

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Dockworkers prepare for strike as October 1 contract deadline looms

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 88/NO. 37 OCTOBER 7, 2024

End US rulers' economic war against Cuba!

BY PATRICK BROWN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — In campaigning against the over 60-year U.S. economic war against Cuba, “it’s important to demand Cuba’s removal from Washington’s State Sponsors of Terrorism list,” Luis Ernesto Morejón Rodríguez, Cuba’s ambassador to New Zealand, told a public meeting here Sept. 14. Cuban Embassy Consul Hortensia Rodríguez Martínez also took part.

Some 30 people attended the event, which was organized by the Cuba Friendship Society.

Former U.S. President Donald Trump added Cuba to Washington’s “Sponsors of Terrorism” list in January 2021, which his successor, Joseph Biden, has continued.

This flies in the face of the fact that “Cuba has been a victim of terrorist actions that for years have been organized and financed from U.S. territory,” Morejón said, quoting from Cuba’s recently released 2024 report to the United Nations on the damage the embargo creates. The U.N. General Assembly has repeatedly, and overwhelmingly, voted to call for an end to the embargo.

Being put on this list deepened the
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Socialist Workers Party candidates say:

‘All out in support of the Boeing workers strike!’

Rachele Fruit for president • Dennis Richter vice president



Rachele Fruit, left, SWP candidate for president, and campaign supporter Jacquie Henderson, campaigning at Cincinnati CSX rail yard to build solidarity with Boeing workers strike, Sept. 21.

Richter: ‘We need our own party, a party of labor’

BY JANET POST

PAULSBORO, N.J. — “I thought it was ‘We, the people’ who are supposed to be in charge,” trucker Santiago Corpus told Dennis Richter, Socialist Work-

Continued on page 4

Fruit: ‘The working class needs to take power’

BY BETSY FARLEY

CINCINNATI — “This is the first time in my life I really feel like something I do can make a difference and change things,” Eric Wood, a cook at a restaurant here, told the *Militant*. He was attending a Sept. 22 meeting for Rachele Fruit, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president.

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Boeing workers strike is solid as bosses try to go around union

BY REBECCA WILLIAMSON

SEATTLE — Bosses at Boeing took what they called their “best and final” offer directly to 33,000 striking workers in an attempt to go around their union, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers District Lodge 751 and District W24. The offer, they said, would only be on the table for four days.

“This offer was not negotiated with your Union; it was thrown at us without any discussion,” said the leadership of Local 751. Union members “will not be voting on the 27th.”

Workers at Boeing aerospace plants across Washington, Oregon, and southern California struck Sept. 13, after votes of 94.6% against the company’s contract offer, and by 96% to strike. They are fighting for conditions millions of workers confront: the need for wages that keep up with inflation, safety issues and livable work schedules with limits on boss demands for overtime that impedes any sort of life off the job. Workers also want to restore the pension that bosses cut a decade ago.

The strike has won wide support from working people. Some 300 people rallied outside Boeing’s Gresham, Oregon, plant Sept. 21, where 1,300 work. Alongside the striking Machinists, members

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As battles with Hezbollah heat up: Defend Israel as a refuge for Jews!



AP Photo/Gil Nechushtan

Israeli rescuers at houses hit by Hezbollah rocket in Kiryat Bialik, northern Israel, Sept. 22. Daily missile attacks from Lebanon by Tehran-sponsored terror group target Jewish civilians.

BY SETH GALINSKY

Having made significant progress in the war to dismantle Hamas in Gaza, Israeli forces — no longer willing to accept daily missile assaults on northern Israel — are now focusing on Lebanon-based Hezbollah. And they’re dealing devastating blows to the Tehran-allied Jew-hating group.

Destroying Hamas’ ability to launch

future deadly pogroms and pushing Hezbollah back are essential to crippling Tehran’s “axis of resistance,” defending Israel’s right to exist as a refuge for Jews and advancing the fight against Jew-hatred around the world. This would also open space in Gaza, Lebanon and more broadly for Jewish, Muslim, Christian and other workers to come together in

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Gov’t claims inflation is ‘solved,’ ‘soft landing’ assured. It isn’t.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Front-page articles in the capitalist press have hailed the Federal Reserve’s recent interest-rate cut as a milestone in the recovery of the U.S. economy. “Pop the Champagne for

the Fed Rate Cut and a Soft Landing Ahead” the *U.S. News & World Report* celebrated Sept. 18.

But this is not what the working class is experiencing today under the deepening capitalist economic and social crisis. Working people confront consistently high prices for food, gas, housing, health care and just about everything else; a drop in available full-time jobs; high credit-card debts; and more. All this makes it increasingly

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

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Supporters of the rights of workers behind bars and freedom of speech and the press have been fighting to overturn the ban on *Militant* issue no. 17 by Jackson Correctional Institution prison authorities in Malone, Florida, for five months. More letters demanding the reversal of the ban are needed.

Those who have already sent letters can make further inquiries asking to know why this unconstitutional im-

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Join, build Oct. 7 actions against Jew-hatred 12

— On the picket line, p. 6 —

Pittsburgh area nurses win big, vow to continue the fight

Australian construction workers fight to defend their union

End economic war against Cuba!

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embargo, Morejón said, including placing further curbs on Cuba's access to credit, a necessity for international trade. Now cash-strapped Cuba has to pay upfront for many more sorely needed goods on the capitalist world market.

Morejón recalled that when he opened a bank account as a new ambassador in New Zealand early this year he was told, "You cannot send or receive a single penny to or from Cuba" or the bank would face penalties in its U.S. operations. "Many of our embassies face difficulties in banking."

Deepening attacks on tourism

Another "terror list" measure targets international travel to Cuba, which is already barred to millions of U.S. citizens. Now non-U.S. visitors to Cuba are denied visa-free travel to the U.S.

As of April this year, more than 300,000 European citizens had their access to the United States Electronic System for Travel Authorization restricted after taking a trip to Cuba.

Morejón said this and penalties on cruise ship companies plays a key part in the slow recovery of Cuba's tourism — historically an essential source of foreign exchange — from the slump it suffered in the COVID-19 pandemic. While almost 4.3 million people visited the island in 2019, only 1.6 million came in 2022.

"The United States says the Cuban government alone is responsible for our very difficult economic situation, but it is not true," Morejón said, emphasizing the deep impact the embargo has on the daily lives of Cubans.

Because of shortages of flour caused by the embargo, Cuba announced it had to cut its subsidized daily ration of bread by 25% Sept. 16, from 80 to 60 grams, reported Reuters.

Washington imposed the embargo in the early 1960s in response to the socialist revolution led by Fidel Castro. Millions of Cubans joined in a mighty land reform, a nationalization of both U.S. and Cuban capitalist-owned companies, a far-reaching mobilization that eliminated illiteracy, and other measures that transformed the country and its people. Before the revolution, in the rural areas 85% lacked running water and the vast majority did not have electricity, Morejón said. With the revolution, Cuba established "a very different social and economic system from its neighbor 90 miles to the north."

Cuba's internationalist foreign policy, based on solidarity with struggles for independence and freedom, flows from this course, he said. He pointed to the mobilization by hundreds of thousands of Cuban volunteers who fought in Angola's wars in the 1970s and '80s against invasions by apartheid South Africa.

Aiming to cause economic collapse and counterrevolution — the stated goal of U.S. policy toward revolutionary Cuba — Washington has increased the extraterritorial character of the embargo, Morejón said. They're not only blocking U.S. trade with Cuba, but also pressuring foreign countries and companies to fall into line.

Given the increasing impact of these restrictions, "there is no way



Flavia Morejón/Cuban Embassy

"Cuba has been a victim of terrorist actions that for years have been organized and financed from U.S. territories," Luis Ernesto Morejón Rodríguez, Cuba's ambassador to New Zealand, told a public meeting in Auckland Sept. 14. At left, Fiona Taler of the Cuba Friendship Society.

to find the resources to buy what we need abroad," he said. For example, "Cuba could produce 80% of the pharmaceuticals we need, but we lack the raw materials."

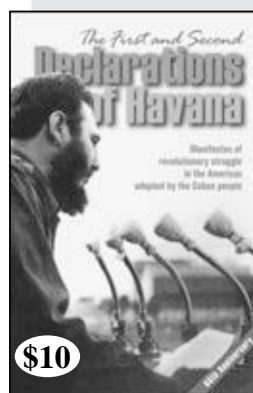
The drop in Cuba's foreign earnings means the government must carefully ration fuel use, the ambassador said, in the wide-ranging discussion. Trash often festers longer in the streets since there is less fuel to power sanitation trucks.

Fumigation workers with fuel-hungry sprayers cannot match the breadth of former preventative campaigns to kill disease-carrying mosquitos.

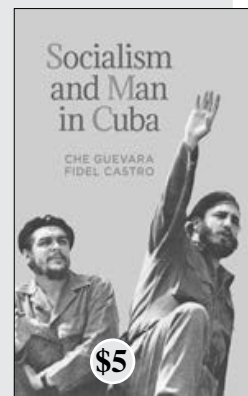
"We appreciate the solidarity of everyone around the world," said the ambassador. He urged participants to join in the 10th Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting of Solidarity with Cuba, scheduled to take place in Beijing Oct. 28-31.

For further reading 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.



The First and Second Declarations of Havana
Manifestos of revolutionary struggle in the Americas adopted by the Cuban people



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THE MILITANT

Women's rights grew when millions joined workforce

The second-class status of women means smaller paychecks and bearing the heaviest load for care of children and the elderly. Millions of women have joined the workforce, strengthening the working class and its capacity to fight for family needs, women's emancipation.



Militant/Eric Simpson

Hotel workers, majority women, march outside Marriott hotel in San Francisco Sept. 2.

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Gov't claims inflation 'solved'

Continued from front page
difficult for workers and their families to make ends meet.

"Prices are high on a historical basis," the *New York Times* admitted Sept. 20.

