

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Mexican rulers surpass China as number one exporter to US

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Moscow's war aims to destroy the Ukrainian people, culture

BY ROY LANDERSEN

When Russian President Vladimir Putin launched his invasion in 2022, he minced no words in explaining Ukraine is not really a nation at all and has no right to be one. "Modern Ukraine was entirely and fully created by Russia," he said. It is "an inalienable part of our own history, culture and spiritual space." And he has conducted the war along these lines, with attacks aimed at causing the most deaths and destruction in Ukraine's civilian-occupied urban centers.

His goal is to crush the determination of Ukraine's people to fight for their independence. Following this course, Moscow's war has brought armed conflict to Europe on a scale not seen since World War II, raining death, destruction and dislocation on millions of Ukrainian working people.

Putin's strategy relies on the Russian Federation's larger population and reserves, and his willingness to sacrifice them at unprecedented rates as cannon fodder. And he counts on exploiting the increasingly conflicting interests among

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Socialist Workers Party campaign is only voice for the working class

Rachele Fruit president • Dennis Richter vice president



Militant/David Rosenfeld

Dennis Richter, Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president, introduces campaign to Robert Gray in Vermont July 9. So far 1,474 people have signed to put party on the ballot there.

BY DAVID ROSENFELD

SOUTH BURLINGTON, Vt. — On a hot, muggy afternoon July 9, Dennis Richter, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president, joined campaigners here outside a Hannaford supermarket. He met Robert Gray, a telephone lineman from Happy Valley, Pennsylvania, who came to shop.

"Too many people think they can't make a change. That those of us who are for big changes are too small and weak," Gray said.

"Under capitalism, everything is set up to reinforce that idea," Richter replied. "But when workers engage in struggle, that's when we discover our capacities and our self-worth. Today, many workers are in a mood to fight."

"The country is run by money, by people who don't work," Gray said. "They go to different schools than we do, to learn how to become wealthier,

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French election reflects impact of crisis hitting working people

BY TERRY EVANS

The final results of the French elections were an "unexpected blow" to the "far right," the *Washington Post* claimed July 7, declaring the result "one of the greatest political upsets in recent French history."

Like much of the capitalist media, the same outlet had predicted an unprecedented victory for Marine Le Pen's National Rally, which they called the "far right." Le Pen's party

AS I SEE IT

won the largest share in the first-round vote while a bloc of parties that backed President Emmanuel Macron came in a distant third.

In reality, little occurred that was unexpected. Following Macron's first-round defeat, parties on the left in the New Popular Front formed an alliance with Macron. Together they withdrew candidates for some 200 seats where they had come in third to create an anti-Le Pen bloc. Days before the vote, Macron's prime minister, Gabriel Attal, urged people to vote for whoever was most likely to prevent a National Rally majority.

The New Popular Front includes
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'Exodus': Hard-fought journey of heroic Holocaust survivors



Israel Government Press Office

Jewish refugees hemmed in by British troops on Exodus in Haifa, Palestine, July 18, 1947, after they rammed, boarded the boat. British took them to displaced persons camps in Germany.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

This month marks the 77th anniversary since thousands of survivors of the Holocaust boarded a ship in France, soon renamed Exodus 1947, in an attempt to rebuild their lives in Palestine. From the get-go the ship was trailed, then brutally attacked, by British naval forces and seized in international waters before reaching its destination.

Part of the story about this ship has been popularized in the 1960 film "Exodus," based on a novel by Leon Uris. But neither the movie nor the book tells the true story of what happened.

London sought to halt Jewish immigration to Palestine, part of its colonial empire that it hoped to hang onto. Like its imperialist allies in the U.S. and Can-

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Join our fight against the ban on the 'Militant' in Florida prison

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

"I learned that Florida prison officials have banned an issue of the *Militant* newspaper in violation of inmates' constitutional rights and the right of the *Militant* to reach its subscribers," Yecenia Arango, assistant branch manager of the St. Louis County Library in Missouri, wrote to Florida prison authorities. She urged them to "reverse this blatant violation of the right of workers behind bars to read the news they want and freedom of the press."

Arango is one of a growing number of individuals and organizations speaking out against the ban by authorities at Jackson Correctional Institution in Malone, Florida, on the April 29 issue of the *Militant*.

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Minneapolis park workers strike is for 'whole working class'

BY EDWIN FRUIT

MINNEAPOLIS — "If we fight, we win!" 100 members, family and supporters of Laborers' Local 363 chanted as they rallied at the Labor Center here July 4. The union, which represents over 300 workers who take care of the park system in Minneapolis, was beginning a one-week strike.

Keith Glenn Jr., a Laborers' union business representative, welcomed people and chaired the meeting. A.J. Lange, business manager of the lo-

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Mexican rulers surpass China as number one exporter to US

BY RÓGER CALERO

Mexico has surpassed China as the number one source of goods imported by the United States. The sharpening tensions between Washington and Beijing, as well as the drive by capitalist bosses to tap sources of goods closer to their main market as a hedge against supply-chain disruptions and to lower shipping costs, have helped boost production in Mexico.

The value of goods imported from Mexico rose nearly 5% in 2023, to more than \$475 billion. In comparison, the value of Chinese imports dropped 20%, to \$427 billion.

Mexican government officials report that in late 2022 more than 400 companies expressed interest in relocating to Mexico from Asia. Since the 1990s Mexico has become a key manufacturing hub for U.S. bosses. Billions of dollars in U.S. and other foreign investment has poured into the northern Mexican border states, building industrial parks catering to the U.S. market.

Scores of Chinese companies are moving to Mexico, seeking to avoid growing U.S. tariffs and sanctions and taking advantage of favored treatment under the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement on trade.

As part of the growing rivalry between Washington and Beijing, the Donald Trump administration slapped steep tariffs on hundreds of billions of dollars in Chinese imports in 2018. Last year, President Joseph Biden added a ban on new U.S. investments in Chinese companies making semiconductors and microelectronics, quantum information technologies and “artificial intelligence”

systems. They are all areas in which Washington wants to maintain domination. The U.S. rulers view developing these supply chains as vital to U.S. industry and to their military.

Destabilizing world events like COVID pandemic-related shutdowns, Moscow’s war against the people of Ukraine, and the war in the Middle East following Hamas’ murderous pogrom in Israel have pushed U.S. companies to insist suppliers set up plants closer to home. One example is Lizhong, a Chinese manufacturer of automobile wheels. Ford and General Motors, its largest customers, pressed it to open a factory in North America.

Washington’s tariffs and sanctions against its rivals, and pressures on suppliers to relocate, are not aimed at protecting “American jobs” or “our economy,” as capitalist politicians in the U.S. claim. Nor does “nearshoring” factories and production mean U.S. capitalists have renounced efforts to exploit cheaper labor. These measures have only one purpose — to come out ahead in the dog-eat-dog competition against their rivals. At the same time, they use the competition to press U.S. workers for lower wages and more unsustainable, dangerous schedules and working conditions.

Debt bondage, stirrings of resistance

Mexico is the 12th largest economy in the world — the second largest in Latin America — and a leading exporter in the region. But just like Brazil, Argentina, Colombia and Chile — the other four countries with the largest gross domestic product in the



Gente Del Balsas

Unionists at ArcelorMittal Mexico vote on proposed contract in Michoacán, Mexico, July 9. Some 3,500 steelworkers, members of the miners union, struck May 24, demanding better wages and working conditions. The company fired 1,200, calling the action illegal.

region — Mexico is an oppressed nation. All of these countries are held in debt bondage to banks and bondholders, first and foremost in the U.S.

