

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Are working people in Europe flocking to join the 'far right'?
— PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Communist League in UK campaigns for party of labor

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — “Nothing fundamental will change for working people and youth whatever the outcome” of the July 4 general election, said Peter Clifford, Communist League candidate in the Manchester Rusholme constituency. He was responding to questions from Manchester University Students’ Union executive members Tesnime Safraou and Hannah Mortimer in a wide-ranging interview June 20. It will be available on YouTube and Instagram.

“We fight for a crash program of public works” to build the homes, schools and colleges, hospitals and infrastructure we need, the CL candidate said. “But under capitalism, education, health, the rail industry, where I work, are all commodities, run as businesses to make money.

“The fundamental question is which class rules,” he said. In Cuba working people made a socialist revolution that put an end to education as a commodity and embarked on making learning a lifetime experience. “Our campaign is addressed to how we can fight together to settle that question here.”

Continued on page 5

Jew-hatred, attacks spread worldwide after Hamas pogrom

BY SETH GALINSKY

Supporters of Hamas’ murderous attack on Jews in Israel have launched an escalating series of threats, violent assaults and other provocative actions around the world in an attempt to intimidate Jews and anyone who supports the right of Israel to exist as a refuge for Jews.

One key center for their threats and violence is New York City, which has the largest Jewish population in the world outside of Israel, including many who are workers.

On June 10, hundreds of people organized by Within Our Lifetime, an outfit that calls for the destruction of Israel, protested outside a New York exhibit showing the brutality of the Tehran-backed Hamas death squads’ attack on the Nova music festival in Israel Oct. 7. (See article on page 7.)

One prominent sign at the action said, “Zionists are not Jews and are not humans: They are the evil in the world.” In the slogans of these groups, the word “Zionist” is simply a code word for “Jew.” As for saying “Zionists are not humans,” there is no mis-

Continued on page 7

‘Back Puerto Ricans’ fight against US colonial rule!



Militant/Mary Martin

Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, testifies in defense of fight by Puerto Rican people to throw off U.S. colonial oppression at U.N. hearing June 20.

SWP presidential candidate Rachele Fruit speaks at UN

Statement by Rachele Fruit for the Socialist Workers Party to U.N. Special Committee hearing on the decolonization of Puerto Rico, June 20.

Distinguished chairperson and committee members:

My name is Rachele Fruit, and I speak on behalf of the Socialist Workers Party. I am the party’s 2024 candidate for president of the United States, the most powerful — and the last — imperialist empire.

Since our party’s founding in 1938, we have championed the fight for Puerto Rico’s independence from U.S. colonial rule. We have campaigned alongside independence fighters for the withdrawal of all U.S. troops and bases from the island, for the release of independentistas from U.S. prisons, and in support of unionists and other workers defending

Continued on page 4

Decolonization panel votes to back Puerto Rico struggle

BY MARY MARTIN AND MARTÍN KOPPEL

UNITED NATIONS — “As we speak, thousands of Puerto Ricans remain without electrical power and potable water due to recent collapses of segments of infrastructure. The U.S. government does nothing about it,” testified Edwin Ortiz, representing A Call to Action on Puerto Rico, a New York-based pro-independence group.

Ortiz was one of 80 people who addressed the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization June 20.

Continued on page 4

Flight attendant unions rally over pay, schedules, right to strike at 30 airports



Shafkat Anowar/The Dallas Morning News/TNS

Flight attendants and their unions, Association of Professional Flight Attendants and Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, representing over 77,000 workers, have been fighting for new contracts for five years. Above, flight attendants picketed Dallas-Fort Worth airport Feb. 13.

BY MARY MARTIN

CLEVELAND — Hundreds of flight attendants — members of their two central unions, the Association of Professional Flight Attendants and the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA — picketed and rallied at over 30 airports across the U.S. and

in London and Guam June 13. The two unions, representing more than 77,000 workers, have been fighting for new contracts for five years.

Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, joined American Airlines flight attendants and union

Continued on page 3

Join fight against ban on ‘Militant’ in Florida prison

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Support is building for the *Militant’s* fight against efforts by officials at Florida’s Jackson Correctional Institution to ban the paper, a violation of inmates’ constitutional rights and the right of the *Militant* to reach its subscribers behind bars.

The *Militant* was informed May 17 by authorities there that they had impounded issue no. 17, dated April 29, for running a photo they claim, “shows dead person being paraded around on a motorcycle; magazine depict hatred toward a specific race.”

This widely circulated Associated Press picture accompanied an article

Continued on page 3

First and Second Amendments are key for struggles of working people

BY TERRY EVANS

Defense of free speech and the right to bear arms is at the center of a case brought by the National Rifle Association against New York state officials. Without the right to bear arms, the capacity of workers and our allies to defend free speech and other constitutional protections can be destroyed.

Continued on page 9

Inside

Editorial: Endorse, build the SWP 2024 campaign 9

As bosses reap profits, workers face effects of sky-high prices 2

Nova festival exhibit shows reality of Hamas’ Oct. 7 pogrom 7

—On the picket line, p. 3—

Montreal warehouse workers strike over wages, respect

As bosses reap profits, workers face effects of sky-high prices

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The working class continues to feel the squeeze from high prices and challenges getting decent, well-paid full-time jobs to cover their families' increased living expenses. This reflects the growing capitalist economic and social crisis affecting our lives every day.

But this is not the situation for the capitalist ruling families and their upper-middle-class backers that think Bidenomics is working just fine for them, as they reap profits off high stock prices, investment in gold and other speculative endeavors. The reality of life in the U.S. is sharply class-divided.

The Federal Reserve crows that U.S. household net worth soared to a record \$161 trillion in the first quarter of 2024, mostly on the back of rising equity prices. But a closer look shows that the richest 1% in the country own 50% of all equity wealth, and the top 10% hold some 90%. Workers don't make the cut.

"Economic Data Paint a Picture of Two Americas" headlined a June 8 *Wall Street Journal* article, pointing to the reality of this class-divide. "The rich are feeling confident but lower-income households are growing cautious." The paper says that workers shopping for groceries are "struggling with inflation," while "cruise lines are booming."

The official unemployment rate for May was 4%, but among 20- to 24-year-olds, it was nearly double that. And job openings fell to their lowest level in more than three years. In fact, the rate at which companies hire workers has fallen to levels last seen seven years ago.

Of the 272,000 jobs the government announced were created in May, the

biggest numbers by far are in "leisure and hospitality," with lower wages, part-time hours and little or no benefits. By contrast, the entire goods-producing manufacturing sector of the economy added just 25,000 jobs in the same month.

The federal Bureau of Labor Statistics household survey provides a picture of challenges facing the working class. It reports a drop of 408,000 jobs in May compared to the previous month. Over the past year there's been an increase of only 31,000 jobs. Since May 2023 an additional 750,000 workers were "eliminated" from the workforce because they've been unemployed too long.

"Look Under the Hood: Despite Robust Job Report, Biden's Economy Is a Lemon," headlined a June 7 *New York Sun* article. There's been a steep drop in full-time jobs — 605,000 in May — while part-time jobs rose by 286,000.

Increasing numbers of workers have had to take on a second or third job to make ends meet. That's risen to 8.4 million workers in May. This leaves little time to spend with your family, or, for that matter, to start one.

