

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Defense of constitutional freedoms
is key in the class struggle today
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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1964: Freedom Summer took Jim Crow fight into Mississippi

BY TERRY EVANS

The 1963 March on Washington inspired Blacks as well as workers of all colors around the country. On its heels, leaders of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee began to discuss organizing a Freedom Summer project all across Mississippi.

The goal was to draw tens of thousands of Blacks in small towns and big cities into the fight to uproot racial segregation in a state where it was deeply entrenched. SNCC's leaders were convinced that nowhere was off-limits in the struggle to end Jim Crow, despite the murderous assaults that civil rights fighters faced.

African Americans, 45% of Mississippi's population, had been systematically denied the right to vote. Only 12,000, some 5%, were registered statewide and virtually zero in rural counties where Blacks were often a majority.

SNCC decided to test the ground for the Freedom Summer as elections for Mississippi's governor neared in the fall of 1963. Given the exclusion

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Does German vote open door to the return of fascist rule?

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The Alternative for Germany (AfD) party scored its best election returns ever Sept. 6 in the former East German state of Saxony-Anhalt, one of the areas of the country hardest hit by the capitalist crisis. It polled almost 44% of the vote, nearly double its total from five years ago, fueling an agitated response from liberal commentators and politicians alike.

The conservative Christian Democratic Union, which had governed the state most of the time since the country's reunification in 1990, fell to a historic low of just over 17% of the vote, only half its total in 2021.

The AfD needs three more seats to form the government there. It's courting conservative members of parliament willing to breach what the main capitalist parties call a "firewall" — their joint refusal to work in any way with the AfD.

The AfD is a right-of-center capitalist party that was founded in 2013 based on scapegoating of immigrants for the problems workers face and opposition to the euro. It opposes the German gov-

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SWP: US workers can learn from Cuba, its role in the freedom struggle in Africa



FMSMB/Casa Comum-Amílcar Cabral

Amílcar Cabral, leader of independence struggle against Portuguese colonialism in Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, with young fighters, 1972. He instilled moral values in all the combatants.

BY ANDREA MORELL

OAKLAND, Calif. — "This is an important book," Brando Williams told listeners to his Peralta Community College radio show, "The Bottom Half," Aug. 27, here. Williams was referring to *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde: The Fall of the Last Colonial Empire in Africa*, by Cuban revolu-

tionary leader Victor Dreke. It's published by Pathfinder Press.

Williams got the book from Margaret Trowe, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for California governor, when he interviewed her before the state's primary election in June. Trowe had asked him to consider doing a spot on the title. He soon told her he liked the book and

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US hands off Cuba! End the stranglehold of the US blockade

Join fight to defend Cuba's socialist revolution!



Militant/Katy LeRougetel

Washington's trade blockade curtailed public transport, but Cuban government, people were able to open schools anyway. Above, electric tricycle driver, passengers in Havana in August.

Working people in Cuba come together to battle water crisis

BY JANET POST

The growing lack of safe drinking water in Cuba today is a product of the U.S. government's ever-tightening oil blockade and punishing sanctions against the import of energy and other resources. This means a much greater risk of serious health problems, food safety issues and harder living conditions for Cuban working people.

On Sept. 4, the U.S. Embassy in Ha-

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Cuba tells UN: 'US blockade punishes life of our people'

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

"The long months living with only two or three hours of electricity a day or less, food spoiling, the heat that makes it impossible to sleep, parents fanning their babies, children doing their homework in near darkness, young people without internet access or recreation, grandparents without television or, sometimes, even radio — all family life is damaged." That's

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Weakened Tehran turns to Houthis to exert leverage on Washington, Saudis

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Tehran-backed Houthis in Yemen have stepped up their missile and drone attacks on Saudi oil facilities and seized more territory from Saudi-backed gov-

ernment forces in Yemen, including the strategic port of Mokha Sept. 11. The reactionary group has taken nearby islands to advance its control of maritime traffic through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait at the entrance to the Red Sea, saying it will allow all ships to pass through except Saudi vessels.

At the same time, militias in Iraq, financed and armed by Tehran, launched drone attacks on a key Saudi pipeline

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Virginia black lung meeting says cases are at 50-year high

BY TONY LANE

ABINGDON, Va. — "It's critically important to tell your stories," Brandon Crum, a radiologist from Pikeville, Kentucky, told the more than 100 coal miners and others gathered at the National Black Lung Association meeting here Sept. 11. "We have momentum from the NIOSH [National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health] report. You have to tell the personal side." Crum told the meeting he

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Minneapolis hospice nurses strike over staffing, conditions

Canada’s rulers step up their attacks on immigrant workers

BY JOE YOUNG

MONTREAL — The federal Liberal Party government of Mark Carney is leading a new round of attacks against immigrant workers in Canada, with political leaders at all levels of government following its lead. These attacks are meeting significant opposition from working people.

The goal of the ruling Canadian capitalist families is not to stop immigration. They need cheaper immigrant labor to boost profits. Today’s attacks are aimed at two key goals — one, to create a pariah layer of workers with less legal protection who can be superexploited, and, two, to set immigrant workers and workers in Canada with papers against each other, to divide and weaken the working class. They see this as more important today, as competition among bosses within Canada and between Ottawa and its rivals abroad is deepening, especially with Washington.

Deportations are increasing with a reported 23,160 deported in 2025, the highest in years. After Law C-12, called the “Strengthening Canada’s Immigration System and Borders Act,” was adopted by Parliament March 26, the government sent out 30,000 letters telling immigrants they could be asked to leave the country.

As a result of the government’s stepped-up attacks, Canada’s population has fallen for the third consecutive quarter, from 41.6 million to 41.4 million. The total number of temporary residents in the country is 2.56 million. An estimated half a million workers are undocumented.

On March 27, a broad coalition of

immigrant rights organizations, unions and civil liberties groups issued a statement saying, “Bill C-12 sets the current and future governments on a dangerous path by limiting the ability to seek refugee protection in Canada, enabling the mass cancellation of immigration documents and applications, and facilitating the sharing of personal information within and outside the country. Bill C-12 will put thousands of individuals at risk of persecution, violence and precarity.”

Immigrant Portage College students and their supporters have begun protests in Calgary and Edmonton after their work permits were denied, despite the fact they had been assured by the authorities this wouldn’t happen. On Aug. 12 cops called in agents of Canada Border Services to interrogate students at their protest in Calgary. Ten received expulsion orders.

An open letter protesting this outrageous attack and calling for the immediate suspension of the expulsion orders has been issued by a number of prominent organizations and unions, including Amnesty International Canada, Canadian Civil Liberties Association, Canadian Union of Public Employees, and the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions. Coordinated demonstrations have been set for Sept. 20 by immigrant rights groups in cities across Canada to protest the growing attacks.

Attack on English-speaking students

In August, Quebec’s Ministry of Education ordered the administration of College LaSalle in Montreal to close the school down because of nonpayment of close to 30 million Canadian

Moscow escalates attacks on passenger rail in Ukraine



Mykola Kalashnyk/Ukraine’s Minister of Recovery, Infrastructure and Transport

Damage to the engineer’s cabin on an electric train in the Kharkiv region, above, by a Russian drone attack Aug. 23 is part of a growing wave of systematic attacks by Moscow on Ukrainian passenger trains.

On Sept. 8, attack drones struck a Kyiv-Sumy train near Sumy in Ukraine’s northeast, causing it to catch fire. Early warnings allowed most of the 90 passengers and crew to be evacuated in time but two injured women died after being taken to the hospital. The same day, a Dnipro-Zaporizhzhia passenger train was hit, killing a woman attendant. Six rail workers were killed the week before in a strike on a Kyiv locomotive depot.

In recent weeks, several other rail passengers have been killed and dozens injured. Casualties would have been much greater if not for the early warning system that enables passengers and rail crews to be evacuated before the drones hit. Since the invasion 58 rail staff have been killed and over 300 injured.

Moscow’s war on Ukraine is built around targeting civilians, including workers on the job. Russian President Vladimir Putin hopes this can demoralize and punish them for their defiant resistance over four and a half years of invasion by Russian forces. Ukraine’s 15,000 miles of rail tracks, Europe’s third-largest network, move 600,000 passengers around the country each week. It’s a crucial lifeline since air traffic was brought to a halt by the war.

— ROY LANDERSEN

dollars (\$21.6 million) in fines plus CA\$18 million more for “overpaid” subsidies. The fines were levied because the ministry said the college was violating Law 14, a discriminatory act that imposes limits on the number of students who can be enrolled in English-language programs.

