

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Tariff battles advance imperialist drive toward new wars

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 89/NO. 31 SEPTEMBER 1, 2025

Back Ukrainian people's fight to defend their nat'l sovereignty

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The stance of the Donald Trump administration in its efforts to bring to an end Moscow's assaults on the Ukrainian people continues to shift almost daily. What doesn't change is its goal of advancing the interests of U.S. imperialism.

Trump met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Alaska Aug. 15, followed by a meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and several top European leaders at the White House three days later. He now says he's working on a meeting between the Russian and Ukrainian presidents. Where all this is headed is unclear. All the parties have competing interests.

The one thing that's certain is that Putin continues to target working people in Ukraine with nightly bombardments of apartment buildings, schools and other civilian targets. And he's losing thousands of troops — workers in uniform — every week trying to take a few extra yards of territory in Ukraine's east.

The U.S. rulers seek to restore normalized relations with Putin, trying to

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Socialist Workers Party 2025 campaign

'As crisis of capitalism grows, workers need to take power'



Susan LaMont, SWP candidate for mayor of Atlanta, talks with Reggie Wright, patient at VA hospital in Decatur, Georgia. He joined nurses' protest against gov't ending union contracts.

BY TERRY EVANS

Socialist Workers Party candidates around the country are meeting workers involved in fights against worsening working conditions and wages you can't live on, and they're pointing to the need to expand solidarity with union battles.

They're discussing why the assaults workers face today are a result of the crisis of capitalism, which drives fierce

competition among capitalist powers worldwide. These rivalries fuel economic and military conflicts, deadly Jew-hating violence and the rulers' march toward a third world war.

The SWP candidates are discussing the central questions in politics, starting from Israel's war to defeat Hamas and why it's necessary to stop another Holocaust.

SWP campaigners are also finding interest in the party's defense of the

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Air Canada flight attendants defy gov't, win new contract

BY STEVE PENNER

MONTREAL — After striking for three days in defiance of a federal government back-to-work order, 10,000 flight attendants at Air Canada began returning to work Aug. 19 when their union, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, announced a deal had been reached. The workers had shut down the country's largest airline in their first strike in 40 years.

Picket lines went up shortly before 1 a.m. Aug. 16. By 2 p.m., the federal government had invoked section 107 of the Canada Labour Code ordering flight attendants back to work and imposing binding arbitration.

But boosted by widespread labor support, flight attendants refused to comply, keeping lively picket lines up across the country.

"We will not turn our back on these workers," Mark Hancock, CUPE national president, told the press. "And if it means folks like me going to jail, then so be it. If it means our union being fined, then so be it."

This is the fourth time in a year the federal government has used anti-labor laws to rule a strike illegal, having earlier sent tens of thousands of

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2006: Two million workers march for amnesty, an example for today



UNITE HERE contingent at Chicago May Day rally of 400,000 in 2006, part of nationwide political strike of millions demanding amnesty for immigrants to unite the working class.

BY RÓGER CALERO

Several unions in the U.S. have recently stood up in defense of members threatened with deportation or losing their protected immigration status. This underlines the fact that the struggle for amnesty, for the legalization of all undocumented workers in the U.S., is completely intertwined with the strength of the labor movement.

Whether the labor movement will be able to fight effectively for better wages and working conditions is tied to its ability to convince workers — native- and foreign-born — that they need to band together.

If, on the other hand, the ruling class succeeds in convincing a significant section of the working class that immi-

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Support Israel's fight to stop a new Holocaust! Hamas must be defeated

BY SETH GALINSKY

Nearly two years after Hamas carried out the worst anti-Jewish pogrom since World War II, both it and its backers in Tehran insist they're determined to destroy Israel and eliminate all the Jews there. Hamas continues to use Palestin-

ian civilians in Gaza as human shields, and takes advantage of their inevitable deaths to try to win support from capitalist governments around the world.

Hamas boasts it will repeat Oct. 7, 2023 — the murder of 1,200 people, mostly Jews, and the taking of 251 hostages, the destruction of farm communities, and the rape and mutilation of dozens of women — "again and again."

Among those Hamas slaughtered

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For-profit nursing homes, cuts at VA pose social disaster

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Patients in thousands of nursing homes across the U.S. are denied essential medical care and assistance as the wealthy property owners prioritize maximizing their profits at the expense of the elderly and most vulnerable. Severe short staffing in these facilities, as well as in Veterans Administration medical centers nationwide, shines a spotlight on the deep social and moral crisis of capitalist rule.

The \$200 billion nursing home industry — home to 1.3 million residents —

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Flight attendants picket PSA as negotiations stall

Nurses protest after gov't cancels union contracts at VA hospitals

Air Canada flight attendants

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striking postal workers, port workers and rail workers back to work without a contract.

But after an emergency meeting with union leaders, the Canadian Labour Congress declared Aug. 17, “The heads of Canada’s unions ... stand united behind Air Canada Flight Attendants in defying the government’s unconstitutional attack on workers’ rights. An attack on one is an attack on all.”

“If the government takes legal action against these workers, the labour movement will respond swiftly and stand united in unwavering solidarity.”

Flight attendants are demanding pay raises and to be paid for every hour worked. Up to now, they put in many unpaid hours before and after flights.

“If I don’t press the button one hour and 20 minutes before the flight, I’m in trouble,” a flight attendant, who didn’t wish to give her name, told the *Militant* at a CUPE rally in Montreal Aug. 17. “I have to go through customs, get to the gate, do a briefing with the rest of the crew, find out how many babies will be on board, check the evacuation routes, the equipment, serve champagne in business class.”

None of this is paid. “And I only get paid for 15 minutes after the flight even if I’ve got 460 passengers to unload. It takes a lot more than 15 minutes. I have sat for an hour waiting for all the wheelchairs.”

Details of the deal, to be voted on by

flight attendants, are not yet available. In an Aug. 19 statement announcing the agreement, CUPE said, “Unpaid work is over.”

Underscoring the unions broad support, hundreds of workers attended CUPE-organized rallies in Montreal; Toronto; Calgary, Alberta; and Vancouver, British Columbia, Aug. 17. They were joined by other airline workers and an array of union leaders.

“This is a threat to the right to strike of all workers,” Teamsters Canada President Francois Laporte told the Montreal rally. Thousands of striking rail workers, members of the Teamsters, were ordered back to work last year.

‘An inspiration for all workers’

Teamsters came out to join picket lines across the country. In Vancouver, Dustin Saunders, chairperson of the Engineers division of Teamsters Canada Railway Conference Division 945, told the *Militant*, “The courage of CUPE flight attendants to defy the government’s back-to-work order is an inspiration for all workers.”

In Montreal, rail conductor and Teamsters member Mike Foucault said, “There’s a sense of urgency with repeated government interference slashing our rights. Rail workers, flight



Militant/Tony DiFelice

Some 10,000 flight attendants in the Canadian Union of Public Employees struck Air Canada Aug. 16, defying a government back-to-work order for three days. Above, picket line in Toronto.

attendants, we don’t have the same working conditions but we all have big responsibilities for safety.”

Postal workers, ordered back to work last December, are following the fight closely. Marc-Edouard Joubert, president of the Montreal Regional Council of Quebec Federation of Labour and a postal worker, addressed the rally here. “The labor movement will not stay silent in face of repeated attacks,” he said.

The Canadian Labour Congress saluted the victory, saying, “Any em-

ployer thinking of leaning on Section 107 in the future should think twice.”

Katy LeRougetel, Communist League candidate for mayor of Montreal, joined the Aug. 17 CUPE rally.

“Flight attendants led a sharp confrontation between the organized union movement and the federal government,” she told the *Militant*. “Why are the rulers stepping up attacks on the right to strike? Because as the worldwide economic crisis of the capitalist system gets worse, they look to cripple workers’ ability to fight back.”

Workers discuss fight for safety after US Steel plant explosion

BY TONY LANE

CLAIRTON, Pa. — “It was a gas leak alright,” Larry Evans told the *Militant* in Elizabeth, near the giant U.S. Steel Coke Works here, where a deadly explosion killed two union steelworkers and injured 10 others Aug. 11.