The *Times* claims a key positive feature of the capitalist economy is "public enthusiasm for artificial intelligence." But there is no "public" enthusiasm, just a hope by capitalist investors that "AI will pay off in profits for big companies," it admitted. Nvidia — which has been driving the continuing stock market rise, out of whack with the development of the real economy — makes the chips that run the AI chatbots.

But for working people the number employed full time in the U.S. has shrunk by 1.5 million over the past 14 months. At the same time, those taking part-time jobs, with less pay and benefits, increased by 2 million. Millions of workers have been forced to take on a second or even a third job. In August 8.5 million workers were toiling at more than one job.

Unemployment figures have been slowly rising over the past year, as the pace of job creation by employers has fallen under 100,000 a month, half the pace of a year ago. Big retail chain stores have cut back seasonal hiring plans by tens of thousands, fearing lower sales.

With growing numbers of companies reluctant to hire new workers, bosses are pressuring those on the job to produce more in less time, putting workers' health and safety at risk.

Many fear the Fed's move will accelerate the jobs crisis. A "soft landing" may be very hard for many workers.

This reality is fueling union fights for significant raises, cost-of-living protection, an end to two-tier divisions, and secure pensions. These fights — from Boeing workers to longshoremen on the East and Gulf coasts — deserve active support from all workers.

High rents, low wages

Continuously high rents and low wages are driving more workers to homelessness. The nearly 800 beds at Atlanta Mission's network of homeless shelters increasingly include people who have lost a place to live for the first time. Many work jobs but don't make enough to cover the steep living expenses they and their families face.

"The stories that we hear from our clients: 'Rent went up, I couldn't make it,'" Tensley Almand, the organization's head, told the *New York Times*. "The number of people underemployed right now, we hear that over and over." Similar conditions exist in many cities.

More workers are also lining up at food banks, unable to cover the high grocery costs on essential goods. The Greater Boston Food Bank, for example, has delivered more than 100 million pounds of food every year since 2020, up from less than 70 million in 2019.

The monetary manipulations by the Federal Reserve have little impact on the challenges working people face. While rising stock prices have raised the prospects for comfortable retirement for lucky speculators, workers'

real wages have dropped nearly 4% over the past three and a half years.

Ballooning credit-card debt

Credit-card debt keeps rising as more and more workers depend on these cards to cover their expenses. Balances rose to \$1.14 trillion in the second quarter, the highest level on record, the New York Fed reported. With annual interest rates averaging over 20% for unpaid balances, delinquencies rose by about 10% over the past year. Delinquencies on auto loans have jumped 8% over the same time period, guaranteeing profits for the repo man.

Some 68 million people in the U.S. receive Social Security, and 40% of them rely on these payments for half or more of their income. While being battered over the past several years by high grocery prices, rents and health and medicine expenses, the cost-of-living increase for 2025 — to be announced in October — is projected to be just 2.5%. And that will be cut by the government's increase in the cost of Medicare coverage.

This situation has led many retirees to un-retire. Art Barton, 73, retired from a wireless-technology company in Tiburon, California, in 2021, but as prices continued to soar he had to return to working to get by. He told the *Wall Street Journal* that the costs he faced for home repairs and home insurance premiums had risen over 40%. "It was extremely helpful to go back to work," he said. He retired again in 2023, hoping he can make it this time.

For many working people, prospects for retirement are a distant dream.

SWP begins fall campaign to expand reach of the party

BY JOHN STUDER

On Sept. 21 the Socialist Workers Party began its fall campaign. Over the next eight weeks leading up to and immediately following the presidential election SWP members will expand the reach of the party, its presidential ticket of Rachele Fruit and Dennis Richter, the *Militant*, books by party leaders and other revolutionaries, and raise \$140,000 to further the party's work.

We're out to sign up hundreds of endorsers for the SWP campaign, people who want to join in getting out the word and help lay the basis for broad party

work coming out of the campaign. We'll sell 1,300 subscriptions and a similar number of books, knocking on workers' doors, joining in union strike rallies and pickets, protesting Moscow's continuing assault on Ukraine sovereignty, fighting against all manifestations of Jew-hatred, defending the right of Israel to exist as a refuge for Jews and joining whatever other battles break out for the interests of working people.

We'll explain that the only road to end capitalist exploitation and oppression and the wars that mark the imperialist epoch is for working people to

chart a course to take political power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers and into our own hands. To do this, we need to break from the capitalist parties, the Democrats and Republicans, and form our own party, a party of labor, that can organize working people in our tens of millions for today's battles on the road to conquering workers power.

We'll run the first chart on the drive in the next issue.

Join us. Contact the SWP campaign headquarters nearest you, listed on page 11.



Ezequiel Olmedo, left, a farmworker in Sunnyside, Washington, discusses the SWP campaign program with Vincent Auger, SWP candidate for governor of Washington, Aug. 12.

'Fight Against Jew-Hatred' big seller at Fete de l'Humanite



Militant/Derek Jeffers

BRTIGNY-SUR-ORGE, France — Record numbers of books by Socialist Workers Party leaders and other revolutionaries were sold at Pathfinder Press booth at this year's Fete de l'Humanite Sept. 13-15. The annual event is organized by the French Communist Party. Hundreds of thousands participated.

The hottest selling title was *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class*, with 57 copies of the just-published French edition sold. One young Algerian woman working in one of the other stands at the festival bought a copy. "I think the Jews, too, have the right to a country, especially after everything they have gone through," she said, adding it was almost impossible to openly discuss the question in Algeria.

Another young woman, 18 years old, wrote to a Pathfinder volunteer after the event that she had already finished the book. "It's great!" she said. "I'm going to recommend it. How can I buy more copies to offer to my friends?" Many of those getting the book said they felt uneasy with the near unanimous position of the left in France, which condemns Israel for what has unfolded since Hamas' Oct. 7 pogrom.

Participants bought 20 copies of *The Jewish Question* by Abram Leon and dozens of books by Thomas Sankara, a revolutionary leader and president of Burkina Faso 1983-87. Other best-sellers were *Labor, Nature, and the Evolution of Humanity: The Long View of History, Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, the latter two by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. Altogether, 254 Pathfinder books were sold.

— DEREK JEFFERS

Labor, Nature, and the Evolution of Humanity

Where did humanity come from? How did we arrive where we are today? Why is that even important? Because without understanding how human society, since our remotest ancestors, has been created through social labor, working people remain prisoners of the capitalist epoch in which we live.



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'We need a party of labor'

Continued from front page

ers Party candidate for vice president, when he campaigned at a long-haul truck stop here Sept. 22.

"But who are 'We, the people?'" Richter asked. "We, the workers, or 'we' the billionaires?"

"It's 'we the workers,'" Corpus said. "We're the ones who keep things moving." Corpus is an owner-operator, driving cross-country out of Portland, Oregon. He described some of the conditions facing working people that he has seen.

"If you miss a mortgage payment they come after the house, or you can lose your car," he said. "The banks own everything. On the freeways the garbage is piling up. In Portland the shelves in the stores are locked up because everything is being stolen."

"The Democratic and Republican parties say they are going to fix everything," Richter said. "But they haven't, and they will not. That's why we need a party of labor based on the unions, a step toward working people taking power from the capitalists and into our own hands."

"Yes, we need the working people to decide," Corpus said. "We've got to break the chain to make a change."

"Breaking the chain' is what I call a making a revolution," Richter said.

"Yes, that's right!" Corpus replied.

He told Richter he had been in prison. Since then, he's been driving a truck as he gets his life back together.

"Look at Malcolm X," Richter said. "He ended up in prison where he disciplined himself to read," on the road to becoming a revolutionary leader of the entire working class.

"In prison you do read," Corpus said, "and what you read you will absorb. I graduated from high school in prison." Richter showed Corpus the *Militant* and told him about the paper's fight against an unconstitutional ban on an issue of the paper by prison authorities in Malone, Florida. He decided to get a subscription.

"We work our whole lives and what have we got?" Nelson Salgado, another owner-operator, told Richter. "It's unfair. I haul all over the country. I see that common respect, morals are breaking down. And I think welfare makes it worse."

"Workers need jobs, not welfare," Richter replied. "The SWP calls for a

mass public works program at union-scale pay to put people back to work. We need to build a movement of working people to take power."

"I agree," Salgado said. He said he would read the campaign material the socialist candidate gave him and "do what I can" to help spread the word.

Richter also spoke with a trucker originally from Gambia.

"The Palestinian people were oppressed for so long," he told Richter. Now "they're paying the price for Hamas' attack on Israel."

"Hamas is not leading the Palestinian people to liberation," Richter said. "They knew Israel would have no choice but to go after Hamas, after its Oct. 7 massacre of Jews. Hamas says they will not coexist with the state of Israel." Hamas is a deadly enemy of Jews the world over, as well as the exploited and oppressed Palestinians of Gaza.

To win the struggle against the oppression of the Palestinians, the SWP candidate said, they must join with working people of all religions and nationalities across the region in revolutionary struggle to take state power and end capitalist rule.

The most important allies of work-



Militant/Janet Post

Nelson Salgado, left, at truck stop in Paulsboro, New Jersey, Sept. 22, told Dennis Richter, SWP candidate for vice president, that he agreed with him that workers need to take power.

ers in Israel are workers and farmers in Iran, Richter said. He pointed to widespread opposition there to the Iranian rulers' bloody efforts to extend their clout across the Middle East.

The driver decided to get the book *The*

Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward by SWP leaders Jack Barnes, Mary-Alice Waters and Steve Clark.

"I'm interested in learning more about what the SWP is doing," he said.

'Workers gain confidence in the heat of the class struggle'

BY JANET POST

PHILADELPHIA — Dennis Richter, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president, spoke at a campaign event here Sept. 21 that drew 21 people. One of the central questions he addressed was the need for working people to organize independently of the bosses, and their parties and government.

"In the ongoing war between labor and capital, the Democratic and Republican parties have no solution for workers," Richter said. "While the governing capitalist representatives may enact some minor reforms, even these are not lasting. We need to break with the two capitalist parties and build a party of labor, based on the unions.

"When workers have experience and confidence from working together in the class struggle, more will see themselves as a class, begin to understand their power and how to use it."

And they'll come to recognize the fact that "every fight is a political struggle," he added.

