

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Rallies defend immigrant workers
in Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 90/NO. 37 OCTOBER 19, 2026

Workers look at Democrats and Republicans, see ‘nothing for us’

BY TERRY EVANS

As Socialist Workers Party candidates introduce the only working-class campaign across the country, they’re meeting many workers who say they can see no reason to vote for either the Democrats or Republicans. Pundits in the big-business press have noticed the same thing and are warning the capitalist rulers that neither of their two main parties are drawing much enthusiasm.

But that’s hardly a surprise. Under both Democratic and Republican administrations working people have lived through years of disastrous price rises, a tightening jobs market, the spread of new wars that threaten to escalate into a world conflagration and growing uncertainty about what the future holds. Neither party offers any way to prevent more of the capitalist economic crisis from falling onto workers’ backs.

Both parties “are viewed unfavorably by nearly 60% of Americans,” a survey by the *Wall Street Journal* reported. The paper calls these people “double haters” and admits their

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Cuban people defend their revolution! US hands off!

Washington tightens blockade against Cuba



Xinhua via ZUMA Press/Joaquin Hernandez

People hold images of Raúl Castro, leader of Cuban Revolution, as thousands rallied in Havana May 22 to protest Washington’s oil blockade of Cuba and to defend their socialist revolution.

Cubans collaborate to ease conditions, show movies

BY TERRY EVANS

Working people in Cuba are coming together to take initiatives to combat the effects of the U.S. rulers’ brutal oil blockade and crippling sanctions. An important part of this effort is the re-launching of mobile cinemas

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Washington adds new bans on trade and travel to Cuba

BY LESLIE DORK

The Office of Foreign Assets Control imposed expanded sanctions against Cuba that took effect Sept. 30, tightening Washington’s squeeze on the Cuban people and its drive to overturn the country’s socialist revolution. Foreign financial institutions were warned that they face increased risk of sanctions for transactions involving Cuba, with “previously permissible activities” now restricted. And new curbs on travel to

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Solidarity with BP oil workers, locked out for over 6 months!

BY ILONA GERSH

WHITING, Ind. — The 800 oil refinery workers locked out by BP in March, after they overwhelmingly rejected the company’s “last, best, and final” offer, have been picketing the refinery for more than six months. Their slogan is “One day longer, one day stronger.” And they mean it.

“We got through the crisis caused by the recent storm and its destruction. Now we’re back on the picket line,” Keisha Barajas, an outside operator in the refinery, told the *Militant* Sept. 29.

United Steelworkers Local 7-1 members took a two-week break from picketing to clean up and make repairs after this damaging storm. Many helped each other and their neighbors clear fallen trees, repair roofs, clean out flooded basements and more.

“BP has a new negotiating team,” said Barajas. “They reopened talks. But it’s just for show. They have a bad reputation in the whole community, not just among those that they locked out. The bottom line is they just don’t want to meet the union’s demands.”

“The statements BP puts out are disingenuous,” another locked-out worker said. “They never mention the pay cuts and job cuts they’re demanding, but brag about the 13% increase

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Socialist Workers Party campaign to expand its reach is off and rolling!



Militant/ Hilda Cuzco

Dennis Richter, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Texas, speaks to Sage Arnold Oct. 4. She said, “There are real challenges trying to raise a family” with costs of groceries, housing today.

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Members of Socialist Workers Party branches and Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada and the U.K. are off and rolling in a seven-week international campaign that began Sept. 26. The goal is to win 1,150 new readers to the *Militant* and sell an equal number of books by Socialist Workers Party and other revolutionary leaders, and to build

support for the 2026 election campaigns of the SWP and CLs. And the SWP Party-Building Fund aims to raise over \$140,000 for the work of the party.

When Tony Lane, SWP candidate for governor of Pennsylvania, knocked on Eric Bryant’s door in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania, Oct. 4, they got into a discussion about the power of Cuba’s socialist

Continued on page 3

After decades of imperialist intervention US rulers pull their troops out of Iraq

BY SETH GALINSKY

More than 35 years after Washington launched its first assault on Iraq — a war that announced today’s sharpening imperialist conflicts and the opening guns of World War III — the Pentagon is

pulling out its remaining troops.

Despite two wars under both Republican and Democratic presidents, the overthrow of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, and the death of more than 4,400 U.S. soldiers and hundreds of thousands of Iraqi soldiers and civilians, the U.S. rulers were never able to turn Iraq into a U.S. protectorate, much less use the wars as the beginning of a new world order, as they insisted was their goal.

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Botched execution tortures woman in Tennessee prison

BY JANET POST

Tennessee death row inmate Christa Gail Pike is in critical condition at Vanderbilt University Medical Center after a cruel and gruesome failed attempt by state officials to execute her Sept. 30 at the Riverbend Maximum Security Institute in Nashville. Pike was the first woman the state had attempted to execute in more than 200 years, and the only woman on death row.

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— On the picket line, p. 4 —

Locked-out Marathon refinery workers fight for safety

Documentary ‘Cancelled’ exposes growth of Jew-hatred, attacks on Jews in Australia

BY ROBERT AIKEN

SYDNEY — “Cancelled,” a powerful documentary about the sharp escalation of Jew-hatred in Australia since the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas pogrom in Israel, premiered to a full house here Sept. 16. The turnout of 650 also registered a protest over the film being “cancelled,” as television producers and film festivals alike refused to show it.

In introducing the documentary, director Danny Ben-Moshe told the audience he sent a rough cut to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation Dec. 14, 2025, just hours before two Islamist gunmen shot 55 people at a Jewish event on Bondi Beach, killing 15. “The blood had not run dry from Bondi,” he said, but they didn’t deem the movie “fit to screen.”

Neither the ABC nor SBS, another public broadcaster, nor the organizers of the Sydney and Melbourne film festivals, were interested in showing it. “Our existence, our story, gets in the way of the [anti-Israel] narrative” so prevalent today. “We are living in a cultural ghetto.”

“Cancelled” features musician Deborah Conway, artist Nina Sanadze, writer Joshua Dabelstein and circus performer Talia Sofizade, each of whom stood up and spoke out after they were targeted during the wave of Jew-hatred following the Hamas pogrom.

Since then, the number of antisemitic incidents in Australia has more than doubled, one of the sharpest increases in the world. Anti-Israel protests spread on campuses and in the streets along with violent attacks on

Jews and their houses, cars and synagogues. They’ve faced harassment in classrooms, sports matches and in many workplaces.

The biggest change since the Hamas attack, Dabelstein said in a panel discussion after the film, is “the Jewish community coming together” to speak out. After screenings scheduled for the Jewish International Film Festival in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth, the producers hope to make the film available online.

Ben-Moshe and Sanadze visited the Nova festival site and nearby Kibbutz Nir Oz, both devastated on Oct. 7. “That reality is being denied, distorted, obfuscated and defended in Australia,” he told the *Australian Jewish News* before the premiere.

Sanadze was one of a group of 600 Jewish artists and academics whose posts and contact details were “doxxed” — made public without their consent — in early 2024. This was intended to provide Jew-haters with a hit list to attack.

After being forced out of the studio where she worked for speaking out against the Hamas attack, Sanadze opened the Goldstone Gallery in Melbourne, which is featured in the documentary. The burnt-out doors from the Adass Israel Synagogue, which had been attacked in December 2024, were exhibited there.

Sofizade was ostracized by fellow students at the circus school she attended for defending Israel. Then, as she was having dinner with a friend at Miznon, an Israeli restaurant in Melbourne, it

was attacked by Jew-hating protesters.

