

# THE MILITANT

EDITORIAL

White House is the home of capitalist rule

— PAGE 9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 89/NO. 4 FEBRUARY 3, 2025

## Ceasefire is new stage in fight to defend Israel as refuge for Jews

BY SETH GALINSKY

The ceasefire agreement in Gaza today is the product of the blows the Israeli military and people have dealt Hamas, Hezbollah and the reactionary bourgeois regime in Tehran over the last 15 months.

Advances in defending Israel as a refuge against Jew-hatred and pogroms are also opening space needed for working people throughout the Middle East to join together to fight for their own interests — whatever their religion or nationality — and for their national aspirations.

Hamas had insisted that it would not free more hostages until Israel ended its war in Gaza. Instead, the thug outfit was forced to accept a 42-day ceasefire, during which it is supposed to release 33 of the 94 remaining hostages in batches. More than 30 of the hostages are dead. Negotiations for releasing the rest, an end to the war and who will replace Hamas in running Gaza are supposed to

Continued on page 7

## South African gov't condemns immigrant gold miners to die

BY VED DOOKHUN

Over a harrowing three days, Jan. 13-15, 246 starving miners and the bodies of 78 dead miners were brought to the surface from the 4,200-foot-deep abandoned Buffelsfontein gold mine near Stilfontein, South Africa, a small town 100 miles southwest of Johannesburg.

While South African government forces waited to arrest the miners, two area residents — Mandla Charles and Mzwandile Mkwayi — volunteered to carry out a series of trips in a cage lowered and raised by a crane on the surface until everyone they could find was out.

The deaths are the latest casualties in the African National Congress-led government's war against illegal mining operations, dubbed operation "Close the Hole." Its target is the more than 6,000 gold mines abandoned by their owners when they could no longer produce profits high enough to justify large-scale corporate operation. They have become battlegrounds for miners and gangs as

Continued on page 5

## Evidence grows government to blame in LA fire catastrophe



Elise Hu/NPR

Volunteers sift donations at YMCA center in Los Angeles' Koreatown Jan. 11. Thousands of volunteers, some fire victims themselves, have organized all across city and beyond to collect, distribute clothes, blankets, goods of all kinds. Free pizza and hamburgers are delivered.

BY LAURA GARZA

LOS ANGELES — The heavy smell of smoke, darkened skies in the daytime and spreading ash have receded in many neighborhoods here, though the closer you are to the ongoing fires it is still dangerous to breathe the air. More people are wearing COVID-period masks again. People try to maneuver through cop and National Guard checkpoints to sift through what remains of their property.

The one real sign of hope is the thousands of volunteers who have set up makeshift aid sites or food giveaways at street corners, in parking lots, in churches and other places near fire-damaged areas. Hundreds of pizza shop owners and volunteer drivers have given out thousands of pizzas.

The Democratic Party politicians who dominate in California, from Gov. Gavin Newsom to Los Angeles Mayor

Continued on page 4

## Socialist Workers Party candidates advance working-class road forward



Militant/Roy Landersen

Joanne Kuniansky, left, and Craig Honts, right, SWP candidates for governor and lieutenant governor of New Jersey, speak to Supreme Stegall, a furrier, in Passaic Jan. 19. He got two *Militants* and asked them to visit again for more discussion on party's working-class program.

BY TERRY EVANS

"The Socialist Workers Party campaign speaks in the interests of working people, as we face unemployment, high prices, a deep social crisis and the threat of more wars," Eric Simpson, the party's candidate for mayor of Oakland, California, told supporters after city authorities announced he would be on the ballot in the April 15 special election.

Simpson is a longtime member of the Socialist Workers Party, a machine operator at a chocolate factory

and member of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 125. Former Oakland Mayor Sheng Thao was ousted in a November recall election.

Simpson is one of a growing slate of SWP candidates that the party is announcing around the country. Everywhere they go, SWP campaigners explain workers need to break with the bosses' parties, the Democrats and Republicans, and take political power into

Continued on page 3

## Housing crisis working people face is bred by bosses' drive for profit

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

As the crisis of the U.S. rulers' capitalist system deepens, they are stepping up efforts to place the burden on the backs of working people. One punishing

expression of this is the growing shortage of housing working-class families, the young and the elderly can afford.

In the last quarter of 2024 a paltry 6,700 units with monthly rents that average \$1,332 were under construction nationwide, compared to about half a million "luxury" apartments, according to CoStar, a real-estate company.

Landlords have taken advantage of this housing crisis to raise rents on working people, which have increased by 47% over the past five years. And prices to buy a home have shot up by 26%, to record-high levels.

Under capitalist rule the availability of adequate housing, like just about

Continued on page 9

## Join fight against ban on 'Militant' in Phoenix jail!

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The *Militant* is appealing the banning of its Nov. 11, 2024, issue of the paper by authorities at the Lower Buckeye Jail in Phoenix. The paper is urging supporters of civil liberties and prisoners' rights to join this fight and help get the unconstitutional ban reversed.

Officials at the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office say that issue no. 42 was impounded because "there is a photo on the cover of the newspaper that was found to violate MCSO policy," which "does not allow photos of weaponry."

The photo illustrates armed Hamas thugs seizing a woman and taking her hostage during the Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom the reactionary outfit carried out in Isra-

Continued on page 9

### Inside

Communist League campaigns amid political crisis in Canada 2

Ukraine coal miners fight gov't attacks, resist Moscow's war 6

Protest US gov't restoring Cuba to 'State Sponsors of Terrorism' list 6

— On the picket line, p. 5 —

UK food workers strike at Princes for higher wages

# Communist League campaigns amid political crisis in Canada

BY STEVE PENNER

MONTREAL — “At the very moment [Canada] needs stable and credible leadership” — as a trade conflict with Washington is imminent — “it is instead wracked by the prolonged death throes of a minority government,” complained the editors of the *Globe and Mail*. On Jan. 6 Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced he planned to resign, that he was suspending Parliament, and opening up the race for the Liberal Party leadership to replace him.

These events are provoking a serious crisis for Canada’s capitalist rulers and generating a discussion among working people about how to best defend our own class interests.

Saying that the terms of trade between Washington and Canada, and with Mexico, unfairly harm U.S. producers, President Donald Trump has threatened to impose a 25% tariff on all imports from the two countries. Ottawa has said it will respond in kind. Almost 80% of Canadian exports — \$548 billion Canadian dollars (\$384 billion) in products — went to the U.S. in 2023. Which leader can most effectively defend the Canadian rulers’ interests in the pending trade conflict is the central issue in the coming federal parliamentary elections.

Support for the Trudeau government has been in free fall for some time, reflecting the anger among working people with Ottawa’s inability to offer any protection from the deepening capitalist crisis. Workers face rising prices, stagnating wages, high unemployment, unaffordable housing and the growing threat of new wars. Trudeau’s

woke policies, such as a carbon tax on gasoline and home heating fuel, and his government’s meritocratic disdain for working people, are also provoking its plummeting support.

Over the past year hundreds of thousands of workers have waged union battles for wages that keep up with rising prices, and working conditions that are safe with schedules that allow time for family life, union activity and recreation. Since August the Trudeau government has backed the bosses’ offensive by imposing back-to-work orders on close to 70,000 striking rail, port and postal workers.

Rulers in Ottawa have also launched a major attack on the rights of immigrant workers, which has led to the deportation of thousands. Their goal is to deepen divisions in the working class.

Some working people are looking to Pierre Poilievre, leader of the Conservative Party, for some relief. He has been campaigning to win working-class and union support as a “lesser evil” to the Liberals and is far ahead in the polls. Both parties are organized to defend the wealth and power of the ruling rich.

## Unions must take independent road

Instead of mobilizing the unions to break with the bosses’ parties and organize a party of labor, the Canadian Labour Congress is organizing conferences across the country centered on defeating the Conservatives. The intended effect is to back the Liberals, possibly in a coalition with the New Democratic Party. In Quebec many of the top union officials support the Bloc Quebecois, a pro-Quebec-sovereignty capitalist party.



Militant/Tony DiFelice

Philippe Tessier, one of the Communist League’s two candidates for Parliament from Montreal, speaks in defense of Ukraine’s sovereignty in Toronto March 2022, weeks after Russia’s invasion.

As part of this dead-end, class-colaborationist strategy, unions like the United Steelworkers and Unifor are joining together with bosses and capitalist politicians in the newly formed Canada-U.S. Trade Council. Their goal is to build support for Ottawa in the trade war with the U.S.

On Jan. 17 Trudeau convened the first meeting of the Council of Canada-US Relations, a new body uniting unions with bosses and the government. Trudeau said, “You are all patriots. You believe in fighting for Canada.”

## Communist League alternative

“But Canada is a class-divided society,” Philippe Tessier, one of two Communist League candidates for Parliament from Montreal, told the *Militant* Jan. 16. Tessier is a rail worker and Teamsters union member,

“Instead of mobilizing the unions to defend our right to strike and to fight for better wages and working conditions, union officials have joined ‘Team Canada,’ set up by the country’s ruling billionaire families to defend their industries and profit system.