Newly elected president of Mexico and former mayor of Mexico City Claudia Sheinbaum is the chosen successor to the current president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador. They have built up a populist image by allocating some state resources to infrastructure spending and social programs. That is what drove his popularity and her electoral victory.

But this also helped drive Mexico’s debt to over \$100 billion, the highest in over three decades. Sheinbaum will be hard pressed to continue this course.

She will also inherit a \$101 billion debt accumulated by the state-owned oil and natural gas company, Pemex. It has been grappling with yearslong production declines that have turned Mexico into a net energy importer from the United States. Mexico’s natural gas production is just 70% of what it was in 2010, covering about one-third of the country’s demand. The rest is gas bought from companies in Texas, a dependence that Mexico can’t change anytime soon.

As part of her presidential campaign Sheinbaum announced plans to create an “industrial southern border” next to Guatemala in Tapachula, Chiapas state. Ten “development hubs” will be built, she said, in which half the jobs will be for migrant workers transiting through Mexico and the

other half for local workers.

For years, Mexican bosses have used hundreds of thousands of migrant workers from neighboring Guatemala who cross into Mexico legally and illegally each year to work in coffee, banana, and sugarcane plantations, as well as in fruit and vegetable farms. The Mexican government has sought to expand temporary work programs to hire migrants from Central America.

The capitalist rulers’ calculations in the organization of production, however, never include workers fighting back against exploitation. Some 3,500 steelworkers at ArcelorMittal Mexico in Michoacán state went on strike May 24. The mill supplies 30% of the national production of steel used in vehicles, household appliances and in the construction industry.

In response, the company has fired over 1,200 workers and asked a federal judge to declare the union contract void.

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THE MILITANT

Join the fight against Jew-hatred!

After Jew-hating thugs toppled gravestones of Jews in Cincinnati, Socialist Workers Party candidates there released a press statement, “Working people and the trade unions must oppose such acts, speak out against them, and organize to defend against them.”



In late June vandals toppled 176 gravestones in Cincinnati’s Covedale Jewish Cemeteries.

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Capitalist exploitation fuels debt crisis wracking Africa

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

Tens of thousands of Kenyans took to the streets last month to protest government moves to raise taxes to meet growing debts to foreign lenders and to appease the International Monetary Fund. Capitalist rulers throughout Africa face the same crisis.

Across the continent, governments are massively indebted to international lenders like the World Bank, the IMF, Washington and other imperialist powers, and, more recently, to the rulers of China. Those in power see no way forward except to push their financial crisis onto the backs of working people while taking on ever more debt to meet growing interest payments.

Worldwide, government debt is expanding, now four times that in 2000. In Africa it's at a 25-year high, most of it owed to Western creditors and China.

As government debt in the imperialist centers hits its highest since the aftermath of World War II, African rulers and other semicolonial regimes are being pressed to pay more back.

Washington, the IMF, China and other big lenders insist debt service comes first, before spending on jobs, health care, education, housing and other things working people need. For the growing population of young workers in Africa, the situation is a disaster.

In Nigeria, one of Africa's largest capitalist economies and home to 225 million people, the total debt stands at \$91 billion, with interest payments expected to eat up 36% of the country's revenue in 2024. Moves by President Bola Tinubu to reduce gas and electricity subsidies and devalue the currency have been met by nationwide strikes by the country's labor unions.

The debt is unpayable

When mass protests broke out in Tunisia in early 2023 over soaring food prices, unemployment and shortages of fuel and basic staples like sugar, vegetable oil and rice, government officials moved to quell them with promises, taking on new loans to do so. The result

is this year's debt payments will be 40% higher than in 2023.

After Angola's government acceded to demands by the World Bank and IMF to reduce fuel subsidies — almost doubling the cost of gas — thousands of young people, including many motorcycle taxi drivers, protested in Luanda in June 2023. Five died after police attacked the actions.

These governments' indebtedness is worsened by growing worldwide instability, including deepening conflicts over markets and spheres of influence between capitalist regimes in Washington, Berlin, Paris and other imperialist powers, and Russia, China, Iran and others attracted to the BRICS alliance.

In Africa, these pressures — and the lack of any working-class leadership — contribute to the ongoing civil war in Sudan, military coups across the Sahel region and other government crises.

On June 1 the African National Congress in South Africa — widely denounced as corrupt and a far cry from the organization led by Nelson Mandela that overthrew apartheid — lost its majority rule for the first time in 30 years.

The country's official unemployment rate is 32%, one of the highest in the world. This disproportionately affects Black workers who face shortages of clean water, electricity



Marvellous Durowaiye/Reuters

Nigeria Labour Congress protest in Lagos Feb. 27 against government attacks on living conditions. Facing growing debt crisis, capitalist rulers across Africa are targeting working people.

and housing. Over 60% of the population lives in poverty.

"The ANC, I don't want to even talk to them," 48-year-old Dalene Raiters told Reuters.

Raiters lost her job at a primary school 16 years ago. Her adult son is also jobless. Like many South Africans, their entire family of four lives off a system of grants touted by the ANC. Raiters supplements the \$58 her family receives monthly with handouts from a local mosque and odd jobs she does for neighbors.

Only work will give the next generation a chance, she says. "For the future, I

hope my grandson can get a better job."

South Africa's government, with the largest economy in Africa in 2024 according to the IMF, will spend \$21 billion on debt payments in 2024, one of the largest and fastest growing expense in its budget.

In some countries, inevitable bankruptcy faces the rulers. In December, Ethiopia defaulted after failing to make an interest payment of \$33 million on a \$1 billion bond. With its credit rating slashed down to "risky," future borrowing will be even costlier. It was the third country to default on loans in as many years, following Zambia and Ghana.

Texas prison guards indicted for killing of inmate

BY JOSEFINA OTERO

FORT WORTH, Texas — The family of Anthony Johnson Jr. held a press conference July 2 announcing they had won an important victory with the June 25 indictment of two Tarrant County jailers for the murder of their son. Johnson, a 31-year-old former Marine, died of asphyxiation at the hands of correctional officer Rafael Moreno April 21. The Sheriff's Office claimed he died from a "medical emergency."

A cellphone video taken by the jailers' supervisor, Joel Garcia, shows Johnson face down, handcuffed and

not resisting, with Moreno kneeling on his back. Johnson can be heard saying, "I can't breathe, I can't breathe." Garcia and Moreno have both been fired and are each out on \$125,000 bail.

Johnson had a schizophrenic episode two days earlier and his family took him to WellBridge Healthcare, a Fort Worth mental health hospital. According to the family, the hospital turned him away, saying he was not violent toward himself or others. Police arrested Johnson a few hours later, saying he was wielding a knife. Johnson called his family the next day and told them he was doing

better. The following day he was dead.

"The family is demanding that Tarrant County Sheriff Bill Waybourn resign, that the public be able to see the full video and charge all others who participated in the homicide," Michael Bell, convener of Unity in the Community Coalition, told the press. Only five minutes has been publicly released.

"His death was egregious," Daryl K. Washington, the family's attorney, said. "The full video is damning. You see the jailer punch Anthony and pepper spray him in the mouth. The family is making it clear this is not only about Anthony, but all the others."

