

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Communist League campaign:
‘Workers need to take power’
— PAGE 4

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 89/NO. 7 FEBRUARY 24, 2025

10,000 grocery workers strike King Soopers in Colorado

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

Spirited picket lines are up at 79 King Soopers grocery stores in Colorado after 10,000 workers, members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 7, walked off the job Feb. 6 and 7. The chain, owned by Kroger, is the top grocer in the area. Workers at every location voted overwhelmingly to strike for two weeks when contract negotiations over work conditions and wages broke down. The union says the strike can be extended if needed.

“Workers are being asked to do the jobs of two, three, four workers,” Kim Cordova, president of Local 7, told the *Denver Post*, explaining that the union’s number one issue is inadequate staffing. There aren’t enough people to stock shelves, or to keep the deli, meat and bakery areas open, or enough cashiers.

“You do have to stand up for what you believe in,” Bellarose Moore, who works in the floral area of one Denver store, told CBS News Colorado. “Sometimes in my depart-

Continued on page 9

SWP candidates point road forward for working people

‘Break with bosses parties, build a party of labor’



Militant/Maggie Trowe

Teacher’s aide Johana Perez tells Eric Simpson, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Oakland, Feb. 5 that she likes party’s program backing amnesty for undocumented immigrants.

BY JOHN STUDER
AND JANET POST

The Socialist Workers Party is launching a national slate of candidates in 2025 — a bold working-class campaign that points a road forward for the growing number of workers repelled by the pro-boss politics of the Democrats, Republicans and handful of also-ran so-called

independent parties, tied to lesser-evil bourgeois politics. The SWP’s goal is to organize working people in our tens of millions to fight to take political power into our own hands.

On Jan. 19 the Ballot Access News reported that with its 2024 presidential campaign of Rachele Fruit for president and Dennis Richter for vice president, the SWP became only the fifth party in

Continued on page 5

Israel’s fight to prevent a new Holocaust is at a new stage

BY SETH GALINSKY

The increasingly unstable character of the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Gaza was highlighted Feb. 10 when Hamas announced it was putting off release of three Israeli hostages set for Feb. 15 “until further notice.” This underscores why the reactionary group must be completely disabled by Israel.

The following day the Israeli cabinet voted unanimously that “if Hamas does not return our hostages by noon on Saturday, the ceasefire will end, and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will resume intense fighting until Hamas is decisively defeated.”

Two days later, Hamas backtracked, saying it would proceed with the hostage release.

Under the ceasefire accord, Hamas agreed to release 33 hostages over the first 42 days. The remaining 65 — of whom at least 35 are dead — are supposed to be freed in the deal’s second phase.

But the simple fact is every hostage should be released immediately, ceasefire or no ceasefire.

The second major threat to the exist-

Continued on page 7

Rail workers fight relentless drive by bosses to slash jobs, gut safety



Creston News Advertiser

Rail workers, family members outside 2014 SMART-TD union meeting in Creston, Iowa. Workers voted against one-person crews at BNSF. The union is fighting cuts, layoffs by bosses.

BY JOE SWANSON
AND NAOMI CRAINE

LINCOLN, Neb. — The rail bosses and the wealthy capitalist investors that share in the profits from their operations are determined to keep raking in money off the back of rail workers. Over the last four decades, they have pursued a relentless drive to cut crew sizes on freight trains and yard switching operations down to two — and sometimes to only one worker.

When crew sizes are cut, it increases the workload on the remaining workers, resulting in increasingly unsafe conditions and more hazards for people living and working near rail tracks.

It also means new workers have less opportunities to learn from experienced co-workers, in a job that takes years to conquer.

The rail bosses count on bipartisan

Continued on page 3

Editorial: US out of Guantánamo! End US economic war on Cuba!

Washington’s use of the naval base it occupies in Cuba’s Guantánamo Bay to imprison workers without papers is an assault on their rights, the unity of the working class and a longstanding violation of Cuba’s sovereignty. Working people worldwide should join in the fight to end it.

The U.S. rulers seized Guantánamo Bay in 1903, against the wishes of the Cuban people. For over 120 years since, under every Democratic and Republican administration, the occupation has been part of their decadeslong economic, trade and

political war aimed at crushing the Cuban people and overturning their socialist revolution.

The U.S. capitalist class has never forgiven Cuban workers and farmers for toppling the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in 1959. Led by Fidel Castro, working people took political power, overturned capitalist exploitation and have defended their revolution from a Washington-backed invasion in 1961 and ever since.

Half a million Cubans marched to the U.S. Embassy in December to de-

Continued on page 9



Estudios Revolución

Revolutionary leader Raúl Castro and Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel, center, lead 500,000 people in Havana to protest Washington’s economic war against Cuba Dec. 20, 2024.

UK officials cover up years of gang rapes of working-class girls

BY CATHARINA TIRSÉN

LONDON — A horrendous picture of government knowledge of — and refusal to act on — the abuse of girls has engendered a discussion among working people.

Eight men from Rochdale, near Manchester, are on trial for 56 sexual offenses, including what is called “grooming,” sexually exploiting and raping two 13-year-old girls between 2001 and 2006. The men, described in the press as Asians, deny the allegations.

“Grooming” is a woke term used to cover up the reality of what occurred — the pimping, sexual abuse and rape of children.

The case is the latest in a series of trials held in Rotherham, Telford and elsewhere that have brought to light details of the systematic rape of young girls over two decades by gangs of men largely of Pakistani descent. The trials, and subsequent government-commissioned inquiries, also shed light on the refusal of cops, social workers and officials to investigate repeated complaints of the abuse, denying the children involved basic protection.

One victim, Emily Vaughn, who is now in her 30s, said she was abused by a gang from the age of 14 and trafficked to Telford, Blackpool and within Wales, where she was from, and was raped “almost every single day.” Seven men were jailed in 2012 for running a child prostitution ring in Telford involving more than 100 girls between 2007 and 2009.

Three British-Pakistani men were handed life sentences in Oxford in 2020. In a previous case, the judge described

how one of the three prepared the child “for gang anal rape by using a pump... [and] subjected her to a gang rape by five or six men. A red ball was placed in her mouth to keep her quiet.”

Many times the victims reported what had happened to the police — only to be turned away.

Amber, a young woman from Rochdale, was targeted when she was 14 by a gang who plied girls with drugs and alcohol, and then raped and prostituted them between 2008 and 2010. She was threatened at gunpoint by a man she subsequently identified to the police, who did nothing. “They weren’t bothered,” she told the *Guardian* in 2022. “They don’t give a f—k when you’re not from a wealthy background.”

In Bradford, a 13-year-old girl placed in a residential care home run by the local municipal council in 2002 told social workers she had been assaulted and raped by a group of older men, one of whom she called her “boyfriend.” When she was 15, the girl told social workers she had converted to Islam and married the “boyfriend” in a Sharia-law ceremony. Despite this brutal history, the social worker responsible recommended she be allowed to live with the man and his family, where she was then subjected to further abuse.

Nine men were eventually jailed for the abuse of the young woman, as well as of other girls who had been placed into the council’s care.

An inquiry was commissioned by the Rotherham Borough Council and the results published in 2014. It found that 1,400 children in that city alone were

Striking health care workers rally against Kaiser



Militant/Norton Sandler

LOS ANGELES — “The way Kaiser operates they make consistency in patient care difficult. This impacts the sustainability and longevity of this kind of work. They steal your passion,” Yolando Centeno Raphael told the *Militant* at a Feb. 7 picket line and rally of 200 outside Kaiser’s Sunset hospital here.

Some 2,400 Southern California members of the National Union of Healthcare Workers have been on strike for 16 weeks. Their ranks include therapists, psychologists and other mental health workers. Pay and unsustainable workloads are key issues.

“What’s this about? Basic care,” and “No to health care factory,” they chanted. The union has been organizing picketing Monday to Friday at Kaiser hospitals throughout the area. The next negotiating session is scheduled for Feb. 17.

— NORTON SANDLER

sexually abused between 1997 and 2013 by gangs of predominantly British-Pakistani men. The men would refer to their victims as “white whores.”

