

# THE MILITANT

**SPECIAL FEATURE**

**Opposing US ruling-class assaults on freedoms protected by the Constitution**  
— PAGES 10-15

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 88/NO. 24

JUNE 17, 2024

## A road forward to unite workers in Israel, Iran and Palestine

BY SETH GALINSKY

Israeli soldiers now control most of Gaza's border with Egypt, dealing blows to Hamas' ability to collaborate with Tehran to launch new attacks on Jews and Israel, as well as on Gazans opposed to its reactionary rule.

Israeli troops found and are destroying some 20 tunnels that run between Egypt and Gaza, along with the long-range rockets Hamas had stored there. The *Jerusalem Post* notes Hamas' control of the border was its "oxygen pipe," the main source of its weapons and ammunition.

Only the unequivocal defeat of Hamas and the dismantling of its military and leadership structures can create conditions where Jewish, Arab and other working people can come together to defend their interests against the capitalist rulers in Israel, the Palestinian territories and more broadly in the region, and, in so doing, forge a revolutionary road forward.

The goal of Hamas and Tehran has never been about advancing the rights of Palestinian working people. Their goal is to extend the reactionary influence of

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## SWP presidential candidate Rachele Fruit: 'Workers need to break from the bosses' parties, build a party of labor'



Militant/Mary Martin

Rachele Fruit, SWP candidate for U.S. president, speaks to Harold Etimé at Haitian book fair in Miami May 5. Fruit said SWP opposes U.S. military interventions from Haiti to NATO.

BY ABBY TILSNER

PHILADELPHIA — "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," Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, told a public campaign meeting here in her hometown May 25.

She said Washington and other ma-

major capitalist powers are driven to prepare for more and deadlier wars today, as they compete for markets, spheres of influence and profits. "We oppose Washington's troops, bases, armaments being placed anywhere in the world. We

### EDITORIAL

**Why SWP calls for a labor party**  
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oppose their military and trade pacts, all of which help them exploit the world's toilers and prepare for future wars. This will never cease until the working class takes political power.

"The Democratic Party is leading the charge against our constitutional rights. Today their factional target is Donald Trump, but in the long run their sights will be set on working people, the ones

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## Rail workers fight for safety as deaths grow from remote controlled trains

BY JOE SWANSON

LINCOLN, Neb. — As part of their drive to intensify the pace of labor and slash workers, rail bosses in the U.S. are stepping up use of one-person remote-control operation of trains hauling freight. And they're running larger and longer trains in rail yards and nearby neighborhoods, some up to 160 cars.

This means one worker is running a 100-ton locomotive and its train consist with no one on board. It's literally impossible to see what is happening around these trains.

The increase in remote-control op-  
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## Conviction of Trump deals new blows to political rights

BY TERRY EVANS

The seven-year drive by Democratic Party bosses, prosecutors and the liberal media to bring down, ruin and imprison Donald Trump is accelerating with the coming presidential election. They finally got a conviction by a jury in New York City May 30. The 2024 presidential candidate was found guilty of falsifying business records in order to carry out an unspecified second "crime" related to interfering in the 2016 election in which he had been a candidate.

This combination allowed the prosecution to avoid the fact that the statute of limitations had expired and turn the case from a misdemeanor to a felony, with potential jail time.

The charges were brought by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, who ran for office as the best man to pin a crime on Trump. Judge Juan Merchan, a Biden campaign donor, ran the proceedings, putting barriers in front of Trump and his lawyers to maximize the likelihood of a "guilty" verdict. This included imposing an unconstitutional gag order on the presidential candidate and dealing blows to his right to a fair trial.

This culminated in Merchan's instructions to the jury before they met. He told them they could convict Trump of carrying out this second "crime," say-

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## Join fight against ban on 'Militant' in Florida prison

BY JANET POST

Supporters of the rights of workers behind bars, freedom of speech and the press are stepping up efforts to urge Florida prison officials to reverse their ban of *Militant* issue no. 17 at the Jackson Correctional Institution in Malone.

Letters supporting the *Militant's* appeal include a joint letter from the national and Florida American Civil Liberties Union, as well as from the Florida

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## Ukraine workers resist Moscow attacks, defend their country's independence



The Way Home

Wives, mothers and children of Russian soldiers drafted in 2022 mobilization picketed Defense Ministry in Moscow June 3. Placard on right says, "It's time for the mobilized to come home."

BY ROY LANDERSEN

When Moscow's tanks rolled into Ukraine over two years ago, Russian President Vladimir Putin told his troops they would be welcomed as liberators. Washington expected the invaders to take the capital and much of the country with little resistance.

But the capitalist rulers in Russia and the U.S. underestimated the determina-

tion of working people in Ukraine to fight for the country's independence. They reinforced Ukraine's army and formed voluntary brigades, repelling Moscow's forces from around Kyiv and Kharkiv, the country's biggest cities.

Today Putin seeks to mobilize the military and industrial resources of Russia, three times Ukraine's size, for an ex-

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# Workers defend Ukraine sovereignty

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tended war. Moscow has hiked income taxes, especially on working people, to finance military spending, which has doubled from 14% of the budget in 2021 to 29% this year.

In the past few months, Moscow's forces have stepped up attacks all along the over 600-mile front line with Ukraine's defenses to try to take advantage of the Ukrainian army's shortages of ammunition and troop reserves. Since early May, the Putin regime has escalated bombardment of civilian targets in Kharkiv and taken out over half the power grid across the country. Its forces invaded Ukraine's northeastern border, directly threatening the city.

But the incursion toward Kharkiv was stalled by Ukrainian counterattacks, with Russian losses the highest of the war so far. In the 24 hours between June 2-3, Russia lost 1,270 troops, the *New York Post* reported, the deadliest day of the war. They also lost 14 tanks, 22 armed personnel carriers and 47 pieces of artillery. Kharkiv officials announced May 24 plans for the construction of an underground town, with a school, medical facilities, shopping areas and other amenities that can withstand heavier bombardments.

The U.S. rulers' overriding goal is to try to stabilize the region for their own

predatory interests against both rivals and allies alike. Their concern with Ukrainian sovereignty extends only so far as it aids that goal.

Washington has sought to avoid a direct confrontation with Moscow by imposing constraints on how the weapons it supplies Ukrainian forces can be used. Longer-range rockets were only to be used to strike military targets in Russian-occupied Ukrainian territory, not inside Russia itself.

At the end of May, President Joseph Biden's administration eased some of these restrictions, but only for the Kharkiv region. Ukrainian forces can now target Moscow's forces amassing near the border there or warplanes in Russian airspace that are launching missiles or glide bombs.

The Kremlin uses U.S. arms shipments to Ukraine to claim that Washington is "provoking Ukraine to continue this senseless war." But it's Putin's attempt to seize Ukraine and incorporate it into Russia that is the root cause of the war.

## Worker volunteers defend Ukraine

Roman, a 38-year-old platoon commander, was one of the thousands of Ukrainian workers who volunteered to fight Putin's invasion. "For Europe and the whole world, we're on the front lines," he told Reuters. "If you let him get away with it," Putin "is not going to stop" just in Ukraine.

Viktor, an infantryman in the Ukrainian army, said that in February his exhaustion from constant shelling and lack of sleep got to him. Despite a shortage of soldiers, his commander gave him a few days off to rest. Then he returned, even though conditions are "worse than hell." Such brief



State Emergency Service of Ukraine

Firefighter battles blaze after Russian airstrikes hit Kyiv May 31, forcing power blackouts next day. Moscow attacks civilian targets and has taken out over half of Ukraine's power generation, trying to demoralize working people, who respond with determined resistance.

respite are not uncommon in the Ukrainian army.

By contrast, most Russian mobilized soldiers, if allowed a home rest, would never return to the carnage at the front.

Increasingly faced with troop shortages, including on the Kharkiv front, the Kremlin is pressing prison inmates and young men arrested for debt arrears, like alimony payments, into the army.

Pro-war Project Arkhangel in Russia said June 1, "How is the situation now? It sucks." They reported special Ukrainian drone units around Kharkiv are able to stop just about any Russian attack, no matter its size.

The Kremlin claims it will add another

300,000 troops to boost the half a million now occupying parts of Ukraine. But no mass call-up is planned since Putin fears this would trigger a fresh wave of protests like those after the Sept. 21, 2022, mobilization.

A group of wives, sisters and mothers of Russian soldiers, The Way Home, has been protesting, demanding their relatives' rotation out of the carnage. Although the Putin regime has been careful not to openly suppress its vigils, the government ruled May 31 that the group and one of its spokespeople, Maria Andreeva, are "foreign agents," a smear it uses to target a range of political opponents.

But the women weren't intimidated. About a dozen wives and children picketed the Russian Ministry of Defense in Moscow June 3 with placards and a banner saying, "It's time for the mobilized to come home." When the police arrived, the women said they were from different organizations and continued the protest.

## Correction

The headline in an article in issue no. 23 misstated that "Oberlin College fired lacrosse coach for saying, 'Women's sports are for women.'" Former Oberlin College lacrosse coach Kim Russell was not fired. She was removed from coaching duties in the fall of 2023 and reassigned to a non-coaching position in the athletic department. She resigned on Oct. 4, 2023.

In the same issue, a figure in the article "Fruit joins campaigning, fight for ballot status in Tennessee" was incorrect. The total number of signatures required for ballot status is 275, not 375.

## 'Militant' publishing schedule

This is a three-week issue. The next issue will be mailed June 27

## Socialist Workers Party statement

Defend Ukraine's independence!

For defeat of Moscow's invasion!

US troops, nuclear arms out of Europe, all of Europe!

Online at [themilitant.com](http://themilitant.com)

# THE MILITANT

## Back fight for independence of New Caledonia

Paris sent more troops and police to New Caledonia after its moves to help seat another pro-Paris government were met with widespread protests by Kanaks. The 'Militant' supports the fight to end colonial rule, under which Kanaks face discrimination in education, jobs, rights.



Asia Pacific Report  
Thousands of Kanaks protest colonial rule March 27 in Noumea, New Caledonia.

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## The Militant

Vol. 88/No. 24

Closing news date: June 5, 2024

Editor: John Studer

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Published weekly except for one week in January, two weeks in June, one week in September.

Business Manager: Bob Bruce

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Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: For one year send \$35 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

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United Kingdom: Send £30 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, 5 Norman Road (first floor), Seven Sisters, London, N15 4ND, England.

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France: Send 100 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15.

Australia: Send A\$70 for one year to P.O. Box 73 Campsie, NSW 2194 Australia.

New Zealand and the Pacific Islands: Send A\$70 for one year to above address.

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

# Rulers across Europe boost militaries, war preparations

BY TERRY EVANS

Rivalries, trade wars and the growing threat of more shooting wars are a reality across the capitalist world today. This future underscores the stakes for working people in organizing to take political power out of the capitalist rulers' hands.

Nowhere is this clearer than in Eastern Europe. Following the recent entry of Finland and Sweden into the U.S.-led NATO alliance, the Polish government called on Washington to station nuclear weapons on its soil. Governments across Eastern Europe are fortifying their defenses and seeking stronger alliances with U.S. and European imperialist rulers in the wake of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. This fits with the aims of U.S. imperialism, which is expanding the reach of its military might across the region.

Washington has sought to uphold its still dominant but weakened place as top dog in the imperialist world order, since it failed to emerge victorious after invading Iraq in 1991.

The threat of more wars has accelerated in the last two years, after Moscow's attempt to conquer the Ukrainian people — the largest ground war in Europe since World War II — and Hamas' Oct. 7 pogrom in Israel, the deadliest massacre of Jews since the Nazi's Holocaust. These events confirm that working people are living through the opening guns of a third world war, and they're growing louder.

Washington has yet to respond to Polish President Andrzej Duda's April 22 call for U.S. nuclear weapons, but both governments are advancing military cooperation. Washington made a \$2.5 billion loan for a massive Polish defense modernization program last year. The Polish government now spends 4% of its gross domestic product on its military, the highest of any nation in the NATO alliance. And Warsaw announced May 27 the construction of fortifications aimed at turning its eastern border into an "impenetrable" barrier to Moscow.

Fearing intervention by the Russian rulers, capitalist powers in Eastern Europe are transforming their militaries. The Romanian government has begun building the largest NATO base in Europe at Ramstein. It will host F-16 and F-35 bombers and 10,000 troops. In Finland, which has an 832-mile land border with Russia, the rulers are purchasing U.S. rocket systems and F-35 jets, and Israeli air-defense systems.

Governments of the Baltic states are hosting one of the largest ever NATO naval exercises June 7-20, involving forces from Washington and 18 other countries, 50 ships and 85 aircraft.

## Moscow's deadly course

The rulers of these countries each claim these steps are needed to counter Moscow. In response to the Polish government's request to house U.S. nuclear weapons, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova April 25 threatened Warsaw would be added to its "list of legitimate targets for destruction."

Russian President Vladimir Putin's regime is stepping up the expansionist course it has pursued toward its "near abroad" for decades, with disastrous consequences for working people.

Shortly after its forces invaded

Ukraine in 2022, Putin compared himself to Russia's former czarist rulers and lamented Moscow's loss of the prison house of nations that existed under the czarist empire. A few months earlier, Putin denounced V.I. Lenin, the central leader of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, for unconditionally granting the right of self-determination to all nations oppressed by the czars.

More recently, Putin has claimed parts of Estonia belong to Russia. His regime plans to double the number of troops along Russia's border with Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Lithuania. It announced the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons to neighboring Belarus May 6. The Belarusian government provided Moscow's forces a pathway for its failed attempt to seize Kyiv, the Ukrainian capital, in early 2022.

Putin has cynically used the moves by Washington and other NATO governments to claim his invasion of Ukraine is a defensive response. But in fact an independent Ukraine is no military threat whatsoever to Russia.

## US troops, weapons out of Europe!

The U.S. rulers established NATO on the ashes of their victory in the imperialist slaughter of World War II to put down rebellions by working people

# Molson Coors workers return to work after hard-fought strike

BY ALYSON KENNEDY AND JOSEFINA OTERO

FORT WORTH, Texas — After a three-month hard-fought strike, members of Teamsters Local 997 at Molson Coors Brewery here accepted a three-year contract May 22. Workers said 270 voted yes and 84 voted no. They began returning to work May 29.

The strike began Feb. 17 with 93% of the local rejecting a proposed contract offer. There were 420 workers at the plant. A second proposal was rejected in March. The bosses hired over several hundred temporary workers, all of whom were fired after the contract vote. In the last week of the strike 20 skilled craft workers crossed the picket line.

"I think this was the same contract we just turned down and worse than the first offer," Teamsters Local 997 member Samuel Bullard told the *Militant*. "The company was trying to break the union. I will be ready to fight again in the next contract."

The International union reported the contract included increased wage gains, improved benefits and restored health care for retired members. But workers said the contract also added three more tiers for skilled workers' pay, changed the retirement age from 55 after 15 years of work to 57 after 20, decreased the amount the company pays on 401(K) and increased the cost of health insurance.

The strike, the local's first, received solidarity from the labor movement and working people in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Hundreds joined a rally to support the strikers March 17. Union flight attendants, members of the United Auto Workers, UNITE HERE, Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union and others joined in picketing.

"Union members were looking at



Sebastian Kahnert/dpa

Nine NATO powers, from U.S. and Europe, engage in joint military exercise in Poland, involving 20,000 troops with tanks and other armored vehicles, including crossing of Vistula River, above, March 4. Operation Dragon 24 was designed as a test response to attack by Moscow.

in Europe and elsewhere and advance Washington's interests, including against the Soviet Union.

In the 1990s, the U.S. rulers and their NATO allies bombarded Serbia, Bosnia and elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia, breaking up the country along centuries-old national lines, demolishing the national unification conquered by working people during the 1945 Yugoslav Revolution. In the process Washington reinforced its position as the dominant "European" power.

