

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Democrats attack Trump, deal blows to constitutional freedoms
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 88/NO. 35 SEPTEMBER 23, 2024

Anniversary of Oct. 7 pogrom: Fight against Jew-hatred key

BY SETH GALINSKY

The one-year anniversary of Hamas' Oct. 7 pogrom in Israel — the largest massacre of Jews since the Holocaust — is less than a month away. It's a stark reminder of the deadly character of Nazi-like Jew-hatred in the imperialist epoch and the central importance for workers and our unions of combating it.

Tehran-backed Hamas thugs slaughtered 1,200 people, two-thirds of them civilians, wounded thousands and took 251 hostages. Dozens of women were raped, often their bodies mutilated. Of the 101 hostages still held captive in Gaza, Israeli officials believe at least 33 are dead.

As part of its systematic goal of degrading and dehumanizing Jews, Hamas thugs filmed their atrocities and posted the recordings. They also hijacked victims' social media accounts to livestream parts of the pogrom, horrifying victims' friends, relatives and others.

Hamas also killed two dozen Arab citizens of Israel and almost 70 immigrant workers from Thailand, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Africa, China and Cambodia. In the eyes of Hamas, anyone who works with Jews or believes that Jews and Arabs can

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Endorse the Socialist Workers Party 2024 campaign

'Working class needs to take political power'



Rachele Fruit, SWP presidential candidate, is interviewed by Fox News at Sept. 7 New York Labor Day march. She spoke with workers there, at Harlem Book Fair and at a public meeting.

Rachele Fruit: 'We need to build a party of labor'

BY SARA LOBMAN

NEW YORK — "The fight over which class rules is the central question facing working people everywhere in the world," Rachele Fruit told the 48 people at a public meeting here Sept. 8. "The U.S. working class

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Richter: 'Our struggles begin with solidarity'

BY SAMIR HAZBOUN

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, Md. — "The fight to defend our class starts with building solidarity," Dennis Richter, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. vice president, told striking Teamster member Jacinta Gamble

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Union battles today deserve support from all workers

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

Tens of thousands of dockworkers, postal workers and machinists are fighting for union contracts that include wage increases to keep up with inflation, livable work schedules and safety on the job. In many cases they are up against not only the bosses, but anti-labor laws passed by Democrats and Republicans alike that bar strikes by "essential workers" or tie them up in piles of red tape.

These workers join the thousands of hotel workers and 17,000 AT&T workers across the Southeast striking over issues of vital interest to all working people.

The 45,000 dockworkers, members of the International Longshoremen's Association who work at ports from Maine to Texas, are organizing to hit the streets Oct. 1. No negotiations have been held between the union and the United States Maritime Alliance, the bosses' association, since June 10.

Nearly 300 ILA union officials met in North Bergen, New Jersey, Sept. 4-5, a meeting that ended with unanimous support and concrete plans for a strike. The main issues are a healthy wage increase — ocean carriers made hundreds of billions in profits during the COVID pandemic — and protection from job losses from automation.

While Harold Daggett, president of

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So-called 'American dream' is more like a nightmare for workers today



Picket by BorgWarner workers as first strike in 30 years began Sept. 9 at auto parts plant in Lansing, New York. Over 700 Teamster unionists are fighting for better wages, health care.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The economic and social crisis facing the working class today is reflected in articles in the capitalist press acknowledging that what they call the "American dream" — a steady job, home own-

ership, a family and comfortable retirement — is increasingly out of reach.

Over the past 12 years, those saying the "American dream" still holds true has dropped precipitously from more

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Rail workers in US take on unsafe conditions, anti-family schedules

BY JOE SWANSON

LINCOLN, Neb. — Under the notorious anti-union Railway Labor Act, when rail union contracts near expiration, workers are barred from taking strike action and face years of federal

National Mediation Board-controlled negotiations, reviews by Presidential Emergency Boards, various "cooling off" periods and other government interference.

Industry-wide negotiations are now underway again, less than two years after President Joseph Biden and a bipartisan Congress imposed a contract on rail workers in December 2022, after the majority of the 115,000 workers had voted to strike.

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Join fight against Florida prison ban on the 'Militant'

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Letters keep going to the Florida Department of Corrections Literature Review Committee urging it to overturn the ban imposed by Jackson Correctional Institution authorities in Malone on *Militant* issue no. 17 at the end of April.

This impoundment violates prisoners' basic constitutional rights to read newspapers and political literature of their choice, and freedom of the press, the right of the *Militant* and other publications to reach their subscribers behind

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Canadian gov't continues assault on rights, trucker convoy leaders

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL — Lawyers representing Tamara Lich and Chris Barber, two of the main spokespeople in the 2022 truckers' Freedom Convoy, delivered closing arguments in an Ottawa courtroom Aug. 23. Lich and Barber's trial began last September. Their arguments centered on defense of the right to free speech and to protest.

Lich, a former leader of the Alberta-based Maverick Party, and Barber, the owner of a small trucking company in Saskatchewan, are accused of mischief, intimidation and counseling others to break the law, charges that could mean 10 years in prison. Prosecutors charged them as "co-conspirators."

They were arrested Feb. 17, 2022, two days before the Canadian government sent 3,000 heavily armed cops into downtown Ottawa to break up the three-week camp-in thousands of truckers and their supporters had set up in the capital around Parliament Hill. They were demanding the Liberal government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau end COVID vaccine restrictions that threatened their jobs.

The cop mobilization, one of the largest in Canadian history, was carried out under the draconian Emergencies Act, invoked by Trudeau Feb. 14 on the pretext that the protest was a threat to public order and "national security." Over 200 participants were arrested.

Last January a federal judge ruled that Ottawa's use of the Emergencies Act against the truckers was illegal and unconstitutional, saying it violated democratic freedoms guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of

Rights and Freedoms.

The government's lawyers seek to "criminalize the words and actions" of Lich and Barber, defense lawyer Lawrence Greenspon said, when they had in fact consistently urged peaceful behavior and cooperation with the police.

The prosecution claims Lich's call for participants to "hold the line" as the police prepared for their assault encouraged the truckers to defy police orders to leave. But she was arrested two days before the police action, Greenspon said, when "there was no such line. Lich's rallying call was simply encouragement for protesters "not to give up."

Later this month government lawyers will present their final arguments. Justice Heather Perkins-McVey then has up to six months to rule.

Other frame-up trials underway

Prosecutors summoned Pat King, another prominent Freedom Convoy participant, to Ottawa from his Alberta home where he has been under house arrest for over two years. He surrendered and was imprisoned in Ottawa July 31, charged with violating his bail conditions by posting information about the case on social media.

He was again released on bail Aug. 9, but slapped with a gag order barring him from use of social media "in all forms." An outrageous court order says no one else is allowed to post on social media on his behalf. King cannot participate in public protests nor communicate with Lich, Barber or other convoy leaders.

Bail conditions for King, Lich, Barber and many other convoy participants fac-



Reuters/Blair Gable

Police pepper spray protesting truckers in Freedom Convoy, Ottawa, Feb. 19, 2022. Despite court ruling use of Emergencies Acts was illegal, assault on convoy spokespeople continues.

ing charges have been extraordinarily restrictive, designed to shut them up, break their fighting spirit and as a warning to anyone else inclined to publicly protest government policies.

King's trial on numerous criminal charges similar to those lodged against Lich and Barber concluded at the end of July. A verdict in his case is expected on Oct. 4.

In another Freedom Convoy case, government prosecutors were forced to drop charges Aug. 2 against Benjamin Spicer after Justice Timothy Lipson ruled that his arrest Feb. 19, 2022, during the police assault was unlawful.