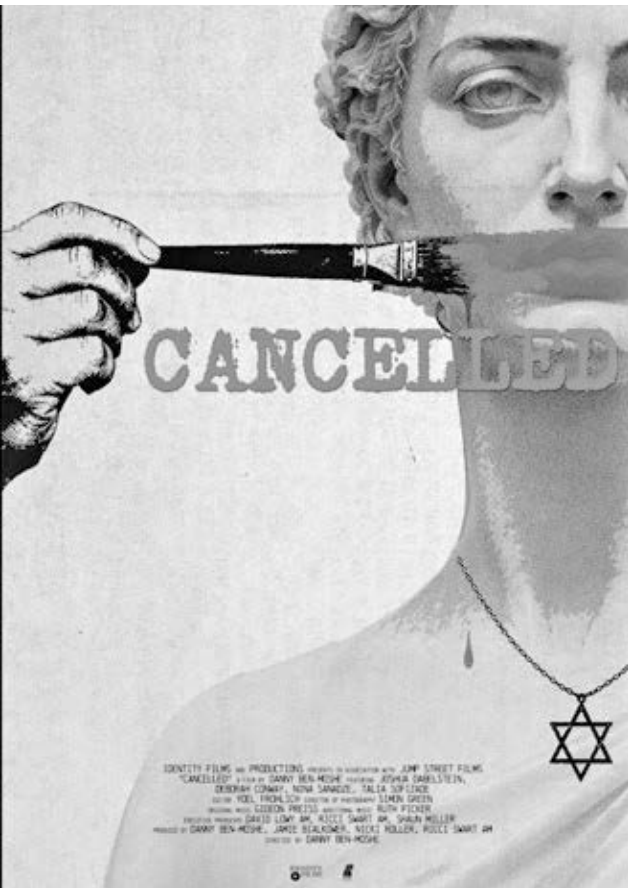
Conway, a well-known singer, also spoke out in defense of Israel’s right to exist. She faced cancellations and protests at her concerts and at events to promote her recently published memoirs. She said that when she spoke at a small bookshop in Brisbane there were a dozen people outside wearing masks. “They literally screamed for the next 45 minutes and pounded on the glass.” At another event, “70 people turned up wearing balaclavas beating pots and pans.” The police were there at both events, she said, but did nothing.

The debate continues

The film screening came as the Royal Commission into Antisemitism and Social Cohesion, established by the federal Labor government in the wake of the Bondi Beach massacre, wrapped up its proceedings. Its report is due Dec. 18. The overwhelming majority of the 20,000 submissions made to the commission came from members of the Jewish community who seized the opportunity to speak out about what they face.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese agreed to establish the commission following the Bondi shootings only after widespread anger erupted, led by Jewish organizations, over the fact the growing acts of antisemitism were being normalized by government inaction.

The commission heard 340 witnesses over several months. But hearing about a problem “is not the same as investigating it,” wrote doctor Jacqueline Rakov. She had sent a letter to the government just weeks after the Oct. 7 Hamas attack, co-signed by 235 other doctors. It protested the



Film “Cancelled” on escalating Jew-hatred in Australia was submitted Dec. 14, 2025, to Australian Broadcasting Corporation, which declined to show it just before two Islamist gunmen shot 55 people at Jewish event on Bondi Beach, killing 15. Documentary was shunned by public broadcasters and major film festivals.

eruption of antisemitism in the health-care industry, but was ignored.

Albanese and other federal government leaders continue to attack Israel’s defensive war against Hamas, Hezbollah and Tehran. At the Labor Party national conference in June, a resolution was adopted that dropped a demand for Hamas to disarm. Jewish delegates and some others who abhorred the pogrom agreed to a “compromise” as an even more vitriolic anti-Israel motion was being posed.

The Communist League in Australia campaigns to defend Israel’s right to exist as a refuge for Jews, explaining the role that Jew-hatred plays in the imperialist epoch, as the capitalist rulers seek to place the blame for their deepening crises and wars onto the Jews. The CL points to the need for the union movement to take on responsibility for both physically defending Jews and for building actions that protest Jew-hatred.

Robert Aiken is the Communist League candidate in the New South Wales state elections.

THE MILITANT

Black workers led battles that smashed Jim Crow

The ‘Militant’ is running a series on the mass movement to tear down Jim Crow segregation in the 1950s and 1960s. This is a key part of the history of the class struggle in the U.S., which dealt powerful blows to decades of racist violence, helped unify the working class.

Alabama Department of Archives and History/Jim Pepler
Alabama fighters joined 1966 “March Against Fear” to fight Jim Crow in Mississippi.

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Telephone: (212) 244-4899

Fax: (212) 244-4947

E-mail: themilitant@mac.com

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CL campaigns against rise in threats, attacks on Jews in UK

BY CATHARINA TIRSÉN

LONDON — “Only the Communist League is placing the fight against Jew-hatred as a key issue in its campaigning,” Jonathan Silberman told over 100 people at an election candidates’ debate Sept. 24. He is the Communist League candidate in the Holborn and St. Pancras by-election in London.

The debate was organized by the Board of Deputies of British Jews and the London Jewish Forum. The speakers panel was restricted to what the organizers called the “main parties.” But after strong representation by the CL and others, they conceded that Silberman would be given 30 seconds to “ask a question” after the presentations.

“The Hamas pogrom on Oct. 7, 2023, in collusion with Tehran, confirms that the fight against Jew-hatred and defense of Israel as a refuge for Jews is decisive today,” Silberman said. “That has never been U.K. policy. Both Conservative and Labour governments blocked Jewish immigration to Palestine, opposed Israel’s establishment and backed and armed the invading armies against the fledgling Jewish state in 1948.”

“This election is about local issues,” Labour candidate Sagal Abdi-Wali, front-runner in the polls, replied. “I’m an anti-Zionist,” said Zack Polanski, leader of the Green Party, her main challenger. Israel’s existence “relies on the displacement and genocide of the Palestinian people.”

Participants picked up a CL campaign flyer, the same one that has been delivered to 66,000 households in the constituency. The flyer says, “Fight Jew-hatred — poisonous trap for working people” and “Defend Israel’s existence as a refuge for Jews. US/UK troops, bases, warships out of Middle East.”

Antisemitic attacks have been on the rise in the U.K. A year ago, two Jews were killed at Heaton Park synagogue in Manchester celebrating Yom Kippur. Four ambulances belonging to a Jewish charity in London were burned and two Jewish men were kicked and stabbed in recent north London attacks.

“Scapegoating of Jews for the problems working people face is an out-

rage,” Koli Akther told Silberman when he knocked on her door Oct. 1. Akther, whose family is originally from Bangladesh, is a university student who also works as a care giver.

Cable Street

The Communist League took its working-class campaign to a march Oct. 4 commemorating the 90th anniversary of a major working-class mobilization on Cable Street, in east London. Some 100,000 took to the streets in opposition to an antisemitic march by the British Union of Fascists. The black-shirted thug outfit was founded and led by Oswald Mosley, who had been the leader of the Labour Party left-wing.

At the time, sections of the British ruling class were flirting with fascist groups. “Hurrah for the Blackshirts,” headlined the *Daily Mail* in January 1934.

