

## Israel seeks to defend Druze after attack by Syrian gov't

BY SETH GALINSKY

At the center of a recent deadly fight in southern Syria is the Syrian government’s attempt to impose its rule in the predominantly Druze region. This is in contrast to what is often presented in the capitalist press as long-simmering disputes between Bedouin and Druze tribes.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said it was “absolutely unacceptable” that the Syrian regime sent its troops into southern Syria, which Israel insists must be a demilitarized zone, and massacred hundreds of Druze. Maintaining a stable border is part of Israel’s battle to defend the country as a refuge for Jews and to prevent another Holocaust.

Resistance from the Druze and military strikes by Israel forced Damascus to back off.

Ninety-one percent of the population of Sweida governorate near Israel are Druze; the rest are Bedouins or Christians. There are some 700,000 Druze in Syria, 150,000 in Israel, 250,000 in Lebanon and 20,000 in Jordan who closely

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## Socialist Workers Party 2025 campaign SWP supports, builds union fights, campaigns against deportations



Craig Honts, center, SWP candidate for N.J. lieutenant governor, discusses working-class solidarity with Teamsters Local 25 members at Republic Services picket in Massachusetts July 20.

BY TERRY EVANS

There is growing interest in the Socialist Workers Party and its candidates today, spurred by the party’s activities in support of labor battles and its working-class response to deepgoing shifts in world politics. It reflects workers’ increasing recognition that neither the Democrats nor Republicans have any interest in fighting the worsening condi-

tions we face, let alone offer a road out of the capitalist crisis.

At union picket lines, protests against deportations and in working-class neighborhoods, SWP members are discussing how working people can defend ourselves from the bosses and their governments. And what it will take to bring an end to capitalist exploitation — the root cause of the increasing difficulties workers face providing for their families — as well as the growing threat of new wars.

Craig Honts, the SWP candidate for

Continued on page 5

## Build support for Teamsters out on strike at Republic!

BY SANDRA LATHAM

BOSTON — “We risk our lives every day on the streets of Boston while the company gets rich,” Daniel Berrios told the *Militant* July 19. He was one of a dozen workers on the Teamsters picket line in the Roxbury neighborhood of Boston that day.

Some 450 workers in the Boston area, members of Local 25, are on strike against Republic Services. The company, the nation’s second-largest trash hauling company, raked in \$2 billion in profits last year. Garbage collection is one of the most dangerous industries in the U.S.

The strike, which began in this area July 1, has spread across the country. As of July 9 some 2,000 Teamster-organized sanitation workers across the country were on strike. Some are fighting a contract battle, others are out in solidarity.

“We played a big role in spreading the strike,” Milton Despina, a Teamsters field representative, said. I met him at one of the picket lines in Peabody. “We sent workers and union staffers out to California and other places to explain to local union officials and the ranks why we went out and urge them to do the same,” he said.

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## People in Kentucky town win fight to free youth from ICE jail



Some 200 people rally in Bowling Green, Kentucky, June 11, part of effort to win freedom for 18-year-old Ernesto Manuel-Andres, seized and detained by ICE. He won release June 25.

BY AMY HUSK

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Over 100 people came out June 25 in this south-central Kentucky manufacturing center to welcome home 18-year-old Ernesto Manuel-Andres after he was released from detention in Louisiana by immigration authorities. The predominantly U.S.-born crowd cheered as Manuel-Andres walked in. They carried signs and a banner that

said “Welcome Home,” some wore T-shirts saying “Free Ernesto.”

Manuel-Andres, who is originally from Guatemala and has been in the U.S. since 2022, was arrested and detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents June 4. He was charged with entering the country illegally, even though he has Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, a legal

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## Amid deepening crisis of capitalism Washington, Beijing step up rivalry

BY ROY LANDERSEN

China’s state capitalist rulers are moving to extend their economic and military reach across the Pacific in a growing challenge to Washington’s decades-

long supremacy there. The U.S. rulers are determined to win out and protect their markets, resources and profits in the region, which they see as their prize from emerging as top dog out of the second imperialist world war. Washington threatens to intervene militarily, joined by its allies, if Beijing attempts to invade and seize Taiwan.

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## Profit-driven nursing home bosses sedate residents to make up for staff shortages

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The growing use of sedatives to control elderly residents in understaffed nursing homes was highlighted in a June 12 report by the Pension Research Council at the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School of Business. Its description of the abusive way these facilities operate shows how the entire medical industry is organized under capitalism — to make the most profit for the wealthy owners, not to provide care

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Quebec Steelworkers at Rio Tinto strike over wages, vacations

Manchester union rally backs striking UK refuse workers



# Back Teamsters at Republic!

Continued from front page

One big boost for strikers was when Local 25 members drove to and began picketing at the Republic landfill in Youngstown, Ohio, shutting it down. Workers there refused to cross the picket line. This means trucks and trains carrying 12 million pounds of trash daily from New York City and New Jersey are unable to unload.

The next morning in Peabody, garbage truck driver Shane Alexson emphasized the same point. “This is new,” he said. “We went out to other locals to talk to them about the strike.” Craig Honts, Socialist Workers Party candidate for lieutenant governor in New Jersey, who joined this reporter in bringing solidarity to the picket line, explained how meat packers on strike at Hormel Foods in Minnesota did this in the 1980s.

“That’s exactly what we have to do,” Alexson said. “It’s about workers communicating with each other.” Despina said he thought about 800 workers had joined the strike as a result of visits across the country by members of Local 25.

The two main issues are wages and

medical insurance, workers explained. “There are a couple of family-owned trash management companies that pay their workers \$5 to \$6 an hour more than we get,” Berrios said. “We’re just asking to be brought up to their level.”

“It can seem like we make a lot of money,” Alexson added. “But Boston is one of the most expensive cities in the country to live in.”

Working conditions are also an issue. “It’s hot in the summer and cold in the winter,” Junior Sanchez, who picks up trash for recycling, said. “They bought new trucks that hold more,” laborer Afri Ituen, who tosses garbage into the trucks, literally tons every day, added. “That just means I have to handle more garbage.”

The company also wants to put cameras in all the trucks to keep an eye on the drivers, Despina said. “They want to be better able to find reasons to discipline workers.”

Republic is trying to keep the struck facilities in Massachusetts running by using nonunion workers from their Tyngsborough and Haverhill facilities. The striking Teamster members have been reaching out to these workers. Alexson said he met with workers at Haverhill. “About half the workers have signed union cards there,” he said. “If those workers decide to go union, it will be a real blow to the company.”

### Contract campaign

Despina said that the vote to strike was 90% in favor and not a single union member has crossed the picket line. He explained workers had agreed to small pay raises in the last two contracts. “This time, we went on a campaign for eight months, prepar-



Members of Teamsters Local 25 on strike against Republic Services and supporters picket in Peabody, Massachusetts, July 20. Workers are fighting for higher wages, improved conditions.

ing union members for the possibility that we would have to strike to get a decent contract,” he said.

Alexson explained this in more detail the next morning. “Especially the contract right at the beginning of the COVID pandemic, we prioritized keeping our pensions, including for new workers. We didn’t think we could get more,” he said. “But we told the company we would have to catch up on wages with the next contract.”

Some talks took place July 18, but went nowhere. Following another wasted bargaining session — where Republic took a five-hour caucus and then returned without any increase in its wage proposal and refused to budge from its position not to agree to the more comprehensive Teamsters Health Insurance Plan — Local 25 President Tom Mari released a public statement saying the company was “going through the motions with no intent to reach an agreement.”

The company responded by claiming the union “is focused on disinformation and disruption,” including a “pattern of criminal behavior.”

Republic has filed a lawsuit against the union, seeking a temporary restraining order on their picketing.

The workers are determined. “This strike has brought us together,” Berrios said. “A lot of people visit the picket lines.” Picketing workers in both Rox-

bury and Peabody told of visits from members of Teamsters Local 25 who work elsewhere. Teamsters from Connecticut, teachers, firemen, representatives from the Boston Labor Council, nonunion sanitation workers, politicians and others also joined them.