The refusal to investigate complaints about the abuse was often done under the guise that responding would be “Islamophobic.” An inquiry in Manchester found that cops held back from investigating reported sexual assaults on children, claiming they didn’t want to “upset race relations.”

These kind of woke ideas are common on the left of capitalist politics. In 2018 an all-party parliamentary committee report stated that “age-old stereotypes” about “Asian grooming gangs” would “heighten the vulnerability of Muslims to hate crimes.”

But acknowledging the fact that gangs of men of mostly Pakistani descent did carry out horrendous crimes, with authorities looking the other way,

doesn’t mean that child abuse isn’t also perpetrated by people of other nationalities and religions. Nor does it get in the way of fighting anti-Muslim prejudice and discrimination.

“Child abuse, sexual abuse and rape are endemic under capitalism,” Pamela Holmes, a member of the Communist League, told participants at a Militant Labour Forum here Jan. 18, “and totally unacceptable to working people.”

She explained that the way government officials responded, by refusing to take action because it would be “racist,” underscored their class contempt for the victims. The fight to end child abuse, she said, was bound up with the fight for women’s emancipation, something that will be advanced only in the course of a struggle by the working class to take power into its own hands and put an end to capitalist exploitation.

THE MILITANT

Build solidarity with Cuba’s socialist revolution!

Communist League leader Michel Prairie; Sean O’Donoghue, secretary of Quebec-Cuba Solidarity Roundtable; and doctor Idrisse Diallo speak Feb. 1 to demand U.S. remove Cuba from its list of “countries that support terrorism,” end its punishing economic embargo.



Militant/Guy Tremblay
Panel at Montreal Militant Labour Forum Feb. 1 defends Cuba’s socialist revolution.

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. 7

Closing news date: February 13, 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.

Rail workers fight for jobs, safety

Continued from front page

support from the government — the politicians, courts, arbitration boards and a myriad of other regulatory bodies. Only the mobilization of union power and solidarity in action can push back the bosses' offensive.

The latest attack is at the BNSF Railway. It was the last of the six Class I railroads where union contracts still required a third crew member — a helper or brakeman — on most yard, industry and local switching jobs.

That's why a large majority of SMART-TD union members at BNSF voted in October to reject a tentative crew consist agreement that would allow bosses to eliminate the helper and brakeman jobs. Hoping to influence the vote, the company offered a \$27,500 "signing bonus," some extra pay and a promise that current employees wouldn't be laid off.

BNSF, owned by multibillionaire Warren Buffet's Berkshire Hathaway conglomerate, has been pushing since 2019 to catch up with its competitors in cutting jobs. In 2021 the company won an arbitration ruling to force SMART-TD to negotiate the "crew consist" issue. Arbitration boards were established under the Railway Labor Act, a notorious anti-labor law passed by Congress in 1926. It ties up railroad, and now airline, workers in a complex and yearslong series of negotiations, "cooling-off" periods and arbitration, a setup that is stacked against workers and their unions.

And, if after years workers finally are allowed to strike, the president can shove the contract they rejected down their throat and order them back to work — as Joseph Biden did in 2022.

Gov't approves bosses' demands

After SMART-TD rejected BNSF's offer, union officials agreed to send the issue to binding arbitration. They argued it was better to do so rapidly, before the Donald Trump administration took office.

Within weeks the arbitration board ruled the bosses' "tentative agreement is fair and reasonable," and imposed exactly what the big majority of rail workers had rejected. To add insult to

injury, they cut the "signing bonus" by \$500, to account for "additional costs incurred by BNSF."

After the ruling, BNSF began the first round of job cuts across its 28-state network.

The ruling "is almost identical to the one that union members who work for BNSF voted down," Andrew Foust, Nebraska state legislative director for SMART-TD, told the *Cowboy State Daily*, Wyoming's largest newspaper. He explained the cuts will leave crews that are already stretched thin even thinner.

Foust worked for the railroad for 20 years, and said he "can't even imagine now walking an entire train, out there switching in the middle of the night by myself." There's "no one out there with me and the nearest member of my crew being a mile and a half away."

"Railroad bosses have been on a drive to cut back train crews for over four decades. When my dad was a conductor, a train crew had five workers," Lance Anton, a SMART-TD conductor with 14 years' experience in Lincoln, told the *Militant*. "Crew consist" agreements are elimination of workers and greater profits for the railroad owners and stockholders.

"Smaller train crews lead to dangerous conditions for the workforce and the communities that trains pass through, and we'll end up having more East Palestine-type disasters," he said. "Our railroad unions need to organize and fight for 50-car trains and a crew of four, two on the locomotive head end and two riding in a locomotive on the rear of the train."

In mid-January BNSF arbitrarily and with no notice to the union further tightened its already draconian attendance policy for train crew members. Anton said, "Now there's even less breathing room to have time off for the family."

Bosses push cuts, higher profits

Like BNSF, bosses at other Class I railroads are on the prod against the rail unions. Union Pacific is turning over operation of its yard in Eugene, Oregon, to the Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, a short line owned by



AP/Gene J. Puskar

Uncontrolled toxic fire from 2023 Norfolk Southern derailment in East Palestine, Ohio. Rail workers, area residents are still fighting for justice and to prevent future disasters.

Genesee & Wyoming. The union says this will result in 30 to 40 jobs being cut. Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad says displaced workers can apply to work at the short line, but there is no union and pay rates are lower.

For decades, the Class I railroads have been abandoning or selling off rail yards and spurs to operators like Genesee & Wyoming, with the aim of cutting jobs and wages and weakening the unions. Today short lines operate 50,000 miles of track, nearly 40% of the country's rail network. Genesee & Wyoming is North America's largest short line holding company, running more than 100 rail lines in the U.S. and Canada, as well as operations in the U.K.

The only way for workers to push back against these attacks is using union power, and the widespread solidarity we

can win when we fight. A good sign of workers' desire to fight was the recent unanimous vote by workers at Wilmington Terminal Railroad, a subsidiary of Genesee & Wyoming in North Carolina, to join SMART-TD.

The broader upturn in labor resistance in the U.S. means it's a good time for rail workers to speak out and organize against bosses' attacks. We've seen strikes by longshore workers, autoworkers and hotel workers win important gains. Airline flight attendants, who also face Railway Labor Act restrictions on their right to strike, have organized picket lines and rallies to draw attention to their fight.

Joe Swanson is a retired rail worker. Naomi Craine is a member of SMART-TD in Chicago.

Letter Carriers vote down contract with paltry wage raise by 2-1 vote

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

By a vote of 63,680 to 26,304, postal workers in the National Association of Letter Carriers soundly defeated a tentative three-year contract proposal that offered only a paltry 1.3% wage increase a year. The 200,000 workers, who are barred by federal law from striking, have been fighting for a new contract to

replace one that expired in May 2023.

"The resounding no vote shows that letter carriers are ready to fight for better schedules, better wages and a better work-life balance," Chris Pennock, vice president of NALC Station 9 in Minneapolis, told the *Militant*. "The contract we voted on says 'we can volunteer' for overtime. They're telling us that's the best way to make enough money to pay the bills — work a ridiculous, unlimited number of hours of overtime."

Timothy Frankland, a member of American Postal Workers Union Local 7019 in Eagan, Minnesota, told the *Militant* he fully supported the letter carriers. "Management continues to think that it can squeeze more and more work out of fewer and fewer workers," he said. "We must draw a line in the sand and declare that we've sacrificed enough, we've given in enough."

The union is preparing to reopen negotiations and has called for members and supporters to join in a solidarity rally in Washington, D.C., on Feb. 13 at 2 p.m.

Discounted books for prisoners

Pathfinder Press offers books at a 50% discount plus \$2.75 shipping per order. Prisoners can mail their prepaid orders to: Pathfinder Press, PO Box 162767 Atlanta GA 30321-2767 For more information: www.pathfinderpress.com

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

February 21, 2000

Britain should get its troops, cops, and secret police out of Ireland now. That should be the demand of every working person, union member and farmer, especially in the United Kingdom and the United States.

The mobilizations over the past two weeks, as well as the actions by working farmers across the entire country, are an indication of the ways working people and those standing up for a united Ireland are finding to press forward the struggle. The growing confidence of tens of thousands in these actions is a bad sign for London and the unionist parties in the north.

