

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Russian forces suffer big losses in human wave attacks on Kharkiv — PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 88/NO. 22

JUNE 3, 2024

Support Israel's fight to defeat Hamas, prevent more pogroms

BY SETH GALINSKY

With their move into Rafah, Israeli forces are making progress in the fight to dismantle Hamas in Gaza, an absolute necessity to prevent the Tehran-backed group from carrying out its threats to keep massacring Jews “again and again.”

Since May 6, nearly a million Palestinians have heeded Israel's call to evacuate Rafah, near the Egypt-Gaza border. This has allowed Israeli troops to go after Hamas death squads and destroy its tunnels and weapon stores, while minimizing civilian casualties. Israeli forces have found more than 50 cross-border tunnels between Rafah and Egypt that likely were used to supply Hamas and move combatants back and forth.

Hamas refuses to free the 124 remaining hostages it seized and has held captive since Oct. 7, when it carried out the worst anti-Jewish pogrom since World War II. Hamas and Islamic Jihad death squads murdered 1,200 people, mostly civilians, wounded more than 5,000 and raped and mutilated dozens of women.

Even with Israel in control of most
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SWP presidential candidate Rachele Fruit: ‘What class will rule is the central question facing working people’



Militant/Mary Martin
Larryn Peterson, left, signs to put SWP presidential candidate Rachele Fruit, right, on ballot in Memphis, Tennessee, May 20, after discussing a working-class road to women's emancipation.

Richter joins locked-out Boeing firefighters' picket

BY JACOB PERASSO

SEATTLE — Dennis Richter, Rachele Fruit's running mate as Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president, joined International Association of Fire Fighters Local I-66 members at
Continued on page 4

Fruit takes SWP program to working people in Georgia

BY JANICE LYNN

ATLANTA — “The future of humanity depends on the U.S. working class taking power away from the capitalist rulers and starting down the road to make a socialist revolution,” Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president Rachele Fruit told the 47 people at a May 11 public meeting, the high point of a campaign tour here.

“What is needed is a political formation independent of the bosses' parties. We call for a labor party based on the unions that organizes the whole working class to fight together, a social movement that can attract all those facing exploitation and oppression by capital and who care about the future of humanity.”

“A labor party could explain no work-
Continued on page 5

UAW wins 44% in first union vote at Mercedes, workers vow to fight on

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

Following the victorious United Auto Workers unionization campaign by workers at the Volkswagen auto plant in Chattanooga, Tennessee, in April, workers at Mercedes-Benz in Vance, Alabama, voted down representation by the UAW by 56% — 2,642 to 2,045

“Of course we're disappointed,” Kirk Garner, a Mercedes worker told the *Militant* by phone May 18. “The company was able to flip some workers who had said they'd vote yes. The company really hammered us, showing videos against the union at mandatory sessions.”

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Join fight to overturn ban on ‘Militant’ in Florida prison

Prison officials in Florida have banned an issue of the *Militant* in violation of inmates' constitutional rights and the right of the *Militant* to reach its subscribers behind bars. Aided by the *Militant's* attorney, David Goldstein, we are fighting to overturn the ruling. Join us!

On May 17 the paper received a no-

EDITORIAL

notice from authorities at the Jackson Correctional Institution in Malone, Florida, that they had impounded issue no. 17, dated April 29, for running a photo they claim “shows dead person being paraded around on a motorcycle; magazine depicts hatred toward a specific race?”

What they don't say is that this widely printed Associated Press photo illustrates an article *opposing* Jew-hatred. It shows the body of a Jewish man murdered by Hamas in its Oct. 7 pogrom

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As Trump trial in NY winds down, judge steps up attacks on rights

BY TERRY EVANS

Democrats desperately hope the outcome of the frame-up trial of Donald Trump they have engineered in New York will be successful and advance their seven-year-long drive to bring him down.

Over that time they've fabricated claims he colluded with Moscow, initiated two failed impeachment trials, carried out an armed FBI raid on his Mar-a-Lago estate and drummed up three additional legal cases brought by either White House-appointed special prosecutors or local Democratic district attorneys, like Alvin Bragg in New York.

All of these have so far failed. And Bragg's case has a hitch too — they've

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Texas barge collision, Baltimore bridge collapse part of long history of disasters



KTRK

Oil barge hit Pelican Island bridge in Galveston May 15, spilled oil, brought down old rail track. Two months ago another deadlier catastrophe unfolded when ship hit Baltimore bridge.

BY JOHN STUDER

Just seven weeks after the massive container vessel Dali crashed into the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore, a loaded oil barge crashed into the dilapidated Pelican Island drawbridge in Galveston, Texas. It dumped some 2,000 gallons of vacuum gas oil into the bay and did significant further damage to the bridge.

“It's the worst wreck I've seen,” bridge tender David Flores, who had worked for the port and navigation district for 40 years, told the *Galveston Daily News*.

All across the country, infrastructure is crumbling, threatening life and limb of working people. For the capitalist rulers, fixing these problems is just a drain on their profits. When the Francis Scott

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School cleaners in Australia rally for better pay and conditions

Track workers demand sick days at Canadian Pacific Kansas City

Canadian rulers push new laws to further restrict political rights

BY STEVE PENNER

MONTREAL — The Canadian government of Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has introduced Bills 70 and 63 before Parliament. If adopted, they would deal further blows to the political rights of working people.

These attacks are the latest steps taken by Canada's capitalist rulers to reduce the political space working people need to defend ourselves against the impact of today's world capitalist economic and social crisis. They build on Ottawa's use of the draconian Emergencies Act in February 2022 to crush the truckers' Freedom Convoy protest in the capital.

Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc tabled Bill 70 May 6. It would establish a registry of "foreign agents" and make it a crime — punishable by up to life in prison — to engage in "surreptitious or deceptive conduct" at the direction of a foreign government with the goal of "harming Canadian interests."

This follows months of controversy into whether there was foreign interference in the last federal elections in 2019 and 2021.

For decades working-class fighters in many capitalist countries have faced similar attacks on political rights. On the eve of World War II, the imperialist rulers in Washington passed the Foreign Agents Registration Act and used it against labor and anti-war groups.

Similar laws are being used by the Vladimir Putin regime in Russia against opponents of his war on Ukraine, and have just been adopted by the Moscow-aligned government in Georgia.

Washington used its law to target the Communist Party, the Socialist Workers

Party and others during the McCarthy anti-communist witch hunt in the 1950s.

In 1998, five Cuban revolutionaries who were monitoring counterrevolutionary Cuban emigres planning attacks on socialist Cuba from the U.S. were arrested by the FBI and charged with being "unregistered foreign agents." The Cuban Five spent up to 16 years in federal prisons on this and other charges before being released after an international campaign to win their freedom.

Bill 70 also includes a new criminal offense for use against anyone who allegedly interferes with access to or the functioning of "essential infrastructures," such as railroads, ports and highways. The Canadian Civil Liberties Association warns this could be used to "suppress protests" and is "a serious risk to freedom of expression."

Big-business associations across Canada have been clamoring for Ottawa to act to prevent rail and port workers, such as those at Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Kansas City railroads, from striking. The rail workers have voted by over 97% to strike and the Montreal port workers recently rejected a proposed contract by 99.5%.

When Prime Minister Trudeau invoked the Emergencies Act against the truckers who had set up an encampment in Ottawa to protest federal COVID mandates that threatened their jobs, government ministers argued that Canada's "national security" was threatened by the economic impact of the protest.

In an important victory for the rights of working people, Federal Court Justice Richard Mosley ruled Jan. 23 that Ottawa's use of the Emergencies Act



Reuters/Blair Gable

Under Canadian government's Emergencies Act, police pepper-sprayed protesting truckers in Ottawa, Feb. 19, 2022. Justin Trudeau administration is advancing new attacks on rights.

was illegal. Ottawa is appealing this decision to the Supreme Court.

Despite the court ruling, the government's frame-up trials against leaders of the Freedom Convoy — including Tamara Lich, Chris Barber and Pat King — continue.

More attacks on political rights

Bill 70 comes on top of Bill 63, the Online Harms Act, introduced in February under the cynical guise of protecting children from pornography. The law contains sweeping measures to strengthen existing "anti-hate laws" and impose government censorship over the internet. It would increase prison sentences of up to life in prison for anyone convicted of an offense "motivated by hatred."