During the discussion one participant asked Richter, "Just what is a meritocracy?"

Richter pointed to the book *Are They Rich Because They're Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. It explains that this social layer is "a high-earning and professional and upper middle-class layer. ... Its members truly believe that their 'brightness,' their 'quickness,' their 'contributions to public life' give them the right to 'regulate' the lives of working people, who can't be trusted to know what's in our own interests."

"The meritocracy claims to 'feel your pain' and promises to help the struggling people of the world," Richter said. "But in reality it is a multi-racial layer that fights to maintain the status quo and its own usefulness to the ruling class. The meritocrats fear

losing their positions and having to become wage workers like me."

Kamala Harris and Barrack Obama both rose to prominence out of this layer, which increasingly dominates the Democratic Party today.

In the discussion, Richter also explained what he meant by a party of labor. "Sometimes when I mention a party of labor, people's frame of reference is in electoral politics." They think "I'm referring to something like the Labour Party in the U.K. that runs the bourgeois government there.

"But we're talking about something entirely different — a party of labor based on the trade unions, farmers and all the exploited workers that can bring our weight to bear in the class struggle.

"Our campaign program is straightforward: for workers and their allies to take power from the imperialist rulers and into our own hands," he said.

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)

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Socialist Workers Party in 2024

The working-class alternative

Rachele Fruit for president

Dennis Richter for vice president

California

Laura Garza, U.S. Senate
Eric Simpson, U.S. Congress

Florida

Laura Anderson, U.S. Senate

Georgia

Lisa Potash, U.S. Congress

Illinois

Naomi Craine, U.S. Congress

Minnesota

Kevin Dwire, U.S. Senate
Gabrielle Prosser, U.S. Congress

New Jersey

Joanne Kuniansky, U.S. Senate
Lea Sherman, U.S. Congress

New York

Sara Lobman, U.S. Senate
Willie Cotton, U.S. Congress

Ohio

John Hawkins, U.S. Senate
Ned Measel, U.S. Congress

Pennsylvania

Ved Dookhun, U.S. Senate
Candace Wagner, U.S. Congress

Texas

Alyson Kennedy, U.S. Senate

Washington, D.C.

James Harris, delegate to Congress

Washington state

Henry Dennison, U.S. Senate
Vincent Auger, Governor

‘Workers need to take power!’

Continued from front page

Wood recently endorsed Fruit’s campaign and plans to join campaign supporters bringing solidarity to an Indianapolis rally of postal workers fighting for a new national contract.

“The fight over whether the bosses or the workers run the government is the central question that matters for working people everywhere in the world, and the U.S. working class is decisive in that fight,” Fruit told the meeting. “The fight for workers power will open the door to ending the exploitative and oppressive conditions that are the source of the capitalists’ wealth.”

To advance along that course, Fruit said, workers “need a party of labor to mobilize and unite working people, independent of the boss parties. It must be a party based on the unions that can organize the whole working class to fight together, a social movement in struggle to replace capitalist political power with a workers government. A party of labor can help to organize our class to fight for the things we need in the political arena.”

During the discussion after Fruit’s presentation, one participant pointed to union-organizing drives involving the Teamsters in the area. She asked what Fruit thought of the recent decision announced by Teamsters union President Sean O’Brien that the union wouldn’t endorse either Democratic Party candidate Kamala Harris or Republican Donald Trump.

For decades the union, with 1.3 million members, has endorsed Democratic Party presidential candidates. O’Brien’s announcement has been met with furious condemnation from liberals and the middle-class left. *In These Times* ran a headline, “The Weird and Stupid Teamsters Non-Endorsement Fiasco.”

Fruit responded to the question by pointing to O’Brien’s speech at the Republican Party convention. He “did not break in any way from capitalist politics,” she said. “Instead, O’Brien and other officials still look to get favors from so-called friends of labor in both capitalist parties.

“We say workers need to make a decisive break with both parties of the bosses and form our own party of labor to fight for political power,” she said.

Despite talk of lowered inflation, Fruit said in her presentation, the cost of rent, food, child care and other necessities are up by 20% to 35% over the past four years. “Necessities like drugs for cancer and other life-threatening diseases cost hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of dollars a year,” she added.

“As conditions of life for the working class deteriorate and wars escalate, millions of workers are being drawn into politics in a new and urgent way,” she said. “More workers today are organizing unions and using their unions to fight for higher pay and cost-of-living protection.”

Pointing to the strikes by 33,000 Machinists at Boeing, the 30-day strike by Communications Workers of America members at AT&T, and the continuing strikes by UNITE HERE hotel workers across the country, Fruit said, “Workers today are in a mood to fight. And contract deadlines are coming up as well for the 45,000 dockworkers in the International Longshoremen’s Association and 200,000 postal workers.”

“There are 16.2 million workers in the U.S. who are in unions,” Fruit said. “That can be a powerful force if united and acting together. But it only represents 10% of the working class and 6% of workers in private industry. The other 90% need to be or-



Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, spoke at public meeting in Cincinnati Sept. 22. John Hawkins, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Ohio, is on left.

ganized along with our allies among exploited producers like small farmers, truckers and fishermen.

Fight against Jew-hatred

“We explain that Jew-hatred — a reflection of the crisis of capitalism — is also a life-and-death question for the working class and our unions,” Fruit said. “We have to act against every move to slander, scapegoat and attack Jews.”

“The persecution of Jews goes back two millennia,” she pointed out. “But with the dawn of the imperialist epoch, it became an international question. It is linked to the survival of the capitalist class in its death agony. The imperialist epoch opens the line of march of the working class toward power, it’s the epoch of socialist revolution.

“We defend Israel as a refuge for Jews from anywhere in the world,” Fruit said.

“But Israel cannot solve the problem. The solution is tied to building a revolutionary working-class party

of all nationalities in every country, including Israel, that works toward workers conquering power.”

“We are for the Ukrainians defeating the Putin regime in its war against Ukraine’s sovereignty,” Fruit added. She pointed to the growing opposition of working people and soldiers in Russia to Putin’s war, describing it as “the most important solidarity possible for the people of Ukraine.”

“We don’t support the capitalist governments in Ukraine and Israel who depend on their fickle imperialist allies who put their own interests first. But if they win the wars they are fighting for the survival of their countries, the working class will have more space to organize, to unite and to find their allies in other countries.

Fruit ended her talk pointing to the Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution in 1917 and the Cuban Revolution led by Fidel Castro in 1959. “In both cases they defied the most powerful forces on earth and won.

“The Cuban toilers have shown the world what can be achieved, how social relations will change, how human beings will change. And we fight like hell to defend that revolution.”

“What does it mean to endorse the SWP campaign?” one participant asked.

“The starting point is that you agree we need to break from the lesser evil politics of backing either the Democrats or Republicans,” Fruit responded. “And that you want to help us, campaign with us or join us as we win solidarity for workers on strike, or at rallies like the postal workers are planning for Oct. 1.”

Fruit visits memorial to Black rights fighter Fred Shuttlesworth



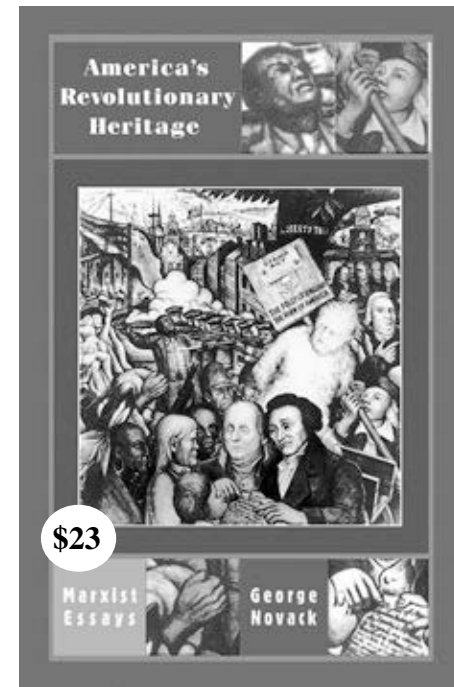
Left, Militant/Mary Martin; above, Voices of the Civil Rights Movement

On left, Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, visits the Fred Shuttlesworth Archive at the Greater New Light Baptist Church in Cincinnati Sept. 21. Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth was a leader of the mass proletarian movement that overturned Jim Crow segregation in Birmingham, Alabama. Fruit was welcomed by Rev. Stevie Bester, Shuttlesworth’s grandson.

Above, Shuttlesworth’s home in Birmingham after it was firebombed by the Ku Klux Klan Dec. 25, 1956. Bester told Fruit the family moved from Birmingham to Cincinnati after the bombing, and Shuttlesworth went back and forth between the two cities.

In 1963, Shuttlesworth led thousands of youth in street battles in what became known as the Battle of Birmingham, in the face of mass arrests, vicious cop assaults and criticism by U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy. The intransigence of the fighters who took part was key in bringing down segregation there. Their victory gave powerful impetus to the movement for Black rights throughout the country.

— MARY MARTIN



\$23

pathfinderpress.com

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Help the *Militant* cover labor struggles around the world!

This column is dedicated to spreading the truth about workers struggles for a union movement in every workplace today. It gives a voice to those engaged in battle and helps build solidarity. We need your help to make it a success. If you are involved in a skirmish or strike or know other workers who are, please contact us at (212) 244-4899 or themilitant@mac.com. We'll work together to ensure your story gets told.

Pittsburgh area nurses win big, vow to continue the fight

PITTSBURGH — “We have accomplished so much as a union at West Penn, Allegheny General, and Allegheny Valley,” Katie Kiesel, a labor and delivery nurse at West Penn Hospital and a member of SEIU Healthcare Pennsylvania, told the *Militant* in a phone interview Sept. 19. “But we all know that only when nurses and hospital workers at every AHN and UPMC hospital are all standing together can we completely transform health care in this region.

“We’re committed to building a movement that achieves that. We’re committed to standing with union members that are continuing to negotiate contracts, and we’re committed to standing with nonunion health care workers advocating for a voice for their patients and their professions. Our victory at West Penn is just the start!”