Their actions strengthen the hand of working people throughout the (not so) United Kingdom. Organizing in the coming weeks to show solidarity with the fight for a united, democratic Ireland is crucial as the British rulers ratchet up the pressure on the struggle.

THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

February 21, 1975

In January 1912 the wages of the textile workers in Lawrence, Mass., were cut. As the pay envelopes were passed around the workers — primarily Polish women — sat at the machines, refused to work, and finally walked out of the plant. By the next day the fury had spread from mill to mill and the Battle of Lawrence had begun under the cry, "Better to starve fighting than to starve working."

The Italian Socialist Federation in New York decided to relieve some of the burden by bringing the Lawrence children into homes in other cities for the duration of the strike.

The "children's crusade," along with the inability of the companies to break the strike, caused the companies to surrender. A meeting of 15,000 workers on March 14 ratified pay increases of 5 to 21 percent, time and a quarter for overtime and a pledge to reinstate strikers.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

February 20, 1950

Whatever the outcome of the mine struggle, President Truman has already exposed himself fully as the deadly foe of organized labor.

Truman's anti-labor role is demonstrated by the fact that this Democratic president, who promised so loudly before elections to secure repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act, has personally invoked it not less than eight times now, while his NLRB Counsel has employed it not less than 61 times. This is what the pro-capitalist union leaders have brought on labor because they have opposed the formation of labor's own party and supported so-called "friends of labor."

Truman's assault on the miners is first of all a political lesson, a clarion call to the American labor movement: Build your own independent party of the working class! Dependence on capitalist parties and politicians is a one way street to disaster.

Communist League campaign: ‘Workers need to take power’

BY JOE YOUNG

MONTREAL — On Feb. 8 the Communist League in Canada launched the party’s 2025 candidates in the federal elections at a public forum here. Calling for a break with all the capitalist parties and for building a party of labor based on the unions to fight for political power, the Communist League is running Katy LeRougetel, a union bakery worker, and Philippe Tessier, a rail worker and member of the Teamsters union. They are campaigning to get on the ballot in Dorval-Lachine-LaSalle and Bourassa respectively.

The resignation of Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, the dissolution of Parliament, and the calling for a new Liberal Party leadership as U.S. President Donald Trump threatens to impose 25% tariff on imports from Canada, has provoked a serious crisis for Canada’s capitalist rulers.

“In the last weeks,” Tessier said, “we have seen a reactionary Canadian nationalist campaign to build support for this country’s capitalists in face of the threatened U.S. tariffs. Day and night the media bombard us with pro-Canada, anti-American propaganda. All the bourgeois parties are waging this campaign, alongside the bosses’ associations and the capitalist media.

“Much more dangerous to working people than the tariffs,” he said, “is that the leadership of many of our unions have jumped wholeheartedly into this reactionary campaign. The CL campaign is presenting a working-class alternative that can unite Canadian workers with our brothers and sisters in the U.S. and internationally to join in defense of our common class interests. Our goal is to build a mass working-class movement to fight for political power.”

Decades of retreat by the unions have ended, Tessier said. “For the last couple years we have begun to use our unions to fight for better wages, working conditions and livable work schedules. The response of the bosses and their government has been a continuous attack on our political rights and conditions of life.”

The biggest attack was the use of the Emergencies Act against the truckers by the Trudeau government in February 2022. Thousands of heavily armed police were sent to break up their three-week protest in the capital.

Since August, 70,000 rail workers, postal workers, and longshore workers in Montreal, Vancouver, on the coast of British Columbia and Quebec City have seen their right to strike taken away by

the federal Minister of Labor.

“At the same time,” Tessier said, “a part of our class that is among the most vulnerable — immigrant workers, especially those with temporary work permits, refugees, and international students — has been targeted by both the federal and provincial governments. Thousands are being deported and the threat of deportation hangs over the head of any who try to fight for their rights. This weakens the unity of the working class in face of the bosses’ offensive.”

Tessier also denounced the Quebec government’s proposal to introduce a law promoting Quebec “values,” culture and language, which is directed against immigrants and English speakers.

“The way to fight for jobs for all is not to support Ottawa in a tariff war, but to demand a government-funded program of public works at union wages to create jobs to build what working people need — schools, day care centers, hospitals and affordable homes. We call for a basic income for all working-class families that allows everyone to live decently.

“Our number one enemy is in Ottawa. We need to break with all bosses’ parties and their government and organize a fight against the rulers’ attacks, to build a party of labor to take political power in our own name.”

Workers need our own foreign policy

LeRougetel said the working class needs its own independent foreign policy. “It is only the international working class that has the capacity to take political power from the warmakers and save humanity,” she said. “The 1917 Russian Revolution and the 1959 Cuban Revolution are the proof that it is possible.”

The defense of Israel as a refuge from Jew-hatred and pogroms is crucial, she said. Hamas is using the highly unstable ceasefire to rebuild itself in Gaza, and



Militant/Michel Prairie

Katy LeRougetel, one of Communist League’s two candidates for Canadian parliament, talks with farmer at May 3, 2024, protest in Quebec. LeRougetel told farmers more workers are turning to their unions to fight, strengthening a crucial ally against capitalist exploitation.

celebrate its Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom on Israel as an example of what must be done again and again.

The reactionary rulers in Tehran are getting closer to building a nuclear bomb with the goal of destroying Israel’s 10 million people — another Holocaust, she said.

“We back Israel 100% in its effort to defeat Hamas and Hezbollah and their determination to carry out a ‘Final Solution’ against the Jews,” she said. “But even this will not create a safe haven for Jews.

“The only road to peace in the Middle East is for working people of all nationalities and religions to unite to defend their common class interests and, in the course of doing so, build revolutionary parties capable of following the example of the Russian and Cuban revolutions.”

“The demonstrations of thousands of workers and oppressed nationalities in Iran who chant ‘stop the war, our table is empty,’ as well as the widespread opposition inside Russia to Putin’s war on the people of Ukraine show what is possible.”

LeRougetel held up endorser cards

for the Communist League candidates, inviting people to sign to join in actively building the campaign.

‘What you’re doing is great’

The next day, LeRougetel and campaign supporter Lynda Little met office worker Lovepreet Kaur on her doorstep in Lachine. She was surprised to learn the Communist League campaign knew about the fight of Pujabi farmers in India to defend their livelihoods. “They occupied Delhi for two years to win better prices for their products,” she said.

“Yes, and they won a lot of support from workers in the cities,” LeRougetel said. “Our paper, the *Militant*, built solidarity with their fight” added Little.

“We joined several demonstrations in support of their fight here in Montreal,” LeRougetel said. “Our campaign starts with the world.”

“I work six days a week,” Kaur said as she signed to put LeRougetel on the ballot, “But I’ll try and come to your meeting when I can. What you’re doing is great.”

To join in the campaign, contact the Communist League, listed on page 8.

Protesters hit gov’t role in death of South Africa gold miners

BY VED DOOKHUN

Public protests took place in Cape Town and Pretoria Feb. 5 in solidarity with the immigrant gold miners killed by starvation as they were forced to stay for weeks in the deep underground gold mine in Stilfontein, South Africa.

Demanding justice for the miners and that the ANC-led government accept responsibility for their deaths, 50 protesters picketed outside a large conference of mine bosses, related investors and South African government leaders in Cape Town. Another protest of 100 marched to the offices of the government’s Department of Mineral Resources and Energy in Pretoria.

“We believe that the people’s constitutional rights were violated and the government needs to be held accountable,” Meshack Mbangula, national coordinator of Mining Affected Communities United in Action, told GroundUp News. “We also want to assist the families affected to receive some sort of justice.”

At the Cape Town conference, Gwede Mantashe, ANC minister for Mineral and Petroleum Resources, claimed the government wasn’t responsible for the deaths of the Stilfontein miners, and had no obligation to provide food and water to them. He blamed the miners themselves for their deaths.

“It’s like committing suicide,” he

said. “Committing suicide can’t be a humanitarian case.”

In a press statement released the next day, Mining Affected Communities United in Action and the Stilfontein Solidarity Committee condemned the government’s “deliberate starvation and murder of over 87 miners in Stilfontein.”