"The family wants Anthony's death not to be in vain," he said. "Sixty-five percent of inmates are dealing with some percentage of mental illness." He added that a civil suit will be filed against the sheriff and former Chief Charles Eckert, who has resigned.

Since 2017, 63 inmates have died in the county jail. This includes 11 from COVID-19, six suicides and 32 from "other natural causes." Tarrant County has paid \$2.8 million in settlements for deaths, abuse and neglect in the jail.

"Everyone must see the full video. People shouldn't be treated like this," said Johnson's father, Anthony Johnson Sr. "We're going to get accountability."

"I am thankful for the two indictments, but the whole system is at issue," said Chanell Johnson, one of Anthony Johnson Jr.'s sisters.

"I want to express my solidarity with the Johnson family," Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Texas, said at the press conference. "My campaign will get the word out about your case and why working people should support your fight. I am also a member of UNITE HERE Local 23 at Sky Chefs. I will take this back to my co-workers and my union."

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



July 19, 1999

The following statement was issued by the Communist League in Canada.

The labor movement across Canada must transform the huge sympathy for the 47,500 Quebec nurses into actions in the streets. We must call for repeal of laws 160 and 72 and the granting of the nurses' just demands.

The strike is the most recent in a class battle across Canada. In Saskatchewan nurses defied back-to-work legislation imposed by a New Democratic Party government, a social-democratic party with links to the trade unions.

The battle is an opening for workers to begin discussing the need for their unions to break away from their decade-long support for the Parti Quebecois, a capitalist party, and to build their own party. The PQ is today dismantling some of the central gains made by hard-fought struggles — including the right to unionize and strike.



July 26, 1974

On July 15 the city of Luanda in Angola was almost paralyzed by a general strike called by Black workers to protest continued Portuguese control of the colony. The same day, Portuguese troops shot at two demonstrations of Blacks, killing up to 20 and wounding 60.

The previous week, attacks by Angola's white minority provoked two nights of violence. During that time six Blacks and one white were killed and 40 wounded. Thirty thousand people attended the funeral ceremony for four of the slain Blacks.

The independence struggle has sharpened in Mozambique as well. Portuguese rule is facing serious challenge from the actions of the guerrilla forces of Frelimo. Frelimo troops have blown up sections of the vital Beira-Tete railway line every week for the past three weeks. Frelimo has also stepped up its actions against Portuguese troops.



July 25, 1949

LOS ANGELES — Total condemnation of the use of the red scare, the witch-hunt and the "subversive" list as instruments of government policy, and the call for a gigantic mass conference in Washington to demand civil rights legislation were the outstanding achievements of the 40th annual conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

The conference called upon President Truman "to summon Congress back for a special session for the express and exclusive purpose of passing civil rights laws." The delegates also condemned the president's loyalty order as resulting in "police inquisition, star-chamber proceedings and grave injustice." The convention called for repeal of the Taft-Hartley law.

The call for a march on Washington in favor of passage of civil rights legislation should be widely supported.

Crisis hitting French workers

Continued from front page

the Socialist, Communist and Green parties, along with Jean-Luc Melenchon's France Unbowed and smaller far left groups. These forces have little in common, other than a fervent desire to unite against the "far right." They won the most seats in the second round, 182, but still far short of the 289 needed for a majority. Macron's Ensemble came in second with 168 seats and National Rally third with 143, up from the 88 it held previously.

The 66% voter turnout was the biggest since 1997. Still, one-third of French voters stayed home.

Viewed through the prism of today's capitalist politics with its world of parties of the left and right, media coverage of the election largely ignored the deep crisis facing working people in France, the only real way to explain the vote.

Swings away from ruling parties occurred in both France and the U.K., alongside last year's vote in the Netherlands that ousted 14-year incumbent Prime Minister Mark Rutte, as well as results that punished those in power in elections for the European Parliament in June. These votes reflect the desire of tens of millions of working people to be rid of parties that have held office for years while workers have faced ruinous price rises, stifling regulations imposed under the rubric of "climate change," growing uncertainty about the future and increasing threats of new armed conflicts and a third world war.

But the only choices on offer were capitalist parties of different hues. New governments are being formed that guarantee the continued domination of the ruling capitalist families and the bosses' assaults on workers and farmers.

The crisis workers confront isn't a product of the clashes between the left and right of capitalist politics. It's bred by dog-eat-dog capitalist exploitation and wars. The only answer is a working-class road forward — building and strengthening unions, advancing working-class solidarity, and, most importantly, breaking with all the parties of the bosses and building a party

of labor. It would organize working people in our tens of millions to fight to defend our class interests and to take political power into our own hands.

Rival capitalist rulers in Europe and worldwide are engaged in sharp struggle with each other for markets and to defend their interests amid mounting instability in the imperialist world. The only road for the rulers to shore up their profits is to deepen efforts to make working people pay, attacks that lead workers to look for a road to resist.

Following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, each of the continent's rival ruling classes have been driven to transform their dilapidated military forces and to look for new alliances. Despite recent hikes in military spending, the size of the armed forces of Europe's main imperialist powers — France, Germany, Italy and the U.K. — continues to shrink.

Crisis hits workers in France

Last year the official French inflation rate hit a 40-year high, with real wages dropping 7.6% in 2022. The number of people who rely on food aid is now between 2 million and 4 million. Like elsewhere across the imperialist world, it's harder for workers to start families. The birth rate in France in 2023 was almost 20% lower than in 2010.

None of this deterred Macron from imposing a raise in the retirement age from 62 to 64 last year. In response, French union federations held one-day work stoppages and demonstrations that were joined by hundreds of thousands.

In these conditions, Le Pen's National Rally attracted votes across the country, including in rural areas where vital services — schools, train stations and post offices — have closed down and where medical care is getting harder to find.

Beginning in late 2018, tens of thousands of working people in rural areas and cities took to the streets for months, angered by the disdain shown them by Macron's government and its efforts to protect the position and profits of the country's capitalist rulers. The yellow vest protesters, as they were known, were responding to his government's imposition of a new fuel tax and broader assaults on living standards.

Le Pen has transformed National Rally from its origins in France's ultraright into a parliamentary party vying for office against its capitalist rivals.

Nothing in the record vote for National Rally signifies a shift to the far right by working people. Claims by liberals and middle-class left groups that National Rally is "fascist" are both false and dangerous. Just as similar claims about former President Donald Trump in the U.S. are.

History shows that fascist outfits can grow significantly when sections of the rulers turn to them when they fear their rule is threatened by rising revolutionary struggle. Fascist thugs are funded and unleashed to target the labor movement and scapegoat Jews, communists and other militants. But this isn't happening today in any imperialist country.

The terms "fascist" or "far right" are used as epithets for conservative parties by liberals and the left. They urge collaboration with "non-fascist" capitalist parties — like Macron's — to steer working people away from



Alain Pitton/Nurphoto via AP

Over 100,000 marched in some 250 rallies across France May 1, 2022, including in Toulouse, above, demanding President Macron drop his move to raise workers' retirement age. Protesters called themselves "gilets jaunes." Banner reads, "Yellow vests of all countries, unite!"

relying on ourselves, to keep us from organizing independently of the bosses' parties.