“Without that we’d be much weaker. But with it we can keep fighting until we win,” Berrios said.

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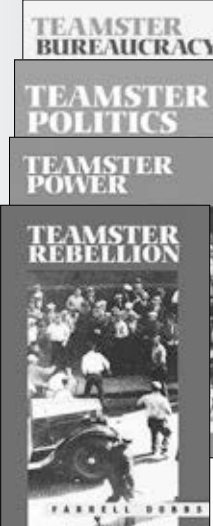
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# THE MILITANT

## Rail workers need control over jobs, safety

*Rail workers continue to die on the job, confirming the bosses and their government are only interested in profits, not safety. “We need to use union power and force the bosses to improve safety,” Laura Anderson, rail worker and SWP candidate, told the ‘Militant.’*



Militant/Jacquie Henderson  
Rail workers rally for contract with improved safety in Columbus, Ohio, Dec. 13, 2022.

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# —ON THE PICKET LINE—

## Quebec Steelworkers at Rio Tinto strike over wages and vacations

SOREL-TRACY, Quebec — Some 180 United Steelworkers union members have been on strike against Rio Tinto's iron and titanium operation here since July 10. They are fighting for better wages and against concessions the company demands on their vacations. The workers voted down the bosses' "final" offer by 98% July 3. They have been without a contract for a year.

Rio Tinto is a British- and Australian-based mining conglomerate with operations in 35 countries, employing 60,000 workers. The bosses boasted a profit of over \$11 billion in 2024.

"Our members always find themselves being considered as an 'adjustment variable' on which the employer relies to maximize its profits," Steelworkers union representative Yves Roland told the press. "These workers are demanding to be paid according to their real contributions to this company."

The strikers have been aided by solidarity and donations from USW locals at Lafarge Cement, Owens-Illinois, Infasco and three different ArcelorMittal locals in the region. They have also received solidarity visits from Canadian National Teamsters train conductors and other workers.

Workers on the picket line told us health and safety is a major question in the plant. Over the past 10 years, two subcontractor company workers died in the plant due to dangerous working conditions.

There are two different unions here, the USW on strike and a CSN local. The 900 CSN workers adopted a new contract in January, winning wage raises of 5.5%, 3.5% and 3% in each of three years. They also won increases in evening and night shift premiums.

Workers in Quebec are not new to battles with Rio Tinto. In 2012, 770 workers in the company's aluminum smelter in Alma were locked out for six months. They won a cap on the number of nonunion subcontractors, who are paid half the wages of union workers.

— *Giulio Archambeault and Philippe Tessier*

## Locked-out Canada aerospace workers fight for wage parity

LAVAL, Quebec — Twenty-four hours after 100 workers walked off the job in a one-day strike July 8, the Heroux-Devtek bosses, rather than negotiating with their union, the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN), locked them out.

Heroux-Devtek is the third largest manufacturer of airplane landing gear in the world. Its profits last year were \$38.3 million, up 177% from previous year.

The workers here are fighting to close a wage gap of eight Canadian dollars an hour (\$5.85) with workers at Heroux-Devtek's plant in Longueuil. A recent contract won by those workers further widened the wage differential.

We were warmly welcomed when we visited the picket line July 18, bringing a couple boxes of donuts. The plant is on a busy street, and many drivers honked their horns in solidarity as they drove by.

The bosses "are angry at us for carrying out the July 8 strike," Maryse Huot, a leader of the union's mobilization committee who has worked as an assembler here for 39 years, told the *Militant*. "Because of the unity we showed, they want to crush the union."

"Recently the company hired young



Militant/John Steele

Workers at Heroux-Devtek in Laval, Quebec, hold union meeting on their picket line, July 18. After a one-day strike calling for a wage increase, the company locked them out.

workers with different ethnic backgrounds, for example, workers from India and Muslims," Huot said. They thought "these new hires would help to undermine the union. But that strategy didn't work. We stood strong together during the one-day strike."

"Before, I would pass a picket line and wonder why they are on strike and think maybe they are just a bunch of whiners. Now I won't cross a picket line," she said. "I will always honk in solidarity and bring donuts for the pickets. And I

have learned the bosses use the media to slander the union."

The workers have been reaching out to other aerospace workers, setting up informational picket lines at CSN-organized plants. They need solidarity! Visit the picket line. Solidarity messages can be sent by email to [csn.qc.ca](mailto:csn.qc.ca), by phone to 1-800-947-6177, or mailed to CSN 1601, avenue De Lorimier, Montreal, Quebec H2K 4M5.

— *Vicky Mercier and John Steele*

## Manchester union rally backs striking UK refuse workers

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

BIRMINGHAM, England — A lively public meeting in support of striking Birmingham refuse workers, members of Unite, was organized by the Manchester Trades Union Council July 9.

"Birmingham Council thinks the way out of their debt is to put workers into debt," striker and shop steward Mike Masters told the meeting. The council is seeking to impose wage cuts of up to 25% or 8,000 pounds (\$10,730) per year. "Why should we be made to pay?" he said. "They're not just cutting our wages, they're attacking our right to strike."

Hours earlier John Cotton, leader of the Birmingham City Council and the strikers' boss, announced there would be no further negotiations with the

union. He said all the striking workers would be fired and then "offered" their jobs back at lower wages with a different job classification.

Three workers from a local aerospace plant attended the meeting, handing Masters a solidarity card signed by 20 workers and union stewards from the Unite North West 0619 branch. Masters told them that the strikers have restarted some "slow walking," delaying trucks' entry and exit from depots, after a court injunction initially restricted picketing. "We're picketing to win," he said.

"The Birmingham bin workers' fight is not just about pay or conditions," Sajad Ahmad, one of the three aerospace workers, told the *Militant*. "It's about dignity and respect. Their

struggle is our struggle."

The week before, striker and shop steward Danny Taylor and Unite organizer Pete Randle toured workplaces in the Manchester area. They joined the picket line of Unison strikers at Manchester Metropolitan University. Over 5,000 pounds was collected in contributions to the refuse workers strike fund, Chris Neville, Manchester Trades Union Council president, told the meeting.

"When you get solidarity, it means the world to striking workers," Randle added.

"What Birmingham City Council has proposed is fire and rehire," Unite General Secretary Sharon Graham said in a July 9 statement. "Fire and rehire" is a measure used by employers to attack wages and conditions won through union action over years.

The Labour Party government has given full backing to the council's attacks. "Unite should suspend the strike and work with the council," a representative of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, told BBC News.

At the picket line July 10 dozens gathered round a loudspeaker to hear a radio interview with Cotton. "The council is acting from a position of weakness," striker Paul Jackson told the *Militant*.

The firing of the strikers "changes nothing from the union's point of view, nor the backing the union will extend to the strike," Unite national officer Onay Kasab told the strikers to applause.

Graham addressed the annual Durham Miners' Gala attended by thousands of trade unionists July 12. She said that strikers like the Birmingham workers were the "vanguard of our movement."

If the council and government get away with pay cuts, council after council across the country will follow suit, she said.

*Andrés Mendoza and Pete Clifford contributed to this article.*

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

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

July 31, 2000

UNITED NATIONS — The United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization held hearings here July 12 on the colonial status of Puerto Rico and approved a resolution that "reaffirms the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence" from the United States. The resolution was sponsored by the revolutionary government of Cuba.

Speaker after speaker pointed to the fact that when a U.S. warplane dropped two "stray" bombs on Vieques, killing David Sanes, it detonated a sustained wave of protests that has not stopped. Over 30 people testified, the big majority in favor of independence. They included longtime independence fighters Juan Mari Bras and Lolita Lebrón, representatives of the Puerto Rican Independence Party and the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico, as well as James Harris, the Socialist Workers Party's presidential candidate.

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

August 1, 1975

The practice of forced sterilization of poor women is becoming a nationwide scandal. In South Carolina Dr. Clovis Pierce refuses to deliver babies for women on welfare who already have three children, unless they agree to be sterilized.