“They preach safety, but don’t stand by it, don’t back it up. It aggravates me,” Evans, who has 20-plus years as a crane operator at a United Steelworkers’ union-organized plant in nearby West Mifflin, said, describing the attitude of management. He said how the steel companies’ approach to safety is to blame the workers for anything that goes wrong. “We’re the ones that get written up, are given days off.”

We discussed how the United Mine Workers had a revolution in their union and built union safety committees with the power to shut production to control safety on the job. “If we stick together, we can be stronger as a union,” he said.

Socialist Workers Party campaigners going door to door in communities nearby the coke plant met many workers who worked industrial jobs,

including current and former employees at the coke works.

Debbie Rondinelli, who works as a cleaner, was laid off from the U.S. Steel plant in the early 1980s. She said she was just blocks from the plant when the explosion occurred. She saw the cloud of smoke and dust from it. “We can’t put our faith in the companies, some of these coke batteries are very old,” she said, adding she hopes the new owners — Nippon Steel — “put some money into it.”

In the days since the explosion, more information has come out. The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* reported U.S. Steel said it’s possible a gas valve failure may have led to the explosion, which happened during “preparation for planned maintenance.” Many workers told the

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The ‘Militant’ is taking a one-week vacation break. The next issue will be mailed Sept. 4.

THE MILITANT

Attacks on synagogues show real face of Jew-hatred

Attacks on synagogues in Australia, Canada and elsewhere point to the stakes in the fight to defend Israel as a refuge from Jew-hatred, pogroms. “It’s important that working people protest these attacks,” Robert Aiken, Communist League candidate in Australia, told the *Militant*.



Solomon Siegel

Threat of pogrom against Jews at Congregation Emanu-El in British Columbia, Aug. 2.

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—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Philadelphia flight attendants picket PSA as negotiations stall

PHILADELPHIA — “What do we want? A contract! When do we want it? Now!” chanted some 35 flight attendants and their supporters at the airport here Aug. 18. Similar protests took place at PSA Airlines hubs at four other airports across the country — Charlotte, North Carolina; Washington, D.C.; Dayton, Ohio; and Dallas-Fort Worth.

Another popular chant offered support for fellow flight attendants on strike in Canada. “Any worker under attack — what do we do — stand up, fight back!” was another main chant.

The workers, members of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, are calling for a new labor contract after more than two years of stalled negotiations.

“We get 45% less pay than crews doing the same work at American. No pay for boarding passengers, only from when the door closes. And no pay for the drive to the hotel,” flight attendant Susan DuBois told the *Militant*. She lives in St. Louis but her home terminal is in Philadelphia. “We get 10 hours minimum rest, but after deducting travel and everything else, you may get five to six hours of actual sleep. So you see why we’re out here.”

“We’ve faced operational meltdowns, gut-wrenching tragedy, and an impossible cost of living — while American Airlines celebrates record profits,” Sean Griffin, president of the Charlotte branch of the Association of Flight Attendants at PSA, told the media. “It’s time for a real contract with real pay.” PSA is controlled by American Airlines, which maintains full control over pay and working conditions there and at other American Eagle regional carriers.

Last September PSA flight attendants voted 99.2% in favor of authorizing a strike if necessary, saying management has only proposed a single-digit wage increase — a far cry from the up to 20.5% raise won by some American Airlines’ mainline flight attendants.

The union is demanding a contract that mirrors that of American’s crews, including double-digit pay increases, boarding pay and pay retroactive to when their contract ran out, as well as improvements in schedules.

The picket drew not only flight attendants from PSA, but also from Ameri-

can and Frontier Airlines, as well as baggage handlers in the International Association of Machinists. Members of UNITE HERE Local 274, who are in contract negotiations with hotel bosses here, joined in.

— Chris Hoeppner

Flight attendants rally at DC, Charlotte, Dallas airports

ARLINGTON, Va. — Dozens of flight attendants, members of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA union at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport here, mounted a spirited picket line outside of the American Airlines terminal Aug. 18.

“Some days you have to work 14, 15, or 16 hours but you can still end up only getting paid for three and a half hours,” flight attendant Phylicia Christmas explained. “When a plane is delayed, we don’t get paid, and we aren’t allowed to leave the airport. The company says ‘it’s just part of the job,’ but it shouldn’t be.”

Sara Nelson, national president of the union, addressed the picket line. “We’re in solidarity with the Air Canada strike. The court said their strike is illegal, but I was just on the phone with their president and he said they’re not going back to work without a contract. We stand with them and we’re willing to do the same thing.”

Taylor Garland, a spokesperson for the AFA, told the *Militant*, “The fight here and at Air Canada are fundamentally about the same issue. The fight to get paid for what is currently unpaid work is at the center of both contract fights.”

“It’s fantastic about the Canadian flight attendants’ fight. If management doesn’t come around here, we will be forced to strike,” Jeanne Krejci, the AFA-CWA’s representative covering both the Dallas/Fort Worth and Charlotte, North Carolina, PSA terminals, told *Militant* worker-correspondent Josefina Otero at the picket in Dallas.

Sara Nelson spoke with the *Militant* after the rally here. “What flight attendants are taking up today are issues the entire working class faces,” she said, “with rising rent, child care and grocery costs. Lots of workers hear about our fight and support us.”

Messages of solidarity can be sent to info@afacwa.org.

— Samir Hazboun



Militant/Samir Hazboun

Association of Flight Attendants union members at PSA Airlines picket at Reagan National Airport in Arlington, Virginia, Aug. 18 in long fight for new contract with pay for unpaid work.

Nurses protest after gov’t cancels union contracts at VA hospitals

DECATUR, Ga. — Nurses and their supporters rallied outside the Department of Veteran Affairs hospital here Aug. 12 protesting the termination of their union contract and proposed cuts in staffing.

“On Aug. 6, the government canceled our union contract,” Florence Uzuegbunam, a member of National Nurses United, told the *Militant*. NNU represents more than 1,200 registered nurses at this Atlanta VA Medical Center.

“Without a union contract we will have no control over conditions where we work and this puts patients at risk,” she said, adding they were told to vacate and take everything out of the union office.

A union statement said some 16,000 National Nurses United members at 23 facilities would be affected by the termination of the union contracts.

In announcing the decision, the Department of Veterans Affairs told the press the space the unions used had “cost VA millions of dollars in lost rent and expenses.”

In addition to the National Nurses

United, the VA said union contracts were also terminated for the American Federation of Government Employees, the National Association of Government Employees, the National Federation of Federal Employees and the Service Employees International Union.

The nurses were also protesting proposed cuts of 55% of the staff in the Mental Health Intensive Case Management team, which helps veterans with serious mental issues.

“We never had enough staff to begin with, especially in a lot of our critical service areas,” nurse Teshara Felder said. “The positions being cut or reorganized ultimately cause a reduction in services to veterans.”

Nurses joined the protest on their lunch or on breaks. A number of veterans also attended. “The VA saved my life, was my support,” Ed Anderson said. “I’m against any layoffs, terminations or cutbacks in services.”

“In my 40 years I saw a lot of what soldiers had to go through,” Bridget, a retired military nurse who only gave her first name, said. “I had to show up today.”

— Janice Lynn

Workers discuss US Steel explosion

Continued from page 2

paper the gas leak in the reversing room, the center of the blast, had been ignored.

Some workers we spoke to, including current and previous employees, still defended the company’s safety record.

“Don’t listen to people who talk bad about the company,” one worker, who didn’t provide his name, said. “They follow the rules closely.”

Local media has interviewed workers and family members who were victims of explosions at the coke plant in 2009 and 2010.

“Clairton Coke Works might be one of the most dangerous places on Earth,” Brian Doyle, a steamfitters union member who had worked there, told the *Tribune-Review*. “It’s essentially a bomb.” He said he remembers being hurled to the floor by the 2010 explosion.

“There was no question in both of those cases we established that appropriate safety protocols weren’t followed, and that’s what led to the explosions,” John Gismondi, a lawyer who represented workers affected by the two explosions, told The Associated Press. In the 2010 case, Gismondi’s clients said managers directed them to repair a live line even after an alarm went off warning of high levels of natural gas.