"There is no evidence that Mr. Spicer did anything in violation of any law that warranted him being detained

on the ground and being subjected to physical force," Lipson wrote. "I found that there were multiple breaches of Mr. Spicer's Charter rights, and each breach is in my view serious."

"Frame-ups and 'conspiracy' charges that criminalize the spoken and written word have long been used by Canada's capitalist rulers to railroad working-class fighters and union activists to prison," Katy LeRougetel, the Communist League candidate in the Sept. 16 federal by-election in Montreal, told the *Militant*. "The unions and all defenders of democratic freedoms should demand the end of the Freedom Convoy trials and the dropping of all charges against convoy participants."

UK gov't admits 'dishonesty,' 'greed' made Grenfell Tower a 'death trap'

BY PAMELA HOLMES

LONDON — The 24-story Grenfell Tower apartment building in west London — with broken fire alarms and no sprinkler system — was wrapped in highly flammable cladding, which went up in a fast-spreading blaze in 2017, leaving 72 people dead and 70 others injured. It was the worst fire disaster in the U.K. since World War II. The government finally published the results of its inquiry into the fire Sept. 4.

The report admits the causes, including "systematic dishonesty" and "greed," turned the tower into a "death trap." Prime Minister Keir Starmer issued an apology on behalf of the British state.

Following the inferno, residents continued to campaign for the prosecution of those responsible. At a protest in 2021 placards highlighted the mountains of evidence about the responsibility of suc-

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THE MILITANT

Nurses strikes spread across Iran

Thousands of nurses have struck in 40 cities across Iran over low wages, high patient loads and chronic shortages of medicine and other basic supplies. Along with other ongoing labor battles, these workers have rejected Tehran's demand that they sacrifice to support Hamas.



Coordinating Council of Nurses' Protests
Hundreds of nurses, supporters protest at Isfahan University's hospital in Iran Aug. 31.

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Rail conditions, schedules

Continued from front page

The railroad freight industry press reports that three of the six Class 1 railroads — BNSF, CSX, and Norfolk Southern — have reached tentative agreements with as many as nine of the unions that organize their workers. The tentative agreements come four months before collective bargaining can begin under the Railway Labor Act.

The unions announcing tentative agreements include three of the largest on the railroads — SMART-TD conductors and yardmasters, members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way track workers and the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen/TCU. These deals have yet to be voted on by the memberships.

One significant difference between these negotiations and those from 2019-22 is that then all the rail unions agreed to negotiate collectively. They organized public rallies and marches to get broader support, and all 12 pledged that if any one union goes on strike, they all go out.

Today, each union is bargaining separately. Notably without any agreements reached so far is the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, with about 23,000 working locomotive engineers and some conductors. Some BLET leaders have criticized the tentative contract agreements, saying they

will not serve as a so-called pattern for what they will accept.

The tentative pact agreed to by the officials of the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen and Transportation Communications International Union contains a 17.5% wage increase over a five-year agreement (3.5% per year), along with some improvements in vacations and health insurance.

But they don't guarantee more humane work schedules with time off for workers to spend with their families — one of the most important questions facing all rail workers — or cost-of-living escalator clauses to relieve the corrosive effects of rising prices, or agreements for much needed increased training time for new hires, much less hiring more workers to run and inspect the trains and the tracks.

These were some of the reasons rail workers rejected the 2022 contract and set a strike deadline in which all 12 rail unions had pledged to participate.

Need for a change

Rail workers face increasingly dangerous working conditions today. Union Pacific conductor Austin Scott Raysby, 34, was struck and killed by a Metra/UP train in Kenosha, Wisconsin, Sept. 4. In July another Union Pacific conductor was killed near Chicago after completing his short training program.

"Working conditions on the railroads today make for an unforgiving life," Lance Anton, a Lincoln conductor and SMART-TD union member with some 12 years' experience, told the *Militant*. "Rail workers have to deal with working 12-hour shifts or longer, at times in difficult weather, and dealing with continuous harassment and speedup."

A look at how the rail bosses have slashed the workforce points to the depth of the problem. In 1973 there were 587,000 rail workers, 83% of whom were in unions. Today there are only 199,000 rail workers, with only 54% in unions. Over the past decade, profits for the rail bosses have risen while the real value of workers' wages fell 30%.

"Rail bosses need to be forced by the unions to provide more training before



Militant

Members of Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way protest in 2022 in Nebraska. Rail workers look to continue fight for bigger crews, livable work schedules, more training for new hires.

new hires are set up to be conductors," Anton said. "It takes two to three years' experience for conductors and engineers to work safely and with confidence, to learn the company rules, the yard and road terrains, to spot cars at industry sidings, where other crews are working and many derailments happen."

The Union Pacific and BNSF bosses reported to the Federal Railroad Administration that they had a total of 1,936 "human factor-caused accidents from 2020 to 2024." That figure — likely a substantial undercount — reflects the result of the bosses' drive for profits.

No rail worker needs to die on the job! "The life-and-death issue of safety is not a bargainable question," Rachele Fruit, who has talked to rail workers across the country as Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president,

told the *Militant*.

"Workers' determination to fight is on the rise today. Rail workers see the resistance being mounted by truckers, autoworkers, nurses and many others. They set an example of how all workers are part of a great class, the working class, with the power to use their unions to fight for workers control over their work conditions."

The fact is laws like the Railway Labor Act are just a piece of paper. It is the class struggle and relationship of class forces that decides if anti-union government moves can be enforced.

Rail workers need a crew of four on every train, two on the locomotive and two in the rear, and trains no longer than 50 cars.

Naomi Craine, a SMART-TD conductor, contributed to this article.

Canadian rail workers fight back against gov't back-to-work order

BY NED DMYTRYSHYN

PORT MOODY, British Columbia — A rally and picnic was held at Rocky Point Park here Sept. 6 by rail workers fighting against Canadian government intervention ending their strike at the Canadian National and Canadian

Pacific Kansas City railroads. They're fighting against dangerous working conditions that threaten workers and those who live by the tracks.

"Working on the railway is arduous. Ten-hour days with no overtime pay. No defined lunch break — we eat as we go. A large portion of what the company considers to be our days off are spent away from our families and without pay," Dustin Saunders, an engineer at Canadian National and the local chair of the engineers' division of Teamsters Canada Rail Conference Division 945. "This isn't what CN or CPKC are asking for in their contract offers. This is what they already have. They are trying to take even more from us.

"The rail barons do not accept fatigue as being a safety issue," he said. "Fatigue to them is a behavior issue. If the worker is tired, it is the worker's fault.

"But safety is nonnegotiable. We already have grueling on-call schedules and each of us has a full understanding of the reality of fatigue-related accidents and mishaps," Saunders said. "We will not allow the companies to value profits over people."

The union is challenging the government's order stopping their strike and imposing binding arbitration.

Greetings were brought by Sussanne Skidmore, president of the B.C. Federation of Labour, and Janet Andrews, secretary-treasurer of the New Westminster and District Labour Council.

Teamster Politics



"Unionism and politics cannot be separated. Power generated at the trade-union level can be shattered by government blows. Workers must enter the political arena

as an independent class force, with their own party."

— Farrell Dobbs

pathfinderpress.com

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



September 27, 1999

Working people around the world should oppose the imperialist intervention under way in East Timor. Its aim is to advance imperialist domination in the region and has nothing to do with helping the people of East Timor to free themselves. The workers, peasants and youth of East Timor are not helpless victims who need a UN protectorate for "three or four years" or a few months.

They fought for independence from Portugal in the 1970s to bring to power a pro-independence government. They waged a struggle against Indonesian military occupation for the past 24 years. The mass sentiment for national self-determination was registered in the landslide vote for independence in the Aug. 30 referendum.

This struggle has new potential allies among the workers and peasants inside Indonesia who have begun to take action in their own interests.