After students and teachers there organized protests against the order, the college was given a one-year extension. Several students told the *Militant* Sept. 8 they thought the anti-English policy was aimed at creating divisions among them.

“I feel ecstatic. I’m just super happy,” Dominique Goulet, a second-year

fashion design student, told the media outside the courthouse when the extension was granted. “I’m ready to fight again next year if we need to.”

“The unity of the working class, regardless of where we are born, is a life-and-death question. Our unions need to come together and act on this.” As the Communist League candidate for Quebec’s National Assembly in the St. Laurent riding and a member of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union, I told the press, “I encourage the biggest participation possible in the Sept. 20 rallies. Permanent residency for all! End all deportations!”

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

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The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018. Telephone: (212) 244-4899 Fax: (212) 244-4947

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THE MILITANT

Locked-out BP refinery workers win support

Refinery workers at BP in Whiting, Indiana, have been locked out for months. They are gaining support from other unionists and working people all over the area. The ‘Militant’ gets out the truth on the issues and importance of this labor battle, helps win expanding solidarity.



Militant/Naomi Craine

Steelworkers members locked out by BP in Whiting march in Labor Day Parade Sept. 7.

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What does vote in Germany mean?

Continued from front page
ernment's aid to Ukraine and favors stronger ties with Moscow, while at the same time backing the German rulers' rearmament program.

Unemployment in Saxony-Anhalt is 8.1%, well above the national rate, and wages are among the lowest anywhere in the country. No other state in Germany has witnessed such a severe population decline since German reunification. It has plunged from 2.9 million to 2.1 million.

Facing worsening conditions and with no working-class party to vote for that has a serious program to meet today's capitalist offensive, many working people were looking for change and the AfD promised that, in contrast to more of the same from the established ruling parties. Nationally, the AfD is now Germany's most popular party, polling at 28%, while support for the ruling Christian Democrats has fallen to 20%.

Upheaval in German ruling parties

"This is the worst election defeat the CDU has suffered in years — or even decades," Chancellor Friedrich Merz told the press. His Christian Democratic Union heads a governing coalition with the Social Democratic Party.

The AfD is strongest in the east, which was part of the former Soviet bloc dominated by Moscow. But it is also drawing more support in western Germany, especially in areas where once strong manufacturing is in crisis.

While the German capitalists have ruled over the strongest economy in Europe for years, today they face deepening challenges. Their only solution to the economic stagnation is to intensify the exploitation of working people at home and prepare for future wars abroad.

They see a future of deepening conflicts and are building what they boast will be the strongest army in Europe, and at the same time, are moving to turn state expenditures from welfare to warfare. Car plants, like those of VW where 50,000 workers face layoffs, are being converted to arms production.

Liberals and middle-class radicals expressed alarm at the Saxony election result. CBS News declared it could result in "the first far-right state government since the Nazi era."

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sán-

chez said the AfD vote is "a warning that the far-right threat is gaining ground," adding "a progressive coalition government," is "more necessary than ever."

The Saxony vote was a victory for "the neo-Nazi, anti-European and pro-Putin far right," French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot declared. Claims in Europe that "fascism" is on the rise have the same ring as the crusade against President Donald Trump from the left of capitalist politics in the U.S.

Do German rulers need fascism now?

The reality is that many working people in Saxony voted for the AfD in protest against rising joblessness and declining living standards. They are not searching for a resurrection of a Fuhrer, but for jobs, better wages and a more secure future.

Conditions in the class struggle in Germany and elsewhere in Europe today are not like those in the early 1930s when Hitler's Nazis took power.

At that time, the country's ruling capitalists faced depression conditions on top of brutal post-World War I repayments imposed by their imperialist rivals in London and Paris. They turned more and more to Nazi street gangs that used Jew-hatred as a tool to divert attention from the capitalist rulers' responsibility for the crisis. Nazi thugs targeted the labor movement and communists for attacks. It was only the refusal of the Stalinist Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party to lead a united defense against the Nazi terror — a historic betrayal of



AP images/picture alliance/dpa/Swen Pförtner

Berlin is sharply expanding militarization, including converting car plants to arms production. Above, production line at Rheinmetall tank factory, the largest in Europe, in Kassel, Germany.

working-class interests — that made it possible for Hitler to rise to power.

The AfD's political rise followed former Chancellor Angela Merkel's 2015 decision to open Germany's borders to some 1 million asylum seekers, mostly from the Middle East, sharpening competition for jobs. A series of Islamist attacks in recent years were used by AfD leaders to boost their call for more deportations of immigrants.

After reunification at the end of the Cold War, the entire state-owned economy in former East Germany was rapidly privatized in a looting spree by big business dubbed "shock therapy." Today social services are decaying and wages in the eastern part of the country are at least 20% below those in the west. The AfD has also won support from people

in neglected rural areas.

In the March state elections in Baden-Wurttemberg — the home in southern Germany to Mercedes-Benz and Porsche — the AfD doubled its share of the vote to 19%. Working people across Germany have faced years of rising fuel costs, exacerbated by the loss of cheap gas from Moscow after its 2022 invasion of Ukraine. The effects of this crisis in the east has been compounded by Berlin's closures of nuclear power plants three years ago, in the name of fighting "climate change."

The crisis of Germany's imperialist rulers is deepening in an increasingly unstable world. So too will resistance by millions of working people to being saddled with the burden bosses are trying to foist on our backs.

Virginia black lung meeting says cases at 50-year high

Continued from front page
has been interviewed by newspapers and for documentaries and these outlets "want the personal human side."

The conference took place just a month after a report by scientists at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health documented that black lung rates are at a 50-year high, with one in three long-tenured coal miners in Central Appalachia affected.

Vonda Robinson, the newly elected National Black Lung Association president, told the *Militant*, "Our goal is to

reach out to other states, all the coal states. We want to go out to meet with miners' widows in the Navajo Nation."

She said the NBLA is organizing a three-day trip to Washington, D.C., at the end of September that will include hosting "a roundtable of doctors, people from the black lung clinics, miners, widows and lawyers. We will be discussing implementation of the new silica rule, raises in black lung benefits, and a widow's bill." The silica rule, issued in 2024 after years of protests, mandated bosses to cut levels of permissible dust in mines by half.

Robinson said they also plan to hold signs up outside Congress to draw attention to the importance of their fight to see the silica bill implemented.

Dr. Drew Harris, a pulmonologist at the University of Virginia, gave a Zoom presentation to open the meeting that detailed the devastating facts in the NIOSH report. It shows how the rate of black lung had dropped from the 1970s until 2000, but has soared since. It also shows the dramatic difference in the rate of black lung between Central Appalachia and the rest of the country. "These numbers are outrageous," said Harris. "Black lung is 100% preventable. Death rates from black lung are rising, with hundreds dying each year."

In the 1960s and '70s members of the United Mine Workers of America organized a powerful movement to take control of their union and use it to fight to bring the scourge of black lung under control, as well as take other steps in the interest of the workers. They succeeded in transforming the union, and in cooperation with supportive medical personnel who set

up clinics across Appalachia, beat the disease back and won a measure of control over conditions in the mines.

Josh West, a district representative for District 17 of the UMWA, told the meeting, "We need your help to fight for safety in the coal mines. We need to organize, so we can fight around black lung, and for safety."

Black Lung Association chapters in Kentucky, Virginia and West Virginia reported on efforts to reach out to coalfield communities. Over 100 people attended the first miners' picnic in Whitesburg, Kentucky, last fall, hosted by the Southeast Kentucky chapter. Their hope is to make it an annual event. The chapter includes former miners, widows and caregivers. On Black Lung Awareness Day, the Kanawha County and Fayette County chapters in West Virginia gathered at the state Capitol in Charleston to bring attention to the debilitating spread of the disease in nonunion mines in the region.

It is in the interest of workers everywhere to get out the story of the miners' fight against black lung.

— ON THE PICKET LINE —

Hospice nurses strike for better staffing levels, conditions, pay

MINNEAPOLIS — Over 60 hospice care workers, members of SEIU Healthcare of Minnesota and Iowa, began a seven-day strike Sept. 11 against Allina Health. These nurses provide end-of-life care in patient homes, assisted living centers and other facilities.

A spirited rally and picket line was held outside Allina's Abbott Northwestern Hospital. Hospice registered nurse Abby McDonald, a member of the negotiating team, told the rally about the problems they face. Because of the conditions imposed by the hospital bosses, "we are exhausted for our patients, we are exhausted for ourselves, and we are exhausted for our families," she said. "When we work on Christmas, there is no holiday pay, none whatsoever."