"Washington and its capitalist al-

lies in London, Paris, Berlin, and elsewhere shed crocodile tears over Ukraine's national sovereignty and the plight of its people," explains a Socialist Workers Party National Committee statement issued by Jack Barnes, the party's national secretary, in March 2022. "Their only real concern is to protect their own profits and strategic political interests in the region."

Some 100,000 U.S. troops are deployed in Europe alongside a further 40,000 troops from other countries

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the number of temps who were working in the plant and that skilled workers crossed days before the vote," Donald Cook, a co-picket line captain during the strike, said.

"Molson Coors used to be a good place to work and you had to know someone to get hired," Cook said. "It's not like that anymore. I have seen many families destroyed because you are never home. You don't even know your kids."

Workers regularly worked 12-to-

16 hour shifts seven days a week. The factory isn't air-conditioned. "In the summertime, it gets really rough in there," line mechanic Jeff Pruitt told the Fort Worth Weekly. "It's extremely hot, and it wouldn't be so bad if the air wasn't so stagnant. There's no ventilation in there." He said workers have suffered heat-stroke in the facility.

Molson Coors bosses reported 2023 was an extremely successful year, taking in \$11.7 billion.

# Tractor workers in the UK welcome support for strike action over wages

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

BASILDON, England — "This is the best turnout yet," Unite union shop steward Nick Brown commented as some 200 workers picketed the Case New Holland tractor plant here June 4. Over 500 workers at the factory have been on strike three days a week since May 14. Joining the picket were a couple of other Unite members from the nearby Thurrock refuse center and the Ford plant in Dagenham, as well as Pamela Holmes, the Communist League parliamentary candidate for Tottenham in London.

"The company has reneged on the agreement they signed two years ago," union convener Pat Gough told Holmes. "We were on the verge of striking, locked in dispute with the local management, when the Italian owners stepped in. They offered wage rises based on averaged inflation over the previous year which we accepted." The company's two plants in the U.S., in Wisconsin and Iowa, were already involved in strike action by the United Auto Workers union. The owners didn't want strike action on

two continents. The U.S. strike lasted eight months, through January 2023.

"Now they're offering a raise based on the Consumer Price Index in the month of last December alone. If they can rip up a signed agreement, what does that mean for having a union?"

The strike vote was 95% in favor, Gough said, "and in the lead-up to the strikes, we've recruited 60 new members. Almost all the shop floor are now in the union."

"We've had some form of inflation-protection for years. But, like many conditions here, it's been eroded," added shop steward and maintenance worker Tania Powell. She has worked for Case for 36 years, the first woman to get an engineering apprenticeship.

Driven by competition, bosses have been going after wages and conditions won by unions, Holmes said. "We need to be building and strengthening unions — to win pay and conditions to prevent families in the working class from being torn apart, and to allow young workers to start a family. That's what is so important about the fight at Case."

# ‘Workers need a labor party’

Continued from front page

Hillary Clinton called ‘deplorables’ and that today the Biden administration calls ‘semi-fascists’ and ‘MAGA Republicans.’ It is working people who are paying the price for the crisis of capitalism, who resist being told how to think and live, and for whom neither the Democrats nor Republicans have any solutions.”

The attacks are coming from Republican Party politicians as well, she said. In Florida, where she lives, “We’ve seen book bannings, attacks on the unions, increased use of the death penalty, attempts to outlaw abortion and more, as well as a recently signed bill mandating that kindergartners be taught about the ‘evils of communism.’”

“Our campaign today will first and foremost defend the Jewish people,” Fruit said. “The Oct. 7 massacre in Israel was the largest anti-Jewish pogrom since the Nazi Holocaust, and has unleashed a firestorm of bourgeois and middle-class Jew-hatred around the world. All spring, reactionary mobilizations have taken place on elite college campuses around the country, including Penn and Drexel here, threatening Jewish students and faculty with calls to ‘Go back to Poland,’ for Hamas to ‘Strike, strike Tel Aviv,’ and more.

“The Israeli people have the absolute right to take all steps necessary to defend Israel’s existence as a refuge for Jews. The Socialist Workers Party calls on working people in the U.S. to condemn the Biden administration for trying to pressure Israel’s government ‘to accept the win’ and not respond to the attack by Iran.

“At the same time, we oppose the deepening sanctions against Iran proposed by Washington and other imperialist powers. It is Iran’s working people — Persian, Kurdish, Azerbaijani, Arab, and Baluchi — who are the biggest potential allies of working people in Israel in the fight against Hamas. They have protested in large numbers in cities, villages and rural areas in 2018, 2019, 2022 and again today, many with their unions, in defiance of the regime. The class struggle in Iran is central to helping overcome the national divisions and uniting all the toilers of the Middle East.

Given the space they need, “the working classes of Israel, Palestine, Iran and the whole region can find solutions in their common interests.”

## Cuba’s socialist revolution

“We speak out in defense of the Cuban Revolution. Our job is to never give an inch, even the tip of a finger, to the U.S. rulers’ relentless economic war on Cuba’s sovereignty and the socialist revolution workers and peasants made there. We live in a transitional historical period opened by the Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution in 1917. The fight for workers power was reopened in the Americas with the Cuban Revolution led by Fidel Castro in 1959. In both cases, with proper leadership working people defied the most powerful forces on earth, and won.”

She described the role of Stalinism in putting a brake on revolutionary struggles before, during and after World War II.

“By order of Joseph Stalin, Moscow ripped apart the efforts of Jewish and Arab workers who tried to build communist parties that could unite the workers and farmers in the Middle East and

fight in their common class interests. Instead, Moscow backed some of the most reactionary Arab rulers, including those allied with the Hitler regime in Germany, in the name of Arab nationalism.

“The Stalinists’ refusal to make a united front with the Social Democracy in Germany and organize the power of the working class there to fight to block Hitler coming to power — and then flip-flopping into backing ‘democratic’ imperialist regimes in the U.S. and elsewhere — prevented revolutionary-minded workers in Europe from taking power.

“They made it possible for Hitler to rise to power and for World War II to take place, leading to the deaths of tens of millions of toilers who were sent to fight and die in the interests of competing capitalist alliances,” Fruit said, “on top of the 20 million who died defending the Soviet Union and the 40% of the world’s Jewish population slaughtered in the Holocaust.

## Defend Ukrainian independence

“Putin claims that he was forced to invade Ukraine because NATO was too close for comfort, but after two years of death and destruction, it is Russia’s ‘near neighbors’ who feel threatened.

“The result is that capitalist governments in Poland, Bulgaria, Romania and Finland are all ramping up their military and trying to cement stronger ties with U.S. and European imperialist rulers,” she said. “Romania is building a new air base for 10,000 NATO soldiers and their families.

“Former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev claimed Romani, or gypsy, influence on Romania’s national culture

# SWP campaign prepares to file for ballot in Tennessee

BY SUSAN LAMONT

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — “I don’t believe in the other candidates,” Lycinda Richards, a disabled worker living in Johnson City, told Socialist Workers Party campaigners Arrin Hawkins and Richard Hazboun when they knocked on her door May 18. Hawkins and Hazboun were part of a statewide effort to get signatures and presidential electors to put Rachele Fruit, the SWP candidate for president, and her running mate, Dennis Richter, on the Tennessee ballot in the November election.

“The Socialist Workers Party says that workers need to break with the bosses’ parties and form a labor party, based on the unions, to involve and defend the interests of all workers,” said Hawkins.

“Hold up!” Richards replied. Then she called for her daughter to come and sign the petition too. “There are no good candidates on either side,” Richards said. “No one is looking out for the working class. If you are down on your luck, the rich will tell you to go to a shelter. It’s workers who are the most generous. We look out for each other.”

Richards also got a subscription to the *Militant* so she could follow the campaign. Her daughter, Kristin Smith, signed Fruit’s petition and picked up *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class and Women’s Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*. Smith said she has a Jewish friend who lives in New Zealand now and she has followed the rise in antisemitic attacks there and in Australia.



Militant/Janet Post

Rachele Fruit, SWP candidate for U.S. president, speaks in Philadelphia May 25, inviting everyone to endorse her campaign, join in spreading the word about its working-class program.

means ‘Romanians, as you know, are not a nation, but a way of life.’” Romani were also rounded up and tossed in concentration camps and exterminated by the Nazi regime in Germany.

“Today in Moscow there is a giant billboard that says, ‘Russia’s borders do not end anywhere.’”

Washington responds in kind, strengthening its military might and looking for stronger alliances against both Moscow and Beijing.

“We are not bourgeois pacifists. Our program is not peaceful coexistence. We are for organizing the working class to fight in our class interests. Like the Bolsheviks. Like Fidel did in Cuba,” Fruit said. “We are for the Ukrainian people defeating the Putin regime. We are for Israel’s defeat of Hamas.”

These two historic confrontations — in Ukraine and Israel — mark

a watershed today. They reflect the weaknesses and breakdown of the imperialist order, and the danger of spreading wars and the use of nuclear weapons under extreme pressure. “Only socialist revolutions in the imperialist countries can bring the danger of a world nuclear conflagration to an end once and for all.

“We don’t call for nonproliferation or arms treaties or disarmament because the only disarmament that can avert, or end war,” she said, “is the disarmament of the capitalist rulers by the workers.”

Fruit appealed to everyone at the meeting to endorse the Socialist Workers Party campaign and join in spreading the word about its working-class program.

“What if the U.S. cuts ammunition  
Continued on page 5

Michael Powell also signed the petition in Johnson City. “I’ve been thinking about a party like this for awhile,” he told campaigner Betsy Farley. “I’m getting nowhere. I take five steps forward and 15 steps back. Look at the gas and food prices going up, and wages going down. The rich are making record profits, but a couple with good jobs can’t afford groceries.”

“More workers are fighting now, not only for higher wages but for safety and some measure of control over what happens on the shop floor,” Farley said, pointing to the recent victory in organizing the Volkswagen plant in Chattanooga into the United Auto Workers. Powell agreed, explaining that when he worked at Texas Instruments in 1979 he had spoken up for getting organized. He was told, “If you mention the union again, you’re out the door.”

He bought an introductory subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward*.

Eighteen supporters of Fruit and the Socialist Workers Party who joined in the May 18-26 effort campaigned in Nashville and its surrounding towns, Chattanooga, Memphis, and Johnson City. They campaigned in store parking lots in the morning and knocked on doors in working-class neighborhoods in the afternoon.

Fruit joined the team in Memphis for several days, including meeting with union members of the Bakery Workers and United Auto Workers. (See “Fruit joins campaigning, fight for ballot status

in Tennessee” in the June 10 *Militant*.)

In Chattanooga, several members of the UAW from the recently organized Volkswagen plant signed up to put Fruit on the ballot. This union victory came up in many discussions with workers across Tennessee. “The VW workers we met were jubilant about their victory,” campaigner Janice Lynn told the *Militant*.

SWP campaigners found serious interest among workers of all backgrounds in the idea that workers need their own party. They also found widespread support for Israel’s right to exist as a refuge against Jew-hatred and pogroms, and the importance of working people standing up to antisemitism.

While a few people, including both Trump and Biden supporters, said, “No way!” when they saw the word “socialist” on the campaign flyer, the main reaction was interest. Others were attracted to the party’s call for working people and the unions to defend constitutional freedoms, which are under concerted attack by the Democratic Party and Biden White House.

In nine days in Tennessee, socialist campaigners gathered 776 signatures, well over the legal requirement of 275, as well as the required 11 presidential electors. They sold 14 subscriptions to the *Militant*, 14 books by SWP and other revolutionary leaders, and 50 single copies of the *Militant*. They also signed up 12 new endorsers for Fruit’s campaign.

Arrin Hawkins from Washington, D.C., contributed to this article.

# SWP files petitions to put party on New Jersey ballot

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

UNION CITY, N.J. — “Two SWP candidates file as independents,” the Hudson County View reported June 1. Joanne Kuniansky, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from New Jersey, and Lea Sherman, the party’s candidate for Congress, filed petitions May 31. They had more than double the signatures required to be placed on the New Jersey ballot.

Campaign supporters gathered a similar number of signatures for SWP presidential candidate Rachele Fruit. They will be filed later.

The View noted the party’s opposition to the conviction of Donald Trump on frame-up charges a day earlier. The SWP candidates, they wrote, say, “Overturn the guilty verdict. Whatever they do to Trump — a candidate of one of the bosses’ parties — the same and worse will be done to workers and our unions.”

Campaign supporters spoke to thousands of working people across the state about the party’s program as they collected signatures.

Rail worker Jesse Cancel and his partner, Deseree Savo, a pharmacist, signed up May 19 after talking to SWP member Terry Evans here. “We need a change in the president, someone for the working class,” Cancel said.

“The question in front of us is what workers can do together to fight what the bosses and their parties do to us,” Evans said. “That’s how we’ll begin to change the conditions we face.”

“But the government has got us divided, by religion, by race. If we were more united we could do more,” Cancel replied.

Evans pointed to today’s labor battles, where workers have come together to fight to end multitier wages, push back against family-crushing schedules and take control over working conditions.

“Look at the historic accomplishments of the working class in this country, where millions fought to uproot Jim Crow segregation,” he said. “That’s what our class is capable of doing when we fight.”

Employers “keep pushing us,” Cancel said. “Sooner or later there’ll be a rebellion.” He got a copy of the *Militant* to learn more about what fellow rail workers in Canada are doing in response to employer and government attacks there.

A retired postal worker and former shop steward here signed up to put Fruit and Kuniansky on the ballot. “What’s the SWP view on abortion? Can women’s rights ever be won?” she asked.

“Abortion should be decriminalized,” Evans replied. “The working-class road to women’s emancipation starts with fighting capitalism’s erosion of conditions that make family life possible, especially unemployment and the effects of soaring prices.” He showed her how *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks For-*

## Richter: Trump conviction is blow to rights of working people

BY BETSY FARLEY

CINCINNATI — “The conviction of Donald Trump was celebrated in huge headlines in the Dallas-Fort Worth newspapers and liberal media across the country,” Dennis Richter, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. vice president, told supporters at a June 1 campaign event here. “But this was no victory for working people — quite the opposite.”

Richter explained the New York “hush-money” trial, as well as the three additional indictments Trump faces, are nothing but an attempt by the Democratic Party to run him out of the elections and deny millions of workers the



Militant/Abby Tilsner  
Lea Sherman, left, SWP candidate for Congress, and Joanne Kuniansky, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate, turn in twice the required signatures to be placed on New Jersey ballot May 31 in Trenton, accompanied by Ved Dookhun, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Pennsylvania.

ward addresses these questions. She got a copy of the book along with a *Militant* subscription.

Sherone Thompson, a nurse, was happy to find SWP member Candace Wagner campaigning outside the Walmart in Kearney May 20. She told Wagner she got a campaign flyer a few weeks earlier and liked what she read.

She bought a copy of the *Militant* and signed up to become an endorser of Rachele Fruit’s campaign.

The statewide effort wrapped up with a successful campaign meeting here May 25 featuring Dennis Richter, the SWP candidate for vice president. Participants contributed \$1,168 to extend the reach of the campaign.

right to vote for the candidate of their choice.

“Rachele Fruit, the SWP candidate for U.S. president, and I say Trump’s conviction is an attack on the constitutional protections working people and the oppressed need, first and foremost. The fight to defend and extend these freedoms is at the center of the class struggle today.

“Millions of workers resist being told how to think and how to live,” Richter said. “We say the working class needs its own party, a labor party based on the unions, a party that can organize all working people.

“Tens of thousands of workers have been on the picket lines in recent years, winning some important gains, like in the United Auto Workers strike at the Big Three and others. Hotel workers in my union, UNITE HERE, just won contracts in Los Angeles with significant wage increases.