September 27, 1974

All supporters of democratic rights and all who struggle for social change welcome the dismissal of charges against Dennis Banks and Russell Means.

The Wounded Knee prosecution was aimed at intimidating others who might stand up for their rights. The government's attempt to destroy the American Indian Movement reckoned without the courage and determination of the defendants and their attorneys. The government also reckoned without the widespread support for the defendants and distrust of the FBI and other prosecution witnesses.

Despite the government's repeated violation of its own laws, the charges against Banks and Means would never have been dropped without the publicity generated by the defense campaign. The victory will give an impetus to the whole Indian movement and to the fight to free all political prisoners in the U.S.



September 26, 1949

Once again the country's 480,000 coal miners have taken the lead in defense of the standard of living and rights of American labor. With the slogan, "No Welfare, No Work!" the miners on Sept. 19 shut down the pits.

The determined fighting action of the United Mine Workers comes at a most crucial moment for America's industrial workers. With the example of the miners before them, the workers in steel, auto, rubber and other basic industries are bound to take heart in their own struggles to win some form of security during illness and old age.

The battle of the UMW to maintain their company-financed pensions at retirement age of 62 and to increase the amount of company contributions, stands in sharp contrast to the failure of their CIO leaders to win any basic social gains for their members by the methods of conciliation and compromise.

'Struggles start with solidarity'

Continued from front page

as they walked the picket line in front of the truck yard at Ecology Services, a recycling and waste-collection company here. Over 70 Teamsters Local 570 members walked out Sept. 4.

Gamble, who is a driver, told Richter that for four years she worked as an over-the-road trucker. "You had to be out for three weeks a month, get a few days at home, and go right back out," she said. "I was trying to make ends meet. I have three kids to raise, but I hardly got to see them. Here, I know every worker on this picket. I have worked with them on the job. I look out for them."

"That's very important," Richter said. "When we are on strike, we see ourselves and each other in a new light. We see that we have common interests, and how fighting together we can change things. We recognize our worth."

"We need to realize all labor battles are political battles as well," he said. "The bosses are driven from their class interests for profits, and their political parties — the Democrats and Republicans — defend those interests. The working class needs and can build our own political party, a party of labor."

Gamble endorsed the SWP presidential ticket, subscribed to the *Militant* and picked up a copy of *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward*.

The company offer is for a 38-cent-an-hour raise each year for four years. "No one wants to be on strike, but we have to pay bills," Tia Davis, a Local 570 business agent, told Richter. "Just look at a supermarket receipt to see why we're out here. Look at a receipt from five years ago and one today and you'll see why we need higher wages."

"I've been campaigning all over the country, wages are a big question everywhere," Richter said. "With rising prices, we have to get higher wages. Millions of workers face this crisis."

Davis introduced the SWP candidate to Mike Caperoon, a truck driver at Ecology Services for 14 years.

"Wages are a big thing we are fighting for, but it's also our conditions. These trucks are run-down, with exposed springs coming out of the seats, and some don't have working seat belts," he told Richter. "Some have no AC, or inadequate AC. That's hard on the drivers, but even harder on the throwers, because between each stop they don't have a cold cab to come into to cool off."

"If you get hurt they put you on 'light duty' and make you stand in the yard all day. They make you miserable so you cave and go back to regular duty," said a woman worker who had been terminated by the company for getting hurt. "All workers are familiar with this. Once you get hurt they start trying to build a case against you to drive you out," Richter said. "That's why a party of labor is necessary. It would fight for workers control over safety and conditions on the job."

The SWP campaign asks workers to support these strikers. Messages of support and contributions can be sent to Teamsters Local 570, 6910 Eastern Ave., Baltimore, MD 21224, earmarked for the Ecology Services strike.

Richter supports fight by Pittsburgh nurses



Militant/Dave Ferguson

PITTSBURGH — Socialist Workers Party vice presidential candidate Dennis Richter discussed the party's campaign with Helen Huber, an operating room nurse at West Penn Hospital, above, at a Sept. 4 rally here called by the Service Employees International Union. Nurses at two Allegheny Health Network hospitals have voted overwhelmingly to go on strike for better pay and more hiring.

"Before we would keep no patients waiting in the ER," Huber told Richter. "We would quickly put them in rooms. Now they're pushed together in the ER waiting room. That is a health problem and a security problem."

Richter described meeting nurses in New Orleans who voted to join the union last year and are now fighting for their first contract. "They're also demanding higher staffing levels," Richter said.

He pledged to build support for the fight at West Penn. Workers need a party of labor, Richter said, to organize all working people into struggle — class against class — in the big cities, small towns and rural areas.

— TONY LANE

Refugees in Australia protest, demand right to visas

BY LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY — Over a hundred refugees and supporters of refugee rights gathered at Dorothy Reserve in Bankstown here Aug. 31, protesting conditions faced by asylum-seekers on long-term bridging visas in Australia. They called on the government to grant them permanent visas.

Three days earlier 23-year-old Mano Yogalingam died in Melbourne after setting himself on fire. He had spent more than a decade on a bridging visa with an uncertain future in Australia.

He was seeking to appeal his claim for refugee status, which had been rejected under the government's so-called Fast Track system.

"Mano was driven to despair," Sowriya Vishnuvarman, a 19-year-old

Tamil refugee from Sri Lanka, told the rally. "He was denied the right to work or access to Medicare."

In 2014 the federal government adopted a new law mandating that all asylum-seekers who arrived by boat between August 2012 and December 2013 without a valid visa have to apply for refugee status through Fast Track.

"The Fast Track system strips away rights, and is rigged against refugees from the start. The rejection rates are staggeringly high," Renuga Inpakumar, a spokesperson for the Tamil Refugee Council, said.

Refugees who are denied Medicare

are unable to access health care, because they can't afford it, she added. "It's a denial of basic human dignity."

Vishnuvarman described her own situation, having lived in Australia since she was a young girl. She graduated from school but can't go onto university because of her visa status. "Australia is our home but we are treated like outsiders," she said.

Chanting "What do we want? Permanent visas!" the crowd marched to the office of federal Minister for Immigration Tony Burke. There is an ongoing 24/7 picket outside his office by the Tamil Refugee Council.

Grenfell Tower fire cause: 'greed'

Continued from page 2

cessive governments and those involved in the management and refurbishment of the block.

"Millions of documents have been uncovered to tell us what we already knew," Karim Mussilhy, a member of Grenfell United, an organization of survivors and relatives of the fire, told protesters.

Seven years on, hundreds of thousands continue to live in dangerous buildings across the U.K. As of July this year, 4,630 buildings above 11 meters (36 feet) had cladding like that at Grenfell. Work to remove the dangerous material has yet to begin on half of them, the government admits.

Over decades, governments ignored safety warnings in pursuit of cost cutting. Legislation in 2020 finally made the installation of sprinkler systems compulsory in new buildings above 11 meters, but there is no requirement to fit them retrospectively, leaving many thousands with no protection from a similar disaster.

According to the inquiry report, Celotex, a company that manufactured the Grenfell fire insulation, "embarked on a dishonest scheme." Another company, Kingspan, sold the flammable material without a relevant fire test and continued to do so for three years after the inferno.

The Crown Prosecution Service said it did not expect to charge anyone in connection with the fire until 2026, if at all.

The failure of all capitalist parties to address the urgent need for safe housing fuels anger among working people. "Workers don't need the fraud of long inquiries and 'better' regulations," Communist League leader Jonathan Silberman told the *Militant*.

"Our unions — working with residents — should demand the immediate installation of sprinklers and other protective measures." Such demands are part of the fight "to bring building construction under workers control," he said, and help advance the political organization of working people.

Socialism and Man in Cuba

by Che Guevara and Fidel Castro

Guevara explains why the revolutionary transformation of social relations necessarily involves the transformation of the working people organizing and leading that process.