On April 10 the Quebec government of Premier Francois Legault introduced Bill 57, an act "to Protect Elected Officers and to Facilitate the Unhindered Exercise of their Functions." It makes it illegal for anyone to "obstruct" an elected Quebec official by threatening, harassing or intimidating them, levying fines up to 1,500 Canadian dollars (\$1,095).

Quebec's four union federations responded, charging the proposed bill "could have the effect of criminalizing the democratic participation of citizens and undermining their freedom of expression."

"Historically the labor movement has

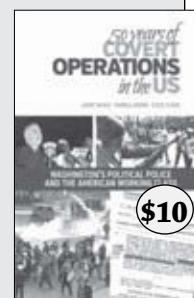
often been the target of legislation aimed at suppressing anti-government dissent, including times when workers have demanded better living conditions through strike actions," the Ontario Public Service Employees Union said several days after Ottawa invoked the Emergencies Act against the truckers' protest.

"To protect the political space we need to organize to defend our class interests, the unions need to lead a fight by all supporters of political rights to prevent these anti-working-class laws from being adopted," said Katy LeRougetel, Communist League candidate in the federal by-election in Montreal. "We must demand that the frame-up trials of the Freedom Convoy leaders be ended and all charges against participants in the truckers' protest be dropped."

50 Years of Covert Operations in the US

Washington's Political Police and the American Working Class

Decades of spying and disruption by FBI targeting working-class organizations and other opponents of government policies.



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THE MILITANT

US-led intervention in Haiti deepens social crisis

The transitional council in Haiti, established April 25 under pressure from Washington and other capitalist powers, is composed of politicians responsible for the political crisis. Haiti's underdevelopment and social crisis can only be solved by the working people.



AP/Odelyn Joseph
U.S. Air Force plane in Haiti May 11 to build base for Kenyan-led military force.

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Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Martín Koppel, Roy Landersen, Jacob Perasso, Vivian Sahner, Brian Williams.

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Telephone: (212) 244-4899

Fax: (212) 244-4947

E-mail: themilitant@mac.com

Website: www.themilitant.com

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

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

School cleaners in Australia rally for better pay and conditions

SYDNEY — Around 70 school cleaners, members of the United Workers Union, and their supporters rallied in pouring rain at Parramatta in west Sydney May 11 to protest low pay and the erosion of their working conditions.

“I’ve been a cleaner for 18 years,” Judith Barber said. “I have seen and experienced ongoing cuts to hours, understaffing and equipment not being replaced or repaired.”

The state government in New South Wales contracts out school cleaning to four companies for 500 million Australian dollars (\$335 million) a year, while school cleaners earn as little as AU\$24 an hour, just about a dollar above the minimum wage in Australia.

Cleaners have been hit hard by the rising cost of living, with most having to delay medical care, cut back on heating and skip meals, the union reports.

Workers at the rally also scored the high rate of injuries on the job, as contractors impose impossible workloads on them. “We pay the price with our knees, backs and shoulders,” Barber said.

One worker this *Militant* worker-correspondent spoke to at the rally said he works at several schools to make up his hours. Another worked a split shift — four hours starting at 4:30 a.m., then again in the afternoon. Another pointed to the increased number of tasks he had to do, with his latest schedule allowing two minutes to clean a room.

The United Workers Union is demanding the state government end the contracting out of jobs and resume direct hiring of school cleaners, to help advance organization of the fight for better conditions.

— Bob Aiken

Track workers demand sick days at Canadian Pacific Kansas City

FRANKLIN PARK, Ill. — “What do we want? Paid sick days!” chanted track workers and supporters outside the CPKC railroad’s community relations event here May 8. The rail bosses are touring a steam locomotive

from Canada to Mexico to celebrate the merger of Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern.

Members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees took the opportunity to get out the word about their fight for better working conditions. Some 40 unionists took part in the action. They handed out hundreds of informational flyers to people coming to see the train, and got a positive response from many.

“We’re asking for four paid sick days a year,” BMW General Chairman Brian Rumler told the *Militant*. “We shouldn’t have to give concessions for what should be a basic right.

“CPKC want us to agree to have management do our work if we’re out sick,” he said, which would open the door to a broader attack on the union.

Workers are also opposed to a draconian attendance policy that explicitly imposes a harsher penalty on workers who try to use the union to appeal disciplinary actions.

He said the union held rallies at the train’s first two stops in Minot, North Dakota, and St. Paul, Minnesota. The



Militant/Illona Gersh

Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way workers picket at Canadian Pacific Kansas City community steam train event in Franklin Park, Illinois, May 8, in fight for paid sick leave.

next stops are in Davenport, Iowa, and Kansas City, Missouri.

Workers from Union Pacific, Metra and other railroads joined the action here. “We need to stick together,” said Renne Perez, a BMW member at Union Pacific. “When we had issues at UP, workers from CP and Metra

were here for us.”

Many at the protest had heard about the strike vote by engineers and conductors at Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Kansas City in Canada, and expressed support for the fight there.

— Naomi Craine

UAW wins 44% in first vote at Mercedes, vows to fight on

Continued from front page

“They brought in three anti-union ‘consultants’ who were on the floor full time in Plant 2 for the last three weeks before the election. The company got lists of workers who hadn’t worn any union buttons or stickers, or who had called the company with questions, and went to work on them one on one,” Garner said.

The May 13-17 vote was the first attempt to win union recognition at the plant. Nearly 93% of eligible workers cast ballots. Workers at Volkswagen had to try three times before winning the union.

The National Labor Relations Board is investigating six charges filed by the UAW against Mercedes disciplining workers for discussing the union at work, prohibiting distribution of union materials and firing union supporters.

The NLRB is also investigating three charges filed against Hyundai at its Montgomery, Alabama, plant, where another union effort is underway.

“We’re just starting to talk about what’s next, but we know we have to keep moving ahead and try again,” Garner said. “We have to wait at least a year before there can be another election.”

Conditions on the job — grueling work schedules that leave no time for family life and paychecks that don’t keep up with inflation — inspired many workers to fight for a union, along with watching the gains won through the UAW at the “Big Three” strikes last fall.

The pro-union push was fiercely opposed by state officials as well. On the first day of voting, Kay Ivey, Alabama’s governor, announced legislation to revoke government inducements given to companies that set up factories there

that agree to recognize unions.

Ivey is one of six Southern governors who have railed against the UAW, alleging that unions “threaten our jobs and the values we live by.”

The “values” they’re determined to uphold are promises given to auto companies that operating in the South would find a nonunion workforce where bosses could pay less.

State officials rejoiced after the vote. “The UAW has no place in Alabama,” said Jerry Carl, a U.S. Congressman from Mobile. “Alabama is open for business!” Gary Palmer, the Congressman from Hoover tweeted.

Almost every foreign-owned auto factory that’s opened in the U.S. since the 1990s has been in the South. Nissan opened a plant in Smyrna, Tennessee, in 1983. BMW started production in Spartanburg, South Carolina, in 1994 and now runs a massive complex of plants employing 11,000 people.

More plants followed: Toyota in Kentucky, Mississippi and Texas; Volvo in South Carolina; Kia in Georgia; Volkswagen in Tennessee; and Mercedes, Honda, Hyundai and Mazda in Alabama; among others.

When workers at Volkswagen’s plant voted up the UAW by a landslide in April, it was the first foreign-owned auto plant organized in the South. A new day is dawning.

Susan LaMont in Atlanta contributed to this article.

— 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO —



June 7, 1999

PASCAGOULA, Miss. — “Good news to Newport News, Ingalls workers want money too!” declares a picket sign at the main gate of Ingalls Shipbuilding in this Gulf Coast town. With 11,500 workers, it’s Mississippi’s largest private employer. Eight thousand workers are on strike. This is the second major shipyard strike in the U.S. Members of United Steelworkers of America Local 8888 at Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia have been on strike since April 5.

The Ingalls workers rejected a proposal that included wage increases along with increases in health insurance premiums and co-payments. Strikers haven’t had a raise in six years. This is the first strike at Ingalls since 1974.