Two suits have been filed against the University of Southern California Medical Center. The women charge that the center performed sterilizations without their knowledge or by means of coercion, pressure and deception. On June 18, eleven Chicanas filed a federal class-action civil rights suit charging they were the victims of involuntary sterilization. The principal attorney, Antonia Hernandez, explained that in the eyes of many of the doctors there, they are "illegal" entrants from Mexico and/or on welfare.

Many of the doctors rationalize what they're doing with the arguments of overpopulation and diminishing resources.

**THE MILITANT**  
PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

July 31, 1950

A letter to the President and Members of Congress by James P. Cannon  
Gentlemen:

I disagree with your actions in Korea and in my capacity as a private citizen I petition you to change your policy fundamentally, as follows: Withdraw the American troops!

Before opening the argument, I beg your permission to tell you what I think of you. You are traitors to the human race. I hate your rudeness and your brutality. The whole of the Korean people have a mortal hatred of the Wall Street "liberator."

This is more than a fight for unification and national liberation. It is a civil war. On the one side are the workers, peasants and student youth. On the other are the landlords, usurers, capitalists and their police and political agents.

The American people well remember the War of Independence that brought this nation its freedom from British tyranny.

# Protests overturn ICE arrest of students in NY, Massachusetts

BY JANET POST

NEW YORK — Joselyn Chipantiza-Sisalema, a 20-year-old student originally from Ecuador who is enrolled in a GED program here, was greeted by family and friends July 16 at the Port Authority bus terminal. She had just been released after three weeks in an Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention center in Monroe, Louisiana.

Chipantiza-Sisalema was arrested at the Jacob K. Javits Federal Building in Manhattan June 24 after a routine immigration hearing on her asylum petition. Her family says she faces persecution and certain death if she returns to Ecuador.

“Federal agents, lying in wait outside the courtroom, arrested her anyway despite a pending court date,” the New York *Daily News* reported, “tossing her in a detention cell with 50 other women where she sleeps on the floor, has no access to a shower and has worn the same clothes for more than a week.” This was a room at the federal building that is supposed to be used as a processing center.

“We had to beg the people working there that they give us something to eat, they didn’t even give us water. Sometimes a few cookies they’d throw in there,” she said. “They had us in there like animals.”

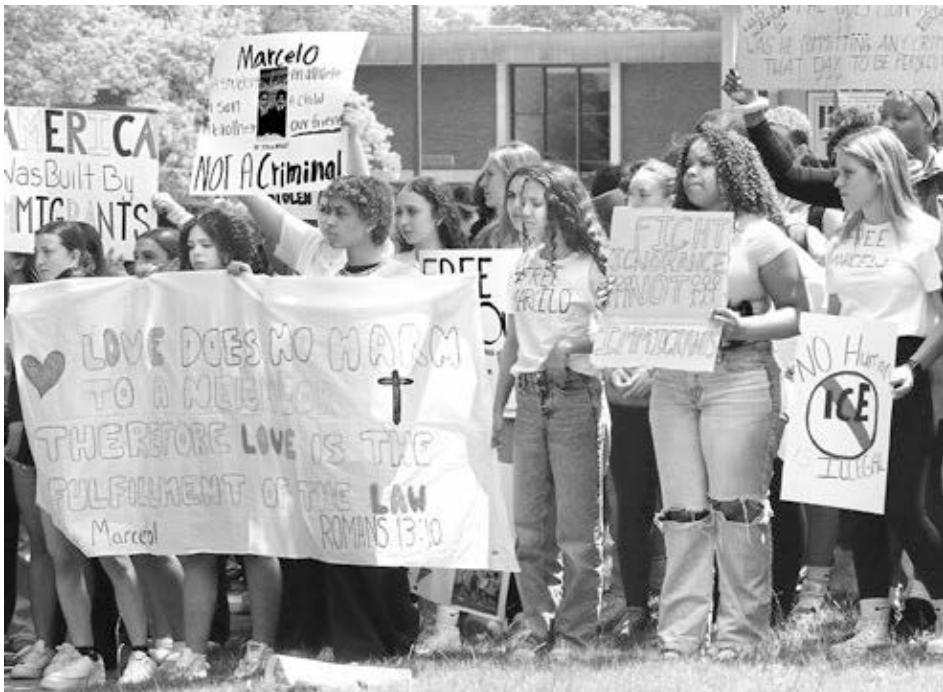
Two videos were recorded by immigrant workers ICE detained in a holding cell. More than 20 men are seen laying on the floor atop thin blankets or on benches near two metal toilets.

After 10 days Chipantiza-Sisalema and some other women were shackled

on their hands, feet and waists and flown to Louisiana. Friends, family and people from the school worked to win her freedom.

Other students are being arrested. In Massachusetts, 18-year-old Milford High School student Marcelo Gomes da Silva was detained by ICE May 31 on his way to volleyball practice. He was born in Brazil and his student visa had lapsed. The ICE agent told him he was arrested “because you’re illegal. You’re an immigrant.” The agency claimed their target was Gomes da Silva’s father.

On June 1, Gomes da Silva would have played in the band at the high school’s graduation ceremony. The class valedictorian’s speech called for his release. Students, still in graduation robes, marched a mile to the town hall where they rallied for his freedom, along with 200 teachers



Massachusetts Teachers Association

Milford High School students, teachers demand classmate Marcelo Gomes da Silva be released from ICE detention June 2. Protests were successful, Gomes da Silva was released June 5.

in solidarity. The next day students organized a walkout carrying “Free Marcelo” signs and wearing Brazilian flags.

The state’s largest teachers union,

the Massachusetts Teachers Association, commended those who walked out, denouncing ICE’s actions as “cruel.” Gomes da Silva was released on bond June 5.

## Thugs attack Jewish-owned San Francisco cafe, twice

BY RAUL GONZALEZ

A small group of Jew-hating thugs attacked Manny’s, a café and community center in the Mission District of San Francisco, in the early evening June 9. The attack came as the café was hosting a meeting on San Francisco city politics, one of many meetings held there.

The attackers busted two windows and spray-painted black and pink graffiti on the walls reading, “The only good settler is a dead one,” “F--k Manny” and more. Meeting participants called Manny Yekutieli, the café owner, who is Jewish. He rushed over and stayed as

the meeting wrapped up. Then he and the café workers cleaned up, put a coat of paint over the damage, and closed up.

Later that night the attackers returned. They smashed their way inside the restaurant, covering the walls with more graffiti: “Death 2 Israel is a promise,” “Die Zio[nist],” “Intifada” and other Jew-hating threats.

This wasn’t the first time Manny’s has been targeted. A boycott against the store was launched shortly after Yekutieli posted celebrations of Israel on his personal Facebook page in 2019. He keeps books on Israel and Jewish

history in the bookcases of the café, alongside other titles. “But this time,” Yekutieli told Mission Local, “it is more directed, and violent.”

Neighbors sprang into action to help. “Before I could even start cleaning up the damage, strangers from the neighborhood stopped what they were doing to help,” Yekutieli told the press. “A kind man named Jesus grabbed my paint bucket and started covering the first layer of graffiti without a word. The outpouring has been overwhelming.”

At a meeting organized by the Jewish Community Relations Council, which helped raise \$200,000 for repairs at Manny’s, Yekutieli told the crowd, “We’re not going anywhere and I’m not going anywhere.”

Five days after the attack on Manny’s, a Jewish woman and her friend were assaulted in the Marina District by several men on the street while they were eating a snack on the curb after a night out. Alana Gans turned around when she heard someone behind her shouting “F--k the Jews” and “Free Palestine.” She identified herself as a Jew and asked them to stop. Six or seven men then knocked her to the ground, while her companion Jeremy was kicked and punched unconscious.

A worker at the Balboa Café across the street saw the assault and ran over to try to break it up. He was knocked to the ground and beaten.

Three of the attackers were caught and charged with assault. So far, one has been found guilty.

## Kentucky town wins fight to free youth from ICE jail

Continued from front page

protection granted to undocumented children who have been abused or neglected by their parents.

Even with this status, Manuel-Andres was stuck on an ever-growing waiting list for an available visa, which would allow him to apply for a green card. The court order did allow him to stay in the country while awaiting the visa.