“There is no way forward for working people if we back the class that exploits our labor and is attacking our rights in its trade and military conflicts against their capitalist competitors.”

Katy LeRougetel, the CL’s other candidate, pointed out, “Trade wars lead to shooting wars. That’s what

happened before the first and second imperialist world wars in which tens of millions of workers died. These conflicts turn working people in one country against those in another.” LeRougetel is a member of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union.

“Proposals that the unions should be fighting to defend ‘Canadian’ jobs here at the expense of workers in the U.S. is a deadly trap,” she said. “They are not our enemy but our most important and potentially powerful ally. In both countries, workers need to fight for jobs for all and for permanent resident status for all immigrants.

“Hotel workers in Las Vegas in the U.S. are on strike and need solidarity, just like the 600 locked out at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel here. I encourage everyone to join them on their picket line.

“The labor movement needs its own independent working-class foreign policy that defends working people around the world.”

“Out of these struggles working people can break from supporting one or other of the capitalist parties as a ‘lesser evil,’ and forge a party of our own, a party of labor based on the unions,” Tessier said, “to organize working people in their millions to wrest power away from the capitalist rulers, end capitalist exploitation, halt imperialism’s march toward fascism and World War III and join the fight to build a socialist world.”

## THE MILITANT

Join the 2025 Socialist Workers Party campaign!

The Socialist Workers Party in 2025 is running Joanne Kuniansky for governor of New Jersey and Eric Simpson for mayor of Oakland, with more to come. Join in campaigning for the only party that is rooted in the working class and dedicated to its class interests.



Militant/Maggie Trowe

Eric Simpson, a factory worker, is the SWP candidate for mayor of Oakland, California.

## SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

### NEW READERS

\$5 for 12 issues

### RENEWAL

\$10 for 12 weeks

\$20 for 6 months

\$35 for 1 year

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT, 306 W. 37TH ST., 13TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018. OR SUBSCRIBE ONLINE AT: WWW.THEMILITANT.COM

12 weeks of the *Militant* outside the U.S.: Australia, A\$10 • United Kingdom, £4 • Canada, Can\$7 • Caribbean and Latin America, US\$10 • Continental Europe, £8 • France, 8 euros • New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, A\$10 • All other areas, US\$16 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

## The Militant

Vol. 89/No. 4

Closing news date: January 22, 2025

Editor: John Studer

Managing Editor: Terry Evans

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Martín Koppel, Roy Landersen, Jacob Perasso, Vivian Sahner, Brian Williams.

Published weekly except for one week in January, one week in June, one week in July, and one week in September.

Business Manager: Bob Bruce

The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Telephone: (212) 244-4899

Fax: (212) 244-4947

E-mail: themilitant@mac.com

Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: For one year send \$35 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Africa, Asia, and the Middle East: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Canada: For one year send Canadian \$45 to the Militant, 7107 St. Denis #204, Montreal, Quebec H2S 2S5.

United Kingdom: Send £30 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, 5 Norman Road (first floor), Seven Sisters, London, N15 4ND, England.

Republic of Ireland and Continental Europe: Send £85 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London at above address.

France: Send 100 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15.

Australia: Send A\$70 for one year to P.O. Box 73 Campsie, NSW 2194 Australia.

New Zealand and the Pacific Islands: Send A\$70 for one year to above address.

Submissions to the *Militant* may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.

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

# Socialist Workers Party candidates

Continued from front page

our own hands. They describe how past working-class struggles show this is both possible and necessary.

“The thing that really appeals to me is Simpson’s focus on supporting unions,” Levi Meir Clancy, who signed on to sponsor Simpson’s campaign, told the *Militant*. Clancy cares for adults with disabilities and met the SWP at protests against the murderous Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas pogrom. He welcomes the party’s defense of Israel’s right to exist as a refuge for Jews.

In New Jersey, Joanne Kuniansky and Craig Honts, the Socialist Workers Party candidates for governor and lieutenant governor, found serious interest in the party’s working-class program when they campaigned on workers’ doorsteps in Passaic Jan. 19.

Supreme Stegall told the SWP candidates he’s concerned at the number of “mentally ill who are left on the streets, taking drugs.” Stegall works as a furrier in a union shop in New York.

“You say you’re for the working class, but what about those who aren’t workers, the unemployed?” he asked.

## A union-led fight for jobs for all

Honts said the unemployed are part of the working class, and employers use competition for jobs to try to deepen divisions among workers. “Bosses say, ‘If you don’t like it here, there are 10 others waiting to take your job.’ What’s needed is a fight for jobs for all, including a government-funded public works program to create millions of jobs at union-scale wages and a shorter workweek with no cut in pay to spread the available work around.”

Kuniansky pointed to the example of union struggles in Minneapolis where SWP members were part of the leadership of the Teamsters union in the 1930s. The union organized the unemployed to join workers’ strike picket lines. It also established an auxiliary for unemployed workers that led the fight for their interests with the backing of the labor movement.

“But if you win, how would you change things today?” Stegall asked. Kuniansky said SWP candidates would continue building solidarity with union battles and other struggles in the interests of the working class. “But the only way to really make a difference is to change which class runs society.”

She pointed to the mighty Black-led working-class movement that tore down Jim Crow segregation, showing the revolutionary potential and capacities of the working class.

“Yes, there may not be lynchings to-

day,” Stegall said, “but the jobs situation is still no better.”

“The profit system of the ruling rich reproduces racism, it’s built in,” Kuniansky replied. She pointed to the example set by the leaders of the socialist revolution in Cuba. After the conquest of power, they organized working people to “get rid of Jim Crow race laws, drew Afro-Cubans into all industries, brought women into jobs they were excluded from, and sent 100,000 youth into the countryside to teach workers and peasants to read and write.”

“This country has been built by immigrants,” Stegall said, but he thought too many were entering the U.S. today. Honts said that the bosses turn immigration on and off to ensure themselves the labor they need and to heighten competition among workers.

“The SWP is not for open borders,” Kuniansky added, “but we fight for the defense of all workers who are here, and we demand amnesty for the more than 11 million undocumented workers. We also build solidarity with workers fighting for better conditions in other countries.”

Kuniansky also addressed the growing threat of imperialist wars. “Washington is the only power to have used nuclear weapons, against the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II.”

“How do we get rid of the threat of nuclear war,” Stegall asked, “when the U.S. government claims to be the only government with the ‘right’ to have nuclear weapons?”

“All the peace treaties and disarmament pacts capitalist governments sign



Militant/Joel Britton

Eric Simpson, left, SWP candidate for mayor of Oakland, California, speaks with striking hotel workers in San Francisco last October. Joining workers in struggle is key part of SWP campaign.

today only pave the way for new wars tomorrow,” Kuniansky said. “The only way to stop war is to take power from the warmakers, the capitalist class, including right here in the U.S.”

Stegall took a couple of issues of the *Militant* and encouraged the SWP candidates to return when he’s had a chance to read them.

## Black workers hit hard in L.A. fires

At a Jan. 18 Martin Luther King parade in Dallas, SWP members Josefina Otero and Dennis Richter talked with Lori Patton.

“Three of my family members in Altadena lost their homes in the fire” in Los Angeles, Patton told the SWP campaigners. “I’m worried that the fires will wipe out the Black families’ legacy in Altadena.” Tens of thousands of African Americans moved to Los Angeles

during the second great migration from the South between 1940 and 1970, many settling in Altadena.

“The Los Angeles firestorm falls hardest on the working class,” Richter said. “Many can’t afford the high-priced insurance and will not be able to rebuild their homes.”

“Working people need to break with the capitalist parties. We need a party of labor,” Otero said.

“I like the idea of a party of labor, to begin to take on the problems facing working people,” Patton replied. She got a copy of the *Militant*.

To join in campaigning for SWP candidates, contact the party branch nearest you listed on page 8.

Maggie Trowe in Oakland and Roy Landersen in New Jersey contributed to this article.

# True Jimmy Carter: Defender of US capitalist rule, wars

BY JACOB PERASSO

The bourgeois press, particularly the liberal-run media, has gone to great lengths to portray recently deceased Democratic Party politician and former President James Earl Carter Jr. as a “humanitarian” and “peacemaker.” Carter was the 39th president, the executive officer for the U.S. capitalist rulers, from 1977 to 1981.

“To all of the young people in this nation and for anyone in search of what it means to live a life of purpose and meaning — the good life,” then President Joseph Biden eulogized, “study Jimmy Carter, a man of principle, faith and humility.”

Nothing could be further from the truth. The reality is that Carter always acted, often with brutal methods, to defend the interests of the U.S. ruling capitalist class in both foreign and domestic policy.

Peter Baker, writing in the *New York Times*, said Carter “became one of his generation’s great peacemakers with his Camp David accords, bringing together Israel and Egypt.”

