

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
1934 Minneapolis Teamsters strikes: Lessons for workers today
 — PAGE 8

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE VOL. 88/NO. 29 AUGUST 5, 2024

Tehran's allies expand drone, missile attacks on Jews, Israel

BY SETH GALINSKY

In retaliation for a drone attack targeting civilians that killed one person in a Tel Aviv apartment building and wounded nine others July 19, the Israeli air force struck fuel tanks and a power plant in the Houthi-controlled port city of Hodeidah in Yemen the next day.

This was the first time the Houthis — a reactionary clan-based militia in Yemen funded by Tehran — had succeeded in striking Tel Aviv, and the first time Israeli forces had directly retaliated against the Houthis. Before July 19, Israel had left responding to Houthi attacks, especially on shipping in the Red Sea, to U.S. forces based across the Middle East.

Tehran and its allied militias in Iraq and Yemen have launched some 1,000 missiles and drones against Israel since Oct. 7, more than 200 of them by the Houthis alone, almost all shot down before reaching their targets.

But the biggest immediate danger is from Hezbollah, which has launched more than 6,800 missiles and drones at Israel from Lebanon since Oct. 8.

Continued on page 6

US rulers push to reestablish stability in two party setup

BY TERRY EVANS

For the first time in years, the capitalist rulers in the U.S. are making progress in reestablishing a measure of stability in the decades-old two-party political system. This doesn't mean they have any answers to the economic and social crisis working people face today, from persistently high prices to the threat of more wars. In fact, it is their dog-eat-dog profit system that is responsible.

That is why the Socialist Workers Party presidential campaign of Rachele Fruit for president and Dennis Richter for vice president gets a serious response when they say workers need to break from the bosses' parties and build their own party, a party of labor.

The gains made by the rulers in steady the Republican Party were clear at the July 15-18 Republican National Convention, where the overwhelming majority of the party — including all those who had challenged Trump in earlier primaries — came together around the Donald Trump-J.D. Vance ticket.

Their convention platform presented

Continued on page 7

Rachele Fruit, SWP candidate for president: 'Break with the bosses' parties and build a party of labor'



Militant/Josefina Otero

Dennis Richter, SWP candidate for vice president, joins National Nurses United picket at University Medical Center in New Orleans July 17, part of their fight for a first contract.

'Why should I sign for the Socialist Workers Party?'

BY NAOMI CRAINE

MINNEAPOLIS — "Hello! If this has anything to do with elections, I want to know what you are doing," said Layla Bashir, waving Rachele Fruit over to her car outside a Target store here July 22.

Fruit explained that she is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president. The SWP calls for building a party of labor to organize and mobilize working people, union and nonunion alike.

Continued on page 5

SWP gathers electors to get on ballot in Louisiana

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

BOSIER, La. — Supporters of Rachele Fruit, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, and her running mate, Dennis Richter, campaigned from one end of Louisiana to the other July 16-23. Richter joined the campaign volunteers to bring what the candidates stand for to working people and to ask them to help put the only working-class alternative on the ballot.

Continued on page 4

July 26: Building the leadership to make Cuba's socialist revolution



Cuban Council of State Office of Historical Affairs

Leaders of July 26, 1953, attack on Cuban dictator's Moncada military garrison, including, from left, Raúl Castro, Juan Almeida and Fidel Castro, leave Isle of Pines prison, May 15, 1955.

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

Seventy-one years ago on July 26, workers and youth, led by Fidel Castro, attacked the Moncada Barracks in Santiago de Cuba and the Carlos Manuel de Céspedes Garrison in Bayamo, opening the battle for Cuba's socialist revolution.

Without fear of consequences for themselves, or political hesitation, thousands of working people joined the July

26 Movement — peasants, woodworkers, house painters, bakers, shoemakers, sheet metal workers, carpenters, students and others — to fight to bring down the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship. They proved with discipline and a leadership forged through battle they could win.

When Batista seized power in a coup

Continued on page 3

In blow to the Constitution, Democrats plan move on Supreme Court justices

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Democrats are stepping up attacks on members of the U.S. Supreme Court after it issued a series of rulings that set back attempts by Democrats to use courts to imprison

Donald Trump, knock him out of the 2024 race and prevent tens of millions from voting for the candidate of their choice.

President Joseph Biden says he is preparing proposals to change the court in ways that would bring it under the control of Democratic Party legislators. The proposals include term limits for the nine justices, who currently serve lifetime appointments, making it easier for Democrats to replace any judge who stands

Continued on page 9

Join fight against Florida prison ban on the 'Militant'!

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

As we go to press, the *Militant* is still waiting information from the Florida Department of Corrections Literature Review Committee on the outcome of its July 18 hearing. On the agenda was the paper's appeal of the banning of *Militant* issue no. 17 by the Jackson Correctional Institution in Malone, Florida.

It's been over two months since the impoundment with no explanation of the delay. Letters continue to be sent to the Literature Review Committee urg-

Continued on page 4

Inside

- Editorial: For a fighting program for labor!** 9
- Drug prices soar as inflation ravages the working class 2
- Putin regime in Moscow targets Russian culture today 3
- Farrell Dobbs: For a party of labor based on the unions 8

Drug prices soar as inflation ravages the working class

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

While Democrats and the liberal media are heralding a government report saying the average monthly inflation rate is falling, prices on a broad range of essential goods working people need remain stubbornly high, and they're not coming down. This reality clobbering the working class is disguised by the way average inflation figures weigh both essentials like food, rent and gas, along with extravagances limited to the wealthy, like yachts and Riviera vacations.

Some of the most outrageous costs have to do with the medical "care" industry. Prices for prescription drugs are going through the roof as giant pharmaceutical companies, their subsidiaries and related drug store chains put their drive for profits above all, especially over providing actual health care for millions of working people.

More and more, receiving a cancer diagnosis means falling deeply into debt. Over half of cancer drugs introduced between 2019 and 2023 cost over \$200,000 a year.

"Cutting back on meds. Cutting back on doctor visits. Losing your home. Cutting back on food — these are not things that we want to believe happen to people with cancer in this country," Dr. Reshma Jaggi, a radiation oncologist at Emory University School of Medicine, told the *New York Times*.

But this is exactly what's happening. The fact of the matter is the price workers pay to purchase needed prescription drugs is way out of whack with what it costs the pharmaceutical bosses to pro-

duce them. That's because the major health conglomerates — CVS Health, Cigna and UnitedHealth Group — are extorting profits from the pockets of working people through a variety of opaque schemes. These companies handle some 80% of the U.S. prescriptions dispensed to 200 million people.

One not so well-known part of this operation is conducted by so-called drug middlemen companies, known as pharmacy benefit managers — Caremark for CVS, Express Scripts for Cigna, and Optum Rx for UnitedHealth.

These PBMs, as they are known in the industry, supposedly were created to drive down drug costs, a June 21 *Times* article said. But much of the time they do the exact opposite. "They steer patients toward pricier drugs, charge steep markups on what would otherwise be inexpensive medicines and extract billions in hidden fees."

In Oklahoma, CVS charged Kent McKinley \$138,000 a year for the generic version of Everolimus to treat his gastrointestinal cancer. But the wholesale price for this drug was just \$14,000. So the drug company giant pocketed \$124,000 in profits.

Similarly, in New Jersey, Express Scripts told Joseph Kaplan, a 77-year-old retiree, he had to pay \$211 for a three-month supply of his allergy drug, which he could have gotten for \$22 at Costco. "It's just nuts," he told the *Times*.

'Pricier drugs, steep markups'

Some end up paying even more through this profit swindle. According to a Federal Trade Commission



KFF Healthnews

Despite having insurance, Jeni Rae Peters in Rapid City, South Dakota, faces over \$30,000 of debt in 2020, and threats from bill collectors, after paying for drugs to treat cancer. Some 25% of cancer patients in the U.S. are forced to declare bankruptcy or lose their homes.

study, pharmacy benefit managers steered patients to their own pharmacies and away from unaffiliated ones. As a result, they would be charged up to 200 times what they would pay for the same drug at Costco.