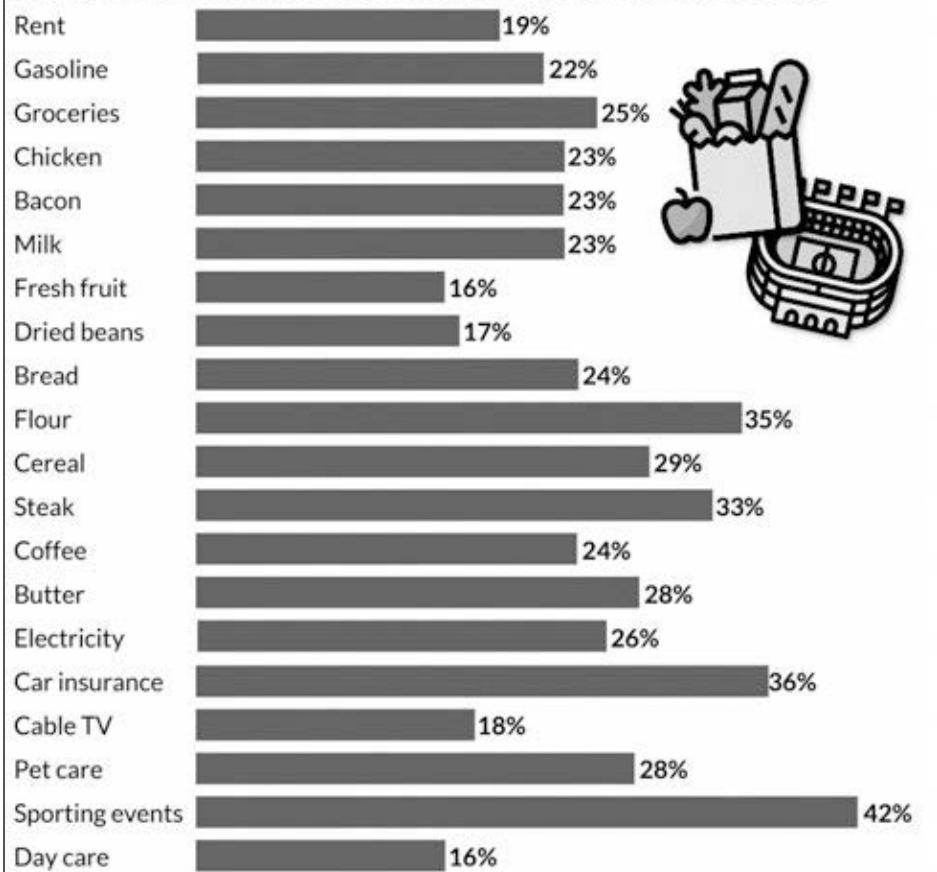
Prices limit buying nutritious food

A new poll by No Kid Hungry New York says that 85% of residents in the state report the cost of food is outpacing their income, with parents of schoolchildren and rural households being hit the hardest. Half of those contacted said the first items to go are increasingly costly foods like fresh produce and meats.

While the annual rate of inflation is lower than a year ago, prices overall are significantly higher than four years ago

The high cost of high inflation

Rent, groceries and other staples a lot more expensive vs. four years ago



and they're not coming down.

Car insurance rose more than 22% since last March, the fastest pace since the 1970s. And further double-digit increases are projected through the end of 2024. Workers' wages haven't begun to keep up with these increases.

Rising rents now eat up at least one-third of an average worker's monthly paycheck, and in a number of cities, like New York, it's more. That city's Rent Guidelines Board voted June 17 to raise city-regulated rents 2.75% for one-year leases and 5.25% for two-year, covering almost 1 million apartments. The board imposed similar raises a year ago. Those of us paying market rates have seen them soar higher.

Unaffordable rents have forced growing numbers of young people to live with family members, other relatives, friends or to find like-challenged roommates. And for older workers who don't have a family to assist them, homelessness is growing.

For workers who would like to buy a home, the costs are prohibitive. Only 5.8% of those renting nationwide — about 2.6 million households — had sufficient income to afford a median-

priced home, the U.S. Census Bureau reported. The average 30-year mortgage rate has hovered around 7% recently, up from 3% three years ago. Average home prices are at a record high of \$419,300.

People over age 50 are the fastest-growing segment of the population to face homelessness. "These people worked their whole lives, but many were in low-paying jobs with limited ability to have savings or safety nets," Margot Kushel, director of the Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative, told MarketWatch. Any "disruption to job or their health could lead to homelessness."

These conditions are bred by the workings of the for-profit capitalist system. Neither Bidenomics nor Make-America-Great rhetoric can change this reality. This is why more workers today are joining and using unions to fight for higher pay, cost-of-living protection against the ravages of inflation, and to defend the interests of all working people.

The next step is to break politically with the Democrats, Republicans and all other capitalist candidates and form a party of labor to fight to take political power into our own hands.

THE MILITANT

Back rail workers' fight for safety

Rail bosses are stepping up the use of one-person remote-control operation of freight trains despite an increase in injuries and deaths of both rail workers and those living near the tracks. The 'Militant' supports rail workers' call to use union power to control operations, safety.



Union Pacific
Rail worker runs driverless train with remote control in San Antonio, Texas, in 2023.

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

Flight attendants unions rally

Continued from front page

supporters on a spirited picket line at Cleveland Hopkins airport. Dozens chanted, “What do we want? Contract. When do we want it? Now!”

Hobbled by the notoriously anti-union Railway Labor Act, the Association of Professional Flight Attendants is pressing the mandated National Mediation Board to allow them to strike after recent negotiations failed. But company officials are confident no strike will be permitted. “The Railway Labor Act is designed to very, very, very significantly minimize the possibility of a disruption to the transportation system,” Steve Johnson, American Airlines’ vice chair, told the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*.

Flight attendants who work at United and Frontier Airlines, along with representatives of the International Association of Machinists and Amalgamated Transit Union, were among those who joined the action here. Drivers in several passing cars honked their horns in support.

Nilda Santiago, who works at Frontier Airlines, told Fruit that she was on the picket line to also draw attention to the newly imposed “turn model” of airline operations, which is hated by many flight attendants. Already in use on some 85% of Frontier flights, it schedules flight attendants to do daily round trips, eliminating layovers and additional per diem pay for the crews. This saves the airline bosses money. Santiago explained how this can mean loss of adequate rest along with reduced pay.

It also means more driving back and forth to the airport and parking fees.

In addition, flight attendants aren’t paid for time spent loading and unloading passengers, only for when the plane’s door is shut.

Fruit, who is a hotel worker and a member of the UNITE HERE union, was the first woman hired to work on the ramp for Eastern Airlines at Baltimore/Washington International Airport in Maryland. She told Santiago she was all too familiar with the bosses’ exploi-



Militant/Mary Martin

Rachele Fruit, left, SWP candidate for president, joined flight attendants’ picket line at Cleveland Hopkins airport June 13. Workers demand wage increases, pay for all hours worked.

tation of workers in the airline industry.

Fruit said her campaign calls for breaking with the Democrats and Republicans and building a party of labor to mobilize union power to defend

workers against these kind of conditions. They are dangerous to flight crews and the public alike.

The unions plan to organize further protests.

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

Continued from front page

in the paper opposing Jew-hatred. It shows the body of a Jewish man murdered by Hamas during its deadly Oct. 7 pogrom in Israel being driven around Gaza City to cheers by the Islamist group’s supporters.

Prison authorities claim the photo is “dangerously inflammatory” and violates prison rules, including the encouragement of “riot, insurrection, rebellion” and “organized prison protest.”

David Goldstein, the *Militant*’s attorney, filed an appeal May 23 urging the Florida Department of Corrections Literature Review Committee to overturn the ban.

“Jackson’s impoundment of the issue constitutes unconstitutional censorship,” he wrote. “It is discriminatory and arbitrary, in violation of the *Militant*’s rights to Due Process and Equal Protection under the Constitution’s 14th Amendment.”

Copies of protest letters by readers and civil liberties organizations calling for the ban to be overturned have been arriving at the *Militant*.

“Publications like the *Militant* have

a First Amendment right to communicate with their incarcerated subscribers,” wrote the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press. “Incarcerated individuals also have a First Amendment right to receive publications like the *Militant* through the mail.”

“The Reporters Committee urges the Literature Review Committee to overturn the impoundment,” they said. “Far from encouraging violence, the headline, subheadlines, and text of the article, decry violence and convey a clear message *against* ‘hatred toward’ any specific group.”

“The *Militant* is a newspaper reporting on events and facts and as such does not represent a threat to the security of any carceral facility,” wrote Moira Marquis, on behalf of PEN America. “We hope the Florida Literature Review Committee will not only see the unwarrantedness of this censorship but keep in mind the need to maintain free expression as a basic human right.”

Fifteen members of UNITE HERE Local 23 who work at a Dallas-Fort Worth airport caterer sent a petition demanding the lifting of the ban. “The un-

dersigned are joining the fight to defend the right of prisoners to read material of their own choosing and the right of newspapers to have subscribers behind bars,” they wrote.

The *Militant* has “taken a principled, ethical stand against government overreach by political police forces. They stand by constitutional guarantees,” wrote a prisoner from Illinois. “I urge you to permit the inmates of FDOC to open their minds

by perusing the pages of the *Militant*.”