But as of June 6, the Department of Homeland Security rescinded its policy of granting deferred action to special immigrant juveniles who did not yet have a visa.

Gabriel Spellberg, one of the youth’s lawyers, said this put Manuel-Andres and others like him in a Catch-22 situation. If they leave the U.S., they’ll automatically lose this status. But without a visa, they’re liable to be detained and face deportation.

In an attempt to demoralize and disorient Manuel-Andres, and prevent his supporters from finding him, ICE moved him three times, first to Grayson County, then to Laurel County, and then to Monroe, Louisiana.

A fight is launched

His friends, neighbors, teachers and classmates, as well as a growing number of community organizations and churches, came together to organize to fight for his freedom. They held protests and vigils at local churches and wrote letters to public officials.

Warren County is not recognized as

a particularly liberal area. In 2024, 61% of residents voted for Donald Trump. Bowling Green is known as “Vette City,” where the only GM Corvette assembly plant in the world is located.

The teenager is a recent graduate of the Teranga Academy, a school for immigrants run by the Fugees Family that provides education in English and other subjects for refugees and other immigrants. Luma Mufleh, director of the school, and former Teranga Academy principal Kristi Costellow helped lead the fight.

Members drove to Louisiana to visit him in the detention center and set up a GoFundMe page to raise money to pay for his release on bond. On June 24 Manuel-Andres posted a \$1,500 bond and was released, but his fight isn’t over. He could be detained again if he is still without a visa and the bond is repealed.

“The community played a huge role in getting the government to return Ernesto,” Evelina Gevorgian, program director at the International Center of Kentucky, told this *Militant* correspondent July 16. “It shows what is possible when we fight.”

The center has been helping immigrants settle in Kentucky since 2002. They’ve found housing, jobs and transportation for hundreds of immigrant workers here from the Congo, Thailand, Myanmar, Cuba, Afghanistan and other countries. With new restrictions by the Donald Trump administration, Gevorgian said, “we’ve

had no new arrivals from out of the country lately. But we have many people moving here from other cities within the U.S. because they heard it’s a place welcoming to immigrants.”

“The community of Bowling Green looked at Ernesto, a resident of our community, and said ‘he’s ours,’” Costellow told the celebration. “I’m thankful to be in Bowling Green,” she said, “a community where people will see something that’s wrong and they will keep at it until it’s made right.”

In the past few months, we’ve seen “people taken out of their homes, out of the streets, when they have every legal right to be here, just like Ernesto,” Mufleh told the crowd. “But the difference is you spoke up for what was right, you said, ‘Not in this town, not in our community, and not on our watch.’”

Within the past 24 hours, Mufleh said, six other families had reached out about relatives or loved ones who have gone missing. “This is bigger than just Ernesto.”

The fight to bring Manuel-Andres home was well-known among working people here. When I knocked on doors, almost everyone I spoke to knew about the fight and supported it. “We’re so glad he’s home!” said FedEx worker Sarah Nobles, who came to the door on crutches after an on-the-job injury.

“Thank you for being here,” Manuel-Andres told the crowd welcoming him back, “I’m happy to be at my house again in Kentucky.”

### The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us

The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward

A decadeslong retreat by the working class and unions has come to an end. Workers are beginning to wield their collective power to defend their interests.

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# Socialist Workers Party campaigns

Continued from front page

lieutenant governor of New Jersey, reports that five striking sanitation workers got subscriptions to the *Militant* during a July 19-20 visit he and other party members made to bring solidarity to the Teamster picket lines at Republic Services in Massachusetts. The workers are members of Local 25.

During a discussion with garbage truck driver Shane Alexson about working conditions, SWP members pointed to the need to organize all workers — regardless of their immigration status — into unions.

Some unions are beginning to defend immigrant members who are being detained, they said. If you work, you should be in a union.

“Exactly,” Alexson replied. “These anti-immigrant raids by ICE are terrible.” After looking at the *Militant*’s coverage of today’s labor battles, as well as the fight to defend Israel as a refuge for Jews, he decided to get a subscription and a copy of *Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs, an SWP leader and central organizer of the powerful movement that built the union across the Midwest in the 1930s.

“My wife’s from Latin America and is Jewish,” he said.

Another copy of *Teamster Rebellion* and *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward* by SWP leaders Jack Barnes, Mary-Alice Waters and Steve Clark were bought by strikers.

## CL in Canada winning support

In Montreal the Communist League held a well-attended barbecue July 19 for people to meet its candidates, Katy LeRougetel for mayor of Montreal and Philippe Tessier for mayor of the St. Leonard borough.

Two people came to the event who had just met the CL as it was gathering signatures to put the candidates on the ballot. So far 122 signatures have been collected toward the goal of 300 for LeRougetel, and 47 of 150 for Tessier. Campaigning to go over the top is being organized in August.

Socialist Workers Party members are joining demonstrations to protest against ICE raids and deportations. SWP members took part in a protest at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Washington, July 14. One of the speakers was Ngoc Phan, whose husband Tuan Thanh Phan, originally from Vietnam, was deported by the U.S. government to South Sudan in March.

“They are hunting down our people like dogs,” she told the rally. “We need brave leaders who will stand up. If Governor Ferguson isn’t willing to stand up, he should get voted out.”

After the rally Phan spoke with Re-

becca Williamson, SWP candidate for King County Executive.

“It’s the capitalist class that’s driving the attacks that are coming down on workers,” Williamson said. Phan agreed when Williamson pointed out that both Democratic and Republican administrations carry out deportations and scapegoat immigrants to try and divide workers and attack our wages and conditions. We need to organize independently of them, Williamson said.

## Fight to unify working people

“The fight for an amnesty for workers without papers is a fight to unify the working class,” Williamson said. “Working people have forced the government to grant broad amnesties before, and we can do it again.

“Ultimately it will take a movement of millions to put working people in power and bring about the changes we need.”

Phan got a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us*.

SWP members Maggie Trowe and Eric Simpson set up a campaign table July 12 in Oakland’s Fruitvale neighborhood, in front at a drugstore parking lot where day laborers gather to find work.

“Yes, we need a revolutionary party,” retired construction worker Mario Arevalo told the SWP campaigners after they showed him the *Militant*. Arevalo had been part of the revolutionary movement in El Salvador during the civil war there in the 1980s.

He said he became disillusioned with the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front, a revolutionary organization that had initially advanced struggles by workers and landless peasants



Militant/Barry Fatland

At July 14 protest at Tacoma, Washington, ICE jail, Rebecca Williamson, right, SWP candidate for King County Executive, speaks with Ngoc Phan. Her husband was deported to South Sudan.

against a brutal dictatorship backed by Washington. But the FMLN lacked the program and class orientation to take power and turned away from leading workers and farmers to act in their own interests. It transformed itself into another capitalist party.

“It sold out for money,” Arevalo said. “Yes, but that’s not inevitable,” Trowe replied, it depends on whether a communist working-class leadership is built. She pointed to *Revolution and the Road to Peace in Colombia: The Example of the Cuban Revolution* by Fidel Castro. It draws on the lessons of the revolutionary struggle in Cuba that culminated in working people taking power and making a socialist revolution.

“The SWP is building a revolutionary party here today,” Trowe said.

Arevalo liked what Trowe and Simp-

son had to say, including the SWP’s backing for Israel’s war to defeat Hamas. He got a copy of the *Militant* and the SWP National Committee’s June 25 statement “Defend Israel’s battle to prevent another Holocaust! US troops, bases and warships out of the Mideast!” He thanked the SWP members for campaigning in the area.

The statement is available on the *Militant* website.

The SWP is looking for people who want to learn more about fighting to change society and to get involved with the party. To help get out the *Militant*, check out the location nearest you listed on page 8.

Beverly Bernardo in Montreal, Rebecca Williamson in Seattle and Eric Simpson in Oakland contributed to this article.

# State officials increase executions as opposition grows

BY JANET POST

On July 15 Michael Bernard Bell, 54, became the eighth death row inmate to be executed in Florida this year, and the 26th killed overall in the U.S. This already surpasses the 25 executions nationwide for all of last year. There are currently 269 prisoners on Florida’s death row, more than 100 of whom have been there for over 30 years.