The lead banner on the march read, “No to Antisemitism, Islamophobia, all racism. 1936 they did not pass. 2026 they will not pass.” The march included a well-attended contingent of the Unite trade union, one of the sponsors, led by Unite General Secretary Sharon Graham. Leaders of the garbage workers in Birmingham, who’ve been on strike for over 18 months, also marched.

A separate anniversary march of 300 in the same area highlighted Mosley’s antisemitism and the continu-



Militant/Julie Crawford

Jonathan Silberman, right, Communist League candidate in Holborn and St. Pancras by-election in London, campaigns at Oct. 4 march marking working-class protest in 1936 against Jew-hating action by British fascists, led by Oswald Mosley, former leader of Labour Party left.

ity of today’s fight against Jew-hatred with protests then, organized by Our Fight and Stop the Hate UK. Several marchers told Silberman they welcomed his participation and the Communist League campaign.

Marchers at the two actions bought seven subscriptions to the *Militant*, 13 books by communist leaders and seven copies of a CL pamphlet, *UK policy in the Middle East: Defend British interests, not the Jews*. It contains a talk Silberman gave at a “Contemporary Antisemitism” conference in Haifa, Israel, in July.

David Forman, retired telephone engineer and member of the Communica-

tion Workers Union, bought a *Militant* subscription; *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class*; and *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde: The Fall of the Last Colonial Empire in Africa*. Forman told campaign supporter Debbie Delange that he had been impressed by the CL candidate’s comments at a conference on Cable Street hosted by the Trades Union Congress two days earlier.

Altogether 33 subscriptions and 35 books by SWP and other communist leaders have been sold so far during the campaign.

SWP campaign to expand its reach is off and rolling!

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revolution and why successive U.S. administrations, Republican and Democratic alike, have been determined to overturn it. Lane showed him the new Pathfinder book, *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde: The Fall of the Last Colonial Empire in Africa* by veteran Cuban revolutionary Victor Dreke. Lane quoted Fidel Castro, who said that the Cuban Revolution owed a debt to humanity. “That’s why Cuban volunteers played such a central role in helping to defeat the colonial powers in Africa and the South African apartheid regime’s invasions of Angola.”

Bryant wanted to learn more and got a subscription to the *Militant* and bought the book.

“There are real challenges trying to raise a family today. The cost of groceries, housing, all the basics,” Sage Arnold, a worker at the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, told Dennis Richter, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in Texas, on her doorstep in Arlington Oct. 4.

“I have a daughter and we would like to expand our family, but even thinking of daycare costs running over \$400 a week makes us put it off,” she said.

Richter said the SWP calls for fighting for cost-of-living clauses in all union contracts and government programs like Social Security that guarantee when prices rise, wages rise to meet them 100%.

“We also need a massive government-funded public works program to provide jobs to build what working people need, including more daycare centers,” he said. “And the fundamental right to a job that pays enough to sustain a working person and their family. I’m a union member and we

need to use union power to fight for what all working people need.”

Arnold said she hadn’t voted before but wanted “to know how to vote for you,” as she bought an introductory subscription to the *Militant*.

‘A different way of looking at things’

“You have given me a different way of looking at things,” Dave Gibson, a 53-year-old concrete worker originally from the Bahamas, told SWP member David Rosenfeld, who met him campaigning in Miami Oct. 2.

Rosenfeld explained the SWP advances the demand for amnesty for all immigrant workers in the U.S., a demand that was raised by tens of thousands of workers in widespread demonstrations in 2006. This is in the interests of the entire working class. “The capitalist class and their parties, the Democrats and Republicans, reap superprofits by maintaining millions of workers without papers who have fewer rights. They also look to scapegoat these fellow workers for the deepening crisis of capitalism that bears down on all of us.

“We fight stronger and more effectively when our co-workers don’t face the threat of deportation and are organized into the unions,” Rosenfeld said. “This strengthens and unifies the entire working class.” Gibson said his dad was a meatpacker and he understood the stakes involved in forging working-class unity.

“I want to educate myself,” Gibson said as he bought *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes; *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward* by Barnes, Mary-Alice Waters and Steve Clark; and a *Militant* subscription. As Gibson

treated campaigners to some Gatorade, Rosenfeld said, “We’ll stay in touch.”

Melvin Robinson and Victoria Robinson from Atlanta stopped by the Pathfinder Books booth at the Decatur Book Fair Oct. 3. They too bought a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. Melvin Robinson, who is studying to be a therapist for children with autism, picked up the book with interest. “I was raised in South Carolina,” he said. “I’ve always been interested in what happened in the Civil War and what led up to the Civil Rights Movement.”

“Despite the victory against the slavery in the Civil War, we ended up with 80 years of Jim Crow segregation in the South afterwards. Why?” responded SWP campaigner Susan LaMont. “Because of the overthrow of Radical Reconstruction, the biggest defeat for the U.S. working class in our history, dividing our class along race lines.”

“It took the mighty Black-led Civil Rights Movement to tear down Jim Crow segregation and begin to overcome that decades-long division in our class. This has strengthened the whole working class, including our unions,” she said.

Melvin Robinson was also interested in the ongoing series on the history of the fight to overthrow Jim Crow segregation now appearing in the *Militant*. So were many others among those who bought 15 subscriptions, along with 106 books.

Out of such discussions, SWP candidates and their campaign supporters find many working people are willing to make a contribution to the SWP Party-Building Fund.

To join in campaigning in your area, contact the nearest *Militant* distributors listed on page 8.

The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us

The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward

The global order imposed by victors of the inter-imperialist slaughter of World War II is shattering with explosive ramifications for workers and farmers worldwide. A decades-long retreat by the working class and unions has come to an end. More and more

workers are saying, “Enough is enough!” And they’ve begun to wield the collective power of the exploited producers in response.

pathfinderpress.com



Solidarity with BP oil workers!

Continued from front page

they're offering. They 'forget' to say that increase comes after the pay cuts they want. Overall, we'll take a pay cut."

"In 2020, they tried to get us to agree to a 120-day strike notice," Local 7-1 member Kevin Scarbrough told the *Militant* at the Lowell Labor Day parade. "This time they upped the demand to 150 days. We're not going to do that."

"They're also trying to get rid of the in-house craft workers and contract out those 60-100 jobs."

Scarbrough works as a chief operator. "They want to get rid of that position and put me back to operator, with a \$6 an hour pay cut. The chief operator can vet tasks the managers give us and can decide we won't do something unsafe," he said. "Eliminating that job means getting rid of a layer of safety protection."

At the same time, the company has filed a challenge against Indiana's decision to grant the locked-out workers unemployment benefits. "If the company's appeal is granted," the union said, "United Steelworkers Local 7-1 members will lose the roughly \$310 a week in unemployment benefits they are now taking home. Worse, they could be required to pay back unemployment benefits they've already received."

The Steelworkers called on Indiana Gov. Mike Braun to reject the company's move. "British Petroleum's latest attempt to hurt Northwest Indiana families is unconscionable," Eric Schultz, president of USW Local 7-1, told the press. "Locking us out of our jobs and taking paychecks away from hundreds of local families was always part of their negotiating strategy."

A hearing is set for Oct. 16.

"Whiting is the last union refinery in the U.S. for British Petroleum, which has already delivered nearly \$6 Billion in profits to its shareholders this year," the union said. "Still, their CEO vowed to deliver even more profits this year."

The unionists are well aware that they are not alone. They've seen and talked with Steelworkers from other locals in this heavily industrialized part of north-

west Indiana, as well as auto and construction workers, teachers and many others who've joined their picket lines.