“Not every fight ends in a victory though,” Richter said, pointing to recent union battles at International Flavors and Fragrances in Memphis, Tennessee and Molson Coors in Fort Worth, Texas. Although workers at Volkswagen in Chattanooga, Tennessee, won a hard-fought battle with 73% voting for the UAW, the union lost its first vote for the union at Mercedes-Benz in Vance,

Alabama. Richter urged solidarity and support for June 13 protests organized by the two flight attendants unions fighting for a contract.

“It will take organization, developing leadership and solidarity to go forward,” he said. “We can build a workers’ movement, a labor party of all working people, anyone who agrees we need to break with the capitalist parties. A labor party can fight for a government-financed public works program to create jobs for all who need them, building things workers need at union-scale wages. And we can fight for workers control of production and safety. A labor party can build a social movement regardless of language or nationality.”

Richter said that ultimately workers need to fight to take political power, “The question facing humanity on a worldwide basis is which class will rule.” Richter urged everyone to endorse the campaign of Rachele Fruit for president and join in campaigning. “There’s nothing more important you can do with your life today.”

A lively discussion followed Richter’s presentation and more than \$500 was raised for the Socialist Workers Party campaign.

### New endorser backs SWP call for labor party



Militant/Josefina Otero

EL RENO, Okla. — “America needs an independent labor party from the workers,” Robert Stock said as he signed a card to endorse the campaign of Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, June 2.

Stock, above left, with SWP member Gerardo Sánchez, is a hotel worker in El Reno. He looked online for a party with working-class politics, found the SWP and the *Militant* and subscribed. He agreed with the party’s views supporting Ukraine’s fight for sovereignty, on Israel’s right to exist as a refuge for Jews, and the importance of the Cuban Revolution and sent in two contributions to the spring Militant Fighting Fund.

— JOSEFINA OTERO

## Rachele Fruit

Continued from page 4

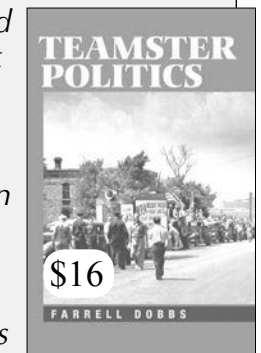
to Israel, who will supply it?” one participant asked in the discussion after her talk.

“We don’t call on Washington or any imperialist power to provide arms to anyone. The U.S. rulers have their own predatory interests. At the same time, we support the right of Israel to get arms anywhere it can. We back its fight to defeat Hamas.”

Over \$600 was raised for the campaign. The following day campaign supporters organized a barbecue, where informal political discussion continued with the socialist candidate.

### Teamster Politics

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



— Farrell Dobbs

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# US, UN-led intervention forces will fuel, not solve, crisis in Haiti

BY STEVE WARSHHELL

MIAMI — The Joseph Biden administration seized on the May 23 killing of three Christian missionaries working in Haiti — two Americans and a Haitian — to call for an “expedited deployment” of a multinational military force to fight powerful gangs who control large parts of the country’s capital.

The looming U.N.-backed deployment of some 2,500 Kenyan-led foreign forces has been in the works since October as Washington seeks to put into place yet another U.S. imperialist-led intervention in the neighboring Caribbean nation.

“There is a lot going on in this hemisphere. And we’re in a situation where we want to do all we can without us looking like America once again is stepping over, deciding this is what must be done,” Biden said May 23 at a White House press conference with William Ruto, president of Kenya. In addition to largely financing the military intervention, Washington will provide intelligence support and equipment.

In the meantime, gangs are intensifying attacks to better their positions before the deployment. Since Feb. 29, armed gangs have targeted police stations and vandalized and burned dozens of hospitals, schools and critical infrastructure. The violence has forced at least 90,000 Haitians to seek refuge in schoolyards and public plazas in the capital and led to the deaths and injuries of more than 2,500.

In the past 30 years, military invasions of Haiti have been carried out both under the banner of the U.N. and directly by U.S. troops. They have installed puppet governments through which U.S., French, and Canadian imperialism exercised control over the country. These military interventions have visited on Haitians cholera, rape and thousands of casualties by U.N. forces.

During Washington’s first imperialist intervention the administration of President Woodrow Wilson sent U.S. Marines to Port-au-Prince in 1914 to take \$500,000 — the equivalent of \$15 million today — from the Haitian National Bank to New York, giving the U.S. rulers control over the bank. The following year Washington invaded Haiti and occupied it for 20 years.

What followed were decades of naked

imperialist exploitation carried out in collaboration with a string of dictators. These regimes relied on paramilitary gangs to stifle their rivals and suppress struggles by working people in city and countryside. This became the face of capitalist domination in Haiti.

During the rule of the Francois and Jean-Claude Duvalier family — from 1957 to 1986 — the regime used the notorious paramilitary Tonton Macoutes to dispose of its enemies and terrorize working people. They were backed by Washington.

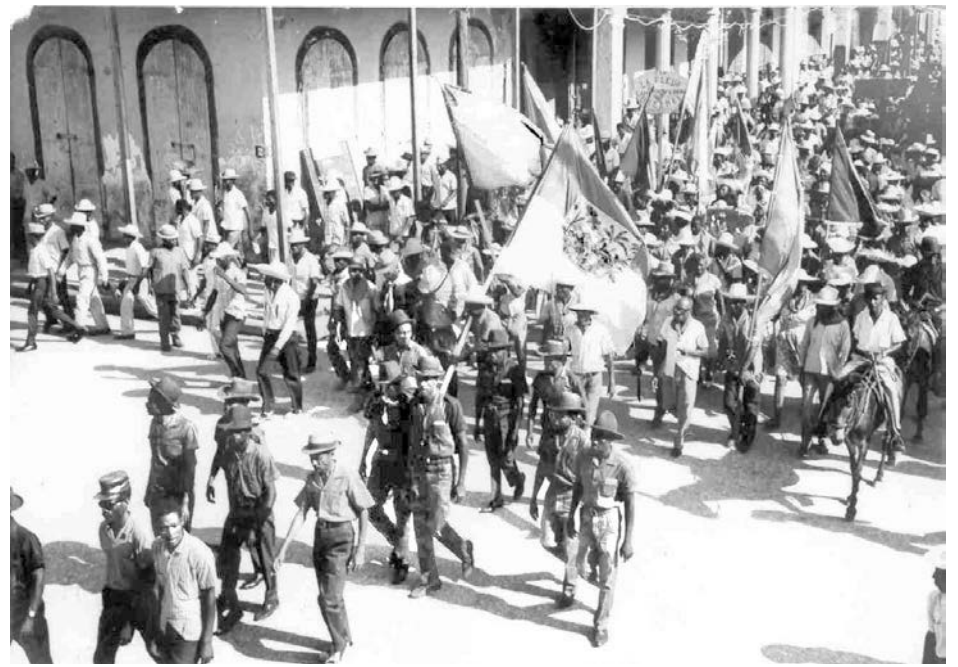
## Haitian toilers rise up

Growing working-class resistance to the Duvaliers’ dictatorship in 1984 led to a broad struggle involving tens of thousands in street mobilizations and strikes across the country. Their struggle brought down one of the most brutal dictatorships in Latin America, building the confidence of working people to fight for political rights and better working and living conditions.

Jean-Bertrand Aristide, an outspoken opponent of the tyranny, emerged as the main leader of this rebellion. He was elected president on the hopes of working people that the new government would improve their conditions of life.

In 1991, rightist military officers, backed by capitalist forces both in Haiti and abroad, toppled Aristide. He turned to Washington with illusions the U.S. rulers would help. But he made a deal with the devil. Washington did help Aristide retake power, on the bayonets of 20,000 invading U.S. troops. The price was increased subordination to Washington’s dictates.

The reinstated Aristide government willingly carried out Wall Street’s demands to open up Haiti to greater imperialist penetration, relying more and more on thuggish methods against its capitalist opponents. His party’s lead-



CIDHCA

From 1957 to 1986, U.S.-backed regimes of Francois (Papa Doc) and Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier used notorious Tonton Macoutes paramilitary force, shown above on parade, to eliminate foes and terrorize working people. Their brutal rule was backed by Washington.

ers enriched themselves amid flourishing corruption, becoming more and more distanced from the realities of life of the Haitian masses.

## Imperialist interference

“The worst period in Haiti in my lifetime was when Aristide was brought back,” Max Noel, today a warehouse worker in Miami, told the *Militant*. “When the United States invaded they changed everything so they could get rich off of us. Haiti’s resources were stolen — even historical landmarks, like an old castle in my hometown — were looted, and all the bronze statues and cannons were stolen. Land was sold off cheap to factory owners. The pay and conditions in those factories were horrible.”

Aristide was elected a second time, and then toppled again in 2004. Following his removal, the U.N. Security Council assembled an occupation force to establish a new regime. At its height, the U.N. force grew to as many as 13,000 members.

U.N. occupation forces and “aid” agencies were there during the devastating 2010 earthquake, which killed over

300,000 people. At least 10,000 died of cholera, which was caused by poor sanitation at a U.N. base.

The naked corruption led to a growing number of clashes that left hundreds of civilians dead, and numerous cases of “peacekeepers” linked to a child sexual exploitation ring and the rape of women. Criminal courts never charged them formally. In 2017, the U.S. rulers decided to remove their mission from the country. Now they’re looking to come back.

The imposition of puppet governments by imperialist interests, factional war between Haitian ruling circles and the emergence of organized criminal gangs in the last decade has created a vacuum of power. “Given the number of weapons present in this country any serious government will have to get along with the armed groups,” notorious gang leader Jimmy Chérizier told France 24 News on May 27.

As struggles by working people worldwide deepen under the impact of today’s capitalist crisis, the fighting traditions of Haitian toilers will rise again.

Roger Calero contributed to this article.

# Beijing uses frame-up trial to shut down rights in Hong Kong

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Fourteen political figures in Hong Kong opposed to Beijing’s increasingly authoritarian control over the former British colony were found guilty of “subversion” in a landmark trial against political freedoms May 30. Of the 47 originally arrested, 31 had entered guilty pleas. The prosecution has appealed the acquittal of two others over lack of evidence.

The charge carries a minimum of three years and a maximum of life imprisonment. Daniel Chan wrote the *Militant* from Hong Kong May 31 to say he believes “the defendants would receive very severe sentences.”

The frame-up snared journalists, lawyers and student activists who were charged with trying to “overthrow” the government. Most were already in detention since their arrest over three years ago. Among them were Joshua Wong, a student leader who led large street occupations in 2014 demanding the right to vote, and nurse Winnie Wu, who joined the mass protests for political rights in 2019.

The “crime” the “Hong Kong 47” were charged with was holding a primary election in 2020 in which over 600,000 people voted to select candidates to run against Beijing-selected of-

ficials for the city parliament. The judges in the 118-day trial were handpicked by Hong Kong’s Beijing-installed Chief Executive John Lee.

Outside the courthouse, demonstrators protested the verdict. Vanessa Chan, wife of defendant Leung Kwok-hung, one of Hong Kong’s most well-known dissidents, was arrested for “disorderly conduct.”

The prosecution was based on the notorious National Security Law, adopted by unanimous vote under Beijing’s pressure in June 2020, in response to large protests against the Chinese rulers’ tightening grip. It criminalizes what it terms subversion, secession, collusion with foreign forces and terrorist acts. This effectively outlaws all forms of dissent. Some 291 people have already been arrested under its provisions.

This has forced scores of organizations to shut down, including trade unions, media outlets and opposition political parties.

One group shuttered was the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China, which for years had organized mass commemorations of Beijing’s brutal crushing of protests by Chinese working people and students on June 4, 1989.

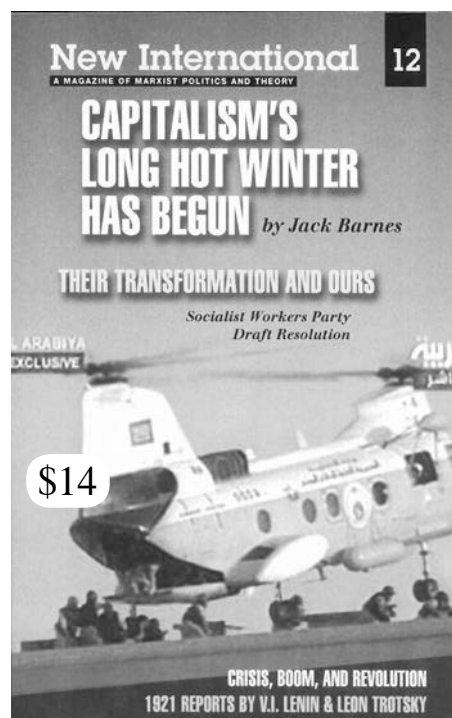
Tanks rolled over the large encampment in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square, which had been set up to demand political rights with the support of millions across the country and worldwide.

Some 200,000 people attended the Tiananmen Square commemoration in Hong Kong in 2019. By then, Hong Kong was the only place claimed by Beijing to be part of Chinese territory where telling the truth about the bloodbath was not banned. Now China’s rulers hope to obliterate its memory there too.

The week before the 35th anniversary, police charged Chow Hang-tung — who was already in jail on another frame-up — as well as seven others. They were charged with publishing “seditious materials.” The evidence against Chow, Chan said, are short reminiscences she posted about past June 4 events.

On that date the authorities “deployed a lot of policemen, all fully armed, as they always are nowadays,” at locations where past commemorations have been held, Chan said.

“As a result, we can no longer do” any public demonstrations in Hong Kong. “But events in commemoration of June 4 are being held in many places all over the world.”



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# Rail workers fight for safety

Continued from front page

eration is a product of their insatiable drive for profits. It goes along with their having reduced operating crews by a third in recent years and the elimination of inspectors, carmen and track-repair workers.

Rail unions are challenging this setup. And, in an initial report May 22, the Federal Railroad Administration admitted today's longer and longer trains have "negative impacts on safety and performance."

Railroad bosses claim remote-controlled trains have a better safety record, better than trains with crew members. But, as a May 27 *New York Times* article, "A 100-Ton Locomotive with No One in the Cab," makes strikingly clear, the increasing number of injuries and deaths on remote-control operated trains belies that claim.

When the bosses introduced remote control operators in 2005, they agreed to limit using them to the confines of rail yards, away from inhabited neighborhoods. But now, the *Times* reports, they're finding ways to extend remote operation miles into cities.

## Growing numbers killed, maimed

The article lists numerous incidents of maiming and deaths of both rail workers and people who live near rail tracks.

Aron Iradukunda, a 9-year-old child, had his leg cut off while playing close to CSX railroad tracks in Buffalo, New York. He likely would have died if his sister hadn't heard him scream and pulled him off the tracks. A few months later in 2023 Tyrina Mozee's mutilated body was found a few blocks from where Iradukunda was maimed after she tried to get through the cars of a remote-controlled train that began moving.

Arnette Booker, Mozee's aunt, was furious to find that there were no warnings that remote trains with no conductor or engineer onboard were passing through the residential neighborhood where children live and play.

"There's no gate. There's no sign saying, 'No trespassing,' no sign saying 'Danger! Don't come on the

tracks.' There's no warning at all," she told the *Times*.

In virtually every case when a human is maimed or killed, the *Times* said, rail bosses claim it's the victim's fault. But it's the bosses' profit drive that's at fault.

## Rail workers face the same dangers

Rail workers have been injured and killed on the job in remote control operator-related events. A CSX rail inspector, 56-year-old Frederick M. Anderson Jr., was hit and killed in September 2023 near Toledo, Ohio, when he stepped into the path of a remote-controlled locomotive, whose operator couldn't see him. He was the third rail inspector since 2015 to die after being struck by a remote locomotive, sparking the Federal Railroad Administration to open a new review into remote operations.