In his book *Palestine Peace Not Apartheid*, Carter promoted the lie that Israel is primarily to blame for the conditions the Palestinian people face in Gaza and elsewhere. This lets the reactionary bourgeois forces there, such as Hamas and Fatah, off the hook.

It is Hamas’ course, above all, that has ensured conditions in Gaza remain deplorable. For decades Hamas has used Palestinians as human shields, believing their deaths help it win political support and financial backing. Its oft-stated aim

is to destroy the state of Israel and kill as many Jews as possible. In 2009 Carter met with Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh and embraced him.

It is Hamas’ Tehran-backed pogrom of Oct. 7, 2023 — killing 1,200 people, mostly civilians, wounding thousands, raping and mutilating dozens of women and kidnapping 250 hostages — that is responsible for the recent fighting in Gaza.

Carter falsely accused the Jewish state of “apartheid,” charges Hamas and its supporters use to justify the Oct. 7 pogrom.

It’s preposterous to say that what exists in democratic capitalist Israel today is apartheid. There are 9.9 million people living there, 21% of whom are Arabs, mostly Muslims, almost all of them citizens with the right to vote and who can travel anywhere they want.

In apartheid South Africa, some 24 million Black Africans, the overwhelming majority of the country’s people, were barred from citizenship and the right to vote. Every aspect of their labor and life was under the control of the apartheid rulers.

## Carter backs apartheid South Africa

When the apartheid rulers of South Africa invaded newly independent Angola in 1975, Carter as president in 1978 sided with them against the new Angolan government. Despite the efforts of Carter and U.S. administrations that followed his, Angola, backed by tens of thousands of volunteer Cuban forces, won a decisive victory in 1988. This victory “broke the myth of the invincibility

of the white oppressors,” Nelson Mandela explained, and opened the road to the collapse of the apartheid government and system.

Carter was a fierce opponent of Cuba and its socialist revolution. He accused Cuba of being a violator of human rights and encouraged Cuban counterrevolutionaries’ efforts to bring down Cuba’s revolutionary government.

On New Year’s Eve 1977 in Tehran, Carter toasted the notorious shah of Iran, saying because of his “great leadership,” Iran “is an island of stability in one of the more troubled areas of the world.” The shah used his brutal secret police force to ruthlessly suppress opposition.

The next year, anti-shah protests broke out in Iran’s major cities. The shah responded by ordering his forces to fire on demonstrators, killing hundreds and wounding thousands. By October 1978 strikes paralyzed the country. Workers, farmers, women and oppressed nationalities in their millions carried out the historic Iranian Revolution in 1979.

Carter was no friend to working people at home, either. He invoked the anti-working-class Taft-Hartley law in a failed attempt to break the 1977-78 111-day coal miners strike. Using it, he ordered the miners back to work and threatened to fine or jail their union leaders, confiscate their union treasuries, and even to cut off food stamps for their families.

Far from a record of promoting people and human rights, Carter’s slavish support for the U.S. capitalist rulers at home and abroad made him an enemy of humanity.

## The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us

The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward

The low point of labor resistance is behind us



\$10

More and more workers — of all ages, skin colors, and both sexes — are saying, “Enough is enough!” They’ve begun to wield the collective power of the exploited producers in response.

pathfinderpress.com

# Evidence: gov't is responsible

## Continued from front page

Karen Bass, the heads of related government agencies, power utility bosses, cops and others are all pointing fingers at each other for the failure to maintain and then to deploy the resources needed to prevent or contain the fires.

The prospect of finding new housing without being gouged by profit-hungry realtors confronts thousands of fire victims, part of the deepening social crises the fires have both created and exacerbated. The death toll has reached 28 and many people remain unaccounted for. Many in western Altadena, a historically Black area, report they didn't receive notice of danger or evacuation warnings until the flames of the Eaton fire raged around them. Seventeen of the deaths occurred there.

Local papers remind people who've lost their homes that if they had a mortgage, they will still have to pay it all off. You may get a one-year reprieve, but you've got to pay. And even if you can collect insurance and rebuild, you've got to rent somewhere until it's done.

Even before the fires, the California Housing Partnership reported renters in Los Angeles County needed to earn at least \$48.04 an hour — 2.9 times the minimum wage here — to afford the average monthly rent of \$2,498. But in today's crush, rents are escalating, despite the fact it's illegal for landlords to raise rents more than 10%.

David Wellington, an African American FedEx worker, spoke to this *Militant* worker-correspondent Jan. 16. He was on his way to work from the Pasadena Convention Center shelter where he's staying since his home in Altadena burned down. "The insurance company says they have to see the place and verify it burned," he said, but no one is allowed up there now. So, he's stuck staying in the shelter.

A total of 15,000 homes, businesses and schools have been destroyed by the fires.

## Volunteers by the thousands

Meanwhile, the continuing outpouring of volunteers shows the capacity of working people to transform themselves and step into the breach. At a pop-up site behind Club 1881, a Pasadena bar, Daisy Barajas, her companion Jose, and their 9-year-old daughter spoke with the *Militant* Jan. 19. Daisy said she, her daughter and her parents had lived in a rented house in Altadena that burned to the ground, as did the supermarket where

she worked. She is living with her companion and has found temporary housing for her parents at a motel until Feb. 16.

This volunteer site was organized by Dann Salinas, a construction site project manager. "We have clothes, shoes, kitchen supplies, toys and bedding. Even some hot dogs," he said, brought by neighbors and friends. Helping Salinas was Tony Duran, an engineer for the Union Pacific Railroad. "Dann is my compadre," Duran said. "He grew up here and reached out to me. I'm glad to help."

Thousands of people are doing the same thing, dropping off supplies, bringing hot meals, setting up food trucks and more.

Many of the volunteers met at a huge donation center set up in the parking lot of the Santa Anita Racetrack the week after the fires started. Regardless of the continuing needs, city officials announced Jan. 16 that this site would be shut down.

The Pasadena Community Job Center, organized by National Day Laborer Organizing Network, has opened its doors to volunteers.

"There were hundreds of volunteers, up to 700, over the weekend. We ask what families need, then they can pick it up," Walter Batres, president of the Guatemalan Migrant Network, told the *Militant* at the center. He is a skilled construction worker who lives in Altadena. Batres pointed to the line of people waiting to pick up donated items.

Ervin Mancilla, 70, a construction worker, is an activist with the day laborer network and a musician who is part of the *Jornaleros del Norte* (Day labor-



Socialist Workers Party campaigner Barbara Bowman, right, speaks with Daisy Barajas at makeshift donation site in Pasadena Jan. 19. Barajas lost her house and her family and her parents rented in Altadena.

ers of the North) band. He was rehearsing the day the fires started, he said. The next morning big trees that had come down were blocking the road. Workers from the center came and cut the trees up and cleared the street.

## Capitalist government responsible

Facing forecasts of more extreme Santa Ana winds with high fire risks beginning Jan. 20, the city finally took steps it had failed to do before the fires started two weeks earlier. They prepositioned firefighters in vulnerable areas, staffed extra engines and had the outgoing shift of 1,000 firefighters remain on duty. These are steps authorities had routinely taken in past years.

It is clear to millions that the disaster here was the result of many years of government neglect to build and maintain needed infrastructure and adequate firefighting capacity. What working people

have suffered is a result of the for-profit operation of capitalism and the disdain of its political defenders.

At a Fire Commission meeting a month earlier, before the fires broke out, the president of the firefighters union and others spoke out, calling for more resources and citing dangerous shortages. They noted that trucks sit unrepaired because the Los Angeles Fire Department is understaffed, including cuts to mechanics. The department has less than one firefighter for every 1,000 residents. Many major cities have staffing ratios closer to two firefighters per 1,000.

Freddy Escobar, president of the firefighters union, told CNN, "This isn't about one budget cycle. It's not about a single mayor. We have been speaking about it for years now. It's sad it's taken this natural disaster and tragedy to highlight what we have been saying for decades."

# Capitalist rule turned LA fires into a social catastrophe

Statement by Laura Garza, organizer of the Los Angeles Socialist Workers Party, Jan. 20.

The dog-eat-dog capitalist system is incapable of addressing the crisis now facing working people, small-business owners and thousands of others in the aftermath of the deadly Eaton, Palisades and other fires that have devastated parts of Los Angeles. Thousands are jobless, families are suddenly homeless, many without income and with every possession destroyed. Yet they are still on the hook for mortgages, loans and other debts.

Driven by the insurance companies, real-estate speculators and banks — with a government that serves their interests — this profit-driven system has turned a natural disaster into a social catastrophe.

The Socialist Workers Party calls on the trade union movement to take charge and lead the effort to clean up and rebuild Los Angeles. The first step will be fighting to win a government-funded mass public works program to clear the immense debris from the fires and build thousands of houses, schools, child care centers and hospitals. New roads are needed; the water and power infrastructure must be rebuilt; brush regularly cleared in fire zones; and power lines should be buried.