“By refusing to provide humanitarian assistance, by blocking efforts to bring food and water, and by allowing these miners to die slow, painful deaths from starvation and dehydration,” the statement said, “the South African government has carried out an intentional act of state-sponsored extermination.”

An independent pathologist brought in by Mining Affected Communities United in Action performed autopsies on 20 of the dead miners, confirming that “the primary causes of death” were starvation and dehydration.

For weeks the trapped miners suffered the ravages of tuberculosis, pneumonia and bowel infections before they died.

The government has yet to release its own report on the cause of the deaths of the miners, citing ongoing police investigations.

Mining Affected Communities United in Action and the Stilfontein Solidarity Committee are calling for criminal charges to be brought against Mantashe

and all government officials responsible for the deaths in Stilfontein. They call for a commission of inquiry into the “deliberate starvation of the miners,” and for an end to intimidation of individuals and organizations who have aided the Stilfontein miners.

The two groups also call for government regulation of the artisanal and small-scale mining sector, so “alternatives” can be developed to workers being forced into gang-run informal mining to try to survive.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

On the Anniversary of Russia’s Invasion of Ukraine: Defend Ukraine’s Sovereignty! Russia Out Now! Speaker: Ray Parsons, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 21, 5 p.m. Donation: \$5. 2826 S. Vermont Ave., Suite 1. Tel.: (323) 643-4968.

Oakland

The Road to Working-Class Political Independence From the Parties of the Bosses — Support the Socialist Workers Party Campaign! Speaker: Joel Britton, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 22, 5 p.m. Donation: \$5. 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Tel.: (510) 686-1351.

pathfinderpress.com

The low point of labor resistance is behind us

THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY LOOKS FORWARD

FORCED OVERTIME NO FAMILY TIME

Hours of work pay less than \$10

\$10

JACK BARNES MARY-ALICE WATERS STEVE CLARK

Socialist Workers Party candidates

Continued from front page

U.S. history to run presidential candidates in every election for over 75 years.

Starting in the 1948 presidential election with Farrell Dobbs, a leader of the Teamsters over-the-road campaign, the party's candidates have advanced a fighting class-struggle program, championing striking workers and battles for independence and socialism worldwide.

Dobbs, who ran as the party's presidential candidate in four elections, helped build support for the historic Montgomery bus boycott. He drove down the first station wagon donated to fighters there and told the truth about the boycott everywhere he went. In 1960 he went to Cuba to see the unfolding socialist revolution, and returned to defend it from Washington's attacks and point to it as an example for workers in the U.S. to emulate.

In 2025 so far, the SWP has announced campaigns in California, Florida, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas. (See box below.) Next up will be an announcement of the party's candidate for mayor of New York City. These campaigns give the SWP the broadest opportunity to win workers to the need to break with the bosses' two-party trap and launch our own party, a party of labor, to fight to take power.

Socialist Workers Party candidates explain that all labor and social battles today are political, where the two major social classes confront each other — the capitalist ruling families versus the millions of workers and others exploited and oppressed by capital.

The world's imperialist ruling classes are marching humanity toward deeper crises, trade conflicts and wars, including the threat of a third world war.

SWP candidates explain that a key battleground today is the fight by Israel to defeat and demobilize Hamas and defend Israel's existence as a refuge for Jews. Jew-hatred is rising in the world, a threat to the unions and the working class.

The SWP campaigns stand on the front lines of today's labor struggles and social battles, explaining the consequences in them for workers everywhere. To win more allies to join in solidarity with these fights, to make a difference.

Every political question today is a class question. Class consciousness and self-confidence will grow, and a clearer picture of the need for a socialist future.

'Amnesty for immigrant workers'

On Feb. 4 the SWP in Fort Worth, Texas, filed petitions for the ballot for Alyson Kennedy for mayor and Hilda Cuzco for City Council in District 11.

Two days earlier, Kennedy and Cuzco marched with thousands in Dallas to defend immigrant workers in the U.S. facing attacks by the government, carrying signs reading "Amnesty for immigrant workers! No deportations!"

Kennedy is a member of UNITE HERE Local 23 and a cleaner at LSG Sky Chefs at the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport. Cuzco, a bakery packer in Grand Prairie, is a member of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 111.

In Oakland, California, SWP candidate Eric Simpson is on the ballot in the April 15 special election for mayor. Simpson is a chocolate factory worker and member of BCTGM Local 125.

Simpson and his campaign supporters are distributing a statement, "Amnesty for immigrants working in the U.S.: A life-and-death question for the labor movement," as they knock on doors in workers' neighborhoods, on the job and at strike picket lines and other protests.

He explains that the capitalist ruling families "profit from having a layer of workers they hope will accept worse conditions because they fear deportation. This is used to drive down wages of all.

"Joe Biden left office with deportation orders against over a million. Trump claims he will deport many more," Simpson says. "Neither party aims to expel the mass of undocumented workers, but to frighten them and intensify their exploitation.

"In times of economic crisis, anti-immigrant voices get a hearing from some workers fearing competition for jobs. Every worker needs a job. Unions need to fight for a government-funded public works program to hire and train millions to build infrastructure, homes damaged by fires, child care centers, hospitals and more."

Tony Lane, SWP candidate for mayor of Pittsburgh, and campaign supporter Candace Wagner met Joyce Ferrari, a member of the Mail Handlers Union, while campaigning door



Militant photos: left, Mary Martin; right, Josefina Otero

Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party 2024 candidate for president, speaks out against Hamas pogrom in Israel October 2023. Dennis Richter, SWP vice president candidate, joins nurses strike picket line in New Orleans. Campaign set example for party's 2025 candidates.

to door. "We're advocating for a union-led fight to prevent the bosses and their government dividing the working class, pitting immigrant against native-born workers," said Lane.

"My boyfriend's mother is from Japan," said Ferrari. "Luckily she's a citizen, but it makes you think about these raids." This is a fight for the whole working class, Lane said.

Campaign at Anne Frank exhibit

On Feb. 9 SWP members Sara Lobman, Willie Cotton and Seth Galinsky set up a campaign table outside the Center for Jewish History's "Anne Frank The Exhibition" in New York City. The exhibit is a re-creation of the hidden annex where Frank wrote her diary while her family was hiding from the Nazis in Amsterdam from 1942 to 1944.

"People need to see this," one of the people coming out told Galinsky. "Especially people who are not Jewish." Organizers of the exhibit say they have

made plans for 250,000 area students to visit. Interest is high, and the center has announced the exhibit will remain in the city through Oct. 31.

"A Holocaust could happen again," said another woman. Galinsky replied that there are more people speaking out against Hamas' murderous Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom in Israel, and that Israel has struck some significant blows to the Nazi-rooted Hamas and Hezbollah. This shows the possibilities to take on Jew-hatred.

They found real interest in the new Pathfinder Press book, *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class*, selling two copies. They also sold two copies of the *Militant* and passed out over 60 copies of the SWP statement "Oppose Jew-hatred! Defend Israel's right to exist as a refuge for Jews!"

Join the SWP campaign closest to you!

Bosses trade conflicts pit workers against each other

BY TERRY EVANS

President Donald Trump's administration imposed stiff tariffs on all steel and aluminum imports to the U.S. Feb. 10, claiming the duties will defend jobs for workers in those and related industries and are in the interests of "all Americans."

In fact, the protectionist measures are a club used by the bosses to grab a bigger share of world markets amid rising competition with allies and rivals alike. They're accompanied by patriotic propaganda aimed at lining workers and our unions up behind the U.S. ruling class and against fellow workers worldwide.

Trump issued a 25% tariff on all steel entering the U.S., upped tariffs on aluminum imports from 10% to 25%, and jettisoned exemptions on duties granted by former President Joseph Biden. These actions follow a 10% tariff Trump imposed on all goods across the

board from China Feb. 4, and the threat to enact yet more duties on any goods imported into the U.S. that come from countries whose governments levy tariffs on exports from the U.S.

Steel imported into the U.S. comes primarily from Brazil, Canada, Germany, Mexico and South Korea. But Chinese capitalists dominate steel and aluminum production and trade worldwide, and they are Washington's main target.