Florida has put to death more people than any other state this year, followed by Texas, South Carolina, Alabama, Arizona, Oklahoma, Indiana, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee.

Bell, an African American, was executed by lethal injection at Florida State Prison. He was found guilty of killing two people in a car he thought belonged to a man who had fatally shot his brother in 1993. In fact, the killer had sold the car.

Bell’s last words at his execution were, “Thank you for not letting me spend the rest of my life in prison.” Conditions in Florida prisons are notoriously poor. “Molding food, improper portions, sauna like temperatures in the cells” with no air conditioning make prisoners’ lives “unbearable,” the *Tallahassee Democrat* reported in 2023.

When Bell was 15 he was sentenced to be put in the Arthur G. Dozier School for Boys in Marianna, Florida. This state reform school was opened in 1900 for boys with minor offenses, such as petty theft, truancy or running away from home, as well as those orphaned or abandoned. Bell was accused of stealing a car.

Families of youth placed in Dozier have brought forward reports of beatings, whippings, torture, solitary confinement, shackling, hog-tying, rapes and murder by the school’s staff. In 2012 anthropologists at the University of South Florida discovered 55 burial sites on the Dozier grounds and documented nearly 100 deaths. Twenty-seven more graves were found later.

Bell “said he was sexually assaulted by guards, who also forced him to fight other students and punished him when he lost,” *USA Today* reported on the day of his execution. They “beat him with a leather strap and left him shackled for hours in the notorious ‘White House’ where survivors have said they were taken to be tortured and raped.”

The Marshall Project interviewed Bell, who described his experience at Dozier as “torture.” In addition to the sadistic treatment there, living conditions were horrific, with no heating in winter and buckets used as toilets.

“Michael has never been the same since that Dozier school,” Bell’s aunt, Paula Goins, testified at his trial. “That boy came back home damaged.”

Dozier was closed in 2011. As of last year, more than 800 youths who had been sent there, and their families, had applied for restitution from the state. Former inmates between 1940 and 1975 were awarded \$20 million in compensation. *Nickel Boys*, a book by Colson Whitehead describing what students faced there, won a Pulitzer Prize in 2020. It was turned into a movie and was nomi-

nated for best picture at this year’s Academy Awards.

## Unconstitutional death penalty

In 2016 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Florida’s capital sentencing statute was unconstitutional. At the time only a simple majority of jurors could recommend a death sentence, a decision that was placed in the hands of the judge. The court held that the Sixth Amendment, which guarantees the right to trial by jury, “requires a jury, not a judge, to find each fact necessary to impose a sentence of death.”

But it did not rule that juries must vote unanimously to impose the death sentence. And in 2023 the Florida Legislature passed a new law saying that the votes of only eight of 12 jurors are needed to condemn a prisoner to death. Only one other state, Alabama, allows executions without a unanimous jury verdict.

The next inmate set to be executed in Florida is Edward Zakrzewski, on July 31. He filed an appeal July 16, explaining the jury that convicted him of three murders voted for the death penalty 7-5 in two of the cases and deadlocked at 6-6 in the third. In 1995 a judge decided to impose the death penalty.

“If a jury returned those votes today, Mr. Zakrzewski would be ineligible for a death sentence,” his attorneys pointed out. A Pew Research Center poll in March found “a significant decline” in support for the death penalty, with 30% opposed to it altogether compared to 18% in 1996.

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# Washington, Beijing step up rivalry

Continued from front page

Beijing has heavily invested in expanding its armed forces, at the same time millions of China's working people face a sharpening economic crisis. Labor actions and protests are suppressed by the authoritarian regime.

China's rulers see Washington's weakening domination amid a disintegrating world imperialist "order" as an opening to expand their own power in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. They've conducted rehearsals for an invasion across the Taiwan Strait, jousting with forces of the Philippines over its nearby islands and stepped up production of armaments.

Beijing has created and fortified islets across the South China Sea, through which almost a third of global shipping passes. Recently, the Chinese rulers planted a permanent oil rig in a disputed part of the Yellow Sea between China and South Korea.

Two of China's aircraft carriers held their first joint drills in the western Pacific near Japan in June. A third carrier — larger and more advanced but still not comparable to the nuclear-powered giants in the U.S. fleets — will enter service this year.

In February, Chinese navy warships carried out unannounced live-fire drills in the Tasman Sea between Australia and New Zealand that disrupted some 50 international airline flights. The aggressive display, including sailing around Australia, was a "wake-up call" for Canberra and Wellington, New Zealand's defense minister said.

Washington is pressing the governments of its partners in the Pacific — Japan, Australia, South Korea, Taiwan and others — to bolster their own armaments and armies.

The largest-ever war games, co-organized by Washington and Canberra, began in northern Australia July 14. Over 2,000 U.S. Marines are based there for half of each year, and U.S. strategic bombers rotate in and out.

This year the biennial exercises, called Talisman Sabre, involved over 40,000 troops from 19 nations. The armed forces of imperialist powers from Japan and New Zealand as well as several European countries, along with those of South Korea, the Philippines, India and Fiji participated.

Air, land and sea drones, a growing part of today's wars, featured in the

fight over the sovereignty of Ukraine, are being pursued everywhere.

## Trade conflicts with China

The deepening crisis of capitalism today is fueling trade disputes between rivals and allies alike worldwide. None is more fraught than those between the rulers in Washington and Beijing. This has sharpened conflicts among opposing powers over wealth extracted from the labor of workers and farmers, as well as access to markets and mineral riches.

Beijing's vast manufacturing industries are keenly dependent on exports to markets in the U.S., European Union and elsewhere, since no comparable internal market has been developed inside China. This makes it vulnerable in trade disputes as it tries to export its way out of its crisis.

China's working people face an uncertain future with the crisis provoking large-scale youth unemployment and disaffection, alongside growing inequality, layoffs and unpaid wages.

A huge bubble, inflated by years of government stimulus, in construction of huge apartment towers, which many workers could not afford, and other infrastructure development, burst in 2021. This was highlighted by the collapse of Evergrande, a giant real estate firm that fell amid a glut of unsellable housing and massive debt.

Millions lost savings in banking failures, and indebted local governments still face serious financial stress.

## Putin sends released POWs back to the front to be killed

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The savage character of Russian President Vladimir Putin's war against the Ukrainian people today means not only deadly aerial attacks on their cities, but also a callous contempt for the lives and families of Russian workers and farmers in uniform. They are dying by the thousands as Moscow desperately tries to make small advances in eastern Ukraine.

In May, Moscow and Kyiv carried out the largest prisoner of war exchange since Putin's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine began. It involved 1,000 captive troops from each side. But the families of many returned Russian soldiers have publicly spoken



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kaleb C. Birch

Warships, planes from U.S., U.K., other capitalist powers escort aircraft carriers USS George Washington, left, and HMS Prince of Wales, right, in Timor Sea July 18. U.S. rulers, allies and Beijing are all preparing for Pacific conflicts to come, threatening another world war.

Attempting to escape the crisis by another giant central-government stimulus can only create a deeper disaster. Chinese President Xi Jinping recently admitted, "We should not only focus on how much GDP has grown and how many major projects have been built, but also on how much debt is owed."

Competition among Chinese manufacturers for markets — both inside China and abroad — is headed toward a new crash. This is especially sharp in the electric vehicle industry, where cutthroat downward pricing is fueling a deflationary spiral.

Drawing a comparison to the housing collapse, Wei Jianjin, chair of Great Wall Motors, said, "The Evergrande in the automobile industry already exists, but it is just yet to explode."

The only way auto bosses there have survived so far is by stopping payments to their suppliers, spreading the economic crisis.

The price cuts also feed tariff battles with foreign competitors. All this fuels the rush to increase military spending.

Working people around the world are being driven to resist attacks by the bosses and their governments on our livelihoods. At the same time, these same bosses tell us, "we" Americans have common interests in beating back foreign competition. This is a lie. U.S. workers have a strong class interest in international solidarity with our fellow workers against the bosses and their political parties everywhere, including in China.

out to say they never got to see their husbands, brothers, and sons, not even those seriously wounded. Virtually every released POW was thrown straight back into the "meat grinder" at the front.