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Rachele Fruit for president & Dennis Richter vice president

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‘We need a party of labor’

Continued from front page
is decisive in that fight.”

The meeting and reception was the culmination of a two-day tour here. On Sept. 7 Fruit participated in the New York Labor Day Parade, where she spoke with dozens of workers and was interviewed by a reporter for Fox 5 NY. That afternoon she headed uptown to the Harlem Book Fair where she met people who came by the Pathfinder Books booth.

Throughout the weekend she found workers interested in a working-class campaign that is an alternative to both of the capitalist rulers’ main candidates — Donald Trump and Kamala Harris. And provides an explanation of why working people need to decisively break with the Democratic and Republican parties and build our own party, a party of labor, that we can use to fight in our millions to advance our own class interests. Fruit urged all those she met to endorse the campaign and get involved. More than 15 did, including several who were new to the party.

The world capitalist economic crisis is bringing devastation and war to many millions, she told the meeting, pointing to the watershed developments of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and the Iran-sponsored pogrom by Hamas that killed 1,200 people, most of them Jews living in Israel.

While weakened, the U.S. is “still the most powerful imperialist power, and it seeks to expand its economic, military and political control throughout the world, just like its competitors do. No new world capitalist order is possible that would make the world any safer or more peaceful.

“As conditions of life for the working class deteriorate and wars escalate, millions of workers are being drawn into politics,” she said.

“We put the fight against Jew-hatred as well as the defense of Ukrainian sovereignty at the heart of what we raise with workers everywhere,” she said. My campaign really began on Oct. 10 when I attended a rally against the bloody Hamas pogrom in Israel three days earlier and spoke out against it for the SWP.

“The fight for workers power” is the only road to “open the door to ending the exploitative and oppressive conditions that are the source of the capitalists’ wealth,” Fruit said. “This is a revolutionary perspective. It will take a disciplined movement of millions of working-class people determined to create a new world.”

We call for a party of labor

“We call for a party of labor that is based on the unions but that can orga-

nize the whole working class to fight together,” for jobs for all at wages that are automatically adjusted to cover rising prices, a government-financed public works program to put workers to work at union-scale wages building things workers need, like schools, hospitals, child care and affordable housing.

Most important, such a party could lead “a social movement in a struggle to replace capitalist political power with a workers’ government,” she said. “It could expose and fight against every outrage, every crime the capitalist rulers commit against us.”

“I know many workers agree,” a meeting participant said in the discussion. “But most union officials don’t seem to be heading in that direction — they mostly endorse one of the capitalist parties. How do we change that?”

“Among workers I speak with,” the need to organize a party of labor independent of the bosses and their parties is “enormously popular,” Fruit said. And objectively, “it is what needs to happen.” But real momentum in that direction will only come as workers join in struggles and gain confidence in ourselves as a class. “In every city I go to,” Fruit said, “I’m able to meet and talk with workers, walk picket lines and offer solidarity.”

She described many she has met — hotel workers who struck from Boston to Honolulu over the busy Labor Day weekend; Teamsters at the Molson Coors brewery in Fort Worth, Texas, who fought being forced to work 16-hour shifts; warehouse workers in Montreal; as well as railroad workers and Amazon workers in the United Kingdom who are fighting for a union.

The most critical question people ask her, she said, is how can we be sure we’re capable of taking all this on? Hundreds of thousands of workers in the U.S., Canada and elsewhere have fought for pay you can live on, schedules that allow you to have and raise a family and safe conditions at work, Fruit said. Workers change in the course of these fights. “We begin to see each other in a new light — our humanity and capacity for solidarity. Through these union battles we learn that there are no individual solutions. It is our collective action that counts. This is the beginning of our consciousness as a class.”

“We have a revolutionary history in the United States,” she said. “The historic accomplishments of the working class, fought for in the war for independence from Britain, the Civil War against slavery, the gigantic workers’ upsurge that led to the organization of the industrial unions in the 1930s, and the proletarian social revolution



Militant/Mike Shur

“We call for a party of labor based on the unions,” Rachele Fruit, the SWP candidate for president, told New York meeting Sept. 8, “one that can organize the whole working class.”

that brought down Jim Crow segregation in the South in the 1950s and ’60s prove what the U.S. working class is capable of.

“We point to our continuity. Two mighty revolutions have won power in the imperialist epoch, in Russia in 1917 under the leadership of V.I. Lenin and the Bolshevik Party, and again in Cuba in 1959 under the leadership of Fidel Castro.

“We can do it right here in the U.S.,” she said.

Need to unite the working class

A nurse from the Albany area asked Fruit to address the question of immigrant workers. He said he finds co-workers who are immigrants scared to join the union or go on strike

“We’re for amnesty for all immigrant workers living in the U.S.,” Fruit said. “All workers need the same rights. We’re not ‘American’ workers. We’re workers, of all nationalities, in the U.S.” This is a life-and-death question for the working class. Without fighting along these lines, the working class will be torn apart.

Fruit noted that striking hotel workers in California forced the companies to agree not to use the federal government’s E-verify system to try to catch workers who don’t have the paperwork the rulers say is necessary. “This was because of the strength of the workers.”

She pointed to the example of 55,000 school workers in Canada who struck in 2022 even though the government had passed a law declaring the strike illegal. “Other workers supported them and they ended up winning.”

A home health attendant in the audience explained that in Venezuela she had been a doctor. But even then, “all my friends were workers at the hospital — janitors or elevator operators. In Latin America we have an expression, she said, ‘The union makes us strong.’”

Opening guns of World War III

“It has been over 30 years since the Socialist Workers Party explained the U.S. war against Iraq was the opening guns of World War III,” Fruit said. “Today, millions hear those guns getting louder.”

“Imperialism is not a policy that a government chooses,” Fruit said. “The drive toward war and plunder is inherent to it. It can only be ended by organizing a revolutionary movement of workers and farmers to take state power and overturn capitalist rule.”

“We are not bourgeois pacifists,” Fruit said. “Our program is not for peaceful coexistence. We are for organizing the

working class to fight in our class interests. We are *for* the Ukrainians defeating the Putin regime. We are *for* Israel” — the only government with a stake in defending Jews — “defeating Hamas.”

“And we oppose U.S. troops, bases and armaments anywhere in the world,” she said. We know the U.S. military is *never* used to advance the interests of working people here or abroad. It is *always* used to advance the predatory interests of the U.S. ruling class.

“The governments in Ukraine and in Israel are capitalist governments and they depend on fickle imperialist allies that put their own interests first,” Fruit said. “But if they win the wars they are fighting for their survival, the working class there will have more space to organize, to unite and to reach out to their allies in the working classes of other countries.” Ultimately, she said, “the solution is tied to building a revolutionary working-class party of all nationalities in every country,” Fruit said — including in Israel and Ukraine — “that fights for workers power.”

That’s what the Socialist Workers Party is working to do here, she said. “We invite you to join us.”

In response to an appeal from John Studer, the SWP’s national campaign director, meeting participants gave \$3,634 to help finance the final nine weeks of the campaign.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

The Centrality of the Fight for Immigrant Rights and Amnesty for Undocumented Workers for the Working Class and Our Unions. Speaker: Laura Garza, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from California. Sun., Sept. 22, 5 p.m. Donation: \$5. 2826 S. Vermont Ave., Suite 1. Tel.: (323) 643-4968.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Meet and Hear Dennis Richter, SWP candidate for U.S. Vice President. Sat., Sept. 21. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. Donation: \$10. 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite 16. Tel.: (215) 708-1270.