"Workers at Marathon in California are on strike for the same reasons we rejected BP's contract," said Barajas. They walked off the job April 27 after the company refused to agree to the same four-year contract fellow refinery workers who are covered by the USW's National Oil Bargaining Program got. They also demanded an end to forced overtime, which can extend from four to six hours after a 12-hour shift.

Workers on the picket lines often speak about how they organize to help out their co-workers. Liz Piña told me how she organizes three volunteers to pick up food at pantries and bring it to the union hall. "This helps a lot of families who don't have transportation." Piña is co-chair of the USW Local 7-1 Women of Steel chapter.

"It seems all along their intent is



USW Local 7-1

Locked-out BP oil refinery workers in Whiting, Indiana, gather for news conference Oct. 2 at USW Local 7-1 hall to protest move by bosses to end workers' unemployment benefits.

to eliminate the union," Schultz told a news conference on the picket line the first day of the lockout. "The union's biggest leverage is our abil-

ity to withhold work."

To join the picket lines at BP gates, stop by the union hall at 2045 Schrage Ave. in Whiting to get a ride.

Locked-out Marathon refinery workers fight for safety

BY JOEL BRITTON

MARTINEZ, Calif. — Locked-out members of United Steelworkers Local 5 here are picketing 24/7 at the North and South Gates of Marathon's biofuels refinery. Over 100 workers went on strike April 27 and then were locked out by Marathon bosses June 22 when the union offered to return to work unconditionally while contract talks continued.

Safety issues and Marathon's moves to break the union are at the heart of this fight. The union has long demanded more staffing of process operators and other job categories and an end to mandatory overtime. Operator Vinnie Caragan told the *Militant* Oct. 1 that Marathon "has been chipping away, taking away safer staffing levels and conditions we had won in earlier years." He pointed to control board positions and "outside operator tasks now handled by one worker" where at least two are needed.

The Marathon managers want to gut seniority and use nonunion workers and managers to carry out work formerly done by USW members. This means work being done by people more sus-

ceptible to company pressure to put profits ahead of safety.

Cliff Reyes, a wastewater head operator and Marathon Local 5 union chair, told the *Militant* Sept. 24 that without seniority protections managers can bypass job bidding rights and discriminate against the more experienced and safety conscious union members. "Training of new refinery employees needs to be led by those who know the plant and how to operate safely, not inexperienced engineers and managers."

The USW insisted on remaining part of the National Oil Bargaining Program with a common contract expiration date early in 2030, when thousands of other oil refinery workers' contracts will expire. Marathon bosses rejected that, claiming the fact this refinery uses renewable feedstocks, not crude oil, makes it different. But workers respond that they all make the same dangerous product, diesel fuel.

Fourteen maintenance positions in the refinery were declared by Marathon bosses to be no longer in the USW bargaining unit. After the workers went on

strike Marathon declared that 46 more workers — who handle ships at the refinery wharf, work with rail cars or in the lab — will no longer be in the union. Only the process operators will retain union representation.

Following two days of negotiations in September, "we paused the talks to await the outcome of unfair labor charges we have submitted to the National Labor Relations Board," Reyes told the *Militant*.

Bosses refuse to negotiate

The USW charged Marathon with "Refusal to Bargain/Bad Faith Bargaining," and other collective bargaining violations. "Twenty times we've come to the table, starting on Jan. 6, and 20 times not a single Marathon manager has joined the talks," said Reyes. He noted that on each of those 20 occasions, Marathon attorney Brian Easley simply said "no" to every union proposal. Minneapolis-based Easley works for Jones Day, a pro-business firm with a reputation for helping corporations break unions.

Thanks to a substantial strike fund, Local 5 continues to help locked-out workers with rent and mortgage payments, along with car loans, utility bills and groceries. Every working USW refinery worker in the Bay Area contributes to this fund.

Poorly trained managers and strike-breakers have been operating the refinery at reduced rates. Several months into this fight the locked-out workers started picketing the refinery's North Gate, near where Union Pacific tanker cars were delivered to the refinery, often more than 50 at a time. For an entire week in August UP rail workers refused to deliver or pick up cars; for several weeks UP bosses then did that work, coming from Nevada and elsewhere to scab on the workers. Now Marathon's own strike-breakers are doing this work, but at a very reduced rate, 18 tanker cars a day.

Some unionists from area refineries and other workplaces have joined picketing in solidarity with the locked-out Marathon workers. The severity of the attacks here calls for a stronger response by the labor movement and nearby working-class communities.

Join the locked-out workers in Martinez at Solano Way and Arnold Industrial Way, or on Waterfront Road east of I-680 at the refinery's North Gate.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

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

October 15, 2001

A number of organizations met in the Puerto Rican island of Vieques Sept. 26 in a popular assembly and decided to continue their protests demanding an end to the U.S. Navy's bombardment and occupation of large sections of the island. The meeting took place as a naval battle group began a second week of military exercises. The naval group is expected to soon join Washington's military deployment against Afghanistan.

Through its colonial overlordship over Puerto Rico, Washington uses Vieques as a joint forces training base for Navy fleets, and for preparation for wars and invasions such as against Grenada in 1983 and the imperialist assault on Yugoslavia two years ago.

In a ballot organized by the Puerto Rican government last July, 68 percent of the people of Vieques voted for the U.S. Navy to leave immediately and to return all occupied lands.

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

October 15, 1976

The Socialist Workers Party challenge to the "Great Debates" went before the U.S. Supreme Court Oct. 4. The suit demands equal time with the Democratic and Republican candidates for SWP candidates Peter Camejo and Willie Mae Reid.

At issue is the government stripping away of equal-time protection for independent parties and candidates.

"An unfavorable ruling," said Eric Lieberman, attorney for Camejo and Reid, "would be a significant step toward instituting the Democratic and Republican monopoly on air time."

The ruling capitalist parties have so far succeeded in freezing out discussion of their politics on the national level.

"We have asked for expedited treatment," Lieberman said. The SWP's suit is sponsored by the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee. The noted constitutional lawyer Leonard Boudin is also an attorney for Camejo and Reid.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

October 15, 1951

An extremely important development in the growing resistance to the witch hunt was the formation last week of the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee. The committee pledged support to the defense of James Kutcher, a legless veteran purged from the Newark Veterans Administration because of his membership in the Socialist Workers Party, as well as Communist Party members indicted and convicted under the Smith Act.

This marks a new and promising stage in the movement to organize united action by labor and liberal forces on behalf of all groups and individuals whose rights are being violated by the witch-hunters.

While this new committee appears for the present to be composed primarily of professional elements, there are other indications inside the unions that sentiment for labor action against the witch hunt is gaining steadily in strength.

85th anniversary of Babyn Yar pogrom is marked in Ukraine

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The 85th anniversary of the “Holocaust by bullets,” one of the worst single atrocities by Adolf Hitler’s Nazi regime, was commemorated at Babyn Yar on the outskirts of Kyiv Sept. 29. Less than two weeks after the German imperialist army routed Soviet forces and seized the city in 1941, over 30,000 Jews were systematically slaughtered there. This was one of the killing fields in the Nazis’ genocidal “Final Solution” in which 6 million Jews were murdered in German-occupied nations across Eastern Europe.

Nazi troops rounded up all Jewish men, women and children who hadn’t fled the city. Marched to the ravine, 33,771 were forced to undress and were then machine-gunned Sept. 29-30. The toll was recorded with chilling precision by the Nazi executioners.