Another way these profit-gougers force you to stay within their system, the *Times* explained, "is to not allow patients to receive 90-day supplies of drugs if they fill prescriptions at outside pharmacies." And if your mail order is delayed or lost, you may not be able to get a replacement.

In many cases pharmacy benefit managers only approve taking more expensive brand name drugs, even when cheaper generics are available. This is the case for drugs to treat Hepatitis C as well as the blood thinner Eliquis, for example.

This swindle — which drives prices up — is helping drive independent drugstores out of business, hitting working people in rural areas the hardest. They must travel farther and face increased difficulties in filling prescriptions and getting other medical supplies.

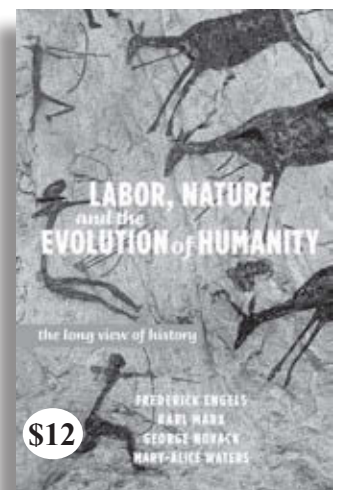
And big chain drug stores are shuttering underperforming stores nationwide. Walgreens has announced plans to close over 2,000 of its 8,600 stores. CVS, which closed 300 stores in 2021, projects shutting another 900 this year.

Another attack on women's health and comfort was highlighted this month when the *Wall Street Journal* reported

prices of tampons, pads and other menstrual products have soared, jumping at an even higher rate than food.

Three companies have a virtual monopoly on this \$3.5 billion market — Procter & Gamble, Kimberly-Clark and Edgewell Personal Care. The price of sanitary pads has soared 41% since 2019, while a package of tampons jumped 36%. The reason these companies can corner the market, and largely bar production of generic versions, is that they require government approval as a "medical device."

The *Journal*, whose editors now seem to be trending toward more "politically correct" terminology, said the number of "menstruation-age people" in the U.S. is growing. The average age of onset of women's periods has fallen to 11.9 years old.



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THE MILITANT

U.S., Mexican truckers join to fight for better conditions

"Trucking companies are using our brothers and sisters in Mexico against our brothers and sisters in the U.S.," Billy Randel, a leader of the independent truckers' fight, told the *Militant*. Truckers in both countries deserve the support of unions and working people across the U.S.



Eli Hartman/The Texas Tribune
Members of the Truckers Movement for Justice speak with drivers July 1 in Texas.

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Cuba's socialist revolution

Continued from front page

on March 10, 1952, hundreds of thousands of working people in Cuba were unemployed. Some 3 million, half of the island's population, had no electricity. More than half lived in huts, in slums, without the most minimal sanitary facilities. In the cities, rents took almost one-third of family income. Peasants could only work in the growing season, or during the short sugar harvest. There were no teachers for 70% of rural children. Many became convinced that the only road forward was to fight.

Ramiro Valdés, a vice president of Cuba and Commander of the Revolution — a title earned by top leaders of the rebel troops under Fidel Castro's command in the 1950s — spoke with a group of children at the Fidel Castro Ruz Center in Havana July 10 about the conditions that led him and those of his generation to join the fight to end the dictatorship and the misery and indignity produced by capitalist exploitation.

Becoming a revolutionary "is not a career that you study for," Valdés explained on many occasions. "You become a revolutionary because you rebel, you refuse to accept the conditions of life that you face" and draw inspiration from history and those who came before us.

The then 21-year-old trucking assistant, who hauled sugar cane for the Pilar and San Cristóbal mills, set out to find others like himself looking to fight. After hearing young lawyer Fidel Castro denounce Batista on the radio, he went to meet him.

He and his friends from the impoverished La Matilde neighborhood of Artemisa put themselves at Castro's disposal. Under his leadership they learned to act in a disciplined and politically effective way. Many of these militants, including Valdés, were selected by Castro to participate in the attack on Moncada.

A revolution reignited

Imprisoned until 1955 and then exiled from Cuba, Valdés joined Castro in Mexico and returned to Cuba on the Granma with him, looking to take on its dictatorship. Fidel, he told the children in Havana, held out to the

crew the key to victory — resist, resist, resist — and confidence the people would support and join in a war that they would consider just.

Valdés fought as second in command in Che Guevara's Rebel Army Column 4 and later as commander of Column 8 in Las Villas.

Many other lifelong leaders of the Cuban Revolution had similar origins. Juan Almeida Bosque, a black Cuban who worked as a bricklayer from the age of 11, also decided after the coup it was time to act. He went to the University of Havana campus to protest, joining an action organized by Castro. He joined the Moncada attack, the guerilla struggle against Batista and went on to become a central leader of the Cuban Revolution.

Haydée Santamaría participated in the attack on Moncada and was imprisoned afterward for seven months. She became a founding member of the July 26 Movement in 1955, fought in the revolutionary war and played leading roles over the decades.

They, and others like them, joined Castro in providing leadership for the Cuban Revolution.

U.S. imperialism has never forgiven the revolution for carrying through on its program. This includes the Agrar-



Granma/Juvenal Balán; inset, Cuban Council of State

To defend Cuban Revolution, "you have to know Fidel more and more," Ramiro Valdés, a vice president of Cuba and Commander of the Revolution, told Cuban children in Havana July 10. Inset, from left, Ramiro Valdés, Camilo Cienfuegos and Che Guevara after Jan. 1, 1959, triumph.



ian Reform Law, which put land into the hands of hundreds of thousands of landless peasants, and mobilizing workers to carry through nationalization of U.S.-owned banks and businesses, as well as those of Cuba's capitalist class.

Cuba's socialist revolution — and what it showed about the capacities of working people — stands as a powerful example for us today.

Washington says the Cuban Revolu-

tion must disappear, Valdés said in a Cuban television interview. "We have to be conscious of that, because we are, and will continue to be a hard nut to crack. We are a bone stuck in their throat they can't swallow."

Now 92 years old, Valdés urged the youth in Havana to study the Cuban Revolution — and Fidel Castro — in order to continue to defend it. "You have to know Fidel more and more," he said.

Putin regime in Moscow targets Russian culture today

BY ROY LANDERSEN

After brutally suppressing political protests against his war in Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin is now intensifying his crackdown on culture and artistic creativity. "Censorship and repression is now at levels resembling those in the post-Stalin years of the later 1950s and 1960s," the *Financial Times* observed July 18. Poets, playwrights, artists, musicians and other cultural workers have been arrested, prosecuted and silenced.

One example is how a light-hearted novel about a zombie apocalypse in Moscow has attracted the wrath of Russian censors. Prosecutors have demanded that Ivan Filippov's book *Mouse* must be withdrawn from sale

across the country on the grounds that it threatens public order.

The novel is a satire about an infected rodent that escapes a secret lab where experts are developing a serum to prolong Putin's life. In the ensuing chaos, most of Moscow's residents turn into mouse-like zombies.

In April, Filippov was branded a "foreign agent," a move by the regime to intimidate all opponents of the Russian government. After Putin's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Filippov left Russia to escape prosecution.

His Telegram channel in Russian protesting Putin's war is called "Na Zzzzapadnom fronte bez peremen," which means "All quiet on the Western front." This borrows from the title of a

famous German 1929 anti-war novel by Erich Maria Remarque. It satirizes the "Z" painted on invading tanks and plastered all over the country as a symbol of Putin's war on the Ukrainian people.

The administrators of the Erarta contemporary art museum in St. Petersburg were charged July 18 for the exhibit of a painting, part of the gallery's collection since 2016, that authorities now claim contains "Nazi symbols." The artwork by Belarusian artist Sergei Grinevich called "Festival" depicts dancers in national costumes performing behind three thuggish security guards.