UNITED KINGDOM

Manchester

Capitalism, the Family and a Working-Class Road to Women’s Emancipation. Speaker: Anne Howie, Communist League. Sat., Sept. 21, 6 p.m. Donation: £3. 329 Royal Exchange Buildings, 3 Old Bank St., M2 7PE. Tel.: 0161-312-8119.



Militant/Mary Martin

During a visit to Harlem Book Fair in New York, Sept. 7, Rachele Fruit spoke with many interested in working-class alternative to the bosses’ parties, the Democrats and Republicans.

Fight against Jew-hatred key

Continued from front page
get along together in the same land is an enemy who must be annihilated.

Farhan al-Qadi, a Bedouin-Arab citizen of Israel, spent 326 days as a Hamas hostage until Israeli troops rescued him. Hamas thugs shot him in the leg when he refused to take them to Jews he knew. Why did he refuse? Because Jews and Arabs in Israel “are one family, one people,” he said. “No one can take this from us.”

Unable to walk, he was forced to go up the stairs in the hospital in Khan Younis on all fours. “Look, here’s our dog walking,” the thugs said. The doctors operated on him without anesthesia. He spent eight months in a tunnel.

“I thought to myself that if this was how I was being treated as a Muslim, how were the Jews being treated?” he told Israel’s Channel 12.

Eden Yerushalmi, one of the six Jewish hostages Hamas murdered last week, weighed only 79 pounds at the time of her death, 22 pounds less than when she was kidnapped.

Hamas’ Nazi legacy

Hamas has nothing to do with fighting against the oppression of the Palestinian people.

Its origins are in the Egypt-based Muslim Brotherhood and the pogromist Amin al-Husseini, the grand mufti of Jerusalem. They allied with the Nazis in Germany during World War II with the aim of extending the Nazis’ “Final Solution” — the elimination of all Jews — across the Middle East.

By scapegoating the Jews for the problems facing the toilers, these forces prevented a working-class movement from developing that could take power out of the hands of the capitalists and semi-feudal landowners.

Anniversary of Zhina Amini death nears amid uptick in protests in Iran

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Iranian government has been arresting opponents, especially in the Kurdish region, hoping to head off demonstrations on the second anniversary of the death of Zhina Amini. The young Kurdish woman died Sept. 16, 2022, after she was arrested in Tehran by the hated “morality” police for allegedly violating the regime’s reactionary dress code.

Amini’s death sparked demonstrations across Iran under the banner of “Women, life, freedom!” More than 500 people were killed and thousands arrested as police and government-organized thugs attacked several months of peaceful protests.

The anniversary will take place amid an uptick in labor protests across Iran, including months of weekly protests by retirees and oil workers and recent strikes by nurses and factory workers. And amid widespread opposition to assaults on Israel and Jews organized by the bourgeois clerical regime’s “axis of resistance.” Protests are planned in more than a dozen U.S. cities and around the world Sept. 15.

Consistent with this, Hamas’ 1988 founding covenant calls for killing the Jews and the destruction of Israel, the one country that provides Jews with a refuge. That remains the goal of Hamas and its enablers and financiers in Tehran.

Since 2007, when Hamas won a bloody war against its main rival, Fatah, the group has broken strikes by teachers and arrested, tortured and killed its political opponents.

Gazan: ‘Save us from Hamas’

One of Hamas’ latest victims was Ziad Abu Haya, who was shown by the Saudi-based Al-Arabiya news network in August asking the world to “save us from Hamas.” Gunmen dragged him naked out of his tent in Khan Younis Sept. 6 and beat and tortured him.

But as Israeli forces continue to make progress in dismantling Hamas command structures in Gaza and the West Bank, more Palestinians are standing up to the reactionary bourgeois group.

Israeli forces have been targeting Hamas command posts placed in schools, mosques and residential buildings. A central part of Hamas’ strategy is to maximize the deaths of Palestinian civilians, then claim them as “martyrs.”

The *New York Times* reported Sept. 10 that at the Abdul Kareem al-Aklouk school in Deir al Balah, leaders of families taking refuge there have been standing up to Hamas and its allied groups, telling them they are not allowed inside if they are armed.

“All the families agreed,” Nasser al-Zaanin told the *Times*. They want to



Soroka Medical Center

Hostage Farhan al-Qadi, a Bedouin citizen of Israel, attended to by a relative and doctor after his rescue by Israeli soldiers. Hamas thugs shot him in the leg when he refused to take them to where Jews were. “Muslims, Jews, Bedouins are together, one family, one people,” he said.

lessen “any potential threat against us because of the existence of police and members of the Hamas government.”

Defeating Hamas is a necessary step to create openings for Jewish, Arab and other working people to come together to defend their class interests against the capitalist rulers in Israel, Gaza and across the region. Only through such action can a road be charted to replace capitalist rule with workers power and end Jew-hatred for all time.

Anti-Zionism today is antisemitism

Hamas, together with various Stalinist, Maoist and anarchist currents, has put together a well-oiled international propaganda machine that demonizes Israel. They claim they’re “anti-Zionist,” not antisemitic.

So-called ‘American dream’ is more like a nightmare

Continued from front page
than 50% to about 30% today, an Aug. 29 *Wall Street Journal* article reported. And that percentage declined more in the working class.

“While around 90% of children born in 1940 were ultimately better off than their parents,” the *Journal* said, “only around half of those born in the 1980s were able to say the same.” And this figure continues to tumble.

The main consequence of the squeeze on workers’ living standards is not a decline in myths about the “American dream.” It’s that today workers are in a mood to fight. More are involved in strikes to try to reverse years of the bosses’ assaults on wages and working conditions.

Nearly half of young adults aged 18 to 29 still live with their parents — the highest in more than 70 years — because high mortgages and rents prevent many from moving out and raising a family in the wealthiest capitalist nation in the world.

Overall prices are up 20% over the past four years and are not going back down. A number of essentials have risen even more: eggs and sugar are up 40%; bread, 46%; roast beef, 44%; and car insurance and repair, 47%, to name a few.

To cover such price hikes, working people have put more of their purchases on credit cards, which require annual interest rates of more than 20% on unpaid balances. As a result, delinquencies on credit card debt rose sharply over the past year — by more than 10% — to the highest level since 2012.

This underscores the fact that life in the U.S. is class-divided. While working people are finding it more difficult to make ends meet, the capitalist rulers and the upper middle class aren’t impacted much. Many are becoming wealthier off stock investments and their only concern is workers rocking the boat.

Declining job openings, wages

“Bosses Are Finding Ways to Pay Workers Less,” headlined another *Journal* article. The biggest drop was in retail, where average wages for new hires is down a full 55.9%. In agriculture it’s down 24.5% and manufacturing, 17.3%. This comes on top of a 3.9% decline in all workers’ average wages over the past three and a half years.

Tom Locke, the franchise owner of 56 McDonald’s in the Midwest, told the *Journal* that he starts workers at \$13 an hour. He says he’s constantly asking managers if they can cut this to an even more measly \$12.

Job openings fell to the lowest level in more than three years in July. The government figures on job growth for June and July were revised down by 86,000, on top of the 818,000 drop for the past year ending in March. The number of workers forced to work part time but who want full time jobs is up to 4.8 million, a rise of 600,000 since mid-2023.

Layoffs also rose in July, to 1.8 million, the highest level since March 2023. With a growing number of companies reluctant to hire new workers, bosses are driving to get those on the job to produce more in less time, increasing

the threat to workers’ life and limb. But a report issued Aug. 30 by an administration-appointed task force at Columbia University documents egregious cases of Jew-hatred at the campus, a center of anti-Israel actions.

A Jewish student, who had put up a mezuzah — a traditional Jewish symbol — on her doorway in an on-campus dormitory, was harassed at all hours of the day and night after Oct. 7 by Hamas apologists who banged on her door demanding she explain Israel’s actions.