The rule of the capitalist class is the source of the problems workers face. Crucial to uniting workers is combating today's rise in Jew-hatred, including growing attacks on Jews in France. The main protagonists aren't fascist gangs, but supporters of Hamas' bloody Oct. 7 pogrom against Jews in Israel.

This anti-working-class course is exemplified by Melenchon. France Unbowed called Hamas' Oct. 7 pogrom "an armed offensive by Palestinian forces" caused by Israel's "policy of occupation of Gaza," rather than

the Jew-hating massacre it was. Melenchon claims Israel's war to prevent more pogroms is "genocide."

Workers everywhere know our class faces a crisis today. A road forward requires gaining class-struggle experience, developing working-class consciousness and study of the great revolutions of the 20th century, led by Lenin and the Bolsheviks in Russia and Fidel Castro in Cuba.

Whatever government comes out of talks between the New Popular Front and other capitalist forces, at the forefront of the challenges facing workers in France — like workers in the U.S. and elsewhere — is the need to establish a working-class party of their own.

Demand freedom for Leonard Peltier! Framed by FBI, jailed for 5 decades

BY JOHN STUDER

On July 2 the U.S. federal Parole Commission once again denied Leonard Peltier's request for parole. The hearing, the first in over a decade, took place June 10.

Peltier, a leader of the American Indian Movement, has been in federal prison for almost 50 years. He was framed up by the FBI for the 1975 shooting death of two of their agents on South Dakota's Pine Ridge reservation. AIM and Peltier were targets of an FBI Cointelpro operation.

Conditions on the reservation were abysmal. Alcoholism was rife, unemployment reached 70%, life expectancy was 44 years. Life was controlled by Tribal Chairperson Dick Wilson, who organized his own special armed force, appropriately named GOON — Guardians of the Oglala Nation.

Residents asked Peltier to organize AIM volunteers to come to the reservation and help protect them. The FBI and other police agencies were sent to spy on them. When FBI agents Jack Coler and Ronald Williams approached their camp, a shootout broke out and the two agents, as well as a young Indian named Joseph Stuntz, were killed.

The FBI claimed it was Peltier who shot the FBI agents at close range, but there is no physical evidence linking him to their deaths. A 1975 laboratory ballistic report, which the FBI refused to turn over to Peltier at his trial, showed the bullets didn't come from his gun. Government lawyers

now admit they don't know who fired the shots.

James Reynolds, one of the lead prosecutors who helped send Peltier to prison, now calls for his release. The trial "was unusually troublesome," he says, admitting the FBI played a "role in the creation of dangerous conditions on Pine Ridge."

The FBI continues to campaign against any release for Peltier.

Peltier's attorney, Kevin Sharp, says they will continue to fight for his release, but "his next hearing is set for 2039, when he would be 94."

"Hope is a hard thing to hold, but no one is strong enough to take it from me," Peltier wrote to his supporters in 2023. "There is a lot of work left to do, I would like to get out and join you in doing it."

Join in demanding the Joseph Biden administration grant Peltier his freedom!

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SWP voice for working class

Continued from front page
be another Rockefeller.”

“They’re a class, they’re capitalists,” Richter said. “They see exploiting us as their right. Workers have to take power out of their hands, to form our own government.

“The needs of working people don’t matter to them at all. They face a worldwide crisis of their capitalist system, with growing instability and rising conflicts. They’re all expanding their armed forces. Imperialist rulers everywhere are colliding based on competing interests that are sharpening today.”

In addition to campaigning here, the SWP is gathering signatures on petitions to put Rachele Fruit, the party’s candidate for president, on the ballot along with Richter. They’re getting an excellent response.

After campaigning, Richter sat down with the *Militant* to recount some of his experiences in bringing the party’s working-class alternative to workers here. He described one exchange outside a Walmart in Williston after he introduced himself to a shopper. “The first words out of her mouth were, ‘I’m a Republican.’ I said, ‘That’s fine. Do you have a few minutes to talk?’”

She’s a former house cleaner who was injured on the job and is on disability. “When she said that she was concerned only about what is going on in Vermont, not the rest of the world, I said what goes on in the world affects every working person, including in Vermont,” said Richter. “From Russia’s war against Ukrainian independence to Hamas’ murderous Oct.

7 attack on Jews in Israel, all working people need to take a side, to defend our class and our allies.

“She immediately agreed that anti-semitic attacks are on the rise and need to be confronted.”

Not everyone they discuss politics with can sign the petition. One example is immigrant workers who have come here from around the world.

“At the Walmart, I talked with a mother and daughter from Bosnia who have settled in Vermont. The mother is watching international politics with anxiety because of the parallels she sees in Ukraine with the war that ripped apart Yugoslavia in the 1990s,” Richter said. Until Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine, the Yugoslav conflict was the biggest ground war on the European continent since World War II.

“I explained that the same forces that led to World Wars I and II are fueling the opening guns of World War III today,” Richter said. “While she has reason to be anxious, there is also reason to be optimistic that the working class can prevent the march toward a new imperialist war. We need to build revolutionary workers parties in the U.S. and throughout the world. I told her that ultimately, the working class needs to take power out of the hands of the war makers.

“She said that the majority of working people have good intentions — a source of optimism for the future. I agreed and pointed to the struggles of workers, from flight attendants to Vermont nurses who threatened to strike, as examples of workers who have said enough and are fighting to



Militant/Dean Hazlewood

Tiffany Mobbs, right, signed to put SWP presidential candidate Rachele Fruit on the ballot in Vermont. She discussed SWP’s support for fight for women’s equality, steps to back needs of working-class families with Lea Sherman, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress from New Jersey.

defend working-class interests, like higher wages, safer conditions and building solidarity in our class.”

‘Break with parties of capitalism’

Campaign supporters got a good response in St. Albans, a town of 7,000 located 30 miles north of Burlington, an agricultural area. “We need to break with the parties of capitalism and form a party of our own — a party of labor,” Socialist Workers Party campaigner Beverly Benjamin told two farmers from nearby Bakersfield in the Walmart parking lot.

“We work hard on our farm, just the two of us producing some 15,000 pounds of garlic a year. We can’t see ourselves voting for either the Democrats or the Republicans,” Marie-Danielle Saint Hilaire said. She reached for the petition to sign for Fruit and Richter. Her husband did so also and picked up a copy of the *Militant* to learn more about the working-class alternative.

Abby Ryea, 21, told SWP campaigners, “I worked six days a week and brought home just about \$300. You can’t support a family of three and make a truck payment that way.”

“Both the Democrats and Republicans are eroding women’s choices and rights, including the right to have an abortion,” John Greenia, who works at a help desk in a nearby medical clinic added. “It’s important to look at all stages of family planning. You aren’t ‘pro-life’ if once a child is born you don’t care about its life.”

“Workers can solve these problems,” SWP petitioner Abigail Rosen said. “A party of labor would fight for women’s emancipation by uniting and mobilizing working people independent of the bosses’ parties in a fight for jobs, quality housing, child care, for maternal care and safe contraceptives and for the decriminalization of abortion.”

“I would like to read more about that,” Greenia said, picking up the *Militant*.

Outside Shaw’s supermarket in Williston, Tony Lane approached a worker heading for his pickup truck, handing him a flyer for Rachele Fruit and the SWP campaign. The worker asked, “What is she? Democrat or Republican?”

“Neither. She’s the working-class alternative to both of the bosses’ parties,” Lane responded.