The Allegheny Health Network and University of Pittsburgh Medical Center dominate health care access in the Pittsburgh area. UPMC is largely nonunion. After voting to strike overwhelmingly in November 2023, nurses at Allegheny General Hospital won a contract with a 23% wage increase over three years and improvements in nurse-to-patient ratios. This September, similar gains were demanded by nurses at AHN hospitals West Penn and Allegheny Valley, who voted strike authorization by over 99%. At Allegheny Valley, hospital workers bargained together with the nurses.

Nurses and hospital workers rallied in front of both hospitals vowing to strike if their demands were not met. Management offered contracts raising wages for nurses to a minimum of \$40 an hour by the end of the three-year contract. Hospital workers at Allegheny Valley will get a minimum of \$20. Nurse-to-patient ratio improvements were won, as well as gains in working conditions. Workers voted to approve

the contracts overwhelmingly.

Now on the agenda are negotiations for a better union contract for nurses at UPMC Western Psychiatric Hospital. Chronic understaffing has led to the closing of one-third of patient beds there. Nurse Chris Hunter described in the *Tribune-Review* the more than 100% turnover in nurses there over three years.

— Candace Wagner

Bay Area Sheetrock workers strike for pay, family time

ANTIOCH, Calif. — More than 100 workers went on strike at the Georgia-Pacific Sheetrock plant here Sept. 16 after company bosses refused to offer more than a 3% wage increase.

“The big issue is money,” said Jose Rivera, who has worked here nine years. Married with three children, he told the *Militant* he typically works 60 or 70 hours a week just to pay their bills.

Every worker in the plant walked out. For most it is their first strike. About 90 of them are members of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 6. Others are mechanics and electricians, members of International Association of Machinists Local 1584. Teamster truck drivers are honoring the picket lines.

Forced overtime, last minute schedule changes and lack of family time are also big issues. “More often than not, you can be forced to work 12-hour shifts for five or six days in a row,” said Christian Ortega, a worker and production and shipping union representative with Local 6. “You can have plans for doing something with your family and at the last minute they can force you to cancel them and come in.”

Workers are also fed up with unsafe working conditions. Pigeons fly through the plant dropping feces. Proper ventilation or showers are needed for dealing with fiberglass you get covered with, as well as the heat



Militant

Members of ILWU Local 6, IAM Local 1584 on strike at Georgia-Pacific in Antioch, California, Sept. 23, fighting for better wages, working conditions, schedule changes, more family time.

inside the plant, Ortega said.

Georgia-Pacific reported revenue of over \$17 billion in 2023. To try to break the strike, the company is busying in scabs from as far away as Texas and Arizona.

Solidarity with this fight is needed. Unions and individuals are urged to donate to “Support Local 6 Workers in Their Strike for Fair Wages — GoFundMe.” Join the picket line weekdays outside the plant at 801 Minaker Drive.

— Betsey Stone

Australian construction workers fight to defend their union

SYDNEY — Chanting “Union Power!” more than 5,000 construction and other building trades workers marched through the central city here Sept. 18 protesting the Labor government’s takeover of the construction workers’ union. Tens of thousands also marched in Melbourne, and the previous day in Brisbane.

They rallied outside the New South Wales state Parliament. Darren Greenfield, state secretary of the construction division of the Construction, Forestry and Maritime Employees Union, was greeted with prolonged cheers. “Workers will see through what the Labor Party has done to our union,” he said. “We will always stand up for our members.”

Greenfield was dismissed after the construction division of the CFMEU was placed under government administration Aug. 23. After rushing special legislation through Parliament with bipartisan support, the Labor government appointed a state administrator to run the union, who dismissed 281 of the union’s elected leaders.

CFMEU delegate Denis McNamara was another removed from his union positions. “They said it was in our best interests, but they never asked any of us what we thought. We’re telling them now!” he told the rally. “We’ll continue to fight until everyone is reinstated — the leaders we voted for — and the legislation repealed. We will come out stronger and more united.”

“This is an attack on every union. We call on all unions to stand up and fight with us,” McNamara said. Representatives of the Electrical Trades Union, the Plumbers Union, the Australian Manufacturing Workers’ Union and the Maritime Union of Australia spoke in support of the CFMEU.

Leaders of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the national union federation, have backed the federal government assault. “The ACTU has turned its back on workers and trade unions,” said Maritime Union of Australia Sydney branch secretary Paul Keating.

CFMEU members who’ve been on strike for over 40 days at Etex, a plant that processes plasterboard, joined the action. Rally participants enthusiastically gave donations to help their fight.

This was the second large protest in three weeks, winning broadening support especially from unions in the building trades.

— Linda Harris

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



October 11, 1999

Hurricane Floyd has brought disaster in its wake for tens of thousands of working people from North Carolina to New Jersey. At least 50 people have died, and 20,000 have been driven from their homes in the worst-hit state, North Carolina.

Capitalist relations shape the differential impact of the floods. The wealthier farmers who employ wage labor tend to live on higher ground. They are the major recipients of government assistance. Workers, farmers and their families, along with proprietors of small enterprises, bear the brunt of the flooding. Their farms, homes, schools and jobs are destroyed or jeopardized.

Workers and working farmers must stand together to demand immediate and massive cash relief for those affected by the flood. We should also demand: Stop all farm foreclosures — not one working farmer should lose one acre of land.



October 11, 1974

On Sept. 30 Gen. Antonio de Spínola resigned as president of Portugal after being forced by mass pressure to call off a major right-wing mobilization scheduled for Sept. 28 in Lisbon.

Buses were to have brought participants from sections of the country. However, the bus drivers union responded by stopping all buses into Lisbon. Teams of workers, students, and supporters of the Communist, Socialist and other political groups stationed themselves around the city to stop any armed rightists from entering.

If the capitalist rulers become sufficiently alarmed over the possibility of mass actions getting out of their control, there is a real danger of a rightist coup. Such a defeat could only be prevented by a broad mobilization of the masses, led by a revolutionary party aiming at establishing a government of the workers and peasants.



October 10, 1949

Goaded beyond endurance by the arrogant steel monopolists who are demanding nothing less than unconditional surrender, more than 500,000 workers in basic steel have chosen the only honorable course left open to them — strike action.

Including 380,000 soft coal miners who left the pits three weeks ago, American workers now on strike total nearly a million. Thus, the battle of steel involves not merely the immediate issue — contributory or noncontributory pensions — but a test of strength to determine whether or not the steel workers union shall continue to endure.

Government intervention remains the deadliest threat to the strike. [President] Truman can do this through the Taft-Hartley Act, which he has not hesitated to use in the past. Let the slogan of the labor movement be: “The monopolists asked for it — now let ’em have it!”

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

A Year After the Murderous Hamas Pogrom: The Road Forward for Fighting Jew-Hatred in the World. Speaker: Norton Sandler, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., Oct. 6, 5 p.m. Donation: \$5. 2826 S. Vermont Ave, Suite 1. Tel.: (323) 643-4968.

Oakland

Meet and Hear Dennis Richter, Socialist Workers Party Vice Presidential Candidate. Sat., Oct. 5. Buffet reception, 5:30 p.m.; program, 6:30 p.m. Donation: \$5 buffet; \$5 program. Community Center, 13909 E. 14th St., San Leandro. Tel.: (510) 686-1351.

Dockworkers prepare for strike as October 1 contract deadline looms

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

The Oct. 1 strike deadline for 45,000 dockworkers on the East and Gulf coasts is rapidly approaching, with members of the International Longshoremen's Association at three dozen ports from Texas to Maine organizing to walk out if no new contract is in place. Hundreds packed union meetings around the country over the past two weeks to discuss strike plans. It would be the union's first walkout since 1977.

Wages are one of the key issues. "The ILA proposal not only makes up for the past few years of extremely high inflation, and long-term inflation going back decades," ILA President Harold J. Daggett told a meeting of 250 union delegates in Teaneck, New Jersey, Sept. 18, but "also ensures the financial security of ILA members and their families through the uncertainty of the coming years."

On Sept. 23 the union said the two parties had been in communication many times in recent weeks but a stalemate remains. The employers' group, the United States Maritime Alliance, "continues to offer ILA longshore workers an unacceptable wage increase package."

The bosses' push for more automation is the other critical issue, both to prevent job losses and defend safety on the job. Negotiations broke down June 10 when ILA officials said they discovered automated equipment to process trucks was being used at Alabama's Port of Mobile, in violation of the current contract.

Working on the docks is dangerous. On Sept. 18 a worker died at the Port of Houston after a stack of pipes collapsed onto him. A report published in February by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health says workers in marine terminals and port operations are five times more likely to die on the job than other workers.

The threats to workers' health from automation caused bosses at the Port of Auckland in New Zealand, after spending \$65 million, to back off moves toward automation in 2021. As one news article put it, the signs of trouble were not subtle: "When large machines which are supposed to be coordinated crash into containers and topple over walls, you know something is seriously wrong."

The ILA has also had to fight attempts by bosses to open new marine terminals without union representation.

After two ocean carriers attempted to unload with nonunion labor at the new Leatherman Terminal in the South Carolina Port of Charleston in 2021, the ILA took them to court, finally winning its case this year. One group deeply disappointed by the decision was the bosses planning a similar nonunion scheme for a new container terminal in Georgia's Port of Savannah.

A group of 177 retailers, manufacturers and automakers have sent a letter to the White House demanding that the Biden administration step in to stop any strike. The strike at this point "would have a devastating impact on the economy," they said. East and Gulf coast ports handle more than 40% of U.S. imports.

The shipping carriers, never passing up an opportunity, have already announced plans to hike rates.

So far President Joseph Biden says he won't interfere. "We've never invoked Taft-Hartley to break a strike and are not considering doing so now," a Biden administration official told Reuters. Time will tell, but it's worth recalling that Biden, backed by a bipartisan Congress, invoked the notorious Railway Labor Act to force rail workers back on the job in 2022 under a contract they had voted down.