The prosecutor's objection is to a Belarusian phrase "Zyvie Bielarus!" (Long live Belarus!) graffitied under the painting, which has been there for four years. They claim it was used by pro-Nazi nationalist groups in World War II.

But the censors' real objection is that the slogan was a rallying cry in 2020 for tens of thousands of working people in Belarus who protested against President Alexander Lukashenko, the pro-Putin incumbent who stole the presidential elections. With Moscow's help, the Belarusian strongman put down the opposition in the streets.

Harsh sentences

In another example of the regime's harsh assault on the arts, Yevgenia Berkovich, a prominent independent theater director, and playwright Svetlana Petriyuk were convicted July 8 on trumped-up terrorism charges over their award-winning play. They each were sentenced to six years in prison after being held in jail for over a year awaiting trial. They say their play was produced to depict the danger of terrorist groups like Islamic State. Putin's censors say the play itself is terrorist. Their real crime was voicing opposition to the war in Ukraine.

As part of this crackdown, a growing number of young men and women who were arrested for protesting the war in

Continued on page 4

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



August 2, 1999

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. — Chants of "No Justice No Peace!" and "What Do We Want? A Contract! When Do We Want It? Now!" broke out as Steelworkers on strike at Newport News Shipbuilding and locked out at Kaiser Aluminum greeted each other by slapping hands on the picket line here July 10. The strikers carried picket signs that read: "Locked-out workers at Kaiser support Local 8888," and "Local 8888 supports locked-out Kaiser workers."

Kaiser Aluminum workers went out on strike at five plants in Washington, Louisiana, and Ohio September 30, to fight the company's plan to eliminate hundreds of jobs.

While Local 8888 is on strike, U.S. Navy personnel are in the shipyard working on the ships. The union has called a march and rally in Washington, D.C., to protest the strikebreaking. Local 8888 is organizing buses to the rally.



August 9, 1974

Welcoming the new Greek regime of Constantine Caramanlis, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger described its members as "old friends of ours." But the warm words of welcome "were clouded by worry," reported the *Christian Science Monitor*. "The common denominator of demonstrations all over Greece after seven years of rule by a military junta was the cry: 'Out with the Americans.'"

The mood of joy at the end of the dictatorship and anger and bitterness at its crimes was reflected in the release of 45 political prisoners from the island of Gyros. As the ferry approached shore, the crowd shouted, "The heroes are coming," but soon began to chant, "Poison for the dogs of the military police."

Washington's support of the Greek colonels was one of the main factors that enabled their inept and hated regime to survive as long as it did.



August 8, 1949

The government which can find endless billions to feed the war machine has so far failed to appropriate one extra nickel to provide jobs or adequate unemployment compensation for the growing army of jobless victims of the capitalist profit system. The only federal assistance is in the form of unemployment insurance funds dispensed through the state governments. The compensation is in no instance better than a hunger income.

The CIO Economic Outlook proposes a new national unemployment insurance law, administered by the federal government, of up to 52 weeks for all unemployed.

Such a measure would represent a vast improvement over the present "states rights" insurance system. But even the best program is worthless without the program of action to put it over.

SWP wins electors in Louisiana

Continued from front page

Eight workers — one in each of Louisiana's six congressional districts and two at-large — signed to serve as electors for Fruit and Richter. Their forms will be turned in to the secretary of state's office.

Richter and SWP campaigners Josefina Otero and Alyson Kennedy joined a July 17 informational picket line of over 150 nurses, members of the National Nurses United union. Some 700 nurses at University Medical Center in New Orleans are fighting for their first contract since they voted to join the union by 82% in December.

"We are demanding safe patient care and safe staffing levels," Kisha Montes, who has been a nurse at the hospital since 2008, told Richter. "I work in the psychiatric ward where there are two nurses and one technician for 50 patients.

"I like what you say about a labor party based on the unions," she added.

Terry Mogilles, another nurse walking the picket line, signed up to be an elector. She told Richter she decided to do so after learning more about what the party stands for. "You support our fight for a contract and what you stand for will help mitigate health disparities."

In Morgan City, Steve Warshell and Laura Anderson met several people who said they were voting for Trump, but agreed with what they heard about the SWP campaign. One retired offshore worker said he "supported the idea of workers uniting whether you are in a union or not."

After hearing what Fruit and Richter's campaign says, Maria Garcia Ortiz said, "You are doing something important," and signed up as an elector in District 3. She donated \$10 to the campaign and bought a copy of *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers*

Putin hits culture

Continued from page 3

Ukraine now face punitive, long prison sentences. Several of them are teenagers. One of the youngest, Valery Zaitsev, was 14 when he was arrested last year for voicing pro-Ukrainian sympathies. He now faces a prison sentence of from 15 years to life for "sympathizing" with "terrorists."

Since he came to power in 1999, Putin, who rose to prominence after being an officer in the KGB, the Stalinist secret police, has increasingly tightened his grip on power. Both inside Russia — and in exile abroad — Russian artists are standing up and protesting his regime.

One young artist called Philippenzo, who is known for his political graffiti, was able to leave, even though the government had seized his passport. He has now opened an exhibit in Montenegro. He is wanted in Russia on charges of "vandalism motivated by political hatred."

"To be honest, I can't even object to this," he told the Moscow Times, "because I really do hate the Putin regime."

He is also taking part in a larger exhibit opening Aug. 3 in Amsterdam being put on by Artists Against the Kremlin. In the wake of Moscow's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, simply telling the truth about that war has become illegal as "false news."

Party Looks Forward.

In Houma, campaigners met Edward Kenny, an auto mechanic who was working on a truck in his driveway. He responded to the SWP campaign, saying, "You get tired of seeing the same old thing. It is time for a change." He also signed up as an elector.

Campaigners drove to the northern part of the state, where they fanned out to towns surrounding Shreveport and signed up four more electors. In Bosier, Christopher West, a truck driver who works for a company that lays concrete, said he wanted to be an elector. "We are being put in a box on who to choose in the elections," he said, but the SWP deserves to be on the ballot.

The election forms have to be signed in front of a notary, who certifies them. After reading the campaign flyer, one notary from West Monroe, William Stratton Jr., said, "I signed up as an elector in the 5th District because I'm tired of the limitations imposed by the



Truck driver Christopher West signs as elector for SWP presidential ticket in Bosier, Louisiana, July 20. At left, SWP campaigner Gerardo Sánchez, at right, notary public Corey Williams.

two-party system. It's time to empower the working class and ensure their voices are heard loud and clear."

He bought a copy of *The Low Point*

of *Labor Resistance Is Behind Us* and *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class*.

Join fight against Florida prison ban on 'Militant'

Continued from front page

ing the ban be overturned. It was May 17 when the paper got notice from authorities in Malone saying they had impounded the *Militant* 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." *Militant* attorney David Goldstein filed an appeal May 23.

"I understand that Florida's Jackson Correctional Institution banned an April issue of the *Militant* from subscribers in that institution based on the use of a widely distributed photograph of a Hamas member showing off the body of an Israeli kidnapped into Gaza, arguing that it was tantamount to incitement," wrote Julie Paris from Pittsburgh to the Literature Review Committee July 17. The *Militant* has "been one of the few publications to share the truth about who Hamas is, what they represent, and the threat they pose to the Jewish community and the wider world.

"They share these images not to incite, but rather to expose the barbaric acts of this internationally recognized terrorist organization," she added, "and to share the fight that Israel faces in defeating the terrorists who have promised to repeat

their actions over and over again. I hope that you will reverse your decision and allow their subscribers to learn the truth about what happened on October 7."

From Bluffton, South Carolina, Scott Thompson wrote, "The ban violates prisoners' First Amendment rights. The reasons for the ban reported in the news — that a photo of a Jewish man murdered by Hamas is inflammatory and encourages violence — are not persuasive and, frankly, sound pretextual, in

light of the State's prior efforts to cut off access to the newspaper."