Union Pacific bosses expanded their remote operations across the country, running trains of up to 160 cars, three times longer than the Federal Railroad Administration recommended in 2007.

In Houston, remote trains now run on a milelong section in the eastern part of the city, past family-run restaurants, bodegas, industrial warehouses and a school bus station. Some of these trains carry hazardous cargo, including hydrochloric acid and petroleum.

Last year, a man was found dead with his leg severed in a Houston area where remote locomotives were in use. Two years earlier, a woman in the same part of town lost both her legs after trying to cross between cars of a remote train that suddenly began moving. It's impossible for workers running remotes to see all sides of a train, much less one 160 cars long.

In March of this year, a remote-controlled Union Pacific train hauled 128 cars, including 62 carrying hazardous materials, from Angleton to Freeport, Texas, a distance of 19 miles. The train ran through several communities with a combined population near 30,000, past 18 train crossings, five of them with no gates.

The SMART-TD rail union, which represents conductors and locomotive engineers, contends remote technol-



Union Pacific

Rail worker runs driverless train with remote control in San Antonio, Texas, in 2023. Expansion of remote control operation beyond rail yards is product of bosses' drive for profits. It's led to more injuries, deaths of rail workers and working people who live near train tracks.

ogy can be safe in some situations, but that railroads are cutting too many jobs, leaving more and more trains that should be handled by a crew of two or three, not operated by a single remote control operator.

Before this *Militant* worker-correspondent retired, I was a conductor when the norm was a five-person crew on freight trains — three workers on the locomotive and two workers riding in a rear caboose. Together they could see everything around the train. Rail yard crews had three on the ground working together doing switching work.

What is posed today is a clash between bosses' profit drive and workers and their unions fighting for safe schedules and operating conditions.

"Railroad workers will need to start using their union power to control all work situations to eliminate the dangers to themselves and people who live and work near railroad tracks," Lance Anton, a SMART-TD freight conductor working in Lincoln, told the *Militant*.

There is an example workers here can look to. A year ago, Laura Garza, a SMART-TD conductor and Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from California, visited Cuba and met with rail workers there.

In an example of gains Cuban work-

ers made in their socialist revolution led by Fidel Castro, Garza reported Cuban rail workers' schedules and shifts are in stark contrast to the long hours and scarce time off faced in the U.S.

A Cuban train consist working a 16-hour run is composed of two crews, both with a conductor, a conductor's assistant, an engineer, assistant engineer and a mechanic/technical worker. One crew works the first eight hours, while the other crew members are assigned to a sleeping car. Then they switch. Rail workers have four days off before having to work again.

## —ON THE PICKET LINE—

### Workers go on strike at Cargill's beef-processing plant in Ontario

GUELPH, Ontario — Hundreds of workers at the Cargill beef-processing plant here, members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 175, hit the picket line May 27 the day after an 82% vote against a proposed offer.

Cargill's Guelph plant is Canada's largest beef-slaughter plant east of Manitoba, with more than 900 workers. The company has about 8,000 workers nationally. It supplies 55% of the beef in the Canadian market.

Walter Rzeznik, who works as a butcher in the cutting room and has been there 27 years, said, "We go through between 1,700 to 1,800 head of cattle a day, with overtime up to 2,000." He noted his last name is Polish for "butcher."

"By speeding up production," he said, "the company is forcing the butchers to work closer to each other, with less elbow room, increasing the chance of injury."

Cargill is an international conglomerate with 160,000 employees in 70 countries, and a 2023 revenue of \$177 billion. One hundred members of the Cargill-MacMillan family own at least 88% of the company.

Strikers told the *Militant* the main issue is to win a wage increase that keeps up with inflation.

Hundreds of strikers were lined up all along Dunlop Drive. Rzeznik showed this *Militant* correspondent the video of a "festival" they had on the picket line, accordion player and all.

The strike is winning solidarity, with other unions joining the picket line and almost constant honks of support from trucks and cars driving by.

— Tony DiFelice

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



June 14, 1999

HAVANA, Cuba — "We're not veterans — we're combatants," Brig. Gen. Gustavo Chui affirmed. "As members of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, we're engaged in the day-to-day struggle for the unconditional defense of our socialist revolution."

The association brings together revolutionary fighters of several generations. It has 300,000 members in 11,200 neighborhood committees throughout the island. Above all, the association focuses its political work on winning the young generations to a revolutionary working-class perspective — to do with their lives what many of these combatants have been doing for more than four decades.

Chui added, "I tell other combatants that the revolution is once again offering us a responsibility — to unite in order to help educate the new generation. We have an important, historic task to fulfill."



June 21, 1974

OXNARD, Calif. — The militant strike here of strawberry pickers, mostly Chicanos, is 80 percent effective, despite police attacks and attempted intimidation.

The strike began May 24 when the entire crew at American Food Company left the fields in protest over low wages and poor working conditions. By June 7, the strike had spread to all 23 of the area's strawberry ranches. When the first group walked out, they contacted the United Farm Workers to help them win a union contract.

The impetus for the strike came in part from a victory in Watsonville. A five-day strike there by strawberry pickers forced the American Food Company to sell its strawberry fields to Pik'd Rite, a company that already had a UFW contract. The new contract gave the workers a 20 percent wage increase, making them the highest paid farm workers in the area.



June 20, 1949

The American, British and Russian governments are all strikebreakers.

The Kremlin tried to crush the strike of Western Berlin railroad workers with violence. Last week, the Japanese railroad workers went on strike against mass firings and British workers continued their strikes for higher wages.

Douglas MacArthur, U.S. military dictator in Japan, ordered the union heads to end the strike and the government to suspend collective bargaining. The British Labor government broadcast radio demands that the railroad and dock strikers return to work.

The Kremlin commits its crimes against labor in the name of "communism," the British government in the name of "socialism," American imperialism in the name of capitalist "democracy." All three are brutal despoilers of working people — enemies alike of socialism, communism and democratic rights.

# 'I stand for socialism, Cuba, independence for Puerto Rico'

Puerto Rico: Independence Is a Necessity by Rafael Cancel Miranda is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for June. Rachele Fruit, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, will be representing the party, speaking before the U.N. commission on decolonization hearing on Puerto Rico June 20. Cancel Miranda was one of five Puerto Rican Nationalists imprisoned by Washington for more than 25 years following armed protests they carried out in the U.S. Capitol against colonial rule. Freed from prison in 1979 after an international defense campaign, he continued to speak out on the brutal reality of U.S. colonial domination, campaigning to free other Puerto Rican political prisoners and explaining the example of Cuba's socialist revolution. Copyright © 1998 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



AP/Ricardo Figueroa  
**March to U.S. Federal Building in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in 2006, protesting the FBI killing of Macheteros leader Filiberto Ojeda Ríos and FBI raids on homes of pro-independence fighters. For decades the Puerto Rican people have fought to get out from under Uncle Sam's boot.**

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY RAFAEL CANCEL MIRANDA

U.S. imperialism controls our country socially, politically, and economically. We are a militarily occupied country — we're saturated by U.S. military bases. Now they want to transfer the U.S. Southern Command here from Panama.

They control the mass media. They control our schools. They indoctrinate us from the time we're children. They

tell you who to hate and who not to hate. They can even indoctrinate you to hate yourself. ...

We have to reach out to the greatest number of our people with the truth and the need for independence. Independence is not simply a nice ideal. It is a necessity.

We have to reach the new generations, so they will continue the struggle until the time comes when different forces in the world come together and strengthen our struggle. We are part of the world, and what happens all over the world affects our country.

The United States uses our young people as cannon fodder in their wars. In the Vietnam War, Puerto Rico had a disproportionately high number of casualties relative to its population compared to the United States. The same thing happened in the Korean War.

They sent us to kill Dominicans in the Dominican Republic in 1965. When they invaded Panama in 1989, they sent us to kill Panamanians, who are our brothers and sisters.

Before the Gulf War, nobody here knew who Saddam Hussein was. But in one week they got the Puerto Rican people to hate Saddam Hussein, through their control of the media, and then everyone was saying that Saddam was the devil.

I asked on the radio the other day, "What are Puerto Ricans doing in Bos-

nia?" If Rockefeller wants to send his sons to fight in Bosnia, let him do it. But he's not going to send his sons to Bosnia. He's going to send your sons, the sons of John Doe and Mary Jane.

So young people are affected by this colonial reality.

We have to show workers why independence is in their interests as workers: so they can be the owners of their country and their factories, so they can be the owners of what they produce. So that everything doesn't end up in the coffers of Wall Street. So that it stays here for their development. ...

We Nationalists say: first, transfer all powers to the Puerto Rican people. Demilitarize our country. Remove all U.S. military bases and repressive agencies from Puerto Rico, and then we'll decide. Then we can talk.

Our people enjoyed a few months of freedom during the transfer of power between Spain and the United States. In 1897 we won a measure of autonomy, after many years of struggle. We had our own postage stamps, our own Puerto Rican currency, our own parliament, our own Customs. We had control over our own foreign trade; we sold to whom-ever we wished. When the U.S. invaded in 1898, that came to an end.

This struggle is difficult for a people that has been colonized for so many years, because colonial rule is like alcoholism or worse. As hard as it is to

detoxify yourself from alcoholism, it's even harder to detoxify yourself from a colonial mindset, because you have to get rid of so many lies and complexes that they've drilled into your head. ...

We weren't freed from prison because suddenly the U.S. government, like St. Paul, saw the light. They freed us from prison because of international pressure.

We were the only prisoners in U.S. penal history who came out of jail setting conditions on the jailers, rather than the jailers imposing conditions on us. Anyone can get out of prison. What counts isn't going to prison or getting out of prison. It's why you go in and how you come out. ...

But it was a victory. We came out standing on our feet.

That was thanks to the struggle waged by other people, including the *Militant*, which wrote articles on our behalf. ...

Under the system that exists in Cuba, your worth is determined by what you are. And when I talk about the system in Cuba, I'm talking about the socialist system. Your worth is measured by how you share with others. Under this system your worth is measured by what you own, and they keep us at war with each other.

For me, Cuba dignifies people, it humanizes people. This system dehumanizes people. It's dog-eat-dog. That's the philosophy. And they keep indoctrinating you in order to strip you of your human values. They keep instilling money-grubbing values so you will serve them better as a tool and to make you accept degradation and humiliation because they've taken away your values. Only people who have values are capable of feeling indignation and anger.

I was always a nationalist and defender of my country. But I'm a nationalist because I'm a socialist. And I'm a socialist because I'm a nationalist. I believe in socialism for my country because I want the best for my country and for the world. ...

I believe in socialism as much as I believe in independence for my country. I wouldn't want a free country — with all we have sacrificed throughout our history of struggle — so that two or three parasites could take over the lives of our people, could enrich themselves at the expense of our people. I don't want that kind of independence.

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# Road forward to unite workers

Continued from front page

the bourgeois clerical regime in Tehran throughout the Middle East, hand in hand with the destruction of Israel.

Hamas launched the war Oct. 7 by killing 1,200 people in Israel — 75% of them civilians — taking some 250 hostages and raping and mutilating women. It still holds some 120 hostages, although Israeli officials believe that less than 80 are still alive.

The Oct. 7 assault was not a war for Palestinian national liberation. It was the largest anti-Jewish pogrom since the Holocaust. The Hamas death squads also killed 24 Arab Israelis and more than 50 migrant workers from Thailand, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and elsewhere, for the “crime” of working with Jews.

During the more than 17 years they ruled Gaza, Hamas leaders lived in upscale neighborhoods there or in luxury abroad, while most Gazans were kept dependent on United Nations handouts. Hamas’ opponents, including supporters of the Palestinian Authority, were arrested, tortured or killed. Strikes by unions were crushed and women’s rights trampled on.

Even in its weakened state, where it can Hamas attacks those who speak out against it. Recently they dismantled the tent of a journalist and her family in Nusseirat after she criticized the group.

## Attacks by ‘axis of resistance’

The Tehran-led “axis of resistance” — Hamas, Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Yemeni Houthis, Tehran-backed militias in Iraq and Syria and the brutal Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria — continues to target Israel. More than 60,000 Israelis — Jewish and Arab citizens alike — have been forced from their homes near the Lebanese border because of Hezbollah. Shipping in the Red Sea is sorely constrained by Houthi attacks.

Founded in 1982 in Lebanon by local supporters of the Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Hez-

bollah is estimated to have more than 150,000 rockets and missiles, 10 times what Hamas had on Oct. 7. And unlike Hamas’ rockets, many of Hezbollah’s are precision guided.

Tehran and Hezbollah have steered away from a major war with Israel for now, but continue to make their murderous presence felt. Hezbollah has doubled its attacks on northern Israel over the last month. Tehran continues to come closer to being able to produce nuclear weapons, a deadly threat to Jews in Israel and workers throughout the region.

## Biden pushes permanent cease-fire

Meanwhile, the Joseph Biden administration is stepping up its pressure on Israel to wind down the war, which it views as an obstacle to its own imperialist interests. Washington’s only concern is defending the economic and political interests of the U.S. rulers, not the lives of Jews. This includes pursuing an accommodation with the regime in Iran.

On May 31 Biden announced that Israel “has offered a comprehensive new proposal” for a cease-fire and release of all hostages, which would lead to a permanent end to hostilities and the rebuilding of Gaza.

Despite Biden’s claim this was an Israeli proposal, a senior administration official told the press that it was Biden’s proposal, which “has been accepted by Israel” and transmitted to Hamas.

A few days later Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s office dismissed “the notion that Israel would agree to a permanent cease-fire without attaining all of its goals, meaning the return of all of the hostages, destroying Hamas’ military and governing capabilities and ensuring that Gaza can never be a threat to Israel.”

Before Biden’s speech, *Time* magazine asked him if Netanyahu “is prolonging the war for his own political self-preservation,” a slander promoted by forces that want Israel to stop fighting even though Hamas is still intact. “There is every reason for people to draw that conclusion,” Biden answered, attempting to step up the pressure on Netanyahu and fuel divisions among capitalist political rivals in Israel.

## Liberal media covers for Hamas

The White House campaign is aided by the liberal bourgeois media, from the *Washington Post* to the *New York Times*, which focus their daily coverage on the suffering in Gaza, but never explain that it’s the direct result of Hamas’ reactionary rule, its use of civilians as human shields and its promise to repeat Oct. 7 “again and again.”

Two recent articles in the *Jerusalem Post* expose the *Times*’ bias. For example, they say, “the word ‘rape’ appeared in only three headlines out of 1,398 since the war began. In contrast the word ‘genocide’ appeared 22 times in the context of Israel.” The words “starvation” and “famine” appeared 30 times. “The fact is that the rapes actually happened, while starvation and genocide are unfounded accusations.”

Since Oct. 7 the *Times* has published 72 op-eds that

## Baluch farmers in Iran protest mine expansion



Baluch farmers have been blocking the entrance (above) to a copper mine in Rameshk in Iran’s Kerman province for over a month and a half. They are protesting the confiscation of their farmland without compensation by the mine owners and that the company won’t hire local labor. They’re also concerned that mine waste will contaminate their water supply.

The police have arrested at least two protesters in an attempt to intimidate the farmers.

Baluch workers and farmers in Kerman and neighboring Sistan-Baluchistan province have been at the forefront of protests against attacks on democratic rights by the Iranian government. The mostly rural region in southeastern Iran is one of Iran’s poorest. Many villages lack drinking water and electricity.

The Baluch are a mostly Sunni Muslim oppressed nationality spread across the region, with 2 million in Iran, 600,000 in Afghanistan and 6 million in Pakistan. They face discrimination in all three countries.

In Iran, thousands of Baluch are denied official ID cards by the Shiite-based bourgeois clerical regime, preventing them from receiving social security, education and other rights.