Fighting government interference

Dockworkers have long experience with government interference, from threats to invoke the Taft-Hartley Act, to restrictions on pickets, to attacks by the courts and cops. Nowhere is this better known than at the Port of New



International Longshoremen's Association

Members of International Longshoremen's Association Local 1422A who work at the Port of Charleston in South Carolina meet to discuss and organize in fight for a new contract.

York-New Jersey, where the infamous Waterfront Commission regularly busted labor actions and framed union militants, claiming the union was controlled by "the mafia."

The 70-year-old Commission of New York Harbor officially closed shop in July 2023. New Jersey officials won a U.S. Supreme Court decision holding that since the harbor's working docks are now 90% in New Jersey, and the New Jersey State Police was more than capable of licensing dockworkers and policing the port, the commission should be disbanded.

In April, New York authorized a new Waterfront Commission to hold sway over the remaining New York docks. This decision was praised by New York's *Daily News* Sept. 3, which claimed the New Jersey legislature had bowed to "Harold Daggett

and his mobbed-up International Longshoremen's Association."

The FNV Havens union, the largest union of longshore workers in the Netherlands, told the U.S. union that it "fully supports the ILA in their just demands for fairness. Port workers often serve the same shipping companies worldwide," it said, that "make mega profits and believe they can demand anything and everything from port workers."

Statements of support have also come from the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, whose members work on the West Coast; Bermuda Industrial Union; International Transport Workers Federation, which represents 20 million transportation workers globally; and the International Dockworkers Council, which represents 120,000 dockworkers.

Boeing strikers solid, as bosses try to skirt the union

Continued from front page

of the Oregon Nurses Association, the American Postal Workers Union, United Auto Workers and other IAM locals attended, as well as a delegation of some 25 United Food and Commercial Workers who had struck Fred Meyer groceries a few weeks ago.

Members of the Laborers and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers helped shuttle people from the Laborers' union hall parking lot to the rally.

Strikers have "got the support of our 600,000 both active and retired members all across the United States and Canada," International IAM President Brian Bryant, told the rally. Boeing

has "been paying exorbitant salaries to their executives and managers; the bonuses that they've given; the stock buybacks that they've given," he said. "They can go to that same well and settle this contract with the workers."

In Seattle, striking production workers have received support from Boeing firefighters, who were locked out earlier this year during their fight for a new contract.

"Last time we got a raise was two years ago at 1%," Jeff Seifert, a gear cutter at the Gresham plant, told KOIN 6 News. "I have worked every other weekend for the last year in order to make my bills and have nothing extra at all to spend, to do anything with my family."

"Boeing's disregard for working people in the pursuit of ever higher profits has directly led us to this strike, and caused the safety issues that have damaged public trust in Boeing," IAM Local 751 wrote in a statement in the *Portland Tribune*. Crashes of Boeing 737 MAX planes in 2018 and 2019 left 346 people dead.

Engineers contract up soon

The engineers at Boeing have been gearing up for their own contract talks and have been strong supporters of their striking co-workers.

"Boeing needs to make striking Machinists an offer that would end the current dispute and put them back to work," said John Dimas, president of the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace in a union statement.

"The IAM's success at the bargaining table now will lay the foundation for our own SPEEA contract talks in 2026," he said. "I encourage members of our union to continue supporting the Machinists, and in particular to volunteer to spend time during your off-work hours standing on picket lines alongside them."

Boeing announced it would implement "rolling furloughs" for mostly nonunion employees with one week off unpaid every four weeks. This includes departments involved in defense and space, commercial aircraft, aftermarket services and safety compliance.

Bosses tried to get SPEEA to go along with the furloughs, but the union refused.

"Why would we do something that would hurt our union brothers and sisters?" Ryan Rule, a SPEEA Local 2001 member in Seattle, told the *Militant* Sept. 23.

Boeing has flown in some 400 janitors from a few southern states to clean up the facilities during the strike. The work they're doing is normally performed by Machinist union workers.

Government mediators joined negotiations Sept. 17 between the union and the company, with talks breaking off the next day. No further talks are scheduled.

Show your support! Walk the picket line and bring a friend. Foodstuffs, donations, firewood, and help staffing kitchens and shuttles are needed. Contact the IAM hall at 9125 15th Place S., Seattle, WA 98108. To make contributions to the strike, go to iam751/hardship fund.



Some 200,000 postal workers, members of the American Postal Workers Union, are fighting for a new contract around issues that affect millions of working people — paychecks that keep up with inflation, safety improvements, end of two-tier wages, better work schedules and rights for part-time workers.

Saying, "Union proud, say it loud!" postal workers are wearing union stickers and buttons every Thursday during negotiations. The APWU has called for an Oct. 1 day of action, with rallies planned in more than 70 cities across the country. For information for the one nearest you, go to apwu.org. The *Militant* urges readers to join and show your support.

White House uses 'Foreign Agent' law to target political opponents

BY TERRY EVANS

The Democrats are dealing blows to sorely needed constitutional freedoms with their barrage of prosecutions aimed at stopping Donald Trump from regaining the White House in 2024. Alongside this, they're stepping up use of the FBI — the capitalist rulers' main political police outfit — and the courts to frame up political opponents, claiming they're illegal "foreign agents."

On Aug. 7 the FBI raided the home of Scott Ritter — a former United Nations weapons inspector and an adviser to Trump's 2016 campaign — after seizing his passport at the airport in June as he was about to board a plane for a planned speaking tour in Russia.

The search warrant for the FBI raid on Ritter's home in Delmar, New York, was granted by a federal district court. It rubber stamped the FBI's seizure of his "computers, computer equipment, cellular telephones and/or any other electronic media." Going beyond the court order, they also seized paper files.

During the raid, Ritter says an agent told him he was being investigated for violating the Foreign Agents Registration Act. He says the agent made him aware that the FBI was spying on his correspondence, telling him one of his emails "suggests that you were taking instructions from the Russian Embassy."

"It shows no such thing," Ritter replied, pointing out he had contacted the embassy to check the accuracy of a quote from the ambassador that he was using in an article he was writing.

The raid was "a fishing expedition," Ritter says. So far no charges have been filed against him.

Ritter is a former Marine major and was a prominent U.N. weapons inspector in Iraq from 1991 to 1998. Claims by Washington that the Saddam Hussein regime had weapons of mass destruction were used to justify a brutal U.N. embargo of the country and for launching the U.S.-led 2003 Iraq War.

Ritter quit the "weapons inspection" racket in 1998, accusing Washington of not being tough enough on Saddam, before having a political change of heart and becoming a critic of U.S. intervention in the Middle East.

Since then, he's become an enthusiastic apologist for Vladimir Putin's regime and its murderous war in Ukraine. Ritter claims the Ukrainian government

had carried out "crimes against humanity" after Putin's invasion in 2022. He wrote that Ukrainian forces carried out a false flag operation in Bucha, killing hundreds of their own people and blaming Moscow — a patently false accusation. Since 2020 Ritter has been a contributor to Russia Today, a publication financed by Moscow.

Defense of Ritter from FBI harassment has nothing to do with support for any of his political views, but with safeguarding his right to hold them and to speak and write about them. It is not a crime for his views and those of the Russian government to be similar. It's free speech.

Use of 'foreign agents' law

These frame-up moves against Ritter come at the same time the Justice Department has filed Foreign Agents Registration Act charges against two Russia Today reporters and to frame up leaders of the African People's Socialist Party and its support group UHURU.

Adopted on the eve of World War II, the Foreign Agents Registration Act was used by the Democratic administration of President Franklin Roosevelt to target the Socialist Workers Party for organizing opposition in the working class to U.S. entry into the second imperialist world war over markets and spheres of influence. The Justice Department admits the law was one of the reasons it gave for continuing to target the SWP into the 1950s.

Washington justifies stepped-up use

Democrats move to block third parties from the ballot

BY TERRY EVANS

The heart of the Democrats' campaign for president this year is their full-throated attack on Donald Trump as a dictatorial ultrarightist. The *Washington Post* headlined Catherine Rampell's Sept. 24 column, "Don't scoff at the Hitler comparisons. Trump's rhetoric is that bad." Democrats claim no less than "democracy is on the ballot" in 2024.

But at the same time, they're driving to get third parties and independent candidates thrown off the ballot across the country. This is an assault on the constitutional right to be able to vote for the candidate of your choice.

For decades the Democratic and Republican parties have passed laws, including daunting petitioning requirements, to try to keep the Socialist Workers Party and others who aren't candidates of the bosses' two main parties off the ballot. Or, if the petitions meet the requirement, to find technicalities to try to do the job.

According to the Aug. 1 *Ballot Access News*, "Eight minor party and independent presidential candidates are facing challenges to their ballot access. This is the highest number of such candidates in history." It points out that "the overwhelming number of challenges so far have been filed by Democrats."

They're denouncing "third party" candidates in increasingly shrill tones.

The Green Party's presidential candidate, Jill Stein, is "predatory," Democratic Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-



FBI agents raid home of Scott Ritter, former U.N. weapons inspector in Iraq, later Trump adviser, Aug. 7 after seizing his passport as he boarded plane for tour in Russia. U.S. rulers use "Foreign Agents" act, FBI to attack constitutional right to free speech and association.

of the law today as part of going after a "Russian government-sponsored foreign malign influence operation." Secretary of State Antony Blinken denounced media like Russia Today Sept. 13 as "a de facto arm of Russia's intelligence apparatus," claiming it is trying to "undermine democracy in the United States."

This led Meta, which owns Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, to ban Russia Today from using its platforms, as did Alphabet, the parent company of YouTube.

In a related case, journalist Dmitri Simes and his wife Anastasia were indicted Sept. 5 for alleged violations of U.S. sanctions against Russia and for money-laundering, charges that carry up to 20 years in prison. The FBI had raided the Simes' home in Virginia Aug. 13, seizing paintings by Russian artists.

Simes is a former adviser to Presi-

dent Richard Nixon. He campaigned for Trump in 2016. Now resident in Russia, he hosts a weekly chat show there on state-controlled TV.

Simes told the *Washington Post* he's being prosecuted for doing nothing more than "presenting my point of view." Adding, "I thought the First Amendment was designed exactly to protect unpopular views."