Amy Rich, another striking nurse, told the *Militant* the main issues are

overtime pay, holiday pay and safe staffing levels.

"You're asking people to show up at a families' most vulnerable and sacred times," Jessica Hausauer, CEO of the National Coalition for Hospice and Palliative Care, told the press, "and if you're going to do that work, you really want to be able to show up and be present, and that's hard to do when you're facing workforce pressures."

The nurses are also worried about the future of their jobs, as Allina is in negotiations for a merger with California-based Sutter Health.

Some 150 doctors at Allina, represented by the Doctors Council SEIU, have called their own four-day strike beginning Sept. 14. They've been trying to get a contract for more than three years.

— Helen Meyers

\$7

In defense of the US working class

MARY-ALICE WATERS

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Weakened Tehran turns to Houthis

Continued from front page

that moved millions of barrels of crude oil a day to the Red Sea, forcing its temporary shutdown. The pipeline had allowed the Saudi rulers to bypass the Strait of Hormuz, where Tehran has frequently attacked their ships.

The Houthis had announced a blockade on Saudi ships in July but began escalating their attacks recently at the request of Tehran.

The Iranian rulers hope the Houthi attacks will give them leverage to push Washington to lift its highly effective maritime blockade of Iran's ports and to accept Tehran's control over the Strait of Hormuz. Until the latest war between the U.S. rulers and Tehran, some 20% of the world's oil and liquefied gas passed through that strait. As much as 14% of world maritime trade passes through the Bab el- Mandeb Strait.

The Houthis' military operations have growing importance for Tehran because Hezbollah and Hamas — key allies in Tehran's long-term goal of destroying Israel and expelling or killing the Jews who live there — have been badly battered by Israel over the last three years.

Israel is waging its war to defend its existence as a crucial refuge for Jews. Its ongoing strikes are aimed at preventing Tehran's proxies from recovering and launching new massacres like the one Hamas carried out Oct. 7, 2023. Hamas thugs slaughtered 1,200 people that day, mostly Jewish civilians, in the worst pogrom since World War II.

'Death to Israel. Curse on the Jews.'

The Houthis are a reactionary armed group based on an extended clan in northwestern Yemen, who follow the Zaydi branch of Shiite Islam. Even though Zaydis make up just 35% of Yemen's population, the Houthis at first gained some wider support because of their opposition to the corrupt capitalist government of Yemen President Ali Saleh, who was backed by Washington.

But far from fighting to defend the interests of workers and farmers there, the Houthis promote Jew-hating violence, highlighted by their slogan "God is great. Death to America. Death to Israel. Curse on the Jews. Victory to Islam." Weeks after Hamas' Oct. 7 pogrom in 2023, the Houthis began launching attacks targeting Israel.

With funding, arms and training from Tehran, the Houthis have been fighting a Saudi-backed government for control of Yemen for more than a decade. Before the Houthis' latest advances, 70% of Yemen's population lived in areas under Houthi control. Some 150,000 people have died in the war there since 2014, when the Houthis seized Sanaa, the capital, from the government.

Agriculture has been distorted by the war and the Houthi advances. A major cash crop is khat, a mild narcotic, despite widespread hunger and the need to grow food.

With little industry and oil production mostly shutdown, some 35% of the country's income today comes from remittances sent by relatives living abroad, a higher percentage than all but two other countries in the world. Along with its funding from Tehran, the Houthis finance their operations by heavily taxing imports.

The group was able to make its recent

gains by taking advantage of the weakness of the pro-government forces and divisions between the Saudi capitalist monarchy and the rulers of the United Arab Emirates, which back rival forces fighting for control of the parts of Yemen not under Houthi rule. The Emirates pulled out its last remaining troops in Yemen after Saudi Arabia bombed a UAE weapons shipment.

As Houthi forces advanced this month, the Yemeni government appealed to Washington and Saudi Arabia for airstrikes to block their onslaught. But those airstrikes never came.

The pro-government forces withdrew without a fight from some towns before the Houthis arrived.

Trump refuses to strike Yemen

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, reluctant to provoke even greater Houthi retaliation on Saudi Arabia, called President Donald Trump twice on Sept. 10 to request U.S. airstrikes on the Houthis' advance, but Trump refused.

"The Houthis called us, and they don't want to fight with us," Trump told reporters Sept. 12.

The Houthis are "letting most ships go through," Trump said. "There's just one country that they're not too happy with," a reference to Saudi Arabia, claiming, "We'll get that straightened out."

This underscores the U.S. imperialists' goals in the Middle East. They want to advance their plunder of the oil, gas and other natural resources in the region and their exploitation of the labor of working people there, with little concern for the interests of their "allies," like the capitalist rulers of Saudi Arabia, and none for the lives of Jews in Israel. The Trump administration's overall aim is to reach an agreement with Tehran and its allies that shores up U.S. profits.

While the U.S. rulers so far are avoiding deeper intervention in Yemen, they are maintaining their block-

USS Abraham Lincoln: The US rulers care little about GIs

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

Working-class families, including the young men and women in uniform in the U.S., just got a stark lesson in how little the capitalist rulers here are concerned about the well-being of its troops. For the ruling families, they're just cannon fodder for their inevitable wars over profit and plunder.

Soon after the USS Abraham Lincoln left San Diego with its crew of 5,000 sailors in November 2025 for what was expected to be a routine Pacific deployment, the ship was suddenly redirected to the Middle East. It became part of Washington's "Operation Epic Fury," a bombing campaign against the Iranian people in the ongoing conflict over control of crucial oil trade routes in the region. The Lincoln ended up stationed there for more than seven months, until reports of fed up sailors contemplating jumping overboard hit the press.

While U.S. carriers typically pull into port every 30-45 days to allow for stock replenishment, maintenance and rest for the crew, the sailors aboard the Lincoln had been deployed for a record-breaking 286 days.

They told their families they endured food and water shortages, frequent loss of mail service with their

Iran protests mark 4th anniversary of Zhina Amini's death



Businesses shut down all across the Kurdish region of Iran Sept. 16 on the fourth anniversary of the death of Zhina Amini. The 22-year-old Kurdish woman died at the hands of the hated "morality" police after her arrest in Tehran in 2022 for alleged violations of the reactionary dress code. Above from left, in the hospital before she died and in a family photo. The regime's thugs killed hundreds of protesters during the widespread actions across the country under the banner of "Woman, life, freedom" following her death.

The strike was called by a coalition of five Iranian Kurdish parties that are fighting for the rights of the Kurds, one of Iran's oppressed nationalities.

In Saqqez, the government blocked all entrances to the cemetery where Amini is buried to prevent people from gathering in protest at her graveside.

The government flooded some Kurdish cities with police, riot-control units and soldiers. On the eve of the strike, one woman in the region posted a video, where their firing of weapons nonstop — apparently into the air — could be heard. "I am sending this," she wrote, "so you can understand exactly what's happening here, how terrified the authorities are of the people and how hard they're trying to silence the people's voices and prevent another popular uprising. They're especially afraid of the Kurds."

Amjad Amini, Zhina's father, sent a message to the people of Iran and around the world, thanking them for their solidarity. "We saw how today all of Kurdistan," he said, "proved that the path to the hearts of the people cannot be blocked."

"The struggle for freedom, equality, justice and a dignified life for all — especially workers, laborers and oppressed people throughout the country — will not stop until freedom and justice are achieved," the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company Workers Union said in a statement Sept. 15.

— SETH GALINSKY

ade of Iranian ports, which is having a devastating impact on the conditions of working people in Iran.

On Sept. 7 the regime in Tehran doubled the price of gasoline for some users and other prices are skyrocketing. Shortages have left some drivers

stranded. Angry over the price hikes and shortages, taxi, truck, and food delivery workers have held strikes. The fuel cuts have left them unable to work for a third of every month, reported taxi drivers in the eastern Iranian province of Kerman.

families and long workdays with little time off. This meant sleeping for months on metal bunks stacked three high in cramped compartments shared with dozens of people. Only 20 inches below the bed above, sailors in the lower and middle bunks often refer to those spaces as "coffin lockers."

"My son is currently on that ship and listening to him say that he and his shipmates constantly think about jumping off the ship just for relief is so hard to listen to," one worried parent wrote to *Stars and Stripes* in July. Editorial control of the paper had been taken over directly by the renamed Department of War in January, it said, to better focus on "war fighting."

Up and down the military chain of command, those responsible have dismissed the sailors' hardships out of hand, saying a little discomfort is just part of the "job" in the military.