Building on the surge of solidarity with fire victims that has been demonstrated by workers throughout the area, tens of thousands must now be put to work at union-scale wages to accomplish this. Construction workers, electricians, plumbers, carpenters, laborers and more have to be trained. Firefighters should be hired and trained. The hundreds of prisoners who are fighting these fires should be guaranteed firefighting jobs upon release if they so choose. As part of unifying and strengthening the working class, the labor movement must champion the demand for amnesty for immigrant workers.

This rebuilding work must be organized under union control and man-

agement, a necessary step to ensure it is done safely and without corner-cutting. Left in the hands of construction bosses, insurance companies and their cronies in government, their sole concern will be turning the disaster into a handsome profit.

Southern California Edison, whose power-line explosion is the likely cause of the Eaton fire, should be nationalized under workers control.

The government on every level, with its two capitalist parties, is responsible for the devastation. Now all they do is try to pass the blame by pointing fingers at each other. No preparation, dilapidated infrastructure, no evacuation plan. The labor movement must break from the capitalist parties and organize our own party, a party of labor, to organize the whole working class. This is a necessary step on the road to taking power out of the hands of the capitalists and building a socialist future.



D.W. Dixie shows collapsed balcony of his Altadena home to SWP campaigners Jan. 19.

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### GEORGIA

#### Atlanta

Los Angeles Wildfire Disaster Is a Product of Capitalist Rule. Speaker: Marklyn Wilson, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., Feb. 2, 4 p.m. Donation: \$5. 777 Cleveland Ave., SW Suite 103. Tel.: (678) 528-7828.

# UK food workers strike at Princes for higher wages

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONG SUTTON, England — Some 300 members of Unite, the union at the Princes food company here, walked out Jan. 7. Princes produces canned fish, meat, vegetables, soft drinks and pickles.

Their action was part of a series of strikes, two or three days a week, joined by over 800 union members, including at the company's other sites in Bradford, Cardiff, Glasgow and Wisbech. The workers are fighting for better pay.

Eighty strikers picketed four points around the Long Sutton plant Jan. 14 in an effort to dissuade several dozen nonunion, agency and union members from breaking the strike.

The pickets were joined by 20 fellow Unite members, who have been on strike at the nearby Bakkavor plant in Spalding for nearly four months over pay and union rights. The strikers cheered the Bakkavor workers for their act of solidarity.

Paul Russell, Unite's senior shop steward at Princes, told the Bakkavor strikers that union members at Long Sutton would reciprocate the solidarity.

"This is the first strike since I've worked here," Russell told the *Militant*. He has been at the plant for 19 years. Workers were originally offered "4%, plus add-ons," he said.

When negotiations first began, Princes was owned by the Japanese conglomerate Mitsubishi. The plant was taken over by the Italian food group Newlat Food SpA last July. Union leaders told the new owners they would recommend rejection of the 4% offer. The bosses responded by cutting the offer to 3%.

"They never thought we'd walk out," deputy shop steward Pat Hickey said.

"To be honest, I could live with the 3%," striker Trevor Price added. "I've only got three more years before I retire and I've paid off my bills. But this isn't about me. It's about all workers having decent wages and a decent union."

Forty years ago, Price said, he was a coal miner living in Sheffield and a participant in the yearlong National Union of Mineworkers strike against pit closures, a struggle that inspired union solidarity from around the world.

"That's how I ended up here," Price said. "Broke at the strike's end, I ended up picking fruit and vegetables in Lincolnshire. Four vans would pick us up and drive an hour plus. We'd work eight

to 10 hours in the fields for very poor money. At the end of the shift we'd get picked up and driven home. And we each had to pay 2 pounds [\$2.45] diesel money! I ended up moving."

"This strike isn't just about pay," Russell said. "It's about the future, including collective bargaining by a strong union. We're up against a major company." A further strike is planned here Jan. 28-31. Messages of support to the Princes strikers can be sent to: Paul.Traversers@unitetheunion.org.



Militant/Jonathan Silberman  
Members of Unite union on strike against Princes food company picket plant in Long Sutton, England, Jan. 14 in strike for pay raise. Fellow unionists on strike against Bakkavor for nearly four months joined in solidarity.

## South African gov't condemns immigrant miners to die

Continued from front page

the price of gold has hit a historic high of \$2,700 an ounce.

The miners are largely undocumented immigrants known as "zama zamas." In the Zulu language this means "hustlers" or "chance takers." The term is used by the capitalist media to imply the miners are criminals.

The South African Police Service laid siege to the mine last August, preventing food and water from reaching the miners. They expected the miners would give up and come to the surface. This was the case last November, when 565 blockaded miners surfaced from an abandoned mine near Orkney and were arrested. Police spokespeople told the press that their strategy could be summed up as "surrender or starve."

Many miners at Buffelsfontein perished from starvation and lack of water. Others fell to their deaths in attempts to climb up the mine's air shaft, a mile-and-a-half vertical climb that would take three days.

The police deny any responsibility for the miners' deaths. Community members disagreed. The Stilfontein Crisis Committee and Mining Affected Communities United in Action, made up of members of the community and other organizations, said miners were pleading for assistance, no longer well enough to get out on their own. They needed to be rescued.

Local people say the cops were working with gang members in the mine.

Community members explained

the miners were trapped in two shafts more than a mile deep, lined with concrete walls with no stairs. The miners had to be pulled to the surface. Volunteers organized to do just that, with a rope and pulley system, but it took so much time and effort that only one person could be brought up at a time. At that rate the rescue would take months and many more would die.

The South African Police Service continued to block people from providing the trapped miners with food. "By providing food, water and necessities to these illegal miners it would be the police entertaining and allowing criminality to thrive," it said.

### Local community forces rescue

The government was forced by court order to prepare a rescue effort. That's when the crane and cage setup was erected. But local authorities refused to send anyone to operate them. Charles and Mkwai told the *Wall Street Journal* they knew the trapped miners. They said the surviving miners had to resort to eating cockroaches and rotting flesh from those who had died. "They had lost hope."

Mkwai is unemployed and Charles, like the men he rescued, has worked as a "zama zama." "That's why I managed to go down. I was just thinking of those guys," he said.

Deeply affected by what they saw and experienced, they kept going until no one was left behind. They made more than 30 round trips over three

days, cramming as many as 13 men and bodies into the cage. "Our government failed them," said Mkwai.

Gwede Mantashe, the South African government's petroleum and resource minister, defended the siege and the deaths as a necessary crackdown on illegal mining. "It's a criminal activity," he said, "an attack on our economy by foreign nationals in the main."

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and Mantashe were both leaders of the National Union of Mineworkers during the anti-apartheid struggle in the 1980s, when the majority of union membership in the mines were migrant workers. Ramaphosa went on to become a boss, then a capitalist politician.

All in all, 1,576 rescued miners were arrested and 121 deported. Most came from Mozambique, others from Lesotho and Zimbabwe. Twenty-one were South African. All were taken into police custody.

### Capitalist crisis breeds exploitation

As the capitalist economic crisis deepens across southern Africa, with crushing inflation and unemployment, workers from nearby countries are drawn to South Africa, looking for a way to survive. They find the crisis facing working people in South Africa is deep, with an unemployment rate of 42%.

This is what drives people into working in these abandoned mines, digging out gold from old deposits. They find themselves caught up amid armed criminal gangs fighting violent turf wars over the profits.

These gangs are politically well connected. They superexploit the miners, forcing them to work for months in abandoned death traps. These mines have no power, no emergency response, no means of transport for miners or products, no roof support and poor ventilation. The gangs skim off the bulk of the profit.

While none of the main mine worker unions issued any statements about this disaster, the South African Federation of Trade Unions, the second-largest union federation in the country, did issue a statement blaming the government for allowing the men "to starve to death in the depths of the earth."

"These miners, many of them undocumented and desperate workers from Mozambique and other Southern African countries, were left to die in one of the most horrific displays of state willful negligence in recent history."

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

### THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

January 31, 2000

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Tens of thousands marched through the streets here demanding the Confederate battle flag no longer be flown over the capitol building. The marchers wound through the streets chanting, "We're fired up! Take it Down!" and "Hey Hey! Ho Ho! The racist flag has got to go!" It was the largest civil rights march ever in the state.

The march was one of many commemorating slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. The flag was installed in 1962 as a calculated insult and in defiance of the advancing civil rights movement.

### THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

January 31, 1975

It was an ironic coincidence. Two painters who were working on the project to shine up the Statue of Liberty for the celebration next year of 200 years of freedom in the United States were seized by Immigration Department agents. It turns out they lacked the proper papers.

Immigration laws, like most others, are drafted for the needs of the rich. One of their needs is to regulate and control their labor supply. The economic crisis has raised the immigration barriers again. The broad and intensive campaign against "illegal aliens" is one of the fake cures for unemployment.

### THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

January 30, 1950

The conviction of Alger Hiss has spread fear among the liberals and left-wing Democrats while jubilation reigns on the extreme right. These contrasting reactions cast light on the political significance of the case.