Prison authorities claim the photo encourages "riot, insurrection, rebellion" and "organized prison protest."

"Workers behind bars have the same rights as those outside prison walls to read about the world, consider different views and form their own opinions without interference by prison authorities. The fight against Jew-hatred is important for all working people," said *Militant* editor John Studer. "We will fight every attempt by prison authorities to ban the *Militant*."

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.

Letters calling for the ban to be overturned have been sent by the American Civil Liberties Union in Florida and nationwide; Florida Press Association; PEN America; Amnesty International; and many others. If you would like copies of any or all of these letters, contact the *Militant*.

Fight prison ban on the 'Militant'

Get letters of support from unions, defenders of workers, prisoners rights and free speech. Send to Literature Review Committee, Florida Department of Corrections, 501 South Calhoun Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399, or email to Saritza.Legault@fdc.myflorida.com, with copies to themilitant@mac.com

Send a check to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018, earmarked "Prisoners Rights Fight."

Endorse Socialist Workers Party 2024 campaign!

Rachele Fruit for president & Dennis Richter vice-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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Socialist Workers Party 2024 Campaign, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Tel: 347-871-0282 & Email: socialistworkers2024@gmail.com

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

Oakland

A Working-Class Policy on Immigration to Unite Our Class and Strengthen Our Unions. Speaker: Eric Simpson, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress, 12th District. Sun., Aug. 18. Refreshments, 5:30; program, 6 p.m. Donation: \$5. 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Tel.: (510) 686-1351.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

The 1945 Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Lessons for Today. Sun., Aug. 4, 3 p.m. Donation: \$5. 777 Cleveland Ave. SW, Suite 103. Tel.: (678) 528-7828.

NEW YORK

New York

The 2024 Elections, the Crisis of Imperialism and Why Workers Should Support the Socialist Workers Party Campaign. Speaker: Terry Evans, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., July 28, 2:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 307 W. 36th St., 13th floor. Tel.: (646) 434-8117.

Fruit: 'Build a party of labor'

Continued from front page

"Our class, the working class, needs to break with the two-party system and all of the capitalist parties," she said.

"Wow, you're right!" said Bashir, who is a nurse. "My eyes were really opened yesterday when they forced the president out of the race. They just pulled their money and changed the candidate without us even having a vote. The Democrats are all bogus. I'm going to spread the word about your campaign to everyone I know." Bashir joined hundreds of others here signing a petition to put Fruit and SWP vice presidential candidate Dennis Richter on the ballot. She took campaign flyers to distribute and a copy of the *Militant*.

The SWP has kicked off a 16-day effort by campaign supporters to take advantage of the interest in a working-class alternative to the bosses' parties and to introduce the SWP program. Campaigners plan to collect well over the 2,000 signatures required to put the party's ticket on the Minnesota ballot.

"Despite their rhetoric about 'hard-working families,' neither the Republicans nor Democrats are interested in defending the lives and livelihoods of working people," Fruit told those at a public meeting here July 20. "They are in business to ensure that the capitalist ruling families are securely in power, and that the military is strong enough to defend U.S. imperialist interests in the world.

"The working class continues to feel the squeeze from high prices and difficulties getting decent, well-paid full-time jobs," she noted. "Neither Bidenomics nor Make-America-Great rhetoric can change this reality. That's why more workers are joining and organizing unions to fight for higher pay and cost-of-living protection against the ravages of inflation."

Fruit cited a recent report that one of the few remaining birthing centers in southern Alabama, in rural Clarke County, will be closing next month. Already Alabama has a maternal mortality rate of more than 64 deaths per 100,000 births, nearly double the national average. For women who are Black the rate is

100.7. "This staggering statistic reflects the continuing oppression of the Black nationality in the United States, which can only be overcome by struggle and the fight for workers power," she said.

The ruling class is beginning to face the fact that the low point of labor resistance is behind us, she said. That was clear at the Republican Party convention. "Trump's appeal from the beginning has been his willingness to talk about the carnage facing working-class communities across the country," she said. "But having Sean O'Brien, the head of the Teamsters union, address the Republican convention is something new."

O'Brien's speech did not break in any way from capitalist politics. Instead, he presents working with so-called friends of labor in both of the bosses' parties. But his talk demonstrated that the ruling class sees a need to convince workers that they have a stable choice among the capitalist parties.

"We want them to consider the Socialist Workers campaign as the road forward," Fruit said. "It shows how big the openings are for us to get a hearing, as we build solidarity through our unions and take our campaign to every workers' struggle we can."

Imperialism's world disorder

"The world capitalist economic crisis is bringing devastation and war to many millions," Fruit said. "The fight over which class rules is the central question that matters for working people everywhere in the world. The U.S. working class is decisive in that fight."

Washington "is a weakened imperialist power, but still the most powerful, and seeks to expand its economic, military and political control throughout the world just like its competitors do — both its allies and enemies," she said. "The NATO summit in Washington was a step toward preparing for the wars to come with ever more terrible weapons."

In 1916, Bolshevik revolutionary leader V.I. Lenin noted that imperialism "is not a *policy* that a government chooses," Fruit said. "The drive toward war is inherent to capitalism in the im-

Fruit brings solidarity to Minneapolis park strikers



Militant/Mary Martin

MINNEAPOLIS — Rachele Fruit, the SWP candidate for president, brought solidarity to striking park workers here, members of the Laborers' International Union of North America, at Minnehaha Falls park July 21.

The strike is in its third week as the city's Parks and Recreation Board refuses to negotiate. Stagnant wages and skyrocketing insurance costs are at the center of the workers strike, along with opposing the bosses' union-busting attitude. The board calls the workers' demands "unreasonable."

The strikers aren't trying to shut down the public parks. Instead, they hold rallies in the picnic areas and organize walks through the parks. They talk to park patrons, distribute a fact sheet on their strike and ask for support. On this day strikers were asking people to sign a petition saying they have no confidence in the Park Board's management.

Park keeper Kyle Matuseski, above left, welcomed Fruit and asked about her campaign. "I'll be spreading news about your strike wherever I go," the SWP candidate told him.

Fruit said the SWP program calls for breaking with all the bosses' parties and building a party of labor. She also explained the party opposes all forms of Jew-hatred and defends Israel's right to exist as a refuge for Jews.

Matuseski said he would gladly sign to put the SWP on the ballot and did. He said, "I'd have a hard time voting for either of the two major party's candidates."

Those wishing to donate to the union's hardship fund can go to <https://workingpartnerships.betterworld.org/campaigns/local-363>.

— MARY MARTIN

SWP presidential campaign files for NJ ballot



Militant/Abby Tilsner

TRENTON, N.J. — Supporters of Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, filed 1,642 signatures, more than twice the requirement, to get on the ballot in New Jersey at the state Division of Elections in Trenton July 19.

Lea Sherman, SWP candidate for Congress in the 8th District, gets receipt for signatures from election worker Madeline Rodriguez, left. Joining Sherman, from left, were campaign supporters Ellen Berman, Gale Shangold, Osborne Hart and Richard Ariza.

"The enthusiastic response from workers across the state to the SWP's ballot campaign underscores the fact that more workers are in a mood to fight today and are open to the need to break with the bosses' parties," Joanne Kuniansky, the SWP candidate for Senate from New Jersey, told the *Militant*.

— LEA SHERMAN

perialist epoch. It can only be ended by organizing a revolutionary movement of workers and farmers to take state power and overturn capitalist rule. And that's what the Bolsheviks did.

"The first two imperialist world wars came at a cost of nearly 100 million lives," she noted. Moscow's invasion of Ukraine and the Tehran-backed massacre of Jews in Israel by Hamas Oct. 7 have sharply accelerated imperialism's world disorder today.