"First-time sailors are going to complain about the food, the living conditions, similar to sending kids off to college for the first time," Dan Keeler, the ship's captain, casually told the *Guardian*.

Describing the women and men on board as if they were little more than machines, Brad Cooper, commander of the U.S. Central Command, said

Lincoln's crew "is tired, but they continue to fire on all cylinders."

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth said the ship's conditions were "completely misrepresented," while President Donald Trump callously declared its deployment was "not nearly long enough." And for the Democrats, it was just a short-term election issue.

Meanwhile a spokesperson for the Navy says it's looking to adjust the ship's "available spaces" to allow the crew "to remain self-sufficient for longer periods, especially when resupply may be difficult."

Our fellow workers on the job, as well as their sons and daughters who find themselves in the military, face the same need to defend our class interests against capitalist exploitation and abuse.

They deserve to be properly and thoroughly trained in the military arts, not just thrown into combat. Their training, like learning your job in the workplace, should come under the control of the unions.

These questions will become increasingly important as today's deepening conflicts between profit-driven capitalist rulers over resources, markets and labor power continue to sharpen.

Support Socialist Workers Party campaigns across the country

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

As the November elections in the U.S. draw closer, working people facing a choice of Donald Trump clones vs. middle-class, woke “socialists,” like Democratic Party candidate for Senate Abdul El-Sayed in Michigan, are looking for an alternative. Many who hear about the candidates of the Socialist Workers Party want to learn more about them.

Kevin Dwire, a member of the UNITE HERE union and the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Minnesota, and his campaign supporters got a good response from workers at the Labor Day picnic in Saint Cloud Sept 7.

Dwire showed Jay Hart — group chair of Steelworkers Local 1259 and a union safety director who works at a local box plant — the recent *Militant* article on how Department of Homeland Security agents targeted unionists and others who helped organize large, disciplined protests against the Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s “Metro Surge” raids, arrests and deportations of immigrants in Minneapolis.

Hart said he backed the protests by the community and unions that succeeded in limiting mass arrests of Somalis and other immigrants in the area. “This is a fight we are not going to give up,” he said.

After looking at Dwire’s campaign flyer, Hart said he was disgusted with both Republicans and Democrats, but was thinking about giving the Democratic Socialists of America’s local candidate a shot.

“The DSA’s goal is to win workers, youths and others back into supporting the Democrats,” Dwire said. “Neither the Democrats nor the Republicans of any stripe have solutions for working people. They tell us to rely on them, not on our power as a working class. Our campaign says workers need to act independently of both parties.”

Attracted to the labor coverage in the *Militant* and interested in learning more about the party, Hart got a subscription to the paper.

‘I’m interested in your campaign’

“I’m interested in your campaign,” Austin Vaile, a teacher and caregiver, told Margaret Trowe, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of California, Sept. 3. Trowe, along with SWP members Betsey Stone and Andrea Morell, had set up a campaign table at the

Fruitvale BART rail station in Oakland with signs opposing Washington’s criminal blockade of Cuba.

After looking over the *Militant* article, “Organize, build protests to demand US hands off Cuba,” — an eye-witness report from an international solidarity conference in Havana marking the 100th anniversary of Fidel Castro’s birth — Vaile bought a subscription to the paper. He also got a copy of *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. It explains how education under capitalism is geared to prepare children for a life as exploited wage laborers, serving the interests of the bosses and their politicians.

Tom Schneitter, a tour guide, came up to the table wanting to know how the politics of the Socialist Workers Party differ from those of the Party for Socialism and Liberation. Unlike the PSL, which champions Hamas’ murderous Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom in Israel, as well as the reactionary regime in Tehran, “the SWP,” Trowe said, “opposes Washington’s war against Iran, supports the mass struggle being waged by workers and oppressed nationalities in Iran, and defends Israel’s defensive war to prevent the destruction of the only refuge for Jews in today’s reality of rising Jew-hatred.”

Schneitter was interested, saying he was troubled by the PSL’s long-standing support for Bashar al-Assad, the now overthrown dictator of Syria. His eyes lit up after looking over *Labor, Nature, and the Evolution of Humanity: The Long View of History* by Frederick Engels, Karl Marx, George Novack and Mary-Alice Waters, a

SWP: US workers can learn from Cuba, its role in Africa

Continued from front page

invited her back to tell listeners why it was worth reading.

Trowe said the book is about the internationalist solidarity provided by Cuba’s revolutionary leadership to the independence struggles that brought down Portuguese colonial rule in Africa.

Dreke headed Cuba’s military mission collaborating with fighters for independence from Portuguese rule in Guinea-Bissau.

“The 41-year fascist dictatorship in Portugal fell in 1974 in large part because of the blows dealt by the successful independence struggles of its colonies in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, which then led to independence in Angola, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe,” Trowe said. “Those struggles succeeded with the solidarity extended by the Cuban revolutionary leadership.”

Williams noted that the Cubans had worked with the Guineans and Cape Verdeans “with respect.”

Trowe described Amílcar Cabral, the central leader of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC), as a world-class revolutionary who looked to the Cuban Revolution as an example. In the book, readers learn how Cabral won the active participation of growing numbers of people to the independence fight.

Trowe said Cabral recognized that the enemy they faced was the Portuguese colonial rulers, not the workers

Join the Communist League’s campaign in Britain!



Militant/Dag Tirsén

LONDON — The Communist League is standing party leader Jonathan Silberman in the Holborn and St. Pancras by-election here, to present a working-class road forward in the face of the sharpening attacks by the ruling class in Britain against workers at home and abroad. Silberman will be on the ballot.

The Oct. 8 election was triggered when Labour Member of Parliament Keir Starmer resigned from the legislature after being ousted as prime minister. The election is widely presented as the first test of Labour Prime Minister Andy Burnham’s new government. The Green Party is standing its leader, Zack Polanski, to challenge Labour’s decades-long dominance in the constituency.

Silberman, above, campaigning in London in June, has a long record building solidarity with union battles for jobs, wages and working conditions, as well as organizing actions to defend Cuba’s socialist revolution, opposing the growing assaults on Jews and fighting for the rights of immigrant workers.

“Imperialism’s march to another world war and the rulers’ mounting assault on our livelihoods is the reality facing working people today,” Silberman said. “None of the capitalist parties — Labour, Conservatives, the Greens or Reform — have any solution to that. This crisis can be ended only by building a revolutionary working-class party to lead millions in the fight for workers power.”

Silberman encourages working people to join the campaign and to build the revolutionary working-class party that already exists — the Communist League. To get involved, contact the campaign headquarters listed on page 6.

— CATHARINA TIRSÉN

materialist and class explanation of history. He bought the book and got a subscription to the *Militant*.

To join upcoming campaigning teams as the *Militant* begins its fall campaign

to publicize the SWP candidates, and expand the reach of the paper and books by SWP and other revolutionaries, from Cuba and elsewhere, contact the distributor nearest you listed on page 6.

The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us

The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward

The low point of labor resistance is behind us



\$10

A decades-long retreat by the working class and unions has come to an end. More and more workers are saying, “Enough is enough!” They’ve begun to wield the collective power of the exploited producers in response.

pathfinderpress.com

Defense of constitutional freedoms is key in the class struggle today

The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward by Jack Barnes, Mary-Alice Waters and Steve Clark is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September. The excerpt is from the opening section of the SWP's December 2022 Political Resolution, "Opposing US rulers' assaults on freedoms protected by the Constitution and their use of the political police." It outlines the course of action the party projects to build a mass revolutionary party in the U.S. and an international communist movement able to lead the working class to end capitalist rule. Copyright © 2023 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Defending and extending the freedoms protected by the US Constitution is at the center of the class struggle today. Workers and farmers must organize and act to prevent the federal government's assault on these freedoms, which we have won in class battles over some two and a half centuries. We must oppose the US rulers' relentless drive to refurbish the reputation and expand the use of the government's political police, first and foremost the FBI. ...

Class-conscious workers, the trade

unions, and organizations of the oppressed and exploited must unconditionally oppose anti-constitutional assaults by the government on freedom of worship and speech; freedom of the press, association, and assembly; prohibition of "unreasonable search and seizure"; and other liberties needed and used by the toilers. ...

Whoever the target today, it is working people who will be targeted tomorrow.

"We stand for freedom of speech and assembly in principle — not just for us, but for everybody," insisted Farrell Dobbs in the Political Report adopted by the June 1961 SWP convention, reaffirming longtime party policy. ...

