and seriously injured another. They were thrown into the Patapsco River while working the night shift repairing potholes on the bridge. It crumbled after being hit by the Dali, a massive cargo vessel carrying 4,679 loaded containers.

"Yesterday I got a job, today no," crane operator Malcolm Lynch told the

Continued on page 9

'What's wrong with the economy? It's you, not the data,' paper tells workers

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The Joseph Biden administration and liberal media praying for his reelection describe the latest government economic reports at the beginning of April as big improvements for everyone. But

working people, whose experiences are quite different, aren't buying it.

"What's Wrong With the Economy? It's You, Not the Data," an article in the Never-Trump *Wall Street Journal* argued April 4, blaming working people for not grasping how things are getting better. After all, the article asserts, "inflation has moved in the right direction" with "unemployment near its lowest in half a century."

"When it comes to the economy, the vibes are at war with the facts," asserted

Continued on page 6

Court gag orders to shut Trump up are blow to free speech

BY TERRY EVANS

Judge Juan Merchan issued a gag order March 26 in an effort to further silence Donald Trump, President Joseph Biden's main rival among the three main capitalist candidates for the White House.

This assault on free speech is an attempt to rig one of several cases cooked up by Democratic prosecutors and the White House, aimed at jailing Trump and preventing tens of millions from voting for the candidate of their choice.

Continued on page 9

Inside

Ottawa's turn against Israel spurs Jew-hatred in Canada 2

'Woke' constitutional amendments rejected in Ireland 7

— On the picket line, p. 3 —

California nurses: 'We're out here striking for our patients'

Alabama Mercedes-Benz workers file for UAW recognition

Ottawa's turn against Israel spurs Jew-hatred in Canada

BY STEVE PENNER

MONTREAL — After a daylong debate March 19, the Canadian Parliament adopted a motion approving Ottawa's shift away from its longstanding support of Israel's armed forces defending the country from attack.

The motion adopted, proposed by the social democratic New Democratic Party and amended by the governing Liberal Party, called for an end to arms sales to Israel, support for the South African government frame-up charge before the International Court of Justice that Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinians, as well as support for Ottawa funding the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, despite its documented ties to Jew-hating Hamas.

The Bloc Quebecois and the Greens supported the resolution while the Conservatives opposed, it along with three Liberal Members of Parliament.

"Canada is the first G7 country to stop sending weapons to [Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu's extremist government," boasted MP Heather McPherson from the Edmonton New Democratic Party. Six days later Melanie Joly, Canada's minister of foreign affairs, hailed the U.N. Security Council's adoption of a call for a cease-fire in Gaza.

The U.N.'s call isn't conditional on the release of Israeli hostages. Nor does it condemn — or even mention — the murderous Oct. 7 pogrom against Jews in Israel by Hamas.

Katy LeRougetel, Communist League candidate in the upcoming federal by-election in Montreal, condemned Parliament's action. She de-

scribed the decision "as moving Canadian imperialism in lock-step with the Joseph Biden White House, which, while claiming to 'support' Israel, is ratcheting up pressure on the Israeli government to end its military operations aimed at destroying Hamas. The truth is that neither Washington nor Ottawa have ever based their actions on defense of the Jews in Israel, but on doing whatever serves their own imperialist economic and political interests.

"A victory in Israel's planned offensive in Rafah is in the interests of both Palestinians and Jews," LeRougetel said. "Hamas is responsible for the humanitarian crisis and suffering in Gaza. In pursuing its stated aim to kill Jews and destroy Israel, Hamas sets up in hospitals and civilian areas to use the population as human shields."

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs also issued a statement March 19 condemning the House of Commons' vote. The group said it was "concerned the motion will further fuel the increased animosity towards the Jewish community in Canada that has plagued our streets since Hamas' depraved and unprovoked attack that resulted in the barbaric murder of more than 1,200 innocent men, women, and children in Israel and the kidnapping and brutalization of more than 250."

Spike in Jew-hatred

There has been a sharp spike in Jew-hatred across Canada since Oct. 7. Jewish-owned business across the country have been defaced by red paint and pro-Nazi graffiti. Synagogues and Jewish schools have been attacked in



Militant/Tony DiFelicea

Over 1,000 people rally at Toronto City Hall April 7 in protest against Jew-hatred, demand Hamas release Oct. 7 hostages. Rally took place amid sharp increase in Jew-hatred in Canada.

Montreal and elsewhere.

The Hamilton Jewish Film Festival was cancelled March 20 because of threats to the venue, the owners of the facility said. The same day a caricature of Netanyahu, portraying him as a vampire with blood dripping from his hands depicted as claws, echoing historic antisemitic blood libels, was only pulled from the website of the Montreal *La Presse* after a storm of protest.

Hundreds of people rallied here in Montreal March 23 backing the call for an immediate cease-fire and an end to Ottawa's military support for Israel. The call for the action didn't mention Hamas, its Oct. 7 pogrom or the rise of acts of Jew-hatred.

This was the first time a pro-Hamas rally was endorsed by top officials from a number of unions, including the Confederation of National Trade Unions and the Montreal Labour Council of the Quebec Federation of Labour (FTQ). Nonetheless, there were only a couple dozen union flags or banners at the rally.

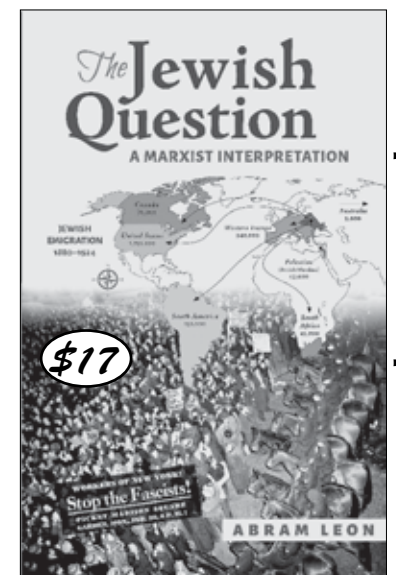
The next day hundreds rallied at the Parliament Building in Toronto to denounce "the surge of Jew-hatred that calls for the complete annihilation of Israel and views Jews in Canada and around the world as legitimate targets," said Canadian Women Against Antisemitism, which called the action.

"I was disgusted beyond belief when I saw my union OPSEU [Ontario Public Service Employees Union],

marching" and "yelling for the genocide of my community and another intifada," marcher Serena Lee-Segal, an occupational therapist, told the *Canadian Jewish News*.

"The large majority of working people are horrified by Hamas' pogrom and many support Israel's right to exist as a refuge for Jews and to defend itself," LeRougetel told the *Militant*.

"Opposing Jew-hatred is a life-and-death question for the labor movement. As the crisis of their system deepens, the ruling capitalist families will turn to fascist forces and Jew-hatred will once again be their banner to attack the unions and working-class political parties, as they did in Italy, Germany, Spain and Portugal in the 1920s, '30s and '40s."



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THE MILITANT

Protest Putin's attacks on immigrants, political rights

After the March 22 attack in Moscow by the reactionary forces of Islamic State, Russian President Vladimir Putin launched attacks on immigrant workers from Central Asia, threatened new assault on Ukraine. The 'Militant' says: Defend immigrant rights, back Ukraine.



Moskva News Agency
Russian police detain Central Asian immigrant workers days after terror attack.

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—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Calif. nurses: 'We're out here striking for our patients'

GILROY, Calif. — Nurses carried out a spirited four-day strike at Santa Clara County hospitals April 2-5, with loud picket lines outside two hospitals in San Jose and one here.

When supporters of the Socialist Workers Party campaign of Rachele Fruit for president joined the picket line in Gilroy — known as the U.S. garlic capital — pickets were waving signs along the country road outside the hospital as cars and trucks honked in support.

At one point a group of hospital workers who aren't on strike, including housekeepers, nurses' assistants and others who are members of Service Employees International Union Local 521, were loudly cheered when they walked out of the hospital and joined the picket line.