The government attacks on free speech echo the "Russia-collusion" hoax used by Hillary Clinton's campaign in 2016, the FBI and the Democrat-controlled House of Representatives to smear and later to try to impeach Trump. Their targeting of political opponents is aimed not just at people whose views mirror those of the Kremlin. They're aimed at setting a precedent to be used against the working class and our unions as the class struggle heats up.

Cortez insisted Sept. 1, because "all you do is show up every four years to speak to people who are justifiably pissed off." She doesn't mention that people are "justifiably pissed off" because neither the Democrats nor Republicans offer a road forward for working people.

New York Times commentator Gail Collins claims Stein's 2016 campaign was responsible for Hillary Clinton's loss to Trump that year and the Green's Ralph Nader candidacy in 2000 for Al Gore's defeat by George W. Bush. Stein "really ought to be doing something else" with her life, Collins says.

The Democrats' drive to limit the ballot is especially fierce in what they call "swing" states.

On Sept. 20 the U.S. Supreme Court refused to overturn a Nevada court ruling tossing Stein off the ballot. Stein's campaign had met all Nevada's petitioning requirements, collecting 10,000 signatures. But an official in the secretary of state's office had sent the Green Party the wrong sample affidavit that so-called minor parties are obligated to submit for the people who collect their signatures. They sent the sample that's required for putting referenda on the ballot, not the one for candidates.

The Greens used the paperwork they were sent, and Democrats got a compliant court to rule her off the ballot, despite acknowledging that the mistake had in fact been made by the state. With polls currently showing Trump and Kamala Harris neck-and-neck in Nevada, Democrats were des-

perate to stop candidates they think will siphon votes away from Harris.

In Pennsylvania, another "swing state," Democrats have won lawsuits throwing presidential candidates Cornel West, an African American academic who's listed as an independent, and Claudia de la Cruz of the Party for Socialism and Liberation, off the ballot.

In Georgia, the state Supreme Court Sept. 15 put a hold on an order by two lower court judges throwing West and de la Cruz off the ballot there. The ruling means their names will be printed on paper ballots, but the high court still has to rule on whether their votes will be counted.

Over the years, petitioning requirements for parties other than the Democrats and Republicans, the capitalist rulers' two main parties, have been made more and more onerous. Today a presidential candidate designated as independent by state authorities in California must turn in 219,403 valid signatures.

With an eye toward future deepening class struggle, these restrictions are in place to make it as difficult as possible for the working class to break from the rulers' two-party shell game and organize our own party, a party of labor, to challenge the employers, their parties and governments for political power.

All attacks on ballot access — including for third-party capitalist candidates like Stein and West — should be opposed.

Battles with Hezbollah heat up

Continued from front page

defense of their class interests. At the behest of the reactionary bourgeois regime in Iran, Hezbollah began daily attacks on northern Israel, using drones, missiles and anti-tank weapons Oct. 8, the day after Hamas thugs murdered 1,200 people in southern Israel, wounded thousands, took more than 250 hostages and raped and mutilated dozens of women. Oct. 7 was the worst anti-Jewish pogrom since the Nazi-organized Holocaust in World War II.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah says he launched the attacks in solidarity with Hamas, and that the attacks will continue until Israel agrees to a cease-fire in Gaza.

As a result, more than 60,000 citizens of Israel — including many Arab citizens — have been evacuated from the north and are unable to return to their homes. Some 26 civilians have been killed there since Oct. 7, along with 22 soldiers.

Israeli counterattacks have killed over 580 Hezbollah members and their allies. On Sept. 17 some 3,000 Hezbollah operatives across the country were wounded and 39 killed when their boot-trapped pagers exploded.

On top of that, an Israeli airstrike Sept. 20 eliminated almost the entire leadership of Hezbollah's elite Radwan Force, which leads the group's offensives against Israel, including its commander, Ibrahim Aquil.

Israel to Lebanese civilians: evacuate

Before the latest round of fighting some 80,000 Lebanese civilians left their homes near the Israeli border. Tens of thousands more fled north Sept. 23, after the Israel Defense Forces got the word out to civilians that it planned to take out arms depots, rockets and rocket launchers hidden in homes in the south.

The IDF sent text messages in Arabic, made phone calls and broadcast statements by taking over Lebanese radio transmissions, urging them to leave. "Hezbollah is lying to you and sacrificing you," one message said. "Its

missiles and drones are more valuable and important to it than you are." Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Lebanese there that "once our operation is finished, you can come back safely to your homes."

On Sept. 23 alone, the Israeli air force carried out 650 sorties, striking over 1,300 targets, the largest attack on Hezbollah since what is now known as the 2006 Second Lebanon War.

In close collaboration with Tehran and with its financing and training, Hamas launched its Oct. 7 pogrom, aiming to terrorize Jews and everyone else in the area — Bedouins, Arabs and workers from abroad. They hoped that taking a large number of hostages would force the release of thousands of Hamas thugs imprisoned in Israel for carrying out terrorist attacks and would sabotage moves by Arab and Muslim regimes to "normalize" diplomatic and economic relations with Israel. They also thought it would advance their long-term goal of destroying Israel and expelling or killing the Jews that live there.

Hezbollah represses working people

Hezbollah thugs — like its allies in Hamas in Gaza and its masters in Tehran — intimidate, assault and murder their opponents. In June, some 20 armed Hezbollah thugs assaulted journalist Rami Naim in broad daylight in Beirut. "My great crime is having a stance against Hezbollah," Naim told the media.

But unlike Hamas in Gaza, which smashed its rival Fatah in 2007, Hezbollah has never completely dominated Lebanon, contending with competing bourgeois parties and with a working class that finds ways to assert its interests.

On Oct. 27, 2019, for example, some 170,000 protesters from all religions formed a 105-mile chain linking Lebanon's north and south. The protest arose out of opposition to tax hikes and called for the government's resignation.

The Israeli government's goal is to force Nasrallah to pull Hezbollah back from the border and to end its air



October 2019 anti-government protest in Beirut brought together Sunnis, Shiites, Druze, Christians and others. Hezbollah, armed, financed and trained by the reactionary capitalist regime in Tehran dominates the country by intimidating workers, political opponents.

attacks, so residents of northern Israel can safely return to their homes. It also aims to degrade Hezbollah's command structure and military forces to block further attacks.

So far neither Hezbollah nor its "advisers" in Tehran have shown they are prepared for a full-scale war. Israel is "dragging us to a point where we do not wish to go," Iranian President Masoud Peshkian complained on Sept. 23. "There is no winner in warfare." But responsibility for the widening of the war is on Tehran's shoulders. It helped plan and fund the Oct. 7 pogrom, pushed Hezbollah to attack northern Israel and continues to drive toward production of nuclear weapons — a deadly threat to Israel.

At the same time, the Joseph Biden administration continues to press Israel to end its war on Hamas before

the Jew-hating group is completely dismantled, pull back from its attacks on Hezbollah, and find an "off-ramp" from the fighting.

The U.S. rulers' concern is not fighting Jew-hatred or defending Israel as a refuge for Jews. Their goal is to gain some stability for U.S. imperialist interests in collaboration with regimes throughout the region.

"A diplomatic solution is still possible," Biden told the United Nations General Assembly Sept. 24. "In fact, it remains the only path to lasting security to allow the residents from both countries to return to their homes."

The crisis in the Middle East will be at the center of discussions at the General Assembly, where the U.N.'s leadership itself and a majority of its members have been acting as apologists for Hamas and Hezbollah.

Counterrevolution in Iran led to formation of Hezbollah in Lebanon

BY SETH GALINSKY

Unlike Hamas, whose roots are in Egypt's Sunni Muslim Brotherhood and its collaboration with the Nazis during World War II, Hezbollah was a direct creation of the regime that took power through a counterrevolution in Iran after pushing back the 1979 popular revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed shah.

Lebanon, which was under French colonial rule after the first imperialist world war, won its independence in 1943. The government setup included Maronite and Orthodox Christians, Sunni and Shiite Muslims, Druze, Armenians and other minorities. Its first constitution included representation for 18 distinct religions. Since then the three highest offices — the president, prime minister and speaker of parliament — are divided between a Maronite Christian, a Sunni Muslim and a Shiite Muslim respectively.

Added to the mix were thousands of Palestinian refugees who fled the 1948 war launched by five reactionary semi-feudal Arab regimes against Israel after the U.N. recognized it. Palestinians and their children are still denied citizenship or even the right to own property in Lebanon.

This unstable arrangement exploded in a civil war that lasted from 1975 to 1990, including a long Syrian military intervention. Israeli troops occupied parts of the country from 1982 to 1984,

in response to attacks by Lebanese-based units of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The war devastated Lebanon and left more than 100,000 dead and 1 million displaced.

Seeing an opportunity to extend its counterrevolution in the region while presenting itself as leading the fight against U.S. imperialism and for Lebanese sovereignty, Tehran in 1982 — with the agreement of the Syrian dictatorship — sent some 1,500 Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps "advisers" to work with Shiite-based militias to form "The Party of God" — Hezbollah.

In 1985, Hezbollah issued an "open letter," which remains its program to this day. It denounced Washington for supporting "the Zionist entity that has usurped the sacred Islamic land of Palestine" and claimed that "the Jew" is the biggest enemy Muslims face. Mixing anti-imperialist rhetoric with open Jew-hatred, Hezbollah said its main goal was the "final obliteration from existence" of Israel.

Despite being supported only by a minority of Lebanese, Hezbollah — with millions of dollars of funding and weapons from Tehran — became the most powerful force in the country, much more powerful than the Lebanese army. Its participation in the fractured government ensures that no measures are taken that could limit its power or Tehran's reactionary influence.