After the 2010 explosion, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration fined U.S. Steel and a subcontractor in the mill \$175,000 for safety violations. U.S. Steel appealed, and the fines were reduced.

— 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

August 28, 2000

NEW YORK — “CWA! CWA! CWA!” chanted a sea of 8,000 red-shirted strikers bearing banners and signs in a militant and spirited mobilization here outside the national headquarters of Verizon Communications August 10.

The show of force in New York has been backed up by hundreds of picket lines at Verizon facilities across 12 states and the District of Columbia. A total of 86,000 workers walked off the job August 6 after their contract expired.

“The main issues are job security, health benefit co-payments, working conditions, and organizing the wireless phone workers,” said Dexter Martin, a technician at Verizon for more than two years. Workers are also striking against the company’s attempt to subcontract work to outside companies.

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

September 5, 1975

On August 15, Joanne Little was found not guilty of second-degree murder in the slaying of her jailer Clarence Alligood.

Women identified with Little. The vicious abuse of Little, who was threatened by Alligood with an ice pick and forced to perform a sexual act, enraged women across the nation. The Black liberation movement knew that Little’s plight stemmed from her being Black and poor. For the men and women filling this country’s jails and prisons, Joanne Little’s fight became a cry against the inhumane treatment of prisoners.

These forces combined in demonstrations, rallies, and pickets, turning Little’s case into the most widely publicized defense case in years. It was that support that won her acquittal.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

August 28, 1950

American imperialism is waging a barbaric war of utmost brutality against the whole Korean people. Wholesale atrocities are being committed upon civilians, without regard for age or sex. Combatants are murdered on the spot, many of them after frightful torture. These facts about Truman’s “police action” have emerged in a report by John Osborne, senior *Time-Life* correspondent in the Far East.

Osborne gives us sufficient affirmation that this is a civil and revolutionary war being waged by the whole populace. It is this fact that accounts for the “utmost savagery” with which the people are being treated by U.S. interventionist forces. The whole populace is against the foreign invader — an invader who must slay whoever crosses his path.

U.S. gov't escalates attack on Cuba's int'l medical missions

BY JANET POST

In the latest move by Washington to tighten its brutal economic war against Cuba, the U.S. government revoked visas from officials in Brazil who had helped expand Cuba's international medical missions there. Since 1963 Cuba's revolutionary government has organized doctors and nurses to answer the requests of governments around the world, bringing vital treatment to people in the most remote rural regions or worst-off urban neighborhoods.

They've helped establish medical schools in Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. The missions are voluntary, and Cuban medical workers receive their full salaries and pensions, contrary to Washington's repeated slander that the program is "human trafficking."

The State Department revoked the visas of several Brazilian government and former Pan American Health Organization officials Aug. 13. They include Mozart Julio Tabosa Sales and Alberto Kleinman, who served in Brazil's Ministry of Health when the government there established the Mais Medicos (More Doctors) program in 2013 with Cuban assistance. Washington revoked the visas of their family members as well.

"These officials were responsible for or involved in abetting the Cuban regime's coercive labor export scheme, which exploits Cuban medical workers through forced labor," Secretary of State Marco Rubio claimed. "This scheme enriches the corrupt Cuban regime and deprives the Cuban people of essential medical care."

Brazilian Health Minister Alexandre Padilha responded to Washington's attack, saying, "We will not bow to those who persecute vaccines, researchers, science — and now two of the key people behind Mais Medicos."

Cuban doctors have treated millions of patients in over 3,600 municipalities across Brazil.

"Cuba will not abandon its health care programs in dozens of countries," Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister Carlos Fernández de Cossío said. "These are absolutely legitimate and, more importantly, they save lives and bring relief to communities."

The State Department says it intends

to revoke or restrict the visas of officials in Cuba, in Grenada and other Caribbean countries, and in African nations that were involved with Cuba's overseas medical missions.

The plan is an extension of moves by former Democratic President Joseph Biden, who signed a bill that included sanctions against officials from countries that contracted Cuba's medical services.

Several Caribbean government heads responded to Washington's attack, saying they will gladly waive their right to U.S. visas if that's what's needed to keep Cuban medical workers in their countries.

Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley called Washington's actions "unfair and unjustified." She said, "We could not get through the pandemic without the Cuban nurses and the Cuban doctors."

Grenada Foreign Minister Joseph Andall called the Cuban internationalist program "indispensable."

"A significant percentage" of the country's doctors are trained in Cuba at no cost to Grenada, he said. "Without the input of the Cuban Medical Brigade there is no question that our health system will collapse." He praised the "generous intervention of Cuba and for that we must always take a principled stand."

According to the U.S. State Department's own figures, Cuba currently has more than 26,000 doctors and nurses volunteering in 55 countries worldwide. In addition to providing primary care



AP Photo/Eraldo Peres

Cuban doctors train at health clinic in Brasilia, Brazil, in 2013, part of the Mais Medicos program there. Doctors, nurses from Cuba have treated millions in municipalities across Brazil.

and specialists, the Cuban missions have led the response to regional disasters, such as hurricanes, earthquakes and public health emergencies.

Cuban doctors played decisive roles combating the cholera outbreak in Haiti following a devastating earthquake there in 2010, and assisting Caribbean nations and elsewhere, including Italy, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through Operation Miracle, Cuba organized 3 million ophthalmic surgeries to treat eye diseases across Latin America and nations in the Caribbean. During the deadly Ebola virus outbreak in West Africa in 2014, Cuba chose 256 out of a total of 12,000 volunteers to join the "army of white coats," as Fidel Castro, the revolution's central leader, called them.

In 2019 Cuban doctor Enmanuel Vigil Fonseca told BBC that some of the medical services provided by the missions are through agreements that include payment, others are provided at no cost. The payment terms are no secret to the participating volunteers, he said. The much-needed currency is used to maintain the social gains of the revolution, including in its own health care system. "Each participant knows that they get a part and the rest goes to the National Health System," Fonseca said. "Not into someone's pocket to enrich themselves."

The Cuban government's internationalism is a product of what working people accomplished when they made a socialist revolution, transforming their conditions of life and themselves in the process.

Tariff battles advance imperialist drive toward new wars

BY TERRY EVANS

President Donald Trump's tariffs on some 90 countries went into effect Aug. 7. The U.S. rulers' aim is to strengthen their competitive edge against their rivals and expand U.S. industrial capacity as they prepare for the inevitable wars to come.

Tensions have sharpened among the capitalist rulers worldwide since Moscow's murderous war on the people of Ukraine began in 2022 and Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom, killing 1,200 people, the largest slaughter of Jews since the Holocaust. The U.S. rulers — and their allies and rivals alike — are acquiring new weaponry, from powerful drones to deadly laser beams and more.

Washington wields tariffs as part of the U.S. rulers' broader moves to defend their weakening world supremacy. It also seeks to win allies as it prepares to push back against the growing economic and military weight of Beijing, its foremost adversary.

Trump's Aug. 7 tariff rates start at 15%. They were originally announced April 2, then suspended for 90 days after an outcry from capitalist investors when the price of bonds tumbled.

The administration used the three-month pause to press the European Union and allied governments in Japan, the U.K. and elsewhere to voluntarily agree to trade deals favorable to Washington and concessions to U.S. producers.

As part of a trade agreement reached with Washington, the bloc of governments in the EU pledged to buy \$750 billion of U.S. energy prod-

ucts and accepted a 15% tariff on all goods exported to the U.S.

"Europe's Summer of Humiliation" read the *Financial Times* headline July 31 reporting the deal. It noted the pact followed a separate agreement Washington pressed on the governments of Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden to purchase U.S.-made weapons they would then donate to Ukraine.

Trump imposed an additional 25% tariff on India Aug. 7 to try to push the Narendra Modi government to halt oil purchases from Moscow. President Vladimir Putin's regime has offset sanctions imposed by Washington by increasing oil sales to India and China.