The tariffs will go into effect March 12. Trump hopes to use the intervening weeks to press Washington's competitors to accept new trade terms more favorable to U.S. bosses. During his first term in office he levied tariffs, then issued exemptions when governments hit by the measures announced they would limit exports to the U.S.

The tariffs will have the greatest impact in countries with large auto, construction and other industries that depend on steel.

Trump was emboldened to exert Washington's immense economic weight after the governments of Canada and Mexico conceded to his demands to take steps to reduce immigration and drug trafficking on their borders with the U.S. when Trump threatened tariffs against them earlier this month.

The administration's moves build on tariffs applied by previous Democratic and Republican administrations against Beijing. Both parties seek to bolster Washington's weakening place at the top of the imperialist "world or-

der" and to curb Beijing's rising economic and political clout.

Washington's moves show Trump's "unwavering commitment to American workers and national security," said Peter Navarro, White House senior counselor for trade and manufacturing. He claimed the measures will "usher in a new Golden Age of prosperity."

United Steelworkers International President David McCall backed the tariffs. "Our union welcomes President Donald Trump's efforts to contain the global overcapacity that has for too long enabled bad actors like China to flood the global market," he said. McCall also called on Trump to treat Canada less aggressively than China.

The Steelworkers union in Canada is a member of the newly formed Canada-U.S. Trade Council, a protectionist outfit initiated by bosses and government officials to defend Ottawa's interests in trade conflicts with Washington.

Defenders of Trump's tariffs say they're necessary because of productive "overcapacity." China's rulers face an economic slowdown and have produced more steel than they can use. Washington complains they've "dumped" this on world markets, lowering prices.

When the rulers talk of "overcapacity" they don't mean too much production to meet human needs, but more than they can sell to make sufficient profits. By echoing the economic nationalism of their own governments, USW officials

Continued on page 9

Socialist Workers Party Campaign Join in building the working-class alternative

California

Eric Simpson, mayor of Oakland

Florida

Laura Anderson, mayor of Miami

New Jersey

Joanne Kuniandy, governor

Craig Honts, lieutenant governor

Ohio

John Hawkins, mayor of Cincinnati
Ned Measel, Cincinnati City Council

Pennsylvania

Tony Lane, mayor of Pittsburgh

Texas

Alyson Kennedy, mayor of Fort Worth
Hilda Cuzco, Fort Worth City Council

Moves to ‘cancel’ Russian culture are blow to the defense of Ukraine

BY ROY LANDERSEN

World renowned Russian opera singer Anna Netrebko performed before 450 people in a packed hotel ballroom in Palm Beach, Florida, Feb. 3. This was her first appearance on stage in the U.S. since Moscow launched its invasion of Ukraine three years ago.

In response to this attack, Netrebko had said, “I am opposed to this senseless war of aggression, and I am calling on Russia to end this war right now to save all of us. We need peace right now.” Given her high profile in Russia, this was a courageous act. It reflected the widespread opposition to the war there, and encouraged Russian working people and artists who took to the streets in protest before Putin’s bloody crackdown.

Nonetheless, Netrebko became persona non grata at U.S. cultural institutions. The Metropolitan Opera in New York broke her contract and fired her, claiming it had the right to dictate her political positions. She was dumped because of her previous support for Putin and refusal to denounce him. Other engagements in the U.S. dried up.

Netrebko is far from the only Russian performer or writer who has been “cancelled” in Ukraine, the U.S. and Europe. The minister of culture in Lithuania barred any further performances of Tchaikovsky’s “The Nutcracker” ballet at Christmas. He said Russian culture could not be separated from Russian imperialism, calling for a “mental quarantine” on all such works, a form of “cultural decolonization.”

In 2023, the Kyiv City Council decided that Russian music, plays, books, and art of any kind, whether hundreds of years old or produced by opponents of Moscow’s war, could no longer be showcased in public. Statues of Alexander Pushkin, one of Russia’s greatest poets who died in 1837, were torn down.

These assaults aimed at erasing Russian culture have escalated. Bans have been imposed against distributing or reading Fyodor Dostoevsky — regardless of the fact the great author had been imprisoned in a Siberian labor camp for four years under the dictatorship of the czar.

In March last year, acclaimed Ukrainian conductor Oksana Lyniv faced criticism, including accusations of “treason,” for agreeing to conduct an opera

by Tchaikovsky at the New York Met. When she pointed out the great composer’s family background was Ukrainian, it was ignored.

But this kind of “cancel culture” only serves to weaken, not strengthen, the fight by courageous Ukrainian working people, arms in hand, to defend their country’s sovereignty.

For culture and debate, not bans

These cultural bans and boycotts go hand in hand with steps by Washington and other imperialist governments to impose biting economic sanctions on Russia, sanctions that hit Russian working people the hardest. Far from helping the Ukrainian people win their fight, it strikes a blow at Ukraine’s biggest ally — the deepening anti-war sentiment among Russia’s working people.

It was this — alongside the death and wounding of Russian troops — that led Moscow to pull out of Afghanistan in 1989, suffering a humiliating defeat. And these are the same two factors that will make a qualitative difference in pressuring Putin to get out of Ukraine as well.

There are ominous implications from this generalized erasure against all things Russian. The country’s rich cul-



Sipa USA via AP/Mykola Myakshykov

Statue of Russian poet Alexander Pushkin torn down in Dnipro, Ukraine, in 2022. Attacks on Russian culture are barrier to building solidarity with Russian workers opposed to Putin’s war.

ture — its literature, music, art and ballet — is being silenced. Ironically much of this censorship is being imposed by organizations set up to support the arts, which should be at the forefront of upholding cultural freedoms.

As Putin’s Ukraine war drags on, the fullest discussion and debate about it is necessary. Anything that closes down space for fraternization and dialogue is a deadly danger to the working class.

Vladimir Kara-Murza, who was sentenced to 25 years in Putin’s Gulag for his opposition to the war in Ukraine and Putin’s regime, was re-

leased last August as part of Moscow’s most prominent prisoner exchange in decades. He spoke about these questions in a talk at Stanford University Nov. 11. “Ukrainians were my neighbors in Omsk [prison],” he said.

He strongly denounced the idea that all Russians were responsible for the atrocities in Ukraine, saying, “The real criminals are those people in the Kremlin who started the war in Ukraine, not those of us who are in prison because we opposed it.”

“There will be another chance for change in Russia,” he said.

Nazi murderer fled to Syria, joined Assads’ brutal regime

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Millions took to the streets in Syria celebrating the overthrow of the Bashar al-Assad dictatorship in December. Thousands were freed from jails, especially from the notorious Saydnaya Prison, known as the “Human Slaughterhouse,” where as many as 15,000 people were executed without trial between September 2011 and December 2015, Amnesty International reports. Huge unmarked burial sites were discovered.

This torture and slaughter were a continuation of what was put in place by Bashar al-Assad’s father, Hafez al-Assad, who ruled Syria with an iron fist from 1971 until his death in 2000. A number of forces in the region collaborated with Assad — including the reactionary and expansionist regime in Tehran and its ally, Hezbollah, which sent in combatants from Lebanon.

Part of the mix was a number of Nazi officers who fled to Syria after World War II. Most prominent among them was Alois Brunner, the right-hand man of Adolf Eichmann, one of the architects of Adolf Hitler’s “Final Solution” — the extermination of the Jews.

Brunner, a commanding officer in the Nazi paramilitary SS, “was responsible for the deportation to the death camps of 128,500 Jews,” reported Efraim Zuroff, director of the Simon Wiesenthal Center’s Israel office. These included 47,000 from Austria, 44,000 from Greece, 23,500 from

France and 14,000 from Slovakia.

Brunner took charge of the Drancy internment camp outside Paris in 1943, where Jews in France were held before being sent to the death camps.

After the defeat of Hitler’s regime in Germany in 1945, Brunner, using a fake Red Cross passport, fled to Egypt, along with a number of other Nazi cadre. Then, in 1954, Amin al-Husseini, the former Mufti of Jerusalem and Nazi collaborator, helped Brunner get to Syria.

He joined a number of other Nazi fugitives living there, including Franz Rademacher, former “expert for Jewish affairs” of the Nazi Foreign Office, and Franz Stangl, former commandant of the Sobibor and Treblinka extermination camps. Like Brunner, many of these former SS members were employed advising the Syrian military.