Strikers are aware of the Newport News strike and the fight to win union recognition at Avondale shipyard in New Orleans.



June 7, 1974

The mass rebellion in Portugal continues to deepen. On May 21 hundreds of African workers and students demonstrated in Lisbon for immediate independence for Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands. On May 25 another demonstration was held, involving Portuguese youth, soldiers, and sailors, as well as Africans, demanding an immediate end to Portugal’s African wars of aggression. The action was estimated as 5,000-strong.

Portuguese workers continue to exercise their newly won right to strike in an effort to win wage increases to catch up with the skyrocketing cost of living. As of May 20 there were at least 60,000 industrial workers on strike. In addition, 200,000 textile workers have been on strike for two weeks. The 8,000 workers at the Lisnave shipyards ended their strike last week in return for a minimum wage of \$280 a month.



June 6, 1949

In recent months Stalinist Russia has given vent to the most outspoken expression of anti-Semitism yet witnessed there. The controlled press has been railing against “homeless cosmopolitans” — and “passportless wanderers” — old anti-Semitic euphemisms for Jews.

These attacks have been underscored with adding the original Jewish name in parenthesis to the assumed Russian name of each of their subjects. Thus, the critics “Melnikov (Mehlman) ... Yakovlev (Holtzman)” etc., are denounced as “homeless cosmopolitans”; the sport writers “Yasny (Finkelstein), Vietoroff (Zlochevsky), Svetloff (Scheidlin),” etc., are condemned as “passportless wanderers” and so on.

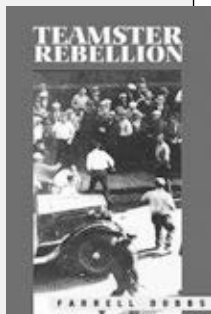
Stalinist anti-Semitism, like barbarism in all its manifestations, can be defeated only by consistent struggle for the revolutionary emancipation of the working class in a Socialist world.

Teamster Rebellion

by Farrell Dobbs

Tells the story of how a class-struggle leadership of the Teamsters union in Minneapolis in 1934 showed how to fight — and win — strike battles in midst of the Great Depression. — \$16

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Richter joins Boeing pickets

Continued from front page
their picket line outside Boeing's factory gates here May 13.

Some 125 firefighters at the company's plants were locked out after rejecting bosses' demand that the time to reach full pay be increased from 14 to 19 years.

The workers, who prevent highly dangerous and toxic fires from breaking out, are demanding a 40% wage raise.

Richter spoke with Terry McCartin, a retired firefighter who walked the picket line in solidarity. "I joined the picket line of striking Teamsters at Molson Coors brewery in Fort Worth, Texas, where I'm from," Richter said. "I'm joining picket lines wherever I go, bringing solidarity."

"We have had several other unions walk the picket line with us, including the International Association of Machinists," McCartin said. The contract for the 32,000 IAM members at Boeing expires in September.

"We need a labor party to organize the fight for the things workers need," said Richter. "We need a guaranteed basic income for all working-class families, that is an income sufficient to keep working, not sitting at home where your self-worth goes to heck."

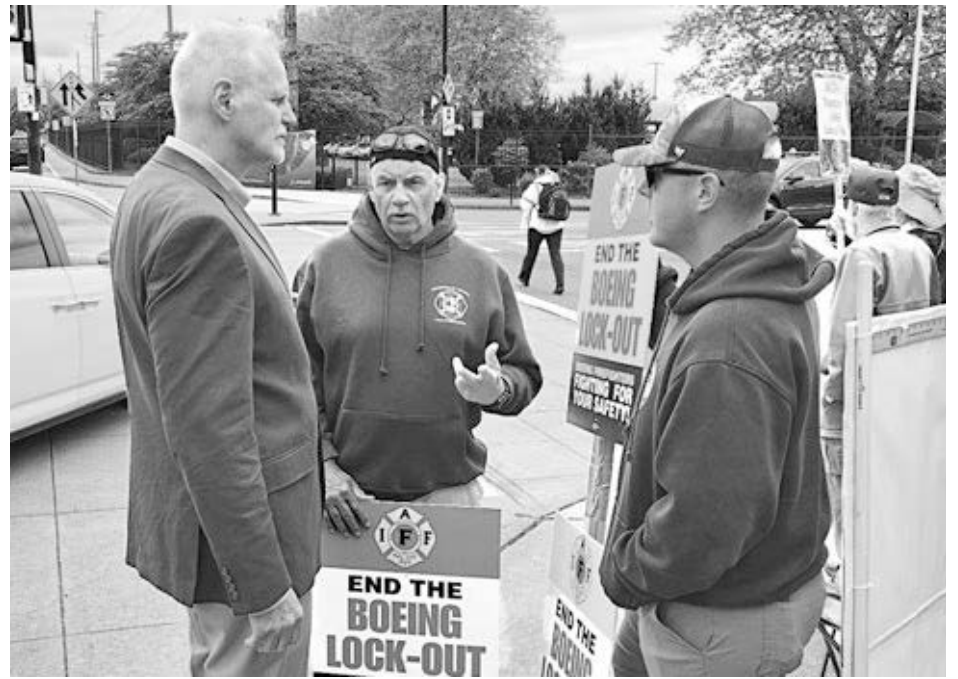
Richter also campaigned with supporters at the International Longshore and Warehouse Union hiring hall May 10. "The billionaires control both the Democrats and Republicans, and those parties will carry out their interests," Richter told longshore worker Ryan Schaffer. "We need a labor party that advances a foreign policy in workers' interests, including defending Israel's right to exist as a refuge from Jew-hatred and pogroms."

"I agree with a lot of what you are saying. I don't like what Hamas is doing and I don't like what Israel is doing," said Schaffer, adding that Israeli military attacks should be more precise to minimize casualties.

"When Hamas carried out their

pogrom on Oct. 7 they planned and organized for many Palestinian civilians to be killed in the war that followed. They knew they could count on support from petty-bourgeois radicals and a layer of the Democratic Party who are putting pressure on Israel to stop short of defeating them," said Richter. "Unless Hamas is defeated, they will carry out more pogroms."

Richter spoke at a campaign rally May 11 and joined supporters at grocery store parking lots May 16 as they campaigned for the SWP ticket. Supporters are seeking 1,000 signatures needed to place Rachele Fruit and Richter on the ballot. To join in, contact the SWP at swpcampaignwa@gmail.com.



Militant/Jacob Perasso
SWP vice presidential candidate Dennis Richter, left, on Boeing firefighters' picket May 13.

Sign up to endorse the Rachele Fruit campaign!

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

Endorsements for Rachele Fruit's campaign for U.S. president have begun to arrive at the *Militant*.

After hearing her running mate, Dennis Richter, speak at a campaign meeting in Minneapolis May 15, Ned Neterval endorsed. "It's the only campaign that has workers' interests in mind," he told Gabrielle Prosser, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in Minnesota.

Neterval is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 663. He works stocking shelves.

Jenny Benton, who works as a cashier at a large hardware store chain, also endorsed the campaign. She plans to join the petitioning effort to get Fruit on the ballot in Minnesota.

"The campaign for Rachele Fruit is a critical voice in what is needed for working people to begin to understand and know the power we have to move humanity forward and see the U.S. working class as part of the international working class," Benton said. "The Socialist Workers Party candidates, nationally and locally, are the only ones doing that."

In New Jersey, Evril Goldsberry endorsed Fruit's campaign after meeting with SWP member Craig Honts, a former co-worker of hers at Walmart.

Along with working as a cashier at Walmart, Goldsberry works as a nurses aide at St. Mary's General Hospital in Passaic. Last summer she hosted a campaign barbecue fund-

raiser at her house.

"I endorse Fruit's campaign because this is a party for lower-class workers and seniors," she said. "And we need something different from the Democrats and Republicans."

From Chicago, John Martinez mailed in his endorsement along with a \$330 contribution "to help spread the word."

Endorse Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party 2024 candidate for U.S. president!

Campaign for what you are for, not who you're against!

I endorse Rachele Fruit for president.

- 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*, the paper of the SWP campaign. (\$5 enclosed, checks payable to the *Militant*.)