The nurses, members of the Registered Nurses Professional Association, voted 97% in favor of the union's first-ever strike. The county had proposed to deal with understaffing by sending nurses to work temporarily in different departments, and even to a different hospital in another city, whether assigned in their specialty or not, and with no notice. Already, some nurses are forced to work temporarily in departments they aren't trained for.

"We're out here for our patients," said Annie Chavez, a nurse at the hospital since 2008. "Having these 'floating' nurses hurts the care we can give."

Tiffany Talerico, a nurse at one of the county hospitals in San Jose who was picketing here, said, "There is a maneuver going on." County administrators tell the media the conflict is over wages, exaggerate what the average nurse makes and point to the \$250 million county budget shortfall. At the same time, they downplay the main issue, understaffing.

Going door to door in San Jose and Gilroy two days after the strike, SWP campaigners urged support for the nurses' fight. We visited the three hospitals and got out issues of the *Militant* that

included articles on their fight. Cafeteria worker Betty Zaragoza and many of the nurses told us of the satisfaction working in a hospital system where a million patients are treated annually whether they have insurance or not. "We're answering a real need," she said. "They are overworking all of us."

— Betsy Stone

Alabama Mercedes-Benz workers file for UAW recognition

ATLANTA — "We feel great," Jim Spitzley, a Mercedes-Benz worker in Vance, Alabama, and veteran fighter for representation by the United Auto Workers, told the *Militant* by phone April 7. "Everyone at work is excited that we filed for the union election. We expect to get a date for the vote soon."

Spitzley and other union supporters filed their petition with the National Labor Relations Board April 5. This union-building move in Vance comes just a few weeks after workers at the Volkswagen plant in Chattanooga, Tennessee, filed to be represented by the UAW there. The union vote at VW will take place April 17-19.

"We passed out a handbill about the filing that morning," said Spitzley, who has worked at Mercedes for 27 years. "Then the company shut down practically the whole plant and read us a memo saying that an election would take place." All hourly employees — some 4,500 workers — will be allowed to vote, he said.

The UAW reports that more than 10,000 autoworkers at 14 nonunion auto companies, mainly in the Southeast, have signed union cards in recent months, following last fall's UAW strikes against the Big Three U.S. auto companies that led to important gains.

"We started signing [union] authorization cards Thanksgiving weekend, and it just stacked up quick," Jeremy Kimbrell, who has worked at Mercedes for 24 years, told National Public Radio. "It was like workers were starving for it, and it took off."

Union supporters at Mercedes-Benz had made several earlier unsuccessful



Militant/Betsy Stone

Striking nurses picket at Santa Clara County hospital in Gilroy, California, April 3. They are protesting bosses' failure to take steps to eliminate understaffing that impacts care for patients.

efforts to have a union election since the plant opened in 1997.

"The UAW has a group of organizers here now to help get ready for the vote, and we have a phone bank going to talk to co-workers about the importance of voting 'yes' in the election," Spitzley said.

"A rapid election will help the vote for the union," he said. "It means the company will have less time to do all their union-busting and anti-labor harassment and propaganda." Workers are trying to end what the union calls the auto bosses' "Alabama discount," by winning higher wages, better working conditions, and dignity and fair treatment on the job.

Union supporters also filed unfair labor practices charges against Mercedes-Benz in late March, calling for an injunction to stop company harassment and disciplinary action against union supporters.

— Susan LaMont

Canadian National Autoport workers vote up new contract

HALIFAX, Nova Scotia — Unifor Local 100 members at Autoport in Eastern Passage voted to accept the latest company offer and return to work. The plant is a wholly owned subsidiary of

Canadian National Railway. The deal provides 3%, 2.5% and 2.5% wage increases over a three-year contract, signing bonuses of 700 Canadian dollars (\$515) now and CA\$500 next January, an extra paid personal day and improvements to their pensions and vacations.

Under the old agreement, hourly wages ranged from CA\$22.30 to CA\$33.06. Autoport workers move about 185,000 vehicles on and off rail cars at Eastern Passage port annually, one of the biggest such operations in North America.

Autoport bosses had fought the strike from the beginning, getting an injunction limiting picketing and using scab labor.

"At first, I didn't want to go on strike, but now we're a lot tighter," Harry Dort told the *Militant*. He said he'd been on strike once before, in a dispute in the herring fisheries in 1984.

"Our members made a really hard decision," said Jennifer Murray, Atlantic regional director for Unifor. "We ratified a deal that was very similar to the tentative agreement" they had rejected earlier.

"I was on what we call the 2-8 a.m. 'feed the raccoons' picket shift, but I met so many great people through the strike," said Heather Johnson, who began working there just days before the strike. Unifor Local 100 President Cory Will said, "We can take pride in knowing we fought back."

The strikers won solidarity locally and nationwide. Kevin Piper, president of International Longshoremen's Association Local 269 here, told the *Militant*, "We respected the picket line for 24 hours, then were served with an injunction for an illegal strike. With authorization from Unifor, we entered the facility as long as we didn't do their work."

Some 1,100 CUPE members in Montreal are in negotiations now, as are ILA dockworkers on the U.S. East Coast and Gulf ports.

Unifor organized solidarity picketing by rail workers in some cities, including in Montreal and Winnipeg. *Militant* worker-correspondents found widespread support for the strike going door to door with the paper in working-class neighborhoods.

— Félix Vincent Ardea,

CN conductor and member of the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



April 26, 1999

The big-business media and U.S. officials would have us believe that workers and farmers in the Balkans have been reduced to weeping Albanian refugees from Kosova, "uncivilized" Serbs seeking "ethnic cleansing," and corpses. Even to those repelled by the brutality that U.S., British and German warplanes are unleashing on the people of Yugoslavia, the message is: these are helpless victims who can only be saved by the "civilized" military forces of NATO led by Washington.

This is false. These war images reflect the contempt the ruling rich have for working people everywhere, especially for those who fight for their rights.

Our fellow toilers in the Balkans earned the undying hatred of the imperialist ruling families by carrying out social revolutions in Yugoslavia and Albania in the 1940s that threw the landlords and capitalists out of power.



April 26, 1974

While refusing to turn over evidence on many of their illegal attacks on the Socialist Workers Party, government defendants have made new admissions and released several new documents in their latest response to the socialists' lawsuit.

The FBI previously claimed that it ceased all wiretapping of the SWP in 1963. However, when asked if there has been surveillance since then, the answer was: "... no plaintiffs have been the subject of direct surveillance." However, "certain plaintiffs were incidentally overheard during surveillance of parties not involved in the present litigation."

The FBI also conceded that it "has received information from sources outside of the Bureau concerning the activities of certain plaintiffs. As a matter of policy, however, the Bureau did not inquire as to the method by which such information was obtained."



April 25, 1949

MAY DAY MANIFESTO OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

War, dictatorship and depression — the unholy trinity of capitalism — today confront American labor with its greatest challenge. The mighty American working class, mobilized in unions 16-million strong, holds in its hands the hope of peace, democracy and plenty for America and the world.

Labor's full power must be mobilized by A CONGRESS OF LABOR, with representation of the rank and file from all unions. This would spearhead the offensive for labor's immediate demands and become the spring-board for a new forward leap toward AN INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTY, BASED ON THE UNIONS, OPPOSED TO ALL CAPITALIST PARTIES AND CANDIDATES!

To all who want a world without fear, poverty, exploitation and war, we appeal: JOIN THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY!

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SWP candidates explain program

Continued from front page

told 24 people at the SWP campaign hall here April 6.

Rachele Fruit, the party's candidate for president, "presents the working-class alternative on all the big political issues today," Kuniansky said. "Millions face unlivable conditions as the world capitalist crisis deepens, assaults on the rights of working people mount, and wars and Jew-hatred spread."

Kuniansky introduced fellow candidates Lea Sherman and Willie Cotton, SWP candidates for Congress from New Jersey and New York respectively. Several at the meeting had been part of a weeklong team presenting the party's program and activity across New Jersey and collecting signatures to get Fruit and Kuniansky on the ballot.

"We've made a strong start toward our goal of collecting 1,700 signatures, more than double the number required to get on the ballot," Kuniansky said. By the end of the first week 648 signatures had been collected for Fruit and 768 for Kuniansky.