Even though Baluchi speakers make up only about 5% of Iran’s population, they are 20% of those executed by the regime. The regime has stepped up executions in the wake of the mass “Women, Life, Freedom” protests after the death of Zhina Amini, a young Kurdish woman. She died following her arrest in Tehran in September 2022 by the hated morality police for allegedly violating the reactionary dress code for women.

According to Amnesty International, Tehran carried out 853 executions in 2023 — mostly for drug and other criminal offenses, along with a smaller number that are blatantly political, 30% more than in 2022 — the second-largest number in the world, after only the Chinese government.

— SETH GALINSKY

# Europe war threat

Continued from page 3

under U.S.-led NATO command. The SWP statement calls for “the withdrawal of all US troops and both conventional and nuclear arms and nuclear missile systems from NATO member countries in Europe.”

In response to Moscow’s war, demands are growing in Germany for the rulers to acquire their own nuclear weapons. Capitalist politicians backing the move cross party lines and include Friedrich Merz, leader of the Christian Democratic Union, the main opposition party. Chancellor Olaf Scholz opposes the proposal.

Currently U.S. nuclear weapons are stationed in Germany, with the decision to use them lying solely with Washington. Under the 1990 agreement that paved the way for the unification of West and East Germany, Berlin renounced the acquisition of nuclear weapons.

The capitalist powers that make up NATO are themselves rivals, with sharply conflicting interests. One expression of this was the April 28 call by French President Emmanuel Macron for the French rulers’ nuclear weapons to form the bedrock of a non-NATO Europe-wide military setup. Days earlier, Macron declared, Europe should “never be a vassal of the United States.”

harshly criticize Israel, written by a variety of Jews, Muslims, Israelis, Palestinians and Christians. Only 23 op-eds expressed criticism of Hamas, not one of them written by a Palestinian or a Muslim.

## Israel’s capitalist government

The government in Israel is a capitalist government that advances the interests of the country’s ruling rich against working people. That includes taking measures targeting Palestinians that undermine a road to unite toilers, whatever

their religion or nationality.

Israel’s State Attorney’s office criticized police in Galilee who blindfolded and zip tied the hands of Rasha Kareem, an Arab citizen, when they detained her for comments she made comparing Israel’s military to Islamic State. She was released from house arrest after five days, one of many who have had their democratic rights trampled on.

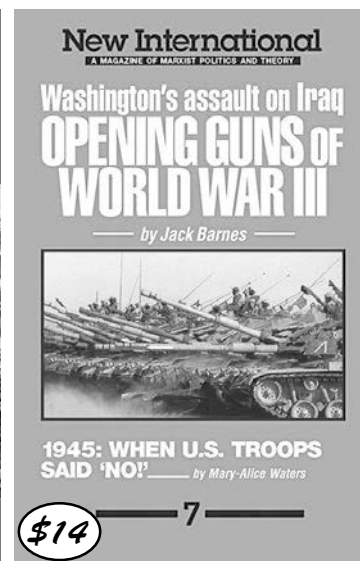
In the West Bank, a Palestinian territory with a patchwork of zones, some under the rule of the Palestinian Authority, others under Israeli rule, Tehran is pouring in money and weapons hoping to create a new base of support.

After Oct. 7 the Israeli government cut off the work permits of 200,000 Palestinians from the West Bank. About 18,000 have since been allowed to return to work inside Israel and 8,000 on West Bank settlements. But more than 170,000 are still without work and face increasingly hard times.

The Histadrut, Israel’s largest union federation, and Koach LaOvdim, another union federation, have called on the government to allow their return to jobs in Israel.

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# Opposing US ruling-class assaults on freedoms protected by the Constitution

“Opposing US rulers’ assaults on freedoms protected by the Constitution and their use of the political police” is the title of the opening section of the political resolution adopted by the December 2022 Socialist Workers Party national convention. It is reprinted below from the book, *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, published by Pathfinder Press.

This issue of the *Militant* was printed just days after the office of liberal New York County District Attorney Alvin Bragg succeeded in leading a jury of New Yorkers, with less than 24 hours of deliberations, to convict former President Donald Trump on 34 felony counts. That New York state prosecution has had the unspoken backing of the Joseph Biden White House since the politically driven charges were filed last year.

This reinforces the stakes for working people in rejecting the Democrats’ frenzied drive to destroy their chief political

## EXCERPT FROM THE LOW POINT OF LABOR RESISTANCE IS BEHIND US

rivals in the 2024 presidential election. Crucial constitutional protections of all are being shredded along the way.

As revolutionary workers leader Leon Trotsky pointed out in 1939, “Under conditions of the bourgeois regime, 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, particularly its most advanced elements. That is a law of history.”

Reading and studying this material is essential for charting a winning course for workers and the unions today. Copyright © 2023 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



1) Defending and extending the freedoms protected by the US Constitution is at the center of the class struggle today. Workers and farmers must organize and act to prevent the federal government’s assault on these freedoms, which



we have won in class battles over some two and a half centuries. We must oppose the US rulers’ relentless drive to refurbish the reputation and expand the use of the government’s political police, first and foremost the FBI.

The political course of the current Democratic administration includes an open assault on these very freedoms. Employing violent and provocative demagoguery, President Biden, in his September 1, 2022, “Battle for the Soul of the Nation” speech in Philadelphia, condemned as “a threat to this country” tens of millions of US citizens who voted for former President Donald Trump in 2020 or who would have done so if they had the chance (74 million people cast ballots for him). The “MAGA Republicans,” Biden said, are carrying out an “ongoing attack on democracy.” They represent “a clear and present danger,” he warned, “an extremism that threatens the very foundations of our republic.”

A week earlier, Biden had branded “MAGA Republicans” as “semi-fascists.” There is no rise of fascism in the US today, but Biden’s Philadelphia performance did call up images of Nuremberg rallies. It was staged against the backdrop of garish red lighting, with two active duty Marines in uniform flanking an American flag. In defiance of government and US Armed Forces policy against uniformed soldiers being used at political events, the Democratic administration mobilized Marine sentries and had the Marine Band play



Left, Reuters/Evelyn Hockstein; above, AP, Terry Renna  
**Left**, President Joseph Biden, speaking May 31 at the White House, called Donald Trump supporters “semi-fascists” and “MAGA Republicans” to justify targeting his constitutional rights. Trump was found guilty May 30 in politically concocted trial violating his Sixth Amendment right “to know the nature of the charges” and to an impartial jury. Yet Biden urged no one to criticize “our justice system.” **Above**, Florida, August 2022. Armed raid by Justice Department on Trump home in Mar-a-Lago, trampling protections against unreasonable searches and seizures. Under bourgeois regimes, “all suppression of political rights and freedom, no matter whom they’re directed against at the start, in the end inevitably bear down upon the working class,” communist leader Leon Trotsky said in 1939.

“Hail to the Chief” as Biden walked to the podium. The talk was so flagrantly a political event, not a presidential address to the nation, that all television networks but two (MSNBC and CNN) refused White House requests to broadcast it live. Even more, Biden’s speech posed a brazen threat to the people’s constitutional rights.

Class-conscious workers, the trade unions, and organizations of the oppressed and exploited must unconditionally oppose anti-constitutional assaults by the government on freedom of worship and speech; freedom of the press, association, and assembly; prohibition of “unreasonable search and seizure”; and other liberties needed and used by the toilers.

That’s true whether the target is a former US president; a football coach who takes a knee to pray; a family persecuted for publicly affirming their religious beliefs and practices; leaders of a small Black nationalist organization; a Cuba solidarity committee; fighters for Puerto Rican independence; a striking United Mine Workers local or embattled union rail workers; farmers indicted for grazing livestock on public lands; a speaker, author, or teacher “canceled” by the “woke”; prisoners denied the *Militant* newsweekly and other reading material; or Socialist Workers Party candidates.

Whoever the target today, it is working people who will be targeted tomorrow.

“We stand for freedom of speech and assembly in principle — not just for us, but for everybody,” insisted Farrell Dobbs in the Political Report adopted by the June 1961 SWP convention, reaffirming longtime party policy.

In August 2022 the Biden administration’s “Justice Department” staged a nine-hour raid on former president Trump’s Florida home, carried out by more than thirty FBI and Secret Service agents, many of them heavily armed. Long experience has taught class-conscious workers that

when the government, in a violent or threatening manner, takes aim at a rival capitalist politician or party, the same methods and worse have been and will again be used by the rulers to harass and disrupt union battles, struggles by working farmers, opponents of Washington’s wars, fighters for Black liberation, and communists.

As Leon Trotsky forcefully reminded us in 1939, “Under conditions of the bourgeois regime, 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, particularly its most advanced elements. That is a law of history.”

2) In September 1939 the Democratic Party administration of Franklin Roosevelt issued a “Presidential Directive” to ensure “the internal safety of our country.” That executive order initiated a transformation of the FBI, which up to then had been a federal police force pursuing interstate law-breaking, financial fraud, and organized crime, a force most of whose field agents were lawyers or accountants. It was reborn as a *federal political police* acting at the behest of the president, whichever party occupied the White House. Its agents carried arms as a matter of course. The FBI was now aimed above all at stabilizing and preserving the capitalist state, as preparations accelerated for the US rulers to take the country into the expanding imperialist slaughter.

Long-established “red squads,” “bomb squads,” and “radical units” of state and local police departments, as well as company goons and other private security forces, were no longer sufficient to the global needs of US finance capital. Even under conditions of bourgeois democracy, the imperialist ruling class, whose executive committee sits in Washington, must have a national political police able to operate secretly and largely with impunity. During World War II the FBI was in charge of counter-

intelligence, and after 1945 it competed with the newly established Central Intelligence Agency and National Security Agency in counterespionage operations.

Roosevelt’s 1939 executive order instructed the FBI “to take charge of” investigations related to “espionage,” “counterespionage,” “neutrality laws,” and, most importantly for the working class, what his administration called “subversive activities.” The latter was an undefined and elastic term calculated to include militant trade unionism, independent working-class political action, and, above all, any determined opposition to the US rulers’ entry into the second imperialist world war.

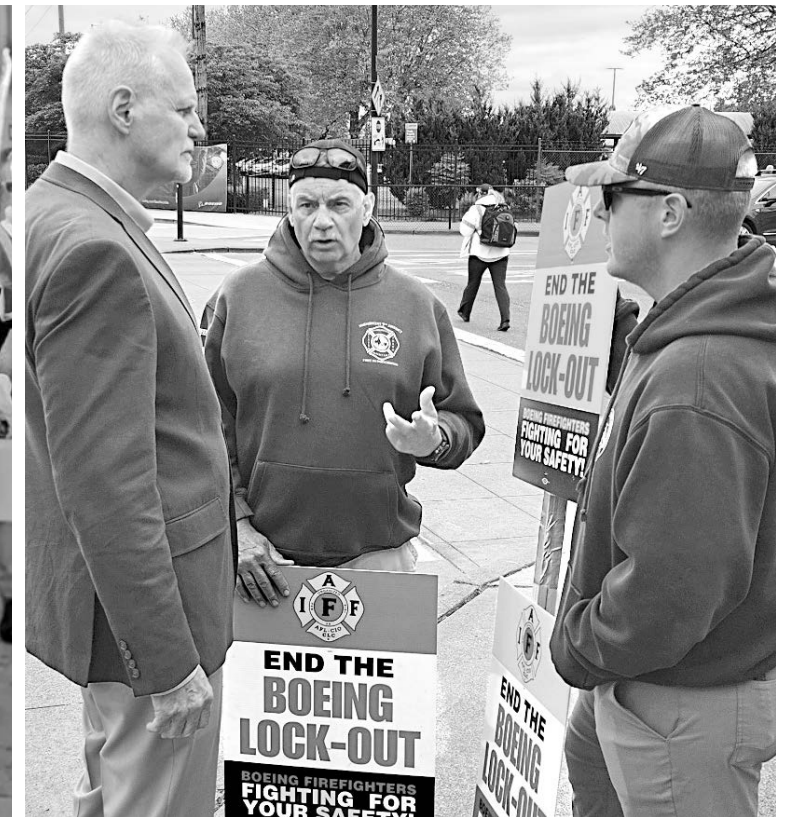
The same month Roosevelt signed the executive order, the New Deal White House unleashed the freshly minted political police against the rising class-struggle leadership of the working class. FBI agents in Nebraska and Iowa raided the homes of union militants in Omaha, Des Moines, and Sioux City who were leaders of the Teamsters Midwest over-the-road organizing drive. Framed up on charges of transporting a stolen truck across state lines and burning it, seven Teamsters leaders were railroaded to federal prison. It was an unmistakable warning to the most advanced layers of the US working class.

By 1942, soon after Washington’s formal entry into the war, the FBI was getting regular reports about union and political activity from some twenty-four thousand informers in four thousand factories, mines, and mills across the US. The Minneapolis-based Teamsters organizing drive and their leaders were central targets of this massive undercover operation.

FBI agents organized snitches and provocateurs in Teamsters Local 544 to slander and frame up central leaders of the unionization drive. Many of those trade unionists were leading cadres of the Socialist Workers Party. In June 1941 the FBI raided the SWP’s public headquarters, libraries, and



**Above**, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president Rachele Fruit walks picket line with members of UNITE HERE union at hotel in Los Angeles April 5. **Right**, vice presidential candidate Dennis Richter talks with firefighters locked out by Boeing in Seattle, May 13. Fruit and other SWP candidates explain stakes for workers and unions in defending constitutional liberties.



bookstores in Minneapolis and in St. Paul, accompanied by reporters and photographers from the cities’ main dailies and national wire services. The federal cops seized cartons of books, pamphlets, issues of the *Militant*, and other publications. This “search and seizure,” carried out in violation of the Constitution, was sensationalized across front pages the next day.

In July 1941 Roosevelt’s Justice Department handed down indictments against twenty-nine SWP and Local 544 leaders. The government’s aim was to cripple the unionization drive and head the developing class-struggle union leadership. Above all it aimed to silence the forces in the labor movement campaigning to a growing working-class audience against the US rulers’ rationalizations for dragging them into the unfolding imperialist war being fought from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

The indictment had two counts: (1) “conspiracy to overthrow the government by force and violence,” in violation of the 1861 Seditious Conspiracy Act, originally aimed at leaders of the secessionists who soon formed the Confederate States of America; and (2) “conspiracy to advocate [emphasis added] the overthrow of the government by force and violence.” The thought-control Smith Act, under which the second count was lodged, had been signed into law by Roosevelt only months earlier in 1940. It was used by the government for the first time in this frame-up. All those indicted were

acquitted on the seditious conspiracy charge. Eighteen were convicted under the “conspiracy to advocate” clause of the Smith Act and sent to prison on sentences of up to sixteen months.

The Socialist Workers Party, through the *Militant* and other avenues, took the political lead in getting the truth out to working people, the labor movement, and beyond about the anti-working-class purpose and anti-constitutional activities of the newly consolidated political police. This included the party’s initiative in launching the Civil Rights Defense Committee to wage an international defense campaign to combat the frame-up and win freedom for those imprisoned. Organized in the midst of World War II, the campaign won broad support in the unions and from Black rights and other organizations, despite vicious opposition from the Communist Party and the labor, Black, and civil rights groups it influenced.

3) In the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, the SWP again broke new ground in combating government assaults on constitutional rights through our political campaign and federal lawsuit against the FBI, US Attorney General, and other political police agencies.

With the rise of the “Cold War” after World War II, Washington escalated its use of informers, harassment tactics, break-ins, phone taps, and other unconstitutional methods. Among those the government targeted were the rising proletarian-based movement to smash Jim Crow segregation, as well as Mal-

colm X and numerous Black liberation organizations; those demanding fair play for Cuba and organizing solidarity with Cuba’s socialist revolution; participants in and leaders of the fight to end US imperialism’s war against the Vietnamese people, including citizen-soldiers exercising their constitutional rights; militant trade unionists and labor struggles; and the emerging fight for women’s emancipation.