It is often forgotten that the idea of a "loyalty" probe of government employees was projected in 1939 to expose "Communist" agents. The lesson from the Hiss trial is that the loyalty purge cannot be limited. Once started, it sets into motion forces which can boomerang against its own sponsors. Truman persecuted Stalinists, Trotskyists and others. But this was only a beginning.

# Ukraine coal miners fight gov't attacks, resist Moscow's war

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Ukrainian working people are the heart and soul of the fight to defend their country's sovereignty against Russian President Vladimir Putin's murderous invasion. Ukrainian workers also bear the biggest effects of the economic burden of the war on production, transportation and jobs. And they face a long-running battle with the bosses and their government, which use the cover of the war to press their attacks on union rights, wages and job conditions.

Coal miners, members of the Independent Trade Union of Mineworkers of Ukraine (NGPU) at the government-owned Lviv Coal State Enterprise, held a protest in Kyiv Aug. 1-2 demanding payment of wage arrears and unpaid sick leave. To help fund this, they demanded the company sell coal it has been stockpiling.

In a meeting with cabinet ministers Aug. 5, the union made some progress. They won back pay of 20 million Ukrainian hryvnia (\$474 million) but 600 million hryvnia in owed wages still remains to be paid. The total of wages in arrears at mines across the country has grown to 1,375 billion hryvnia, the Ministry of Energy admits.

Mykhailo Volynets, president of the NGPU and the Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Ukraine, and a member of parliament, joined three other legislators to get a bill passed for a year-long moratorium on closing bankrupt state-owned coal and uranium mines. Volynets criticized government ministers who "cynically ignore mining problems, proposing solutions in an abstract future — perhaps never."

At a time when workers are sacrificing both on the job and at the front for the country's defense, Ukrainian bosses are pressing for radical changes to the Labor Code that would weaken the unions and threaten workers' rights.

Employers would be allowed to spy on workers, alter working hours and break times at will, limit maternity leaves and arbitrarily dismiss workers.

The new law, which was sprung on the union movement New Year's Eve, would also waive provisions on labor rights at companies with foreign ownership and in the so-called gig economy. And it would grant bosses more leeway to lock out workers in any dispute with the unions.

## Workers defend their rights

Volynets called for "labor collectives," workers and miners to organize actions against these proposals.

The NGPU Trade Union News reported Dec. 13 that the majority of legislators, supposedly the "servants of the people," adopted a bill Nov. 21 that will "completely deprive people with special needs of social protection," especially those with disabilities, including war veterans and retired workers.

"Many of our union members are currently holding the front," said Yuriy Kryvoruchko, an official of the NGPU



NGPU

Members of Independent Trade Union of Mineworkers of Ukraine from Lviv Coal State Enterprise protest at Ministry of Energy in Kyiv Aug. 1 demanding payment of wage arrears.

for Western Donbas. Thousands of miners have volunteered for the army. Their co-workers still on the job volunteer to help them. They scour for spare parts lying idle on the job and other supplies needed by army colleagues.

Oleg Yeliseyev, a mine electrician for 20 years, is using his free time at work to fulfill requests from mine workers at the front. He is currently working on making starters the army has not been

able to fix for tanks and other heavy military equipment. He is also working on a portable battery charger with enough power to weld, so soldiers can perform some minor repairs themselves.

These initiatives, along with the battles the unions are forced to wage against boss attacks, show the challenges facing working people trying to defend their sovereignty under capitalist rule, as well as their determination to prevail.

# Exhibit: Bolshevik Revolution unleashed Ukraine culture

BY GREG McCARTAN

LONDON — How the 1905 and 1917 revolutions in Russia affected the development of modern art and culture in Ukraine was the focus of the exhibit "In the Eye of the Storm: Modernism in Ukraine, 1900-1930s." On display here last fall, it included 65 artworks, mostly on loan from the National Art Museum of Ukraine and the Museum of Theatre, Music and Cinema of Ukraine in Kyiv.

The heart of the exhibit shows how an "outpouring of cultural activities and a flourishing of the arts" took place in the wake of the Bolshevik's victory in 1917. Under the leadership of V.I. Len-

in, workers and peasants fought to free themselves from centuries of oppression under the Russian Empire of the czars.

Because of the crushing of their national rights, many of Ukraine's artists lived abroad. One of the artists on display is Mykhailo Boichuk, who returned to Ukraine in 1917 after the victorious Russian Revolution freed the country from czarist bondage.

He became a professor at the newly established Ukrainian State Academy of Arts. It was the first-ever art institution in modern Ukraine. Renamed the Kyiv State Art Institute in 1924, it became a leading art school. Boichuk was the founder of the Association of Revolutionary Art of Ukraine in 1925 and drew in other artists committed to expanding Ukrainian culture and supporting the Bolshevik Revolution.

The exhibit features works by Jewish artists centered in Kyiv. Many of them were part of the newly organized Kultur Lige promoting Jewish culture. An especially powerful work is "Jewish Pogrom" by Manuil Shekhtman, done in 1926. It reflects the history of organized assaults and murders carried out both under the czars and by reactionary forces fighting to prevent workers and peasants from taking power after the 1917 revolution.

Sarah Shor, who escaped a pogrom in northern Ukraine, joined the Kultur Lige's art section in 1919 in Kyiv. Her two works, "Sunrise" and "Horse Riders," capture "the optimism of the new age, while reworking Jewish artistic traditions," the exhibitors explain.

Much of the material written about the exhibit fails to present the historical truth about the role of the Bolshevik Party in Russia and its central leader, V.I. Lenin. The Bolsheviks led the fight for liberation of Ukraine and other nations oppressed by the czarist empire. Lenin insisted the revolution had to support national self-determination for Ukraine and uphold cultural expression based on

the Ukrainian language.

This explosion of Ukrainian culture was a central target of the counterrevolution against Lenin's course championed by Joseph Stalin starting in the mid-1920s. The Stalinist regime carried out "purges of the Ukrainian intelligentsia," the exhibitors point out, including murdering leading figures like Boichuk, who was accused of "bourgeois nationalism."

## Stalinist counterrevolution

Manuscripts, books and artwork were destroyed. Murals were painted over or scraped off the walls. "Socialist Realism" was imposed on artists, and the few paintings from this era are displayed to show the Stalinists' corruption of art.

The independence won by Ukraine after the implosion of the Soviet Union in 1991 engendered an explosion of interest in literature and art from the 1920s and early '30s. An art academy in Kyiv was named after Boichuk in 1991. This facility was severely damaged by Russian bombing last March.

The works exhibited here by survivors of the Stalinist repression are an exceptional tribute to what the Russian Revolution opened up for the people and artists of Ukraine.

# Protest US gov't restoration of Cuba to 'State Sponsors of Terrorism' list

BY JANET POST

Within hours after his Jan. 20 inauguration, President Donald Trump revoked the "Certificate of Rescission of Cuba's Designation as a State Sponsor of Terrorism" issued by former President Joseph Biden just six days earlier.

Cuba had been placed on this list by Trump just days before the end of his first term as president in 2021. Biden kept this attack on Cuban people on the books, which tightens the U.S. rulers' 60-year-plus economic war against

them, until the end of his presidency.

Trump's action was not surprising, Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel responded. "Its objective is to keep accelerating the cruel economic war against Cuba with a goal of domination.

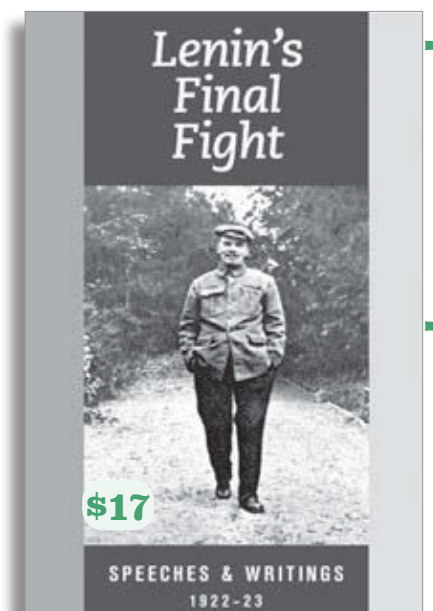
"The result of the extreme siege measures imposed by Trump has been to provoke shortages among our people," he said. "The legitimate and noble cause of our people will prevail, and once again prevail."

In December half a million Cubans marched by the U.S. Embassy in Havana protesting Washington's embargo and demanding the U.S. government remove Cuba from the "terrorism" list.

The U.S. capitalist rulers are determined to destroy Cuba's socialist revolution ushered in by a powerful uprising of millions that overthrew the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship. Led by Fidel Castro, Cuban working people took control of their destiny. Far from organizing terrorism, Cuba offers the hand of solidarity to toilers everywhere. It is an example to be emulated, including in the U.S.



pathfinderpress.com



pathfinderpress.com

# Why the Holocaust made the creation of Israel inevitable

Underground to Palestine by I.F. Stone. Hassell Street Press. 264 pages. \$26.06. Reprinted 2021.