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Welcome to new readers from the 'Militant'

Welcome to the 1,355 new and renewing readers to the *Militant*! We work hard to bring you news, political analysis and lessons from the continuity of the working-class movement every week, to chart a course toward workers organizing in our millions to take political power into our own hands.

We hope you will decide to join us in expanding the reach of the *Militant*. Introduce the paper to your co-workers, fellow unionists and others. Encourage them to subscribe and to send in notes on labor battles and social questions in which they are involved.

This presidential election year the *Militant* is championing the campaign of Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president. Endorsing and getting involved in her campaign is the best way today to raise the need to organize a labor party based on the unions that can reach out to draw working people of all kinds into class politics.

We also want to thank our readers, who contributed \$168,246 this spring to finance the production of the *Militant*. We take no paid advertising and rely 100% on our working-class readers for our financing.

We got 1,511 books by Socialist Workers Party leaders and other revolutionaries into the hands of workers looking to learn more about the lessons of past struggles. This includes the SWP's revolutionary continuity from V.I. Lenin and the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and Fidel Castro and Cuba's socialist revolution. If you'd like a catalog of the books Pathfinder offers, just ask.

And feel free to send letters, describing your activities or questions you would like the *Militant* to address.

In solidarity,

John Studer
Militant editor

Socialist Workers Party in 2024 The working-class alternative Rachele Fruit for president Dennis Richter 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

Washington state

Henry Dennison, U.S. Senate
Vincent Auger, Governor

Fruit advances SWP program

Continued from front page

er has to die on the job if we controlled safety and production,” she said. “A labor party would demand a government-funded program of public works to create jobs at union-scale wages to build the things we need, from schools and hospitals to bridges and mass transit.

“It would fight for cost-of-living adjustments to our wages and benefits, to offset the scourge of inflation, and would demand reduced hours of work with no cut in pay to address layoffs.

“A labor party would unite and represent the interests of all workers regardless of nationality, race, sex or immigration status. The scapegoating of immigrants is a weapon used by the ruling class to divide and weaken us. The fight to unify our class is a life-and-death question for the working class. A labor party would demand amnesty with equal rights for all,” she said.

“These measures are essential for families to be able to live, rather than be torn apart by the bosses’ relentless drive for profits. This includes fighting for government-paid health care, including reproductive and maternal care, child care and elder care; sex education that is not gender indoctrination, as well as access to the safest and most reliable contraceptive methods and safe and legal abortion procedures.

Stand up against Jew-hatred

“And a labor party will organize working people to stand up to all acts of Jew-hatred,” Fruit said. “The SWP denounced the Oct. 7 massacre carried out by Hamas and the Islamic Jihad — the largest anti-Jewish pogrom since the Nazi Holocaust. We say Israel has the right to defend itself as a refuge from Jew-hatred and pogroms.”

She decried the reactionary mobilizations on elite college campuses around the country that have backed Hamas’ so-called resistance and threatened Jewish students and faculty.

“Their campus actions have been planned by well-funded political currents that back Hamas, including anarchists and various Stalinist organizations, in order to build support for the anti-Israel, Jew-hating program of Hamas. Their tactics are disruption, violence and intimidation,” Fruit said.

“On Oct. 7 it was absolutely imperative to stand up to the pogrom, without hesitation. It was a test for every political current and party. We explain that Jew-hatred, a product of the crisis of capitalism, is a life-and-death question for the working class,” she said. “It is used to try to prevent middle-class layers ruined by capitalism from blaming the capitalist system itself. When the capitalists feel their rule is threatened they will back fascist thugs who will recruit these forces to try to smash the unions, crush the working class and annihilate the Jewish people.”

“The working class is the one force that can and will advance humanity,” Fruit said, explaining that the workers she has been meeting around the country are interested in learning more about the party.

“More workers are using their unions, walking picket lines, gaining confidence in one another and beginning to see our class as a social force with immense potential power,” Fruit said. “And we will work to win many of these workers to our campaign, to the banner of socialist revolution and to the Socialist Workers Party.”

Chairperson Lisa Potash, the SWP’s congressional candidate in Atlanta, invited people to join in campaigning in Tennessee in the coming weeks to put Fruit and running mate Dennis Richter on the ballot.

A lively discussion followed Fruit’s presentation. Several of those present had come from North Carolina and spoke about the recent union contract won by Daimler truck workers there. “This fight was led by the workers, who held rallies and practice pickets,” one said. “They won raises, the end of wage tiers and cost-of-living adjustments.”

Workers willing to fight today

Others noted the expansion of union organizing in the South, including the overwhelming vote for the United Auto Workers union by workers in Chattanooga, Tennessee. “This is further confirmation that the low point of labor resistance is behind us,” one said.

Another participant said there are increasing stakes for the working class, which is living through and feeling the crises of capitalism. “The SWP campaign gets a response from workers when we talk about the necessity of political activity by labor to confront this.”

Fruit agreed and told of her meeting with workers in Montreal who are in a



Militant Rachele Fruit, SWP candidate for U.S. president, speaks in Washington, D.C., May 18. “We need to break from the bosses’ parties, form a labor party to mobilize the entire working class.”

nationwide contract battle with the rail bosses, and against the Canadian government’s attempt to bar them from striking. She described how striking brewery workers she met in Texas told her how proud they were to be standing up for themselves. And that hotel workers she marched with in Los Angeles and Florida who are fighting for union contracts, more staffing, higher wages and better working conditions, are building growing unity and confidence among the workers.

“Workers like these are interested in discussing the need for a labor party — a break from the capitalist parties on the road toward the working class taking political power,” she said. “We are asking people who agree with this course to endorse our campaign and a growing number of workers are doing this.”

One participant said the party’s explanation of why only a socialist revolution can put an end to the conditions faced by the working class might seem abstract. She asked Fruit how she answers the question, “How do we get there?”

Fruit spoke about her visit to East Pal-

estine, Ohio, the scene of the February 2023 toxic Norfolk Southern train derailment and fire, meeting with some of the fighters there who have been battling for the government and the railroad to take responsibility for the disaster.

“More workers are realizing the government and companies don’t care about us,” Fruit said. “This can only be resolved by the working class taking power. Our campaign points in this direction — breaking with the capitalist parties and organizing independently. One retired worker active in the fight there saw this and endorsed our campaign.”

Another participant said, “When working people fight together they see they can change things,” pointing to the historic victories won in the fight to overthrow Jim Crow in the 1960s. It helped break down divisions in the working class the bosses had relied on.

Two schoolteachers who came to the meeting signed up as endorsers. “Rachele’s talk was enlightening,” Crystal Thomas told the *Militant*. A collection for the SWP campaign’s Tennessee ballot effort netted \$2,757.

‘Workers need our own party,’ Fruit tells ‘Jewish Times’

The following is an excerpt from an interview with SWP presidential candidate Rachele Fruit by Jillian Diamond that appeared in the Baltimore Jewish Times online May 17. It is slated to appear in the next print edition.

BALTIMORE JEWISH TIMES: Rachele Fruit has been running for office on a socialist platform since the 1970s. Now, she’s running for president as the candidate for the Socialist Workers Party. . . .

You used to be a Baltimore resident. Could you tell me about that?

RACHELE FRUIT: I was the first woman they hired to work on the ramp at Eastern Air Lines in 1986. And then I got laid off, and I worked the rest of the time in the garment industry. I worked at Jos. A. Bank for five years making men’s suits both as a sewer and a presser.

I was politically active in many, many different things, like the fight against apartheid. I was in Baltimore when Nelson Mandela was released from prison and elected president. But I’ve been active in the labor movement for all of my working life. . . .

There’s a new need to speak out against antisemitism and Jew-hatred, which is on the rise in the world today, and to defend Israel’s right to exist as a refuge for Jews, which is more obvious every day, but it’s necessary.

JEWISH TIMES: There have been comparisons made between the current anti-

Israel protest movement and the protests against the Vietnam War and South African apartheid. As someone who was involved in both, how do you think this is different from those movements?