Brunner, now identifying himself as Georg Fischer, joined the thriving trade of Nazi arms runners in Damascus in 1955. Four years later, he was arrested by the then-head of one of Syria’s secret services on suspicion of spying and drug smuggling.

‘I was Eichmann’s assistant’

Brunner told his interrogator, “I was Eichmann’s assistant, and I’m hunted because I’m an enemy of the Jews.” The interrogator “rose up and shook Brunner’s hand,” saying, “The enemy of my enemy is my friend,” Danny Orbach, an associate professor in history and Asian studies at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, wrote in New Lines magazine. Brunner then became an adviser to Syrian intelligence.

He began to play a more central role after the Arab Baath Party seized power in March 1963, and the Assad family consolidated its dictatorial rule.

He became an adviser to Hafez al-Assad, training his henchmen in spying, interrogation and torture techniques. Brunner “knew exactly how to extract and use information, how to manipulate people,” wrote Didier Epelbaum, who authored a biography of Brunner. “He knew more than any Syrian officer. As a result he was involved in restructuring the secret service.”

The brutal methods he taught Assad’s officer corps had a lasting influence on the way the regime repressed political dissent over the family’s 50-year rule.

Brunner was also involved in promoting the government’s reign of terror against the 25,000 Jews in Syria. They were forbidden to work for the government, nationally owned enterprises and banks. When the head of a Jewish family died, his property was forfeited to the state. Syrian Jews were not allowed to leave the country. They were the only minority to have their religion highlighted on their passports.

Both Austria and West Germany formally demanded Brunner’s extradition from Damascus, but the Syrian regime claimed the Austrian-born Nazi wasn’t there.

Though told by Syrian officials to keep a low profile, Brunner gave interviews to German, Austrian and other media, making clear that he still staunchly believed in what the Nazis set out to do in the Holocaust. In a 1987 interview with the *Chicago Sun-Times*, Brunner said of the Jews, “All of them deserved to die because they were the devil’s agents and human garbage. I have no regrets. If I had the chance I would do it again.”

Israeli Nazi-hunters spent years tracking Brunner to Syria. Deciding they wouldn’t be able to get an extrac-

Continued on page 9

Protest three years of war on Ukraine!

**RUSSIAN
TROOPS OUT!
SOLIDARITY
WITH UKRAINE**

Washington, D.C., Feb. 22

• 2 p.m. at Lincoln Memorial

London, Feb. 22

• 12 p.m. Assemble St. Volodymyr Statue

• 1 p.m. Rally Russian Embassy

Toronto, Feb. 23,

3 p.m. City Hall

For information on other actions,
contact Ukrainian Canadian Congress

Fight to prevent a new Holocaust

Continued from front page

tence of Israel and the Jews is Tehran's relentless moves to create nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them.

Iran Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei calls Israel a "cancerous growth" that must be "uprooted and destroyed."

A new Holocaust would be a historic defeat both for Jews and for working people the world over.

Hostages show marks of torture

The emaciated condition of hostages Eli Sharabi, Or Levy and Ohad Ben Ami, released by Hamas Feb. 8, was reminiscent of photos of starving Jewish survivors of Nazi concentration camps during World War II. Each of the three lost some 30% of their body weight during their 16-month captivity.

When the hostages were paraded by heavily armed Hamas thugs, a sign behind them said, "We're the flood." This is a reference to Hamas' name for the pogrom they carried out on Oct. 7, 2023, when 1,200 people, most of them Jews, were murdered.

Sharabi and Ben Ami were kidnapped from Kibbutz Beeri, near the Gaza border. Sharabi's wife and two daughters were murdered by Hamas death squads there that day.

Levy and his wife hid in a bomb shelter after Hamas attacked the Supernova music festival. The thugs threw grenades into it. Levy was captured; his wife Eynav was murdered.

Hamas is using the ceasefire to try to rebuild its battered forces, reassert its dictatorial control over Palestinians in Gaza and prepare more pogroms against Jews and actions aimed at destroying Israel. In exchange for the 16 hostages freed so far, Israel has released 670 Palestinians, including notorious terrorists.

One of those released is Iyad Abu-Shkeidem, who organized a double-suicide bombing in 2004 in a public square in Beersheba that killed 16 people and wounded over 100.

Hamas propaganda

A Hamas film crew carried out a degrading "interview" with the three as part of the stage-managed release ceremony. They were forced to thank their captors for "feeding" them, keeping them "safe" and "taking care" of them.

Once back in Israel they were able to speak the truth. They said they were often given only a rotten pita bread every few days and denied water for days at a time. At least one of them was

shackled inside a tunnel for 15 months and not allowed to walk until shortly before his release.

They also reported that they had been tortured — hung upside down from the ceiling, burned with a heated object and gagged with cloth to the point of suffocation.

Hamas has plenty of experience with torture. That's one of the weapons it has used against the Palestinians in Gaza since coming to power in 2006.

Israel exists because of the history-changing defeats that working people suffered in the 1930s and '40s. Powerful revolutionary movements in Germany, Spain, Italy and Greece were betrayed by Stalinized Communist Parties that refused to organize working people to defeat fascist forces and to take power into their own hands.

In Germany, the Stalinist party allowed Adolf Hitler and the Nazis to come to power without a fight. The Nazis began expelling and then massacring Jews. By the time the war was over the Nazis and their accomplices had murdered 40% of the Jews in the world, two out of every three Jews in Europe.

The "democratic" imperialist powers, from Washington to London, turned away tens of thousands of Jews, condemning many to their deaths. And they kept turning them away after the war.

Where else were the Jews to go? Israel came to be as the only refuge for Jews anywhere in the world.

Before heading back home after a weeklong trip to the U.S. and meeting with President Donald Trump, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu gave an interview to Mark Levin Feb. 8 on Fox News. Levin asked Netanyahu about demands that Israel accept a Palestinian state on its border that's being raised by some inside Israel and by "democratic" imperialist governments worldwide.

There was a Palestinian state, "it's called Gaza under Hamas," Netanyahu said. "It was used as a springboard in an attempt to destroy us." Both Hamas and the Palestinian Authority "want to see the end of Israel," he noted.

Israel is only 263 miles long, 72 miles across at its widest and only 9 miles at its narrowest point. If Israel is to exist, it can't permit "an organization that is



Nur photo via AP/Majdi Fathi

Hamas propaganda ceremony with Israeli hostages Eli Sharabi, Or Levy and Ohad Ben Ami Feb. 8. Hamas seeks to reassert its dictatorship in Gaza, prepare new pogroms against Jews.

committed to our destruction" on its border, said Netanyahu.

Netanyahu noted the horrific price paid by the people of Gaza because Hamas uses them as human shields. "Hamas was firing from densely populated areas and forced us to take action," he noted. They put booby traps "in every house."

Despite the fact that its policies have left most of Gaza in shambles and tens of thousands have died, Hamas claims it won a great victory.

Even some of the terrorists freed by Israel under the accord are repelled by Hamas' destruction. That includes Muhammad Al-Tous, a member of Fatah sentenced to life in prison for his role in several terror attacks. Thousands died in Gaza, he told Al-Mashhad TV, "for what?" He said he is telling his children and grandchildren not to join military operations against Israel.

A decisive defeat of Hamas would open the door to new political forces stepping forward and to broader class struggles that could bring workers of all nationalities and religions in the region into common actions.

U.S. rulers seek investments, profits

Netanyahu, a capitalist politician, seeks the support of U.S. imperialism, but he also knows that Israel must rely on itself.

The previous administration of Joseph Biden froze the delivery of crucial weapons to Israel, to press it to end the war with Hamas still intact. Some members of Netanyahu's coalition government and high-ranking army officials bent to that pressure. "People said, we're dependent on American arms," Netanyahu reported. "Let's stop the war." Netanyahu says he

told his cabinet that even without U.S. arms, "we'll fight with what we have. But if we become a vassal state, we will not survive."

And that is what Israel did, dealing significant blows to Hamas and to Hezbollah in Lebanon, as well as destroying a large part of Tehran's air defense system.