"Workers are in the mood to fight," Kuniansky said. She invited participants to join a nationwide day of action by flight attendants at airports around the U.S. and abroad April 11. Rail workers in the U.S. and Canada are discussing ways to defend themselves as the bosses impose punishing and dangerous work schedules, Kuniansky said. She pointed out that 21 Canadian rail workers had been killed and 110 seriously injured on the job in the past 10 years.

Cotton spoke about the toxic derailment in East Palestine, Ohio, last year; a series of crashes and near disasters involving Boeing planes; and the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore after it was hit by a huge container ship whose power had failed. "All of these disasters arose from the capitalists' drive for profit," he said. "That's why the fight for union control of safety and other work conditions is so important."

Neither of the two ruling parties, nor "independent" capitalist candidates like Robert Kennedy Jr., provide any solutions to the crisis workers face, Kuniansky said. "The Democrats fear Donald Trump will win the election. They're trying to bankrupt

and jail him to keep him off the ballot, violating constitutional freedoms along the way.

"Their real target is the workers who elected Trump and who may do so again," Kuniansky said. These are the working people Hillary Clinton derided as "deplorables" in 2016 and Biden calls "semi-fascist MAGA Republicans" today.

The SWP campaign calls for a labor party based on the unions, she said. "A labor party would be able to unite the working class and represent its interests irrespective of language or national differences."

The SWP explains "why working people must take political power as the only way to solve today's crisis of capitalism," Sherman said. She had joined the weeklong campaign team and described the interest campaigners found among workers in discussing the party's defense of Israel as a refuge for Jews and the widespread abhorrence of Hamas' Oct. 7 attack to "murder, rape and terrorize Jews. It was the greatest nightmare the Jewish people had experienced in their lifetimes," she said.

The reactionary assault was backed by Iran's clerical capitalist rulers, she said. Tehran and its allied forces across the Middle East are for "finishing the job Hitler started, what he called 'the Final Solution,' the annihilation of the Jewish people.

"After the 1917 socialist revolution in Russia the forces of reaction were defeated by the Bolsheviks, who brought pogroms against Jews to an end," Sherman said. "Such a revolutionary force needs to be built by the working people of Israel, Palestine and the whole Middle East."

Cotton pointed to the deepening drive by capitalist forces worldwide



Militant/Sara Lobman

Joanne Kuniansky, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from New Jersey, speaks at event in Union City April 6 after successful day of campaigning, petitioning. From left, Willie Cotton, SWP candidate for Congress from New York; Lea Sherman, candidate for Congress from New Jersey.

in response to new conflicts and wars, including the Iranian regime's drive to acquire nuclear weapons and Russian President Vladimir Putin's threats to use Moscow's nuclear arsenal. "The danger of nuclear conflagration is closer now than in decades," he said.

This poses "which class should rule as the question for humanity," he said. "Working people need to take power out of the hands of the capitalist war-makers to ensure that spreading wars and the potential of nuclear conflict are brought to an end."

"The decisive stand of the SWP in the fight against Jew-hatred, as well as the party's defense of Ukrainian sovereignty," Kuniansky concluded, "places it on the front lines at a turning point in world politics."

Many people that SWP members spoke to during the weeklong team

were attracted to the party's campaign.

In Pompton Lakes, in northern New Jersey, Jack Dixon and nurse Kristin Trainor told SWP campaigner Tony Lane that they can't afford to buy a house to start a family. "We have no student debt," Dixon said. "But we don't have money for a down payment, let alone interest rates. We have more education and higher paying jobs than our parents did 40 years ago, but they had union jobs."

Both signed up to put Fruit and Kuniansky on the ballot. Dixon got a subscription to the *Militant*, and the books *Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs and *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* by Jack Barnes.

Sara Lobman, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from New York, contributed to this article.

New rail crew regulation no substitute for union power

BY JOE SWANSON

LINCOLN, Neb. — Under pressure from a series of recent derailments and other rail disasters, including the explosive toxic fire in East Palestine, Ohio, the Federal Railroad Administration adopted April 2 a "Train Crew Size Safety Requirement" that will supposedly maintain two-person crews on most freight routes across the U.S.

Officials of the two largest railroad unions, representing some 60,000 train conductors and engineers, have been lobbying Washington for such a regulation for years and hailed the decision as a victory.

But the fact is the railroad administration's pronouncement offers no real protection from the bosses' profit drive for rail workers and working people who live near the tracks.

"Common sense tells us that large freight trains, some of which can be over 3 miles long, should have at least two crew members on board, and now there's a federal regulation in place to ensure trains are safely staffed," Joseph Biden's transportation secretary, Peter Buttigieg, said at a press conference. He

was accompanied by Federal Railroad Administrator Amit Bose and officials from the SMART-Transportation Division conductors union.

Contrary to the headlines in the capitalist press, however, the ruling does not prohibit engineer-only operation of trains, which the profit-driven rail bosses have been pushing to get for years. It has plenty of loo pholes, allowing most existing one-person operations to continue at regional and short line railroads, and includes a process for approving new ones, like on the six giant Class 1 railroads.

But not to worry. The Federal Railroad Administration says that "each railroad receiving special approval for

Continued on page 5

Socialist Workers Party in 2024 The working-class alternative Rachele Fruit for president Margaret Trowe for vice president

California

Laura Garza, U.S. Senate
Eric Simpson, U.S. Congress

Florida

Laura Anderson, U.S. Senate

Georgia

Lisa Potash, U.S. Congress

Illinois

Naomi Craine, U.S. Congress

Minnesota

Kevin Dwire, U.S. Senate
Gabrielle Prosser, U.S. Congress

New Jersey

Joanne Kuniansky, U.S. Senate
Lea Sherman, U.S. Congress

New York

Sara Lobman, U.S. Senate
Willie Cotton, U.S. Congress

Ohio

John Hawkins, U.S. Senate
Ned Measel, U.S. Congress

Pennsylvania

Ved Dookhun, U.S. Senate
Candace Wagner, U.S. Congress

Texas

Alyson Kennedy, U.S. Senate

Washington, D.C.

James Harris, delegate to Congress

Join the Socialist Workers Party campaign in 2024! Campaign for what you are for, not who you're against!

- I want to endorse Socialist Workers Party candidate Rachele Fruit for president.
- I want to join in campaigning or host a house meeting for the candidates. Please contact me.
- Here is my contribution of \$_____ to help spread the word. (Make checks to Socialist Workers National Campaign)
- Send me a 12-week subscription to the *Militant*, a socialist newsweekly. (\$5 enclosed, checks payable to the *Militant*.)

Send in along with your name, address, phone # and e-mail address to:
Socialist Workers Party 2024 Campaign, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, NY, NY 10018. Tel: 347-871-0282 ✉ Email: socialistworkers2024@gmail.com

Fruit campaign wins interest

Continued from front page

Leagues in Australia, Canada and the U.K. to get out the word about the campaign and the party's program, win 1,350 *Militant* readers, sell 1,350 books by SWP leaders and other revolutionaries and raise \$165,000 for the Militant Fighting Fund.

The *Militant* is the voice of the Fruit campaign.

Fruit joined hundreds of hotel workers fighting for a better contract and their supporters at a UNITE HERE Local 11 picket line in front of the Hotel Figueroa in downtown Los Angeles April 5. Fruit is a hotel worker in Miami and UNITE HERE member.

Politically, the fight against Jew-hatred has been a central focus of the SWP campaign, in continuity with the SWP's political program and activity since its founding and the Bolshevik Revolution led by V.I. Lenin.

"We are becoming known as the socialists who act against Jew-hatred and in defense of Israel's right to exist as a refuge for Jews fleeing persecution," Fruit explains. "The worldwide rise of Jew-hatred since Hamas' Oct. 7 deadly pogrom against Jews in Israel shows the need for a refuge today is not an abstract question. Israel must have the right to defend itself from destruction, the aim of the Iranian regime and all its proxies — Hamas, Hezbollah and the Houthis.