Since 2013 Florida prison officials have tried to suppress issues of the *Militant* nearly 50 times. The paper challenges every ban and has won the vast majority.

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

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Montreal warehouse workers strike over wages, respect

MONTREAL — Some 130 Teamsters union members at the Richelieu Hardware warehouse here went on strike June 17 demanding higher wages and some respect from the bosses. Picket lines, up 12 hours a day, Monday through Friday, are greeted by continuous honks of support from truckers and other passersby.

“It’s not right, the company’s ex-

panded because of us. Now they’re offering 75 cents an hour,” striker Jean-Pierre Primeau, shipping lead hand, told the *Militant* when I visited and brought muffins and solidarity June 21. Shop steward Marco Chavez added, “Regular workers start at \$18.90 an hour [US\$13.85]. We want a three-year agreement, the company wants five. There were only two no’s on the strike vote. On the company offer, 61 voted no, 12 voted yes.”

“All the nationalities are together here, even the people who do 30 hours overtime. We succeeded — no one did overtime. People stuck together” in the lead-up to the strike, Josée Farand said proudly. She drives an order picker and other lift trucks.

“There’s one woman who has worked 32 years and is getting only \$22.85 an hour,” Farand said. A lot of women work in packaging, where the company started out. “Their wage structure is lower than the rest of us.”

Strikers told the *Militant* story after story of disrespect by management. “Before we had portable toilets set up on the line the boss called around all the businesses nearby asking them not to give us access to their washrooms or let us park,” Jean-Lesly Maurice said.

Richelieu now has 116 distribution centers in North America. They provide building materials to hardware stores and construction companies. Their 2023 sales were CA\$1.8 billion.

Join the picket line or send a solidarity message to Local 106 at magauthier@teamsters.ca.

— Katy LeRougetel

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



July 12, 1999

NEWPORT NEWS, Virginia — “We must let them know that they can’t walk all over us any old way. What we do will make a difference to the other companies.” This is how Glenda Saunders, a pipefitter at the Newport News shipyard and a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 8888, summed up her view of the strike battle here.

After two and a half months on the picket lines, the big majority of the 9,200 hourly workers are holding the line in their fight for respect and dignity on the job and for a contract with increased wages and pensions.

Local 8888 members are not receiving strike pay. Instead, USWA set up an office where workers submit bills to be paid. Despite financial pressures, many are determined to stick with this fight.



July 12, 1974

The movement for democratic rights in the Soviet Union won a major victory June 26 when former major general Pyotr Grigorenko was released after more than five years of confinement in Soviet psychiatric prisons.

A revolutionary Marxist, Grigorenko founded the Union of Struggle for the Revival of Leninism in 1963. He was active in demanding that the Crimean Tatars, the Chechen and the Ingush people, as well as the Volga Germans, be allowed to return to their homelands.

The timing of Grigorenko’s release is probably due to the bureaucracy’s fear that he would become an even more powerful symbol were he to die in prison. At the same time, about 50 Jewish activists have reportedly been arrested in Moscow and Kishinev.



July 11, 1949

With the Senate’s adoption of 28 “improvements” on the Taft-Hartley Act, the Democratic Party’s pledge to repeal the Slave Labor Law has gone up in smoke. This fact alone should call for the re-evaluation by the union leaders of their present political policies and their projection of a fresh program as the next step for organized labor.

The Democratic Party never put up a fight for repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act — and never intended to. As a capitalist party the Democratic Party seeks to tie labor to the capitalist state.

Labor must move boldly forward. November 1950 will inevitably bring more disappointments unless the unions call a Congress of Labor and construct a united program of independent labor action, with a labor party as plank No. 1.

Panel backs Puerto Rico struggle

Continued from front page

The annual hearing takes up the status of Puerto Rico, a U.S. colony since 1898.

The majority of petitioners called for the independence of Puerto Rico. One after another explained how Washington presents Puerto Rico to the world as a “self-governing Commonwealth,” trying to disguise the fact it remains one of the few remaining colonies in the world.

That reality was reinforced in 2016, when the Barack Obama administration and U.S. Congress imposed a “financial oversight board” — the junta, as working people contemptuously call it. Its purpose is to enforce payment to wealthy U.S. bondholders on Puerto Rico’s massive debt. The junta has the power to veto all budgetary and financial decisions of the colonial regime in San Juan.

“The only thing the U.S. government cares about is to make sure the bondholders get their payments,” said María de Lourdes Guzmán of the Movement for a Sovereign Union (MUS). “The junta, together with the two colonial parties, has taken on the job of plundering our wealth and turning it over to the insatiable bondholders, while the Puerto Rican people face precarious conditions.”

The two ruling colonial parties are the Popular Democratic Party (PPD), which defends the island’s “Commonwealth”

status, and the pro-statehood New Progressive Party (PNP).

Many petitioners, like Ortiz, detailed the intensified social, economic and moral crisis inflicted on the people of Puerto Rico under U.S. colonial and capitalist rule. They described how electrical blackouts are a nearly daily reality, with brutal consequences for working people, especially the elderly.

Millions face near-daily blackouts

The deterioration of the electric grid is a result of willful neglect by the capitalist rulers of Puerto Rico. They used the crisis to justify moves to sell off the debt-ridden state-owned power company. Operation of the electrical system is now largely in the hands of two private contractors, Luma Energy and Genera PR, but service has only worsened while utility rates have been hiked.

Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, pointed to recent protests by workers on the island against the privatization of public services and pension cuts. “We join them to demand Washington cancel the debt now!” she said.

“A successful battle to end U.S. colonial rule in Puerto Rico will also strengthen working people here,” she added. (Fruit’s statement is below.)

Speakers at the hearing noted that



Militant/Mary Martin

SWP presidential candidate Rachele Fruit, right, talks with participant at pro-independence rally for Puerto Rico in New York park after speaking at June 20 U.N. decolonization hearing.

Puerto Rico has never recovered from the social crisis triggered by the devastation of Hurricane Maria in 2017. Countless homes were destroyed and much of Puerto Rico was left without electric power for up to a year.

“Seven years after the Hurricane Maria, we still have people living in homes lacking a roof or not sturdy enough to withstand another natural disaster,” said Venecia Butler-Pérez from the environmental rights group Amigxs del MAR (Friends of the Sea).

Walter Alomar, an electrical worker

and independence fighter who lives in New Jersey, described how working people on the island responded with solidarity after the hurricane, in contrast to the callous indifference of the capitalist rulers.

“I was in Puerto Rico when Hurricane Maria struck, causing over 4,645 deaths.” Hired “as a lineman repairing power lines, I witnessed the resilience of our people. We pulled together, constantly checked on each other, and shared resources.” Drawing on these

Continued on page 5

SWP presidential candidate Rachele Fruit speaks at UN Puerto Rico hearing

Continued from front page

Nothing exposes more clearly the colonial status of Puerto Rico than the “financial oversight” board imposed by the Obama administration in 2016. Since then, the Junta has enforced measures to squeeze workers and farmers in order to guarantee payments to wealthy U.S. bondholders on tens of billions in debt.

The rulers have used this debt as a club to slash jobs and pensions, close schools, raise university tuition, hike utility rates and much more. But workers say: “It’s not our debt!” On May Day, thousands marched in San Juan against pension cuts and the privatization of public services.

We join them to demand: Washington cancel the debt now!

In the U.S., workers and farmers confront the same drive by the employer class, backed by its twin parties and

government, to put the burden of the capitalist economic crisis on our backs.

‘Workers are in mood to fight’

Across the country we find workers are in a mood to fight. Millions are turning to their unions, fighting for wage increases that are not wiped out by inflation, for safer job conditions, for work schedules that make it possible to be with and care for their families.

In recent months I’ve joined picket lines and other union actions across North America — bringing solidarity to hotel workers in Los Angeles and Miami, brewery workers in Fort Worth, Texas, and warehouse workers in Montreal. I’ve joined protests against rising Jew-hatred, a life-and-death question for the working class worldwide. We’ve campaigned for amnesty for immigrant workers to help unify our class. We’ve received a good

response to our explanation that workers need to break with the Democrats, Republicans, and all other capitalist parties, to form a labor party, based on the unions, that will organize all working people to fight for our class interests at home and internationally.