"There is more danger than ever that some capitalist regime — maybe in Iran, Russia, the United States or China — will resort to the use of nuclear weapons," she said. "Only socialist revolutions can bring the danger of a world nuclear conflagration to an end once and for all."

After the meeting, several participants endorsed Fruit's campaign and signed up to help collect signatures over the next two weeks. "I think capitalism today is not good for the workers," said Tyler Hurtgen, a young bakery worker who joined in campaigning for Fruit the next day. "I liked what she said."

"This is the only campaign putting forward the need to fight to end the wages system," said Chris Pennock, a shop steward in the Letter Carriers union, as he signed an endorser card after the meeting. "This campaign is not about opposing Trump. Looking across the landscape of the left that is all you see."

"I do think what Trump has said and done in some cases is criminal," said Pennock's co-worker, Andrew Hagan, who also attended the meeting. "But I'm glad I came, I'm always open to new perspectives."

SWP campaigners "explain that Jew-hatred, a reflection of the crisis

of capitalism, is also a life and death question for the working class," Fruit said at the meeting. "We have to *act* against every move to slander, scapegoat and attack Jews."

Answer modern Holocaust deniers

It's important to explain what Hamas' Oct. 7 pogrom was, she said, "in order to answer the 21st century Holocaust deniers. Like Roger Waters, from the band Pink Floyd, who is getting prime time exposure to say that those who claim that rapes occurred are 'filthy disgusting' liars."

Campaign supporters are having many discussions on this question as they talk with working people. Several have bought copies of *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class*.

SWP campaigners Betsy Farley and Kevin Dwire met a large group of farmworkers outside the Walmart in Bloomington. They came from all over Mexico, from Guadalajara to Veracruz, for temporary work on a nearby farm.

One worker told Farley he was very pleased to hear about the SWP, a party "for the working class" in the U.S. He was especially happy to see the article in the *Militant* about common actions by U.S. and Mexican truck drivers for better wages and conditions. He explained he had been part of union organizing in Mexico. The farmworkers took several campaign flyers in Spanish and a copy of the *Militant* to pass around.

Daily teams will campaign across the state through Aug. 4. If you'd like to help, contact the branch of the Socialist Workers Party in your area.

Tehran's allies attack Israel

Continued from front page
From its formation in 1985 — inspired by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and the bourgeois counterrevolution in Iran — Hezbollah's goal has been the "final obliteration from existence" of Israel and the Jews.

In addition to killing 30 people so far, wounding 205, and forcing the evacuation of more than 60,000 people in northern Israel near the Lebanese border, Hezbollah's recent attacks have seriously damaged agricultural and industrial production.

Like Gaza-based Hamas and Hezbollah, the Houthis' goal is to destroy Israel. What the regime in Tehran and its so-called axis of resistance want is to complete the Nazis' "Final Solution" of eliminating the Jewish people.

The Oct. 7 anti-Jewish pogrom in Israel shows that this is not an idle threat.

Hamas thugs and their allies — financed, armed and trained by the capitalist regime in Iran — murdered 1,200 people that day, three-quarters of them civilians. They wounded thousands, kidnapped more than 250 hostages and raped and mutilated dozens of women.

Combating Jew-hatred is not just a question in the Middle East. A pro-Hamas group in Madrid is planning a conference there Oct. 7 this year to celebrate the "glorious" one-year anniversary of the Hamas-led assault.

The stakes are high for working people. Under the guise of "anti-Zionism," thugs threaten, vandalize and attack Jews on museum boards, Jewish-owned businesses and Jewish students who defend Israel's right to exist as a refuge for Jews. Tomorrow many of them will use the reactionary banner of Jew-hatred to target the trade unions and other workers fighting for their rights.

But Tehran and Hamas and their apologists around the world underestimated the will and fighting spirit of working people and others in Israel — Jewish and Arab citizens alike.

Risks of all-out war with Hezbollah

Israelis are preparing for the possibility of a full-scale war in Lebanon. Hezbollah reportedly has 150,000 missiles — 10 times more than Hamas had before Oct. 7. Unlike Hamas' rockets, which are mostly rudimentary and imprecise, a large part of Hezbollah's have precision guidance systems.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported July 18 that Israeli officials are preparing for barrages of up to 4,000 rockets a day — and thousands of casualties.

Israel's Fire and Rescue Services is training more than 150 civilian response teams within 18 miles of the border with Lebanon, the *Journal* reported. Similar efforts are underway in Haifa, a city of nearly 300,000 — both Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel — 20 miles from the border.

After the Houthi drone attack, an article in *Tasnim*, the daily newspaper of Tehran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, warned that the axis of resistance "has new surprises for the Zionist enemy."

Hamas is the biggest obstacle

In Gaza, Hamas pressures civilians not to evacuate, so they can be used as human shields and to create "martyrs" it can use as propaganda against Israel. Its

false claims of "genocide" are repeated in the liberal press in the U.S.

Hamas is the biggest obstacle working people in Gaza and the West Bank face to be able to organize to fight for their rights.

Amin Abed has been an opponent of Hamas since it seized dictatorial power in Gaza in 2007. He has denounced Oct. 7 and recently posted on Facebook that Hamas "has grown arrogant and is fighting with us until the last child amongst us." That was enough for Hamas thugs to beat him so severely in Jabalya July 8 that he ended up in intensive care at Al Awda Hospital.

In another sign of resistance to Hamas, some passersby tried to intervene. Abed told Saudi-owned Al-Arabiya News, but backed off when the thugs fired in the air. Eventually residents were able to wheel him in a cart to the hospital.

Colonial settler state?

Apologists for Tehran and Hamas around the world — aided by the liberal bourgeois news media and capitalist politicians — try to paint Israel as a "colonial settler" state that is committing "genocide" in Gaza.

They never mention why Israel exists. Leading up to World War II Adolf Hitler walked into power in Germany because



Tomer Appelbaum
Tel Aviv apartment damaged by Houthi drone attack July 19. Houthis, like Hamas and others in Tehran's "axis of resistance," seek to impose Hitler's "Final Solution" on Jews in Israel.

of the betrayal of the Communist Party, which along with the Social Democrats, refused to lead a fight against the Nazis. In Germany and other countries, Stalinist Communist Parties prevented working people from organizing to take power into their own hands, despite opportunities to overturn capitalist rule before and after the war.

During the war, the Nazi murder machine slaughtered 40% of the world's entire Jewish population. But the imperialist powers like Washington and Brit-

ain, turned away Jews fleeing the Nazis, before, during and after the war.

Jews fleeing the Holocaust and its aftermath had nowhere else to go.

Today, despite being a capitalist class-divided country, Israel is the only place in the world where Jews, from anywhere, can find sanctuary in face of persecution and violence. But as long as imperialism exists, constantly breeding the conditions that cause Jew-hatred, there will be no safe haven. To achieve that will take a socialist revolution.

Longshore, Boeing, postal workers prepare for strikes

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

Some 45,000 dockworkers, members of the International Longshoremen's Association who work at ports from Maine to Texas, are preparing to hit the streets Oct. 1 if a new contract isn't in place.

It's one of three sizable labor battles shaping up this fall. The contract for more than 30,000 workers at Boeing in Seattle, members of the International Association of Machinists, is up Sept. 12. Thousands poured into the Seattle Mariners' baseball stadium July 17 and voted by 99.9% to strike if they don't win an acceptable contract by then.

And the contract is up Sept. 20 for 200,000 postal workers, members of the American Postal Workers Union.

No negotiations have been held between the International Longshoremen's Association and the United States Maritime Alliance, the bosses' association in the East and Gulf Coast longshore industry, since June 10. That was when the ILA said it discovered the bosses were running automated equipment to process trucks at Alabama's Port of Mobile, in violation of the current contract. Automation and the loss of jobs is a key

issue for longshoremen across the country. Another major issue for ILA members is a healthy wage increase.