Washington is stepping up pressure on Moscow, as the U.S. rulers seek an outcome ending Putin's war on Ukraine in a way that advances the U.S. rulers' own predatory aims. At the same time, Washington wants to maximize chances of pulling Moscow away from its growing ties to Beijing.

The U.S. rulers also look to extend their power across Europe and to break up the fragile BRICS bloc of governments — Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa — set up to rival Washington's dominance.

U.S. rulers' drive against Beijing

One of Washington's central goals, reflected in its trade clashes, is to rebuild the U.S. rulers' industrial capacity, especially in industries and technologies that are vital for war. And, at the same time, to prevent Beijing

from acquiring those technologies. This is a bipartisan policy.

In the years leading up to World War II, the massive expansion of U.S. industrial capacity helped pave the way for the rulers' conversion of production for trade to the large-scale manufacturing of weaponry and military equipment.

This was critical to U.S. imperialism emerging as the victor out of the slaughter.

In July, Trump imposed a 50% tariff on copper, following duties on steel and aluminum earlier this year. Copper is widely used in aircraft, naval vessels and military communication systems.

On Aug. 15 Trump announced plans for up to 300% tariffs on semiconductors, crucial components in military hardware, from fighter jets to missile guidance systems. The most advanced semiconductors are made today in Taiwan where the government is allied with Washington.

Trump's move builds on the Biden administration's 2022 "Chips Act," which subsidized companies that moved semiconductor production to the U.S. Biden also restricted semiconductor sales to China and kept in place the ban on Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei that was imposed by the first Trump administration.

As this conflict increases, Beijing and Washington agreed to extend a temporary truce in their trade war to Nov. 10. Washington seeks to strengthen its alliances and see how its other tariffs work out before launching any stepped-up attack on Beijing.

RED ZONE
CUBA AND THE BATTLE AGAINST
EBOLA IN WEST AFRICA

\$17
Enrique Ubieta Gómez

"Just as the Cuban combatants in Angola set an example that can never be erased, the heroic actions of Cuba's army of white coats will occupy a place of honor."
— Fidel Castro, October 2014

pathfinderpress.com

Protests continue to grow in Iran following the 12-day war

BY SETH GALINSKY

The reactionary regime in Iran arrested some 21,000 people during and after the 12-day war with Israel in June, setting up more than 1,000 roadblocks across the country in a crack-down on “crime” and political dissidents, a police department spokesperson there told the press Aug. 12.

The cops said hundreds had been arrested for supporting Israel, including 30 whose online comments had been monitored. This is a backhanded admission that there is deep opposition in Iran to Tehran’s longstanding drive to destroy Israel and eliminate Jews living there.

But the staggering number of arrests failed in the regime’s goal of intimidating working people and preventing new protests in the wake of the war.

The Aug. 16-18 weekend in Iran saw more than 65 protests by oil workers, miners, retirees, truck drivers and others, over issues ranging from demands for higher wages, pensions and safe working conditions; calls for government action to relieve the severe water and electricity crisis working people face; and an end to the death penalty. Iran has one of the highest execution rates in the world.

On Aug. 17, hundreds of oil workers marched to the headquarters of Gachsaran Oil and Gas Exploration Company in southern Iran. They carried pictures of Saber Asayesh, a contract worker who died July 26 after a pipe fell on his legs. Workers are angry that the bosses delayed hours before calling an ambulance, ignoring his co-workers’ pleas. Then the first hospital they took him to refused to treat him because he was a contract worker, not a direct employee for the oil company. By the time he got to another hospital, he was dead.

The protesters also demanded equal wages for contract and permanent workers, and for contract workers to be made permanent. Only a minority of workers in Iran are hired directly by the companies, most are hired through contractors.

The weekly Sunday and Monday protests by retirees that took place all across Iran before the war are once again picking up steam. Retirees protested this

week in Isfahan, Ahvaz, Rasht, Shusha, Sanandaj, Bijar County and Tehran.

Opposition to the regime’s reinstatement of the death penalty against Sharifeh Mohammadi was a central demand at the retirees’ protest in Rasht, where she is imprisoned. Mohammadi, a former member of the Coordinating Committee to Help Create Labor Organizations, was arrested in December 2023, accused of armed rebellion and being a member of Komala, a banned Kurdish political party. Her family insists the charges are false.

Mohammadi has been tortured and beaten in prison. In October 2024 the Supreme Court overturned her death sentence on the grounds of lack of evidence and other flaws and ordered a retrial. The sentence was reinstated a month after the 12-day war.

The death penalty is an “inhuman



Free Union of Iranian Trade Unions

Oil workers protesting in Gachsaran, Iran Aug. 17, hold photo of Saber Asayesh, who died because of company disdain for workers’ lives, denial of health care to contract workers.

man punishment issued to suppress and spread fear in society,” long-time union and retiree leader Ismail Gerami said Aug. 18. It doesn’t “affect the de-

termination of fighters for justice and freedom nor solve social problems.” He joined other unionists in calling for freedom for Mohammadi.

‘As capitalist crisis grows, workers need to take power’

Continued from front page

Ukrainian people from Moscow’s murderous invasion and the SWP’s call for the U.S. imperialist rulers to get their military forces out of Europe.

Everywhere they go the party’s candidates are presenting a road forward for working people to build the leadership our class needs to replace capitalist rule with workers power. And they’re explaining why workers should join the SWP — to be on the front lines of the class battles that will make that possible.

In Miami, Laura Anderson, SWP candidate for mayor, met Jamal Dowling, a 30-year longshoreman and member of International Longshoremen’s Association Local 1416, at his home Aug. 13.

“Working people need to organize independently of the Democrats and Republicans. They govern to maintain the capitalist class in power,” Anderson said.

“I was raised to vote for Democrats,” Dowling replied, “but I stopped.” He pointed out he’d met “SWP campaigners outside the ILA hall in the past and I’ve gotten some books, including this one,” he said, pointing to *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes.

Anderson told him she had walked the union’s picket line during the ILA’s strike in 2024.

“The press vilified us because we wanted a raise,” Dowling said, “but

the cost of living is sky high. And every quarter the shipping companies announce record profits. In the five-year contract we got — taking into account inflation — the raise is about a dollar per year. It’s not enough.”

“The ILA stood up and fought, and set an example to other workers,” Anderson said. “My SMART Local 1138 refused to cross your picket line. Your strike was followed closely by working people.”

Class struggle transforms workers

Dowling said he’d participated in solidarity trips by his union in the early 2000s to support striking meatpackers in the Carolinas and restaurant workers on strike in Las Vegas.

“This experience helped me see that whether you are in the ILA, AFSCME, TWA or the SEIU, that when the call goes out we have to go, whether it is your day off or whatever, we have to support other unions. When some of us fight back it affects all of us.”

“The boss class will always find a way to push back the gains workers win,” Anderson said. “That’s why our party’s program explains that workers need to take political power into our own hands, we need to make a socialist revolution.

“A central question today is defense of Israel’s right to exist as a refuge against Jew-hatred and pogroms and why Hamas must be defeated to prevent another Holocaust,” she explained.

“I’ve followed the aftermath of what happened on Oct. 7, but I really didn’t follow how it started,” Dowling said.

“You should consider reading this book,” she said, handing him a copy of *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class*. “It explains the roots of Hamas going back to the Nazis and why the fight to defeat them is in the interests of all working people.”

Dowling read the back cover of the book. “OK, I want to get this,” he said, paying for it. Anderson told him she’d like to continue the discussion and would let him know about the next union action or strike that she and party members plan to join.

“Good,” Dowling said, “maybe I’ll bring other ILA members with me too.” In Paterson, New Jersey, this work-

er-correspondent and SWP member Lea Sherman introduced the party’s campaign to truck driver Devon Graham on his doorstep Aug. 10. He’s one of some 200,000 people in the area who were left without drinking water after a water main burst Aug. 8.

“They’ve set up free bottled water distribution centers, but the queues are very long,” Graham said. For days city authorities urged residents not to wash cars or water their lawns, and to take shorter showers. Drinking water came back on a week later.

“The fact that there’s no backup supply tells you something about the priorities of capitalist governments,” I said. “The only way to prevent disasters like this is for workers to run society.”