“Students have reported having necklaces ripped off their necks and being pinned against walls, while walking back to their dorm” or “on their way to synagogue,” the report noted. Others were shouted at to “go back to Poland.” Many Jewish students have stopped walking alone on campus.

the threat to workers’ life and limb.

With an eye on the 2024 election, the Federal Reserve claims it’ll achieve a “soft landing” instead of a recession by manipulating interest rates. But its monetary maneuvers have little impact on the reality that working people face: higher prices, lower wages and benefits and steadily rising unemployment.

“The Fed welcomes a ‘soft landing’ even if many Americans don’t feel like cheering,” the Associated Press admitted. They point to slowing manufacturing and a drop of more than 8% in the number of housing units under construction since the start of this year.

Average house prices are now almost 38% higher than in January 2021. Monthly mortgage payments on a median-priced home are up to \$3,000. That’s 50% higher than 2021.

The pace of apartment building construction has slowed down 41% over the last two years. Despite a dire need for low-cost rentals, most of the apartments being built are for upper-middle-class households who can afford the skyrocketing rents.

Sensing a huge profits bonanza, giant multibillion-dollar investment firms like KKR and Blackstone are buying up thousands of apartment buildings with plans to boost what are already high monthly rents.

For working people, changing these conditions depends on the class struggle — on joining together to fight the bosses’ attacks, on strengthening our unions and on organizing our own political party, a party of labor.

Democrats attack Trump, deal blows to constitutional freedoms

BY TERRY EVANS

Central to the Democrats' efforts to hold onto the White House in 2024 are relentless attacks against their main opponent, Donald Trump, including a four-part legal offensive that threatens constitutional rights crucial for working people.

They're determined to get tens of millions to view him as a criminal who must be driven out of politics at all costs. And they're now reviving claims he's connected to concealed election-meddling in the November election by the Vladimir Putin regime in Moscow.

Each of the cases against Trump deals blows to free speech, the right to a fair trial and other vital protections against government intervention.

Regardless of the fact that the target is a candidate of the Republican Party — one of the two main parties serving the capitalist class — working people have an important stake in demanding the cases be thrown out. Similar frame-up assaults and far worse have been used to go after militant workers, fighters for Black rights, the Socialist Workers Party and opponents of Washington's wars. They will be again, as new struggles by working people emerge.

In a case brought in Washington, D.C., by Justice Department special counsel Jack Smith charging Trump "interfered" with the 2020 election, Judge Tanya Chutkan set a new timetable for pretrial hearings.

On Sept. 5 Chutkan said prosecutors will have up to Oct. 29 — seven days before the vote — to respond to Trump's motion to dismiss the case. She rejected Trump's motion for deadlines in the hearing to be set after the election.

She claims the timing of the election is "not relevant" to the schedule she's imposed. But her ruling offers liberal media further pretexts to launch an avalanche of hysteria about Trump and the Jan. 6, 2021, riot just prior to the 2024 vote, to give a boost to the campaign of Kamala Harris.

The Supreme Court had ruled July 1 that Trump — like any president — has some immunity from prosecution for acts related to his official duties. It sent Smith's charges back to Chutkan to review in light of the decision.

Smith then filed a new, cut down, set of charges Aug. 27. This was just 10 days short of 60 days before the election, a period during which the Justice Department has a policy of not issuing new charges against presidential candidates.

Trump said the new indictment was an attempt to interfere with the elec-

tion. Both the new and old charges target Trump for things he said about the 2020 election to state officials and Vice President Michael Pence. Regardless of whether his comments were accurate, they're protected by the court's ruling and the First Amendment.

Russia-collusion hoax redux

As the 2024 vote nears, the Justice Department has resurrected claims that Putin is carrying out a disguised and elaborate effort to help Trump win the election. They insinuate that Trump may be involved.

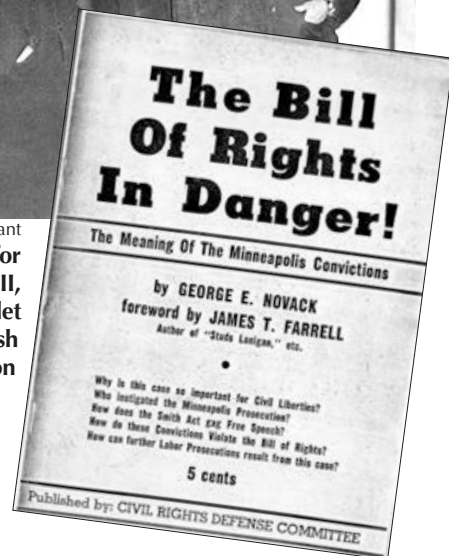
Attempts to tar Trump as a threat to "national security" go back to Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign. Her election committee paid a former British spy to concoct slanders that Trump was "colluding" with Putin. Based on this, the Barack Obama administration unleashed the FBI to spy on Trump's campaign.

Clinton claimed she lost the election because of Moscow's intervention. A sprawling investigation into these claims was opened by the Democratic Party-controlled Congress in 2017, headed by ex-FBI boss Robert Mueller. After months of leaks, he came up empty handed, but his probe led to the jailing of several Trump associates on unrelated charges in a thinly veiled attempt to get them to finger the former president for something.

On Sept. 4 Attorney General Merrick Garland — the same Biden administration official who unleashed Smith's witch hunt and charges against Trump



Above, 18 SWP and Teamsters leaders, framed up for opposition to U.S. rulers' drive to enter World War II, on way to federal prison Dec. 31, 1943. Inset, pamphlet used in defense campaign. One law used to unleash FBI against the party was Foreign Agents Registration Act, being used by the Justice Department today.



— announced the indictment of Kostiantyn Kalashnikov and Elena Afanasyeva, two employees of Russia Today, for failing to register as foreign agents.

This is becoming a popular charge for the administration. A frame-up trial began Sept. 3 against three leaders of the African People's Socialist Party and its support group UHURU on charges they are secret agents of Moscow.

Under the Foreign Agents Registration Act anyone whose views are similar to those of a foreign government can be targeted for FBI harassment and prosecution. The FBI used the law to justify going after the SWP after it was passed in 1938 as one of a series of witch hunt laws enacted on the eve of the second imperialist world war.

Garland claims the two Russia Today staffers were meddling with the 2024 election. He released redacted docu-

ments showing they tried to boost the campaign of an unnamed candidate whose description matches Trump. Neither of the alleged meddlers is likely to go to trial soon, given that their whereabouts are unknown. But the indictment, like the department's entire operation, is aimed at boosting Harris' campaign.

The same day as Garland's announcement, the Justice Department also shut down 32 internet domains they claimed were tied to Moscow and spreading "disinformation."

Safeguarding constitutional protections against government interference with free speech and political association remains a key question for working people today.

Russian pensioner attacked for anti-war views wins support

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Dmitry Grinchiy, an 87-year-old pensioner, was recently assaulted by two hefty men on a Moscow bus for muttering about the former Wagner Group mercenaries and against the war in Ukraine. The assailants then forced the driver to take them to the political police headquarters to turn Grinchiy over.

Instead of ending up in prison, Grinchiy received an outpouring of support. His story throws light on the deepening anti-war sentiment in Russia behind the repressive clampdown orchestrated by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The human rights organization OVD-Info reported Aug. 9 that Grinchiy was physically attacked for calling Wagner's thugs "murderers of children and women" when the bus passed a memorial to the mercenary group. The two men pushed away a woman who

repeatedly tried to stop the assault.

A video of the incident was taken and posted by another rider. It shows the two attackers, a middle-aged man and his son, aggressively twisting Grinchiy's arms, punching him in the kidneys and cursing the elderly survivor of World War II as a "fascist."