Harold Daggett, president of the union, has emphasized that it would not "entertain any discussion about extending the current contract," or put up with interference from either the Biden administration or the Department of Labor. Longshoremen face the same kinds of anti-labor red tape that the government imposes on rail workers, flight attendants and many other workers.

Negotiations are ongoing for a new contract at Boeing, the first in 16 years. Since the last contract the union agreed to concessions under threats from the bosses to move production out of state.

"We aren't just fighting for ourselves," Jon Holden, president of International Association of Machinists District 751, said in a union statement. "We are fighting for everyone, from our family members to the flying public." Along with better wages, these workers are fighting for improved quality and safety measures, winning back retirement benefits and the end to mandatory overtime.

Workers march through the big Boe-

ing plant in Everett every Wednesday to gather support and draw attention to the union's demands.

Like the other two unions, the postal workers are fighting for significant wage increases after years of soaring prices have lowered the value of their paychecks. Other issues include stronger safety rights, an end to a divisive two-tier wage system, better work hour guarantees and rights for part-time workers. These are issues that affect millions of working people.

"We are negotiating against a backdrop of both high inflation, with its profound negative impact on workers and our families, along with rising worker militancy throughout the country," Mark Dimondstein, president of the American Postal Workers Union, said at the opening of negotiations.

Other national labor negotiations going on today involve 8,000 workers at the airline caterer Gate Gourmet, and thousands of flight attendants who've gone years without a new contract.

The *Militant* urges its readers to follow these negotiations and help build support for these workers.



Washington State Standard/Grace Deng
Thousands of Boeing Machinists met in ballpark July 17, voted 99% to authorize a strike if they don't win improved contract before Sept. 12.

US rulers push to reestablish stability in their two-party setup

Continued from front page
The GOP as a party for workers. It's dedicated "To the Forgotten Men and Women of America," and aims to reverse the "crushing tax" of inflation "and build a brighter future for American workers and their families."

Just a few days later, President Joseph Biden was bludgeoned into withdrawing as the Democratic presidential candidate, tossing his support and campaign bank account to Vice President Kamala Harris. Leaders from the overwhelming majority of the clashing wings in the party — from Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez on the socialist left to Nancy Pelosi and party old-guard leaders like Bill and Hillary Clinton — spoke out to support her. By July 23 Harris said she had the support of the majority of delegates to the party's national convention next month, and took off on the road campaigning.

For well over a century, the U.S. imperialists have governed through these two parties, asking workers to choose which is the "lesser evil." But they had become increasingly faction ridden and less effective. The rulers need them to be stable and confident to defend capitalist rule and deal with rivals abroad.

In recent years Washington has faced rising competition and military threats from Beijing seeking to expand its sway in the Pacific. Since Moscow's invasion of Ukraine and the Tehran-backed Hamas pogrom Oct. 7 that killed 1,200 people in Israel, most of them Jews, the challenges the U.S. rulers face have intensified.

Built into this unstable world is the explosive consequences of record-high government debt, pressing the bosses and government officials to increase pressure on workers to sacrifice. This has sharpened class inequalities worldwide and led to anti-gov-



Militant/Mary Martin
Nurse Layla Bashir, left, speaks with Rachele Fruit, SWP candidate for president, signed to put her on Minnesota ballot July 22. Democrats and Republicans have no serious answers to social crisis working people face, while SWP campaign program gets a real response.

ernment protests, from Bangladesh to Kenya, and strike battles across North America and elsewhere.

Irrespective of who wins the election, the U.S. capitalists seek some political stability to better defend their class interests in this volatile world. Former Republican Vice President Michael Pence came forward July 22 to thank Biden for stepping down. Pence's comments reflect the consciousness of a growing number of political figures of the need for more stability. Pence said, "Now is a time for leaders in both parties to ... send a message of strength and resolve to America's friends and enemies alike."

The cornerstone of the Democrats' reelection campaign — the demonization of Trump and his supporters as a "threat to democracy" — is still front and center. Harris says the 2024 election

is now a race between a former California prosecutor and a felon.

But this approach gets less and less traction, especially among workers. Tens of millions oppose the Democrats' assault on constitutional freedoms. Their court cases against Trump, intended to imprison their main rival or damage him irreparably, are increasingly stalled indefinitely or coming apart.

Over the last couple of years the most significant development for working people has been the growing numbers organizing and using unions to resist the bosses' efforts to dump the capitalist crisis on our backs. The employers have launched attacks on our wages, work schedules and conditions, alongside the lack of child care, health care and affordable housing. Strikers are walking picket lines and winning solidarity. This uptick in union struggles has also spurred growing receptivity to the Socialist Workers Party campaign.

Republicans: We're 'workers party'

For the first time in several decades a union leader addressed the Republican convention, invited by Trump. Sean O'Brien, general president of the Teamsters, told delegates the former president was "one tough S.O.B.," pointing to how he raised his fist in the air and asked supporters to "fight" after the attempt to assassinate him at his rally in Pennsylvania.

"I'm here today because I refuse to

do the same things my predecessors did," O'Brien told cheering delegates. For decades top union officials have subordinated labor's interests to getting Democrats elected. O'Brien didn't endorse Trump, but he saw the Republicans as potential allies.

Trump's vice presidential pick, James David Vance, who likes to be called J.D., grew up in Middletown, Ohio, and in Kentucky. He built a career in bourgeois politics by writing about his rise out of the working class, his family's difficulties and depicting the people he grew up with as hopeless in his autobiography, *Hillbilly Elegy*.

He joined the Marines and went to Ohio State and Yale Law School. "Biden's inflation crisis," Vance said, "is really an affordability crisis." He described people he grew up with who can't afford groceries, or to pay the rent and sustain families. "We're done, ladies and gentlemen, catering to Wall Street. We'll commit to the working man."

Before becoming a senator, Vance was a venture capitalist.

Like Trump, Vance seeks working-class support by pitting the interests of native-born against foreign-born workers, scapegoating immigrants for the problems of capitalist rule. The 2024 GOP platform calls for the "largest deportation program in American history."

Like others at the convention, Vance had earlier been a critic of Trump. But his selection on Trump's ticket and agreement to serve is a further attempt to put forward an image of the Republican Party as a champion of the working class.

During the convention, Vance's office touted his initiatives in response to the Norfolk Southern derailment and toxic chemical fire that devastated the lives of working people in East Palestine, Ohio, last year. "Senator Vance will never stop fighting for the people of East Palestine," his office said.

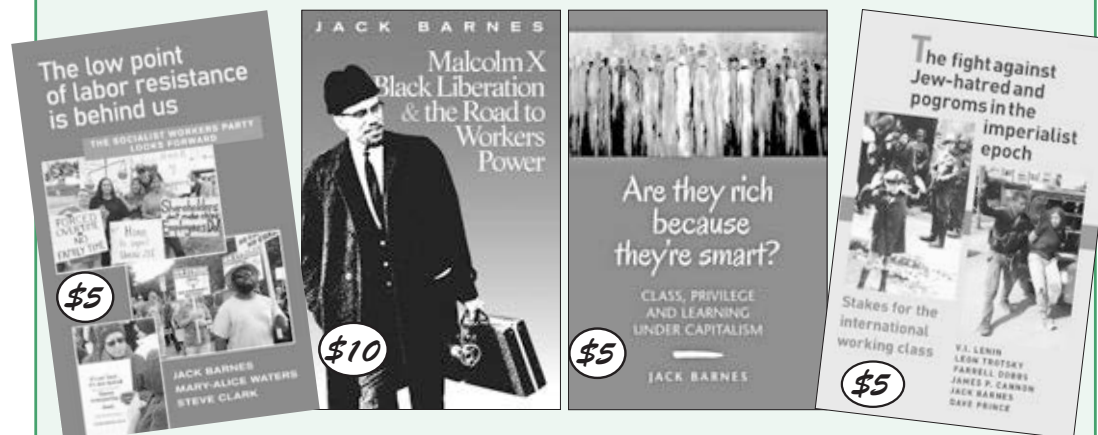
These moves by the bosses' two main parties will give the U.S. rulers more stable political instruments.