FRUIT: I think it’s a completely false analogy. In the case of the Vietnam War, you had a revolution against imperialism going on in Vietnam, which people were attracted to and wanted to defend and understand. It was the beginning of a whole generation learning about what U.S. imperialism is and what it does to the people and the resources of the world. And in this case, this is not a case of supporting a liberation movement in any way. And anyone who is interested in reading and learning about the history of Hamas will be convinced that it’s not about liberation. It’s about genocide against the Jews.

And that’s an important point because there is a legitimate Palestinian liberation struggle, but there’s no leadership. To resolve the Palestine national question and the Jewish national question will take the working class of both people to find a way to work together to figure out how to live together on the same land and move forward.


The South Africa analogy is also extremely important because the goal of the African National Congress was to have all residents of South Africa to live together on the land, and their opponents’ position was “one settler, one

bullet,” which was to drag the whites out of the country. And that’s much more in line with Hamas’ position. Mandela defended the Jews in South Africa and talked about an important role they played in the country and in the liberation struggle.

JEWISH TIMES: Why do you think it’s still important to have third-party options in presidential elections?

FRUIT: One of the main planks in our platform is that workers should break from the Democratic and Republican Party. Neither one has the interests of the working people in mind. Their policies defend the interests of the ruling rich. So we call for a labor party, a working-class party that will organize us to fight for the things that we need, against inflation, for higher wages and safer working conditions.

This is why unions are extremely important, but we also need a vehicle to fight in the political arena. And our party is an example of that. It’s an example that workers can look towards of how we can organize an independent party. You have to start somewhere, and we’ve been speaking all over the country, talking to workers on picket lines and all kinds of protests. So to get this message across, and there’s a lot of interest, we ask anyone who agrees that we need our own party to speak for our interests to endorse our campaign. It’s the beginning, it’s an example.



Cuba and the Coming American Revolution
by Jack Barnes

The example set by leaders of Cuba’s socialist revolution.

www.pathfinderpress.com

Russian forces suffer big losses in human wave attacks on Kharkiv

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Moscow's troops are suffering heavy losses during an offensive launched May 10 in Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv region. Russian President Vladimir Putin is seeking to extend the front lines of the largest ground war in Europe since World War II and stretch outgunned and outmanned, but courageous and determined, Ukrainian defenses.

For the first two weeks of the offensive, the Russian army suffered over 1,000 casualties every day, likely a record for the entire war. Partisan groups operating behind Russian lines claimed that two of the Kremlin's major combat units suffered losses with over two-thirds dead or severely injured. Wave upon wave of Russian soldiers are thrown into the front line barrage, leading to high casualty figures, and deepening opposition to the war among working people inside Russia.

"It's an unbelievable meat grinder that they're still sending their people into," a mortar operator for the Freedom of Russia Legion, who uses his call sign "Winnie," told Reuters. The legion and two other paramilitary units of pro-Ukrainian Russian nationals are among the reinforcements Kyiv has sent to repel the northeastern incursion.

Putin has the same contempt for the lives of Russian soldiers as he has for the Ukrainian people his forces bombard. Opposition to the war inside Russia shows that it is working people there, in and out of uniform, who are the Ukrainian people's most important ally in their fight to defend their country's sovereignty.

Ukrainian artillery and drones inflicted blows on poorly equipped and demoralized Russian troops attempting to take the town of Vovchansk, in the northeast. Moscow's forces have seized 40% of the town and several nearby villages. They remain about 20 miles from Kharkiv, Ukraine's second largest and most heavily bombarded major city.

At the same time, Putin's forces have made small gains with heavy losses fighting to take over the town of Chasiv Yar in the south. The hillside town is a significant hub for Ukrainian forces in the eastern Donetsk region. It has been fought over since 2014, when Putin used Russian soldiers, disguised

as separatists, to seize Crimea and parts of Donetsk and Luhansk.

Putin claims Moscow's offensive in northeastern Ukraine is necessary to provide Russia with a buffer zone and protect civilians there from attack by Ukrainian forces. But it's his regime's drive to destroy Ukraine as a sovereign nation that is the source of the carnage. An independent Ukraine is no threat to the Russian people.

Kyiv strikes Crimea, Russia bases

Ukrainian long-range precision-guided missiles sank two Russian warships — a guided missile corvette and a minesweeper — in Sevastopol in Crimea May 19. At least two fighter jets were also destroyed at a nearby air base. The Kremlin withdrew most of its warships from Sevastopol in October after Ukrainian forces sunk or damaged over half the fleet.

Inside Russia an oil refinery in the southern Krasnodar region and a substation, an oil depot, and a railway station in the port city of Novorossiysk, were also hit the same week.

Moscow continues to wield its military superiority. Its artillery has ammunition stocks many times as large as those of Ukrainian forces. As well as ramping up domestic arms production since the invasion began, Moscow has received munitions from governments in North Korea, Iran and Belarus.

Taking advantage of delays in the delivery of air defense systems by Washington and its allies, Moscow has intensified its airstrikes on Ukrainian cities and towns. In March alone, more than 400 Russian missiles, over 600 drones and more than 3,000 guided glide bombs were fired. Glide bombs are released from warplanes in Russian airspace far from their targets and out of the reach of Ukrainian air defenses.

Moscow's forces also specialize in what are called two-tap strikes. A bomb is exploded in an urban area and then, when emergency services and worker-volunteers come to rescue survivors, a second deadly projectile is unleashed on the same target.

All large thermal and hydroelectric plants in Ukraine were targeted between March 22 and May 8, caus-



Claire Harbage/NPR

Maksym Timchenko, 7, raises his hand for his teacher Liudmyla Demchenko to call on him at class inside subway station in Kharkiv, under constant bombardment. Schools and other facilities have been forced underground as city's residents defy Moscow's assault.

US union raises aid for Ukrainian rail workers



In an important example of international working-class solidarity, SMART-TD, the largest rail workers union in the U.S., is asking union locals and members to help collect much-needed personal protective equipment for rail workers in war-torn Ukraine.

In a letter posted online May 1, the rail union explains, "Our Ukrainian brothers and sisters are not only obligated by their company to take that call to work but they also have the added obligation to keep the country's supply chain, people, and humanitarian support moving while their country is under attack."

By November last year, some 530 railway workers had lost their lives since the beginning of the murderous invasion of Ukraine by Russian President Vladimir Putin. Among them, 23 were killed on the job by Moscow's bombing of cargo, passenger and metro train lines. Of the many who volunteered to defend their country, 395 had died on the front lines. Another 112 were killed among the tens of thousands of casualties from Putin's relentless shelling and bombing of civilian targets.

The latest victims are a railway inspector and repairman working for Ukrainian Railways. They were killed May 15 by Russian shelling of civilian rail infrastructure in the Dnipropetrovsk region in southeastern Ukraine. The two were Serhiy Derevytskyi, 48, and Oleksandr Prykhodko, 51.

The Trade Union of Railwaymen and Transport Construction Workers of Ukraine is asking for help as the usual sources for these supplies have been redirected to the war effort.

Work gloves, boots, safety helmets, earplugs, respirators, and protective eyewear are among the needed items. A full list is included in the appeal on SMART-TD's website, www.smart-union.org.

The union is asking for locals or individual members to take up collections and send them to SMART-TD (Ukraine assistance), c/o Dan Banks, 6060 Rockside Woods Blvd. N., Suite 325, Independence, OH 44131.

— Naomi Craine, freight rail worker and SMART-TD member in Chicago.

ing extensive damage. As a result, the Ukrainian government has been forced to reintroduce nationwide blackouts for industrial and residential use.

In Ukraine working people volunteer to fight at the front, while Russian soldiers are seeking ways to get out of the line of fire.

A Russian officer was recorded berating his troops, who were trying to escape a barrage, the *Kyiv Post* reported May 14. "They are mutinying," he screams over the radio. He threatens them with being targeted by a unit positioned behind them with orders to

kill any retreating soldiers. He shouts, "You will die if you stop right now. I'll direct the artillery on you personally!"

Near the village of Rabotyne in the south, Eduard Maranov, 21, a Russian private from Kamykia, found a way out. In the face of Ukrainian drone attacks, he and his mates retreated, then wandered into Ukrainian positions. He told the *Kyiv Post* that the Russian army doesn't often supply food to troops in forward positions, but Russian prisoners of war in Ukraine were given regular meals by authorities there.