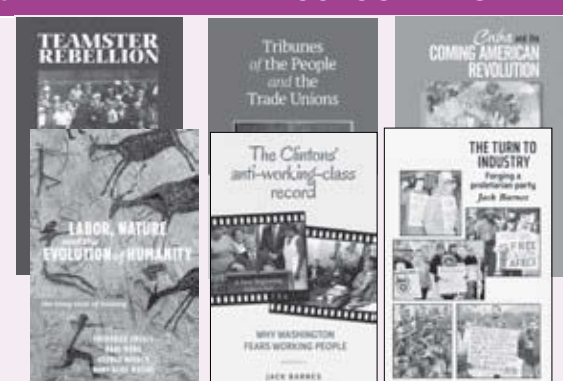
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Putin whitewashes history of Stalin, seeks to hide repression in Russia, occupied Ukraine

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine has faced determined resistance for more than two and a half years as Ukrainian working people there fight to defend their country's sovereignty. Putin is also waging a war on the home front with tightening police repression, censorship and stepped-up state propaganda to try to deter growing opposition among Russian soldiers, their families and other working people.

The Kremlin is rewriting history to justify its course. Revised high school textbooks now convey Putin's self-serving narrative glorifying Russia's "1,000-year" history leading to him being presented as a new czar. An 11th grade textbook now describes his attempted conquest of Ukraine as "the return of our historical lands."

Putin, a former KGB political-police officer, now wants to erase the memory of the anti-working-class crimes of Joseph Stalin. He claims both he and Stalin are great wartime leaders in the fight against "Nazism."

In reality, the German imperialist invasion of the Soviet Union in World War II was defeated by millions of workers and peasants who fought to defend their workers state in spite of, not because of, Stalin's brutal regime. Fearing opposition, Stalin had killed or imprisoned the Soviet military leadership on the eve of the war.

Putin is now moving to overturn the "rehabilitation" of victims of Stalin's Great Terror. Three-quarters of a million people were killed with a million more imprisoned in Gulag forced-labor camps starting in the 1930s.

Lenin's revolution reversed by Stalin

These bloody purges were the culmination of a bureaucratic counter-revolution headed by Stalin against the proletarian internationalist course of Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin that had marked the early years of the Russian Revolution.

Lenin is hated by Putin, both for his overthrow of the czarist regime and for defending national self-determination for Ukrainians, Georgians and other oppressed nationalities under the czarist prison house of nations.

Lenin's final political struggle was against bureaucratic encroachments on working-class control of the new state and to try to safeguard the voluntary character of the union of the Soviet republics. After Lenin's death, thousands of revolutionary militants were among those executed, imprisoned or exiled in Stalin's purges of the 1930s. Leon Trotsky led those committed to uphold Lenin's course against the consolidation of the counterrevolutionary bureaucracy under Stalin.

Under growing pressure from both inside and outside of Russia, a "thaw" in

repression was carried out by Stalin's successor, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, and later by Mikhail Gorbachev. These regimes released thousands of prisoners and thousands more were proclaimed rehabilitated posthumously.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union at the end of the 1980s, rehabilitations accelerated. Under a sweeping 1991 law, over 3 million people had their names belatedly cleared of Stalin's frame-up charges.

Now Putin wants to begin reversing those measures. These moves follow Putin's 2021 banning of Memorial, the Russian rights organization that documented Soviet-era crimes. A new draft law aims to overturn rehabilitations as part of "defending society from destructive infopsychological influence."

Putin revives Soviet-era denunciation

Putin earlier had tried to disassociate himself from Stalin's legacy. "Stalinism is associated with a personality cult and mass violations of the law, with repression and camps," he said in 2013. "There is nothing like this in Russia and, I hope, never will be again." But



"Mask of Sorrow" by Ernst Neizvestny erected in 1996 in Magadan on Russia's remote Far East Pacific coast dedicated to victims of Stalinist Soviet Gulag system.

now he has presided over the construction of a new Gulag.

"The level of repression and of terror increased enormously" in the occupied areas, including Crimea, after Putin's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Halya Coynash wrote in the Sept. 20 Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group newsletter.

Now Putin's regime "has systematically reinstated Soviet-era denunciations in the Russian Federation and is trying to do the same in occupied parts of Ukraine," she wrote. As part of the "general warmongering hysteria," she noted, the rationale is the need "to fight 'extremism,' a concept as broad and elastic as 'spies' and 'traitors' during the years of Soviet Terror."

And Moscow is moving to "reinstate another foul feature of the Soviet regime, namely the notorious Stalin-era SMERSH 'counterintelligence' units." These secret forces, she noted, "will be used as an additional weapon of terror directed against Ukrainian resistance and Ukrainian identity."

The memory of Stalin's crimes runs deep among millions of families across the former Soviet Union whose relatives became victims. Now the growing opposition to Moscow's war and the Kremlin's bloody repression threaten Putin's regime.

Pathfinder welcomed at Federation of Blind convention

BY NED MEASEL

ORLANDO, Fla. — The National Federation of the Blind held its annual convention here. These conventions are the largest gatherings worldwide of blind and low vision people, their families, friends and supporters. This year, some 2,600 registered in person and another 600 viewed online. Seventy-five came from abroad. The sessions took place July 3-8.

Pathfinder Press set up a booth, the third time it has done so. Booth volunteers distributed flyers on featured books written by Socialist Workers Party and other revolutionary working-class leaders that are available in Braille and large print on Bookshare.org. These include *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward* by SWP leaders Jack Barnes, Mary-Alice Waters and Steve Clark; *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class*; and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, also by Barnes.

Chuck Hietala, a retired over-the-road trucker and Teamster union member from Florida, stopped by the table along with his wife, who is blind. He's from a union family on the Minnesota Iron Range.

He wanted to discuss the increase in labor resistance over the last year, as more workers are turning to their unions or organizing one where they had none. He bought the series of four books by Farrell Dobbs on the class-struggle course followed by the Teamsters in Minneapolis and throughout the Midwest in the 1930s.

The booth next to Pathfinder was set

up by Guide Dogs of America. "The Machinists union started that organization," Hietala said.

The young woman staffing the booth said workers there had been represented by the International Association of Machinists for decades. The group was founded in 1948 after Joseph Jones Sr., a retired machinist, was denied training with a guide dog because he was deemed too old at 57. He turned to his union for help, and the IAM founded the group.

Nicole Quibol stopped at the booth. When volunteers there showed her *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us*, which explains the working class needs a party of labor to organize all workers to fight for political power, she said, "Wouldn't that be wonderful?"

Some people remembered Pathfinder from previous conferences. One woman was looking for books to start a library for her new son. "It's my responsibility to see he gets a real education, more than he'll get in school," she said. She was attracted to *Malcolm X on Afro-American History*, one of several dozen Pathfinder books that are available in text only format on Bookshare. They are being upgraded to publisher-quality versions over time.

Several people who attended a conference workshop on the National Federation of the Blind and Judaism stopped by the booth, including Rabbi Lenny Sarko. He and his wife bought three books, including titles on labor's resistance, *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch* and *The Jewish Question, a Marxist Interpretation* by Abram Leon.

The determination of people who are

blind to work and take part in unions and politics was reflected in the speech given by Federation President Mark Riccobono. He quoted remarks by former President Marc Maurer. "We give this society richness, depth and a level of experience and understanding that cannot be had without us. Some may try to shoulder us aside into low-grade, shabby lives, but this is not enough," Maurer said in 2013. "We will not be shut out. We belong!"

The convention reaffirmed a 1993 resolution that concluded, "Although we have no particular pride in the fact of our blindness, neither do we have any shame in it. To the extent that euphemisms are used to convey any other concept or image, we deplore such use. We can make our own way in the world on equal terms with others, and we intend to do it."



Militant/Ned Measel

Discussions at Pathfinder Press booth at 2024 National Federation of the Blind convention in Orlando, Florida. Volunteers introduced Pathfinder books available in Braille and large print.

'Program must lead proletariat to the conquest of power'

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September. Parts of this book and important new material has been published in a new book, The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party. The author of both is Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. The excerpt is from "A new stage of revolutionary working-class politics," part of the political resolution adopted by the 30th national convention of the SWP in August 1979. Copyright © 2002 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Communist Party of Great Britain Archives
V.I. Lenin, front left, with delegates to Second Congress of Communist International, July 19, 1920. Under his leadership, Bolsheviks led Russian workers and peasants to power, setting worldwide example of kind of party, program and strategy needed for a socialist revolution.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JACK BARNES

Before World War I, the Marxist movement talked only of principles and tactics; it didn't really have a strategy.

Principles are what we've sometimes called "red light" questions — if you start crossing them, a big red stoplight should flash on in your head. You don't support imperialist wars. You don't breach class independence.

These are principles. They are more often things "thou shalt not do" than things "thou shalt do."

Principles are very important. They are not just dreamed up. A high price is paid for them in blood. They are lessons drawn from the experiences of the

working class and its struggles. If you begin breaching them, you cannot build a revolutionary working-class party.

In 1928, a full decade before he drafted the Transitional Program, [Leon] Trotsky wrote about the pre-World War I socialist movement's lack of a strategic conception.

"Prior to the war," he wrote, "we spoke only of the tactics of the proletarian party; this conception conformed adequately enough to the then prevailing trade union, parliamentary methods which did not transcend the limits of the day-to-day demands and tasks.

"By the conception of tactics," Trotsky explained, "is understood the system of measures that serves a single current task or a single branch of the class struggle."

But that's not enough, Trotsky said. "Revolutionary strategy on the contrary embraces a combined system of actions which by their association, consistency, and growth must lead the proletariat to the conquest of power."

"Tactics are subordinate to strategy," Trotsky said. And strategy serves as the indispensable link between tactics, on the one hand, and principles and the socialist goal, on the other.

World War I showed that the majority of leaders of the Second International did have a strategy — only it was not an acknowledged one and it led to disaster. Their strategy was to rely on their own

bourgeoisie, to rely on a gradual accumulation of reforms under capitalism.

At the end of the war, however, the Bolsheviks showed in practice the kind of strategy needed to lead the working class to power.

By the mid-1920s, the revolutionary wave in Europe had subsided without further victories for the workers. The world capitalist expansion of that decade got under way. ...

Periods such as these always create the illusion that reform is realistic. Capitalism doesn't seem to be a crisis-ridden system. A lot of workers seem to be doing pretty well. Fewer and fewer workers sense a social crisis; those who do, or who understand that crises are built into the capitalist system, are a small minority. ...