As Leon Trotsky forcefully reminded us in 1939, "Under conditions of the bourgeois regime, all suppression of political rights and freedom, no matter whom they are directed against in the beginning, in the end inevitably bear down upon the working class, particularly its most advanced elements. That is a law of history."

In September 1939 the Democratic Party administration of Franklin Roosevelt issued a "Presidential Directive" to ensure "the internal safety of our country." That executive order initiated a transformation of the FBI, which up to then had been a federal police force pursuing interstate law-breaking, financial fraud, and organized crime, a force most of whose field agents were lawyers or accountants. It was reborn as a *federal political police* acting at the behest of the president, whichever party occupied the White House. Its agents carried arms as a matter of course. The FBI was now aimed above all at stabilizing and preserving the capitalist state, as preparations accelerated for the US rulers to take the country into the expanding imperialist slaughter.

Long-established "red squads," "bomb squads," and "radical units" of state and local police departments, as well as company goons and other private security forces, were no longer sufficient to the global needs of US finance capital. Even under conditions of bourgeois democracy, the imperialist ruling class, whose executive committee sits in Washington, must have



Militant/Tony Savino
News conference March 17, 1988, announces victory for constitutional rights in SWP's lawsuit against federal government for FBI spying. From left, SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, lead attorney Leonard Boudin, John Studer, director of the Political Rights Defense Fund.

a national political police able to operate secretly and largely with impunity. During World War II the FBI was in charge of counterintelligence, and after 1945 it competed with the newly established Central Intelligence Agency and National Security Agency in counter-espionage operations. ...

The US Constitution is a bourgeois document, the supreme law of the land enshrining in writing the class dictatorship and property relations of what is today the world's final empire. When first drafted in the 1780s, as a product of the victory of the First American Revolution, the Constitution balanced the factional interests of Northern merchant capital and the plantation-based capital of the Southern slavocracy. By the mid-1800s that shaky ruling-class coalition erupted into the "inevitable conflict," the battle over secession. The resulting bloody civil war was the final manifestation of the mounting threat posed by the expansion of chattel slavery to the continent-wide consolidation of US commercial, banking, and industrial capital.

Also from the day the Constitution was ratified on June 21, 1788, there were struggles by small farmers, craftsmen, mechanics, and other plebeian layers, former slaves and bonded laborers, and later the rapidly expanding hereditary proletariat and other exploited producers to protect their class interests within this new governmental structure. Through hard-fought battles, they won amendments — *changes* — to the Constitution that provide pro-

tections *from* the state and exploiting class on whose behalf it rules.

These rights, in addition to others widely established well before the first American Revolution, introduce a degree of rule by law and written boundaries on the rulers' license to run roughshod over popular and regional interests, rural as well as urban, and other expressions of social, cultural, religious, race, and national diversity among the toiling majority of a vast continent. ...

Due to these historical origins and class battles, the US Constitution includes universal rights limiting the reach of the bourgeois state, protections that are deeply in the interests of workers and our allies among working farmers, owner-operator truckers, fishermen, small proprietors, and other exploited producers.

Standing guard against assaults on freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution is indispensable to engaging in the revolutionary class struggle necessary to prepare a vanguard of the working class capable, as conditions demand, of initiating and leading workers defense guards in the unions. Defense guards that can take on and defeat rightist and fascist forces that will organize at the service of the employing class with the aim of crushing the labor movement and its allies in face of a proletarian challenge to the rule of capital.

This course is central to the communist program, continuity, and practice of the Socialist Workers Party, along the line of march toward a revolutionary struggle for workers power.

September
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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

FRANCE

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Mississippi Freedom Summer

Continued from front page
of Blacks from the right to vote, they couldn't express their interests in the official state election. So SNCC and its allies organized their own election, called the Freedom Vote. A coalition of civil rights groups nominated NAACP leader Aaron Henry for governor, promoting a program of voting rights for all Blacks, an increase in the minimum wage, and loans for farmers.

For weeks they campaigned across the state, discussing the ongoing battle to end Jim Crow and urging people to vote for Henry. On election day they set up ballot boxes in churches, pool halls and other places. The willingness of African Americans to fight for the right to vote was reflected in the 83,000 Black Mississippians who turned out to vote for Henry.

SNCC had previously sent volunteers to McComb, Mississippi, in 1961 to work on a voter registration drive alongside Black rail workers, who led the NAACP chapter there. As they were making headway, Herbert Lee, a Black farmer who backed the effort, was shot dead by segregationist State Rep. E.H. Hurst in front of a dozen people. Hurst was acquitted by an all-white jury. Given the flagrant refusal of authorities to protect Blacks there, SNCC was forced to retreat from McComb for the time being.

The April 13, 1964, *Militant* described the launch of the Mississippi Freedom Summer to register voters and hold freedom schools, pickets and other protests across the state, with some 1,000 student volunteers from northern colleges, mostly Caucasian, coming to join the effort.

But the Justice Department, under Democratic Party President Lyndon Johnson, made clear it would provide no protection to civil rights campaigners.

Murder of civil rights volunteers

On June 21, the day after the campaign began, three civil rights volunteers — James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner — disappeared, and were feared

murdered by the Ku Klux Klan near Philadelphia, Mississippi. After a local cop came forward to talk to the FBI, their bodies were dug up. President Johnson's "administration shares responsibility for what has happened to the three young men" because it refused to protect them, Clifton DeBerry, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, said June 29.

Over the course of the Freedom Summer racist thugs carried out 80 beatings, 70 firebombings and 35 shootings. They were reinforced by state and local cops, who arrested more than 1,000 civil rights fighters. The bodies of three other Blacks were discovered, each of whom had been lynched.

But the Freedom Summer was greeted with enthusiastic support from Blacks across the state. It included educational programs on Black and African history.

The refusal of growing numbers of African Americans to back off from the fight to tear down Jim Crow was typified by Laura McGhee. She opened her small farm outside Greenwood, Mississippi, to SNCC for rallies and meetings, and put her farmland up as security to bail out civil rights fighters from jail time and again. Her sons were arrested on numerous occasions at sit-ins.

When her farm was targeted in a drive-by shooting, one of her sons shot back at the car. The local sheriff demanded McGhee instruct him never to do that again. McGhee told the sheriff, "He won't shoot anymore," and added, "but I'm going to sleep all day and stay up at night to protect my children. If anyone shoots at my house, I'm shooting back."

The *Militant* reported McGhee was jailed Aug. 20 on charges she struck a cop. She later recalled the cops were trying to prevent her from visiting her son who was in jail. "I admired my children for having the courage to go through with it, whatever way it turned out," she said.

In 1965, when federal authorities finally came to Greenwood to register voters, many of McGhee's neigh-



Standing up to racist harassment and violence, Laura McGhee, above, opened her small farm outside Greenwood, Mississippi, to SNCC campaigners and others for rallies and meetings during the 1964 Freedom Summer campaign to build the movement, deal blows to Jim Crow.

bors refused to sign up unless she went with them.

Battle in McComb

SNCC returned to McComb during the Freedom Summer. At first its Freedom House was bombed and Black churches burned down. With state and federal authorities refusing to provide protection, Blacks in the area organized nightly armed guards. Initially, most Blacks were leery of joining the voter registration drive.

After the Freedom Summer ended, several SNCC activists decided to stay in McComb. When the Society Hill Baptist Church there was bombed Sept. 20 several hundred Black residents poured into the streets to protest, many armed. A boycott of white-owned businesses began. By the end of September more than 200 Blacks had been arrested, but not a single Klansman. Klan bombings of Black churches and homes continued.

Under pressure from media reports about the extent of Klan assaults, Mississippi Gov. Paul Johnson announced Sept. 29 he would send in the National Guard if authorities in McComb did not put an end to the Klan violence. Within a single day, 11 Klansmen were arrested and stockpiles of their weapons seized. The bombings stopped.

With the Klan pushed back, fighters for Black freedom had more space. High school students from McComb began leading protests outside the courthouse in Magnolia for voting rights in early 1965.

During the Freedom Summer over 800 delegates and other Black rights fighters in Mississippi organized a Freedom Democratic Party state convention, electing their own delegates to attend the Democrats' national convention and fighting to oust the state's all-white, pro-segregation delegation.

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party delegation was led by longtime Black rights fighter Fannie Lou Hamer. It was able to win the right to give testimony to the national convention about why it should be seated. Hamer was watched by millions on TV when she described the assaults and reprisals she and others had faced trying to register to vote.

When Democratic Party officials rejected the MFDP's motion to oust the official Jim Crow delegation, the MFDP announced its own candidates and called on Congress to refuse to seat any of those elected on the Jim Crow ticket.