Books for working-class fighters



See page 8 for distributor near you

Israel's fight to defeat Hamas

Continued from front page

of Rafah, the Israel Defense Forces are being cautious, according to the *Jerusalem Post*, “to avoid even the possibility that a misfire might hit nearby Egyptian troops,” part of an “understanding” with Egyptian officials. The Egyptian government publicly says it opposes the Israeli offensive against Hamas and closed the Rafah border crossing in protest — blocking humanitarian aid — after Israel took control. For their own reasons, many Arab governments in the region, including Cairo, would like to see Hamas destroyed.

Despite these facts, and amid ongoing negotiations between Washington and the Saudi monarchy over a proposed peace deal, International Criminal Court prosecutor Karim Khan announced May 20 that he is seeking arrest warrants for Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Minister of Defense Yoav Gallant and three Hamas leaders, Yahya Sinwar, Mohammed Deif and Ismail Haniyeh, for “war crimes,” as if there was moral equivalency between Israel's defense of its right to exist and the Hamas pogromists!

Deliberate lie of Israeli genocide

Khan slanders the Israeli government, claiming it's seeking the “extermination” of Palestinians, including “deaths caused by starvation.” This same charge has been made almost daily by Hamas apologists, and others that echo them, like the editors of the *New York Times*.

But the goal of the capitalist Israeli rulers isn't to eliminate the Palestinians, but to prevent future slaughters of Jews. In fact, in Rafah and other areas Israeli forces have entered, they have given Gazan civilians warning and time to move out of combat zones before attacking, even though this also allows Hamas thugs to escape for now.

Claiming that Israel is carrying out “genocide” is a complete falsification. Genocide is the deliberate, systematic attempt to bring about the extermination of an entire people.

The most obvious case of genocide in

the imperialist epoch is the Nazi's systematic slaughter of 6 million Jews, 40% of the world's Jewish population, in the Holocaust during World War II. There are still fewer Jews in the world today than at the start of that war.

Major imperialist powers from Washington to London closed their doors to Jews seeking to flee the Holocaust, including after the war ended. That, and Stalinist betrayals of promising revolutionary situations in France, Italy, Greece and elsewhere, is why the creation of Israel as a refuge for Jews became inevitable.

The death of civilians in Gaza — some 16,000 out of a population of more than 2 million — along with the death of some 14,000 Hamas combatants, is not genocide. And it's Hamas, not Israel, that is responsible. Hamas uses Palestinians as human shields, stationing its forces underneath and inside hospitals, schools, mosques, U.N. buildings and residential neighborhoods.

Despite the International Criminal Court prosecutor's claim that Israel is causing “starvation” in Gaza, the Israeli government has provided thousands of tents to Palestinians fleeing combat zones and worked with humanitarian organizations to make possible field kitchens and field hospitals, increased the flow of water to Gaza and expanded the number of crossings for aid.

Genocidal plans of Hamas, Tehran

It's Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah and the government in Tehran that seek another genocidal “Final Solution.”

Hamas' founding covenant calls for the killing of all Jews. Hamas leaders say they want to carry out more pogroms like Oct. 7 until they destroy Israel and kill or expel all the Jews.

Hamas apologist Nerdeen Kiswani, the main spokesperson for the New York-based Within Our Lifetime group, which has organized protests calling for a cease-fire in Gaza, lauds Oct. 7 as a “heroic” act of “resistance.” Despite eyewitness reports of the murders of civilians; rapes perpetrated by

restrict access to financing from foreign banks and institutions, the collection of payments for services provided by Cuba to other countries, and the ability of Cubans living abroad to send money to family members on the island.

This “is an absolutely unilateral and unfounded list, whose sole purpose is to slander and serve as a pretext for the adoption of coercive economic measures against sovereign States, such as those ruthlessly applied against Cuba,” the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs said May 15.

“The clear and absolute truth is that Cuba does not sponsor terrorism, but has been a victim of it,” the statement said. “It is not enough to recognize that Cuba cooperates fully with the United States. It also does so with the international community as a whole.

“It is a known truth and no attempt should be made to confuse public opinion. The President of the United States has every prerogative to act honestly and do the right thing.”



Reuters/Ronen Zvulun

Aftermath of Hamas' slaughter of 370 Jews and others at Nova music festival in Israel, part of Oct. 7 pogrom that killed 1,200 people overall. More than 40 of the hostages Hamas seized were at the festival. “Everything we do is justified,” says Hamas leader Ghazi Hamad, inset.

the Hamas death squads; photographic proof of mutilation of the bodies of those they raped and killed, Kiswani cynically claims it's all lies.

For months, the U.S. rulers have been ratcheting up pressure on Israel to abandon efforts to defeat Hamas, a course that would be disastrous for working people in the region, leaving the Tehran-backed group intact to target Jews and threaten Israel's existence. While Secretary of State Antony Blinken condemned the international court prosecutor's call for arrest warrants as “shameful,” his main concern was that it “does nothing to help, and could jeopardize, ongoing ef-

orts to reach a cease-fire agreement.”

The U.S. rulers put their own predatory interests in the Middle East above all else, not defense of Israel or of Jews.

The campaign against Israel by Hamas apologists has fueled an increase in anti-Jewish violence around the world. In New York City's Upper East Side, glass doors at three Jewish-owned stores were smashed in the early morning of May 15, right after Israel celebrated its independence day.

On May 12 a man fled after assaulting two Jewish children in Brooklyn, hitting one in the head and knocking the other to the ground and kicking him.

Hamas' charge that Israel today is an 'apartheid state' is bald-faced lie

BY SETH GALINSKY

To justify the bloody Oct. 7 massacre of Jews, apologists for Hamas claim that Israel is like South Africa before apartheid was overthrown in the 1990s. Blacks in South Africa fought to overthrow apartheid “by any means necessary,” therefore Palestinians have the right to do the same against Israel, they say.

“Everything we do is justified,” says Hamas leader Ghazi Hamad.

But this is dead wrong. Working people and all those who truly want to fight against oppression need to start with the facts.

Apartheid in South Africa was a brutal system where a minority of 5 million whites, out of a population of 33 million, controlled the country. Some 24 million Black Africans, the overwhelming majority, were denied the right to citizenship or to vote. Those the rulers referred to as Coloured — mixed race — numbered 3 million and they and 1 million Indians had a few more rights than Black Africans.

Africans were denied the right to own land. Every aspect of their labor and life — where they lived, where they could work, how long they could stay in “white” cities, where and when they could travel — was under the control of the apartheid rulers. If they quit their job or were laid off or fired, they had to return to rural tribal “homelands.”

It's preposterous to say that's what exists in capitalist Israel today, a country of 9.9 million people where 21% of the Israeli population are Arabs, mostly Muslims, almost all of whom are citizens with the right to vote and

the right to travel anywhere they want.

Arab political parties have elected members in the Knesset, Israel's parliament. One member of the Supreme Court is a Muslim Arab citizen.

While like every capitalist country there is racism and discrimination, working people have fought to overcome those divisions.

Two trade union federations — the Histadrut, which is the largest, and Koach LaOvdim — organize workers regardless of their religious beliefs or nationality. There have been numerous labor battles over the last decades where Jewish, Arab and immigrant workers have fought side by side.

The claim of Hamas supporters that they are following in the footsteps of Nelson Mandela, who led the fight against apartheid, is also preposterous.

Mandela and the African National Congress opposed the ultra-left, reactionary line of the rival Pan African Congress, which called for expulsion or killing of all whites under the slogan “One settler, one bullet.” This is similar to Hamas' call “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.” Mandela won the support of the vast majority of South Africans, under the banner of “South Africa belongs to all who live in it.”

A victory over Hamas would open the door to fight for gains for Palestinians and for common working-class struggles.

To learn more about the real history of the fight against apartheid, read “The Coming Revolution in South Africa” by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes in *New International* no. 5, available at pathfinderpress.com.

Despite shift on one 'terror' list, US rulers press economic war on Cuba

BY JANET POST

In a May 15 report to Congress, Secretary of State Antony Blinken removed Cuba from the annual list of countries “not cooperating fully” with the U.S. on anti-terrorist efforts. Last year's report had included Cuba along with Iran, North Korea, Syria and Venezuela. Those countries are still listed this year.