On July 1, Meduza, a Russian-language news service, ran a report from the independent outlet Okno, which had spoken with relatives of these Russian POWs. They described the utter disregard with which they and their soldier kin are treated by Russian authorities.

Kirill Putintsev, a 23-year-old worker from Borzya, in Russia's Far East, signed a military contract just over a year ago, looking to get out of serving a prison sentence for theft. Posted to the front, he went missing less than two months later.

"I found out he'd been captured on my own," Yana, Kirill's sister, told Okno. After getting no response from the Russian army, she posted a video online. She was helped by Irina Krynina, a Russian woman who collaborates with Ukraine's Want to Find project. It helps Russian families find out what happened to relatives sent to fight in Ukraine. Eventually she got "good news" confirming her brother was alive.

After Kirill was returned in early May, he wasn't allowed home — not even for a day. Instead, he was held and interrogated by Putin's secret police, the FSB. He was told there was no chance of a leave, let alone a medical discharge. "Then they sent him straight back to Ukraine," Yana said.

"I don't care if someone [reports

me], I'll speak the truth," Yana said. "My brother has six shrapnel wounds across his back. His fingers were amputated. And now they're throwing him back to the front!"

Kirill told Krynina, "He only signed up for the money, and he regretted it immediately. Not a day goes by that he doesn't regret joining this goddamn war."

"We fought for 11 months to get him out of captivity, not to send him to die all over again," his sister said.

"No one wants to go back," one of Kirill's fellow soldiers told Okno. "A few were lucky enough to get sent to a hospital. Others were just patched up and sent back. We've all been assigned to Unit No. 42038" — a code they use for being sent on suicide meat grinder missions.

Marina, the wife of another captured Russian soldier, Alexey Frolov, made a video that was broadcast on the Telegram channel Mobilizatsiya. She says that although her husband is finally nearing the front of the exchange line, she no longer wants it to happen.

"I don't want this exchange anymore. It's like they're being freed from captivity only to be made slaves again," she said.

"We, the wives and mothers of POWs, have written to the ombudsman, to the president, begging them to bring these men home after they're released — not send them back to the slaughter. But all we get is form letters."

As long as he's still held in Ukraine, she said, "he's safe. He says they're not torturing him, And he'll stay alive."

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# Israel seeks to defend Druze

**Continued from front page**  
follow the unfolding battle for national rights in Syria.

In Israel thousands of Druze took to the streets to demand that the government come to the aid of their Druze brethren in Syria. “This is our Oct. 7,” Sari Halabi, a Druze who lives in Majdal Shams in the Golan Heights 50 yards from the Syrian border, told the Jewish News Service.

Since the overthrow of the Bashar al-Assad dictatorship, Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa has sought to create a centralized capitalist state and army. But Kurds in the north and Druze in the south — given Sharaa’s origin in Islamic State and al-Qaeda — have good reason not to trust the new regime to respect their national rights.

During the Syrian civil war, the Druze worked to keep out reactionary Islamist forces fighting Assad. As Assad’s repression deepened, thousands of Druze in Sweida — along with local Bedouins — joined protests against his regime.

**‘We were united, now it’s not so easy’**  
“It was a good time, we were united,” Omar al-Sabra, a Bedouin who was at those protests, told the New Arab news site. “Now it’s not so easy, tensions have emerged.”

Every modern capitalist regime has fostered divisions among Syria’s different nationalities and religions. The Bedouin are mostly Sunni Muslims and historically seminomadic, raising livestock. The Druze practice a religion that diverged centuries ago from Shia Islam and many are farmers.

Despite some conflicts over land and resources, the Druze and Bedouin in Sweida have mostly had fraternal relations, attending each others weddings, wakes and other social events.

The latest dispute began after a Bedouin militia allied with Sharaa kidnapped and robbed a Druze merchant at a checkpoint on the Damascus-Sweida road July 13. Druze groups retaliated, kidnapping several Bedouins.

This escalated into armed clashes as thousands of Bedouin fighters from hundreds of miles northeast and with little connection to Sweida poured into the south. Many large Bedouin tribes refused to join them.

Sharaa sent in troops of the Syrian Arab Army supposedly to quell the violence. Instead, they joined brutal attacks on the Druze.

Druze civilians, including women and children, were massacred. Videos showed Syrian troops and allied Bedouin militiamen forcibly shaving off the mustaches of Druze men, a symbol of their religion.

Some Druze and local Bedouin helped each other. When Fouad Hanna, a Druze, was shot by pro-regime thugs, his Bedouin neighbors rushed him to a hospital.

Israel insisted that the Syrian troops leave and backed up its demand by bombing Syrian tanks and positions in Sweida and the entrance to the defense ministry in Damascus. Sharaa ordered his troops to retreat, but his allied militias continued looting and attacking Druze. By July 20 a shaky ceasefire was in place.

According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, 505 Druze fighters and 298 Druze civilians were killed, including 194 “summarily executed by members of the Defense and Interior Ministries,” along with 408 government troops and 35 Bedouins.

In the face of the Druze resistance and Israel’s warnings, Sharaa abandoned his call for Druze militias to dissolve and announced he was entrusting the Druze groups and their religious leaders to maintain the security of the province.

**US gov’t: Israeli moves ‘at bad time’**  
President Donald Trump’s adminis-



July 21 demonstration by Druze in Majdal Shams, in Israeli-run Golan Heights, in solidarity with Druze in southern Syria who fought off attack by Syrian government-backed militias.

tration opposed Israel’s intervention. Trump announced in May he would lift all U.S. sanctions on Syria and removed the terrorist designation of Tahrir al-Sham, the group Sharaa led before toppling Assad.

His administration is trying to cobble together an alliance involving the Syrian regime, the governments of Saudi Arabia and Turkey and others, as well as reestablish relations with Tehran. The U.S. rulers want a new Pax Americana like it established as the victor after World War II — stability for capitalist profits under U.S. economic and political supremacy, backed up by Washing-

ton’s military might. But stability is impossible given Israel’s fight against Hamas in Gaza is still unresolved and Tehran is looking to get back on course for developing nuclear weapons aimed at Israel’s major cities. Any ceasefire in Syria is unstable as the Sharaa regime is committed to extending its control over the Druze, Kurds and other oppressed nationalities.

Only by joining in common struggle can working people — Druze, Bedouin, Jews, Christians, Kurds, Afghanis and others — earn each others trust, defend their national aspirations and begin forging a working-class leadership and road forward.

## Netanyahu foes trample on rights as Israel fights Hamas

**BY SETH GALINSKY**  
In the middle of a life-or-death war to defend Israel’s existence as a refuge from Jew-hatred and pogroms — the only such refuge in a world where attacks on Jews are on the rise — Israel has been wracked by a semi-civil war within its capitalist political system. The liberal bourgeois news media in the U.S. and Israel present this as a fight by those who believe in “democracy” against a “rightist,” warmongering Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is only concerned about staying in power. But what is really involved is an effort by Netanyahu’s capitalist political rivals and meritocratic, middle-class layers — including at top levels of Israel’s military officer corps and intelligence organizations — to drive him from office and force the government to stop its war to destroy Hamas and to completely eliminate Tehran’s nuclear weapons programs. They argue that is the road to “peace.”

Their anti-Netanyahu drive is aided by the U.S. ruling class, which sees his refusal to compromise with Hamas as an obstacle to the stability the U.S. imperialists require to advance their own interests in the Middle East. The U.S. rulers have never cared about the lives of Jews or Palestinians. They seek to keep plundering the natural resources and labor of the region, and to block Beijing, their main rival, from increasing its toehold there.

**Witch hunt against Netanyahu**  
A central figure in the witch hunt to oust Netanyahu is Israel’s attorney general, Gali Baharav-Miara. She has backed at least three different investi-

gations or trials against Netanyahu or members of his staff.

This includes a trial that began in 2020 of a “corruption case” that asserts Netanyahu paid bribes to get favorable news coverage.