Babyn Yar became the largest mass grave in Europe. Over the next two years some 70,000 others — mostly Jews, but also Roma, Soviet prisoners, psychiatric and disabled patients and Ukrainian partisans — were herded along its “road of death,” shot and buried there.

After Russian troops ended the Nazi occupation in 1943, Moscow reestablished its rule over Ukraine. For decades the Stalinist bureaucracy covered up the Nazis’ slaughter of the Jews as it advanced its own antisemitic propaganda.

After 1917, the Bolshevik government, led by V.I. Lenin, had put an end to decades of czarist pogroms against Jews. “The October Revolution abolished the outlawed status of the Jews,” Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky explained. A revival of Jewish culture was fostered by the young workers republic, as it granted autonomy to nations like Ukraine, long oppressed by Moscow.

Stalin revived antisemitism

Many of the conquests of Russia’s socialist revolution were overturned in the late 1920s as Joseph Stalin consolidated a bloody counterrevolution that ended Ukrainian self-determination and drove workers and peasants out of politics. A reign of terror was unleashed against revolutionaries in Ukraine.

This was accompanied by a revival of Jew-hatred. “The leading cadre of

the bureaucracy at the center and in the provinces strives to divert the indignation of the working masses from itself to the Jews,” Trotsky wrote from exile in 1937.

The Stalinist regime resisted pressure to build a memorial at Babyn Yar and hid the fact that Jews had been the target. Moscow built a dam in the ravine in 1957, which then collapsed, leading to an environmental disaster. But Jews and others found ways to mark the anniversary there every year.

After visiting the ravine in 1961, Ukrainian poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko wrote a poem, “Babyn Yar.” He began, “No monument stands over Babyn Yar, a steep cliff only, like the rudest headstone.”

When Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev met him in 1962, Yevtushenko read him the last lines of his poem:

“In my blood there is no Jewish blood. But all anti-Semites hate me with Encrusted spite as if I were a Jew.

And because of that — I’m a true Russian.”

“Comrade Yevtushenko, this poem has no place here,” Khrushchev warned him.

In 1966, on the 25th anniversary

Ukraine unions call for solidarity in face of Moscow’s bombs

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The Independent Trade Union of Miners of Ukraine (NGPU) issued an urgent appeal Oct. 2 for “strengthened international solidarity with Ukrainian workers and trade unions amid the continuing escalation of Russian attacks.” This follows a similar appeal two days earlier by the Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Ukraine (KVPU), saying the devastating impact of Moscow’s invasion have “grown increasingly severe after more than four years.”

The NGPU appeal came in response to a Russian airstrike that hit the building of the DTEK coal company in Pavlohrad, injuring three people. The company runs Ukraine’s largest coal mine, in the Dnipropetrovsk region. The offices of both unions there, the NGPU and the Trade Union of Coal Industry Workers of Ukraine,



Presidential Office of Ukraine

Ceremony at Menorah Memorial in Kyiv, Ukraine, Sept. 29, on 85th anniversary of “Holocaust by bullets” at Babyn Yar, where 33,000 Jews were shot, buried in a ravine by Nazi occupiers.

of the massacre, thousands gathered at the ravine for an unauthorized rally. The featured speaker was Ivan Dzyuba, a Ukrainian communist who wrote the book *Internationalism or Russification?* a defense of Lenin’s course.

“Babyn Yar is a tragedy of the whole of mankind,” he said. “But it happened on Ukrainian soil. And therefore a Ukrainian must not forget it any more than a Jew.

“We, the Ukrainians, should combat in our midst any manifestation of anti-

semitism, or disrespect to a Jew.”

By 1976 an official monument was erected at Babyn Yar — but only celebrating Soviet “citizens” who suffered in the fight against the Nazis, with no mention of Jews being massacred.

It was only after the disintegration of the Stalinized Soviet Union and Ukraine gaining independence in 1991 that an appropriate monument was built to mark the Nazis’ atrocity at Babyn Yar as part of the Holocaust against the Jews. The anniversary event was held there again this year.

London school cleaners, caterers strike over wage cuts, seek union recognition

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — Chanting, “They say cut back, we say fight back!” 40 cleaning and catering workers at Forest School in east London concluded their first ever week on strike with a militant picket line Oct. 2.

Many of the low-paid workers — immigrants from Spain, Colombia, Lithuania, Poland and Portugal, as well as from the U.K. — said they joined Unite the Union three months ago after learning school owners were cutting their pay to cover just 45 weeks a year, a 13.5% cut.

“This is a case of a rich private school putting profits before people and attacking the lowest-paid workers,” United General Secretary Sharon Graham told the media.

“We’re strong, we’re going to stop the cut and win union recognition,” union representative Luisa Pérez, who has worked at the school for 16 years, told the *Militant* on the picket line.

“I have a 16-year-old daughter at the school,” Nichola Clarke said as she joined the picket. Students applauded the strikers as they arrived for classes.

Forest is a private school that charges parents 11,000 pounds (\$14,570) per term for each secondary pupil, 8,000 pounds for primary. The catering and cleaning operation is run by contractor Compass UK and Ireland. It operates “in over 25 countries with around 590,000 employees worldwide” with “revenues of over \$46 billion for the 2025 fiscal year,” says the company’s website.

were demolished. A small museum on the history of the independent union movement in Ukraine since 1989 was also destroyed.

“This was not simply an attack on a building. It was an attack on workers, their union organizations, as well as the history and identity of the independent trade union movement,” Mykhailo Volynets, chair of the NGPU, said.

Russian forces are systematically targeting workplaces, mines, coal- and iron-processing plants, and even buses and vans used to bring workers to and from their jobs. Last Feb. 1 a drone strike on a DTEK service bus killed 12 people, 10 of them miners returning home after their shift.

“Since the beginning of the war in 2014, Ukraine has lost 132 coal mines as a result of Russian aggression,” the NGPU says. Four waves of Russian airstrikes in August and September targeted Ukraine’s key metallurgical plants, forcing shutdowns in a further blow to the country’s economy.

Aerial bombing targeting the Kametstal steel plant in Kamianske in the Dnipropetrovsk region Sept. 5 killed five workers. Four airstrikes on the huge steel factory in Zaporizhzhia killed eight workers and injured 31. The mill, which employs 8,500 workers, had to suspend operations.

Over the past five weeks, strikes on the large mining and steelmaking complex of ArcelorMittal in Kryvyi Rih claimed the lives of five workers and injured 17. The extensive damage has led the bosses there to shut production down for the foreseeable future.

The Vladimir Putin regime has “intensified its deliberate attacks on Ukrainian cities, civilian infrastructure and workplaces,” the KVPU said. Kyiv, the capital and home to most of the country’s union headquarters, has been subjected to “constant bom-

bardment in recent months.”

Moscow has launched over 2,100 missiles and 63,000 drones this year alone at residential blocks, hospitals, maternity wards, schools, shopping centers and other purely civilian targets. In the first seven months this year, 1,839 civilians were killed and 10,638 injured across the country.