The fundamental class-against-class basis of politics becomes disguised in such periods. That is, the struggles that do break out often seem unrelated to class divisions in society. ...

Those issues that are recognized as class-against-class by the general population, including big layers of the working class, come to be viewed very narrowly — what are often called "bread and butter" issues. These are seen as very limited struggles that don't challenge the overall status quo. Political and social issues, on the other hand — including political solutions to economic needs — are not recognized as class

questions at all.

The crisis in 1929 shook things up. It was the beginning of the end for illusions about capitalism's reformability, its rosy future, its crisis-free existence. ...

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, "bread and butter" issues became life-or-death questions that took on a direct social and political form. But it also became increasingly clear that social struggles were part of the class struggle, all part of the struggle between the exploiters and the exploited.

Under these conditions, and after extensive discussions with American comrades and comrades from Europe who could make it to Mexico, Trotsky drafted the Transitional Program in 1938. This exemplifies the strategy and method that we must understand more thoroughly than ever today so that we can apply it under new and different conditions to build the revolutionary party.

If it's not understood that the Transitional Program is a strategic document aimed at furthering the construction of proletarian combat parties, then the whole point is missed. ...

Trotsky continued: "The present epoch is distinguished not because it frees the revolutionary party from day-to-day work but because it permits this work to be carried on indissolubly with the actual tasks of the revolution. ... It carries on this day-to-day work within the framework of the correct actual, that is, revolutionary, perspective." The party becomes capable of imparting this perspective to more and more workers.

"Insofar as the old partial, 'minimal' demands of the masses clash with the destructive and degrading tendencies of decadent capitalism," says Trotsky, "and this occurs at each step — the Fourth International advances a system of *transitional demands*."

The essence of these transitional demands, Trotsky explains, "is contained in the fact that ever more openly and decisively they will be directed against the very foundations of the bourgeois regime.

"The old 'minimal program' is superseded by the *transitional program*," Trotsky concludes, "the task of which lies in systematic mobilization of the masses for the proletarian revolution."

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Study, use SWP victory against FBI

Under capitalism all the trappings of government — from the White House to the state houses, the courts of all stripes, and regulatory and other non-elected agencies, to the FBI and cops — serve the interests of the ruling capitalist class, contrary to claims of all bourgeois politicians who say the government acts for “all Americans.”

Their state exists to defend and advance the capitalists’ unending drive to profit off workers’ backs at home, and their imperialist reach for markets and spheres of influence across the world, backed by their bloated war machine. No capitalist class can rule without maintaining a far-reaching political police to spy on, harass and disrupt its opponents — above all those they most deeply fear, the working class and its vanguard fighters.

Today the U.S. rulers are stepping up their use of the FBI and laws like the Foreign Agents Registration Act and other witch hunt statutes. Democrats are at the forefront, targeting Donald Trump and other opponents in capitalist politics and dealing blows to constitutional freedoms.

In 1973, after the Watergate revelations and widespread disillusionment in the government over its murderous war in Vietnam, the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party initiated a political campaign and legal action against the FBI, the U.S. attorney general and other government agencies, challenging decades of spying and attacks on the party. This 15-year victorious fight set an important precedent to be used in the future.

The party won support in the labor movement and beyond, fighting to defend the political space for working people to speak, organize and act — in the factories, on picket lines, in the streets and in politics.

It brought into the open the truth about the government’s use of undercover informers to spy on SWP members, phone bugs and wiretaps, and break-ins and burglaries of party headquarters. The FBI sought to disrupt as much of the party’s work as it could. It got individuals fired from their jobs and evicted from apartments, and fomented factional conflicts between different groups.

The SWP’s fight helped bring to the surface evidence of similar disruption operations against militants fighting to bring down Jim Crow segregation, organizers of solidarity with Cuba’s socialist revolution, emerging leaders of the fight for women’s emancipa-

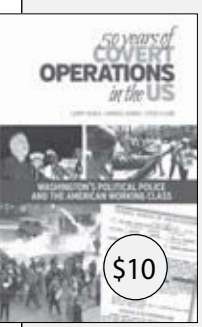
tion and opponents of Washington’s wars.

During the trial of the SWP’s case against the FBI, the government attempted to justify its Cointelpro operations with accusations that the SWP was conspiring and covering up its real revolutionary aims. But the trial showed the opposite was true. The SWP made no secret that its goal was to lead the working people to take political power, explaining its revolutionary views were protected by the Constitution.

It was the government and their snoops that concealed their methods, aims and assault on key rights all workers need.

The party’s campaign led to a groundbreaking victory in 1986. Judge Thomas Griesa ruled there was no evidence “that any FBI informant ever reported an instance of planned or actual espionage, violence, [or] terrorism by the party or its members.” He ruled that the use of the FBI to infiltrate organizations and spy on individuals engaged in political activity, including communists and other working-class fighters, violated the Constitution.

The rulers are taking steps today to refurbish the FBI and resurrect espionage and other frame-up laws. The SWP ruling still stands, an example and a tool for working-class fighters to use.



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\$17

Join, build Oct. 7 actions against Jew-hatred

The fight against Jew-hatred is a key question everywhere. It will be decisive to all working-class battles today against the brutal consequences for humanity of imperialism in decline.

That’s why working people everywhere should join actions marking the one-year anniversary of Hamas’ deadly anti-Jewish pogrom Oct. 7. This is an opportunity to join in solidarity with those facing growing Jew-hatred today. Invite your co-workers, fellow union members, neighbors, friends and relatives to participate too. Bring your own signs.

These should not be seen as “Jewish” actions, or as support to the capitalist government in Israel, but as broad meetings against Jew-hatred, in defense of Israel’s right to defend itself as a refuge for Jews, and to demand Hamas unconditionally and immediately release *all* the hostages it still holds in Gaza.

The murder of 1,200 people just because they are Jewish or because they work with Jews, the taking of hostages, and the rape and mutilation of women — and men — has nothing to do with the rights of Palestinians. Hamas, Hezbollah and the entire Tehran-led “axis of resistance” are among the biggest obstacles Jewish, Palestinian, Arab and Muslim workers and farmers face in coming together to

advance their own class interests.

Opponents of Jew-hatred have often carried signs saying “Rape is not resistance.” And they are right. Most working people feel revulsion for what Hamas carried out Oct. 7 — financed, armed and facilitated by the reactionary capitalist regime in Iran.

Those who call themselves “socialists” who champion Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis and Tehran will easily find themselves in the ranks of fascist thugs in the future. Many of them are already acting like Nazis. Just look at the video of Hamas apologists blocking the entrance of a New York Kosher restaurant and threatening Jewish students from Baruch College trying to meet for a back-to-school brunch.

As the crisis of capitalism deepens, the bosses will turn to reactionary forces who scapegoat Jews for all the problems facing humanity. They will win a hearing among middle-class layers being pushed into the ranks of the working class. They will target the unions, as Hitler did on the road to power. They will use Jew-hatred to try to divert working people from the real source of their problems — dog-eat-dog capitalism.

Jews are just 0.2% of the world’s population. The words of revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky in 1938 still ring true today: “Now more than ever, the fate of the Jewish people — not only their political but also their physical fate — is indissolubly linked with the emancipating struggle of the international proletariat.”

The reverse is also true. Combating Jew-hatred is essential for the future of the labor movement.

See you Oct. 7!

‘Militant’ prison ban

Continued from front page

poundment has remained in place for so long.

The ban is a serious violation of prisoners’ rights to read political literature of their choice and the right of the *Militant* and other publications to reach their subscribers behind bars with articles and opinion pieces on breaking world news.

The *Militant* was informed May 17 that Jackson prison officials had banned this issue on April 29. They claimed an Associated Press photo showing the body of a Jewish man murdered by Hamas and being driven around Gaza City to cheers by Islamist thugs during the Nazi-like group’s Oct. 7 pogrom, “depict hatred toward a specific race.”

The paper 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 wrote that the photo — and the whole issue — are “dangerously inflammatory,” encouraging “riot, insurrection, rebellion” and “organized prison protest.”

But these charges have no basis in fact. Every issue of the *Militant*, including no. 17, explains the centrality of opposing Jew-hatred as part of uniting working people no matter what their religion or nationality.

Readers of the paper have responded to the outrageous claims the *Militant* spreads “hate toward a specific race.”

“I am a Canadian hospital worker active in the Hospital Employees Union and a long-time reader of the *Militant*,” wrote Michael Barker to the Literature Review Committee Sept. 23. “I can attest to the *Militant*’s opposition to all forms of racism. It does not promote physical violence against individuals or groups.

“The photo and article in question align with its history of opposing such violence,” Barker wrote. “This is more important than ever given the rise in violence targeting Jews and their institutions.”

Upon learning of the ban, *Militant* attorney David Goldstein immediately filed an appeal. Since then dozens of letters opposing the impoundment have been sent to the Department of Corrections Literature Review Committee.

The committee upheld the ban at a July 18 meeting, but did not look at either the *Militant*’s appeal or the numerous letters they had received. They gave no reason for the decision. The *Militant* was not informed about this ruling until Aug. 21. Library Services Administrator Saritza Legault then wrote to Goldstein that the Literature Review Committee at its next meeting on Aug. 29 would review “the Publisher’s Appeal and all of the associated letters of support.”

As we go to press, four weeks later, the *Militant* has not heard what decision the Literature Review Committee made at that meeting, nor even whether the meeting took place. Authorities haven’t responded to either emails or phone calls from the *Militant*’s attorney.

This is an unusual situation that the *Militant* has not previously faced when it has challenged past impoundments of the paper. In the big majority of cases the *Militant* fought successfully to have those bans overturned. Either way, decisions were promptly reported. The *Militant* will continue to build and broaden support to get this ban reversed.

“As a teacher and union member in Canada, I advocate for the protection of constitutional rights and political freedoms,” Vicky Mercier writes from Toronto. “I urge you to reverse the ban and allow all subscribers behind bars in Florida to receive their issues of the paper without delay.”

Keep the letters coming. See address below.

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.”