"Our starting point is the class interests and solidarity of workers of all nationalities and religious beliefs, whether in the Middle East — Palestinians, Jews, Arabs, Kurds or otherwise — or working people elsewhere around the world."

There were protests worldwide over the April 6-7 weekend, marking six months since the pogrom and Hamas' kidnapping of over 250 hostages. The actions demanded their immediate release. SWP and Communist League candidates took part in many cities, including New York, Pittsburgh, Dallas,

Montreal, Toronto and elsewhere.

Since Oct. 7 weekly vigils have been organized in Pittsburgh calling for release of the hostages and condemning antisemitic attacks there.

"Vandalism, thuggery, 'shut them down' actions targeting Jews and Israel's right to exist are not about social justice," Candace Wagner, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress, told a March 31 rally attended by 100 people. "They remind us of Hitler's jackbooted fascists, who began by smashing Jewish shop windows, and then proceeded to physically crush the German trade unions and working-class political parties."

Toby Tabachnick, editor of the *Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle*, wrote an article March 28 about Wagner's campaign. It pointed out that Wagner "spoke before the Allegheny County Council in March, urging its members to vote against a resolution calling for Israel to cease its military operation in Gaza."

For a working-class road forward

Katy LeRougetel, Communist League candidate in the upcoming Montreal federal by-election, and campaigner Félix Vincent Ardea met retired auto parts factory worker Ed Baker on his doorstep in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, April 6. They showed him the *Militant* and described how the League had been involved in supporting the Unifor union workers, who just won their 37-day strike against Canadian National Railway-owned Autoport bosses. LeRougetel said working-class solidarity is crucial in today's labor battles.

"I really agree with what you're saying. Keep the change," Baker said, getting a subscription, a copy of *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward* by party leaders Jack Barnes, Mary-Alice Waters and Steve Clark, and contributing \$6.

"The rulers try to take away our confidence in our own capacities," said



Militant/Ikona Gersh

Uber drive Paul Brown, left, gets *Militant* subscription from SWP member Dan Fein April 1 at O'Hare airport. Brown liked idea Fruit raises of building a labor party based on the unions.

LeRougetel, "it's one of their biggest weapons against us. They say, 'who are you, what do you know, anyway?'"

"I just worked for you all my life," Baker said with irony. "I thought maybe it would get better. But now it's going more the way of that guy Hitler?"

"Yes, the rich use Jew-hatred just like the Nazis did, to try to get us to blame the Jews for the problems of capitalism," LeRougetel said. "We have to build unity against Jew-hatred."

They also discussed the fight to defend leaders of the 2022 truckers' Freedom Convoy who are facing draconian charges for opposing government job-killing COVID policies.

"Exactly, they're taking away freedom of speech," said Baker. "Finally someone sensible, thanks for stopping by. You made my day."

In Florida, Laura Anderson, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from that state, campaigned with supporters March 30 in North Miami. A Haitian worker, Louis Wilbert, talked with Anderson about the dire conditions and political crisis in Haiti today and asked her what people here can do about it.

"A revolutionary leadership must be forged to organize workers in our millions to take political power from the

capitalist class and into our own hands — and use that power to defend workers and farmers around the world," said Anderson. Wilbert bought *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* by Barnes along with a subscription.

Then Anderson met a young couple from Honduras — Naftali, a cleaner and home care worker, and her husband, a construction worker. "It seems like nothing works in this country, sometimes," said Naftali.

"The system here is not broken," Anderson responded. "Capitalism is based on the exploitation of the working class and there is no letup in the bosses' offensive.

"The only check on their offensive against the working class is our determination to fight back," she said. The couple subscribed to the paper and bought *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Barnes and *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us*.

To campaign for Rachele Fruit and other SWP and Communist League candidates, contact the office near you on page 8. Donations to the fund can be made out to the *Militant* and sent to 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018 or online at themilitant.com.

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

March 9-May 7 (week four)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	Fund received
UNITED STATES						
Atlanta	55	25	55	25	\$9,500	\$3,599
Chicago	100	32	100	35	\$14,000	\$4,627
Cincinnati	50	13	50	20	\$5,000	\$1,278
Dallas-Ft. Worth	60	31	60	29	\$5,000	\$2,275
Lincoln	15	7	15	10	\$500	\$404
Los Angeles*	120	52	120	41	\$16,000	\$1,465
Miami	35	11	35	21	\$5,000	\$1,600
Minneapolis	70	23	70	21	\$5,500	\$1,845
N. New Jersey	75	25	75	23	\$7,500	\$3,580
New York	100	48	100	44	\$20,500	\$8,977
Oakland	80	46	80	40	\$15,500	\$8,028
Philadelphia	55	21	55	31	\$6,000	\$2,331
Pittsburgh	45	19	45	16	\$6,000	\$2,268
Seattle	70	31	70	23	\$14,500	\$4,148
Washington	60	22	60	18	\$5,000	\$1,310
Other	0	1	0	0	\$0	\$250
Total U.S.	990	407	990	397	\$135,500	\$47,985
Prisoners		55				
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	45	22	45	14	\$2,560	\$750
Manchester	35	21	35	18	\$1,200	\$165
Total U.K.	80	43	80	32	\$3,760	\$915
Canada	90	51	110	52	\$12,150	\$7,730
Australia	30	15	30	20	\$5,000	\$1,750
Total	1,190	571	1,210	501	\$156,410	\$58,380
SHOULD BE	1,350	675	1,350	675	\$165,000	\$82,500
* Raised goal						

Fight for larger rail crews is job for the unions

Continued from page 4
a one-person train crew operation" must "submit to FRA an annual report summarizing the safety of the operation."

Relying on "pro-labor" regulations from Democratic "friends of labor" administrations tie workers and our unions to the capitalist state. It undercuts the only power workers really have, our ability to come together and organize independently of the bosses and their parties to use union power to fight for our own class interests.

In December 2022 Biden, who promotes himself as the "most pro-union president in American history," pushed bipartisan legislation through Congress that imposed a contract on 115,000 rail workers who had in their majority voted against it and banned union strike action.

"The FRA has admitted that freight train length has

increased up to nearly 3 miles in length, making conditions more dangerous. But there is nothing in the FRA's 223-page ruling that compels the railroads to run shorter length trains that include railroad crew safeguards on the rear of the train," Lance Anton, a 12-year SMART-TD conductor in the Burlington Northern's Lincoln yard, said. "Currently there are 18 conductors furloughed here, and rail bosses continue to cut mechanical workers who inspect and repair railroad equipment.

"We need to use our unions to fight for a limit of 50 cars on a train and a crew of four," Anton said, "two on the head end and two on the rear end."

But shorter trains and more crew members alone won't end derailments, he said. "Mechanical workers I know are flabbergasted on how the railroads can pretend to maintain safe equipment when the workers responsible have been cut to the bone. Railroad unions need to fight for the return of tens of thousands of furloughed conductors, train engineers, mechanical and track workers and hire more. Railroad workers know another East Palestine disaster or worse is coming. The only question is when, as the rail bosses' relentless drive for profits endangers us all."

A policy group for the rail bosses, the Association of American Railroads, denounced the Federal Railroad Administration ruling, claiming there is a "lack of evidence connecting crew size to rail safety."

For decades, the rail bosses have been on a drive to downsize crews to boost profits. Crew sizes have been systematically slashed, from a conductor and two brakemen, along with an engineer, to a two-person crew today, an engineer and conductor.

Rail workers need to use their power as the ones who make the trains run to advance safety on the job and for those who live near rail tracks.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

GEORGIA

Atlanta
Biden Says the Economy's Great, Workers Face a Different Reality. Speaker: Lisa Potash, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress. Sun., April 21, 3 p.m. Donation: \$5. 777 Cleveland Ave. SW Suite 103. Tel.: (678) 528-7828.

Tehran admits role in pogrom

Continued from front page militias in Syria and Iraq.

The Joseph Biden administration — looking to cut a new deal with Tehran — also absolved Tehran of responsibility, asserting the Iranian regime was caught by surprise by the Hamas assault.

But as the *Militant* pointed out from the start, Tehran was directly involved in planning and carrying out the pogrom.