Hamas aim is expanding pogroms

The discussion turned to Israel’s war to defeat Hamas. “It’s necessary to stop Hamas from carrying out its goals of destroying Israel and killing Jews,” Sherman said.

“Yes, but what about the starvation facing Palestinians?” Graham asked, something that is a central feature in the media today.

Hamas’ rule is the biggest obstacle to Palestinians getting aid supplies, Sherman said. “The press campaign about ‘starvation’ in Gaza is based on ‘facts’ supplied by Hamas. It’s aimed at generating pressure to get Israel to back off from defending itself and from preventing another Holocaust.

Graham didn’t say whether he was convinced, but he was interested in reading the *Militant’s* coverage on the war.

He said he’d heard about the Freedom Convoy organized by truck drivers in Canada in 2022 to protest government COVID mandates. When the SWP campaigners pointed to the paper’s coverage of the fight against the frame-up of the truckers’ leaders in the Canadian courts, Graham decided to get a subscription, as well as a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*.

To learn more about the SWP and help get the *Militant* around, contact the area nearest you listed on page 8.

Mary Martin in Miami contributed to this article.

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

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Minnesota

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Edwin Fruit, Minneapolis City Council

New Jersey

Joanne Kuniandy, governor
Craig Honts, lieutenant governor

New York

Paul Mailhot, mayor of New York City

Ohio

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

Pennsylvania

Tony Lane, mayor of Pittsburgh

Washington

Jacob Perasso, mayor of Seattle
Rebecca Williamson, King County Executive

2006: workers march for amnesty

Continued from front page
grants should be treated as pariahs with lesser constitutional protections and legal rights, the struggles of all workers will be weakened.

In mid-July the *New York Times* ran an article about a film made 21 years ago, “A Day Without a Mexican.” The 2004 film depicts people in California waking up one day to find all Mexicans were gone, disappeared from agricultural fields, construction sites, meatpacking plants, Home Depot parking lots where they had been looking for work, and everywhere else. The *Times* said the film felt all too real today, as church attendance and store and street traffic plummeted in Los Angeles after Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents descended on the city and workers stayed home, afraid of being picked up.

What was striking about the article, however, is that it made no mention of the historic mass mobilizations that took place May 1, 2006, under the slogan, “A Day Without an Immigrant.” Workplaces and stores were shut down. Two million people, in more than 140 cities in 40 states, took to the streets. Not out of fear, but to stand tall to oppose the Sensenbrenner bill, which would have made it a felony to live in the U.S. without papers.

Hundreds of thousands of workers nationwide were absent from their jobs, in many cases encouraged by their unions, and joined the demonstrations.

Discussions about the bill and the place of immigrant workers were abuzz everywhere. They drew in U.S.-born workers, who were impressed by the example of unity and determination displayed in the protests.

The conservative magazine *National Review* noted with alarm the rallies were “ominous ... because of their hint of a large, unassimilated population existing outside of America’s laws and exhibiting absolutely no sheepishness about it.”

That is precisely what the bosses try to instill — “sheepishness,” by keeping a large pool of immigrants with fewer rights than the rest of the working class in fear of being deported. And immigrant workers were saying we’re not going to live in fear. “We are not criminals. We are workers!” was the battle cry of the demonstrators.

These powerful actions put the question of an amnesty on the national political agenda. The AFL-CIO joined with immigrant rights groups, like the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, to call for amnesty. Buses crossed the country rallying support for legalization. Many African Americans extended support, reminded of the original Freedom Rides, which helped build the movement that brought down Jim Crow segregation in the 1960s.

These demonstrations gave a boost to workers’ struggles and built on the

success of strikes and other struggles over the previous decade.

Two landmark struggles showed how the incorporation of immigrants into the working class had strengthened the labor movement. One was the 1992 organizing drive that brought 4,000 drywallers, largely new immigrant workers, into the Carpenters union in Southern California. The other was the Justice for Janitors Campaign, which brought thousands of building janitorial workers into the Service Employees International Union in the 1990s.

Immigrants strengthen unions

Hanging drywall had traditionally been a well-paid union job for U.S.-born workers. But the bosses drove the unions out of the residential housing industry by replacing their members with undocumented immigrants, largely from Mexico. Similar offensives were launched by the bosses against the unions in other industries.

Before the strike, the Carpenters union didn’t attempt to unionize immigrant workers. Union officials would treat them as “scabs” for taking the jobs of union drywall workers. But this changed dramatically after these same immigrant workers approached the union for support as they led a six-month-long strike against the building contractors. It is well worth watching a video, “The 30th Anniversary of the 1992 Southern California Drywall Strike,” available on YouTube.

Today, in New York City alone, it is estimated that 40% of construction workers are undocumented. Among them are the “men and women out of nowhere” who will join and lead the



Militant/Sarah Ullman

July 7 Maryland rally demands freedom for Kilmar Abrego García. His wife, Jennifer Vásquez, at left, brother César with sign. Washington Council AFL-CIO President Samuel Epps speaking.

union struggles to come.

Union leaders must reject the demagoguery of capitalist politicians claiming to protect “American jobs” and fight to defend the basic right of *all* workers in the U.S. to a job.

The simple fact is the bosses are dependent on immigrant labor. This is shown by their objections to the government’s stepped-up attack on workers without papers in the agricultural, construction, hotel and restaurant industries. They’re concerned that the raids, deportations and revocation of Temporary Protective Status and other humanitarian parole programs are cutting too deeply into the pool of exploitable labor they need.

The goal of the ruling capitalist families is not to expel all undocumented immigrants, but rather to make their lives as precarious as possible so they keep their heads down and accept the second-

class status the bosses seek to impose.

A call for mass actions against deportations and for amnesty would mobilize broad support right now, including among many who voted for Donald Trump, who reject the arrests and deportations of their neighbors, friends, and co-workers.

The attempts by the capitalist rulers to turn immigrant workers into scapegoats will not cease. As today’s crisis of capitalism deepens, the wealthy ruling families have no alternative but to deepen their brutal drive to lower the wages and living standards of working people as a whole. To do so, they need to foster divisions among the working class and weaken its capacity to fight back.

This is what is at stake in advancing the fight for amnesty, to unify the working class. This is the perspective the Socialist Workers Party promotes. We invite you to join us.

Azerbaijan, Armenia deal shows waning reach of Moscow

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

President Donald Trump met with government leaders from Azerbaijan and Armenia at the White House Aug. 8 and they signed a joint declaration aimed at ending nearly four decades of conflict and wars between the two former Soviet republics. The fight over control of Nagorno-Karabakh, a territory with a majority Armenian population encircled by Azerbaijan, has taken a big toll on working people, with tens of thousands of civilians killed or driven from their homes.

The agreement, which isn’t finalized, would give Washington exclusive rights for up to 99 years to develop a transit corridor through the mountainous southern part of Armenia to Azerbaijan, potentially creating a new trade route between Europe and Central Asia that bypasses both Russia and Iran. Under the agreement, the corridor, including roads, railways, oil and gas pipelines and fiber-optic lines, would be developed and managed by U.S. companies.

The deal brings Washington’s imperialist interests into the heart of Russia’s self-proclaimed “near abroad,” something unthinkable before Moscow got bogged down in its more than three-year-long war against the people of Ukraine. The weakness of Moscow’s grip in the region was exposed in 2023 when its troops, deployed in Armenia to defend Nagorno-Karabakh, were ordered to stand aside as Turkish-backed Azerbaijani forces seized the area.

Since then Baku has asserted growing independence from Moscow, including its stance toward Russian President Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine. Like Ukraine, both Armenia and Azerbaijan were part of the former prison house of nations under Russia’s czars. After the 1917 Russian Revolution led by V.I. Lenin, the workers and farmers government took special steps to aid the development of the economy, language and cultural rights of toilers in the Caucasus region, efforts that helped lead to the formation of the Transcaucasian Federation of the Soviet Union in March 1922.

But by the end of the 1920s this course was reversed by a counterrevolution by a privileged bureaucratic layer led by Joseph Stalin. In 1991, after decades of Stalinist rule led to the collapse of the Soviet Union, both countries declared their independence.