Assault on constitutional rights

The U.S. rulers are stepping up their assault on constitutional rights — freedom of worship and speech, presumption of innocence, freedom from arbitrary search and seizure, the right to due process. Washington has renewed the use of the Espionage Act, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, and the federal Insurrection Act, laws that have been used first and foremost against the working class and its organizations. Today such attacks are being used in the political witch hunt against presidential candidate Donald Trump. But history shows that what begins as a campaign against the government’s capitalist opponents will be used to undermine hard-won rights that working people need to defend our own interests.

Likewise, in Puerto Rico today, the FBI is using the prosecution of capitalist politicians on corruption charges to clean up its own image and justify the use of wiretapping and informers. My fellow fighters here know from long experience that Washington will use its political police, the FBI, to go after the Puerto Rican unions and the independence movement.

The sharpening class conflicts in Puerto Rico and the U.S. are part of a growing capitalist world disorder. Today, the largest land war in Europe since World War II threatens the independence and sovereignty of Ukraine. That, along with the Oct. 7 anti-Jewish pogrom by Hamas against Israel, portends broader wars. The opening guns of World War III are growing louder.

All this underscores that workers in

Puerto Rico, the U.S., and worldwide have common interests and a common struggle. Through their struggles, working people here broaden their horizons. They can identify more readily with the working-class resistance and the independence struggle in Puerto Rico. A successful battle to end U.S. colonial rule in Puerto Rico will also strengthen working people here.

Can we win? Yes. In neighboring Cuba, working people in their millions, led by Fidel Castro, overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959 and took state power. They broke free from imperialist rule, established a workers and farmers government, and began to transform society in the interests of the vast majority. For 65 years they have stood up to Washington’s brutal efforts to strangle them, while extending solidarity to others worldwide. The powerful example of Cuba’s socialist revolution shows the road to genuine freedom and independence for Puerto Rico. And it’s also an example for working people in the U.S.

I thank the committee for the opportunity to add our voice to those here today who are fighting for an end to Washington’s colonial domination of Puerto Rico.

Endorse Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party 2024 candidate for U.S. president! Campaign for what you are for, not who you’re against!

I endorse Rachele Fruit for president.

- Here is my contribution of \$_____ to help spread the word. (Make checks to Socialist Workers National Campaign)
- Send me a 12-week subscription to the *Militant*, the paper of the SWP campaign. (\$5 enclosed, checks payable to the *Militant*.)

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**Puerto Rico
independence is
a necessity**

Rafael Cancel Miranda
on the fight
against U.S.
colonial rule

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CL campaigns for party of labor

Continued from front page

Workers need our own party, a party of labor based on the unions, that will defend the interests of working people, Clifford said. Such a party would fight for amnesty for undocumented immigrants and equal rights for all, whether born here or abroad, as the capitalist parties pledge to ratchet up restrictions on so-called overstayers, including students from abroad, and intensify anti-immigrant demagoguery. It would fight against rising Jew-hatred. And it would defend a working-class foreign policy.

“Such a course means building and strengthening the trade unions,” he said, pointing to how his union, the Rail, Maritime and Transport union at Manchester’s Piccadilly rail station, organized solidarity with nurses on strike last year. Clifford, with a 50-year record as a union-builder and communist leader, has been invited to address three election “hustings” where candidates in the constituency will respond to questions from the public and debate out their platforms.

London campaigners are soapboxing in the busy Tottenham shopping area, where Pamela Holmes is the CL candidate for Parliament.

The Communist League has centered its campaigning in the working class, with candidates reaching out to workmates, to union fights and going door to door in working-class neighborhoods. With the capitalist parties concentrated upon reversing the declining fortunes of the propertied rulers and deepening attacks on workers’ living standards and rights, there is an openness to the CL’s class-against-class program.

“Not a penny, not a person for the imperialist government, its budget and its military,” CL candidates say as the Conservative and Labour parties both pledge to boost the armed forces.

Clifford has been joined by *Militant* subscribers living in the Manchester Rusholme constituency, introducing him to friends and neighbors. Uber driv-

er Asif Kamal, originally from Pakistan, was skeptical when Clifford knocked on his door. There’ll be no “revolutionary change in my or your lifetime,” he said.

“The rulers teach workers from when we’re very young that we are not capable of much, but the class struggle tells a different story,” the CL candidate replied. “Our class has a fighting history, including revolutions in Russia in 1917 and Cuba in 1959.” Kamal bought a subscription to the *Militant* and donated 6 pounds (\$7.60) to the campaign.

John Knight, 91, a retired rail worker, also subscribed. He spoke with Clifford about his experience as a soldier in World War II. “These wars are just for the rich and it’s working people who suffer, and we’re getting closer to another one today,” he said. “It’s only through taking political power away from the capitalist rulers into workers’ hands that can stop future wars,” Clifford replied.

Passing around her campaign flyer at a protest by RMT union “gateline” ticket takers on Northern Trains fighting for union recognition, Holmes was greeted by “Yes we do!” when the CL candidate pointed to the campaign leaflet’s headline, “Workers need our own party.” The June 24 protest at the headquarters of the ticket takers’ subcontractor employer, Carlisle Support Services, in Luton, Bedfordshire, is the latest in a campaign involving days of strike action.

Some 110,000 copies of the leaflet have been printed by the campaign and distributed free by the Royal Mail to every household in the two constituencies where the CL candidates are standing.

Campaign wins a hearing

Campaigners have participated in protests against Jew-hatred. They got a good response to election flyers at a June 7 protest of 120 just north of London demanding release of the hostages held by Hamas since the group’s Oct. 7 pogrom. Six participants picked up copies of *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the*

Decolonization panel backs Puerto Rico struggle

Continued from page 4

capacities of working people, he emphasized, “we must demand independence for our island.”

Christina Mojica of El Otro Puerto Rico, which fights for housing rights, pointed to skyrocketing electric rates, rents and other basic living costs that drive many to emigrate to the U.S. “The root of the cause is our colonial status,” she said.

Alejandra Castrodad of the Juan Mari Brás Foundation reported the average rent in Puerto Rico is now nearly \$3,000 per month, while median monthly wages are barely \$2,000.

Adrián González of the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) noted that 48% of the population lives below the official poverty line.

Many speakers pointed to the social impact of the economic crisis and the junta-enforced cuts in public employee jobs, wages, retiree pensions and other social protections. Some noted the devastation of the health care system. The San Juan daily *El Nuevo Día* recently reported 81 elderly people died while warehoused for months in local hospitals over the last year, waiting to be transferred to a nursing home after their government-funded hospital coverage was cut.

Garvin Sierra, an artist, said the government proposes to cut the University of Puerto Rico’s budget by another \$100 million, which “will jeopardize the university’s Museum of History, Anthropology and Art,” part of the Puerto Rican people’s cultural patrimony.

Shariana Ferrer-Núñez of the Colectiva Feminista en Construcción, a Black women’s rights organization, noted that the economic crisis in Puerto Rico falls disproportionately on working-class families headed by single women.

Rafael Olivera-Cintrón of Boricuas Unidos en la Diaspora (Puerto Ricans United in the Diaspora), pointed to Puerto Rico’s declining birthrate. “In 1999, the year I was born, more than 57,000 children were born in Puerto Rico. Last year there were less than 18,000 — the lowest number in the past 136 years.”

In addition to the pro-independence speakers, some two dozen statehood advocates testified. They acknowledged that Puerto Rico is a colony, but argued the solution is for it to be declared the 51st U.S. state. Their delegation was headed by former colonial Gov. Ricardo Rosselló. He had been forced to resign in 2019 by massive street protests sparked by the government’s callous response to the crisis.

As in previous years, the U.N. com-

NTSB: rail bosses caused East Palestine disaster



AP Photo/Sue Ogrocki

EAST PALESTINE, Ohio — Nearly a year and a half after the Norfolk Southern train derailment and resulting catastrophe here, the National Transportation Safety Board returned June 24-25 to report that the railroad bosses bear full responsibility. Their faulty equipment, lies to government officials, slashed work crews, and dangerous working conditions upended the lives of people in the region and spread toxic chemicals over 16 states.