In another case, a close aide to Netanyahu along with an Israel Defense Forces officer are charged with leaking “top secret” documents to the press. The documents are actually reports discovered by the IDF on Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar’s computer.

A third case is the so-called Qatargate accusations by Ronen Bar, then head of the Israeli domestic intelligence agency Shin Bet, and Baharav-Miara. They allege aides to Netanyahu helped a lobbying company present the Qatari government as a neutral mediator trying to bring peace to Israel and Gaza. They claim this harmed state security.

**Attorney general ‘bends the law’**

“I saw Israel’s attorney-general bend the law for her favorites, and I paid the price,” was the headline on a July 17 *Jerusalem Post* article by the paper’s editor, Zvika Klein. It exposes Baharav-Miara’s trampling on democratic rights.

Klein had flown to Qatar where he interviewed the country’s prime minister. His interview was quoted widely in the Israeli press, but Shin Bet tried to make it part of the “Qatargate” case, accusing him of being a “foreign agent.”

Klein, who is no fan of Netanyahu, was arrested in April without a warrant in the middle of voluntarily giving testimony in the Qatargate investigation. Israeli cops threw him in a room, interrogated him for 12 hours, placing him under house arrest and a gag order for several days. His two phones were con-

fiscated and remain locked in a police vault, while cops leak some of their contents to select Israeli media.

Contrast Klein’s treatment to that of a reporter from notoriously anti-Netanyahu Channel 13 who aggressively shoved Gal Dabush, an aide to Sara Netanyahu, the prime minister’s wife, in a courthouse corridor — all caught on video. When the Channel 13 reporter was supposed to be questioned about the attack, Baharav-Miara called it off. An “urgent consultation,” she said, is required before police can contemplate investigating a journalist for conduct linked to their work because it might “chill the press.”

“The woman who lectures the nation about ‘careful, proportionate enforcement’ now behaves like a wounded animal, lashing out at anything that steps onto her path of self-preservation,” Klein writes.

The office of “attorney general” and the “Supreme Court” in Israel have little in common with U.S. institutions of the same name. Attorney General Baharav-Miara, who was appointed by the previous government, has the power to overturn decisions of the elected government that she claims are “illegal,” and even decide who may or may not serve in the cabinet.

This power of the attorney general was never voted on by Israel’s parliament, nor is it written in any law. It’s the result of a 1993 ruling by the Israeli Supreme Court.

Supreme Court judges in Israel are not voted on by the parliament. Instead, they are selected by a nine-member committee, which is dominated by lawyers and sitting Supreme Court judges.

**Continued on page 9**

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# The Bolsheviks tore down czar's 'prison house of nations'

Among Pathfinder's July Books of the Month is *The Revolution Betrayed: What Is the Soviet Union and Where Is It Going?* by Leon Trotsky. In October 1917 workers and peasants in Russia, led by V.I. Lenin and the Bolsheviks, began the world's first socialist revolution. This classic study by Trotsky, a central leader of that deepgoing revolution, explains the later bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet Union and the Communist parties. Joseph Stalin revived Moscow's despotic domination of oppressed peoples. Trotsky refers to the suppression of Lenin's writings against this, now available in Pathfinder's Lenin's Final Fight. The excerpt is from the section "Nationality and Culture." Copyright © 1972 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

The policy of Bolshevism on the national question, having ensured the victory of the October revolution, also helped the Soviet Union to hold out afterward notwithstanding inner centrifugal forces and a hostile environment. The bureaucratic degeneration of the state has rested like a millstone upon the national policy. It was upon the national question that Lenin intended to give his first battle to the bureaucracy, and especially to Stalin, at the 12th Congress



1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia led workers, peasants to power. In 1918-22, special trains reached the remotest regions and oppressed peoples offering education, culture to overcome mass illiteracy. Revolution championed the right of oppressed nations to self-determination.

of the party in the spring of 1923. But before the congress met Lenin had gone from the ranks. The documents which he then prepared remain even now suppressed by the censor.

The cultural demands of the nations aroused by the revolution require the widest possible autonomy. At the same time, industry can successfully develop only by subjecting all parts of the Union to a general centralized plan. But economy and culture are not separated by impermeable partitions. The tendencies of cultural autonomy and economic centralism come naturally from time to time into conflict. The contradiction between them is, however, far from irreconcilable. Although there can be no once-and-for-all prepared formula to resolve the problem, still there is the resilient will of the interested masses themselves. Only their actual participation in the administration of their own destinies can at each new stage draw the necessary lines between the legitimate demands of economic centralism and the living gravitations of national culture.

The trouble is, however, that the will of the population of the Soviet Union in all its national divisions is now wholly replaced by the will of a bureaucracy which approaches both economy and culture from the point of view of convenience of administration and the specific interests of the ruling stratum. ...

In the schools of the Union, lessons are taught at present in no less than

eighty languages. For a majority of them, it was necessary to compose new alphabets, or to replace the extremely aristocratic Asiatic alphabets with the more democratic Latin. Newspapers are published in the same number of languages — papers which for the first time acquaint the peasants and nomad

**"The cultural demands of the nations aroused by the revolution require the widest autonomy."**

**—Leon Trotsky, 1937**

shepherds with the elementary ideas of human culture. Within the far-flung boundaries of the czar's empire, a native industry is arising. The old semi-clan culture is being destroyed by the tractor. Together with literacy, scientific agriculture and medicine are coming into existence. It would be difficult to overestimate the significance of this work of raising up new human strata. Marx was right when he said that revolution is the locomotive of history. ...

The very necessity of acquainting tens of millions of grown-up people with the alphabet and the newspaper, or with the simple laws of hygiene, shows what a long road must be traveled before you can really pose the question of a new socialist culture. The press informs us, for example, that in western Siberia the

Oirots [Altai people] who formerly did not know what a bath means, have now "in many villages baths to which they sometimes travel 30 kilometers to wash themselves." This extreme example, although taken at the lowest level of culture, nevertheless truthfully suggests the height of many other achievements, and that not only in the backward regions. ... [I]n other words, acquiring the commonplace methods of capitalist trade. We are still far from solving this extremely important problem — in which, however, there is not a drop of socialism.

If we leave laws and institutions aside for a moment, and take the daily life of the basic mass of the population, and if we do not deliberately delude our minds or others', we are compelled to acknowledge that in life customs and culture the heritage of tsarist and bourgeois Russia in the Soviet country vastly prevails over the embryonic growth of socialism. Most convincing on this subject is the population itself, which at the least rise of the standard of living throws itself avidly upon the ready models of the West. ... In a certain sense all this means progress, but what chiefly expresses itself here is not the superiority of socialism over capitalism, but the prevailing of petty bourgeois culture over patriarchal life, the city over the village, the center over the backwoods, the West over the East. ...

To say that the Soviet Union is now performing that cultural work which the advanced countries long ago performed on the basis of capitalism, would be, however, only half the truth. ... The Soviet Union takes it ready made in its latest forms and, thanks to the socialized means of production, applies the borrowings not partially and by degrees but at once and on a gigantic scale. ...

If the October revolution had given nothing but this accelerated forward movement, it would be historically justified, for the declining bourgeois regime has proved incapable during the last quarter century of seriously moving forward any one of the backward countries in any part of the earth. However, the Russian proletariat achieved the revolution in the name of much more far-reaching tasks. No matter how suppressed it is politically at present, in its better parts it has not renounced the communist program nor the mighty hope bound up with it.

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# Cuban Revolution is an example for all workers

Events are being held around the world to celebrate the 72nd anniversary of the July 26th attack on the Moncada and Carlos Manuel de Céspedes barracks in Cuba. They mark the opening battle of a revolutionary uprising that would lead working people in Cuba to make the first socialist revolution in the Americas. This revolution is an example for working people everywhere.

These celebrations in Cuba, the U.S. and elsewhere are an opportunity to condemn Washington’s unrelenting economic and political war aimed at extinguishing that revolution, to offer solidarity and to demand an immediate end to the U.S. rulers’ embargo.

On July 26, 1953, Fidel Castro led rebel forces in an attack that announced the onset of a movement to overthrow the U.S.-backed military dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista that seized power a year earlier. Although the assault was defeated and many of its leaders murdered or jailed, it began a historic struggle.