Azerbaijan’s rulers today support Ukraine against Moscow’s invasion and occupation there, contributing over \$40 million of humanitarian aid. On Aug. 11, Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev pledged another \$2 million, sending truckloads of equipment to stabilize the electrical supply in regions of Ukraine affected by the war.

On Aug. 18, Moscow’s forces destroyed an oil depot in Odesa operated by SOCAR, Azerbaijan’s state-owned energy company.

Another indication is Azerbaijan’s alliance with Israel. A majority Mus-

lim country, Azerbaijan supplies Israel with up to 40% of its oil. After the Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom by Hamas, Baku increased oil sales to Israel to half of Azerbaijan’s total production. In return Israel supplies Baku with advanced weapons systems.

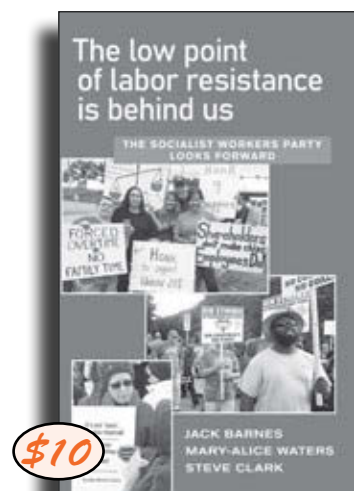
Azerbaijan alliance with Israel

The Trump administration is actively discussing with Azerbaijan’s rulers the possibility of joining the Abraham Accords. This pact established diplomatic and economic relations between the governments of Israel and of the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco, Sudan and Kosovo in 2020 and 2021.

The Aug. 8 declaration by Armenia and Azerbaijan is a further blow to Russia’s diminishing influence in the region. In a muted response, Moscow told Reuters that any plan for a trade route should be developed by countries in the region to avoid repeating the “sad experience” of Western efforts to mediate in the Middle East.

Iran, while strongly opposing the plan, is also in a weakened position to block it. As Israel has made gains against both Hamas and Tehran’s nuclear program and military, Iranian toilers have stepped up protests against the regime and the bosses.

Abbas Mousavi, former Iranian ambassador to Baku, could do little but complain that Trump’s direct involvement with Azerbaijan and Armenia is “interesting, offensive and dangerous.”



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Back Israel's fight to defeat Hamas

Continued from front page

were some two dozen Arab citizens of Israel and more than 50 immigrant workers from other countries, reinforcing Hamas' message that it will never accept "coexistence" with Jews.

Hamas could never have carried out a pogrom on the scale of Oct. 7 without the financing, weapons and training provided by the counterrevolutionary regime in Tehran.

Israel's blows to Hamas since then have weakened it enough that growing numbers of Palestinians in Gaza — and in the West Bank — feel they can speak out against the reactionary group and the disaster it has subjected them to.

In March, April and May thousands of Palestinians marched in Khan Younis, Beit Lahiya, Gaza City and other parts of Gaza demanding "Hamas, Out! Out!" Among their demands were calls for Hamas to end its war and return the hostages.

Before Oct. 7 "there used to be some opposition to Hamas," Moumen al-Natour, a lawyer who helped organize some of the demonstrations in Gaza City, told Fox News. Since Oct. 7 "more and more people in Gaza despise them. The suffering caused by Hamas' actions has turned the tide."

Hamas has been beating, torturing and murdering some of those who speak out, often posting videos of their actions. "I'm moving from place to place, hiding because I don't want to be killed," al-Natour said.

International propaganda campaign

The Hamas-run Gaza Health Ministry claims that more than 62,000 people have been killed in Gaza since the start of Israel's defensive war, likely an exaggeration. And it never says how many of those are combatants. Israeli officials say nearly 20,000 Hamas combatants have been killed and most of its battalions destroyed.

Hamas' claims that Israel is causing a famine and committing genocide are promoted by the bourgeois media, institutions like the United Nations and capitalist governments around the world. This encourages the Nazi-like group to continue on its course, refusing to end its war, disarm and release the remaining hostages, while keeping its boot on the neck of Palestinians in Gaza.

One indication that the mass famine charge is a fake is that almost every photo of an allegedly malnourished child has turned out to be someone with

an underlying chronic condition, like Youssef Matar, who has cerebral palsy.

There are food shortages in Gaza, but they are primarily caused by Hamas' refusal to end the war, its looting of food trucks and its constant disruption of Israeli attempts to organize the distribution of food.

But facts don't matter to those who try to paint the Nazi-like Hamas as a legitimate political force. The U.N.'s World Food Program claimed Aug. 20 that malnutrition in Gaza "is rising fast." But that's a straight-up lie. Over the last several weeks Israel has facilitated a large increase in food going to Gaza. On Aug. 19 alone, the U.N. and other international organizations distributed over 350 truckloads of aid.

This is on top of other aid, including large amounts distributed through the Israeli-facilitated Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, which is expanding its operations.

Hostages deliberately starved

There are a group of people in Gaza who are being deliberately starved — and tortured. That's some 20 living hostages still being held by Hamas. The thug group has also kept hold of the bodies of 30 more.

Hamas has filmed and released videos of grossly emaciated hostages who — on Hamas' orders — describe going days at a time without any food and little water.

But truth is not important to Hamas apologists, the liberal bourgeois news media that repeats its slanders, or the imperialist powers, including Washington. The U.S. rulers see Israel's war to defeat Hamas as an obstacle to advancing their efforts to plunder the Middle East and dominate the region.

Attacks, discrimination against Jews on rise in Canada

BY JOE YOUNG

MONTREAL — Since Hamas' murderous Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom in Israel, attacks on Jews in Canada have grown. B'nai Brith Canada reports 6,219 incidents of Jew-hatred across the country in 2024, more than double the number in 2022.

The attacks are fueled by the campaign of the government and other imperialist powers to press Israel to halt its defensive war against Hamas. Ottawa demands an immediate Israeli ceasefire, leaving Hamas intact to rebuild and renew its Jew-hating assaults, and blames the Israeli government, not Hamas, for "the humanitarian disaster" in Gaza.

An ultra-Orthodox Jew was assaulted while he and his three young daughters walked in a park here Aug. 8. The attacker punched the man several times before ripping off his kippah and throwing it away. The man, whose identity hasn't been revealed, suffered a broken nose.

A woman who witnessed the attack and the victim called the police, who took 30 minutes to arrive.

The unprovoked assault has received widespread condemnation, including from the Israeli government. Sergio Yanes Preciado has been charged with assault causing bodily harm.

Katy LeRougetel, Communist



April 16 protest in Beit Lahiya, north of Gaza City, one of many against Hamas. Since Oct. 7 "more and more people despise" Hamas, said Moumen al-Natour, a protest leader.

Instead of demanding that Hamas surrender, disarm and immediately and unconditionally free the hostages, these forces turn reality on its head and demand Israel stop its war, saving Hamas from defeat.

Hamas' 'ceasefire' bid

Meanwhile, the Israel Defense Forces have begun preparing to launch a new offensive to take control of the remaining 25% or so of Gaza still under Hamas' murderous grip. It is calling up an additional 60,000 reservists, bringing that total to 130,000, in addition to the current volunteer and draftee soldiers.

The offensive is set to start in Gaza City, the strongest of Hamas' last two remaining strongholds in Gaza. Thousands of civilians there have begun heeding the IDF's call to evacuate in advance of the offensive.

Israel is allowing thousands of more tents to be delivered to Gaza and planning additional food distribution and

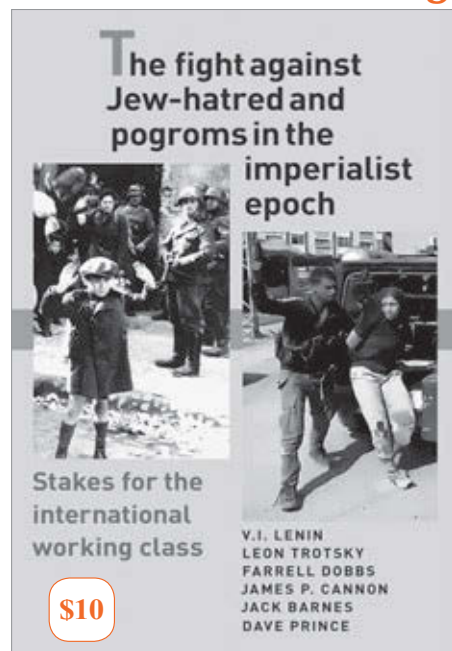
medical centers to tend to the civilian population in advance of the offensive.