Since Oct. 7, the Iranian government's proxies have stepped up attacks on Israel. Hezbollah missile strikes have forced the evacuation of 60,000 from Israel's northern border. Houthi attacks have virtually stopped maritime traffic in the Red Sea. And Tehran-armed militias in Iraq and Syria have launched unsuccessful drone attacks on Israel.

Six months after the Oct. 7 assault, Hamas, Islamic Jihad and their allies still hold half of the hostages, or the bodies of those they've killed. The youngest is Kfir Bibas, who turned 1 year old in captivity Jan. 18. He was kidnapped by Hamas along with his mother and 4-year-old brother Ariel. The oldest is Iraq-born Shlomo Mansour, who turned 86 in March.

Tehran fears working people of Iran

While the reactionary bourgeois clerical regime in Tehran foments attacks by its proxies, it has sought to avoid a direct confrontation with Israel itself because it fears opposition

from working people inside Iran.

At a soccer game in Tehran April 7, sports officials announced a minute of silence for the Revolutionary Guard commanders killed in Syria. Instead, fans jeered, blew horns and shouted the entire time.

Working people in Iran know that Hamas and the other members of Tehran's "axis of resistance" are cut from the same cloth as the regime there. Since 2018 workers of all nationalities have joined a series of protests across Iran as opposition has mounted to the regime, its assaults on living standards, its restrictions on the rights of women and oppressed nationalities, like the Kurds, and its military interventions abroad.

Biden pushes for cease-fire

The Biden administration is taking advantage of the killing of seven volunteers from World Central Kitchen in Gaza by Israeli drone strikes April 2 to step up pressure on Israel to stand down and accept an immediate cease-fire.

Israel Defense Forces Chief of Staff Herzi Halevi apologized, saying the deaths were a "grave mistake." The army command fired two commanding officers and reprimanded several others. The IDF said that the officers violated standing "orders and open-fire regulations."

President Biden, echoed by the *New York Times* and other liberal press,



Palestinian Muslims praying peacefully at Al-Aqsa Mosque during month of Ramadan, including on last day April 5, above, rejecting Hamas' call for confrontations against Israel.

charged that Israel has "not done enough to protect civilians," giving a boost to the anti-Israel campaign by Hamas apologists among the middle-class left worldwide.

Biden won't mention the Aug. 29, 2022, strike by U.S. drones in Kabul, Afghanistan, that killed 10 civilians — including an aid worker and seven children, or other atrocities by U.S. imperialist forces worldwide. This is the way capitalist armies function in war time.

Hamas is responsible for the current war. It could end it immediately by releasing all the hostages, leaving the tunnels and handing over those responsible for the Oct. 7 pogrom.

Hamas' goals have never been secret. Its military leader, Yahya Sinwar, made this clear in a message to a September 2021 conference, "Promise of the Hereafter — Post-Liberation Palestine."

Sinwar said Hamas had been preparing for years "on the ground and in its depths" for the "full liberation of Palestine from the sea to the river."

The final declaration issued by the conference laid out what Hamas would do if it won. "Settlers" — their code word for Jews — who resist "must be killed."

"Educated Jews and experts in the areas of medicine, engineering, technology, and civilian and military industry ... should not be allowed to leave," it said, because they acquired their knowledge "while living in our land and enjoying its bounty." The document does not spell out what they plan to do with these Jews once their "expertise" is no longer needed.

Hamas is the main obstacle workers in Gaza face to join with other workers, including Jews, to fight for their own class interests. Since taking over in 2007, the Islamist outfit broke strikes by unions, killed its political rivals in Fatah, restricted women's rights and has run roughshod over the population.

Hamas' Al-Aqsa TV reported that its police arrested six people from the Palestinian Authority March 30, claiming they were "suspicious." According to the Palestine Authority, these individuals were coordinating aid to Gaza. Five of the six remain in captivity.

'What's wrong with the economy? It's you, not the data'

Continued from front page

the *Journal*. "The vibes seem symptomatic of a broader pessimism disconnected from the data."

But their statistics are a scam. This "data" is sharply class divided. The wealthy rulers and their upper-middle-class allies may be doing well, skewing the government's "average" wage and job figures, but the working class is not.

Look at David Calhoun, the retiring CEO of Boeing, who has been through a widely publicized rough patch recently. The company decided to give him a big stock bonus as he was on the way out, bringing his 2023 salary to \$32.8 million, a big jump from the year before, when he only got \$22.6 million.

But for workers, real earnings have declined about \$2,000 since 2020, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports.

And while the 3.2% annual inflation rate in February was slower than a year earlier, prices are still rising, especially on necessities working families have to buy. Prices for hundreds of grocery items have gone up more than 50% since 2019, and they're not coming down. This affects us every time we go to the supermarket and try to pay our rent or mortgage.

A \$100 grocery list in 2019 costs \$137 today, another article in the same issue of the *Journal* admitted. These increases include: eggs, up 63%; sugar, 53%; beef, 51%; fruit snacks, 77%; sandwich bread, 34%; sports drinks, 80%; and more.

New schemes to raise prices

Bosses have been working overtime to come up with other schemes to raise prices and boost profits. There's "shrinkflation," where you pay the same price to buy ever-smaller packages of food, like yogurt, breakfast cereal and lots more.

There's a new scheme promoted by "behavioral economists" called "price partitioning." It lures you in with a low initial price, which is then followed by high-priced additional items that you have to get to use your new item. For example, you rent a hotel room at a rock-bottom price, only to find out they tack on a bunch of additional fees. Lured by cheap prices for a printer, you end up with having to buy wildly expensive ink cartridges. There are plenty of similar examples.

The simple fact of the matter is the government's inflation figures are inaccurate. A recent study by the National Bureau of Economic Research concluded that the way the consumer price index is calculated today, as compared to the methods used in the 1980s, systematically underestimates the true level of inflation.

One example: "Pre-1983, mortgage costs were in the CPI, as were car payments pre-1998," Larry Summers, treasury secretary under President Bill Clinton, wrote. "Now price indexes do not include borrowing costs."

Increasing numbers of workers have to depend on their credit cards to cover rising expenses. Interest rates on monthly unpaid balances doubled from 2013 to 2023, to over 20% a year. In addition, some are now outrageously higher, with Lowe's hitting 31.99%.

"If we measured inflation as we did in the 1970s," the *New York Sun* wrote March 29 commenting on the recent study, "the inflation that started in 2021 would have peaked at 18 percent — double its reported peak. That's higher than the worst of the 1970s and 1980s. Inflation's current annual rate would be about 8 percent."

that 303,000 jobs were added in March. But nearly three-quarters were in lower-paid or part-time work in hotels, restaurants, health care and low-level government jobs. Better jobs, like in manufacturing, contracted for the sixth straight month in March.

Bosses lay off workers

A growing number of plants, including John Deere & Co., Whirlpool and 3M, are laying off workers. Tyson Foods in March said it was closing its pork-packing plant in Perry, Iowa, eliminating over 1,200 jobs. John Deere announced it was booting out 150 workers at its factory in nearby Ankeny.

Bosses at many other factories are cutting back or have frozen hiring, looking to cut their workforce through attrition. Their goal is to increase profits through speeding up production on the backs of the remaining workers. In February factory work fell to a record low 8.2% of jobs in the U.S.

Since late 2022 factories have accounted on average for less than 1% of all jobs added each month.

There's a growing number of other companies that have announced job cuts this year. This includes UPS, with plans to cut 12,000 jobs; Stelantis, 400 jobs; Amazon and Google are each laying off hundreds of workers; Macy's, 2,350 job cuts; Sony, 900 workers to be laid off; Microsoft, 1,900; PayPal, 2,000; Expedia, about 1,500 people; and the list goes on.

In California a new state law raised wages of fast-food workers in April to \$20 an hour. In response, bosses, particularly at pizza joints, began laying off workers and reducing hours for those left. Over 725,000 workers in California had been employed in fast food.

Erdogan regime faces widespread election defeats in Turkey

Continued from front page

ate the world capitalist crisis, as ruling classes everywhere look to protect their national interests at all costs.