Spreading across the state, the Freedom Summer took the fight against Jim Crow into rural areas and brought new forces into the movement. When the fall semester started at public schools in Philadelphia, Mississippi — the town where Chaney, Goodman and Schwerner were murdered — high school students proudly turned out wearing "One Man One Vote" buttons.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

September 24, 2001

In response to the Sept. 11 attack that destroyed New York's World Trade Center killing and injuring thousands, Washington is preparing military aggression abroad and new assaults on democratic rights at home.

Under the guise of "fighting terrorism," the rulers are exploiting the attacks to rationalize a new extension of steps to widen police powers, erode Fourth Amendment protections against unreasonable search and seizure, increase the use of informers and dirty tricks against opponents of government policies and narrow the rights of the accused and convicted.

One of the few voices dissenting from the U.S.-organized war chorus was Cuban president Fidel Castro. "Cuba's position against any act of terrorism is well known. Our people have been the victims of such actions, promoted from U.S. territory itself, for more than 40 years."

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

September 24, 1976

SAN ANTONIO — Chicano activist Mario Cantu was convicted here Sept. 9 of shielding "illegal aliens." He faces a maximum of 15 years in prison. Cantu's lawyer argued at the trial that the government was prosecuting Cantu because he refused to let Immigration and Naturalization Service cops enter his restaurant until they obtained a warrant.

Government witnesses testified that Cantu urged several of his employees to leave the restaurant while INS cops were getting the warrant. Both government and defense witnesses agreed that Cantu did not tell the workers to lie, hide or disguise themselves.

Some 1,500 people attended an Aug. 29 rally in his defense. Speakers included Franklin Garcia, international representative of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters; Bishop Patrick Flores of the San Antonio Catholic Archdiocese; and Antonio Orendain, head of the Texas Farm Workers Union.

THE MILITANT

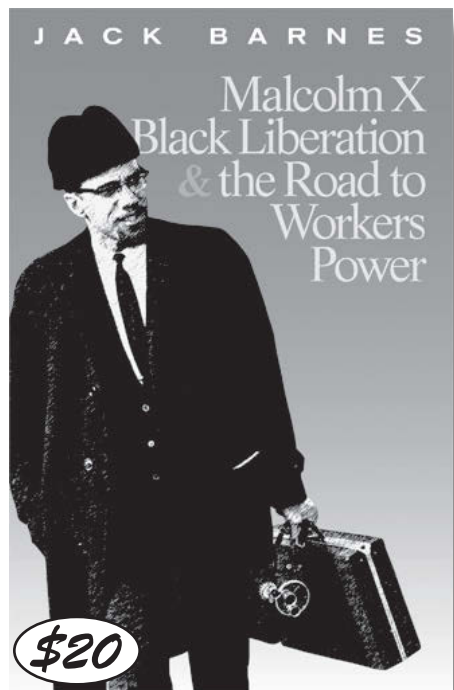
PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

September 24, 1951

The Machinists Union, representing 700,000 workers, last week attacked the Department of Labor cost of living index as a "snare and a delusion" because it fails to take taxes on low incomes into account. The Senate and House prepare a new tax law, which according to all indications will increase taxes at least by a straight 11 percent.

The Machinists Union demanded the Dept. of Labor immediately include the increasing tax deductions from workers' pay envelopes as part of the rising cost of living. Not only income taxes should be included, but all federal, state and local taxes. Last year, for example, state sales taxes jumped 300 percent!

As war preparations mount in cost, the workers' tax burden grows. Unless increased real wages compensate workers for this taxation, millions will suffer drastic reductions in their standard of living.



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Cuban workers battle water crisis

Continued from front page
vane cynically issued a “health alert” aimed at foreign visitors to the island warning of a “significant increase in diarrheal illness across Cuba. Recent cases have included E. coli, norovirus, Shigella, and other gastrointestinal pathogens.”

The advisory warned visitors to avoid foods “that may have been inadequately stored” and to stay hydrated with water “known to be safe.” It urged them to bring their own medicine, saying antibiotics and over-the-counter medicines “are frequently unavailable.”

Of course, Washington’s “advisory” ignored the fact it is the U.S. rulers’ own decades-long sanctions and other attacks on Cuba, accelerating today, that is responsible for the crisis. Nor do they offer any aid to alleviate the situation.

The urgency of the alert to travelers also puts into greater focus what the Cuban people themselves face every day. Cuba’s state-run National Institute of Water Resources reports that nearly 3 million on the island are experiencing difficulty accessing water. The water system strains to operate, having only 37% of the fuel required. Only one major oil tanker has been allowed by Washington to dock in Cuba in the last seven months.

Because the water pumping stations are short on fuel, at best there is just a trickle of tap water. To have water for drinking, cooking, bathing and cleaning, many workers must fill and carry buckets of water from storage tanks, pumping stations or tanker trucks.

The UN News said seven months ago that about 10% of the population — nearly 1 million people — were getting their drinking water from the tanker trucks, a number that has increased since. But there are fewer and fewer of these trucks, known in Cuba as “pipas,” on the road as lack of fuel and parts take a toll. Sometimes this means people need to walk long distances to fill their buckets.

Some workers volunteer, or hire themselves out, to collect and bring water to others. “Demand keeps growing. Every week we have to fetch water from farther away, and we never know whether the pumping station will still be working tomorrow,” Juan Miguel Reyes, a former intensive care doctor, told the *Guardian* in July. “People often thank us because many are too old to

collect water themselves. Here, without neighbors, nobody would make it.”

In addition, the pumping stations and water have been deteriorating, with no parts and machinery to repair them, a result of Washington’s decades-long embargo. Up to 70% of Havana’s water is lost through leaks in the system, the water institute said. Leaks increase the possibility tap water will be contaminated with sewage and other contaminants.

Mosquito-transmitted viruses, like dengue fever, Zika and chikungunya, are spreading. The mosquitos thrive in stagnant water, which has increased from leaking pipes. There’s a shortage of fever-reducing and analgesic drugs needed in acute cases because Washington’s sanctions have slashed supplies. Hospitals and clinics also face water shortages.

This is why efforts such as those organized by Global Health Partners in the U.S. to gather medications and supplies for hospitals and clinics in Cuba are a crucial lifeline. To learn more about their efforts or to help, contact ghpartners.org.

Cubans come together to help

An article in the Sept. 4 digital newspaper Victoria, produced on the Isle of Youth in Cuba, wrote, “Public health forces and other agencies together with neighbors, neighborhoods and work groups here have developed actions against arboviruses in the face of the increase in people with feverish symptoms.”

In the town of La Fe, they’re organizing to fix leaks and clean septic tanks. Some 40 members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces are working with health-care workers “who are intensifying preventive care and treatment for the sick.”

“Screening and fumigation drives are continuing house to house and door to door,” the paper said.

In May, Antonio Rodríguez, president of the National Institute of Water Resources, told Associated Press, “not only does water pumping consume electricity, but all the agency’s essential activities require fuel — from unclogging pipes and cleaning septic tanks to repairing leaks. Chemical supplies are also needed, and their import is currently paralyzed.”

Rodríguez added, “complicating matters are aging infrastructure and oversaturated pumping stations, espe-

Mexican truckers block US border over canceled visas



Hundreds of Mexican long-haul truck drivers organized protests on their side of the U.S.-Mexico border Sept. 3-7. Drivers used their semis and other means to block the commercial crossings between Mexicali, in Baja California, Mexico, and Calexico, just across the U.S. border in California. They also protested in San Luis Río Colorado in Sonora, Mexico, across the border from San Luis, Arizona. They threatened to continue the protests, including extending it into vegetable harvesting season, and to expand them to Tijuana’s Otay Mesa crossing and others.

The truckers are being accused by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services of “cabotage.” Government agents have begun revoking the drivers’ B-1 visas needed to haul freight across the border. Under this temporary business visitor visa, cabotage — hauling freight between two places in one country by a carrier based in a different country — is illegal.

The truckers say that there is no evidence of cabotage, and the Mexican National Chamber of Freight Transportation is investigating the charges. Mexican news reports that at least 17 drivers have had their visas revoked. According to AFN News of Tijuana, “The protesters claim that the visas of many truck drivers have been withdrawn without sufficient explanation, and that no part of the Mexican government has attempted to help affected truck drivers.”

Above, banner on truck at protest reads, “We work with dignity. We are not criminals.”

“What they’re doing to the truck drivers is a witch hunt; they’re treating them like criminals,” Alan Verdugo, a driver at the Mexicali protest told KYMA-TV. “Everyone is asking if ICE agents are at the border crossing.”