“The railroads have boosted profits by cutting the workforce by nearly a third over the past seven years,” Eddie Hall, president of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, said in a statement passed out at the meeting.

“To hear that they purposely and premeditated the poisoning of thousands of people,” Jami Wallace, president of the Unity Council for the East Palestine Train Derailment, above, told Associated Press. “How are they allowed to do that and get away with it?” The *Militant* will run more complete coverage of these developments in the next issue.

— TONY LANE

International Working Class.

“At the center of our campaign is defense of Cuba’s socialist revolution against the Washington-led economic and political war against it and the U.K. government’s complicity,” Holmes told a meeting of 30 in Southall, west London, hosted by the Indian Workers Association, the U.K. branch of the Students’ Federation of India and the local branch of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign.

The meeting was addressed by Rigoberto Zarza, European director of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples; Aymée Díaz, second secretary at the Cuban Embassy in London; and

Students’ Federation of India-United Kingdom Secretary Nikhil Mathew.

The speakers called for an end to the U.S. blockade and the removal of Cuba from Washington’s “State Sponsors of Terrorism” list. The placement of Cuba on the list has led to further damage to access to the world financial system, reducing income, expenditure and foreign investment, Díaz said. “It has depressed tourism, a major foreign currency earner, with a decline of almost 1 million tourists from Europe.”

“In today’s crisis, we point to the example of how through their revolution, Cuba’s working people took political power,” Holmes said. In the process, they renewed communist leadership in the Americas and internationally.

“Working people are inspired when they learn of Cuba’s international solidarity, defending Angola’s sovereignty from invasions by the apartheid regime in South Africa and the contribution that made to freeing Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the African National Congress; and when they find out about Cuba’s international health missions, including during the pandemic,” she said.

mittee adopted a resolution backing Puerto Rico’s “right to self-determination and independence,” introduced by Yuri Gala, Cuba’s deputy permanent representative.

After the hearing, a rally sponsored by several pro-independence groups based in New York took place in a nearby park. It was one of several pro-independence actions that week.

Help get out the word about the Socialist Workers Party and put its presidential ticket on the ballot

Over the next month teams of supporters of the Socialist Workers Party 2024 campaign of Rachele Fruit for president and Dennis Richter for vice president will be fanning out across Vermont, Washington state, Louisiana and Minnesota to introduce the party program and its candidates to working people.

VERMONT — June 29-July 15
WASHINGTON — July 12-18
LOUISIANA — July and August teams
MINNESOTA — July 20-August 4

You can help! If you would like to volunteer to help campaign, contact the national campaign. You can contribute toward the expenses of meeting filing fees, printing literature and putting teams on the road.

Socialist Workers Party 2024 Campaign,
306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.
Tel: 347-871-0282. Email: socialistworkers2024@gmail.com.

Are working people in Europe flocking to join the ‘far right’?

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Elections to the European Parliament June 6-9 saw heavy losses for governing capitalist parties that tens of millions of working people hold responsible for the worsening conditions they confront. The results reflect these crisis conditions, but they're presented in the liberal press worldwide as a shift of the working classes to the "far right."

No independent working-class party presenting an alternative to all the capitalist parties contested the elections. The vote took place after years of rising prices, growing instability and climate taxes on farmers amid the rearming of capitalist powers across the continent in preparation for more bloody conflicts in the wake of Moscow's attempt to conquer Ukraine.

"From France to America, the far right is on the march," the *Financial Times* headlined June 17. "Voters have grown more concentrated on nationalism and identity, often tied to migration," complained *New York Times* columnist Matina Stevis-Gridneff. Liberal commentators view working people in Europe through the same lens that they look at workers in the U.S., as the source of bigotry and reaction.

People in 27 countries voted for representatives to the 720-seat European Parliament. The center-right European People's Party, headed by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, retained its position as the largest bloc. On the middle-class left, the Greens and Social Democrats lost seats, while the liberal Renew group also suffered losses. Parties that registered gains are frequently described as "far right," but they have actually shifted toward the center of capitalist politics.

After 18 months in government, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's party, Brothers of Italy, more than doubled its seats. In contrast, her junior coalition partner, the more rightist Lega led by Matteo Salvini, fell to 8%, less than a quarter of its 2019 vote tally.

Unlike Lega, Meloni favors Italy remaining in the EU. She supports Ukraine's fight for its sovereignty and Israel's war to defeat Hamas. But the liberal press still insists she is "far right."

While more right-wing parties gained in Germany, Austria and the Netherlands, Viktor Orban's governing party in Hungary got less than half the vote, for the first time since 2004.

French elections: more instability

The biggest shakeup was in France where French President Emmanuel Macron's ruling coalition was trounced by Marine Le Pen's National Rally. It won about 32%, more than double the vote of Macron's Renaissance party.

In response, Macron called snap elections for France's National Assembly June 30. Polls show the National Rally and the New Popular Front, a class-collaborationist bloc on the left, likely to take first and second place, ahead of Macron's Renaissance.

For more than a decade, Le Pen has distanced her party from its radical right, antisemitic roots under her father. She expelled him in 2015 for belittling the Holocaust and ditched the party's name, the National Front,

three years later.

She has dropped her proposal for Paris to exit the EU and the euro currency in favor of contesting to advance the interests of French capitalist rulers against their rivals within the EU.

Le Pen's candidate for French premier, Jordan Bardella, promises to impose further restrictions on the movement of immigrants within the EU and to resist dictates from the EU bureaucracy. Farmers in France and across Europe recently protested against skyrocketing energy and fertilizer prices, and over the EU's "climate change" rules that also threaten their livelihoods.

On June 24 the center-left government in Denmark announced it is imposing a new tax of just under 100 euros a year (\$107) on each cow owned by the country's farmers.

The French New Popular Front is an alliance of the Socialist and Communist parties, the Greens and the leftist former presidential candidate Jean-Luc Melenchon.

Citing Hamas' Oct. 7 "pogroms on Israeli soil," Le Pen supports Israel's right to defend itself and its war on the terror group in Gaza. She attacks the "stigmatization of Jews by the far left." She combines this with the scapegoating of



Farmers from Beauvais march on Paris Jan. 29. Farmers across Europe have been protesting skyrocketing costs, heavy EU "climate change" taxes, loss of farm income. Voting for European Parliament June 6-9 reflected impact of capitalist crisis, war on working people.

immigrants and anti-Muslim demagoguery.

By contrast, Melenchon refused to condemn the Oct. 7 massacre by Hamas and denies there is Jew-hatred among Hamas apologists on the left. Stalinists in the Communist Party voice similar opinions.

Setback for German government

The governing coalition parties in Germany suffered a severe setback, with Chancellor Olaf Scholz's Social Democrats scoring their worst result ever in the European elections. His coalition partner, the Greens, fared even worse, dropping to 11.9%. The conser-

vative Christian Democrats, in opposition at the federal level, came in first.

Founded as an anti-EU party, Alternative for Germany opposes Berlin's aid to Ukraine and wants tighter immigration restrictions. It placed second nationwide with a record high 16.2% of the vote. Capitalizing on anti-government sentiment, its vote exceeded each of the three parties in Scholz's governing coalition.

In five eastern German states, where for years workers have been hardest hit by the capitalist crisis, the Alternative for Germany came in first with around 30% of the vote.

'Hamas trafficked in Palestinian blood, ruined our lives'

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

Increasing numbers of Gazans have begun to speak out against Hamas, holding the group responsible for hurling them into eight months of war with Israel and bringing death and destruction into their lives.

"I do not want to sacrifice my life, my home and house for anyone," including Hamas, Ameen Abed, a resident of Jabaliya told the *New York Times* for a June 16 article. "Who are you to impose this kind of life on me?"

While Hamas and even the Israeli hostages were in the underground tunnels, Gazans were above ground with no protection, he said. "There is uncontrolled anger against Hamas. It threw the Palestinian people into the bottom of the well."

"If the death and hunger of their people do not make any difference to them," Motaz Azaiza, a well-known Gaza photojournalist, wrote about Hamas in March, "they do not need to make any difference to us. Cursed be everyone who trafficked in our blood, burned our hearts and homes, and ruined our lives."