Turkey touches on both conflicts, geographically straddling Europe and Asia as well as the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Turkey is a member of the U.S.-led NATO alliance while courting Moscow, Beijing and Tehran, all adversaries of Washington. With a foot in both camps, Erdogan tries to advance Turkish capitalist interests and his own power.

Erdogan has taken steps to mend relations with regional powers, from Egypt to Saudi Arabia, while backing off from supporting the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist groups. He also sought to establish warmer relations with Israel, but after Oct. 7 he demagogically outdid neighboring Arab regimes in supporting Hamas, calling the murderous Jew-hating outfit a "liberation" group.

Attacking the Kurdish people's decades-long fight for national rights in the name of fighting "terrorism" has long been a cornerstone of Erdogan's domestic and foreign policy. The Kurds are an oppressed nationality of 30 million spread across Turkey, Iraq and Syria. The Turkish and other capitalist rulers in the region have brutally suppressed the Kurds' struggle for self-determination.

In the national elections for mayors and local council seats, the CHP won in 36 of Turkey's 81 provinces and made inroads into other strongholds of the governing AKP. Only 10 months earlier, Erdogan had defeated the opposition coalition candidate in a knife-edge presidential race.

The biggest victory for the opposition was retaining power in Istanbul, Turkey's largest city with its 16 million people and position as the country's economic powerhouse. Ekrem Imamoglu, the incumbent CHP mayor, gained over a million more votes than the AKP challenger, despite heavy backing from Erdogan.

"The period of one-man rule is over today," Imamoglu, a 53-year-old former real estate developer, announced to cheering crowds. The social democratic politician said,



Thousands of Kurdish national rights supporters rally in Van, in eastern Turkey, April 5. Protests forced seating of Kurdish opposition candidate Erdogan tried to bar from office.

"Women, young people, Kurds, Christians, Syrians, Jews and people of all beliefs have won!"

The vote took place as the country's ongoing economic crisis deepened. Food prices shot up by 78% in one year as unemployment spread. The value of the Turkish lira has plummeted by more than 80% over the past five years. Although Erdogan changed finance ministers and aggressively raised inter-

est rates from 8.5% a year ago to 50% now, conditions continued to worsen for working people across the country.

Kurd protests back election victory

In the Kurdish region, the pro-Kurdish People's Equality and Democracy Party (DEM) won in a landslide in all 13 districts of the eastern province of Van. It claimed wins in several cities in the southeast, notably in Diyarbakir, the

'Woke' constitutional amendments rejected in Ireland

BY TONY HUNT

LONDON — An attempt by Ireland's capitalist rulers to impose their values on working people blew up in their faces March 8 when two constitutional amendments, backed by the country's main capitalist parties, were soundly defeated by large margins in a referendum.

Prime Minister Leo Varadkar, who claimed the changes were needed to get rid of "old fashioned language about women in the home," resigned March 20 after the defeat.

On one level the proposed changes sought to reflect widely held views about the family today. One amendment sought to expand the definition of families from those based on marriage to include "other durable relationships."

The second amendment would have eliminated the references to "woman," "women" and "mothers" in sections of the Constitution. It deleted the role of women and mothers in "the home" that "gives to the State a support without which the common good cannot be achieved." It would also have deleted a section requiring the state "to ensure that mothers shall not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of their duties in the home."

A new article was to have read, "The State recognizes that the provision of care, by members of a family to one another by reason of the bonds that exist among them, gives to Society a support without which the common good cannot be achieved, and shall strive to support such provision."

The Irish Constitution was adopted in 1937 and reflected the views of the capitalist class at the time and the dominance of the Catholic Church. Since then millions of women have entered the workforce, gained greater economic

independence, and attitudes among women and men have been transformed, strengthening the working class. In 1995 divorce was legalized and in 2018 a ban on abortion was lifted.

The attempt to remove the words "women" and "mothers," however, has another purpose. It is aimed at blurring over the fact that there are two sexes, men and women. That view is in line with unscientific notions pushed by meritocratic middle-class layers that the terms "men" and "women" are somehow regressive. These views are rampant in liberal circles today.

Moreover, the campaign for the amendments covered over the actual conditions that exist for workers under capitalism. Care for the young, elderly and sick *does* fall disproportionately on women, and the proposed changes did nothing to address this class reality.

The amendments were not aimed at advancing the fight for women's rights, leaving untouched the impact today's sharpening crisis has on workers in Ireland, as in the rest of the capitalist world. The lack of affordable housing, child care and health care, along with the employers' assaults on wages and conditions, makes it ever harder for women and all workers to raise a family.

Rents and mortgages have risen so much that half a million 18 to 34 year olds in the Republic of Ireland — out of a total population of just over 5 million — still live with their parents.

For workers with children, infant and child care fees are "crippling," according to state TV broadcaster RTE. Hospitals are dangerously overcrowded, a report by the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation said last year, with large numbers of patients admitted without a bed. Hundreds of medical procedures are being cancelled daily.

largest Kurdish-majority city in Turkey.

In the city of Van, local electoral authorities initially annulled the strong mayoral victory by Abdullah Zeydan. He had won over 55% of the vote, but, they said, he had a prior conviction on terrorism charges for supporting Kurdish rights so they handed the post to Erdogan's candidate, who got only 27% of the vote.

Despite a ban on street demonstrations, the city erupted in mass protests. Pro-Zeydan actions also took place in several other cities around the country, including Istanbul and Amed, for three days. Turkish police tried to put them down, firing tear gas and making 340 arrests.

Zeydan has a history of fighting for his right to run and to take office. In 2015 he was elected on a pro-Kurdish ticket, but was imprisoned by the regime the following year. He remained in jail until January 2023, charged with criticizing Turkish air attacks against the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party.

Ozgur Ozel, a national leader of the opposition CHP, slammed the decision to block Zeydan's victory as an "ambush against the will" of the people of Van.

As the protests spread, gaining support across the opposition, Turkey's Supreme Election Council intervened and reinstated Zeydan as Van's mayor. The protests turned into celebrations.

"We kept mná [Irish for women] in the law," reads a celebratory banner in a photo posted online by Women's Space Ireland after the amendments' defeat.


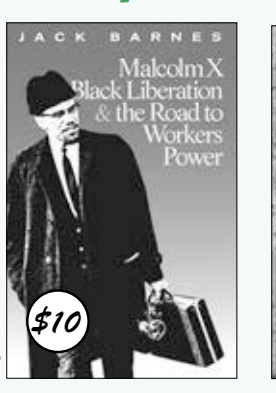


In addition to the many working-class women and men who are all too familiar with the real challenges facing their families today, the Catholic Church also opposed the amendments.

The Irish Constitution, like all bourgeois constitutions, codifies how the capitalist rulers exercise their class dictatorship. Unlike the U.S. Constitution, which contains free speech and other rights won in revolutionary struggles, the Irish Constitution doesn't. These protections from the rulers' state serve workers' interests far better than "progressive" proclamations with no protection from state interference.

"The fight for women's rights is inseparable from efforts to build the labor movement," Pamela Holmes, the Communist League parliamentary candidate for Tottenham in the U.K.'s upcoming general election, told the *Militant*. Her campaign calls for the end of British rule in Northern Ireland and for Ireland's unification. She pointed to the number of trade union fights and union-organizing efforts in both Northern Ireland and the Republic in the south, and in the U.K.

"It will be workers, female and male, acting independently of the bosses who will be key to the struggle for women's rights," Holmes said. "Advancing that struggle requires a union-led fight for jobs with wages and conditions that are necessary for families to live rather than get torn apart. The CL calls for a government-funded program of public works, to provide jobs at union-scale wages, to build the things working people need: housing, child care centers, hospitals and more."