BY SETH GALINSKY

Leading up to and during World War II, Adolf Hitler's Nazis murdered 6 million Jews. That was two out of every three Jews in Europe, 40% of the entire Jewish population in the world.

*Underground to Palestine* by I.F. Stone, tells the powerful story of how Jews who survived the Holocaust organized themselves, and overcame the

## IN REVIEW

obstacles put in their way by the capitalist rulers in Europe to make their way to Palestine. Reading this book will deepen your understanding of the conditions that made the creation of Israel as a refuge for Jews inevitable.

Journalist Stone wrote the book in 1946 after flying to Europe and meeting and traveling with Jews seeking to emigrate. He visited several of the displaced persons camps where 250,000 Jewish survivors had been herded after the war — in Germany, Austria and Italy, often on the sites of the concentration camps where the Nazis had imprisoned them. And he set sail with them on an overcrowded ship to Palestine.

“Like most American Jews, I was neither a Zionist nor an anti-Zionist,” Stone writes. “My parents were born in Russia. Had they not emigrated at the turn of the century to America, I might have gone to the gas chambers in Eastern Europe. I might have been a DP [displaced person], ragged and homeless like those with whom I traveled.”

### Imperialist powers turned Jews away

Leading up to and during the Holocaust the capitalist rulers of the United States, the U.K., Canada and other countries turned away Jews attempting to flee the Nazi terror, sending them back to their deaths. After the war they still kept the doors closed.

Hundreds of thousands of Jews — concentration and death camp survivors; those who managed to hide out till the war was over; and others who had joined the partisan bands or the Russian army to fight the Nazis — were left in limbo.

For most it was impossible to go “home,” even if they wanted to. In Poland, more than one anti-Jewish pogrom made that clear. In Germany, like Poland, Jew-hatred was still widespread.

With the capitalist governments of the world turning their backs on Jews, many survivors decided that to have a life of dignity, they had no choice but to emigrate to Palestine, where Jews had historic roots going back 3,000 years.

On the ship Stone boards to Palestine he reports that two-thirds were men, “for more men than women survived the Nazi terror.” Only 196 out of the 1,000 passengers were over 30. Most had lost their entire family in the Holocaust. What struck him was their resilience.

He tells the story of Sarah, a woman who survived the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. As the U.S. army got closer, the German guards — still intent on the “Final Solution” — put the Jews on a forced march, claiming they were going somewhere safer. When they



Yad Vashem Archive, Jerusalem

Sept. 7, 1947, protest in British-run Bergen-Belsen Jewish displaced persons camp after British navy rammed and boarded the ship Exodus, forcing Jewish passengers trying to reach Palestine back to Europe.

stopped for a rest, the guards started shooting at them from all sides.

“I was one of the lucky few who escaped,” she told Stone. After the war ended, Sarah headed back to Poland, on foot. “There were hundreds of us on the roads, making for home. But when I got back to Lodz I found I had no home. The house we lived in had been burned to the ground,” she said. “Most of the Poles I encountered hated the Jews more than ever.” Sarah learned Hebrew and tailoring — in classes or-

ganized in the camps — so she could start a new life in Palestine.

Stone describes life in the camps. The Holocaust survivors planted gardens, raised cattle and set up trade schools. But even the best of the camps were still surrounded by barbed wire.

Without visas or exit permits, they had to bribe or sneak their way across borders, sometimes beaten and driven back as they traveled from Poland to Czechoslovakia, from Austria to Italy. They found themselves blocked

by British, Italian and other troops as they tried to make their way to a port where they could board a ship.

In secret, they crowded onto ships clandestinely bought by the Zionist movement. They were packed like sardines. Once at sea they tried to avoid warships deployed by the British rulers, who had set up a naval blockade to prevent them from getting to Palestine.

The boat Stone was on made it through and arrived in Haifa. Its passengers were some of the lucky few. Other ships, like the Exodus in 1947, were rammed and boarded by the British forces who then assaulted passengers, forcing them back to Europe or into camps in Cyprus.

### Stone pretties up Washington's role

Stone's book has a weakness. While describing the role of British imperialism in trying to block the Jews from making it to Palestine, he pretties up the role of U.S. imperialism.

He points out that conditions for the Jewish displaced persons were freer in the American-controlled zones than

Continued on page 9

## New stage in fight to defend Israel as a refuge for Jews

Continued from front page  
take place in a second stage.

The Israeli government, in turn, will release 737 Palestinians accused of terrorism, along with 1,167 Gaza residents detained over the last year who did not participate in Hamas' Nazi-like Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom. During phase two Israeli troops would pull back to a new buffer zone within Gaza and to Rafah near Egypt.

The Israel Defense Forces announced Jan. 21 that if “Hamas adheres to all the details of the agreement, residents of the Gaza Strip will be able to return” to their homes in the north starting the following week. Returnees will have to pass through checkpoints to make sure no weapons are being smuggled in.

### Hamas before and after Oct. 7

“It's worth pausing to ask: Where were Hamas and its ‘axis of resistance’ before October 7, 2023, and where are they today?” Israel-based Ynetnews wrote Jan. 17. “This is the standard measure of defeat and victory.”

Hamas death squads killed 1,200 people, took 251 hostages and raped and mutilated dozens of women Oct. 7. Before then, “Hamas reigned unchallenged over the Gaza Strip,” Ynetnews noted, backed by Tehran.

“And today? Hamas' military capabilities have been reduced by 80% and its supply lines for weaponry have dried up completely. Its political and military leadership has been systematically eliminated.” Many of its tunnels are destroyed and some 15,000 of its thugs have been killed.

Hezbollah, a key part of Tehran's “axis of resistance,” was forced to withdraw from southern Lebanon, its leadership decimated. The Israeli air force also destroyed Tehran's main air defense systems, and the Tehran-backed dictatorship of Syria's Bashar al-Assad

collapsed, leading Syrians to pour into the streets to celebrate. All this has left Hamas more isolated than ever.

Despite the blows, Tehran and Hamas have not backed off from their goal of destroying Israel and eliminating the Jews there. Hamas leader Khalil al-Hayya told Al Jazeera Jan. 15 that the Oct. 7 pogrom was a “security and military miracle” and would “forever be a source of pride.”

Both the outgoing administration of Joseph Biden and the incoming one of President Donald Trump pressed the Israeli government and Hamas to agree to the ceasefire deal. Since early in the war, the Biden administration has been pushing Israel to wind it down and leave Hamas intact. Washington's concern is not defense of the Jews, which requires defeating Hamas, but stability for U.S. imperialism's own economic and political interests in the region.

Many Israelis across the political spectrum are uneasy about the release of Palestinians convicted of terrorism and the potential withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza before Hamas is totally dismantled.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says Trump assured him that if Hamas rejects Israel's security demands for the next phase of the ceasefire he will support Israel's return to an offensive against Hamas.

Thousands celebrated across Israel as the first pictures of Romi Gonen, Emily Damari and Doron Steinbacher, the freed hostages, arriving in Israel were broadcast. Damari lost two fingers after Hamas shot her in the hand Oct. 7 as she was comforting her dying dog. She has become a symbol of courage and resilience as she held up her bandaged hand, flashing a victory sign and a smile after her release.

Dozens of gun wielding, masked

Hamas thugs were among a crowd that surged forward, surrounding the cars bringing the three women to Saraya junction in Gaza City, before they were handed over to the Red Cross Jan. 19. The photos Hamas broadcast were meant to give the impression it has massive support. But Quds Feed, a pro-Hamas internet site, posted an aerial photo. It showed several hundred people at best.

Hamas cynically handed the women “gift bags” with photos of them in captivity, a map of Gaza and a “certificate” of release to give the false impression the women were well-treated. Previously released hostages have described their mistreatment at the hands of their captors and widespread sexual abuse.

### Declining support for Hamas

After narrowly winning election over the Palestine Liberation Organization in 2006, Hamas smashed its political opponents in bloody fighting. It routinely tortures and kills them to terrorize the people of Gaza. It's the biggest obstacle Palestinians face to fighting for their national rights and being able to forge ties with workers throughout the region, including workers in Israel.

There have been several anti-Hamas demonstrations in Gaza over the last year and more Gazans are willing to speak out. “This is the result of having bad Islamists in power for years, like Hamas, and it has dragged us back 200 years,” Sami, a Palestinian from Gaza who used to work in Israel, told Media Line in November.

The more progress Israeli forces make in degrading Hamas' remaining military capabilities and structures, the more blows will be dealt to Jew-hatred. And more room can be carved out for working people to forge a leadership that can point a way forward.