“No. You’ve got to be one or the other,” came the reply. “I say there is only one choice: Republican.”

The worker said that he’s not a big supporter of Donald Trump, but was

concerned about the Democrats’ politically motivated legal attacks against the Republican candidate. “The SWP candidates oppose all attacks on constitutional freedoms,” Lane said. “They’re a deadly danger to working people.”

The response, “OK. I’ll take that flyer and read it.”

Campaigners often explain that the SWP has a rich continuity, back to the Bolshevik Revolution led by V.I. Lenin in Russia and the Cuban Revolution led by Fidel Castro. Even when some people don’t agree, they can see what that continuity is.

When Joanne Kuniansky, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from New Jersey, was campaigning for the national ticket in Vermont, she engaged a couple originally from the former Soviet Union.

“Rachele Fruit is a hotel worker and union member who is running for president to present a working-class voice in these elections,” she told them. “Fruit explains workers need to break with the Democrats and Republicans and build a party of labor that fights for the interests of all working people, that fights for workers power.”

The couple said they had experience in Russia with what Kuniansky is advocating, and “it doesn’t work.” They said uneducated workers took over and the results were disastrous. Kuniansky disagreed, saying the anti-working-class Stalinist regime there was a product of a counterrevolution against the course led by Lenin.

The couple left, but the woman returned, determined to get in the last word. She told Kuniansky, “This idea of housekeepers running the country, that’s Lenin!”

“On that we agree,” Kuniansky said.

On track to make the ballot

In the first 11 days of a 16-day campaign to get the SWP ticket on the ballot, supporters have fanned out across the state. They’ve sold 29 subscriptions to the *Militant*, 19 books by leaders of the SWP, and collected 1,474 signatures.

Campaign organizers plan to get several hundred more to ensure they go over the state requirement of 1,000 valid signatures, which will be certified by state officials.

To join in the final effort to go over the top, or to make a contribution, contact the SWP campaign at (646) 434-8117 or newyorkswp@gmail.com.

Joanne Kuniansky and Tony Lane contributed to this article.

SWP candidates file for ballot in Tennessee



Militant/Janice Lynn

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Socialist Workers Party leaders John Benson and Susan LaMont, above, filed to put the party’s presidential ticket — Rachele Fruit for president and Dennis Richter for vice president — on the ballot July 8. They turned in the required 11 presidential electors and 774 signatures, well over the requirement of 275, at the Tennessee secretary of state office.

The signatures were gathered from working people throughout the state during a nine-day period in May. Supporters of Fruit campaigned in Nashville, Chattanooga, Memphis and Johnson City, talking to workers at grocery stores in the morning and knocking on doors in working-class neighborhoods in the early evening. They found a good response to the SWP’s call for a party of labor that would organize working people in their millions to fight year round to defend workers’ interests.

While in Memphis, Fruit met with members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 390G who had just ended a hard-fought strike at International Flavors and Fragrances. She also spoke with members of United Auto Workers Local 2406 at the General Motors ACDelco Parts Distribution Center who were on strike last October. Several endorsed her campaign.

Benson, organizer of the ballot effort, underlined the importance of a working-class alternative appearing on the ballot. “None of the other candidates are addressing the social and economic crisis facing working people,” he said.

— JANICE LYNN

Moscow's war on Ukraine people

Continued from front page

Kyiv's allies, starting with Washington.

Moscow scored a direct hit on Ukraine's main children's cancer hospital in Kyiv July 8, using a cruise missile, killing seven people and injuring dozens. This was part of aerial strikes on urban areas across the country killing at least 43 people and injuring almost 200.

"There may still be children, parents and medical personnel trapped under the rubble," a statement released that day by the Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Ukraine said. The union appealed for greater international support "as Russia continues its terrorist attacks and genocidal war in Ukraine."

May was the deadliest month for civilians in Ukraine over the past year, the U.N. Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine said. At least 174 civilians were killed and 690 injured.

Moscow is also targeting Ukraine's power grid and other essential infrastructure, seeking to increase civilian misery. This has destroyed almost half the country's energy-generating capacity, which will take some time to repair. Water supplies, public communications and transport have also been disrupted. With daily blackouts, millions face a harsh upcoming winter without heating and other services needed for survival.

Defying Moscow, life goes on

The people of Ukraine are not only unbowed, defiant and determined to prevail, but they also find ways to enjoy life in spite of the war.

Kyiv's International Arsenal Book Festival drew 35,000 visitors May 30-June 2, held in a 19th-century arsenal in the center of the capital. Held annually since 2011, it featured over 160 book presentations and a musical tribute to Ukrainian writers who have been killed by Moscow's aggression.

Soldiers from various brigades at the front, and writers volunteering to defend the country arms in hand did presentations and staffed booths. The turnout was overwhelmingly young people who had to wait in long lines to get through security checks.

One stand displayed burned books salvaged after a May 23 attack on a Kharkiv printing plant, one of the country's largest. Russian missiles killed seven workers and destroyed 50,000 books. Moscow wages war not only against the Ukrainian people, but against the Ukrainian culture and language.

In Kharkiv, Ukraine's second city, located 18 miles south of the Russian border where a new invading force was repulsed in May, life goes on despite the war. A street wedding celebration

was held in between air raid sirens. Just beyond the range of enemy artillery, actors rehearsed their lines in the Kharkiv Opera House while people enjoyed an afternoon concert in a windowless basement theater. All underground facilities now double as bomb shelters.

"Kharkiv is going to stand," theater director Armen Kaloyan told the *Washington Post*. "We're unbreakable. We're going to fight with what we're good at."

Moscow's bombardment of populated areas has gone on throughout the war. The civilian toll is rising as Moscow uses more powerful glide bombs that cause significant damage. These are Soviet-era heavy munitions fitted with guidance systems that enable them to be launched from Russian air space, out of range of Ukrainian air defenses.

The recent U.N. report also cited a number of instances of deliberate "double-tap" attacks, which target the same location. The first missile hit on a civilian target attracts volunteer rescue personnel and emergency workers, who are then hit with the second missile.

During the Second World War, the main allied imperialist powers, the U.S. and U.K., set a precedent for Putin, targeting civilian populations in Germany and Japan. Working-class neighbor-



AP photo/Evgeniy Maloletka

Hundreds of people volunteered to clear debris, save survivors at Ukraine's main children's cancer hospital in Kyiv after missile hit July 8 in Moscow's deadliest air attacks in months.

hoods in German cities like Dresden and Hamburg were carpet bombed, setting off firestorms that killed tens of thousands. U.S. bombers did the same to Tokyo, not to mention the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Opposition at home to Moscow's war

For months, the strategy of Moscow's officer corps has been to press relentlessly against Ukraine's defenders, paying a high price in soldiers' lives for small advances. Around 1,200

Russian soldiers were killed or wounded every day in May and June. They were sent in human waves in what Ukrainian troops call "meat assaults."

Despite the narrowing space available given the Russian regime's tightening repression, opponents of Moscow's war keep making use of Russian elections, which the Kremlin preserves to claim legitimacy. Lyudmila Vasilyeva, 83, ran for mayor of St. Petersburg demanding that "the war stop immediately." She has used her status as a survivor of the German imperialist siege of Leningrad during World War II to protest Putin's wars in Ukraine from 2014 to today.