Book specials for Militant subscribers

Also on special for subscribers:

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How Marxists in the US helped lead in overthrow of slavery

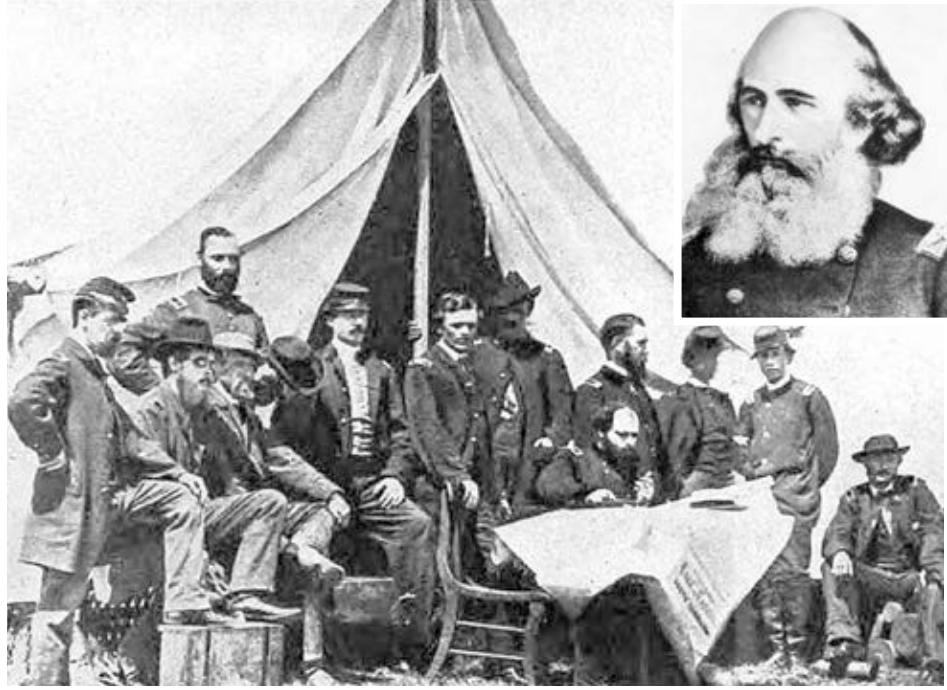
Revolutionary Continuity: The Early Years 1848-1917 by Farrell Dobbs is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for April. This is the first of two volumes covering class struggles and political battles behind the development of a Marxist leadership in the U.S. As a young leader of the Minneapolis Teamsters in the 1930s, Dobbs joined what became the Socialist Workers Party. He was SWP national secretary from 1953 to 1972 and the party's presidential candidate four times.

This volume covers the founding of the international communist movement by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in 1848 and its expansion in the U.S. Dobbs wrote that the international "championed the war to defeat the Confederacy in the United States, projecting the need to transform it into a revolutionary war to emancipate the slaves and crush the slaveholding system and planter class." The excerpt below is from Chapter 2, "Indigenous Origins." Copyright © 1980 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FARRELL DOBBS

In 1852 Joseph Weydemeyer organized the Proletarian League, based on German-American socialists in New York, and began the systematic distribution of Marx's writings in German. Under his leadership the



Joseph Weydemeyer, inset, close collaborator of Karl Marx, served as officer in Union Army, like those, above, during Civil War. Marx hailed President Abraham Lincoln for his reelection in 1864, saying that politically it was "the triumphal war-cry" of "Death to Slavery."

league sought to deepen labor's grasp of class politics. Struggles conducted by the trade unions over immediate issues on the job, these Marxists explained, should be accompanied by independent political action. Generalized demands reflecting the needs of the entire working class could in that way be incorporated into a broad program, and the many local struggles could be raised to a higher plane in the form of political confrontations between the workers and the capitalists nationally. In taking this course labor would of necessity back all victims of capitalist exploitation and oppression, seeking to win them as political allies. But the movement could not be allowed to fall into the hands of petty-bourgeois peddlers of social nostrums. Leadership of anticapitalist political action had at all times to be assumed by the workers and for that purpose they, as a class, had to build their own mass party. ...

After a time Weydemeyer moved to the Chicago-Milwaukee area, where he again took up political work. Friedrich Sorge, another German immigrant, assumed leadership of the eastern socialist movement. In 1857 Sorge reorganized the former cadres of the Proletarian League as the Communist Club of New York.

The new group continued socialist propaganda in the labor move-

ment along the lines initiated earlier by Weydemeyer. But anticipating the coming showdown, its activities — like those of other Marxists scattered around the country — began to focus more and more on the abolitionist fight against enslavement of Blacks. Then, in 1861, the antagonisms between the capitalist and planter classes erupted into civil war. Recognizing the progressive character of the bourgeois "free-labor" struggle against the slave system, followers of Marx responded to President Abraham Lincoln's call to arms. Thereafter the socialists centered their activity on participating as Union Army soldiers in the military side of the war, which caused their work in the labor movement to dwindle for an extended period.

Crushing the slavocracy in 1865 brought the capitalist class definitive control over the nation. A general recasting of governmental policies and social institutions followed, so as to bring them into full conformity with bourgeois needs. That cleared the way for qualitative leaps in machine production, railroad construction, etc., already accelerated by the Civil War. Huge concentrations of capital were amassed to finance large-scale enterprises. Big corporations came into existence. Giant trusts were formed by industrial and banking combines in moves to establish mo-

nopolies. This trend soon produced a bumper crop of multimillionaires who fattened on harsh exploitation of wage-labor and wanton depredation of national resources. These plutocrats became the real power behind the bourgeois-democratic governmental facade, and they dealt brutally with all who resisted their ruthless methods of coining superprofits.

Expansion of the factory system also led to transformation of the working class. Unskilled laborers serving as appendages of machines became an increasingly larger section of the class and the weight of the skilled workers declined proportionately. As these contrasting trends revealed, wage-labor was becoming substantially proletarianized. This signified that — in terms of objective developments — the country was entering a new phase. Capitalism, which had just triumphed over the planter aristocracy and which was making fewer and fewer compromises with the independent producers, was already beginning to create "its own gravediggers."

This period also saw the definitive end to a progressive role for any wing of the bourgeoisie or its political parties.

By 1877, radical reconstruction had gone down to bloody defeat, and not only Afro-Americans but the entire working class had suffered the worst setback in its history. The defeat was engineered by the dominant sectors of the industrial ruling class, who were incapable of carrying through a radical land reform in the old Confederacy and rightly feared the rise of a united working class in which Black and white artisans and industrial workers would come together as a powerful oppositional force, allied with free working farmers.

The rural poor and working class were forcibly divided along color lines. The value of labor power was driven down and class solidarity crippled. Jim Crow, the system of extensive segregation, was legalized. Racism was spread at an accelerated pace throughout the entire United States. The ideological basis for imperialist expansion was laid. All the conditions were created for the forging of the new Afro-American oppressed nationality.

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8

The Militant April 22, 2024

Solidarity with flight attendants fight!

The Association of Flight Attendants union called protests at nearly 20 airports in the United States, Guam and the United Kingdom for April 11. It's one of many protests the three flight attendants' unions have called in their hard-fought battle to win new contracts, and it won't be the last.

Working people everywhere should follow this fight — the *Militant* is a good place to start — to help get out the word and build support for their picket lines. The contracts in dispute cover two-thirds of union flight attendants in the U.S., some 100,000 workers.

The three unions involved are the AFA, representing attendants at some 20 airlines; the Association of Professional Flight Attendants at American Airlines; and the Transport Workers Union at Southwest, JetBlue and Allegiant.

Flight attendants face similar conditions and are fighting for the same things that millions of workers need — livable work schedules, an end to divisive multitier wages, pay high enough to raise a family, decent work conditions and job safety.

The airline bosses want you to think that working as a flight attendant is glamorous, easy and high-paying. Talk to a flight attendant and you'll rapidly find out the reality is much different.

Most flight attendants start working when passengers begin boarding, helping to stow luggage, find seats and take orders, but they don't start getting paid until the plane door closes. And they have to keep working, for no pay, when passengers disembark after the plane lands. The bosses claim that the

“high” pay they already get is compensation enough.

Flight attendants at Alaska Airlines showed the *Seattle Times* in January how many workers with less than 10 years' seniority barely get by on their wages. Many live in overcrowded apartments with other attendants, some end up applying for food stamps.