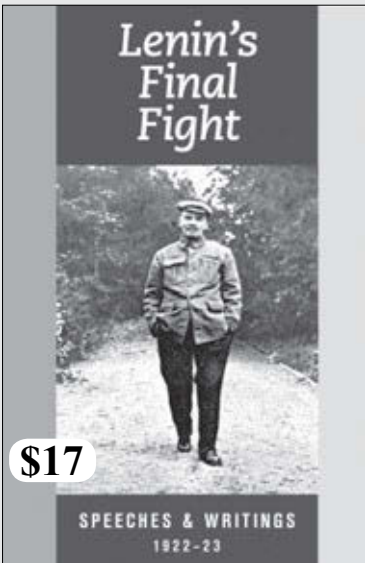
According to the Free Trade Union of Rail Workers of Ukraine, the national rail network — a crucial lifeline for working people and the economy — has suffered 1,534 attacks in 2026 alone. “Missile, artillery, and drone strikes on railway infrastructure have killed approximately 60 railway workers and injured over 310,” the union said.

The KVPU called “for the Russian Federation to immediately and unconditionally cease its aggression and withdraw its troops from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine.”

For further reading

“I declare war to the death on Great Russian chauvinism.”

V.I. Lenin, 1922



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Rallies defend immigrant workers in Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents descended on three towns in southwestern Kansas — Dodge City, Garden City and Liberal — at the end of September, stopping cars and making arrests of immigrant workers. Their operations were met by protests by youth and working people, who said their co-workers, neighbors and friends were being slandered by ICE, which claimed it was detaining the “worst of the worst” and threatening to deport them.

ICE agents arrested more than 100 people, demanding proof of their immigration status during traffic stops and from workers entering the area’s beef processing plants.

This part of Kansas is widely known as the “Golden Triangle of Beef,” with Cargill and National Beef plants in Dodge City, Tyson Foods in Garden City and another National Beef operation in Liberal. Together they slaughter some 24,000 cattle a day, over 20% of the nation’s fed-cattle kill. The ICE raids led to sharp drops in production as workers stayed home.

“They were racially profiling people,” Janeth Vazquez, vice mayor of Liberal, told Kansas Reflector news service. “I’m not just talking about undocumented people. I’m talking about U.S. citizens as well.” Some 68% of the 20,000 people living there are Latino.

“I’ve been in contact with several schools, and I’ve been in contact with the families directly,” Vazquez added. “The majority of these families did not have any criminal history. These were hardworking, humble, genuine, good people in our communities.”

Officials from the three cities put out a joint statement saying they were “not notified in advance” about these ICE operations being conducted in their cities. Vasquez described how there was “an ICE vehicle in front of me, and out of nowhere he just busted a U-turn, and there was oncoming traffic going the other way and he didn’t hesitate to even worry that he could create a hazard and dangerous situation.”

Some 200 people rallied in Dodge City Sept. 25 protesting the detention

and deportation of local workers. In Liberal a second protest took place Oct. 3.

Similar actions occurred in cities large and small in Colorado, where students from more than 200 high schools walked out of class Sept. 4, demanding a halt to ICE targeting classmates, co-workers and others. Hundreds of them gathered for a rally at La Alma-Lincoln Park in Denver, then marched around the neighborhood.

“What ICE is doing is just unconstitutional, unlawful. It’s inhumane, and I just don’t want to sit back and just watch it happen,” Naya Ferguson, a 16-year-old student at Bear Creek High outside Denver told Colorado Newswire.

Demonstrators said they were also protesting the government opening ICE detention centers in the area. They’re run by the GEO Group, the world’s second-largest private prison company, which reaps profits off the decrepit conditions under which immigrant workers are held. One is in Aurora, a suburb of Denver.

Another is being built in Hudson, which is located between the JBS packing plant in Greeley and Cargill’s beef slaughterhouse in Fort Morgan. The workforce at both plants includes workers from many different countries. Through their unions, these workers successfully waged a four-week strike at JBS and



The Peak News/Jordan Baldwin

Students march and rally in Denver Sept. 4 after walking out of class at more than 200 high schools in Colorado to demand a halt to ICE raids, construction of new ICE detention centers.

fought against a boss lockout at Cargill, demanding increased pay and livable working conditions.

Protests at Nebraska ICE facility

In southwestern Nebraska, protests have been growing against an immigration detention center opened nearly a year ago in the rural town of McCook. Some 300 people rallied there Aug. 15, led by McCook-based Nebraska Voices and the American Civil Liberties Union Nebraska.

Among those taking a bus to the protest was Emma Risinger, a student at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. “I and everyone else here has so much more in common with the people who are in that camp than they ever will with the people who put

those people there,” she told the press.

Actions against the ICE prison began modestly, with six protesters showing up when it opened. But their efforts over the next months won widespread support there and throughout the state.

The facility, called by officials the Cornhusker Clink, was originally a minimum-security state jail named the Work Ethic Camp. Its inmates helped out in the community, setting up the town’s annual Santa Claus display and keeping the town’s cemetery clean, McCook resident Diane Lyons told Nebraska Public Media.

“Then all of a sudden it was gone,” she said. “The inmates were sent away. The garden was bulldozed. Rows and rows of barbed wire were put up.”

Workers see ‘nothing for us’ in Democrats, Republicans

Continued from front page

number has risen substantially since the 2022 midterms.

“Call it the distrust election,” Sabrina Tavernise says in the *New York Times*.

Put more directly, there’s a sharpening of class divisions as the capitalist crisis deepens. Since 2019 the 0.1% richest Americans have seen their wealth more than double, while the working class has faced unending and dire assaults on wages and working conditions.

Workers, who have to shell out a larger proportion of their income on transportation, are hardest hit by today’s soaring gas prices. Last year the number of people unable to afford health insurance rose to 29 million, the highest level since 2021. Fewer young people can scrape together the money to start families. It’s no wonder that more workers are repelled by the capitalist party system.

Democrats are seeking to take advantage of mounting anger toward Washington by blaming Donald Trump, claiming he’s a “fascist.” But even where Republican support is falling, there’s little eagerness for the Democrats, either the liberal or democratic socialist variety.

Trump and the Republicans claim the key thing in the midterm elections boils down to defeating the socialist wing of the imperialist Democratic Party. He takes advantage of the broad revulsion among working people toward the rabid Jew-hatred of the middle-class left, pointing out many of these layers backed Hamas’

pogrom against Jews on Oct. 7, 2023.

“Workers are sick and tired of both parties,” AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler had to admit Sept. 1, before announcing the union federation was backing so-called worker-first candidates. That’s her deceptive way of explaining that the AFL-CIO continues to back Democrats, despite their long record of loyalty to the employing class.

Union, working-class resistance

Facing rising boss attacks, more workers have turned to unions in recent years to fight for better wages and to push back against life-threatening speedup, multitier contracts and unlivable schedules. There’s growing opposition among foreign-born and native-born workers alike to the raids and deportation of workers without papers. These are our neighbors and co-workers, many working people say, not the “criminals” the White House claims. And there’s growing unease among workers about the march of the rulers toward more wars.

Democrats and Republicans both pledge that if elected they’ll fix everything up. But promises that rest on support for the rule of the profit-driven capitalist class are a dead end. The only realistic road out of the crisis is through union-led battles and the independent political organization of the working class.

Socialist Workers Party members are part of today’s working-class resistance. Its candidates are fighting union members who present a class-

struggle road forward, promoting workers’ unity and calling for a break with the bosses’ parties.

Rulers march toward world war

Democrats blame the Trump presidency for rising worldwide instability. House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries seized on Trump’s contemptible threat to wipe out Iran’s civilization, to claim that Trump is plunging “our country into World War III.”

“It’s not Trump, but the U.S. capitalist class, backed by both their parties, that is fighting to remain the world’s dominant imperialist power at the expense of its rivals,” Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from New Jersey, explains when she talks with workers on their doorsteps. “What drives the march toward a third world war is the relentless competition between Washington and other capitalist powers for markets and resources and for labor to exploit, not the policies of any one administration.”