Under the Trump administration, Netanyahu hopes that Washington will not block Israel from doing whatever is necessary to defend its existence. The Trump administration has now released some weapons, including 2,000 pound bombs, which the Biden administration had frozen.

Netanyahu made it clear that Israel is not looking for U.S. military intervention. "Hamas attacked us. We'll take care of them," he told Levin.

Like every U.S. administration, the Trump White House's goal is not the defense of the Jewish people, but advancing the U.S. rulers' own domination and exploitation of the resources, land and labor in the Middle East.

Extending Washington's reach lies behind Trump's proposal that Arab regimes in the region take in Palestinians from Gaza so the territory can be turned over to the U.S. imperialist rulers to oversee its rebuilding, claiming this would bring stability and peace to the region.

Trump has said he wants to reach an agreement with the regime in Iran to stop its nuclear weapons development program.

To press for a deal, he reimposed stiff economic sanctions on Iran. But those sanctions increase the difficulties faced by working people there, who already face sky-high prices and worsening conditions. The toilers of Iran have taken to the streets in recent years to express their opposition to the regime and its military adventures. They're the greatest ally of working people in Israel.



Majdi Fathi

Palestinians heading to northern Gaza Feb. 9. Responsibility for devastation they face is that Hamas uses them as human shields in its assaults on Jews.

CHANGES IN JEWISH POPULATION OF SELECT COUNTRIES SINCE 1933		
	1933	2022
World	15,300,000	15,253,500
Israel*	175,000	7,181,000
United States	4,229,400	7,300,000
Poland	3,000,000	4,500
Ukraine	1,574,400	40,000
Romania	756,000	8,700
Russia	589,800	145,000
Germany	500,000	118,000
Hungary	445,000	46,500
Belarus	407,199	7,000
Czechoslovakia**	357,000	6,500
Austria	191,000	10,300
Lithuania	155,000	2,300
Bulgaria	48,500	2,000

* 1933 figure is for Palestine
 ** 2022 figure is for Czech Republic and Slovakia
 *** World Jewish population reached 15.8 million in 2024; It took 80 years to reach pre-Holocaust levels.

Recommended reading

The fight against Jew-hatred and pogroms in the imperialist epoch

Stakes for the international working class

V.I. LENIN
LEON TROTSKY
FARRELL DOBBS
JAMES P. CANNON
JACK BARNES
DAVE PRINCE

\$10

pathfinderpress.com

Malcolm X: Washington 'can't win in Congo, South Vietnam'

Feb. 21 marks the 60th anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X. The excerpt below is from February 1965: *The Final Speeches by Malcolm X, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for February. It is from a speech entitled "The oppressed masses of the world cry out for action against the common oppressor," which Malcolm gave to a packed meeting at the London School of Economics Feb. 11, 1965. He spoke out against Washington's military intervention against liberation forces in the Congo and in Vietnam. In the Congo, the U.S. rulers backed the proimperialist government of Moise Tshombe, who in 1961 had helped overthrow and murder Patrice Lumumba, the leader of the country's first independent government after the downfall of Belgian colonial rule. Copyright © 1992 by Betty Shabazz and Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*



Above, Militant/Eli Finer; Inset, Magnum/Bob Adelman
"Hands off Congo" picket at U.N. December 1964, called by Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance, protesting intervention in Congo by rulers of the U.S. and Belgium. In front, Richard Garza, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate; third is Clifton DeBerry, SWP 1964 candidate for president. Inset, Malcolm X speaking at a rally in Harlem, June 23, 1963.



BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MALCOLM X

[T]he Western governments have permitted themselves to get trapped, in a sense, in backing Tshombe, the same as the United States is trapped over there in South Vietnam. If she goes forward she loses, if she backs up she loses. She's getting bogged down in the Congo in the same way.

Because no African troops win victories for Tshombe. They never

have. The only war, the only battles won by the African troops, in the African revolution, in the Congo area, were those won by the freedom fighters from the Oriental province. They won battles with spears, stones, twigs. They won battles because their heart was in what they were doing. But Tshombe's men from the central Congo government never won any battles. And it was for this reason that he had to import these white mercenaries, the paid killers, to win some battles for him. Which means that Tshombe's government can only stay in power with white help, with white troops.

Well, there will come a time when he won't be able to recruit any more mercenaries, and the Western powers, who are really behind him, will then have to commit their own troops openly. Which means you will then be bogged down in the Congo the same as you're bogged down over there now in South Vietnam. And you can't win in the Congo. If you can't win in South Vietnam, you know you can't win in the Congo.

Just let me see. You think you can win in South Vietnam?

The French were deeply entrenched. The French were deeply entrenched in Vietnam for a hundred years or so. They had the best weap-

ons of warfare, a highly mechanized army, everything that you would need. And the guerrillas come out of the rice paddies with nothing but sneakers on and a rifle [Laughter] and a bowl of rice, nothing but gym shoes — tennis shoes — and a rifle and a bowl of rice. And you know what they did in Dien Bien Phu. They ran the French out of there. And if the French were deeply entrenched and couldn't stay there, then how do you think someone else is going to stay there, who is not even there yet.

Yes, all of them are brothers. They were still — they had a bowl of rice and a rifle and some shoes. I don't care whether they came from China or South Vietnam. And the French aren't there anymore. We don't care how they did it; they're not there anymore. [Malcolm laughs; laughter from the audience] The same thing will happen in the Congo.

See, the African revolution must proceed onward, and one of the reasons that the Western powers are fighting so hard and are trying to cloud the issue in the Congo is that it's not a humanitarian project. It's not a feeling or sense of humanity that makes them want to go in and save some hostages, but there are bigger stakes.

They realize not only that the Congo is a source of mineral wealth, min-

erals that they need. But the Congo is so situated strategically, geographically, that if it falls into the hands of a genuine African government that has the hopes and aspirations of the African people at heart, then it will be possible for the Africans to put their own soldiers right on the border of Angola and wipe the Portuguese out of there overnight.

So that if the Congo falls, Mozambique and Angola must fall. And when they fall, suddenly you have to deal with [Southern Rhodesian Prime Minister] Ian Smith. He won't be there overnight once you can put some troops on his borders. [Applause] Oh yes. Which means it will only be a matter of time before they will be right on the border with South Africa, and then they can talk the type of language that the South Africans understand. And this is the only language that they understand. [Applause]

I might point out right here and now — and I say it bluntly — that you have had a generation of Africans who actually have believed that they could negotiate, negotiate, negotiate, and eventually get some kind of independence. But you're getting a new generation that is being born right now, and they are beginning to think with their own mind and see that you can't negotiate upon freedom nowadays. If something is yours by right, then you fight for it or shut up. If you can't fight for it, then forget it. [Applause]

So we in the West have a stake in the African revolution. We have a stake for this reason: as long as the African continent was dominated by enemies, and as long as it was dominated by colonial powers, those colonial powers were enemies of the African people. They were enemies to the African continent. They meant the African people no good, they did the African people no good, they did the African continent no good.

And then in the position that they were, they were the ones who created the image of the African continent and the African people. They created that continent and those people in a negative image. And they projected this negative image abroad. They projected an image of Africa in the people abroad that was very hateful, extremely hateful.

February
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Pathfinder
Readers Club
Specials

30%

DISCOUNT

February 1965:
The Final Speeches

MALCOLM X

Speeches in Britain, France and the U.S. during the three weeks prior to Malcolm's assassination.

\$17. Special price \$12

Pombo: A Man of Che's Guerrilla

With Che Guevara in Bolivia, 1966-68
HARRY VILLEGAS

\$20. Special price \$14

In Defense of Marxism

Against the Petty-Bourgeois Opposition in the Socialist Workers Party
LEON TROTSKY

\$17. Special price \$12

Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State

FREDERICK ENGELS

\$15. Special price \$10.50

Humanism and Socialism

GEORGE NOVACK

\$12. Special price \$8.50

Thomas Sankara Parle

(Thomas Sankara Speaks)

\$20. Special price \$14

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

ORDER ONLINE AT
PATHFINDERPRESS.COM
OFFER GOOD UNTIL March 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: swplincoln@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: clydsydney@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: 07545 526351. Email: clmanchr@gmail.com

US out of Guantánamo, end embargo of Cuba!