Her campaign for the election in September drew in youthful supporters from the Dawn party, founded earlier this year by fellow anti-war campaigner Yekaterina Duntsova, who was barred from running in the March presidential election.

Some 6,800 voters, braving the Kremlin's police pressure, came to Vasilyeva's campaign headquarters to sign to endorse her anti-war candidacy. She was ruled off the ballot at the end of June but vowed to keep fighting. People expressed gratitude to her for giving them the "opportunity to show that not everyone in Russia supports the war," Vasilyeva said.



Svitanok.nyc

Hundreds held emergency action in New York's Times Square July 8 against Moscow's heaviest air assault in months. Some 43 were killed and almost 200 injured nationwide as missiles struck Ukraine's children's hospital in Kyiv as well as civilian targets across the country.

Minneapolis park strikers fight 'for all working people'

Continued from front page

cal, said, "You are not alone. You are fighting for all working people." The issues involved, he said, were higher pay, adequate staffing, health care that covers members and their families, and reasonable schedules, as well as dignity on the job. "We have the power because we do the work."

The union has been negotiating for seven months without any progress.

Brad Lehto, secretary-treasurer of the Minnesota AFL-CIO, announced it was contributing \$5,000 to Local 363's strike fund. He said Minneapolis parks are considered some of the best in the country because of the work union members do.

Arborist Anthony Smith said he has to hold down a second job just to meet the expenses of his family. "We are the backbone of the park system and we won't back down."

Ilhan Omar, the U.S. congressional representative from the 5th District, also spoke, urging support for the workers.

Several student members of the Macalester College Undergraduate Workers Union attended. They are fighting to win union recognition from the college. The meeting ended with a march to a local park.

Lange said the Minneapolis Pops orchestra had refused to play at the

park in solidarity with the strike. The union has organized rallies at several city parks to get out the word about their fight.

"This is absolutely a fight for all workers. We work for a public employer, but they act like they're in the private sector — motivated by corporate greed," he said. "They're trying to bust the union."

Lange said the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is trying to change the seniority-based wage progression to "merit based" raises, decided by the bosses. He said the board president gets a salary higher than Minnesota's governor.

"The deductibles in our medical plan are so high that many of us just don't go to the doctor," Mitchell Clendenen, a shop steward and member of the negotiating committee, said. "We want the right to be covered by the union's medical insurance plan." He said injuries on the job are often met with disciplinary actions. "We were forced to go on strike."

Mary Martin contributed to this article.

Books for working-class fighters



See page 8 for distributor near you

Exodus: hard-fought journey

Continued from front page

ada, the British rulers prevented Jews fleeing Nazi persecution before, during and after World War II from entering their country. Survivors of the Holocaust were housed in squalid displaced persons camps, some located in former Nazi concentration camps.

The ship, originally called the President Warfield, was a rickety old steamer. Originally designed to accommodate 400 passengers, it was purchased by Jews in the U.S. and refurbished to hold thousands.

Some 4,554 men, women and children — many traveling with false papers in over 170 trucks from the camps in Germany and Poland — climbed onto the cramped ship in Sete, France, July 11 to begin the trip.

Thirty-five of the 39 members of the ship's crew were U.S. volunteers, most of them Jewish.

U.S. volunteer Bernie Marks snuck into the water and swam to the pier to loosen the ropes. Sailing at night in hopes of not being spotted, the ship took off with no lights showing and without the aid of a pilot or tug. It got stuck in the mud, but managed to pull free and get out to the Mediterranean.

But it had been spotted by a British spy plane, and followed by a British armada fleet that grew to 12 ships, including three destroyers and a cruiser, as the Exodus neared the coast of Haifa in Palestine.

"The British, apparently, hadn't bothered to wait until we crossed the boundary into territorial waters, but had attacked us on the high seas," wrote Dov Freiberg, a passenger on the Exodus. "It was true, that one way or another we weren't going to win the battle, but not for one moment had the thought entered our minds to surrender."

Attacked, imprisoned by the British

British forces fired tear gas and machine-gunned the passengers. Two destroyers rammied the fragile ship from opposite sides, smashing into its upper decks and threatening to sink it. Armed British sailors stormed on board.

"We were fighting them with sticks and bare fists. Face-to-face and hand-to-hand fights were taking place the whole length of the deck," Freiberg said.

The British clubbed to death the first mate, William Bernstein, 24, a U.S. Jew. Two passengers were killed, Mordechai Bunstein, 23, a concentration camp survivor, and Hirsh Yacubovitch, 15, who survived the Nazis in Poland. Dozens of others were wounded.

After three hours of fighting, the British navy towed the Exodus into Haifa harbor. It was met by a crowd of several thousand Jews demonstrating their solidarity with the embattled Jewish passengers. British officials forced all the passengers to disembark, ran them through delousing, and reloaded them on three navy transports — Runnymede Park, Ocean Vigour and Empire Valour — that had been refitted into caged prison ships. Among those on the scene to speak with the Jewish refugees, looking to expose the horrendous conditions they faced, was Ruth Gruber. She was one of only three journalists allowed

aboard the prison ships, and the only one to bring a camera.

"I took countless picture of them," she told the *New York Times* in a 2011 interview. "Nobody could destroy them. They survived the death camps, the D.P. camps, the broken-down ship and now this ship."

As she left the ship, the British consul-general demanded she turn over her film. Gruber refused. British authorities then told her, as they told the Exodus veterans, the ship would be landing at the British D.P. camp in Cyprus. Gruber flew there to meet them, but the British had lied.

The three prison ships sailed back to France. Conditions on board were horrendous with refugees crammed to-



gether. But upon arrival in Toulon, the passengers refused to disembark for three weeks, many conducting a 24-day hunger strike. French authorities refused British demands to forcibly remove them.

Forced back to Germany

British authorities then sailed the ships to Hamburg in the British-occupied zone of Germany. There, on Sept. 8 in front of the eyes of the international press, most of the Jewish refugees were forcibly dragged from the



Above, the Exodus, damaged by British attack on high seas, boarded, forced into port of Haifa, July 18, 1947. British officials then crammed Jews onto three prison ships, including the Runnymede Park, left, and took them to France, landing Aug. 22. Passengers refused to disembark, so London sailed ships to Germany, where marines forced the Jews into decrepit displaced persons camps. After Israel declared statehood, most made their way there.

mandate over Palestine into two new states, Israel and Palestine. The U.S. rulers, looking to replace Britain as the dominant imperialist power in the Middle East, backed Israel's statehood. When Britain's mandate ran out, Israel declared its statehood May 14, 1948.

The embattled Exodus refugees, who had no other option, made their way to a new life in Israel.

"4,500 Jews Get Another Lesson in 'Democracy,'" headlined an Aug. 4, 1947, article in the *Militant* about the Exodus' journey. "The British imperialist brigands are not alone in their responsibility for this monstrous episode which is only one of the shocking crimes against a long-suffering people," it said. This "cannot cover up the crime of Wall Street's government in closing the doors of this country to these displaced persons."

Israelis face growing threats, attacks from Hezbollah

BY SETH GALINSKY

In one of the largest barrages yet, Hezbollah launched 200 rockets and mortars and more than 20 drones from Lebanon into northern Israel July 4, killing one Israeli soldier in the Golan Heights and setting fires as far away as Acre, near Haifa. Hezbollah said the barrage was retaliation for an Israeli strike that killed the commander of one of Hezbollah's three divisions in southern Lebanon.