But the depth of the crisis of capitalism and the continuing resistance by working people create more opportunities for the SWP's presidential campaign to get a hearing and win support. Workers need to organize independently of the bosses in the political arena and to break with the bosses' parties and chart a course to replace capitalist rule with a government of our own.



AP/Paul Sancya
Presidential candidate Donald Trump with vice presidential running mate J.D. Vance at Republican National Convention, July 15. Trump's two sons, Donald Jr., left, and Eric, with Eric's wife Lara, are behind them. Trump united party to appeal to "forgotten" working people.

Special: books half price with Militant subscription



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Militant/Betsy Stone
After decades of bosses' attacks and retreat by labor movement, mood to fight and wider solidarity is spreading among working people. Flight attendants at San Francisco airport cheered Feb. 13 as fellow workers at Alaska Airlines voted to strike. Unionists from International Association of Machinists, Teamsters at airport joined picket in solidarity.

1934 Minneapolis Teamsters strikes: Lessons for workers today

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

July marks the 90th anniversary of the 1934 Teamsters strikes in Minneapolis that won union recognition for General Drivers Local 574 and paved the way for successful union battles throughout that city and region. The lessons of this fight, led by class-struggle militants and communist workers, are as relevant today as they were then.

That strike was a continuation of earlier fights by rank-and-file workers that year, including a disciplined and successful battle in the streets with cops and company goons in May. It was one of three titanic labor victories in the summer of 1934. The others were by striking auto parts workers in Toledo, Ohio, and West Coast longshoremen, who waged a three-month strike to win union recognition.

Together they marked a sharp break from years without labor battles following the 1929 stock market crash and ensuing capitalist economic crisis, transforming what workers nationwide believed they could accomplish. They paved the way for forging the Congress of Industrial Organizations a few years after, which organized hundreds of thousands of workers who won union recognition and made advances in class-struggle battles with the bosses in the mines, auto, steel, packinghouses, oil and other basic industries.

Teamsters Local 574 was strengthened through forging a broad leadership team that drew the rank and file into responsibility for the actions of the union. The workers reached out and won support from the unemployed, who were organized as an auxiliary section of the union, known as the Federal Workers Section. They had full support of the union in their fight for jobs and decent working conditions, and they joined the Teamsters on the picket lines in their battles with the bosses.

The union also reached out and won support from other workers in the city, as well as farmers, women and owner-operator truck drivers. In an act of solidarity, when Local 574 went on strike they leased a parking lot so market gardeners, working farmers who sold their produce to small grocers, could continue working. The local also launched a women's auxiliary that organized a commissary and staffed the strike hospital that treated wounded pickets. The auxiliary also organized trips around the region, speaking to win support for the strike.



Teamsters Local 574 leader announces May 1934 Minneapolis truck drivers strike has ended in victory. After bosses reneged on the contract, workers struck again in mid-July and won.

To refute lies by the bosses and point a road forward for the union and the working class as a whole, Teamsters Local 574 published an official union paper, the *Organizer*, which appeared daily in mid-July for the duration of the monthlong strike.

The union continued to publish the paper, subsequently known as the *Northwest Organizer*, throughout

the 1930s. It took up broader social and political issues facing the working class — demanding the Franklin Roosevelt administration grant refuge for Jews fleeing Nazi persecution, fighting FBI frame-ups of unionists, opposing Washington's preparations for the second imperialist World War and posing the need for independent working-class political action.

Farrell Dobbs: For a party of labor based on the unions

Below is an excerpt from the Afterword to Teamster Bureaucracy by Farrell Dobbs. It takes up why workers need to form our own party, a party of labor. Copyright © 2018 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

Whenever conflicts of significant magnitude erupt within industry today, the government intervenes on the employers' side; and this interference is bound to intensify as capitalist decay gets worse. From this it follows that trade union action alone will prove less and less capable of resolving the workers' problems, even on a limited basis. Objectively, industrial conflicts will assume more and more a political character, and even the most powerfully organized workers will be faced with an increasingly urgent need to act on the new and higher plane of politics.

Therefore, efforts to build an effective left wing in the trade unions will run

into insurmountable obstacles unless the workers move toward resolving the problem of political action. A vigorous campaign must be conducted to break the labor movement from subordination to capitalist politics and to launch an independent labor political organization. This campaign will have to focus initially on educational propaganda for a change in labor's political course, but it should not be conducted in an abstract, routine manner. Ample opportunity will be found to concretize the propaganda by drawing the lessons of setbacks caused by the misuse of labor's inherent political strength. This can lay the basis for an advance, as soon as it becomes realistic, to an agitational campaign designed to convince the ranks of the urgency of forming a labor party.

In the process of creating their own mass party, based upon and controlled by the trade unions, the organized workers can draw unorganized, unemployed,

The local also set an example by initiating a 600-member Union Defense Guard, formed by volunteers from the Teamsters and other unions in Minneapolis and St. Paul, that successfully drove the employer-funded fascist group Silver Shirts out of the area in 1938. The bosses had brought the thugs to town that year aiming to unleash them to bust the unions and promote Jew-hatred.

The victories won by the Teamsters in Minneapolis led to an 11-state over-the-road campaign that brought tens of thousands of truckers into the union. These efforts helped make the Teamsters one of the main industrial unions in the U.S., which it remains today.

The story of the Teamster battles in the 1930s and the class-struggle leadership forged in Minneapolis is told by Farrell Dobbs in a four-volume set of books (see ad below). They are an invaluable source of inspiration for use by class-struggle minded workers today.

Dobbs emerged from the ranks to become a leader of the 1934 Teamster strikes and director of the over-the-road campaign. He became a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, serving as its national secretary from 1953 to 1972, and as the party's candidate for president in 1948, 1952, 1956 and 1960.

and undocumented sections of their class into a broad political alliance. Labor will then be in a position to act both in a more unified manner and through advanced forms of struggle.

The workers will learn to generalize their needs, as a class, and to address their demands on a political basis to the capitalists, as a class. Political confrontation of that kind — for example, the nationalization of a given industry under workers' control — will raise labor action as a whole to a higher plane and at the same time impart new vigor to the continuing trade union struggles. Increased militancy within industry will serve, in turn, to reinforce activity in the political sphere. In that way interacting processes will develop through which the workers will attain greater class consciousness, more complete solidarity, and, hence, mounting ability to outfight the bosses.

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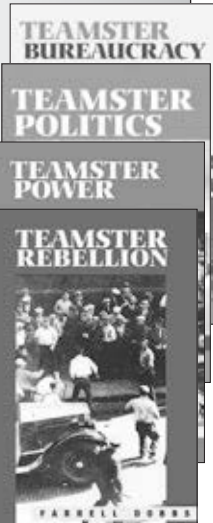
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Lessons of 1930s Teamster battles

4 books by Farrell Dobbs

"The principal lesson of the Teamster experience is not that under an adverse relationship of forces, the workers can be overcome, but that with proper leadership, they can overcome."

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For a fighting program for labor!

Years of soaring prices at the grocery stores and gas stations, and for rent, health care, child care and more are felt in sharply different ways by working people and the ruling capitalist families. They're upending our lives, dealing blows to our ability to keep a roof over our heads, start families, stay healthy and provide care for the elderly.

Under these conditions, it's no surprise that both life expectancy and birthrates are falling. The normal workings of the dog-eat-dog capitalist system breeds a deep social and moral crisis marked by the rulers' utter disregard for workers' lives.

To change this and win what workers need starts with today's union struggles. Working people are more willing to fight. More than 30,000 members of the International Association of Machinists at Boeing will strike if they don't get a better contract this fall, as will some 45,000 members of the International Longshoremen's Association on East and Gulf port docks. Beginning July 30, some 8,000 airline catering workers at Gate Gourmet are released from anti-union government red tape that has blocked them from striking.