Continued from front page

mand Washington end its embargo of Cuba and remove the country from its “State Sponsors of Terrorism” list.

The U.S. rulers deeply fear the example for workers the world over set by working people in Cuba who showed that with a leadership consolidated in struggle workers can take power. The new workers and farmers government didn’t try to “do things” for the toilers. It set out to involve them in taking control of their own destiny, building mass, popular movements from the literacy drive to the Federation of Cuban Women to the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution. Millions were drawn into political life, transforming themselves. And they came to the aid of revolutionary struggles around the world.

Since coming to power, the revolutionary government in Cuba has insisted Guantánamo be returned to Cuban sovereignty.

For more than two decades Washington has used the base to indefinitely detain and torture suspects in its so-called “war on terror.” Fifteen

remain incarcerated there today.

Since the 1990s Washington has run another jail there to imprison immigrant workers before deporting them. It can currently hold 120, but President Donald Trump has dispatched Marines to rebuild the facility so it can hold up to 30,000. By Feb. 11 nearly 100 undocumented immigrants had been sent there.

Washington’s use of the jail at Guantánamo is part of its broader drive to scapegoat the 11-million-plus undocumented workers in the U.S., claiming they “steal American jobs,” and to reinforce their second-class status. The rulers hope this will intimidate those who remain here to make them more easily exploited. Their goal is to divide and weaken the working class as a whole.

The U.S. capitalist rulers will never back off their efforts to destroy the socialist revolution in Cuba. Most importantly, they fear working people here will emulate their example and organize in our millions to replace capitalist rule with a government of our own, building the kind of disciplined proletarian party that can make that possible.

10,000 grocery workers strike at King Soopers

Continued from front page

ment, it’s just me by myself.” Abdarahmane Gaye, an overnight stocker, said. “There’s a lot of load. There’s not enough people.”

The bosses’ “last, best and final offer” included a \$4.50 hourly wage increase over four years for the highest-paid workers. But there was a big catch. “Kroger negotiators have illegally insisted on robbing retiree health care benefits to fund wage increases for workers today,” Cordova said.

Leading up to the strike the company interrogated union members and spied on their discussions, Monique Palacios, a union spokesperson said in a Feb. 5 press release. They were “illegally threatening members with discipline and sending them home from work for simply exercising their union right to wear union clothing, buttons and other union gear.”

While King Soopers is trying to undercut support for the strike, including trying to tell shoppers that higher food prices are because of the union, many aren’t buying it. “I’m about to go across the

street now,” Ashley Anderson, a mom with her two children, told CBS News as she left a Denver King Soopers parking lot to go to a Safeway.

Lorna Hutchinson was shopping at the Safeway Feb. 6, even though she usually shops at King Soopers. “It’s also just kind of a collective solidarity,” she said.

Bosses say they will keep the stores open during the strike. “We have about 1,500 temporary workers in our stores, on the ground already trained,” King Soopers President Joe Kelley told the press. “Any associate who chooses to continue to work is welcome.”

It took a hard-fought 10-day strike by Local 7 to win their contract at King Soopers in 2022. Kroger, the country’s second-largest grocer, had profits of over \$33 billion in 2024.

King Soopers has accused the union of timing the strike to include Super Bowl weekend and Valentine’s Day, both high-business occasions. “Absolutely,” Cordova said, “because the only thing they understand is their profit.”

Bosses trade conflicts pit workers against each other

Continued from page 5

in the U.S. and Canada are arrayed against each other. This is a blow to building solidarity between workers in the U.S. and Canada, as well as China and worldwide.

The U.S. rulers aim to convince workers that our jobs, living standards and future depend on whether the U.S. bosses come out on top in these trade clashes, just as they try to convince workers to sacrifice and accept worse wages and conditions to make the companies we work for more “competitive.”

Workers are an international class

“Workers in the U.S., China and elsewhere have common class interests, not conflicting ones, as the bosses and their governments claim,” Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New Jersey governor, told the *Militant*.

“The idea that unions should defend ‘American’ jobs against other workers’ jobs is a dangerous trap,” she said. “Workers have no stake in tying our fate to the rulers’ trade policies. We have everything to gain from international solidarity.”

“Workers’ future lies in our common struggles against the bosses, and in breaking with their parties, the Democrats and Republicans. We need to build a party of our own, a party of labor, to lay the basis for workers to wrest political power from the capitalist class.”

Underlying today’s trade conflicts are the in-

tensifying national rivalries between the world’s major capitalist powers for control over markets and resources. The deepening crisis of capitalism drives each national ruling class to fight to maximize its market share and the profits each squeezes from working people. As trade conflicts sharpen, the threat of shooting wars grow.

Government officials in competing steel-producing countries all denounced Washington’s steel and aluminum tariffs. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz joined in threatening retaliatory tariffs on U.S. exports.

Decades ago, the EU was established by the competing capitalist governments in Europe as a protectionist trading bloc against Washington. For their part, the U.S. rulers use the massive size of the U.S. domestic market to push back, threatening to restrict access to those who get in their way.

As the capitalist crisis deepens and trade conflicts escalate, the prospect of a third world war over the redivision of the world becomes more likely.

Before then, rising class struggles will create openings for workers to take political power into our own hands. This underlines the need for the labor movement to reject all attempts by the rulers to divide workers along national lines, and instead to strengthen our unity, fighting capacities and international class solidarity.

Join fight to overturn ban on the ‘Militant’ in jail in Phoenix

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The fight to lift the ban on the Nov. 11, 2024, *Militant* by authorities at Lower Buckeye Jail in Phoenix is an important part of defending the constitutional freedoms of all working people, whether you’re inside or outside prison walls.

“This impoundment violates the political rights of prisoners to read the political literature of their choice and to form their own opinions about important political developments in the U.S. and worldwide,” said *Militant* editor John Studer. “It deals a blow to freedom of the press, including the right of the *Militant* and other publications to reach their subscribers behind bars.”

The Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office says the issue, no. 42, was impounded because of “a photo on the cover of the newspaper that was found to violate MCSO policy,” which “does not allow photos of weaponry.”

The photo showed armed Hamas thugs seizing a woman and taking her hostage during the Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom the reactionary outfit carried out in Israel, leaving over 1,200 people dead, most of them Jews. The photo — which was in newspapers in the U.S. and worldwide — accompanied a *Militant* article explaining why the fight against Jew-hatred and the potential for a new Holocaust is crucial for the working class.

This impoundment is an “assault on the First and 14th Amendments,” John Cotman, an associate professor emeritus of the Political Science Department at Howard University, wrote to the Maricopa County jail authorities Feb. 5. “The article in question condemns Hamas’ cowardly terrorism and stated intent to physically exterminate all Jews in Israel. I wonder if the Lower Buckeye County Jail banned all news stories containing this image. I doubt it.

“As a college educator I spent 30 years introducing students to a variety of unpopular political opinions to allow them to develop the critical thinking skills necessary for engaged citizenship,” he wrote. Those incarcerated “have the unalienable right to read and think for themselves. Please reverse this anti-democratic decision.”

Militant attorney David Goldstein filed an appeal of the ban Jan. 13. Since then letters from around the U.S. and worldwide have been sent by organizations defending civil liberties, including Amnesty International USA, unionists and other defenders of prisoners’ political rights to jail authorities in Phoenix urging them to reverse the ban. More letters are needed. Mail them to Ancillary Services Division Commander, MCSO, 3250 W. Lower Buckeye Road, Phoenix, AZ 85009. Email a copy to mcsocentralmailroom@mcs.maricopa.gov, and to themilitant@mac.com.

Nazi murderer in Syria

Continued from page 6

tion team there to seize him and bring him back to Israel, as they had done with Eichmann, they sent two letter bombs to his home in an effort to kill him. Neither succeeded, though one took out an eye and another a few fingers.

Toward the end of his life, when he was no longer playing a role for the Assads, Brunner and his interviews became troublesome to the regime. It is believed he died as a captive sometime in the 2000s. The regime continued to use the Nazi-inspired methods he taught them until it fell in December 2024.

Donate to the ‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

The fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. Send a check or money order payable to the ‘Militant’ and earmarked “Prisoners’ Fund” to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Or donate online at www.themilitant.com