The SWP was actively involved in all these struggles. Moreover, as we had done from our communist origins in 1919, we distinguished ourselves as principled and uncompromising defenders of all targets of government frame-ups.

In 1949 eleven Communist Party leaders were tried and convicted in federal court under the Smith Act. This was the very same repressive legislation that only a few years earlier had been used by the Roosevelt administration — cheered on by the CP leadership — to railroad to prison leaders of the Midwest Teamsters and the SWP. Farrell Dobbs, who became national secretary of the SWP in 1953, covered on the scene the nine-month frame-up trial week in and week out for the *Militant*, and we campaigned for the release of the CP leaders after their imprisonment for the maximum sentence of five years.

In the mid-1960s the SWP championed a successful four-year-long effort to defend three members of the Young Socialist Alliance in Bloomington, Indiana, indicted under the state Anti-Communism Act in May 1963 for “assembling” during the October 1962 “Cuban missile crisis” to advocate the overthrow of the State of Indiana by force and violence.

The FBI launched undercover disruption operations — so-called Cointelpro programs — against the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance, the Communist Party, Black rights organizations, Chicano and Mexicano groups, American Indian militants, and many others. Opponents of government policies were fired from jobs and evicted from apartments. FBI agents instigated and fomented factional divisions, “agent baiting,” and race-baiting within and among groups susceptible to such dirty tricks, leading to expulsions, splits, and

Continued on page 12



In July 2022, FBI commandos broke into homes and offices of African People’s Socialist Party in St. Louis, above, and St. Petersburg, Florida. They detained leaders of the group at gunpoint, accusing them of being “agents” of Moscow and filing charges in 2023.

## Books for working-class fighters



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# Opposing US rulers' assaults on freedoms protected by the Constitution

Continued from page 11

sometimes beatings or murders.

In flagrant defiance of the Fourth Amendment's guarantees against "unreasonable search and seizure," the FBI conducted pervasive wiretapping and opened mail of targeted organizations and individuals. The FBI acknowledged in court more than two hundred burglaries of Socialist Workers Party offices ("black bag jobs," in thuggish FBI lingo), and admitted that the agency had collected ten million pages of files on the SWP and on its members.

Federal District Judge Thomas Griesa's 1986 decision in the lawsuit filed by the SWP and YSA against Washington's political police concluded that the government had produced "no evidence that any FBI informant ever reported an instance of planned or actual espionage, violence, [or] terrorism" by the party or any of its members. The judge ruled that the FBI's use of undercover informers, its Cointelpro operations, and its "black bag jobs" were "violations of the constitutional rights of the SWP and lacked legislative or regulatory authority."

The party's campaign and the victory won for the SWP and YSA helped keep political space open for all working people to speak, organize, and act — not only with respect to the electoral and judicial arenas, but also the party's own working-class terrain: in factories, fields, and mines; at picket lines and on the streets; at bull sessions in soldiers' barracks; and at political events and so-

**The SWP's victory helped keep political space open for all to speak, organize, and act on its working-class terrain — the factories, fields, and mines; in picket lines, the streets, and soldiers' barracks . . .**

cial protests of all kinds. In short, wherever the exploited and oppressed classes are thinking politically, discussing, and fighting back.

Another exposure of FBI trampling on constitutional guarantees of our freedoms had been made twelve years earlier, in a 1974 federal Department of Justice memorandum written by Antonin Scalia, an assistant attorney general who later served on the US Supreme Court. Scalia was the most influential, and useful, Supreme Court justice of the latter twentieth century and opening fifteen years of the twenty-first. The FBI had rejected a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request by SWP member Morris Starsky to receive secret Cointelpro documents relevant to the fight against his politically motivated firing as a professor at Arizona State University.

Scalia recommended to the Justice Department that the FBI's objections be overruled. He pointed out that one requested document was an anonymous letter from a "concerned alumnus" fingering Starsky as an SWP member, aimed at "discrediting him in his academic community." Citing "national defense" prerogatives, the FBI had also rejected other requests by Starsky's attorney. But the agency did so, Scalia



wrote, "without any indication or suspicion that [Starsky] obtained any defense secrets or had any connection whatever with foreign powers."

"In the last analysis," Scalia concluded, "the only policy reason for withholding most of the requested documents is to prevent a citizen from discovering the existence of possible misconduct and abuse of government power directed against him. In my view, this is not only no reason for asserting the exemption; it is a positive reason for declining to use it. . . . The obtaining of information of this sort is perhaps the most important reason for which the Freedom of Information Act exists."

4) Democrats, liberals, the "left," and "woke," so-called social justice warriors — not rightist or other reactionary forces — have led the assault against constitutional protections and freedoms in recent decades.

The Clinton White House established the first federal "counterintelligence czar." In the wake of 9/11, this paved the way for what is now called the Director of National Intelligence, centralizing federal political police operations spanning the FBI, CIA, military intelligence, and other agencies. To cite just a few among many measures undermining constitutional freedoms, the Clinton administration's 1994 Crime Bill eroded Fourth Amendment "search and seizure" safeguards, and in 1996 imposed its Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act — "Effective Death Penalty"! — which introduced "preventive detention" and use of "secret evidence."

Clinton's Justice Department led the cover-up of the murderous 1992 assault by FBI and ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms) sharpshooters on a family at Ruby Ridge in Idaho. During a standoff late in the George H. W. Bush administration, the unarmed mother (holding a baby in her arms) and her teenage son were shot and killed. As for the father, who was wounded by FBI snipers, all charges were later dropped except for failure to appear for a court date (the pretext for the massive armed assault). The Clinton White House followed up the next year with its own FBI siege and assault on the compound of the Branch Davidian religious group, resulting in the slaughter of more than eighty people near Waco, Texas.

In 1998 the Clinton administration ordered predawn FBI raids on the south Florida homes of the Cuban Five — Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González,

and René González — framing them up and sending them to federal prison on charges including conspiracy to commit espionage and, in one case, conspiracy to commit murder. Two years later, the administration unconstitutionally deployed 131 Immigration and Naturalization Service agents and twenty US marshals, many armed with assault weapons, for a middle-of-the-night raid on a private home in Miami. These federal commandos forcibly seized six-year-old Elián González, whom Washington had previously been refusing to return to his father's custody in Cuba.

That military-style operation "dealt a stunning blow to the right of every US resident to be 'secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures,' as provided by the US Constitution's Fourth Amendment," declared a front-page *Militant* editorial that week. "Every step taken by the US ruling class to close political space for working people within the United States . . . is a blow against the Cuban Revolution as well."

Following the initiatives of the Clinton White House, the Obama administration expanded internet and phone wiretapping, resurrecting the 1917 Espionage Act to spy on the Associated Press, a Fox News reporter, and other journalists and government "whistle-blowers."

In 2016 the Democratic administration, in collusion with like-minded FBI officials and Hillary Clinton campaign



Left, Democratic President Franklin Roosevelt signs 1934 bill, forerunner of executive order five years later increasing FBI powers to target unions and "subversives." FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover is directly behind Roosevelt. Above, Raid on Socialist Workers Party office in Minneapolis, June 1941. White House aimed to silence SWP and Teamster union leaders campaigning against rulers' plans to send workers and farmers into second imperialist world war.

operatives, fabricated and paid for salacious slanders that Trump was a pawn of Moscow, lies they continued to spread during Trump's term in the White House and since.

And in 2010 and 2011, also during the Obama administration, the FBI raided the private homes of individuals in Chi-

**Sharpening conflicts over race-baiting, Jew-hatred, 'gender ideology,' freedom of speech and worship ultimately reflect class divisions . . .**

cago, Minneapolis, and Los Angeles in connection with "investigations" of the Freedom Road Socialist Organization and other groups; prosecutors' threats of indictments and Grand Jury inquisitions were baseless and soon collapsed.

Under the Biden administration there have been FBI raids and seizures of documents and electronic devices from individuals associated with Donald Trump and his presidential campaigns. There have also been FBI raids connected to investigations of the so-called January 6 insurrection.

And just days before the Mar-a-Lago operation, there were FBI raids against the Uhuru movement and the African People's Socialist Party on charges of being agents of Russia. Those assaults were followed a few weeks later by attempted FBI interrogations of some six-



Workers celebrate overwhelming vote for United Auto Workers as their union at Volkswagen assembly plant in Chattanooga, Tennessee, April 19. Organizing unions to defend workers' wages and conditions is indispensable to forging a revolutionary leadership able to lead workers to take state power.

# Opposing US rulers' assaults on freedoms protected by the Constitution



Above, Reuters/Amir Cohen

**Above**, wreckage of Iranian rocket, part of barrage of drones and missiles fired at Israel, April 13, 2024. Central to Tehran's counterrevolutionary expansionist course is its aim to destroy Israel and expel and kill Jews. **Right**, Oct. 26, 2022, thousands at cemetery in Iran's Kurdish region protest death of Zhina Amini at hands of hated "morality" police. Despite fierce repression, rulers haven't stopped working people's opposition to military interventions.



ty people in Puerto Rico who had taken part in a solidarity brigade to Cuba.

5) The sharpening political and social conflicts in the US over race-baiting, Jew-hatred, "gender ideology," freedom of religious expression, Second Amendment rights, vaccinations, school curricula, "cancel culture," immigration, and other matters are not only an expression of divisions in bourgeois politics between Democrats and Republicans, "conservative Red states" and "liberal Blue states," or "left" and "right." Whatever the camouflage, they ultimately reflect *class divisions*.

This class polarization is accelerating under the impact of US and world capitalism's profit-driven crises of production and trade. As the obscene wealth of the Gateses, Zuckerbergs, Waltons, and Musks grows, to say nothing of the Rockefellers, Mellons, DuPonts, and other longtime ruling-class families, the deterioration of living and job conditions of working people and our families undercuts all pretense that "a rising tide lifts all boats."

In the wake of billions of dollars of pandemic handouts, as well as sharp

reductions in capitalist investment, production, and trade, the prices of food, fuel, housing, health care, and other necessities are rising (boats no, prices yes!). An extended period of stagflation, combining inflation with stagnating capitalist production and hiring, is increasingly likely both in the US and worldwide.

Even the share of workers in the US who are part of the workforce — that is, those who hold down a job or are looking for work — has declined since the late 1990s. For men between the ages of twenty-five and fifty-four, this so-called labor-force participation rate has fallen sharply, from 97 percent in 1960 to 88 percent today. Real wages, adjusted for inflation, have stagnated since the 1970s. The birth rate is falling. Life expectancy in the US has declined to seventy-six years, its lowest level in more than a quarter century.

Exploited farmers face skyrocketing prices for fuel, seed, fertilizer, equipment, and other supplies. At the same time, reaping vast profits from land speculation, capitalists — from the likes of superrich "philanthropist" Bill Gates,

to wealthy farmers and agricultural corporations — buy up more and more farm acreage, driving up land prices and preventing small farmers from obtaining enough to be economically viable. Much of this accumulation has occurred under the guise of promoting "environmental protection."

State and federal regulatory bureaus, such as water boards, groundwater agencies, the US Environmental Protection Agency, and various environ-

**Working farmers face skyrocketing prices for fuel, seed, and fertilizer, as well as restrictions on access to water. Many are pushed deeper into debt, and forced off the land . . .**

mental bodies on state and local levels, increasingly tighten restrictions on access to water to the benefit of large-scale capitalist agriculture. Working farmers are pushed deeper into debt and often off the land entirely. Ranchers have no

choice but to sell off all or part of their herds. Available water in rural communities, especially in drought-stricken areas, is vastly depleted, leaving many with wells gone dry. Every opportunity to drive a wedge between exploited producers on the land and working people in cities and small towns is promoted.

Working people the world over confront either comparably declining conditions, or much worse in the oppressed countries of Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

Neither we nor anyone else can predict the direction of economic trends immediately ahead, or exactly how the class struggle will unfold. Amid inevitable cycles of capitalist business and trade, however, economic upturns will affect the working class, bolstering confidence and readiness to struggle. We've seen examples of this fact in the post-pandemic strikes and union struggles in the US, as we did during slumps and recoveries in the Great Depression of the 1930s.

What we do know is that whatever happens in capitalist economic and social life and the class struggle, our political course and program remain unchanged. Through building the unions and our conduct as unionists together with all other union members, we will respond to and advance the interests of our class and all the exploited.

6) Political and military alignments — "spheres of influence" that had shaped the global imperialist order since Washington emerged as the dominant power coming out of World War II — are being shaken and new alliances between competing states put together. Working people the world over are hit by the effects of growing global conflicts over trade, currency, raw materials, and immigration.

The first full-scale war between two state powers on the European continent in more than seventy-five years is now raging. Ignited by the assault of the secret-police-based capitalist regime of Vladimir Putin against Ukraine's national sovereignty and independence, that still-unfolding war has consequences that are only beginning to be registered worldwide.

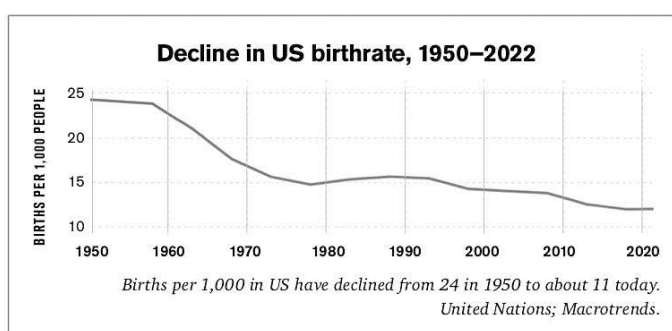
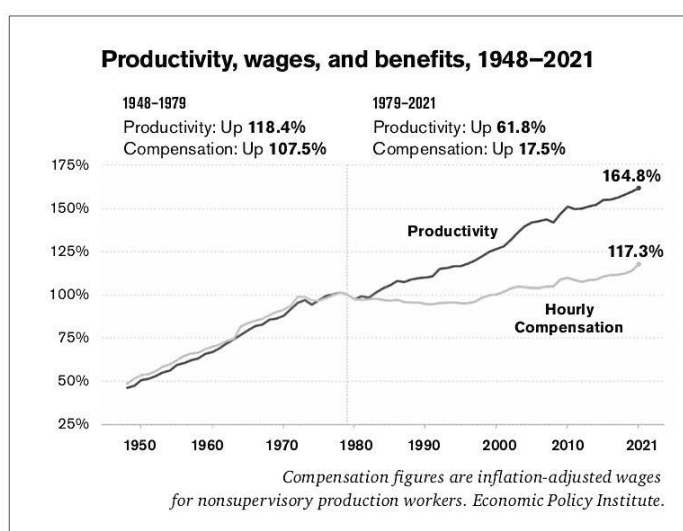
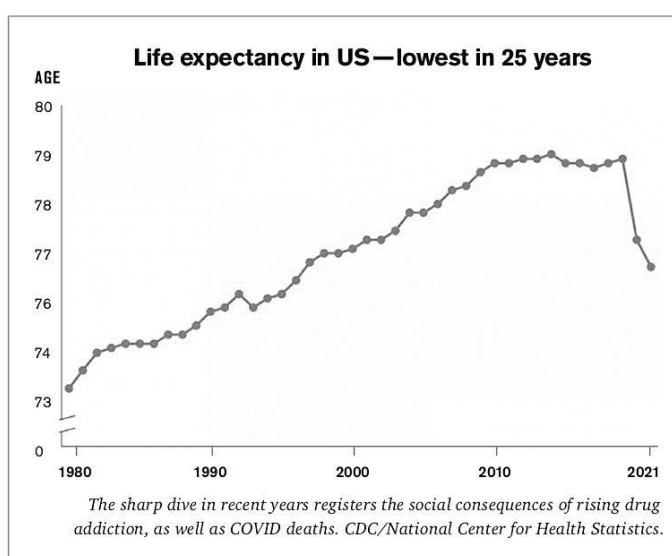
Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, and the economic, political, and military shifts and uncertainties it creates, are temporarily overshadowing other "great power" conflicts, such as the long-smoldering confrontation between China and the US-led imperial-

**Continued on page 14**

**The percent of men in the United States holding a job has declined since the 1950s. Real wages have stagnated for half a century...**



**...Life expectancy in the US has declined to the lowest level in a quarter century. The birthrate has been cut in half since 1950. There's no mystery why working people are searching for answers.**



# Opposing US rulers' assaults on freedoms protected by the Constitution



Above, The Way Home  
**Left**, residents with Ukrainian flags chant "Kherson is Ukraine!" against Moscow's occupation forces, March 2022. Eight months later Kherson was liberated. **Above**, May 9 protest this year by The Way Home, a women's organization calling for return of soldiers drafted by Moscow. **Right**, in November 2022, Russian conscripts confront general (in hat) in Kazan chanting, "Shame on you!" "Let's go home!"