Hezbollah is the largest and best-armed part of Iran's "axis of resistance." It aims to advance the Iranian rulers' expansionist aims across the Middle East. It is a key part of Tehran's long-term goal of destroying Israel and driving Jews from the region.

Hezbollah began an almost daily assault on northern Israel Oct. 8, at the start of Israel's counteroffensive in Gaza to dismantle Hamas and prevent the Jew-hating group from carrying out another pogrom. Hamas, backed by

ships by 2,500 British marines. "They charged us and began hitting us with clubs and truncheons on the heads and arms," wrote Freiberg.

They were taken to displaced persons camps in Poppendorf and Am Stau. "Our arrest camp resembled from the outside a German concentration camp," Freiberg said, describing his incarceration in Poppendorf. "Armed soldiers guarded us night and day."

The United Nations voted on Nov. 29, 1947, to divide Britain's expiring

Tehran, murdered 1,200 people in Israel Oct. 7, mostly civilians, wounded thousands, took more than 250 hostages and raped dozens of women.

Hezbollah is far better armed than Hamas, including with more advanced, precision-guided missiles.

So far, Hezbollah and Tehran have sought to avoid a full-scale war with Israel, seeking instead to press it to agree to a long-term cease-fire, which would allow Hamas to survive and regroup. But even Hezbollah's limited assaults have forced some 60,000 Israelis to evacuate their homes near the northern border. Some 90,000 civilians in Lebanon have also evacuated.

At least 400 Hezbollah and allied combatants have been killed over the last nine months along with 95 civilians, as well as 15 Israeli soldiers and 11 civilians.

Israeli officials are demanding Hezbollah pull its forces back 18 miles north of the Israel-Lebanon border, the terms

of a 2006 cease-fire agreement that allowed only official Lebanese army government units to be in the zone.

The U.S. government presents itself as a neutral arbiter as it pushes its own imperialist economic and political interests throughout the region. In late June, Gen. C.Q. Brown, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, told Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant that while U.S. forces helped shoot down Iranian missiles speeding toward Israel April 13, Washington won't do the same if there is a major war with Hezbollah.

Acting as if both sides were equally responsible, White House envoy Amos Hochstein called for "urgent" de-escalation during a visit to Israel and Lebanon in mid-June.

The Israeli government is not counting on Washington convincing Hezbollah to "de-escalate." Hospitals are increasing blood supplies and preparing to move key units underground.

Pritzker Family National Photography Collection at National Library of Israel, inset, AP Photo

How Minneapolis Teamsters organized to win strikes in 1934

Teamster Rebellion by Farrell Dobbs is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for July. It is the story of the Teamsters' organizing drive in Minneapolis where rank-and-file workers won hard-fought strikes in 1934, defeating combined strikebreaking efforts by the trucking bosses, the employers' Citizens Alliance and the city, state and federal governments. Dobbs was a young worker who became part of the class-struggle union leadership and then a leader of the Socialist Workers Party. He describes how a fighting industrial union movement was built there, helping pave the way for the rise of the CIO during the Great Depression. The excerpt below is from chapter 4, "The opening wedge." Copyright © 2004 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Minnesota Historical Society

Minneapolis cops use tear gas against 10,000 unemployed workers protesting April 6, 1934. Teamsters strikes showed how to organize to win, electrifying broad masses of working people.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FARRELL DOBBS

Wiseacres of the day spoke pontifically about the "passivity" of the working class, never understanding that the seeming docility of the workers at a given time is a relative thing. If workers are more or less holding their own in daily life and expecting that they can get ahead slowly, they won't tend to radicalize. Things are different when they are losing ground and the future looks precarious to them. Then a change begins to occur in their attitude, which is not always immediately apparent. The

tinder of discontent begins to pile up. Any spark can light it, and once lit, the fire can spread rapidly.

In Minneapolis the flames were bound to become widespread because it was not only the coal workers who were being driven toward action to correct an increasingly intolerable situation. Conditions were bad throughout the entire trucking industry. Wages were as low as ten dollars and rarely above eighteen dollars for a workweek ranging from fifty-four to ninety hours. ...

Another objective factor impinging upon the Minneapolis scene was the general working-class upsurge then beginning to take place throughout the country. Seeking help from the official labor movement to defend their class interests, workers were pouring into the AFL in growing numbers. During 1933 a mounting wave of strikes developed nationally. This trend arose primarily because of low pay, long hours and a general feeling of insecurity. It got further impetus from one aspect of Roosevelt's "New Deal" which had been in operation since the spring of the year. Section 7(a) of the newly adopted National Industrial Recovery Act (NRA) purportedly guaranteed the workers the "right to organize." This official declaration helped along the process of unionization, even though the workers were to find themselves mistaken in their belief that the capitalist government would actually

protect their rights. ...

A problem resulted for the insurgent workers, especially the younger militants who spearheaded the radicalization. Their youthfulness freed them from the inhibiting effects of earlier labor defeats and they moved toward battle with the bosses as though they were inventing something new. It followed, however, that they were inexperienced and didn't know just how to conduct the fight. This made them vulnerable to AFL misleaders trained in the Gompers school. A saving factor existed in the workers' objective need to find leaders with a correct policy and the fighting ability to carry it out. To meet this need, the help of a revolutionary socialist party was required. ...

Holding an official post does not automatically make one a leader. A semblance of leadership authority can be maintained for a time through bureaucratic abuse of official powers, but in the long run one must actually meet the responsibilities of a given post or a leadership void will be created. In the latter case someone else can step into the void and begin to exercise actual leadership authority without necessarily holding an official post. A contradictory situation develops, the outcome of which has to be determined by the course of events. In the end the more competent leader, as proven through performance, can wind up with the official authority as well.

It follows that the ultimate gaining of such official authority marks the end of what has been a war on two fronts. The central object all along will have been to lead an effective struggle against the employers. ...

These formations are not as wholly monolithic as might appear at first sight. The most hidebound component is at the very top. Under that top crust there are layers of lesser officials who are closer to the union ranks and more subject to influence by the workers. Although these lesser officials are under pressure from the top to act as police against the union ranks, they are sometimes disinclined to do so when the workers are up in arms against the employers. ...

A broad strike committee was organized to assume command of the picketing. Before the walkout began, mimeographed picketing instructions were prepared, along with maps showing the location of all coal yards.

The strike hit the industry with a bang. Characterized by militant mass picketing from the outset, the whole operation was both audacious and efficient. The pickets, mainly young workers in their first labor struggle, reinforced the careful planning by experienced leaders with courageous actions during which they came up with some innovations of their own. Development and use of cruising picket squads was an outstanding example of the rank-and-file ingenuity. ...

The whirlwind action had indeed caught the bosses unprepared. They were put in a further bind by the frigid cold wave that accompanied the walkout and led to stiff public pressure for fuel deliveries. With the yards tied up tight, the employers had to make a settlement which brought the workers limited material gains. Most importantly, however, they had been compelled to recognize the union. ...

For the first time in many years a strike had been won in Minneapolis. Electrified by the victory, union members throughout the city gained self-confidence and thousands of unorganized workers lifted their eyes toward the union movement with a new sense of hope. The stage was now set for the main conflict, and both sides began to gird for the showdown that was soon to begin.