# Unlike Martin Luther King, Malcolm X was a revolutionary

The anniversaries of the assassination of Malcolm X on Feb. 21, 1965, and of Martin Luther King on April 4, 1968, will soon be commemorated. This week's Books of the Month selection is from the Spanish edition of Malcolm X, *Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. In the excerpt below, Barnes refutes claims of a convergence between two very different leaders of the Black rights movement in the U.S. It is from the chapter "Malcolm X: Revolutionary leader of the working class," based on a talk given by Barnes in March 1987. © Copyright © 2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Library of Congress/Marion S. Trikosko  
Martin Luther King, left, and Malcolm X met only once, at U.S. Capitol during Senate debate on Civil Rights Act, March 26, 1964. The two followed "irreconcilable" class courses, Barnes says.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JACK BARNES

[I]t is simply untrue to talk about a political convergence between Malcolm X and Martin Luther King. King was a courageous individual who helped lead powerful mobilizations for Black rights, from the time of the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955 right up until his assassination in 1968. ...

We're talking about two clashing class outlooks, two irreconcilable political courses.

One of the pieces of "evidence" displayed time and again to support the

"Malcolm-Martin" myth is a photograph of the two of them together, smiling, after running into each other by happenstance at the United States Capitol building in Washington, D.C., in March 1964 — just two weeks after Malcolm announced his break with the Nation of Islam. But there was no political content whatsoever to that chance meeting. As King himself later said in an interview with Alex Haley, "I met Malcolm X once in Washington, but circumstances didn't enable me to talk with him for more than a minute." And King went on in that same January 1965 interview to condemn what he called Malcolm's "fiery, demagogic oratory," charging that "in his litany of articulating the despair of the Negro without offering any positive, creative alternative, I feel that Malcolm has done himself and our people a great disservice."

That was Martin Luther King's political assessment of the person who was arguably America's greatest single mass revolutionary leader of the middle of the twentieth century.

The actual political relations between Malcolm X and Martin Luther King were demonstrated a few months after their unplanned encounter, when King traveled to St. Augustine, Florida, in June 1964. King went there to support activists who had been repeatedly beaten by the Ku Klux Klan and arrested by cops for organizing lunch counter sit-ins and other civil

rights protests. The Democratic administration of Lyndon Johnson had contemptuously spurned King's call for federal troops to protect the demonstrators and enforce their rights.

On behalf of the newly launched Organization of Afro-American Unity, Malcolm sent a telegram to King at the time saying, "If the federal Government will not send troops to your aid, just say the word and we will immediately dispatch some of our brothers there to organize self-defense units among our people and the Ku Klux Klan will then receive a taste of its own medicine. The day of turning the other cheek to those brute beasts is over."

King flatly rejected Malcolm's offer, calling it a "grave error" and "an immoral approach."

Nor did that political chasm narrow over subsequent months. In early February 1965, Malcolm spoke to a group of three hundred young people at a local church in Selma, Alabama. Since the beginning of 1965, King's organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), had been leading voting rights demonstrations in and around Selma, in the course of which protesters had been subjected to cop brutality and some 3,400 had been arrested. After Malcolm had addressed a meeting of several thousand on February 3 at nearby Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, students there insisted that he go with them to Selma the next day,

and Malcolm agreed. ...

Malcolm respected and appreciated anyone who devoted their life to the fight against racism and for Black equality. He was ready for united action to advance common demands. But it's simply false that Malcolm during his last year was converging politically with Martin Luther King — with King's bourgeois pacifism, his social-democratic ideas, his commitment to the reformability of capitalism, his support for the imperialist Democratic Party and various of its politicians.


When he spoke to the young people in Selma, Malcolm again condemned the Johnson administration for its refusal to deploy federal troops to protect Blacks fighting for their rights. Malcolm said he was "100 percent for the effort being put forth by the Black folks here" and believed "they have an absolute right to use whatever means are necessary to gain the vote." But he added that he didn't believe in practicing nonviolence in face of violence by organized racist forces. He concluded: "I pray that you will grow intellectually, so that you can understand the problems of the world and where you fit into, in that world picture" — once again the internationalist starting point, "broadening your scope." ...

King, who was in jail when Malcolm was in Selma, said, shortly after the assassination: "I couldn't block his coming, but my philosophy was so antithetical to the philosophy of Malcolm X — so diametrically opposed, that I would never have invited Malcolm X to come to Selma when we were in the midst of a nonviolent demonstration, and this says nothing about the personal respect I had for him. I disagreed with his philosophy and his methods." ...

So, no, there was not a "Malcolm-Martin" convergence during that last year. To the contrary, the divergence widened, as there was a clarification of Martin Luther King's conviction that capitalism and its injustices could be reformed. Meanwhile, Malcolm never stopped advancing in his commitment to the need for the oppressed and working people of all skin colors, continents, and countries to join together in revolutionary struggle against the capitalist world order responsible for racism, rightist violence, the oppression of women, economic exploitation, and war.

**January**  
**BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

**Pathfinder Readers Club Specials**



**Malcolm X, la liberación de los negros y el camino al poder obrero**  
(Malcolm X, *Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*)  
JACK BARNES  
Why the revolutionary conquest of power by the working class opens the door to the final battle for Black freedom and a socialist world.  
\$20. **Special price \$14**

**30%**  
DISCOUNT

**Letters From Prison**  
JAMES P. CANNON  
A Revolutionary Party Prepares for Post-WWII Labor Battles  
\$20. **Special price \$14**

**Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution**  
A Marxist Appreciation  
JOSEPH HANSEN  
\$23. **Special price \$16**

**Their Morals and Ours**  
The Class Foundations of Moral Practice  
LEON TROTSKY  
\$10. **Special price \$7**

**FBI on Trial**  
The Victory in the Socialist Workers Party Suit Against Government Spying  
MARGARET JAYKO  
\$17. **Special price \$12**

**Teamster Politics**  
FARRELL DOBBS  
\$16. **Special price \$11**

**Join the Pathfinder Readers Club for \$10 and receive discounts all year long**

ORDER ONLINE AT  
**PATHFINDERPRESS.COM**  
OFFER GOOD UNTIL February 10

## IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

Where to find distributors of the *Militant*, *New International*, and a full display of Pathfinder books.

### UNITED STATES

**CALIFORNIA: Oakland:** P.O. Box 6012. Zip: 94603. 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Zip: 94621. Tel: (510) 686-1351. Email: oaklandswp@gmail.com. **Los Angeles:** 2826 S. Vermont. Suite 1. Zip: 90007. Tel: (323) 643-4968. Email: swpla@att.net

**FLORIDA: Miami:** 5711 NW 7th Ave. Unit B. Zip: 33127. Tel: (305) 929-8966. Email: swpmiami@icloud.com

**GEORGIA: Atlanta:** 777 Cleveland Ave. SW Suite 103. Zip: 30315. Tel: (678) 528-7828. Email: swpatlanta@fastmail.com

**ILLINOIS: Chicago:** 1858 W. Cermak Road, 2nd floor. Zip: 60608. Tel: (312) 792-6160. Email: SWPChicago@fastmail.fm

**MINNESOTA: Minneapolis:** 2401 1/2 Central Ave. NE, Unit B. Zip: 55418. Tel: (612) 271-1930. Email: swpminneapolis@gmail.com

**NEBRASKA: Lincoln:** P.O. Box 6811.

Zip: 68506. Tel: (402) 217-4906. Email: swplincolin@gmail.com

**NEW JERSEY:** 3600 Bergenline, Suite 205B, Union City. Zip: 07087. Tel: (551) 240-1512. swpnewjersey@gmail.com

**NEW YORK: New York:** 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor. Zip: 10018. Tel: (646) 434-8117. Email: newyorkswp@gmail.com

**OHIO: Cincinnati:** 2300 Montana Ave., Suite 230. Tel: Zip: 45211. (513) 837-1038. Email: swpcincinnati@gmail.com

**PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia:** 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite 16. Zip: 19149. Tel: (215) 708-1270. Email: philaswp@verizon.net **Pittsburgh:** 5907 Penn Ave., Suite 313. Zip: 15206. Tel: (412) 610-2402. Email: swppittsburgh@gmail.com

**TEXAS: Dallas-Fort Worth:** 6815 Manhattan Blvd., Suite 108 Fort Worth. Zip: 76120. Tel: (817) 899-6720. Email: dfswp@gmail.com

**WASHINGTON, D.C.:** 7603 Georgia Ave. NW, Suite 300. Zip: 20012. Tel: (202) 536-5080. Email: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

**WASHINGTON: Seattle:** 650 S. Orcas St., #120 Zip: 98108. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Email: swpseattle@gmail.com

### AUSTRALIA

**Sydney:** Suite 2, First floor, 275 George St., Liverpool. Postal Address: P.O. Box 73 Campsie, NSW 2194. Tel: (61) 435-995-604. Email: clydney@outlook.com

### CANADA

**QUEBEC: Montreal:** 7107 St. Denis #204 H2S 2S5. Tel: (514) 272-5840. Email: cllcmontreal@fastmail.com

### FRANCE

**Paris:** BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15. Email: militant.paris@gmail.com

### UNITED KINGDOM

**ENGLAND: London:** 5 Norman Road (first floor). Seven Sisters. Post code: N15 4ND. Tel: 020-3538 8900. Email: cllondon@fastmail.fm **Manchester:** 329, Royal Exchange Buildings, 3 Old Bank St. Post code: M2 7PE. Tel: (0161) 312-8119. Email: clmanchr@gmail.com



# White House is the home of capitalist rule

The inauguration of President Donald Trump marks a change from one of the two major parties that serve the U.S. capitalist class to the other. It does nothing to change the class-against-class reality workers face every day.