Raed al-Kelani, who makes meals and distributes food aid in shelters for displaced Gazans, told the *Times* Hamas always acts in its own interests. "It started Oct. 7, and it wants to end it on its own terms," he said. "Hamas is still seeking its slice of power." Another Gaza resident, who recently fled to Egypt and asked the *Times* not to use her name for fear of repercussions against her family, said they tell her they don't want the war to end before Hamas is defeated.

Since the Tehran-backed Hamas' Oct. 7 pogrom in Israel — in which the Nazi-inspired outfit killed 1,200 people, wounded thousands more and tortured and raped civilians — the group has

sought to rally support for their war on the Jews. "O, our people in all Arab and Islamic countries," Muhammad Deif, head of Hamas' military wing, said in a statement released at the time of the attack, "the day has come when anyone who has a gun should take it out. Now is the time. If you do not have a gun, take up your cleaver, hatchet, axe, Molotov cocktail, truck, bulldozer or car."

Few respond to call for attacks

But few heeded his call. There remain plenty of Hamas supporters in Gaza, but the influence they wield has markedly weakened.

The majority of Palestinians, including those who blame Israel for the blockade on Gaza after Hamas came to power, say the killing or kidnapping of civilians is not permissible.

And in spite of Al Jazeera and other regional Arabic-language news media, which focus on Hamas' figures on Palestinian deaths and destruction and

don't cover the atrocities committed by Hamas Oct. 7, more Palestinians are speaking out. And they do so in spite of the long history of violent response by Hamas to any criticism since the group took full control of Gaza in 2007 after ousting the Palestinian Authority's security forces in bloody street battles.

"They [Hamas leaders] believe they planned for everything, but when it came to us they didn't," said Umm Ahmad, the wife of a Gazan blacksmith whose family has been displaced four times during the war. "I need a government that takes care of its people."

Another recent report, in Canada's *National Post* June 14, quotes a Gazan who says Hamas is far less popular than what media like the Qatar-financed Al Jazeera claims. He asked to remain unnamed because of earlier protests against Hamas he participated in.

He said he hopes Israeli forces stay until Hamas is routed and can be replaced by grassroots-area residents.

Jew-hatred, attacks spread

Continued from front page

taking the Nazi-like threat.

Protesters at the action waved Hamas and Hezbollah flags, carrying a banner proclaiming, "Long live Oct. 7th."

The assault on the Nova festival was a key part of Hamas' massacre of 1,200 people in Israel Oct. 7, the taking of 250 hostages, the wounding of thousands and the rape of dozens of women. It was the largest anti-Jewish pogrom since the Holocaust.

On June 11 the homes of several trustees of the Brooklyn Museum were smeared with fake blood and inverted red triangles, the symbol Hamas uses to identify targets in Gaza for assault. In front of the home of Museum Director Anne Pasternak, who is Jewish, they strung a banner charging she is a "white-supremacist Zionist."

"Our task," Within Our Lifetime threatened in a June 21 statement, is to "disrupt, destroy, and bring down every single Zionist and imperialist system in the U.S."

Similar attacks have multiplied in France, Canada, the U.K., Australia and elsewhere.

Increase in Jew-hatred

Jew-hatred and attacks on Jews had been on the rise worldwide well before Oct. 7, as documented in a new report by the Anti-Defamation League and Tel Aviv University. Attacks mushroomed after the Hamas pogrom, when Stalinist and other middle-class radicals took to the streets to celebrate its murderous assault.

Jew-hatred is a central feature of the imperialist epoch. Whenever the capitalist rulers face a deep economic and social crisis and sharpening conflicts with their rivals over markets, profits and spheres of influence, they turn to rightist thugs and Jew-hatred. Their aim is to provide a scapegoat to divert crushed middle-class layers and demoralized workers from seeing the real source of their problems — the profit-driven capitalist system.

Organizing and involving the unions to fight against Jew-hatred is decisive for working-class battles today and advancing revolutionary opportunities to come.

Hamas apologists have become more provocative, violent and blatant in targeting Jews as the war in Gaza has progressed. They are emboldened by calls by President Joseph Biden and other imperialist rulers, backed by the craven liberal bourgeois news media, to pressure Israel to end its war to eliminate Hamas.

The June 17 *New York Times Magazine* published a lengthy story entitled, "Pregnant in Gaza With Nowhere to Go." It follows the challenges and calamities facing the Muhaisens, a better-off Gazan family, as they have to flee Gaza City following Israeli troops intervention to destroy Hamas after the Oct. 7 pogrom.

The family heeds a warning from the Israel Defense Forces to leave

their home, located in a civilian area Hamas forces are using as a shield.

Maise, one of their children, asks why is there fighting. The article never mentions the Hamas pogrom. The closest they come is to mention an Al Jazeera broadcast saying, "It was about an incursion into Israel."

All of the blame for the destruction and carnage is laid at the doorstep of Israel.

But the provocative actions by Hamas supporters and the middle-class left are also a sign of their frustration as Israeli forces continue to make progress in dismantling Hamas in Gaza.

One Israeli military official told the *Jerusalem Post* that Israel Defense Forces "have caused significant damage to Hamas' production and armament capabilities." Israeli forces have taken control of Gaza's border with Egypt, part of its advances in Rafah, making it more difficult for Hamas to replace its weapons and ammunition. Hundreds more of their fighters there have been either killed or captured.

While support for Hamas is de-



Open Jew-hatred marked protest against Nova festival exhibit in New York June 10. Protesters claimed exhibit showing brutality of Hamas' Oct. 7 pogrom was just "Zionist propaganda."

clining in Gaza, thousands of Hamas thugs are still there, and the group and its allies still hold more than 100 living or dead hostages. Israel's capitalist rulers are grappling with who will take charge of a new government in Gaza, once the IDF makes more prog-

ress in dismantling the Jew-hating group's remaining battalions.

As they advance, working people in Gaza feel more room to speak out against Hamas' dictatorial rule and look for ways to take greater control over their lives.

Nova festival exhibit shows reality of Hamas' Oct. 7 pogrom

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK — Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Rachele Fruit and five campaign supporters June 19 toured an exhibit here — "October 7/6:29 a.m. The Moment Music Stood Still." It graphically shows the truth about the anti-Jewish pogrom led by Hamas death squads at the Nova music festival in southern Israel Oct. 7. The weekend rave was "dedicated to peace and love that was brutally cut short," organizers said.

The exhibit was in New York from April 21 to June 22. Its next stop is Los Angeles in mid-August.

"Anyone who has the chance, should see this," Fruit said. "It gives you more tools to answer the lies and distortions of the Oct. 7 deniers — today's equivalent of Holocaust deniers — who claim it never happened or promote the grotesque myth that it was the Israeli army that killed people, not Hamas."

More than 370 of the 1,200 people murdered by Hamas and its allies — and 44 of the 250 hostages they kidnapped — were at the Nova festival.

The day Fruit and campaign supporters, including this correspondent,

attended the exhibit there were hundreds in line waiting to get in. Over 100,000 people have seen the exhibit so far.

"The Moment Music Stood Still" opens with a video of some 3,500 people dancing at the rave. Then near dawn, Hamas began launching thousands of missiles into Israel. Organizers shut off the music and told everyone to leave. But by then Hamas murderers, some arriving on motorized paragliders, had begun to surround the site.

The Hamas pogromists chased people through farm fields, threw grenades into packed bomb shelters where some festivalgoers hid, riddled porta-potties with bullets and tied women to trees before raping and killing them.

The exhibit includes video taken by festivalgoers during the pogrom, from later interviews and dashcam recordings, as well as video taken by Hamas thugs themselves during their hours-long assault with semi-automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades.

There are recordings of cellphone calls made by Nova participants asking for help. And the recording of a Hamas thug, who called his parents

to brag he had killed 10 Jews "with my own hands!"

Rada Rashed, a catering worker at the festival and member of the Arabic-speaking Druze minority in Israel, describes seeing a Hamas thug shoot a woman in the head and then laugh about it. "No one should ever have to see something like that," he said in a video.

"It's hard to walk out of here untouched," Wendy Arbeit told the *Militant* at the exhibit. "Everyone has to bear witness to the evil in the world."

On the first day of the exhibit a small silent protest of Hamas apologists took place outside. Nova survivor Eliat Tibi told the *Forward*, "We invited them in to see the exhibit and to talk with us, and they didn't want to."