July
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Fight for workers power to end Jew-hatred

Washington, London and other “democratic” imperialist governments refused to offer Jews facing the Nazi Holocaust a refuge before, during and after World War II. The Nazis slaughtered 6 million Jews. With nowhere else to go, thousands of Jews interned in displacement camps after the war tried to reach Palestine. In 1947 over 4,500 Jewish refugees on the Exodus were seized by British forces and returned to Germany at gunpoint.

During World War II not one of the “democratic” imperialist rulers attempted to bomb the rail lines used to transport Jews to annihilation in Hitler’s death camps. This underscores the fact that no imperialist rulers can be relied on to defend the Jewish people.

And any hope they might do so today is a dangerous illusion. The only concern of the U.S. rulers, who preside over capitalism’s last empire, is protection of their sway over resources, markets and spheres of influence worldwide.

Jew-hatred is virulent in the imperialist epoch, but it can be defeated once and for all. This requires forging a proletarian party capable of leading a fight for workers power, to uproot exploitation by capital, end all national oppression and build a socialist world.

For the first time in history, capitalism brings into existence a force with the capacities to end class exploitation and oppression. By taking power into its own hands, the working class opens the door to building a different world.

But when deepening working-class struggles head in that direction and the capitalist rulers feel their rule is truly threatened, they will not hesitate to turn to fascist outfits. Jew-hatred is the reactionary banner fascists will rally behind as they seek to crush working people to shore up capitalist rule.

Speaking out against Jew-hatred is a key question

for the working class and the unions — from the targeting of Jews at the Adas Torah synagogue in Los Angeles June 23; to the death threats scrawled at the home of the Jewish director of the Brooklyn Museum in New York; the desecration of Jewish cemeteries in Cincinnati; and the glorification of Hamas’ murderous Oct. 7 pogrom by middle-class radicals. Tens of millions of working people find Jew-hatred abhorrent.

What happened to passengers on the Exodus sheds light on why the establishment of Israel became inevitable. The Nazi’s Holocaust led to the slaughter of 40% of the world’s Jewish population. All the democratic imperialist powers slammed their doors shut to Jews.

The horrors of World War II could have been prevented. But the Stalinist regime in Moscow, backed by Stalinist parties worldwide, betrayed powerful revolutionary struggles in Germany, Spain and elsewhere prior to the war. These betrayals, followed by the Stalin-Hitler Pact, made the second imperialist slaughter unavoidable. After the war, new revolutionary struggles in France, Greece and Italy were blocked by Stalinist parties.

In 1948 Israel was established as a sanctuary for Jews. But Israel is not a solution to the reality of Jew-hatred in the imperialist epoch. As long as the capitalist class holds power there is no way to end the scapegoating and targeting of Jews. Building the proletarian leadership working people need can only come out of class-struggle experience. Blows dealt to Hamas, which says it will carry out more pogroms against Jews, aiming for the “Final Solution,” open the door for common struggle by workers of all religions and nationalities.

Above all, working people must take power in the U.S. This is the perspective presented today by the Socialist Workers Party’s 2024 presidential campaign.

Ontario Cargill workers end strike for better wages

BY TONY DIFELICE AND JOANNE PRITCHARD

GUELPH, Ontario — After a hard-fought six-week strike at the Cargill beef-processing plant here, the nearly 1,000 members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 175 narrowly voted to accept the latest contract offer July 6.

After voting a 99% strike mandate in April, negotiations dragged on until a tentative agreement was reached at the end of May. Union members voted it down by 82% and picket lines went up May 27.

Most workers *Militant* worker-correspondents talked to didn’t see much improvement in the new offer over the one they rejected before.

The wage offer was basically the same — 2 Canadian dollars (\$1.47) in the first year, 50 cents in the second and fourth years. The only change was a boost in the third year from 50 to 75 cents. There were also some improvements to the benefits package.



UFCW Canada members at Cargill’s beef-processing plant in Guelph, Ontario, on strike since May 27 seeking wages that match inflation, accepted new contract.

Strikers voted to accept the new offer by 52%. One striker, who didn’t want to be named due to previous company harassment, said the strike was about earning a living you could survive on and wanted to keep fighting. Striker Donald Cormier agreed it was hardly an improvement over the last offer, especially for those in lower job classifications, but didn’t think they could win much more by staying on strike.

Garrett Lines, who was doing picket duty before going to vote, said that after six weeks on strike it was “getting harder to keep up with inflation, living on CA\$450 strike pay while picketing 30 hours a week.”

Workers faced public pressure from the Beef Farmers of Ontario Association. Ontario is the second largest cattle-raising province in Canada. The Guelph plant processes around 80% of Ontario’s beef slaughter.

A number of workers in the plant were hired from overseas. They can apply for permanent residence in Canada after working for two years. A number of strikers expressed concern for these workers. In addition to their own living expenses, their relatives back home rely on their remittances.

‘Militant’ prison ban

Continued from front page

Along with Arango, 19 other librarians attending the American Library Association Annual Conference in San Diego June 27-July 2 sent letters calling for lifting the impoundment of the paper to the Florida Literature Review Committee. They came from seven states and included former prison librarian Danielle Ball.

The *Militant* has appealed to the Florida Department of Corrections to overturn the ban.

Organizations sending letters calling for the ban to be lifted include the American Civil Liberties Union Florida, Florida Press Association, PEN America and Amnesty International. Petitions from workers at a number of plants organized by the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union have been sent to the committee.

Jackson Correctional Institution authorities claimed the April 29 issue “shows dead person being paraded around on a motorcycle; magazine depict hatred toward a specific race.”

“I’m a Florida farmer writing to urge the Literature Review Committee overturn the impoundment,” Karl Butts wrote from Plant City, Florida, July 7.

“This widely circulated Associated Press photo is included in an article opposing Jew-hatred,” Butts writes. “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. Far from encouraging violence, the *Militant* conveys a clear message against hatred toward any specific group.”

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

“Nothing in the photo, even standing alone, could possibly be construed as *advocating or encouraging* riot, insurrection, etc.,” writes *Militant* attorney David Goldstein in appealing the paper’s impoundment.

Over the past decade Florida prison officials have tried to suppress issues of the *Militant* nearly 50 times. The paper challenged every ban and has won the vast majority.

You can help! 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.

Flight attendants set rally

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

On July 31 members of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA at Endeavor Air will picket at the Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport. They’re demanding wages equal to those paid at Delta Air Lines, Endeavor’s parent company.

While wearing the same uniforms and performing the same services on Delta Connection regional flights, the 1,600 Endeavor flight attendants make on average 45% less. Their starting pay, with its monthly guarantee of 75 hours, only amounts to \$22,914 a year.

Members of the Association of Flight Attendants at Endeavor and their supporters picketed Delta at La Guardia airport in New York June 25, demanding an end to the two-tier setup.

Delta, which made \$4.6 billion last year — more than United, American, Southwest and Alaska airlines combined — claims it would cost too much to give the workers a raise.

So far the company has thwarted efforts to unionize its own flight attendants, something the AFA wants to turn around. In May the union held its national convention in Atlanta — Delta’s headquarters — where it backed the organizing committee at Delta.

We encourage *Militant* readers to join the Minneapolis-Saint Paul picket line July 31, at 11 a.m. The union plans to organize others, including at Detroit Metropolitan Wayne Country Airport Aug. 5.

‘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

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