A State Department spokesperson said one consideration for removing Cuba was that the U.S. and Cuba had “resumed law enforcement cooperation in 2023, including on counterterrorism.”

Despite this modest step forward by Washington, Cuba remains on the U.S. government's “State Sponsors of Terrorism” list, placed there by both the Donald Trump and Joseph Biden administrations. It is part of the U.S. rulers' over six-decade-long economic war against Cuba in hopes of bringing down the socialist revolution.

This designation calls for imposition of additional damaging sanctions. They

'The SWP is unalterably opposed to all imperialist wars'

Socialism on Trial, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for May, contains the testimony of James P. Cannon, a founding leader of the Socialist Workers Party and then its national secretary, at the 1941 trial of 18 leaders of the SWP and the Minneapolis Teamsters union. Under the thought-control Smith Act, they were found guilty and jailed on charges of conspiring to advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government. The U.S. rulers' aim was to prevent the building of working-class opposition to their entry into World War II and to block development of class-struggle leadership in the labor movement. In the excerpt below, Cannon explains the SWP's political views and activities in the labor movement. Copyright © 2014 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Q: Mr. Cannon, will you tell us the position of the Socialist Workers Party on the causes of modern war?

A: Modern wars, in the opinion of our party, are caused by the conflict of imperialist nations for markets, colonies, sources of raw material, fields for investment, and spheres of influence.

Q: What do you mean by "imperialist," Mr. Cannon?

A: Those capitalist nations which directly or indirectly exploit other

countries.

Q: What is the party's position on the inevitability of wars under the capitalist system?

A: As long as the capitalist system remains, and with it those conditions which I have mentioned, which flow automatically from the operation of the capitalist and imperialist system, wars, recurring wars, are inevitable.

Q: And can anybody's opposition, including the opposition of the Socialist Workers Party to war, prevent wars under the capitalist system?

A: No. Our party has always stated that it is impossible to prevent wars without abolishing the capitalist system which breeds war. It may be possible to delay a war for a while, but eventually it is impossible to prevent wars while this system, and its conflicts of imperialist nations, remains.

Q: Then is it true that the party is of the opinion that wars are caused by international economic conflicts, and not by the good will or bad will of some people?

A: Yes. That does not eliminate the possibility of incidental attacks being caused by the acts of this or that ruling group of one country or another; but fundamentally wars are caused by the efforts of all the capitalist powers to expand into other fields. The only way they can get them is by taking them away from some other power, because

the whole world has been divided up among a small group of imperialist powers. That is what leads to war, regardless of the will of the people.

We do not maintain that the ruling groups of any of the imperialist powers now at war really desired the war. We have stated many times that they would have been glad to have avoided it; but they could not avoid it and maintain the capitalist system in their country.

Q: What is the attitude of the party towards a war which it designates as an imperialist war?

A: Our party is unalterably opposed to all imperialist wars. ... [W]e do not give any support to any imperialist war. We do not vote for it; we do not vote for any person that promotes it; we do not speak for it; we do not write for it. We are in opposition to it.

Q: How does the Socialist Workers Party oppose the idea of the United States entering into the war?

A: We do it as every other political party promotes its ideas on any foreign policy. We write against it in the paper; we speak against it; we try to create sentiment in any organization we can approach, to adopt resolutions against the war.

If we had members in Congress, they would speak in Congress, in the Senate, against it. In general we carry on public political agitation against the entry of the United States into

war, and against all measures taken either by the Executive or by Congress which in our opinion lead towards active participation in the war. ...

Q: If the United States should enter into the European conflict, what form would the opposition of the party take to the war? ...

A: [W]e would not become supporters of the war, even after the war was declared. That is, we would remain an opposition political party on the war question, as on others.

Q: You would not support the war?

A: That is what I mean, we would not support the war, in a political sense. ...

Q: When you say, "nonsupport of the war," just exactly what would the party do during a war, which would indicate its nonsupport of the war?

A: Insofar as we are permitted our rights, we would speak against the war as a false policy that should be changed, in the same sense, from our point of view, that other parties might oppose the foreign policy of the government in time of war. ...

In general, we do not put any confidence in the ruling capitalist group in this country. We do not give them any support because we do not think they can or will solve the fundamental social problems which must be solved in order to save civilization from shipwreck.

We believe that the necessary social transition from the present system of capitalism to the far more efficient order of socialism can only be brought about under a leadership of the workers. The workers must organize themselves independently of the capitalist political parties. They must organize a great party of their own, develop an independent working-class party of their own, and oppose the policy of the capitalist parties, regardless of whether they are called the Democratic or Republican, or anything else. ...

Q: What is the party's position on the claim that the war against Hitler is a war of democracy against fascism?

A: We say that is a subterfuge, that the conflict between American imperialism and German imperialism is for the domination of the world. It is absolutely true that Hitler wants to dominate the world, but we think it is equally true that the ruling group of American capitalists has the same idea, and we are not in favor of either of them.

May
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Zip: 68506. Tel: (402) 217-4906. Email: swplincolin@gmail.com

NEW JERSEY: 3600 Bergenline, Suite 205B, Union City. Zip: 07087. Tel: (551) 240-1512. swpnewjersey@gmail.com

NEW YORK: New York: 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor. Zip: 10018. Tel: (646) 434-8117. Email: newyorkswp@gmail.com

OHIO: Cincinnati: 2300 Montana Ave., Suite 230. Tel: Zip: 45211. (513) 837-1038. Email: swpcincinnati@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia: 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite 16. Zip: 19149. Tel: (215) 708-1270. Email: philaswp@verizon.net **Pittsburgh:** 5907 Penn Ave., Suite 313. Zip: 15206. Tel: (412) 610-2402. Email: swppittsburgh@gmail.com

TEXAS: Dallas-Fort Worth: 6815 Manhattan Blvd., Suite 108 Fort Worth. Zip: 76120. Tel: (817) 899-6720. Email: dfswp@gmail.com

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 7603 Georgia Ave. NW, Suite 300. Zip: 20012. Tel: (202) 536-5080. Email: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

WASHINGTON: Seattle: 650 S. Orcas St., #120 Zip: 98108. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Email: swpseattle@gmail.com

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: Suite 2, First floor, 275 George St., Liverpool. Postal Address: P.O. Box 73 Campsie, NSW 2194. Tel: (61) 435-995-604. Email: clydsydney@outlook.com

CANADA

QUEBEC: Montreal: 7107 St. Denis #204 H2S 2S5. Tel: (514) 272-5840. Email: cllcmontreal@fastmail.com

FRANCE

Paris: BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15. Email: militant.paris@gmail.com

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND: London: 5 Norman Road (first floor). Seven Sisters. Post code: N15 4ND. Tel: 020-3538 8900. Email: cllondon@fastmail.fm **Manchester:** 329, Royal Exchange Buildings, 3 Old Bank St. Post code: M2 7PE. Tel: (0161) 312-8119. Email: clmanchr@gmail.com

Fight ban on 'Militant' in Florida prison

Continued from front page

in Israel and driven around to cheering among the Islamist group's supporters in Gaza City.

The same picture has appeared in other news media in the U.S. and worldwide, including the *Boston Herald*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *Spectrum News NY1* and *Proceso Mexico*.

The charge that the *Militant* is spreading "hatred toward a special race" is an outrage. The photo is part of a *Militant* feature reprinting the first chapter of the new Pathfinder book *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class*.

The newspaper each week has been campaigning against Jew-hatred and in defense of Israel's right to exist as a refuge for Jews.

They claim this issue of the paper "is dangerously inflammatory" and "advocates or encourages riot, insurrection, rebellion, organized prison protest."

Florida prison authorities have attempted to ban

the *Militant* on numerous occasions over the last decade, but the socialist newsweekly challenged each attempt and in the overwhelming majority of cases the bans were overturned. Our appeals have won support from the National Coalition Against Censorship, PEN America, Amnesty International, Florida Press Association, American Civil Liberties Union Florida, and unions and prisoners' rights groups.

This is the first time Florida officials have tried to impose a ban on the *Militant* in 15 months.