Continued from page 13

ist governments in the Pacific.

Tehran's expansionist drive to extend the bourgeois clerical regime's military and economic domination across the Middle East continues to pose the threat of an expanded conflagration. These perils are multiplied by the Iranian capitalist rulers' declared aim of eliminating the State of Israel, home to nearly half the world's Jews. Tehran's accelerated course toward developing and deploying a strategic nuclear arsenal endangers all those throughout the region and beyond.

The most important curb to this danger is Iran's working people — of Persian, Kurdish, Azerbaijani, Arab, and other national origins — who have protested in massive numbers in cities, villages, and rural areas in 2018, 2019, and again in 2022, in defiance of the regime and *all* its wings.

Workers, farmers, women, and youth are demanding affordable prices for food and fuel. An end to oppressive dress codes for women, enforced by the "morality" police. Language rights and other freedoms for oppressed nationalities. Restitution of unpaid wages, and protection of water rights. The freedom to speak their minds, organize, and act in their own class interests. They want no more of Tehran's counterrevolutionary military adventures across Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Lebanon, and beyond. No more body bags, funerals, and sacrifice at working people's expense and the enrichment of Iran's capitalist rulers.

7) Increasing class polarization and instability across the imperialist world order drive home the accuracy of the assessment in the party's 1990 convention resolution, "US Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War," that the collapse of the counterrevolutionary Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union would not bring about "a lessening danger of the use of nuclear weapons."

To the contrary, the resolution pointed out, the more governments that possess nuclear arsenals, "and the more class, national, and state conflicts intensify the world over, the greater the dangers that one of these capitalist regimes will resort to the use of nuclear weapons in the face of extreme pressure."

The possibility of the use of weapons of mass destruction in today's world can be seen not only in Tehran's drive to develop nuclear arms and delivery systems. Such a prospect is also underscored by Putin's nuclear saber rattling, in face of growing setbacks to his regime's efforts to crush Ukraine's nation-

al independence and sovereignty.

The Moscow regime confronts mounting battlefield defeats; demoralization and disaffection among its troops; opposition from wide layers of working people and the middle classes at home; and antagonism, overt and covert, among bourgeois rivals atop Russia's largest enterprises (who are cut off from profitable trade and financial markets) and within the state apparatus itself.

The governments of China, India, Turkey, and even Belarus are publicly taking greater distance from Putin, as are the governments of the Central Asian and South Caucasian republics, which gained independence from the disintegrating Soviet Union in 1991. None of the former Soviet republics in Asia and the Caucasus have recognized Putin's "annexations" in Ukraine.

In Asia and the Pacific, there will be growing consequences to Biden's repeated avowals (not "flubs") that Washington will respond militarily to any aggression by Beijing seeking to impose its direct dominance over Taiwan. As this confrontation escalates, the regime in China has cracked down harshly on political opposition in Hong Kong, and on the predominantly Muslim Uighur minority in China's Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region. It has fortified armed outposts on Pacific island chains claimed by other Asian regimes, from imperial Japan to Vietnam, the Philippines, and others.

And Washington maintains its deployment of some 28,000 troops and massive armaments in South Korea and is stepping up joint military maneuvers with Seoul, targeting the nuclear-armed

government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

In the decades since Washington unleashed atomic bombs on the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the party's 1990 convention resolution notes, the US rulers considered using nuclear weapons several times but decided not to. Washington publicly weighed such an option during the Korean War (newly liberated China would also have been a target); during the murderous, decade-long assault on the Vietnamese freedom struggle; as well as against the Cuban Revolution in its opening years.

"Only socialist revolutions in the imperialist countries can bring the danger of a world nuclear conflagration to an end once and for all," the 1990 SWP resolution states. That requires building "a revolutionary working-class movement powerful enough to overthrow the US capitalist rulers and disarm them," which in turn "requires a course toward building a proletarian communist party as part of a world communist movement."

No nonproliferation zones, arms limitation treaties, or diplomatic pacts between imperialist powers and other nuclear-armed regimes can or will advance the fight to stop the global spread and eventual use of such weapons. Nor will the call for unilateral nuclear disarmament of Washington and other governments. No propertied ruling class is going to disarm and risk its own wealth and power, while

its competitors and enemies remain nuclear-armed to the teeth.

"Disarmament?" asks our 1938 founding resolution, the Transitional Program, drafted by Leon Trotsky. "But the entire question revolves around who will disarm whom. The only disarmament which can avert or end war is the disarmament of the bourgeoisie by the workers." That became more true, not less, with the advent of nuclear weapons.

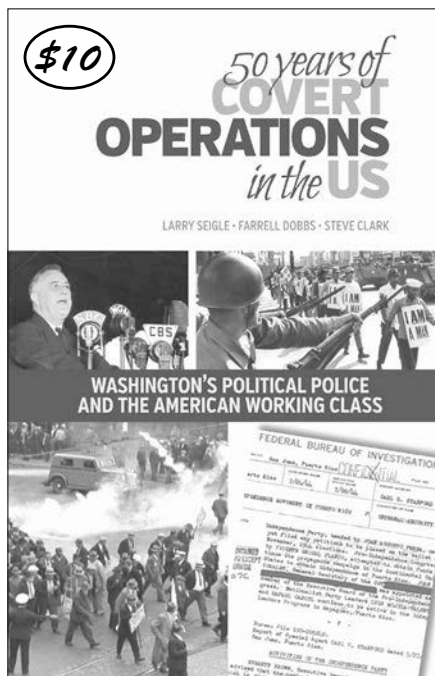
As communists and other class-conscious workers organize to advance a revolutionary struggle for workers power in the United States, our guide on these political and programmatic questions, as with many others, is the Transitional Program, including its section, "The struggle against imperialism and war."

"Not one man and not one penny" for the imperialist government, its budget, and its war machine, states our program, summing up one central aspect of our proletarian internationalist continuity from the Bolsheviks under Lenin to this day.

As Lenin wrote in the article "The 'Disarmament' Slogan" in 1916: "Only after the proletariat has disarmed the bourgeoisie will it be able, without betraying its world-historic mission, to consign all armaments to the scrapheap." *All*, for us, includes conventional and nuclear weapons.

8) Amid the social and political crises driven by the laws of capital, the importance of the US working class safeguarding and *using* the freedoms and protections recognized and enumerated in the US Constitution is posed ever more clearly.

Bourgeois and upper-middle-class political forces, organized especially in the imperialist Democratic Party today, are seeking to disenfranchise those the liberals and the "left" scorn as benighted working people, whom they increasingly fear, as well. Dubbed "irredeemables" and "deplorables" by



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# Opposing US rulers' assaults on freedoms protected by the Constitution

Hillary Clinton during the 2016 presidential election, these workers, farmers, and others are often today called “the MAGA Republican voters” — thus vastly and magically increasing their numbers into the tens of millions.

Proposals by the “enlightened” meritocracy and their hangers-on to eviscerate or even abolish the US Senate and Electoral College are being openly voiced within the Democratic Party and its “progressive,” “democratic socialist,” and assorted radical and “woke” wings. Such schemes remain unlikely to succeed, since they require amending the Constitution. What appears more in reach to many liberals, however, is seeking to entrench four more “safe seat” Democratic US Senators, as well as several additional congresspeople, by imposing statehood on Puerto Rico and Washington, DC.

So does manipulating or packing the courts to hand over more and more *law-making* to unelected judges, proposals

## The proletarian party's unconditional defense of the constitutional freedom of worship is indivisible from our defense of freedom of speech and assembly . . .

that also have support among many Democratic Party “progressives.” The aim is to nullify the political voice and influence of working people in what many liberals and the left disdain as “flyover country.” To sideline those “bitter” people in “small towns,” who, in the words of Barack Obama, “cling to guns or religion or antipathy toward people who aren't like them.”

It's with similar goals in mind that liberal middle-class layers have also gained yardage in increasing the unconstitutional policy-making and enforcement authority of government regulatory agencies and administrative bureaucracies, with their staffs of “experts,” technocrats, and often their own specialized police forces. These span from the Internal Revenue Service to the National Labor Relations Board, from the Environmental Protection Agency to US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and countless more.

The 2022 US Supreme Court decision rejecting the constitutionality of Biden administration actions — having failed to gain a majority in Congress to legislate its “climate change” proposals — to instead *impose* these policies through the EPA, was a setback to rule through fiat by bureaucracies. It was a setback, however temporary, to the tendency toward Bonapartism in the imperialist epoch.

The Supreme Court in recent years has handed down decisions limiting government encroachments on other constitutional freedoms, as well. Several rulings have upheld the First Amendment right to “free exercise” of religion. These include court opinions permitting a high school coach to pray on the field at the end of a game; barring a state government from excluding religiously affiliated schools from access to public funding available to similar private schools with no religious connection; and reversing discriminatory government restrictions on holding religious services be-

cause of COVID quarantines.

The proletarian party's unconditional defense of the constitutional freedom of worship is indivisible from its defense of freedom of speech and assembly.

In recent years, Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan has helped popularize among the self-designated enlightened the term “weaponizing the First Amendment.” By this catchphrase, increasingly invoked by “progressives” and the “left,” Kagan and others mean the alleged abuse of the Constitution's protection of freedom of speech and the press to air what the meritocracy considers “unacceptable” views, whether by opponents of abortion clinics, foes of so-called Critical Race Theory, advocates for the freedom to worship, or others.

At the same time, anti-working-class race-baiting, wokery, and “cancel culture” on the bourgeois and petty bourgeois left are fueling a rise of de facto book banning, the cancellation or disruption of speaking events and political debates, firings, and more. Both on the bourgeois left and right, school authorities and library boards are stripping books from shelves and classrooms — from Art Spiegelman's *Maus* to Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, from Anne Frank's *The Diary of a Young Girl* to Toni Morrison's *Be-loved*. State and federal prison officials have been following suit.

9) The US Constitution is a bourgeois document, the supreme law of the land enshrining in writing the class dictatorship and property relations of what is today the world's final empire. When first drafted in the 1780s, as a product of the victory of the First American Revolution, the Constitution balanced the factional interests of Northern merchant capital and the plantation-based capital of the Southern slavocracy. By the mid-1800s that shaky ruling-class coalition erupted into the “inevitable conflict,” the battle over secession. The resulting bloody civil war was the final manifestation of the mounting threat

## Protections of the US Constitution limiting the reach of the bourgeois state are deeply in the interests of workers and our allies among other exploited producers . . .

posed by the expansion of chattel slavery to the continent-wide consolidation of US commercial, banking, and industrial capital.

Also from the day the Constitution was ratified on June 21, 1788, there were struggles by small farmers, craftsmen, mechanics, and other plebeian layers, former slaves and bonded laborers, and later the rapidly expanding hereditary proletariat and other exploited producers to protect their class interests within this new governmental structure. Through hard-fought battles, they won amendments — *changes* — to the Constitution that provide protections *from* the state and exploiting



**Top**, strikers at International Flavors and Fragrances, in Memphis, Tennessee, June 2023. Unionists often raised slogan of 1968 strike by Black sanitation workers: “I am a man.” **Bottom**, Birmingham, Alabama, May 1963: Youth at civil rights protest are attacked by water hoses on orders of Police Chief Bull Connor.

class on whose behalf it rules.

These rights, in addition to others widely established well before the first American Revolution, introduce a degree of rule by law and written boundaries on the rulers' license to run roughshod over popular and regional interests, rural as well as urban, and other expressions of social, cultural, religious, race, and national diversity among the toiling majority of a vast continent.

There is not a “Constitution,” plus a separate Bill of Rights and other amendments. The twenty-seven current amendments *are part of* the US Constitution. These include the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, often called “the Reconstruction Amendments,” which

are conquests of the Second American Revolution.

Due to these historical origins and class battles, the US Constitution includes universal rights limiting the reach of the bourgeois state, protections that are deeply in the interests of workers and our allies among working farmers, owner-operator truckers, fishermen, small proprietors, and other exploited producers.

Standing guard against assaults on freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution is indispensable to engaging in the revolutionary class struggle necessary to prepare a vanguard of the working class capable, as conditions demand, of initiating and leading workers defense guards in the unions. Defense guards that can take on and

defeat rightist and fascist forces that will organize at the service of the employing class with the aim of crushing the labor movement and its allies in face of a proletarian challenge to the rule of capital.

This course is central to the communist program, continuity, and practice of the Socialist Workers Party, along the line of march toward a revolutionary struggle for workers power.

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# Trump conviction blow to rights

Continued from front page

ing, “You need not be unanimous as to what those unlawful means were.” He said there were multiple possibilities each juror could consider.

But the Sixth Amendment says that the accused has the right to be “informed of the nature and cause of the accusation.” This protection from the state was fought for in blood, because without it, it’s impossible to mount a serious defense.

The methods used against Trump aren’t new. They have marked government use of the FBI and the courts against striking unionists, fighters for Black rights, opponents of Washington’s wars, the Socialist Workers Party and others for more than a century. Workers who get tangled up in the capitalist “justice” system know from their own experience that it’s rigged against the working class.

What took place in Merchan’s court was not “weaponization of the justice system,” as many Republicans claim, but the application of frame-up techniques long used against the working class.

The conviction of Trump — a capitalist politician like Biden — and his prosecution in three other cases in Georgia, Florida and Washington, D.C., are part of Democrats’ frantic efforts to drive him out of the 2024 race. They’re convinced it’s the only way Joseph Biden can win the election.

Along the way, Democrats are dealing serious blows to constitutional protections workers need and use, especially when we take steps to defend ourselves, build unions and organize independently of the bosses’ Democratic and Republican parties.

Biden gave a green light for Trump’s indictment in comments leaked to the *New York Times* in April 2022. He complained Attorney General Merrick Garland was being too slow in charging his likely political opponent.

Two days after Trump’s Nov. 16, 2022, announcement that he’s running for president, Garland appointed former U.N. prosecutor Jack Smith as a Justice Department special counsel to go after Trump. Smith has filed two court cases against Trump, in Florida and Washington, D.C.

## Deep-rooted hatred of working class

Underlying the Democrats’ vitriol toward the Republican candidate is their deeply rooted hatred toward his support-

ers, including tens of millions of workers who they seek to disenfranchise. That disdain is shared by broad layers in the upper middle class who ape the outlook of the capitalist rulers and increasingly fear the possibility of being driven into the working class themselves as the capitalist economy deteriorates.

Hillary Clinton infamously called Trump supporters “deplorables” in 2016. During the trial Trump held a campaign rally May 24 in the Bronx, a Democratic stronghold in New York. The state’s governor, Kathy Hochul, ridiculed the thousands who turned out to hear the candidate as “clowns.”

Merchan has set July 11 for a hearing to sentence Trump, four days before the Republican Party convention opens to formalize his nomination.

The case should never have gone to trial. The verdict should be overturned.