Fearing the coming offensive, Hamas announced Aug. 18 that it had agreed to terms for a 60-day ceasefire it had rejected a few weeks earlier. Backed by the regimes in Egypt and Qatar, Hamas hopes to give the impression it is for "peace" while the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu wants to continue the war.

But Hamas' proposal would only release 10 living hostages by the end of the 60 days and would require Israel to pull back from the largest sections of Gaza, giving up most of the gains it has made over the last several months. Negotiations would continue on a longer ceasefire that Hamas says would be "permanent," despite the fact that it has no intention of renouncing its goal of destroying Israel.

The proposals would leave Hamas intact, to rebuild and carry out what its Oct. 7 pogrom announced — another Holocaust.

Recommended reading



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‘You cannot kill ideas!’ Thomas Sankara’s tribute to Che Guevara

We Are Heirs of the World’s Revolutions: Speeches from the Burkina Faso revolution 1983-87 by *Thomas Sankara* is one of *Pathfinder’s Books of the Month* for August. Sankara led an uprising in the former French colony of Upper Volta in August 1983 that brought a popular revolutionary government to power. In one of the poorest countries in the world, workers, peasants, women and youth were organized to take control of their own destiny. An outstanding communist, he followed the example of Cuban revolutionary leaders Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. Below is an excerpt from his speech, “You cannot kill ideas: A tribute to Che Guevara,” given on Oct. 8, 1987, marking the 20th anniversary of Che’s death in combat in Bolivia. Sankara was assassinated a week later in a counterrevolutionary coup. Copyright © 2007 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY THOMAS SANKARA

We’ve come this morning, in a modest way, to open this exhibition that seeks to trace the life and work of Che. At the same time, we want to tell the whole world today that for us Che Guevara is not dead. Because throughout the world there are centers of struggle where people strive for more freedom, more dignity, more justice, and more



Prensa Latina

Thomas Sankara, president and leader of revolution in Burkina Faso, is awarded José Martí Order by Cuban President Fidel Castro in Havana in 1984. Sankara drew inspiration from Castro, Che Guevara and their internationalist leadership of Cuba’s socialist revolution.

happiness. Throughout the world, people are fighting against oppression and domination; against colonialism, neocolonialism, and imperialism; and against class exploitation.

Dear friends, we join our voices with everyone in the world who remembers that one day a man called Che Guevara ... his heart filled with faith, took up the struggle alongside other men and, in so doing, succeeded in creating a spark that powerfully disturbed the forces of occupation in the world.

We simply want to say that a new era in Burkina Faso has come, a new reality is on the march in our country. That’s how Che Guevara’s call to action must be understood — Che, who wanted to light fires of struggle throughout the world.

Che Guevara was cut down by bullets, imperialist bullets, under Bolivian skies. And we say that for us, Che Guevara is not dead.

One of the beautiful phrases often recalled by revolutionaries, by the great Cuban revolutionaries, is the one that Che’s friend, his companion in struggle, his comrade, his brother, Fidel Castro himself repeated. He heard it from the mouth of a man of the people one day during the struggle — one of Batista’s officers who, despite being part of that reactionary, repressive army, managed to connect with the forces fighting for the wellbeing of the Cuban people. Right after the assault

on the Moncada garrison had failed, when those who had attempted it were about to be put to death by the guns of Batista’s army — they were going to be shot — the officer said simply, “Don’t shoot, you cannot kill ideas.”

It’s true, you cannot kill ideas. Ideas do not die. That’s why Che Guevara, an embodiment of revolutionary ideas and self-sacrifice, is not dead. You have come here today [from Cuba], and we draw inspiration from you.

Che Guevara, an Argentine according to his passport, became an adopted Cuban through the blood and sweat he shed for the Cuban people. He became, above all, a citizen of the free world — the free world that we’re building together. That’s why we say that Che Guevara is also African and Burkinabè.

Che Guevara [made] his beret ... and its star known almost everywhere in Africa. From the north to the south, Africa remembers Che Guevara. ...

Che is Burkinabè. He is Burkinabè because he participates in our struggle. He is Burkinabè because his ideas inspire us and are inscribed in our Political Orientation Speech. He is Burkinabè because his star is stamped on our banner. He is Burkinabè because some of his ideas live in each of us in the daily struggle we wage.

Che is a man, but a man who knew how to show us and teach us that we can dare to have confidence in ourselves and our abilities. Che is among us.

What is Che, I’d like to ask? Che, to us, is above all conviction, revolutionary conviction, revolutionary faith in what you’re doing, the conviction that victory belongs to us, and that struggle is our only recourse.

Che is also a sense of humanity. Humanity — this expression of generosity and self-sacrifice that made Che not only an Argentine, Cuban, and internationalist combatant, but also a man, with all the warmth of a man.

Che is also, and above all, demanding. The demanding character of one who had the good fortune to be born into a well-to-do family ... Yet he was able to say no to those temptations, to turn his back on the easy road in order, on the contrary, to assert himself as a man of the people, a man who makes common cause with the people, a man who makes common cause with the suffering of others. Che’s demanding character is what should inspire us the most.

Conviction, humanity, a demanding character — all this makes him Che. Those who are capable of mustering these virtues within themselves, those who are capable of mustering these qualities within themselves — this conviction, this humanity, and this demanding character — they can say that they are like Che — men among men, but, above all, revolutionaries among revolutionaries.

We have just looked at these pictures that trace part of Che’s life as best they can. Despite their forceful expression, these images remain silent on the most crucial part of the man, the very part against which imperialism took aim. The bullets were aimed much more at Che’s spirit than at his image. His picture is found the world over. His photo is in everyone’s mind, and his silhouette is one of the best-known. So let’s see to it that we’re able to get to know Che better.

Let’s draw closer to Che. Let’s draw closer to him, not as we would a god, not as we would an idea — an image placed above men — but rather ... that revolutionaries draw inspiration from Che’s spirit, that they too become internationalists, that they too, together with other men, learn how to build faith — faith in the struggle for change, in the struggle against imperialism and against capitalism.

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The road to end imperialist war, Jew-hatred

The wars that followed Hamas’ Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom against Jews in Israel and Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine the year before are front lines in the class struggle. Workers have big stakes in backing Israel’s war to prevent Tehran-backed Hamas from carrying out another Holocaust and in defending Ukraine’s sovereignty, while demanding the U.S. rulers get their military forces out of Europe and the Middle East.

For the world’s capitalist rulers, these wars are proving grounds for new weapons and battle tactics.

Driven by fierce rivalry over markets, resources and spheres of influence, Washington and other capitalist powers grab new technology to make the most lethal weapons ever known. They do so as violent conflicts built into the imperialist epoch grow. The rulers are marching humanity toward fascism, a third world war and the threat of nuclear annihilation.

President Donald Trump is using tariffs to bring industrial production back to the U.S. This is a key part of the rulers’ preparation to churn out weapons of war, as they did in World War II, not an attempt to turn the clock back to a mythical “golden age,” as liberals argue.

Under both Democratic and Republican administrations, trade conflicts and war preparations are carried out in the name of defending “our” national interests. There are none. Workers’ interests lie with fellow working people around the world and in linking

together our common struggles. Along that road we can build working-class parties capable of leading tens of millions to take political power into our own hands.

The fight for workers power is the only way to prevent another Holocaust. On that foundation workers can rebuild society based on human solidarity and fight to end national oppression for all time. Israel’s existence became a necessity after Stalinist betrayals destroyed promising revolutionary opportunities in the 1930s, the horror of the Holocaust and moves by Washington and other “democratic” imperialist powers to slam their doors shut to Jews. But Israel is not a solution to ending Jew-hatred and pogroms, which arise as capitalist crises and conflicts grow.