Trump won support from workers of all nationalities during the election. He pledged to put an end to soaring prices, to Democrats' deeply hated woke policies, to government censorship and its use of the courts against political opponents. He said he would prevent more devastating wars from breaking out.

Trump has begun issuing executive orders to advance his program for defending U.S. capitalist interests, claiming he's ushering in a "golden age." But like every Democratic and Republican administration, he will ensure the capitalist rulers continue to reap massive profits off the exploitation of workers' labor. He'll defend the rulers in today's trade conflicts and wars against their rivals.

No capitalist politician can prevent struggles from breaking out between society's two main classes, workers and the bosses. None can stop further economic breakdowns, nor the continuing march of the world imperialist system — with the U.S. rulers at its head — toward fascism and a third world war.

Trump's inauguration did not mark the triumph of "fascism," as the middle-class left forewarned. Nor is there now an "oligarchy" that "threatens our entire democracy," as former President Joseph Biden stated in his farewell.

The entirety of Biden's four years in office was marked by an assault on constitutional rights, which

are crucial for protecting workers from government interference. Partisan prosecutors from the Justice Department on down filed charges against Trump and his supporters, seeking to drive him out of politics. In doing so, they trampled on the right to free speech and assembly, and more.

The Socialist Workers Party campaigned against these blows. "Defending and extending the freedoms protected by the U.S. Constitution is at the center of the class struggle today," the party said. And that remains true.

The change from one capitalist administration to another only underscores the fact that the central question workers face is which class rules.

All class struggles are political struggles. To strengthen our unions, workers need to organize independently of the rulers and their Democratic and Republican parties.

We need a party of labor that organizes all workers, builds solidarity and acts on our shared interests with fellow workers worldwide. A party that strengthens workers' self-confidence and class consciousness. A party that acts on workers' capacities to take state power into our own hands, to end capitalist exploitation and oppression, and to run society in the interests of the toiling majority. The conquest of power by workers here would open another front in the fight for a socialist world.

The Socialist Workers Party is running candidates for office across the country in 2025 to win workers to that course. Join in campaigning for the SWP candidates!

# Workers' housing crisis bred by bosses' profit drive

Continued from front page

everything else, is sharply class-divided. In search of profits, construction bosses have churned out a glut of "upmarket" apartments, which now have a vacancy rate nationwide of 11.4%. In some cities with sizable upper-middle-class populations, like Austin, Texas, it's at 15%.

For the wealthy and their cronies who can afford hefty monthly rents for digs that fit their lifestyles, landlords have been offering special deals to keep generating income on these properties, like two or three months of free rent on a one-year lease.

But no such deals are available for the working class. Far less housing is built for the likes of us, and landlords take advantage of the small number of available apartments to keep raising rents. This is the case in New York City, where the vacancy rate is just 2.8%. In fact, nationwide there's a shortage of 7.3 million "affordable" housing units available to those with low incomes, the National Low Income Housing Coalition says.

In Los Angeles, where catastrophic fires have displaced tens of thousands of people this year, corporate landlords, looking to seize on the opportunity, are jacking up rents. Nearly 60% of those renting in the city before the fires already paid more than 30% of their household income on rent, cutting deep into funds families need to cover the sky-high costs of food, gas, medical care and child care.

Median rent in Los Angeles before the fires was about \$3,000 a month, unless you were well-heeled enough to rent in Pacific Palisades, where median rent was \$10,000 a month.

Similarly, in Maui, Hawaii, many households who were hit by the 2023 wildfires there ended up paying over 50% more in rent for places with the same number or fewer bedrooms than they had before.

With home-insurance premiums soaring — up 33% from 2020 to 2023, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research — increasing numbers of homeowners are being forced to give up their coverage. At the same time, big insurance companies like State Farm are refusing to renew hundreds of thousands of policies, particularly in areas they consider "high risk," like in California, the Carolinas and Florida where fires and hurricanes have hit hard.

Mortgage rates rose to over 7% in January for the first time in six months. The rates are now more than



Militant/Maggie Trowe  
Striking hotel workers, Las Vegas, Jan. 6, fight for better wages to cover the high cost of rents, groceries and other essentials.

double what they were at the beginning of 2022. This, together with high rents, places huge obstacles in the way of young workers hoping to get out of their parents' place to live on their own and raise a family.

The monthly mortgage payment and maintenance cost on a starter home is \$1,091 more than the cost of renting the same property, reports John Burns Research and Consulting. This forces workers who can't get a mortgage to keep paying high monthly rents.

## Increased eviction and homelessness

The rising cost of housing has also led to increased evictions and more workers thrown onto the street. Over the past year landlords have filed more than 1 million eviction notices in 10 states and 36 cities, from New York to Las Vegas. In addition, more than 200,000 rural families face eviction every year.

This has led to a huge jump in the number of ordinary workers and their families in the homeless population, up 30% over the past two years. And that's just for those that government officials have been able to find and count.

Families with children saw the largest increase in homelessness. In New York City the number of homeless students has topped 100,000 for nine straight years.

What's needed is a fight led by the unions for a federally funded public works program to build millions of decent, low-rent housing units, as well as hospitals and child care facilities, and to repair roads, bridges and other basic infrastructure.

# Fight 'Militant' jail ban

Continued from front page

el. The photo accompanied an article explaining why the fight against Jew-hatred is central to the working class everywhere, including in the U.S.

Most major newspapers nationwide carried similar pictures in their reports on Hamas' massacre. And often guns or other weaponry appear in coverage of other conflicts around the world, including reports of battles to defend Ukraine's sovereignty against Moscow's attacks. The jail would have to bar a large number of newspapers.

The "confiscation of an inmate's political literature, as here, violates the First Amendment" of the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing the right to freedom of speech and of the press, *Militant* attorney David Goldstein wrote in his Jan. 13 appeal of the ban. "It is discriminatory and arbitrary, in violation of the *Militant's* rights to Due Process and Equal Protection under the Constitution's 14th Amendment."

The *Militant* is currently mailed to 301 inmate subscribers in 29 states at 156 state, federal and municipal prisons or jails. "None of the 155 other facilities with subscribers to the *Militant* found the photo (or anything else) in no. 42 justified rejection," Goldstein wrote.

The *Militant* was not informed by the Central Mailroom or the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office, as prison rules require, that this issue of the paper had been impounded. Instead, the paper first learned about it from a letter sent to the *Militant* in November by a long-term reader at that jail. He filed a grievance requesting the ban be overturned after being denied access to the issue. The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office promptly rejected it. He told the *Militant* he has received every issue since the ban on no. 42.

Letters are needed now urging prison authorities to overturn the ban. They should be mailed to Ancillary Services Division Commander, MCSO, 3250 W. Lower Buckeye Road, Phoenix, AZ 85009. Also email a copy to [mcsocentralmailroom@MCSO.Maricopa.gov](mailto:mcsocentralmailroom@MCSO.Maricopa.gov), with a copy to [themilitant@mac.com](mailto:themilitant@mac.com).

Join the fight to get this impoundment overturned!

# Israel's creation inevitable

Continued from page 7

in the British-controlled ones. And it was the British navy, not the U.S. Navy, that was preventing them from reaching the shores of Palestine.

But that's because Palestine was under British colonial rule, and London saw Jewish immigration to Palestine as an obstacle to its financial, oil and political interests and to developing good relations with the newly or soon to be independent Arab governments.

Washington had its own imperialist designs on the Middle East, and the U.S. rulers were debating the best course so they would prevail. Their biggest concern was to keep Jews from heading to the U.S. in large numbers. From 1944 to 1959 there are only two years when more than 19,000 Jews were allowed into the U.S. and nine years when it was less than 10,000.

Ultimately the Jewish refugees found a way and made it to Palestine. And in May 1948 when the new state of Israel was declared they helped defend it arms in hand.

*Underground to Palestine* doesn't tell the whole story, including how the Stalinist Communist parties in Europe betrayed revolutionary struggles that exploded in the 1930s and '40s. In Germany the Communist Party let Hitler walk into power without a fight, saying that after he took power they would come next. This opened the road to the Holocaust.

That betrayal, along with the Nazi murder machine, the refusal of the imperialist powers to open their doors to the Jews, and the refusal of millions of Jews to accept those devastating consequences without a fight made the creation of Israel as a refuge for Jews inevitable. And today, in a world where there are Nazi-like forces that are trying to inflict a new Holocaust, that refuge must be defended.

But Israel's existence is not a permanent solution. A road forward requires building the kind of revolutionary working-class parties that can put an end to Jew-hatred forever. Read *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class* by V.I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Farrell Dobbs, James P. Cannon, Jack Barnes and Dave Prince, available from Pathfinder Press.