Castro’s courtroom speech *History Will Absolve Me* presented a forthright program of revolutionary struggle. It was smuggled out of prison and used to recruit new combatants.

The July 26 Movement led workers and peasants to bring down the Batista tyranny in 1959, end Cuba’s subordination to the dictates of U.S. imperialism and establish a government that working people could call their own.

Its accomplishments showed the kind of communist, working-class leadership that must be built to organize the toilers to take and to hold power, including here in the U.S. They are worthy of serious study.

Castro and the movement he led organized working people to use their conquest of state power to take control of the factories, land and banks from the capitalists and to organize production and mass popular organizations to meet human needs. Working people transformed themselves as they began transforming class relations around them. As Malcolm X would say, they learned their own worth.

Peasants were granted title to the land. Thousands of youth mobilized to eradicate illiteracy. Racist acts were outlawed. The Federation of Cuban Women was formed to deepen the revolution.

Internationalism was the hallmark of the revolution. Castro and Che Guevara explained that only the extension of the revolution could keep Cuba’s transformation moving forward.

The U.S. rulers will never forgive working people in Cuba for showing that it is possible to make a socialist revolution.

Advancing the fight to replace capitalist rule with workers power is the most important thing working people in the U.S. can do to end the U.S. rulers’ efforts to destroy the Cuban Revolution.

That’s what the Socialist Workers Party exists to do and why you should join it.

## Temporary Protected Status restored for Haitians

BY STEVE WARSHHELL

MIAMI — Hundreds of thousands of Haitians living in the United States on TPS — Temporary Protected Status — who have been protected from deportation will now be allowed to remain until at least Feb. 3, 2026, with the right to work, according to a July 18 announcement by the Department of Homeland Security.

The restoration of Haitians’ TPS comes after a New York federal judge earlier this month blocked the government’s efforts to cut six months from the program and begin deportation proceedings Sept. 2.

“The court’s decision provides a crucial, if temporary, reprieve for the more than 500,000 Haitians and their families who depend on TPS,” said the Family Action Network Movement, a Haitian rights group based in Miami.

U.S. District Judge Brian Cogan ruled against the administration’s decision to end Haitians’ TPS status, finding that Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem exceeded her authority when she rolled back the timeline. The TPS designation had been extended in July 2024 to run for 18 more months.

“This is just the first step in making it possible for Haitians in the U.S. to regain the confidence to function in the country and defend ourselves,” Max St.

Pierre, a worker at Walmart in North Miami Beach, told the *Militant*.

“Since the original decision many of us saw hundreds of our fellow countrymen fired and arrested,” St. Pierre said. “Many even became afraid to walk in the street. Many no longer shop and carry on business as before. The place I work is now like a ghost town compared to before.”

In his ruling, Cogan says immigrants protected under a program that is set for a fixed time period benefit from its protections for at least that period, noting that Noem is authorized to end these protections once the program expires. The Department of Homeland Security initially announced it would fight the ruling, but has now backed off.

The Family Action Network Movement statement points out, “Haiti continues to face a dire situation marked by widespread violence, rape, kidnapping, armed robbery, general insecurity, lack of access to basic resources, and government collapse.”

The temporary restoration follows threats by the administration to end TPS for immigrants from Afghanistan, Cuba, Ukraine, Venezuela and elsewhere. More than a million people from 17 countries are covered by TPS protection.

## Netanyahu foes trample on rights as Israel fights Hamas

Continued from page 7

In one of the most serious disputes, Baharav-Miara tried to block Netanyahu from firing Shin Bet head Ronen Bar. Shin Bet is responsible for Gaza and Bar was centrally involved in the decision on Oct. 7 to keep reports from going to Netanyahu on numerous signs Hamas was about to attack.

The attorney general claimed that it was a “conflict of interest” for Netanyahu to fire Bar, alleging he did it to stop the Qatargate investigation. And when Bar resigned, she maintained that Netanyahu can’t name a replacement. All in the middle of a war!

In fact, it was no secret for months before the Qatargate prosecution that the Netanyahu government was getting ready to fire Bar for his treasonous refusal to notify Netanyahu about the likelihood of Hamas’ attack.

### Washington fuels civil war

Decades of collaboration with the U.S. military and Washington’s spy agencies, fortified by billions of dollars of military “aid,” have helped consolidate a layer of Israeli officials who act as transmission belts for the

interests of U.S. imperialism.

During President Barack Obama’s administration, the State Department funded groups in Israel that sought to oust Netanyahu. And the Joseph Biden administration funded “nongovernmental organizations” that fought against Netanyahu’s proposed judicial reform.

Under President Donald Trump’s administration, Washington tries to block the Israeli government from taking measures to complete the defeat of Hamas, achieve the total elimination of Tehran’s nuclear weapons program and to prevent the new Syrian regime from being able to threaten Israel.

In leaks to the Axios news site, six anonymous Trump administration officials criticized Netanyahu for going against U.S. interests. Netanyahu acts “like a madman,” one official said. “He bombs everything all the time.”

Netanyahu seeks U.S. imperialism’s support for Israel. But he acts on the fact that if Israel is to survive as a refuge for Jews, it must be ready to act on its own. The U.S. rulers view that as an obstacle to their interests.

## Nursing home bosses

Continued from front page

for those who need it.

“Patients placed under chemical restraints require less work,” the report’s authors note. They reviewed staffing levels and sedative use across the 16,000 nursing homes in the U.S. between 2012 and 2021. “By reducing workloads rather than fulfilling them, nursing homes can hire fewer nurse staff while utilizing antipsychotic medications to still manage their patient load.”

The \$200 billion nursing home industry, which encompasses some 1.2 million patients nationwide, is increasingly run by real estate investment trusts and other giant “health care-affiliated” corporations. Workers at these facilities face low pay, inadequate benefits and increasingly difficult working conditions.

To maximize profits, the bosses refuse to hire enough workers to provide residents at these facilities with basic care and timely attention to their needs. In fact, half of the workers in nursing homes quit each year, according to federal data.

The drugging of those cooped up in nursing homes has been going on for decades and is being stepped up as the capitalist crisis deepens.

“A U.S. Senate subcommittee reported as long ago as 1975 on the abuse of medications as a way to keep residents docile and easy to manage,” reports Market-Watch July 11. “A recent study suggested that nearly one resident in four is being medicated in this way.”

At many facilities residents with dementia are improperly diagnosed as schizophrenic so they can be administered antipsychotic drugs. In 2015 authorities revised reporting requirements for the government’s rating of nursing homes so bosses no longer had to report the use of antipsychotic drugs for residents who are diagnosed with schizophrenia.

Less than 1% of the population is schizophrenic, a disorder that is usually diagnosed in late adolescence or early adulthood, not in old age. But a 2022 government study of 99 nursing homes found that 20% of the residents were listed as “schizophrenic.” A nursing home in Ruleville, Mississippi, in 2023 had diagnosed 39% of its residents as “schizophrenic”!

### No long-term care for workers under capitalism

Medicare does not cover long-term care that many working people will need as they age. In recent years millions of “baby boomers,” born after World War II and into the 1950s, are retiring and living longer. Their growing health care needs are more than most workers’ families can provide. But the capitalist rulers have done next to nothing to deal with this crisis, other than to claim that Medicare and Social Security will run out of money in less than a decade.

For Medicaid recipients to qualify for long-term care facilities, they have to turn over just about everything they possess to the corporate giants running these outfits, including their homes and all assets above \$2,000.

Increasing numbers of older workers who think they can afford it turn to assisted-living facilities as an alternative to the wretched conditions in many nursing homes. But the higher cost for “rent” turns out to be escalated by daily “fees” — \$12 for a blood pressure check, \$50 for an injection, along with fees for help in shaving and even for a reminder that it’s time to take medication. And when you run out of money you’re out the door.

To end the profit-gouging capitalist “health care” system will take a social movement of working people in their millions to take political power into our own hands so that care for the elderly can become a right for all human beings.

### Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes

*This is a book about the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary — it can be made.*

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