Both parties, she says, are gung-ho for the administration’s plans to expand the U.S. military. Both back its blockade and escalating threats against the Cuban people, and the U.S. rulers’ over 60-year-long drive to overturn the first socialist revolution in the Americas.

“Washington’s mounting aggression today is more reason to expand efforts to build the SWP, the only party that advances a road for workers and our allies to defend our class interests and to fight to take political power from the capitalist war makers and into our own hands, to run society to meet our needs,” Kuniansky said.

A giant has begun to stir



In defense of
the US working
class

\$7

MARY-ALICE WATERS

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Cubans work to ease conditions

Continued from front page
around the country by the Cuban Institute of Cinematographic Art and Industry (ICAIC.) They've managed to find a way around the unending power outages caused by Washington's blockade to maintain some access to entertainment, as well as Cuban, Caribbean, African and world culture.

Gloria Rolando, an internationally known documentary filmmaker, helped to set up a mobile cinema in her neighborhood in Colón, Havana. She secured a special screen from Cuba's Ministry of Culture and began inviting her neighbors to gather together for weekend film screenings in the street.

"Anything that brings culture to the community is good, because people are already suffering enough," she told *Belly of the Beast*, a group of U.S. and Cuban journalists dedicated to providing accurate coverage of Cuba. "So this is a small contribution to making life a little easier."

Among the films screened in Colón has been the animated classic "Elpidio Valdés," about a fictional Cuban independence fighter battling Spanish colonial rule in the 19th century.

In a 1996 interview, Rolando, a leader of ICAIC, described the "responsibility we have to conserve culture and pass something on to the younger generation."

Lack of repairs and frequent blackouts have led many regular movie theaters to shut down, and many Cubans don't have enough reliable electrical supply to watch TV at home.

Last year ICAIC figured out how to create mobile cinemas in these conditions, setting up portable projectors and screens on streets in Havana and, following the success there, out to rural areas, town squares and former sugar-mill settlements across the island. Together with the Rueda Producciones film collective, the institute developed technology that allow screenings using batteries charged by solar panels.

In areas of Old Havana, members of the Cuban Youth Network have helped transform open-air spaces

into cinemas. The program of films there has been supplemented to include live musical performances, theater and dance.

In Villa Clara, inflatable screens are being used to bring movies to more remote rural communities.

The use of mobile cinema in Cuba goes back to the early years of the revolution. "Mobile cinemas were transported by truck," Rolando said. Projectionists installed generators, projectors and beds in their vehicles and then traveled across the island, bringing cinema to isolated rural areas where many peasants had never seen a TV screen or a film.

ICAIC was founded just months after workers and farmers, led by Fidel Castro, conquered power in 1959. It was tasked with bringing cinema to working people far and wide, from historical documentaries



Cuba 50
Cuban film institute is deploying mobile cinemas, using generators and solar power, to Havana, rural, working-class communities across Cuba. Initiative's roots lie in early days of revolution.

to Hollywood films. A short 1967 documentary, "For the First Time," by Octavio Cortázar, captures the delight of Cuban peasants and their

children who are attending their first ever movie screening. It can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GFKKW4XY2v0>.

Washington adds new bans on trade, travel to Cuba

Continued from front page
Cuba were imposed.

Both direct and indirect financial transactions will come under even closer U.S. scrutiny. Indirect transfers occur when someone serves as an intermediary to send funds between a sanctioned entity in Cuba and another person. Restricted entities include anyone with a relationship to the Cuban military, intelligence, security services or people who work for them.

The new measures prohibit U.S. banking institutions from processing "U-turn" transactions, which occur outside the U.S., but involve a U.S. bank. The measure ends a primary international banking channel relied on by Cuba.

Under the new measures, U.S. banks are no longer allowed to open and maintain bank accounts for Cuban nationals who are independent private sector entrepreneurs unless they have a special license issued by the Office of Foreign Assets Control.

Washington claims its goal is to strengthen the private sector in Cuba. But "those actions against the Cuban private sector clearly demonstrate that their sole intention is to inflict

maximum suffering on our people," Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel told the media.

The new measures come on top of the punishing U.S. oil blockade implemented earlier this year and a raft of other measures aimed at isolating Cuba from world trade and international banking.

State Department spokesman Thomas Pigott tried to justify the latest restrictions Sept. 30 by repeating the baseless charge that Cuba is a threat to U.S. "national security."

In 2014 France's largest bank, BNP Paribas, was slapped with a \$9 billion penalty and forced to plead guilty to ignoring U.S. sanctions laws by clearing U.S. dollar payments to Cuba and other sanctioned nations. Then Attorney General Eric Holder threatened, "Banks thinking about conducting business in violation of U.S. sanctions should think twice because the Justice Department will not look the other way."

New constraints on travel to Cuba

Travel is now restricted to 12 categories and certain stated conditions. Travelers are advised to be sure their activities meet all U.S. regulations in advance or apply for a specific license from the Office of Foreign Assets Control.

Group people-to-people travel and tourist activities are now eliminated. Attending or organizing professional meetings or conferences is banned.

Traveling to Cuba to conduct professional research must be closely related to the traveler's profession, background and expertise. Authorized educational

activities with an accredited academic institution is permitted, as is travel to engage in religious activities.

Full-time and freelance journalists are authorized to travel if it's directly related to journalistic activity in Cuba, but their schedule of activities "must not include free time or recreation in excess of that consistent with a full-time work schedule," says the Office of Foreign Assets Control.

All forms of licensed travel must not involve lodging, paying for lodging, or making any reservation for a third party to stay at any property owned or controlled by the Cuban government or any of its officials, a Cuban Communist Party member or a close relative. Travelers should be fully aware of the Cuba prohibited accommodations list before leaving. And keep careful records of all expenses for years.

Food, medicine, medical devices as well as replacement parts, components and software updates for medical devices still can be sent to Cuba.

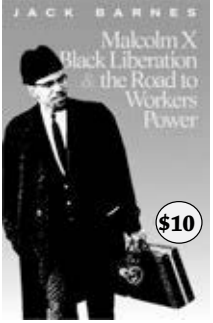
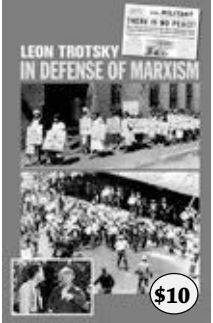
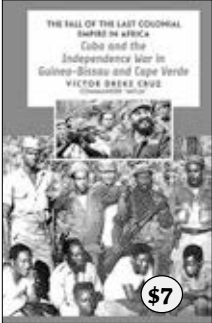
Bob Schwartz, executive director of Global Health Partners, told the *Militant* they so far have not experienced any negative impact from the new restrictions. Global Health Partners provide much-needed medicine and medical equipment to Cuban medical facilities. They were able to ship a 40-foot container of medical supplies to Cuba at the end of August and are planning to ship another this month.

To donate money to get medical supplies to Cuba, go to <https://ghpartners.org/cuba-2026>.

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Montreal protest says: 'End US blockade of Cuba!'

MONTREAL — Some 50 people picketed in front of the busy Berri-UQAM subway station here Oct. 1 in an action in defense of Cuba called by the Quebec-Cuba Solidarity Roundtable. They called for the Canadian government to oppose the U.S. blockade on Cuba, handing out leaflets urging people to sign an online petition to be presented to Parliament in Ottawa.