The judge rejected the defense’s motion to move the trial out of Manhattan, with its overwhelmingly Democratic voter registration and where party officials and most media have stoked anti-Trump hysteria for years. In this case, which even some Democrats admitted was built on questionable foundations, it took less than 24 hours for the jury to bring in a unanimous guilty verdict.

When the trial opened, prosecutors led with claims Trump had his lawyer make an “illegal payment to Stormy Daniels” in 2016. But so-called hush-money payments aren’t illegal.

The judge allowed prosecutors to repeatedly tell the jury Trump had carried out some kind of federal campaign violations. But he sharply limited what Trump’s lawyers could question former chair of the Federal Election Commission Bradley Smith about, including exactly on this matter. Smith planned to explain that a nondisclosure agreement — like the one Trump’s former lawyer Michael Cohen supposedly arranged on his behalf — simply doesn’t constitute a campaign expense. The judge said he wouldn’t allow Smith to testify about this because it would just

## Join fight against ban on ‘Militant’ in Florida prison

Continued from front page

Press Association, which has 146 member newspapers across the state, including the *Miami Herald* and *Orlando Sentinel*.

On April 29 prison officials at Jackson Correctional Institution sent an im-

six baristas there. “Nobody involved,” he said, “including me, the other customers, and even the staff seemed to be happy.”

The company denies its stores are understaffed. Frank Britt, who identifies himself as Starbucks’ “chief reinvention officer,” told Bloomberg the company uses algorithms to determine how many workers are needed at each store and when.

But algorithms don’t make lattes, Frappuccinos or promotional goodies, much less fill special orders. Inflation has driven wholesale coffee prices higher. This cuts into the number of customers and profits. Starbucks reported a 15% drop in net income over the past quarter.

## Starbucks slashes jobs while adding stores, piles more work on baristas

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Starbucks has been cutting its workforce while opening hundreds of new stores in a drive to boost its profits. This means remaining workers are overworked and unable to keep up with the daily barrage of orders. Customers find themselves stuck waiting over half an hour to get their latte, the *New York Post* reported May 29.

Between Octobers 2022 and 2023, Starbucks bosses laid off 29,000 workers while opening another 380 stores.

Waiting 40 minutes at a Starbucks in Shelton, Connecticut, to pick up a latte for his wife on Mother’s Day, Chris Mills told Bloomberg News he was upset by the pace of work forced upon the

## May 19 named ‘Malcolm X Day’ in Nebraska

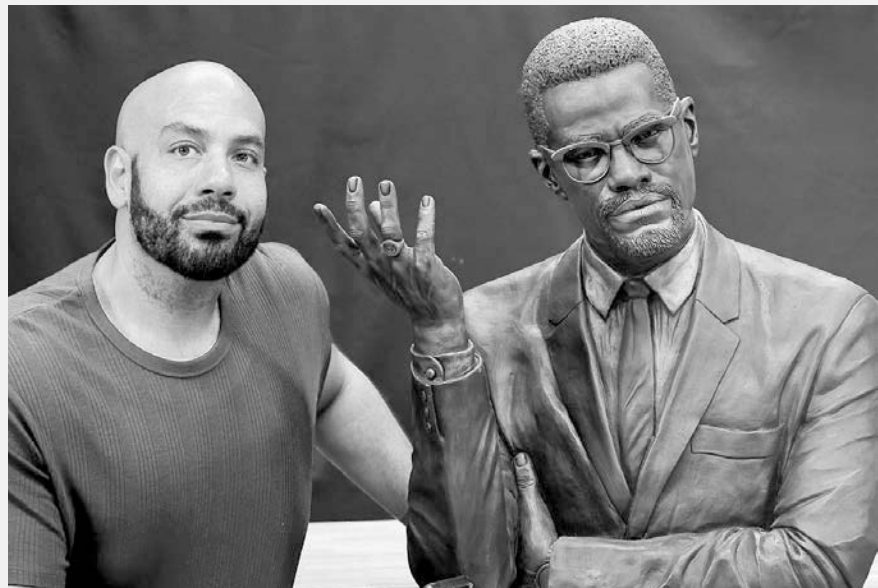


Photo courtesy of Nathan Murray

LINCOLN, Neb. — After nearly 20 years of campaigning by advocates of recognition of Malcolm X, a revolutionary leader of the international working class, he was inducted into the Nebraska Hall of Fame May 22. His bronze bust, made by Lincoln artist Nathan Murray, above, will be put on display in the Nebraska Capitol here.

In March the Nebraska Legislature voted to make every May 19, the day he was born in Omaha in 1925, Malcolm X Day. Programs will be organized in Nebraska schools to recognize his role in history.

“The recent actions here will have influences broader than Nebraska as the legacy of Malcolm reaches others around the world,” Murray, who teaches at Lux Center for the Arts and Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln, told the *Militant* June 2. “They urge, as Malcolm did, that Black people need see to their worth, reaching out to all nationalities and races to use their empowerment to advance humanity.”

— JOE SWANSON

set off a disagreement between “experts” — Smith and himself.

Merchan allowed prosecutors to present extensive testimony from Cohen and David Pecker, former publisher of the *National Enquirer*. But he instructed the jury they must ignore the fact that in a previous case Cohen had cut a plea deal with prosecutors who were pressing him to finger Trump. The judge also told the jury to ignore the fact that Pecker got a nonprosecution agreement from prosecutors before he agreed to testify.

“If they can do this to me, they can do this to anyone,” Trump said after the verdict May 31. In response, Biden declared, “It’s dangerous, it’s irresponsible

for anyone to say this was rigged just because they don’t like the verdict.”

But there is nothing “dangerous” about a defendant, or anyone else, pointing to serious courtroom abuses that do damage to crucial constitutional protections.

The liberal press were ecstatic about the verdict. “Guilty” was the headline over all six columns of the *New York Times* front page May 31. *Washington Post* columnist Jennifer Rubin demanded June 4 that Merchan jail Trump “for at least a year,” because problems with the Democrats three other cases against him mean they will likely be delayed until after the election.

poundment notice to the *Militant* saying that the issue (1) “depicts, describes or encourages activities that may lead to the use of physical violence on another person”; (2) “is dangerously inflammatory in that it advocates or encourages riot, insurrection, rebellion, organized prison protest”; and (3) “includes signs, symbols” that “promotes the gang culture or lifestyle.”

The ban cites a photo on page 7 of the issue: “Picture shows dead person being paraded around on a motorcycle; Magazine depicts hatred toward a specific race.”

In fact, the photo portrays, as the caption underneath it says, “ Hamas parades Jewish man murdered by death squad Oct. 7 past cheering supporters in Gaza City. Massacre in southern Israel was deadliest single attack on Jews since Hitler’s ‘Final Solution.’”

The *Militant* used the photo as one illustration in a feature reprinting a chapter from a new book by Pathfinder Press, *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class*.

The picture was taken by an Associated Press photographer and has appeared widely in news media in the

U.S. and worldwide, including the *Boston Herald*, *U.S. News and World Report* and *Proceso* in Mexico.

“The ACLU Foundation and the ACLU of Florida write to request that you reverse” the impoundment, Corene Kendrick, deputy director of the ACLU National Prison Project, and Daniel Tilley of the ACLU of Florida wrote to the Literature Review Committee May 31.

“Unfortunately, this is not the first time such bans and impoundment have arisen with this publication,” they wrote. “We have contacted FDC about improper censorship of the *Militant* multiple times before, as recently as last year.”

Their letter includes a copy not only of the photo from Gaza City, but a picture the *Militant* ran with it of a Jewish family in Belostok, in what is now Poland, after czarist-inspired pogromists murdered 80 Jews there in 1906.

## Impoundment ‘is unconstitutional’

“The article specifically details the long fight against anti-Semitism, condemns Hamas for its October 7 assault, and sets it in the broader historic context of attacks on people of Jewish faith,” they write. “In sum, the impoundment and confiscation of the *Militant* — a

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# Why the SWP calls for a labor party

The impact of today's economic, social and moral crisis of capitalism on tens of millions poses the need for workers to break from the Democrats and Republicans and all other capitalist parties and build a labor party based on the unions that can organize all working people. Increasingly posed is the question of which class will rule.

Growing difficulties paying for basic necessities and uncertainty about the future has led more and more young workers to put off starting families. Fertility rates are at a record low. The cost of child care and health care are driving millions into debt. The depth of this crisis is reflected in rising opioid and gambling addiction. Furthermore, the U.S. rulers and their rivals worldwide are rearming in preparation for more wars.

These conditions — bred by the workings of capitalism — make replacing this decaying system with something better a necessity.

The road forward starts with building solidarity with union strike struggles, where workers are joining together to fight for better wages, conditions and schedules. Through these fights workers acquire organization and discipline and gain self-confidence and class consciousness.

Workers organizing our own political party has been a central question since the birth of the labor movement more than two centuries ago. Every step of the way, battles to protect workers, build unions or win political rights have come up against the employing

class and its state power. The capitalist rulers utilize news media, cops, courts and their political parties against us. Their hirelings in the middle class teach that this setup is the best there can be, we should leave governing to them and try to get along in the dog-eat-dog struggle of each against all.

Contrary to their claims that workers are incapable of running society, what's needed is a program that unites all those exploited and oppressed by the ruling capitalist families. And that rejects having to choose the lesser evil between the Democratic and Republican parties.

A labor party would chart a working-class foreign policy, independent of the U.S. imperialist rulers and their rapacious drive to exploit workers worldwide. Our best allies are fellow workers abroad. The best ally of Ukrainians fighting to defeat Moscow's assault on their independence is the deepening anti-war sentiment of the working class in Russia. The strongest potential allies of Israeli toilers fighting Hamas' pogroms are working people in Iran.

Along this road workers can build a working-class party to lead millions to take political power from the capitalist rulers into our own hands.

In 2024, the one way that you can support independent working-class political action is by endorsing Rachele Fruit, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president. Win support for the SWP campaign and learn more about the party and its program.

# Fight 'Militant' ban

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publication in print for half a century that is widely read in prisons — is unconstitutional."

Samuel Morley, general counsel for the Florida Press Association, wrote May 30 to protest the ban. "The photo was part of an article on the fight against Jew-hatred and against Hamas' use of the Palestinian civilians of Gaza as human shields. The article repeatedly and unequivocally condemns Hamas for its murderous October assault," he said.

A letter sent to the Literature Review Committee from Inna Stavitsky, former president of the Holocaust Memorial Committee of Brooklyn, reads "The *Militant* is a newspaper that, in its every issue, stands for tolerance and condemnation of barbaric terrorism."

"In March 2024, journalists from the *Militant* visited The Holocaust Memorial Park in Brooklyn, NY, which is dedicated to the memory of the victims of Nazism irrespective of their ethnicity, religion or national belonging," she wrote. "I see the decision to ban the issue of the *Militant* as a violation of the First Amendment rights of both the prisoners and the publication."

The *Militant* appealed the impoundment May 23. David Goldstein, the *Militant's* lawyer and member of the prominent civil liberties law firm Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky and Lieberman, wrote that the ban is "fundamentally incomprehensible. It cannot possibly be that it is the position of FDOC that condemnation of Hamas' barbarity, including photographic depictions condemning that barbarity, is prohibited."

He asks whether prison authorities have "singled out the *Militant* for some reason? Its support for Israel as a refuge for Jews and its unconditional condemnation of Hamas and the regime in Iran?"

Goldstein notes, "The *Militant* is currently mailed to 284 inmate subscribers in 29 states at 139 state, federal and municipal prisons, including 117 inmates in 28 state prisons in Florida." No other prison "found anything in this issue to constitute a threat to prison security."

"Our fight is not just for the *Militant*. We defend the right to free speech for everyone," *Militant* editor John Studer said, urging readers to help get support for overturning the ban. "Because we have become known as determined and effective fighters for political rights is one of the reasons we get so much support.

"We are convinced prisoners have the right to read material of their choosing, to think for themselves, to form their own opinions, to follow unfolding class-struggle battles worldwide," he said.

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

# Hospitals sue patients over medical debts

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Hospitals, especially in rural areas, are increasingly filing suit against patients for unpaid medical bills that run into the tens of billions of dollars. Some 15 million people in the U.S. owe money to area hospitals, an example of the deepening crisis of capitalism where health care is an industry to rake in profits, not to provide care for the millions who need it.

In Kansas, the Pratt Regional Medical Center last year sued 400 of the 9,000 people living in that rural county over their debts.

Cynthia Mehlhorn got a court summons for \$5,619. "I was struggling just to get by day to day," Mehlhorn told the *Wall Street Journal*. She filed for disability around 2019 and has narcolepsy and COPD, a back injury and has had kidney cancer. Mehlhorn agreed to pay \$20 a month toward her bill, which has grown with imposition of over \$2,300 in interest.

"More than 150 people in Pratt had wages ordered garnished in 2023," the *Journal* reported, including by bosses at Walmart, the hospital and the school district. "Most were ordered to pay 12% interest after judgment."

New technology that automates the preparation and filing of lawsuits enables hospitals and other bosses to file large volumes of cases. But for those being sued, in civil cases like these they don't have the right to an attorney.

Not banking enough in profits, another group of hospital bosses in rural areas have been canceling services or shutting down. Working people who live in these areas, mostly older and uninsured, find themselves having to travel farther and farther to get care.

Another sign of the social crisis facing the working class is the record number of opioid overdose deaths. In 2023, for the third straight year, over 100,000 people died from an overdose, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported. Three-quarters of these deaths last year were linked to fentanyl, a powerful synthetic opioid.

In Canada, there's a rising accumulation of unclaimed dead bodies. "The reason deceased individuals are going unclaimed by their families is about affordability," Jeff Weaver, president of the Funeral



Michelle Crouch/NC Health News/Charlotte Ledger  
Lionel and Brenda White, in Charlotte, North Carolina, agreed to monthly payments on medical bills to put off threat of legal action. Whites said they feared losing their house. Bills totaled \$50,529, more than each one earns in a year.

Services Association of Canada, told Reuters. He said funerals now cost between 2,000 Canadian dollars (\$1,450) and CA\$12,000, and a gravesite in midtown Toronto goes for a whopping CA\$34,000.

## LETTERS

### Pleased to learn about the Socialist Workers Party

I recently subscribed to the *Militant*, and I am pleased to discover the existence of the Socialist Workers Party. The open antisemitism of the (Stalinist) CPUSA drove me away from it, when people I had considered friends and fellow travellers suddenly decided to distance themselves from me because I am openly Jewish. The CPUSA's flagship publication regularly publishes articles promoting false stories that play into old and discredited antisemitic conspiracy theories, such as the spurious notion that Jewish "financiers" profited from the 10/7 attacks. I finally had enough of that organization and resigned my membership, though I had hitherto been very much involved with them.

Stalin sadly was said to have followed the old adage of "antisemitism as the socialism of fools," that is to say, he knew that uneducated

people often fell into the bourgeois conspiracy theory of antisemitism (promoted by capitalist classes to distract people from their real problems, as, of course, happened in 1920s Germany), and so Stalin too apparently decided he could use antisemitism to his benefit (by falsely associating Russian Jews with the excesses of capitalism). Unfortunately, in our era, the CPUSA, the Stalinist flagship in the United States, took this wrong lesson to heart, and also evidently hopes to promote itself by purposely fan-

ning the flames of antisemitism.

Antisemitism is a scourge from the bourgeois classes, and serves them ultimately. Socialists must reject this and all other forms of hatred that divide working people and distract them from the long twilight struggle against oppression. I wish to thank the *Militant* and the Socialist Workers Party for understanding this important fact and for providing a safe space for socialist Jews here in the United States who have been ostracized by the American Left in the wake of the unprovoked 10/7 attacks on Levantine Jews.

Francis Erdman  
New Haven, Connecticut

**The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.**

### '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](http://www.themilitant.com)