Then on June 10, Within Our Lifetime, a group that openly backs Hamas and Hezbollah, provocatively mobilized hundreds of its supporters outside the exhibit, waving smoke flares and calling it "Zionist propaganda."

"I've only been in the States for two months," Tibi said, "and it's the first time I've understood or felt anti-semitism, seeing these protests. I was shocked by the slogans they shouted."

In response, organizers extended the exhibit a week and the lines to get in grew longer.

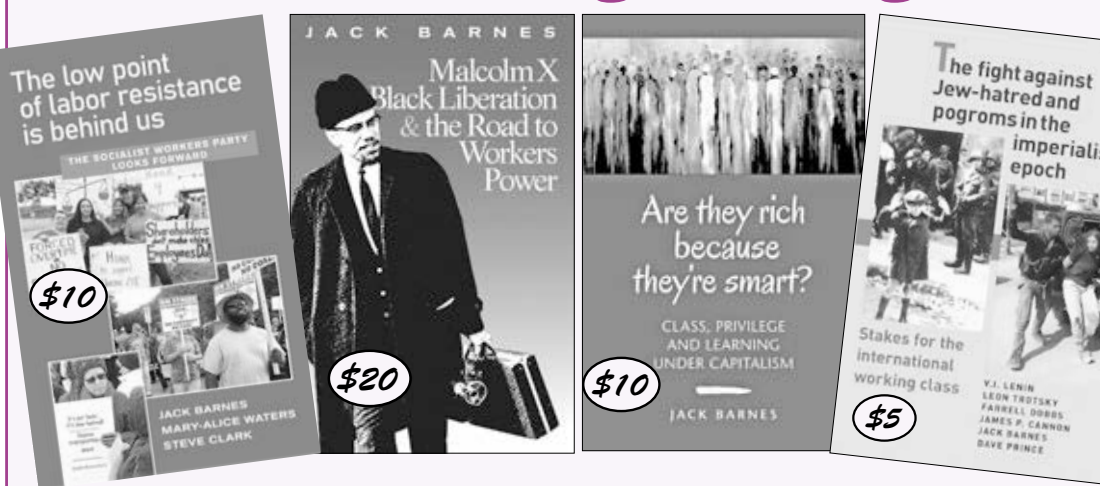
"We still have a lot of work to do, so many people don't understand what happened Oct. 7," Naama Kristal, a volunteer staffer at the exhibit, told the *Militant*. "We challenge everyone to come see the exhibit. Let's talk."

Stakes in fight against Jew-hatred

"The protest against the exhibit highlights that what is involved isn't an Israel question, what's at stake is the question of Jew-hatred in the imperialist epoch," I said to a fellow visitor at the exhibit. "And it's growing because of today's deepening capitalist crisis. It's a threat to all working people."

Continue on page 9

Books for working-class fighters



See page 8 for distributor near you



Exhibit displays shoes left by partygoers fleeing Hamas attack on Nova festival that killed over 370 there.

1962 'missile crisis': Cuban people stood up to defend their revolution

Making History: Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces by José Ramón Fernández, Enrique Carreras, Harry Villegas and Néstor López Cuba is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for July. The excerpt below is from an Oct. 20, 1997, interview with López Cuba by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes and Pathfinder Press President Mary-Alice Waters. In 1957, López Cuba joined the revolutionary war led by Fidel Castro. He led a tank unit to help defend Cuba's socialist revolution against the failed U.S.-backed mercenary invasion at the Bay of Pigs in 1961. He was an officer in Cuba's internationalist mission to defend Angola, which helped defeat an invasion by apartheid South Africa in 1976. Copyright © 1999 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Verde Olivo

Cuban volunteers at defeat of U.S.-organized invasion at Playa Girón, April 1961. In 1962, Néstor López Cuba said, readiness to fight by Cuban people "prevented nuclear holocaust."

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

JACK BARNES: As you know, the way the history of the 1962 October Crisis is written in the United States, [U.S. President John] Kennedy and [Soviet Premier Nikita] Khrushchev saved the world from nuclear holocaust. But we have always told people that the truth lies elsewhere. It was the Cuban people and its Revolutionary Armed Forces that saved the world.

Kennedy fully intended to mount an invasion of Cuba in October 1962, as he had been planning to do for more than

a year. Previously classified documents released in the past few years, however, show that his hand was stayed when the Pentagon informed him that he could expect an estimated 18,000 U.S. troop casualties during the first ten days alone of an invasion. The Cuban people were armed and mobilized on a massive scale, Kennedy was told by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Cuban army was large for a small country, and, together with the militias, very combat-ready.

Kennedy feared the domestic political consequences as a flood of body bags began coming home. So that's when he started seriously probing Khrushchev for a deal. ...

NÉSTOR LÓPEZ CUBA: It's very true, as you say, that the armed forces, and the people of Cuba above all, played a decisive role in preventing a nuclear holocaust. Because it was understood in Washington that the people would fight and the invasion would be costly. This has been the attitude of our people from the triumph of the revolution until today, I believe. Had this consciousness not existed, they would have invaded us.

At the time of Girón, there is no question that [former U.S. President Dwight] Eisenhower had bequeathed the mercenary brigades to Kennedy, and Kennedy had to support them in the invasion. The one decision Kennedy made on his own was not to land the U.S. Marines behind the mercenaries. Had Eisenhower been in power, we believe, things would have

been different; they would have sent in the marines. But Kennedy had just become president, and I think this made him stop and think a bit.

The North Americans have presented their version of the October Crisis. The Russians have told theirs. Cuba has issued important statements and published documents, above all during the conference held in Havana on the thirtieth anniversary of the crisis, attended by Fidel and McNamara, but we have not yet said our final word.

I believe that much remains to be told about the events of the October Crisis, about the role played by Fidel, the leadership of the revolution, our people, and the armed forces. ...

The Soviet people — our teachers, ordinary people — showed a great deal of solidarity with us. They knew about the unilateral decisions taken by the Khrushchev government and were against them. They also knew about Fidel's declaration that the moral missiles we possessed in Cuba were more powerful than the nuclear missiles. All these speeches reached the Soviet people.

MARY-ALICE WATERS: During those same days in October 1962, we were organizing demonstrations in the United States. Jack and I were both university students at that time, in different cities.

LÓPEZ CUBA: You were organizing support activities?

WATERS: Yes. To demand "U.S. Hands Off Cuba!" "U.S. Out of

Guantánamo!" "Stop the Invasion!"

BARNES: Communists in the United States had had no contact with revolutionists in Cuba when the crisis began, of course. But we supported the Cuban revolution, whole-heartedly. Some revolutionary-minded young people in the U.S., including myself, were actually won to communism in Cuba. I spent several months here in Cuba in the summer of 1960. I recall asking a Cuban compañero I had come to trust whether he thought I should stay in Cuba or go back to the United States. I wanted to stay, because we all knew the invasion was coming.

"Go back to the United States," he told me, "and make a revolution there."

I decided he was right. And I've never gone back on that agreement.

During the October Crisis there were a few older socialists in the United States who had been worn down by the retreat of the labor movement and the McCarthyite witch-hunt during the 1950s; they held the view that there was nothing much anyone could do. "Either the Russians and the Americans will go to war or they won't," they said. "It's too late to demonstrate." ...

We responded, "Well, all we can do is fight. Washington has to know they will pay a price if they go to war against Cuba."

The big majority in the communist movement in the U.S. — young or old — responded as we did. We knew the Cuban people were ready to fight, and we were determined to fight alongside them. The most important lesson for young revolutionists to learn is that the imperialists pause only when they have to face those who are ready to fight like you are in Cuba. Otherwise one starts believing that all of history is negotiated by big governments.

LÓPEZ CUBA: What you say is very important because popular pressure in the United States is what forced the U.S. government to pull its troops out of Vietnam.

The Cuban revolution today remains on a firm footing. At the same time, the U.S. government knows that the progressive people of the United States, the working people, will take to the streets to oppose an attack on Cuba, as they did during Vietnam. There is solidarity with Cuba around the world, as well, and this too has acted as a brake on Washington.

July
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Endorse, build the SWP 2024 campaign

With the presidential election nearly four months away, the capitalist rulers in the U.S. seek to convince working people our only choice is to pick a “lesser” evil between Donald Trump or Joseph Biden.