Spread the word and build support for their struggles! Solidarity brings workers together, strengthens the unions and is essential in winning gains that can benefit all workers.

Both Democratic and Republican candidates say "trust us," we've got a plan to rebuild "the economy." But the capitalist economy is built so that the wealthy rulers profit at workers' expense. The labor movement needs to break from the bosses' parties and adopt a fighting program to meet the needs of the vast majority.

Socialist Workers Party candidates call for a union-led fight for:

Cost-of-living adjustments to counter rising prices

in all contracts — union and non-union alike — as well as in retirement, jobless and disability payments.

A federally funded public works program to provide jobs for millions at union-scale wages to build hospitals, housing, day care and badly needed infrastructure.

An income that's sufficient for all families of working people so we can keep a job, as the labor movement fights for universal child care and health care.

A shorter workweek with no cut in take-home pay to prevent layoffs.

Contrary to the myths presented by the bosses and their bought-and-paid-for Democratic and Republican politicians, higher pay doesn't lead to inflation.

All wealth comes from one place — the labor of the working class. Rising wages simply mean a greater share of the wealth we produce goes to the working class instead of into the bosses' profits.

All workers' struggles are political struggles. The capitalist government, with all its anti-labor regulations and bloated agencies that exist to enforce them, is set up to interfere with our unions and prevent workers from effectively using union power.

Workers need to break with the capitalist parties and build our own party, a party that can defend the interests of all those oppressed and exploited by capital. Such a party, a party of labor, would draw working people everywhere into today's union battles, deepening our consciousness as a class. It would chart a course to lead the working class in its tens of millions to take political power from the capitalists into our own hands.

This is the program advanced by Rachele Fruit, Dennis Richter and the whole Socialist Workers Party 2024 campaign.

Democrats plan move on Supreme Court justices

Continued from front page

in their way. And Biden wants to impose an "ethics code" on the justices to be enforced by the legislative branch of government.

These measures would deal blows to the Constitution's separation of powers between the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government.

Democratic socialist Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez announced July 10 she was filing impeachment charges against Supreme Court Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito, claiming their rulings are "threatening American democracy." Her charges, like Biden's proposals, aren't likely to get through the Republican-controlled House of Representatives.

Both moves come after the Supreme Court ruled in March that state courts don't have the power to throw presidential candidates off the federal ballot. The high court ruling ended moves to exclude Trump in several states.

In June the court ruled that Trump has immunity from prosecution for his official acts as president, setting back one of the cases cooked up against him by Justice Department special counsel Jack Smith. As a result of that ruling, Judge Juan Merchan delayed sentencing Trump in a separate case, his frame-up conviction on charges of falsifying business records in New York.

Biden condemned the Supreme Court's ruling on presidential immunity, stating, "No one, no one is above the law, not even the president of the United States." But in fact, the court's decision upheld the Constitution's protection of powers granted to the president. The immunity ruling aims to prevent political opponents orchestrating prosecutions for acts carried out by the president that are part of his duties. It didn't give Trump or any other president blanket immunity.

The high court also threw out an obstruction charge against a Jan. 6 defendant, Joseph Fischer, under the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, the same law Trump is charged with violating in other cases being prosecuted by Smith. The act is an anti-business-fraud statute that has nothing to do with the actions Fischer or Trump are accused of. This ruling further enraged liberals.

The Democrats' legal attacks on their political op-

ponent — and the Republicans' threat of retribution — weaken constitutional freedoms won and used by working people over centuries. The Constitution offers protection from interference by the government, its political police and its multitude of agencies against rights to free speech, political activity, the right to bear arms and freedom of worship. It codifies the right to a trial by a jury of your peers.

The capitalist class often moves to restrict these freedoms, especially when working-class struggles are on the rise or when the U.S. rulers are preparing to go to war. Workers and the oppressed seek ways to defend and extend these freedoms.

Court weakens agencies' powers

Liberals were furious when the Supreme Court June 28 overturned its 1984 Chevron ruling that required judges defer to government regulators to interpret ambiguous laws, even if judges disagreed with what these officials said. The massive proliferation of regulatory agencies in recent decades — part and parcel of the capitalist rulers' state machinery — has given unelected agency bosses more powers to administer the lives of working people. They rule for the benefit of the politicians in the White House who appointed them.

"Chevron prevents the Judiciary from serving as a constitutional check on the Executive," wrote Justice Clarence Thomas in a concurring opinion, and "permits the Executive Branch to exercise powers not given to it."

In a dissenting opinion, Justice Elena Kagan defended Chevron. Statutes are left vague because government regulators know better than the courts how to interpret them, she wrote, because "agencies have expertise."

Writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, Kimberley Strassel noted that liberal lawmakers "purposely leave statutes extremely vague because they know that most of the regulators in Washington, D.C., believe in bigger, tougher rules. And while they might not be able to pass them through Congress, if they just leave holes in the legislation, those bureaucrats will ... come up with the most expansive role possible."

The fight to defend constitutional freedoms is a key issue in the class struggle today.

Death-row inmate fights to prove he's not guilty



Ruben Gutierrez on death row in Huntsville, Texas. His execution was halted 20 minutes before he was to be killed July 16. He says DNA test will show he's innocent.

BY JANET POST

The U.S. Supreme Court halted the execution of death-row inmate Ruben Gutierrez July 16, just 20 minutes before he would have been put to death at the Huntsville, Texas, state penitentiary.

When he got the news, Gutierrez "turned to the back of his cell, covered his mouth. He was tearing up, speechless. He was shocked," The Associated Press quoted a prison spokesperson as saying, he "then prayed with a prison chaplain."

For more than a decade Gutierrez has been fighting for DNA testing of evidence he says would prove he should never have been convicted.

A laborer and forklift operator, Gutierrez, now 47, was sentenced to death in 1999 for the killing of 85-year-old Escolastica Harrison at a mobile home park she managed. A former teacher who "distrusted banks," she kept \$600,000 cash in her trailer, where she was killed, according to court records.

Harrison lived with her nephew, Avel Cuellar, who knew Gutierrez and was a suspect but never charged. He has since died. Gutierrez and two others, Rene Garcia and Pedro Gracia, were arrested for the murder. One pled guilty and is serving a life sentence, while the other was released on bond and went into hiding.

Gutierrez initially confessed while being threatened by local authorities. They said they would arrest his wife and take away his children.

But since then, Gutierrez has insisted that he didn't kill Harrison and was never inside her trailer. No physical evidence was presented against Gutierrez at his trial. He says he is innocent.

In response to Gutierrez's appeal to the Supreme Court, the state's attorney general and Cameron County district attorney said the requests for DNA testing had been denied because state law does not allow for testing to escape the death penalty after a conviction.

Shawn Nolan, an attorney representing Gutierrez, challenged the Texas DNA law in 2019, explaining an inmate was in an impossible situation. While one statute permits an individual to file an appeal arguing that he should not have received a death sentence, Nolan said, "the other statute says you can only get DNA testing if you can prove you are innocent. Well, how do you prove you're innocent before you get the testing?"

The family and supporters of another Texas death-row prisoner, Rodney Reed, have also been fighting for DNA testing of evidence in his case. In 2023 the Supreme Court ruled that Reed's case could proceed and the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals is scheduled to hear oral arguments Aug. 6.

This is the second time Gutierrez has had his life spared while in the death chamber. In 2020 he was 60 minutes away from execution when the Supreme Court issued a stay to hear his and other prisoners' arguments to be allowed to have their spiritual advisors at their side during their executions. The court ruled two years later death row inmates had that right.

"These fights by death-row prisoners for their rights help expose the brutality of the so-called U.S. justice system," Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Texas, told the *Militant*. "The death penalty is a weapon of terror the capitalist ruling class wants to have at its disposal to intimidate the working class and vanguard fighters in the years ahead as class-struggle resistance grows."