The assailants forced the bus driver to stop outside the infamous Lubyanka building, now the Federal Security Service (FSB) headquarters. They dragged Grinchiy off the bus to hand him over to the police. All three were detained. But Grinchiy was released without charges and filed a complaint about the assault.

The Wagner memorial was erected by supporters of Putin's invasion of Ukraine after the death of Wagner Group leader Yevgeny Prigozhin. His plane was blown up in flight two months after his aborted mutiny in June 2023. He accused Russia's military leaders of incompetence over prosecution of the war.

Former Wagner forces operate for Moscow in conflict zones from Ukraine to Syria and several African countries. Prigozhin often boasted of their extremely thuggish methods, including within their own ranks.

Grinchiy explained that he was attacked for "simply remembering that in '37 all my relatives were

shot." When he was a year old, his father, Pavel Grinchiy, was framed up as "an enemy of the people" and executed by firing squad. This was in 1938, part of the Great Terror under the dictatorial regime of Joseph Stalin.

At least three-quarters of a million people were killed in Stalin's purges and over a million more sent to forced labor camps known as Gulags. Thousands were revolutionary fighters seeking to continue the proletarian internationalist course of Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin.

Dmitry Grinchiy didn't know his real family name until he was 15. His father was posthumously "rehabilitated" in 1966 during a political thaw after Stalin's death.

Dmitry Grinchiy told reporter Ilya Azar that he "didn't disgrace anyone" on the bus. "I just regret that I had to be born in a country where people are not considered people. Decent people," he said.

In fact many "decent people" responded when his story got out. OVD-Info said they received "tons" of messages "asking for a donation link or another way to support the retiree." Their lawyer helped him to file a counter-report free of charge. "Russians from all over the country raised enough money to buy Grinchiy a new laptop."

OVD-Info noted that criminal charges against Dmitry Grinchiy were never filed. Instead, police opened a criminal hooliganism case "against the two thugs who attacked him."

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Malcolm X led fight for Black liberation and workers power

The French edition of Malcolm X, *Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September. Below is an excerpt from a talk by Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, at a March 28, 1987, meeting in Atlanta. It appears in the book as, "Malcolm X: Revolutionary Leader of the Working Class." Copyright © 2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JACK BARNES

We need to understand and absorb Malcolm's political legacy because it's a powerful political tool we must have to help make a socialist revolution in the United States. It aids us in gathering and unifying the forces among working people and youth who will forge a working-class party able to lead such a revolution. It is needed by anyone, here or anywhere else on earth, who wants to be part of an international revolutionary movement of the kind Malcolm was so determined to help build — a movement to rid humanity of all forms of oppression and exploitation. ...

Malcolm X emerged on American soil as the most representative revolutionary leader with a mass hearing in the latter half of the twentieth century.



Malcolm X speaking at July 1962 rally in New York City to back fight for union recognition by hospital workers. Malcolm praised Local 1199 President Leon Davis, who was thrown in jail for 30 days because he refused to obey a court order to call off 56-day hospital workers strike.

He converged politically with other revolutionists the world over, including proletarian revolutionists, communists, here in the United States. He was going in the direction the world revolution was going, *against* colonialism and capitalism, and *with* those who were pushing revolutionary struggle forward. Many individuals, in many countries, who aspire to lead revolutions on their home turf are still catching up with Malcolm on many fronts.

Malcolm's course during these final months is sometimes described as a new form of Pan-Africanism, and Malcolm himself used that term a few times. But "Pan-Africanism" captures neither the scope nor the revolutionary political character of Malcolm's internationalism and anti-imperialism. Malcolm, of course, recognized the shared aspects of the oppression facing those of African origin — and of their resistance to that oppression. Because of the combined legacy of colonialism and chattel slavery, Blacks shared many such elements whether they lived and toiled in Africa itself, in the Caribbean and Latin America, in Europe, or what Malcolm, echoing Elijah Muhammad's marvelous term, called "this wilderness of North America."

"Many of us fool ourselves into thinking of Afro-Americans as those only who are here in the United States," Malcolm said in one of his last talks, just five days before he was as-

sassinated. "But the Afro-American is that large number of people in the Western Hemisphere, from the southernmost tip of South America to the northernmost tip of North America, all of whom have a common heritage and have a common origin when you go back to the history of these people. ... [And when Africans] migrate to England, they pose a problem for the English. And when they migrate to France, they pose a problem for the French."

At the same time, Malcolm increasingly identified with, championed, and explained revolutionary struggles the world over — from the Chinese Revolution, to the Cuban Revolution, to battles for national liberation wherever they were being fought, and by people of whatever hue of skin color.

At this meeting tonight, however, I want to try to make the case that is perhaps the most important of all, not just for revolutionists in this country but those around the world. I want to make the case that *Malcolm X was a revolutionary leader of the working class in the United States.*

That may sound strange, for a number of reasons. It may sound strange because of the small degree of support Malcolm had among workers who were Caucasian, at least those he knew of. It may sound strange because of the weakened state of the labor movement and procapitalist positions of the union officialdom that I described earlier, views

that were diametrically opposed to Malcolm's. It may sound strange, if for no other reason than that Malcolm himself never directly addressed this question.

But the fact remains that the social and political transformations that will be wrought by a popular revolution in the United States — a revolution that will be led by the vanguard of the working class, or else go down to a bloody defeat — are decisive for the oppressed and exploited the world over. Among other things, the conquest of power by the working class and its allies — the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat — is the necessary step that can open the road for Blacks, and for all supporters of Black rights, to successfully fight to end racist oppression of every kind once and for all.

In the leadership of revolutionary working-class struggles in this country, workers who are Black will occupy a vanguard place and weight disproportionate to their numbers in the U.S. population. That's what all modern history teaches us. That fact is testified to by the record of powerful social and political struggles in the United States: from battles during the closing years of the Civil War itself; to Radical Reconstruction and the efforts to prevent the imposition of peonage among the freed slaves; to the struggles that built farmers movements and the industrial unions in the 1920s and 1930s; to the mass proletarian movement that toppled Jim Crow segregation, fueled the rise of greater political self-confidence and nationalist consciousness among Blacks in the 1960s, and inspired what became the mass movement against the imperialist war in Vietnam.

Malcolm X was a legitimate political heir to all these struggles.

But who are *Malcolm's* heirs? ...

[T]he heirs of Malcolm X *will* come forward — all over the world, including right here in the United States — as revolutionary struggles advance, as the exploited and oppressed organize to resist the devastating consequences of capitalist crises and imperialist domination and wars. More leaders like Malcolm *will* come forward, including in the labor movement. And they will need to know who Malcolm was, what Malcolm stood for, what he fought for and dedicated his life to.

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Defending protections in US Constitution

The Democrats yearslong efforts to use the FBI and frame-up court cases to bring down Donald Trump pose serious challenges to the working class. In the course of their attacks, and counterattacks by the Republicans, blows are being dealt to constitutional freedoms we need.

The U.S. Constitution provides protection from interference by the government and its political police: freedom of speech, worship, assembly and more. It includes “the right of the people to keep and bear Arms,” ensuring working people have the means to defend ourselves as we exercise all other rights. It provides the right to trial by jury and to legal counsel, bars unreasonable searches and seizures, or cruel and unusual punishment, and guarantees the right to vote.

These political conquests were won by working people in the course of the First American Revolution and extended during the Second American Revolution that uprooted slavery. The Black-led movement that tore down Jim Crow segregation helped ensure these freedoms could be exercised.

These protections are used in all struggles by workers and the oppressed. The latest courtroom attacks on Trump highlight the importance of safeguarding them. The Socialist Workers Party has set an example for working people everywhere on these questions.

“All suppression of political rights” under capitalism, wrote Leon Trotsky a leader of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, “no matter who they are directed against in the beginning, in the end inevitably bear down on the working class and its most advanced elements.”