"Join us in pushing back this blatant attempt to violate the right of workers behind bars to read the news they want and freedom of the press," said *Militant* editor John Studer.

Letters can be emailed to Saritza.Legault@fdcmvflorida.com or to Florida Department of Corrections, Literature Review Committee, 501 South Calhoun St., Tallahassee, FL 32399-2500, with copies to themilitant.com.

Judge steps up attack on rights in NY Trump trial

Continued from front page

yet to say what Trump is actually charged with that would send him to prison. Trial testimony ended with tumult on May 21, with final arguments due May 28.

Trump "orchestrated a criminal scheme to corrupt the 2016 presidential election; then he covered up that criminal conspiracy by lying in his New York business records," claimed Matthew Colangelo in the prosecution's opening statement April 22.

Trump "disguised his payments" to former lawyer Michael Cohen as "legal services," Colangelo said, to pay him back "for an illegal payment to Stormy Daniels on the eve of the election." The so-called illegal payment the prosecution claims Trump ordered was to cover a nondisclosure agreement sought by Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford. She signed up for \$130,000 to stay silent about an affair she claims she had with Trump that he denies.

Pointing out how outrageous Bragg's charges are, civil liberties lawyer Alan Dershowitz asked, "Why would anyone pay hush money if they were required to disclose it?"

The prosecution is stacked with long-time political opponents of Trump. Lead prosecutor Colangelo was previously a top lawyer in President Joseph Biden's Justice Department. Judge Juan Merchan donated to Biden's 2020 campaign, for which he received a "caution" in 2023 from the New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct. And Bragg, the prosecutor who brought the charges, ran for office as the best candidate to find a crime to pin on Trump.

Cohen admits he's a thief and a liar

Democrats are increasingly concerned Biden will lose to Trump in November. They've become more frantic to find a way to keep him tied up in court, preventing him from campaigning, and to smear him with hours of irrelevant and lurid testimony from porn actress Clifford, hoping to prejudice the jury and undermine the presumption of innocence. Merchan has blocked Trump from responding to attacks by Clifford, and Bragg's other star witness, Michael Cohen, by threatening to jail Trump for violating a gag order.

Above all, Democrats are desperate to see Trump imprisoned, to prevent tens of millions from being able to vote for the candidate of their choice. In their factional frenzy, they deal blows to constitutional protections workers need. Free speech, the right to a fair trial and other protections won in

blood are crucial to workers, unions and working-class parties like the Socialist Workers Party.

"All suppression of political rights and freedom, no matter whom they are directed against in the beginning, in the end inevitably bear down upon the working class," explained Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky. "That is a law of history."

The prosecution's only real witness in Bragg's contrived case is disbarred lawyer and fanatical Trump-hater Cohen. He worked for Trump for 13 years, ending abruptly in 2018. On the stand prosecutors were unable to get Cohen to produce anything that should help win a conviction.

Under defense cross-examination, Cohen admitted he has lied repeatedly under oath about other matters, and has been convicted on felony charges. He secretly recorded a discussion with his boss in September 2016, an egregious breach of legal ethics, as well as covertly recording 94 others on his phone.

He also said he lied in 2018 in order to strike a plea bargain with prosecutors who were pressing him to finger Trump. In a further damning admission, Cohen admitted he stole \$30,000 from Trump as a form of "self-help." He also admitted he felt free to say so because the statute of limitations on the theft had passed.

Cohen was the last prosecution witness and the only one who testified Trump had personal knowledge of the supposed false business records scheme.

Defense witness Brad Smith, an expert on campaign finance law, was not called after Merchan restricted what he could say. The defense called only two witnesses.

The main one was Robert Costello, a short-term adviser to Cohen and former deputy chief of the Criminal Division for the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Southern District of New York. The heart of his testimony was that he knew Cohen lied on the stand about Trump's involvement in the payoffs to Clifford from conversations he had with Cohen.

Judge threatens defense witness

At one point, the judge flew off the handle, yelling at Costello and threatening to excise his testimony. Merchan had been upholding a series of prosecution objections preventing the witness from responding to defense questions. Costello muttered under his breath "Geez," and looked at the judge.

Merchan ordered both the jury and press out of the courtroom. Then he lit into Costello, lecturing him for "improper decorum." "You don't give me a side eye," he told the witness, "You don't roll your eyes."

Then he demanded, "Are you staring me down?" Throughout the trial the judge has disparaged Trump's behavior, insulted his lawyers, refused to object to the prosecution's enticement of irrelevant, lurid and clearly prejudicial testimony from Clifford, and let his disdain for the defense show.

The judge, not any evidence pointing to Trump's "guilt," is the biggest problem Trump faces. Merchan is making a mockery of constitutional rights.

Texas barge collision

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Key Bridge collapsed six road workers were killed and the port of Baltimore was shut down, putting thousands of longshore and other workers out of work.

Authorities in Galveston shut down all traffic over the span that connects Galveston with the small island, which is home to a shipyard, other industrial operations and a Texas A&M University extension.

The crash happened after strong winds propelled the 321-foot-long barge, which broke away from a tugboat pulling it, into the bridge. Two crew members were unhurt after they either jumped or fell into the ship channel as large chunks of debris crashed down from the bridge onto the barge.

The bridge, built in 1960, was listed by state officials as "at the end of its structural life." Chunks of its supporting pilings are gone. This was exacerbated when it was hit by another barge last July. Authorities said they had been considering rebuilding it.

The Texas Department of Transportation reports that of 53,018 bridges in the state, 1,025 are "structurally deficient" and 7,577 are "functionally obsolete."

The *New York Times* reported May 15 that some 300 major bridges in the U.S. have protection systems that are "deteriorated, potentially outdated or non-existent." Decisions on what to do about this, it said, are based on "cost-benefit analysis." That's double-speak for saying if it's too expensive, let it be.

"Vessel-bridge crashes have occurred with a certain regularity in recent decades," the *Times* said. "Some of them — in places like Tampa Bay, Fla., Mobile, Ala., South Padre Island, Texas, and Webbers Falls, Okla. — have been catastrophic."

In Tampa Bay, the freighter Summit Venture hit a support column on the Sunshine Skyway Bridge in 1980, sending a number of vehicles, including a Greyhound bus, into the bay, killing 35 people.

In Mobile, a tugboat pushing barges in dense fog in 1993 slammed into a railroad bridge. An Amtrak train heading toward Miami derailed on the bridge sending several cars into the water, killing 47 people and injuring 103.

A tugboat pulling four barges in 2001 hit the bridge connecting South Padre Island with Port Isabel in Texas. Drivers couldn't see the missing spans and 10 cars drove off the bridge, killing eight and injuring three.

A tugboat lost control on the Arkansas River in 2002, sending barges crashing into an Interstate 40 bridge over the river in Webbers Falls, Oklahoma, whose center spans collapsed. Cars and tractor-trailers spilled into the water, killing 14 people.

Blame the workers

In Baltimore, the Dali was finally freed from massive bridge debris May 20 and towed to dock for temporary repairs. To allow for this, thousands of tons of mangled steel from the Francis Scott Key Bridge had to be gotten off the boat's deck. This included a series of "controlled" explosions to cut it apart.

Cranes removed 182 of the 4,700 containers on the ship, some of which were intertwined with the wreckage of the bridge. The remaining containers will now be removed for shipping on other vessels.

The age of the bridge, lack of protection for the bridge's piers and the fact it was built "fracture critical," meaning a break anywhere would bring a substantial portion of the structure tumbling into the water, made it a disaster waiting to happen.


But the focus of the National Transportation Safety Board and the FBI is to blame the disaster on the boat's 21 crew members, who are from India and Sri Lanka. They have not been allowed to leave the ship since the crash. Even during the "controlled" explosions, they were told to move to the back of the ship and sit tight.

"The crew is isolated from their families, fellow workers and the rest of the world," said Rev. Joshua Messick, executive director of the Baltimore International Seafarers' Center.

This is how capitalism works. It's always the workers who get blamed, not the profit-driven bosses or their government.

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

The fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced-rate subscriptions. 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. Or donate online at www.themilitant.com



Testimony, court decision in the Socialist Workers Party's victory in legal fight against US government spying, disruption.

Edited by Margaret Jayko

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