Another trucker, Conrado Marron Valencia, told the press that Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents have threatened to detain the drivers and revoke the visas of their family members if they refuse to admit the cabotage charges. One protester told La Jornada that truckers have had visas revoked because a trip lasted more than four days, or they stopped at a Walmart.

Marcus Gonzalez, a truck driver in Las Vegas, Nevada, told the media he was struck by the generosity of the protesters who had given him food and helped him fix his truck. “These are hard-working people with families, and they’re being treated like animals,” he said.

The protests were temporarily suspended Sept. 7 when a task force of U.S. and Mexican government officials began discussion on how to resolve the dispute with the truckers.

— JANET POST

cially in large cities such as Havana, Santiago de Cuba and Matanzas.”

The institute reported that most of the country’s pumping stations need to operate 18 to 24 hours a day to guarantee water supply, but now some can only operate for two hours.

In response to the sanctimonious “health alert” issued by the U.S. Em-

bassy, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla said, “Collective punishment is a crime. So, too, is inflicting suffering on an entire population through measures coldly calculated to trigger a humanitarian crisis.

“Enough with the abuse. Put an end to the blockade once and for all and allow Cuba to live in peace.”



Granma/José Manuel Correa

Cuban water truck supplies residents in Pinar del Río. Washington’s tightening oil blockade of the island causes power blackouts that stop water pumps, shortages of medical supplies. U.S. Embassy in Havana cynically issued health alert to U.S. travelers about poor water quality, lack of medicines.

For more on the Cuban Revolution

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Cuba tells UN: ‘US blockade punishes the life of our people’

Continued from front page

how Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez described the impact of Washington’s recently intensified blockade on the daily life of millions of Cubans at a press conference in Havana Sept. 7.

He presented a report that documents the extent of the blockade’s damage to Cuba between March 2025 and February 2026. The report will be discussed alongside a resolution — “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba” — prepared for a meeting of the U.N. General Assembly Oct. 27-28.

Rodríguez said the embargo cost the country \$8.1 billion in 2025, a number that will go up sharply in 2026 because of the oil blockade and other sanctions imposed by Washington.

“The blockade doesn’t punish a government,” he said. “It punishes the daily life of a people in every aspect.” Rodríguez described the heavy impact it has had on Cuba’s healthcare system, pointing to the rise in infant mortality from 4 per 1,000 births in 2018 to 9.9 in 2025, as equipment such as incubators stop working when generators fail. “These are children, not numbers. These are deaths that should not have happened,” he said, but did happen because “Cuba and its robust and effective public health system were deprived of legitimate resources.”

Of the 395 basic medicines normally distributed through Cuba’s health system, 300 are unavailable due to lack of access to the raw materials and other components needed to produce them.

The U.S. Embassy in Havana cynically issued a “health alert” for Cuba Sept. 4, warning of a spike in intestinal illnesses and diarrhea associated with failing water and electricity infrastructure. (See accompanying article).

Despite so much damage, more than 1.5 million students started the new school year Sept. 1. Each year this is a national celebration that has been a tradition for Cuban people since the beginning of the Cuban Revolution in 1959.

This year, the Cuban people and government were determined to open classrooms despite big challenges, including the scarcity of notebooks, school uniforms and ability to provide school meals. “Children, teenagers, and teachers walk long distances to get to school,” Rodríguez said. “We have acquired and assembled electric vehicles” to offer some transportation.

“Even under the extreme conditions facing our economy,” he added, the annual funding for education of children and young people with special needs continues. “For a family, this funding means opportunities. Their future is more than just a number on a balance sheet.”

Across the island, Cubans are finding ways to push ahead even as the crisis deepens. Along with efforts to maintain as much industrial and agricultural production as possible, there are also many initiatives across the country to keep social and cultural activities going. Lázaro Alfonso Oviedo, 90, told Reuters he attends



Cuban medical workers with patients after they’d been treated for Ebola, in Guinea, Jan. 19, 2015. Hundreds of Cubans volunteered to help. Today, with 3,500 Ebola deaths in Democratic Republic of the Congo, almost no help has come from the U.S. and Cuban help is barred.

weekly gatherings to help raise the spirits of elderly people. He said he dances and sings “to forget for a little while the suffering the empire puts us through.”

“We’re not going to give up,” he said, pointing to Cubans’ unwavering resilience. “We get it precisely from the spirit forged by the revolution itself — a revolution spanning more than 60 years.”

In 1959, led by Fidel Castro, workers and farmers overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and opened a socialist revolution that overturned capitalist ex-

ploitation and oppression. For more than six decades, U.S. administrations, Democratic and Republican alike, have sought to overthrow Cuba’s revolutionary government and restore U.S. imperialist domination of the island.

International blockade

Washington, while weakened but still the most powerful imperialist state, is using its weight to threaten countries around the globe to obey its blockade or face sanctions. Oil producing countries, airlines, hotel operators, shipping companies and

many others have backed away from providing services for fear of U.S. financial retaliation.

“Despite the pressure and intimidation exerted by the U.S. government, its State Department, and its embassies and diplomatic missions,” Rodríguez said, “our people are confident in the overwhelming support of the world for the demand to end the blockade.” In 2025, the U.N. General Assembly adopted a resolution calling on Washington to end its more than six-decade-long economic war against Cuba, with a vote of 165 in favor, seven against and 12 abstentions.

In preparation for this year’s hearing, Washington is placing heavy pressure on governments dependent on its aid to vote “No” in October.

The Cuban leadership has denounced the slanderous accusations from Washington labeling Cuba a national security threat and a sponsor of terrorism. And has spoken out against the bloodbath a U.S. military intervention in Cuba would provoke. A bloodbath both of “young Americans who would be sent to a war they do not want, a war that is not theirs,” and of Cubans who will defend their “independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity,” Rodríguez said.

Speaking with reporters, he reaffirmed Cuba’s willingness to hold talks with the U.S. government “without preconditions, in sovereign equality, on an absolutely equal footing, based on mutual respect, reciprocal benefit for our peoples, without interference in our internal affairs.”

Beijing tightens the noose on free speech in Hong Kong

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Beijing continues to tighten the noose around free political expression in Hong Kong. For years, this had been the only place in China where public rallies could be held to commemorate Beijing’s 1989 military slaughter of Tiananmen Square protesters and to call for political rights. In a high profile case, a Hong Kong court Sept. 11 sentenced three leaders of the Hong Kong Alliance, the organizer of mass Tiananmen vigils, to several years in prison.

For three decades, the annual commemorations were a symbol of relative political freedoms in the autonomous territory as compared to the mainland. But after massive anti-government protests there in 2019, China’s bureaucratic rulers imposed a draconian national security law and began to steadily eliminate basic freedoms.

Chow Hang-tung, 41; Lee Cheuk-yan, 69; and Albert Ho, 74, were sentenced to between five and seven years imprisonment, having already spent several years behind bars awaiting trial. Lee is a labor organizer while Chow and Ho are both lawyers. Ho was also a founder of Hong Kong’s largest opposition party before it was forced to disband last year.

All three are being punished for calling for the “end of one-party dictatorship” in China. Beijing fears any opening for opposition by working people to its oppressive rule.

Chow defended herself uncompromisingly, seeking to keep alive the memory of Tiananmen victims. She

cited the testimony of mothers whose children were among the many killed in the 1989 slaughter.

Behind bars, she has marked every anniversary by a hunger strike. She pledged in court to demand accountability by Beijing for its Tiananmen victims “until the day democracy arrives.”

Another protest leader on trial, Joshua Wong, 29, has been in prison since late 2020, serving a sentence of more than four years for “conspiracy to commit subversion.” His “crime” was helping to organize an electoral opposition to the city authorities. He pleaded guilty Sept. 1 to a new charge, brought last year, of collusion with foreign entities. Under the draconian national security law, it can carry a sentence of life in prison.

In February, Jimmy Lai, 78, founder of a popular daily newspaper that defended press freedom, was sentenced to 20 years in jail on national security charges. He has been imprisoned, often in solitary confinement, since late 2020.

In recent months, National Security police have raided and closed four independent bookshops, Daniel Chan told the *Militant* from Hong Kong. Authorities are cracking down on what they claim are “seditious” books.

Mandy Lau was one of five people arrested at the Have A Nice Stay bookstore July 19. In a gesture of public defiance that went viral, she was pictured, hands cuffed behind her back but head held high, wearing a T-shirt emblazoned in Chinese char-

acters: “I am a bookstore employee.”