But decades of workers subordinating our class interests to the bosses and their parties is the main obstacle to advancing the interests workers share worldwide against the U.S. and other ruling classes. Their goal is to offload the crisis of their system onto our backs and use us as cannon fodder in their wars.

Both the Democratic and Republican campaigns insist that “we” Americans — workers and the rulers who exploit us — share common interests. But whatever their momentary factional conflicts, both parties govern for the U.S. capitalist ruling families, who profit off the exploitation of the working class, upholding their crisis-racked imperialist world order against rivals abroad.

Rachele Fruit, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, explains the decisive question workers face is the need to break from the bosses’ parties and form our own party, a party of labor. She points to the capacities of workers to join together to fight for the things we need. The only way to use our power effectively is to organize independently of the bosses at every level.

She explains workers today are in a mood to fight, to build and use the unions and to offer solidarity to

those in struggle — here and worldwide.

Tens of millions of working people are disgusted by wages and conditions that make living and sustaining families harder and harder. Many are being drawn into world politics as a result of Moscow’s murderous invasion to subject Ukraine to occupation and Hamas’ barbaric, Oct. 7 pogrom and rising Jew-hatred worldwide.

We need a labor party, based on the unions, that appeals to all working people to join and fight side by side. A party that stands for the independent interests of the working class on all questions. That organizes our class to deepen our struggles — opening the door to transforming workers’ view of ourselves, to strengthening class consciousness and self-confidence, to uniting all the exploited and oppressed to fight to take political power into our own hands.

The Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution in 1917 and Cuba’s socialist revolution in 1959 showed workers it is possible to build a leadership and a party that can lead tens of millions to take political power.

Building this kind of party is what the Socialist Workers presidential campaign offers. Endorse the campaign. Introduce the SWP to your co-workers, family and friends. Join the SWP’s efforts to get on the ballot. Learn more about the party’s program and its revolutionary working-class continuity.

Join party campaigners as they explain it’s not who you’re against, but it’s what you’re for that counts.

Nova festival exhibit

Continued from page 7

“That’s true,” he told me. “But right now Israel is on the front lines.”

“I did not really have an idea of how horrible Oct. 7 was until I saw this exhibit. It’s like you were right there during the terror attack,” said Mamadou, a supporter of the Socialist Workers Party campaign who is Muslim. “Most of the victims are in their 20s. Whatever their age, this is a huge loss for humanity. This horrific attack on Jews cannot be justified by any faith. This is not helping the Palestinian people get their freedom.”

Seeing the stark brutality of Hamas’ pogrom drives home that the group has nothing to do with “national liberation” or defending Palestinian rights. “It’s the consequence of the Jew-hatred that’s at the heart of Hamas’ founding covenant — which explains its continuity with Nazism — and its course ever since,” Fruit said.

Amid the horror shown, the courage and resilience of working people in Israel shows through in the exhibit. In the absence of an immediate response by the Israel Defense Forces, some rave participants, area residents, retired soldiers, reservists, farmers and Bedouin Arab citizens of Israel rushed to help rescue as many people as they could and to confront and drive back the assassins. Without that, the toll would have been much higher.

“That spirit is captured by the slogan of the survivors: ‘We will dance again. And we will invite all of you,’” Fruit said.

First and Second Amendments are key for struggles of working people

Continued from front page

Working people have a big stake in defending liberties previous generations of toilers fought to include in the Constitution. Independence from British colonial rule was won by a popular revolution. After the war farmers and other working people continued to fight to defend themselves against taxes and debts imposed by newly formed state governments in Rhode Island, Virginia, and, most well-known, in Shays’ Rebellion in Massachusetts. These plebian rebellions led to two different class reactions.

The merchants and slave owners — who together formed the new ruling class — decided they needed to draw up a new Constitution to assert a more centralized state power, which they did at the Constitutional Convention in 1789. Farmers and small producers continued to demand that their liberties be first over all other considerations, and fought for legal protection of their rights. This led to the inclusion of the Bill of Rights in the new Constitution.

In 1833 Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story wrote that the Second Amendment is a “palladium of the liberties of a republic, since it offers a strong moral check against the usurpation and arbitrary power of rulers ... thus enabling the people to resist and triumph over them.”

Hated today by liberal gun control campaigners, the Second Amendment allows for a “well regulated militia,” and that “the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.”

After the second great American Revolution, the Civil War, the Reconstructionist-led Congress adopted the 14th Amendment, which made the Bill of Rights applicable to all the states.

Today workers utilize constitutional protections, including free speech and assembly, when we stand up to employer attacks on our wages and conditions, build unions, fight Jew-hatred, join struggles for Black

and women’s rights or speak out against Washington’s imperialist wars. The Second Amendment has a special place in safeguarding all other freedoms.

On May 30 the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously overruled a lower court decision rejecting a lawsuit brought by the NRA against Maria Vullo, head of the New York Department of Financial Services, for violating the NRA’s free speech rights. Vullo’s office regulates banking and financial transactions, with the power to impose hefty fines. She had threatened reprisals against companies that insured the NRA.

Vullo’s goal was to blacklist the group as part of a broader drive to restrict gun ownership, under the guise of preventing further horrific high school shootings, like the slaughter of 17 students and staff at a Parkland, Florida, school in 2018. While liberals push to narrow who can bear arms, the rulers’ forces, from local cops to the FBI, remain armed to the teeth.

Vullo claimed the NRA lawsuit interfered with the government’s free speech. But in fact the suit was aimed at preventing the Democratic-led government from using its power to coerce others into outlawing an organization it disagrees with.

New York’s Department of Financial Services had opened an investigation in 2017 into NRA-endorsed programs that provide insurance for injuries from gun shootings. The probe targeted three insurance companies, who faced fines of up to \$7 million. After the 2018 Parkland killings, Vullo told Lloyd’s of London insurance executives the DFS “was less interested” in pursuing further inquiries into them, “as long as Lloyd’s ceased providing insurance to gun groups, especially the NRA.”

In effect Vullo “threatened to wield her power against those refusing to aid her campaign to punish the NRA’s gun-promotion advocacy,” Sonia Sotomayor wrote for the court. The Department of Financial Services got Lloyd’s, Lockton and Chubb companies to agree not to provide any NRA-endorsed insurance programs.

“The First Amendment prohibits government officials from wielding their power selectively to punish or suppress speech, directly or (as alleged here) through private intermediaries,” Sotomayor wrote. The NRA lawsuit will now return to lower courts for consideration.

The First Amendment codifies protection from government interference with free speech and “the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.” When the government or reactionary groups threaten to use force to prevent the exercise of that right, the Second Amendment provides protection to working people organizing to defend their rights.

That right was affirmed in an important Supreme Court decision in the Heller case in 2008, written by Justice Antonin Scalia. The court overturned an attempt by officials in Washington, D.C., to ban all hand guns except those carried by the daunting number of cop forces there.

Self-defense rights crucial for workers

“The Second Amendment protects an individual right to possess a firearm unconnected with service in a militia, and to use that arm for traditionally lawful purposes, such as self-defense,” Scalia wrote. He pointed out that these “ancient” rights were written into state constitutions long before the passage of the Bill of Rights. Of course, they’re not unlimited, he added, including prohibition of guns in schools or their ownership by the mentally ill.

At times of sharpening class struggle, workers and their unions need to be able to defend ourselves from violent assault by boss-organized strikebreakers, fascist-like thug outfits and the authorities, if attacked.

During the fight that overturned Jim Crow segregation in the 1950s and ’60s, Black army veterans working in the Crown Zellerbach plant in Bogalusa, Louisiana, organized the Deacons for Defense and Justice, which defended their right to bear arms. They used that right to beat back violent assaults by racist thugs and cops. Robert F. Williams, president of the NAACP chapter in Monroe, North Carolina, did the same.

Safeguarding constitutional guarantees 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,” the Socialist Workers Party 2022 political resolution printed in *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us* explains.

Correction

The article “Rulers across Europe boost militaries, war preparations” in *Militant* issue no. 24 incorrectly said NATO’s base being expanded in Romania is at Ramstein. It is at Mihail Kogalniceanu air base.

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

Chapter 1 from Socialist Workers Party December 2022 resolution, “The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us.”

Special feature in Issue #24 of the *Militant*.

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