And many airlines are running flights today with fewer crew members than in the past, the airline equivalent of speedup, to boost profits.

Shifting schedules, unpredictable unpaid layovers, and flight changes make life even more challenging. Flight attendants need more say so they can have the time they need to spend with family, to participate in union activities, to join together in political activity to fight for a better future.

Airline industry net profits are expected to hit \$25.7 billion in 2024. But the capitalist families that own the airlines complain that's only a 2.6% profit margin. They want more. As the worldwide crisis of capitalism deepens, the bosses will push to take it out of the sweat and blood of working people.

Winning solidarity for the flight attendants will put the unions in a stronger position to support workers at Volkswagen in Tennessee and Mercedes-Benz in Alabama fighting for union recognition; to boost the fight by workers at Molson Coors in Fort Worth, Texas, who have been on strike since March 17; and many more labor battles to come.

“An injury to one is an injury to all” isn't just a slogan, but a crucial part of the road forward for the working class.

After bridge collapse

Continued from front page

Militant as he was looking at that day's board April 9 showing job offers for International Longshoremen's Association Local 333 members. “No job, no paycheck.” He pointed to the job board on the wall, which showed only one opening on the screen.

Some 2,400 members of the ILA work on the Baltimore docks, loading and unloading cargo, driving forklifts, operating cranes and other jobs. They're paid by the day and building up hours is how they get more seniority, better jobs and higher pay.

While the port is blockaded by the dead ship and massive bridge debris, some will get temporary work while 1,200 others will get a lump-sum payment of between one- and four-weeks' wages taken from six months vacation pay they've accrued. No one knows for certain when they'll be able to work again. Government officials have said it could be months before ships can safely transit the port again.

There are over 15,000 workers at the port. Another 140,000 jobs in the area depend on its functioning.

The dangers of further disasters like this were driven home April 5 when another massive container ship, the APL Qingdao, lost propulsion power in the Kill Van Kull shipping lane near the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge in New York. Luckily it was escorted by three tugboats at the time, and three more responded to a call for help. The six tugs got the boat to a safe place to anchor just north of the bridge.

The 21-member crew of the Dali, 20 from India and one from Sri Lanka, are stuck on the boat indefinitely. Even as cargo ships have doubled and tripled in size, the bosses have cut crew size.

At 123,881 tons, the Dali is ranked as a medium-sized ocean vessel compared to the world's largest container ships, which can carry 24,000 containers.

Big impact on working people

James Harris, Socialist Workers Party candidate for District of Columbia delegate to Congress, visited and expressed solidarity with workers in Dundalk, near the port. The bridge's collapse “is a disaster that did not have to happen,” Harris explains in an April 1 campaign statement he handed out. “It happened before, to the same bridge in 1980 when the Blue Nagoya drifted into it. The difference was that ship was much smaller. The Dali was three times as big. Nothing was done to reinforce the bridge or to prevent this from happening again.”

Earlier in the week Harris visited the Owls Corner Cafe, a Puerto Rican restaurant that has been organizing solidarity for cook Isabel Franco, whose husband, Jose Mynor Lopez, worked on the bridge that night and didn't survive. “The restaurant was closed, but owner Lilly Ordoñez told us she is raising funds for the Franco and Lopez family,” Harris said.

The Coast Guard has ended the search for his body, along with those of two others whose bodies haven't been found.

Socialist Workers Party campaigners, supporters of Harris and Rachele Fruit for U.S. president, returned to talk to workers on their doorsteps. We got a hearing when we pointed to Fruit's demand for workers control of production, organized by the unions.

“My bills outweigh my income. I have good credit, but the interest is 30%,” lab worker Caleche Arrington said as she let SWP campaigner Glova Scott into her home. “I can only imagine what workers at the port are facing — on top of everything else.” She subscribed to the *Militant* and got *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward*.

“Thousands are waking up to the reality of what this means for their livelihoods and their families,” Delores DeLibera told us. “But why does your party say it's ‘capitalist greed?’”

“The same capitalists who made billions from the bridge's faulty construction throughout its lifespan didn't care about what the impact might be on working people. They don't care about us. They exist for profits,” this *Militant* worker-correspondent replied.

“Well, from that point of view, a lot of the world's problems are because of capitalist greed,” DeLibera said. She bought a copy of *Are They Rich Because They're Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning under Capitalism* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes.

Arrin Hawkins contributed to this article.

Gag orders on Trump are blow to free speech

Continued from front page

The factional frenzy against Trump is led by the Democrats, who fear their candidate can't win by defending his record. It also deals blows to constitutional freedoms won during the First and Second American Revolutions and in working-class battles since. These rights provide vital protection from government interference into union and political activity that workers need and use today, and will need even more in sharper class battles to come.

Merchan's gag order came in the case brought by New York City District Attorney Alvin Bragg. His campaign for DA was built on promises he was the best man to bring Trump down. His boast that “I have sued Trump over 100 times,” isn't true.

After his election, Bragg worked with a group of prosecutors, two of whom had been part of former FBI Director Robert Mueller's efforts to frame up and impeach Trump for collusion with Moscow. Bragg also tried to come up with a case against the former president for business fraud.

When Bragg ultimately decided not to take the “business fraud” case further, it was picked up by State Attorney General Letitia James, who is now using it to prosecute Trump.

Bragg moved his drive against Trump to the hush money case. He accuses the presidential candidate of falsifying business records — a few checks and ledger entries he signed — to conceal hush money payments to Stephanie Clifford. Clifford, also known as Stormy Daniels, says she had a brief relationship with Trump many years ago that he denies.

Out of this, Bragg is trying to concoct a felony charge, accusing Trump of “conspiring to corrupt a presidential election and then lying in New York business records to cover it up.”

Judge gags presidential candidate

Merchan banned Trump from making comments about witnesses in the case, including Clifford and former Trump lawyer Michael Cohen; prosecutors other than Bragg; the judge and his family; and prospective jurors. In an attempt to justify the ruling, the judge claims comments Trump made in other legal cases brought by the Democrats were “threatening, inflammatory, denigrating.” Such all-embracing accusations could easily be used to suppress the speech of any opponents of government policy.

On April 1 Merchan extended the gag to block

Trump from making comments that expose Merchan's family's deep ties to the Democratic Party.

The judge is a registered Democrat and his daughter, Loren Merchan, is president of a Chicago-based consultancy business called Authentic Campaigns. Both Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris are clients of her company. Loren Merchan also worked as “director of digital persuasion” for Harris' failed bid for the Democratic nomination in 2020. Trump's lawyers say Merchan should recuse himself from the case.

The gag order denies presidential candidate Trump the right to comment on political opponents of his campaign. Trump appealed the order April 8.

Claim Trump mixed up in insurrection

In an April 3 order, the judge denied Trump's request for a delay while the Supreme Court considers Trump's claim in another case that he has immunity from prosecution in many instances because he was president. The decision in that case, brought by special counsel Jack Smith, could void this prosecution.

Merchan repeatedly calls Smith's case the “Federal Insurrection Matter.” But Trump faces no charge of insurrection in this case, or any other. Nor do any of the 1,350 people charged in connection with the Jan. 6 melee at the Capitol. Smith charges Trump with obstruction and fraud, targeting what he said at a public rally where he urged people to protest peacefully on Jan. 6.

Despite a three-year Justice Department investigation, no one has come up with any credible evidence that Trump orchestrated an insurrection. He was specifically found not guilty of that charge by the Senate in 2021, during one of the Democrats' failed impeachment attempts.

The capitalist rulers have a long record of using the federal Insurrection Act to attack the labor movement.

President Rutherford Hayes invoked the act in 1877 to use federal troops to put down a nationwide strike by rail workers; Grover Cleveland did the same in 1894 to break the Pullman strike; and Woodrow Wilson invoked it in 1914 to send army units against striking coal miners after company thugs and state troops had massacred 21 miners and family members in Ludlow, Colorado, in 1914.

The history of working-class struggle shows that freedoms won by working people face continual threat from the capitalist rulers. Safeguarding constitutional protections is crucial for the entire labor movement.