The authorities seized hundreds of books, many of them imported from Taiwan. “People from all walks of life, including many young people who did not visit bookshops regularly, went to buy books to show their support,” Chan reported.

Taiwan has become the last place in the Chinese-speaking world where readers can freely access books not censored by Beijing.

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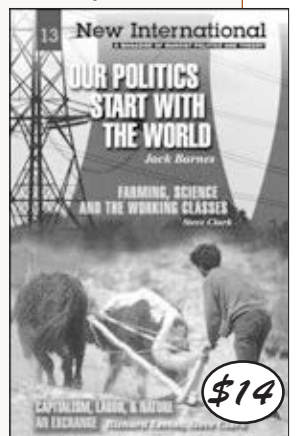
Our Politics Start With the World

“All the questions posed

by the ongoing crises and breakdowns of international capitalism can only be understood clearly, and answered in practice, if we start from a world perspective.”

— Jack Barnes,
Socialist Workers Party
National Secretary

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Imperialist rivalries threaten new world war

The U.S. rulers, with the aid of their Democratic and Republican parties, are at the forefront of conflicts among rival capitalist powers that are marching humanity toward a third world war, as the imperialists have done twice before since the dawn of the imperialist epoch.

Washington's war to extend its domination of the Middle East comes alongside its inhuman blockade and war threats against the Cuban people. Its bloody intervention in Venezuela and seizure of that country's oil is aimed at extending the U.S. rulers' clout across the Western Hemisphere, which they consider their property. They more and more act as if they can take whatever they want, wherever they want.

Moscow believes it can crush Ukraine and is expending the lives of thousands of Russian workers every month to make minimal gains in face of the heroic resistance by Ukrainian working people. Beijing is widening its military clout across the Pacific and threatening its rivals there. Berlin and other capitalist governments in Europe are rebuilding their own armies and their military armaments.

The worst pogrom since the Nazi's Holocaust in World War II was carried out by Tehran-backed Hamas Oct. 7, 2023. It announced the determination of Tehran and its "axis of resistance" to implement their decades-old goal of wiping out Israel and killing the Jews that live there.

The march toward more wars, whatever its ups and downs, is not a policy option for any of the world's exploiting classes. They are driven to redivide the world, because there are no unconquered areas, to expand their markets, resources and workforces at the expense of their rivals. This is unceasing in the age of imperialism.

That's why each is working persistently to acquire the technology to make ever-more deadly weapons.

That's why Washington is using tariffs to boost its war-related industries and driving to grab key resources worldwide, like rare earth minerals. The U.S. War Department acknowledged this week for the first time that it has deployed weapons in space, ready for use. A growing number of governments have nuclear weapons, and more seek them.

Washington is weaker than when it established itself as the world's preeminent power on the backs of the imperialist slaughter in World War II. But there's no other power capable of replacing it. Each of the world's rival capitalist classes are chained together in their decline.

The working class in its tens of millions is capable of preventing the catastrophe that the imperialist powers are marching us toward. We are the one class with no interest of any kind in exploitation, wars of plunder and oppressing other nations.

The 1917 Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution and the 1959 Cuban Revolution show that with proper leadership, working people are capable of taking political power from the exploiting classes and opening a new future for humanity.

That remains the decisive task in front of the working class. With a party of our own, workers in our millions can fight to conquer political power, uproot capitalist exploitation and join the fight for a socialist world.

In the U.S., working people don't have to start from scratch. The Socialist Workers Party already exists. It was forged in class battles by working people over the past century. You'll find its members on the front line of trade union and political struggles unfolding today, speaking and acting for the interests of the entire working class. As history shows, revolutionary parties can grow rapidly when the class struggle explodes.

Join in building the SWP!

Dolly Parton: longtime opponent of Jew-hatred

BY BETSEY STONE

Just hours after Dolly Parton's death Aug. 25, a cowardly anonymous vandal imposed a swastika on her photo on Wikipedia, along with the words, "Jew lover." A look at Parton's long history shows she was an unapologetic opponent of Jew-hatred and drew on Jewish traditions in her music. Two of Parton's most popular songs, "Coat of Many Colors" and "The Master's Hand" drew on Old Testament themes. And she shared close working relationships with Jews throughout her career.

Parton credited Sandy Gallin with helping her

AS I SEE IT

make the "crossover" from country music to pop, and co-founded a successful film and TV production company with him.

"We were from two completely different worlds, but we just clicked, somehow," Parton said in an interview. "Nobody could quite get how the Christian Southern girl and the New York Jewish boy could have so much in common. But it was real."

Growing up poor in rural Tennessee, Parton learned the importance of unions for working people. She was a lifelong member of the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, as well as the American Federation of Musicians. Parton insisted "that the bands, singers, and studio musicians working alongside her received the benefits of union membership," Dave Pomeroy, president of AFM Local 257 in Nashville, Tennessee, told the *Nation*.

Parton founded Imagination Library, a literacy program that has sent over 300 million free books to children. "This actually started because my father could not read and write, and I saw how crippling that could be," she said.

She told Harold Grinspoon she was honored when he informed her she was the inspiration for the launching of PJ Library in 2005, a program that sends free children's books to Jewish families.

The targeting of Dolly Parton is just one of the latest examples that Jew-hatred is on the rise. There are mounting examples of Jews being attacked as they walk the streets, with a recent assault taking place at a New York City synagogue. Narratives straight out of the playbook of Tehran, Hamas and Hezbollah are being spread by candidates endorsed by Democratic Socialists of America in the Democratic Party primaries. Senatorial candidate Abdul El-Sayed in Michigan campaigned alongside Hasan Piker, a video streamer who hails Hamas' murderous pogrom against Jews in Israel Oct. 7, 2023, the deadliest attack on Jews since the Holocaust.

Fighting Jew-hatred is a world question, and a working-class and union question. There is no better proof of this than the rise of Hitler's fascist regime built on the destruction of the labor movement and murder of working-class fighters in Nazi Germany, which went hand in hand with the rounding up and murder of 6 million Jews, Hitler's "Final Solution" for those he and the Nazis scapegoated for the deep capitalist crisis of the 1930s.

As today's economic and political crisis of capitalism spreads, Jew-hatred once again is on the rise, both on the left and right of bourgeois politics worldwide, including across the Middle East.

As it campaigns in working-class neighborhoods and on strike picket lines across the country, the Socialist Workers Party and its candidates find opposition to Jew-hatred and terrorist violence of any kind is strongest there. Workers, whose unions, wages and conditions are under attack today, readily understand why, when the bosses' system is in crisis, they look for a scapegoat to divert the blame from themselves.

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

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

Break your ribs to get that 'hourglass' look

BY TERRY EVANS

"Redefining Your Silhouette" is the innocuous-sounding way one hospital in Bangkok, Thailand, advertised taking a scalpel to women's bodies. What they're talking about is "rib remodeling," an invasive medical procedure promising to give women of all ages an "hourglass figure," while boosting the profits of the cosmetic surgery industry barons.

Their ads aim to convince women these surgeries are absolutely necessary to feel good about themselves and be successful in jobs and relationships.

Doctors in the U.S. who perform rib remodeling tout it as "medical

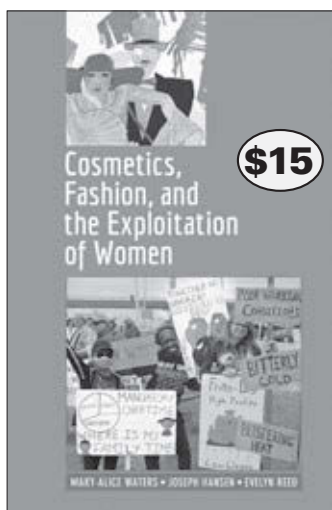
progress" over liposuction or just plain rib removal. This "advance" requires the doctor to break your ribs. You then wear a compression corset for three months to "reset" them to permanently reduce your waist.

If that doesn't sound too painful, the \$10,000 to \$15,000 cost of the procedure will.

"The goal is to restore your confidence in your appearance," Dr. Josef Hadeed insists on his website. He specializes in the procedure in Beverly Hills, California. Far from building women's self-confidence, these profit-hungry sawbones play on women's insecurities.

The operation can also help "male-to-female transgender patients who want a more classically feminine body shape," Hadeed says. Not to miss a trick, he also offers multiple other "body contouring procedures" to "complement" rib remodeling, to be profiled during your first consultation.

The range and number of cosmetic surgeries have proliferated in recent years and so have the number of lawsuits by patients whose new bodies feel mutilated. Of course, this too can provide a windfall for progressive professionals, this time for the lawyers.



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