All the institutions of the U.S. rulers’ state exist to advance the interests of the capitalist rulers against the working class, here and around the world. And the U.S. Constitution codifies capitalist rule. But it also bears the stamp of revolutionary upheavals by working people and the conquests that came out of these battles.

The very need for constitutional protections shows the state is not neutral — as Democrats and Republicans, the capitalist media and our school teachers always claim. It is an instrument of the ruling class against the toiling majority.

This fundamental class character of the U.S. government was missing from the article in the last issue of the *Militant*, “Democrats attack Constitution, weaken checks on gov’t power.”

The Constitution’s separation of the powers between Congress, the presidency and the Supreme Court offers a check on what different sections of the rulers can do against each other, *and* against us. It’s an important protection that’s under attack today.

But when the article described the Supreme Court as “the apex of an independent judiciary,” it made it appear as something outside class reality. Like the other two government branches, it’s not “independent” of the ruling class. It exists to serve them.

Clarity on all questions about the state is central to workers understanding of what we are up against and what we must organize to overturn, if we’re to take political power into our own hands and create a government based on our needs. In the course of revolutionary struggles to replace capitalist rule, workers will make use of every constitutional protection and we’ll fight to extend them. That’s why defending these freedoms today is indispensable.

And when working people have established our own class rule, we’ll combine gains from past struggles with new institutions that facilitate the toiling majority — now the ruling class — in taking control over all aspects of social, economic and political life.

In the course of doing so, we’ll have a lot we can learn from the experiences of the Bolshevik Revolution led by V.I. Lenin and Cuba’s socialist revolution led by Fidel Castro.

Union battles today deserve support of all workers

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the ILA, has emphasized that union members will not work past the contract deadline, or put up with interference from either the Biden administration or the Department of Labor, that’s exactly what the bosses are planning. “The only hope is it’s quick and that the administration invokes Taft-Hartley and puts folks back to work,” one shipping industry boss told the press. That anti-labor law — which imposes an 80-day “cooling-off period” barring strikes — has been used dozens of times, including against West Coast dockworkers in 2002.

The contract is up Sept. 20 for 200,000 postal workers, members of the American Postal Workers Union. They too are fighting around issues that affect millions of working people. Paychecks that keep up with inflation, safety improvements, the end to divisive two-tier wages, as well as better work-hour guarantees and rights for part-time workers.

Members of two other postal workers unions — the National Association of Letter Carriers and the National Rural Letter Carriers’ Association — are working under expired contracts. And the U.S. Postal Service is threatening to cut back rural mail delivery right after the November election.

Thousands of rural letter carriers had their hours reduced and pay cut after an electronic system was put in place in 2023 that supposedly captured all their time worked, right down to how long it takes to walk from their delivery trucks to mailboxes and back.

These unions would have to defy federal law to strike. They are classified as “essential workers,” barred from striking and subject to imposed binding arbitration. The APWU has called for an Oct. 1 day of action, with rallies planned in more than 70 cities coast to coast. “For too long, postal workers have been stretched thin, making miracles happen in understaffed facilities,” the union’s call reads.

In Seattle, a tentative four-year labor agreement between Boeing bosses and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, which represents some 30,000 workers, was announced Sept. 8. Union members will vote Sept. 12. It would be the

first new contract in 16 years.

While Boeing officials have touted the agreement as a “historic” contract offer, some union members are not convinced. Many said that the 25% pay raise in the package wouldn’t even keep up with inflation. “Hundreds protested during a lunch break at the plant in Everett, Washington, chanting, ‘Strike! Strike! Strike!’” according to the *Seattle Times*.

More support for unions today

The hard-fought struggles and gains won by the Teamsters at UPS, United Auto Workers and others in 2023 have inspired more workers to join unions and fight for what they need. A recent Gallup Poll reports that 70% responded favorably to unions, with a disapproval rate that’s the lowest since 1967.

Some 700 auto parts workers in Lansing, New York, members of Teamsters Local 317, went out on strike at BorgWarner Sept. 9, the first strike at the plant in 30 years. The company offered a wage increase of 22.5%, but raised the costs for health care and other benefits.

“When you add the numbers up, by the end, you’re done. You’re in the hole,” said union business agent John Cometti.

“BorgWarner has got to realize that we are about our families first and the job second,” added Jason Adam, who has worked in the plant for 17 years.

In June, the 27,500 teachers, custodians, bus drivers and other workers in the Fairfax County Public Schools in Virginia voted to join the Fairfax Education Unions after state officials conceded the right of public employees to organize.

On Sept. 3, 1,000 autoworkers at Ultium Cells in Spring Hill, Tennessee, voted to join the United Auto Workers. The vote at the electric vehicle battery plant was a blow to auto companies that have poured billions into the South hoping to build electric vehicles with nonunion, cheaper labor.

“Being unionized will help us reap the benefits as far as better health care, better pay, and overall, just having decency within the workplace not just for us, but future generations,” Tradistine Chambers, a worker at Ultium, told the press.

Fight ‘Militant’ ban

Continued from front page

bars. The fact that the fight has dragged on for over four months makes it worse.

The banned issue of the *Militant* contained an article reprinting the opening chapter of Pathfinder’s latest book, *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class*. Prison authorities particularly objected to one of the photos, an Associated Press picture widely printed in papers in Florida and worldwide. It shows the body of a Jewish man murdered by Hamas during the Nazi-like group’s Oct. 7 pogrom against Jews in Israel being driven around Gaza City to cheers by Islamist thugs and their supporters.

Jackson authorities wrote, “Picture shows dead person being paraded around on a motorcycle. Magazine depict hatred toward a specific race.” They then claimed the photo and, for unspecified reasons, the whole newspaper, are “dangerously inflammatory,” encouraging “riot, insurrection, rebellion” and “organized prison protest.”

The Literature Review Committee initially upheld the impoundment at a July 18 meeting, but did not consider the *Militant*’s appeal or give any reason for their decision. Library Services Administrator Saritza Legault informed *Militant* attorney David Goldstein of this decision Aug. 21. She wrote that “the Publisher’s Appeal and all of the associated letters of support” would be reviewed at the committee’s meeting Aug. 29. Since then neither Goldstein nor the *Militant* have heard anything further.

“With respect to what happened with the Jackson Correctional Institution and the confiscation of *Militant* issue no. 17,” one prisoner in Florida wrote to the *Militant*, “I don’t see anything in the photo that could cause disturbances inside Florida prison.

“The majority of Muslims in the prisons are Sunnis loyal to the teachings of the Koran. The Koran condemns any act of terrorism and what happened on Oct. 7,” he wrote. “I join with the thousands of people who are against the Oct. 7 pogrom and who are against terrorism and who really follow Islam.”

Other workers behind bars in Florida prisons have sent letters to the committee opposing the ban. There are 118 *Militant* subscribers in Florida state prisons.

Since the *Militant* issue was impounded, dozens of organizations and individuals have sent letters urging that the ban be reversed. They include the American Civil Liberties Union in Florida and nationally, Amnesty International, PEN America, Florida Press Association, Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press and many others.

Fight prison ban on the ‘Militant’

Get letters of support from unions, churches and defenders of workers 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.”

LETTERS

David Segal

David Segal, a longtime friend and supporter of the Socialist Workers Party, died Aug. 27 after a long illness. He was 79 years old.

Segal, who lived in New York City, regularly attended *Militant* Labor Forums, participating in the discussion and debate.

David was an avid reader of the party’s books, often turning in his copy with proofreading marks so the next printing could be improved.

For several years he was one of the volunteers who helped to mail out the new issue of the *Militant* each week. He was eager to pitch in on anything that was needed, including picking up postage stamps and even for a period of time making his apartment available to help organize this effort.

Brian Williams

New York, New York