The rulers scapegoat Jews to divert the anger of ruined middle-class layers and some demoralized workers away from the source of the problem — capitalist rule. In times of deep crisis, they turn to fascist thugs.

Jew-hatred and pogroms are not eternal. “Now more than ever,” Leon Trotsky wrote before World War II, “the fate of the Jewish people — not only their political but also their physical fate — is indissolubly linked with the emancipating struggle of the international proletariat.”

To be part of this historic battle, join the Socialist Workers Party and help assemble the forces that can lead working people to make a socialist revolution in the U.S., part of the fight for a socialist world.

Ukraine’s fight to defend national sovereignty

Continued from front page

pull Moscow closer as Washington’s economic and military rivalry with Beijing intensifies. Trump is trying to stabilize U.S. imperialism’s place as top dog in capitalism’s world disorder through a combination of trade conflicts and Washington-brokered peace deals.

Trump aimed to pull leaders of the governments of the U.K., Germany, France, Italy and Finland, as well as from the European Commission and NATO, in behind Washington’s lead. All these “allies” seek to advance the interests of their own capitalist rulers in a possible “settlement” of the war, regardless of their professed concerns about Ukrainian sovereignty.

Hours before the White House meeting, Moscow’s missiles and drones rained down on several Ukrainian cities, killing 14 civilians and injuring dozens more. Half the deaths were in Kharkiv, near the Russian border, as a residential building was targeted.

‘Inalienable right to sovereignty’

Any “peace deal violating Ukraine’s territorial integrity” will only prepare the ground, and allow breathing space for new attacks by Moscow, Mustafa Dzhemilev told the Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group Aug. 18. Dzhemilev is the central leader of the Crimean Tatar people, who was expelled from the Crimean Peninsula when Putin seized it in 2014. Trump’s aim is to end the war, he said, whatever it takes. “He’s not concerned about Ukraine’s interests.”

“No one has the right to pass any decisions about the fate of Crimea,” he said, without ensuring “the inalienable right of the Crimean Tatar people to self-determination in their historical homeland as part of the Ukrainian state.”

Trump has raised “possible exchanges of territory, taking into consideration the current line of contact” for a “peace” deal. He claims measures will be put in place by the European powers in “coordination” with Washington to “deter any future aggression against Ukraine.” He ruled out Kyiv’s admission to the U.S.-led NATO alliance, which Zelensky had sought.

Even if circumstances were to force Kyiv to make territorial concessions, the Ukrainian people would never cede their right to fight to recover their country.

The metallurgical and coal-mining region of Donbas is Ukraine’s industrial heartland. It has been coveted by Russia’s capitalist rulers ever since Ukraine became independent in 1991 during the breakup of the former Soviet Union. Moscow occupies most of the Luhansk province, but only three-quarters of Donetsk.

To give up territory beyond what Moscow occupies would be untenable for Kyiv. In addition to losing key

natural resources and industry, ceding the heavily fortified string of cities in the Ukrainian-controlled part of the Donetsk region to Moscow would open a path for Putin to push toward Dnipro and then Kyiv.

Whatever happens in these negotiations, Putin has no intention of giving up his plans to conquer all of Ukraine. Putin aide Yuri Ushakov told the media in July, “Our president said Russia will achieve the goals it has set: that is, the elimination of the well-known root causes that led to the current state of affairs.” He added, “Russia will not back down from these goals.”

The Ukrainian people are determined not to let Moscow conquer their country. “The reality is that negotiations are negotiations, meanwhile the fighting keeps going and if we do not deal with it, no negotiations will save us,” Oleksandr Solonko, Ukrainian commander of a drone strike unit involved in the fierce fighting near Pokrovsk, wrote on Telegram.

Small Russian advances recently threatened to encircle that embattled town on the eastern front by breaching Ukrainian defensive lines to its north. But they were cut off by battle-hardened Ukrainian reinforcements, including from the Azov Brigade. By Aug. 18, over 800 Russian soldiers were surrounded, suffering heavy casualties, with dozens surrendering.

Russian troops are cannon fodder

Against the advice of his wife, Mikhail Simdyankin, a St Petersburg warehouse worker saddled with debt, enlisted last year when the sign-up bonus reached 2 million rubles (\$25,000). He was one of hundreds of thousands of men lured into the Russian army by propaganda, offers of lucrative pay or as a way to get out of prison time.

Russian officers either use brutal Stalinist-era tactics of “meat grinder” advances or try to claw small battlefield gains by deploying “suicide squads.” Either way hundreds of their troops die. Well over a million Russian workers in uniform have been casualties in the three and a half years of war.

Simdyankin was thrown into the front lines three weeks after enlisting. In less than a month, most of the 100 soldiers in his assault group were killed or injured. He was lucky to be injured and captured. He is now in a prisoner-of-war camp in Ukraine. “Our commanders saw us as expendable,” he told the *Wall Street Journal*. “They didn’t care whether or not we survived.”

As opposition to the Putin regime and its war grows, Russian working people, not Washington or the other “democratic” imperialist powers out for their own gain, will be the most reliable allies of Ukrainian people fighting to defend their national sovereignty.

For-profit nursing homes

Continued from front page

is increasingly run by real estate trusts and other giant for-profit corporations. The refusal of these wealthy bosses to hire enough skilled nurses, or to offer high enough wages to attract workers, has been going on for a long time and is getting worse. Workers there also face increasingly difficult working conditions, with a high turnover rate each year.

A documentary titled, “No Country for Old People: A Nursing Home Exposé,” currently streaming on Amazon Prime, describes the plight that families with relatives living there confront in trying to deal with the abysmal conditions. Filmmaker Susie Singer Carter shows the “neglect and pain” suffered by her mother, who died at 89 after five years in a nursing facility in Los Angeles.

“They’re warehousing our most vulnerable people until they can’t bill anymore or they’re costing too much,” Carter says. “And that’s when different decisions are made — like putting someone into hospice who isn’t ready for hospice because hospice pays a lot, because Medicare takes over at that point, and they just have to keep a patient comfortable with morphine, and morphine is cheap.”

Placing relatives who need extra care in a nursing home is a huge expense. The national median monthly cost for a private room is over \$10,600 — that’s more than \$120,000 a year. Nearly two-thirds of nursing-home residents nationwide rely on Medicaid to pay these expenses, and cutbacks chipping away at this government program are increasing the pressure on working-class families trying to provide for aging relatives.

Sedatives and narcotics, like fentanyl, are increasingly being used to “control” elderly residents, the bosses’ solution for understaffed nursing homes.

At the same time, more nursing homes are being shut down or cut back, in response to declining profit margins. Nationally, there are some 15,000 nursing homes, and 774 of them shut down between February 2020 and July 2024. They were not making enough money to suit their owners.

Declining medical care for veterans

The federal Department of Veterans Affairs runs the largest medical network in the country, with 170 medical hospital complexes and 1,193 outpatient clinics to serve over 9.1 million former GIs. They also run nursing homes for veterans, euphemistically called “community living centers.”

All of the department’s medical centers report an insufficient number of workers. It increased 50% from the previous year, the inspector general’s office reported Aug. 12.

Last year “86% of campuses reported severe shortages of medical officers — which includes primary care doctors, psychiatrists and other positions — and 82% reported severe shortages of nurses,” the *Washington Post* reported.

And the department recently announced a budget-driven decision to cut nearly 30,000 workers by October. This will mean even longer waiting times for appointments, procedures and other treatment.

Meanwhile, one scheme becoming increasingly attractive to industry profiteers is to respond to depleted staff by deploying AI and robots.

Researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology “have developed their first prototype of an eldercare robot,” reported MarketWatch July 30.

“‘EBAR,’ or Elderly Bodily Assistance Robot, can help elderly and infirm individuals walk. It can help them get up from a chair or step out of a bath. It can even catch them if they fall, deploying air bags where needed,” the article says.

What could go wrong?

And forget about human interaction and the dignity of patients trying to survive in this setup.

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