The pickets faced 10 opponents of the Cuban Revolution, who waved a large U.S. flag and carried a sign saying, "No more communism." They tried, unsuccessfully, to disrupt the action using a bullhorn. When the police arrived, the disrupters backed off, moving to the other side of the street.

Supporters of the Cuban Revolution, including Joe Young, Communist League candidate in the Oct. 5 Quebec elections in the St. Laurent riding, loudly chanted "Cuba sí, bloqueo no!" Several participants held up a sign in French that read, "Cuba is not a threat, the blockade is." When the protest ended, Reinier Valdés Rodríguez, a popular Cuban singer and actor who was visiting Montreal, thanked all the pickets for their solidarity with Cuba.

— KATY LEROUGETEL

Women's oppression was born with the rise of class society

Is Biology Woman's Destiny? by Evelyn Reed is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for October. Reed was a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, an author and spokeswoman for the party in the 1960s and early '70s in the fight for women's emancipation. She used historical materialism to explain how the roots of women's oppression lie in the evolution of class society. And ending the subjugation of women is tied to the working-class struggle to take political power, opening the door to end capitalist exploitation and the class divisions it rests on. Copyright © 1972 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY EVELYN REED

What women remain unsure about ... is whether or not their biology has played a part in making and keeping them the "second sex." Such uncertainty is quite understandable in a male-dominated society where not only is history written by those who uphold the status quo but all the sciences are likewise in their hands. Two of these sciences, biology and anthropology, are of prime importance in understanding women and their history. Both are so heavily biased in favor of the male sex that they conceal rather than reveal the true facts about women.



Int'l Women's Day March in Wollongong, Australia, in 1984 demands Port Kembla BHP steelworks end its ban on hiring women. Campaign gained wide support, forcing bosses to hire hundreds of women.

Perhaps the most pernicious pseudo-scientific propaganda on female inferiority is that offered in the name of biology. According to the mythmakers in this field, females are biologically handicapped by the organs and functions of motherhood. This handicap is said to go all the way back to the animal world and makes females helpless and dependent upon the superior male sex to provide for them and their young. Nature is held responsible for having condemned females to everlasting inferiority.

It is obvious that females are biologically different from males in that only the female sex possesses the organs and functions of maternity. But it is not true that nature is responsible for the oppression of women; such degradation is exclusively the result of man-made institutions and laws in class-divided patriarchal society. It did not exist in primitive classless society and it does not exist in the animal world. ...

Humans are above all *social* beings who have long since separated themselves from their animal origin and conditions of life. ...

This brings us to the final point in the tangle of myths aiming to prove that women have always been the second sex. This one concerns the distinction between the primitive and civilized division of labor between the sexes. According to the prevailing propaganda, the division of labor between the sexes has always been the same. ...

But it is not true that procreation, which is a natural function, is identical with the family, which is a man-made institution. While women have always been the procreators of children, they

have not always been isolated in self-enclosed units, each woman serving a husband and family. ...

Both sexes in primitive society performed social labor. This was possible because their system of communal production was accompanied by communal child care and education. Female children were trained by the adult women into their future occupations while the male children at a certain age were turned over to the adult men who became their tutors and guardians. Both production and child raising were originally social functions, performed by both women and men. It was only with the downfall of the matriarchal commune and its equalitarian relations between the sexes that women were dispossessed from social production and put into family servitude. Men took over in the new divisions of labor.

Historians often point out that with the advent of the new economy founded upon agriculture and stock raising, many new divisions of labor came into existence, replacing the former sexual division of labor. To give a few examples, pastoral activities became separated from farming; metallurgy, house construction, shipbuilding, textiles, pottery, and other crafts became specialized trades. Along with these divisions of labor in the crafts, there grew up specializations in the cultural sphere, from priests and bards to scientists and artists.

The roles of the sexes were radically transformed in the process. As these new divisions and subdivisions of labor grew and proliferated they became more and more — and finally exclusively — in the hands of the men.

The women were squeezed out of these fields of social and cultural work — and pushed into home and family life. With the rise of state and church power, women were taught that their whole lives were bounded by the four walls of a home and the best women were those who served their husbands and families without complaint. In this elevation of men and downgrading of women, they were compelled to forfeit not only their former place in social production but also their former system of communal child care.

To be sure, women of the plebeian classes, the "common people,"

have always worked. In the long agricultural period they worked on farms as well as in cottage crafts, and they did all this along with bearing children and taking care of households. But working in and through and for an individual husband, home, and family, is by no means the same thing as engaging in socialized labor in a communal society. Participation in social production develops the mind and body; isolation and preoccupation with home chores weakens them and narrows the outlook.

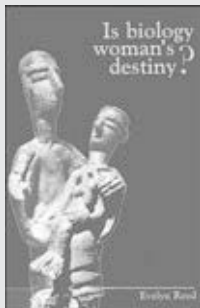
In other words, the division of labor between the sexes has *not* always been the same. The male-dominated division of labor that came in with class society, private property, and the patriarchal family represented a colossal robbery of the women. ...

Woman's position in society, therefore, has been shaped and reshaped by changing historical conditions. The drastic transformation that overturned matriarchal communism brought about the downfall of the female sex. It was with the rise of patriarchal class society that the biological makeup of women became the ideological pretext for justifying and continuing the dispossession of women from social and cultural life and keeping them in a servile status.

Only by recognizing this can women come to grips with the real causes of our subjugation and degradation which are today bound up with the structure of the capitalist system. Our struggle for liberation will be hindered so long as we are hoodwinked into believing that nature rather than this society is the source of our oppression.

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Help get truth out about Cuba’s revolution

The U.N. General Assembly will debate and vote on an annual resolution calling on Washington to end its blockade against Cuba Oct. 27-28. This year’s vote takes place after the U.S. rulers imposed a total oil blockade and sharply escalated crippling sanctions intended to deprive the Cuban people of the basic necessities of life.

Ever since workers and farmers, led by Fidel Castro, took power in 1959, Washington has tried to overturn the first socialist revolution in the Americas and reimpose U.S. imperialist exploitation of Cuba.

Working people and our unions should stand shoulder to shoulder with toilers in Cuba, demanding an unconditional end to the oil blockade and all U.S. trade and financial measures against Cuba enacted over more than six decades.

The truth about the Cuban Revolution is reported week in and week out in the *Militant*, and in books by Cuban and Socialist Workers Party leaders published by Pathfinder. Getting these publications out is vital

to countering Washington’s lies. It’s key to building broader participation in protests calling on the U.S. government to get its hands off Cuba.

The day after the U.S. rulers enacted a trade embargo on Cuba Feb. 3, 1962, over a million Cubans poured into the streets of Havana. Castro told them that behind Washington’s hatred of their revolution is fear of its example. “Fear that the plundered people of the continent will seize the arms from their oppressors and, like Cuba, declare themselves free peoples of the Americas.”

Decades later Castro pointed to the decisive class character of the revolution. Cuba will never renounce the “true principle of government of the people, by the people and for the people,” he said, “which translated into revolutionary language, is government of the workers, by the workers and for the workers.”

That is something the U.S. capitalist class can never forgive. And it’s why working people here should join the Cuban people in demanding U.S. hands off Cuba!

After decades of intervention, US pulls troops from Iraq

Continued from front page

U.S. imperialism did succeed in advancing its plunder of the oil, gas and other resources of the region, and pushing back its competitors. At the same time, the U.S. intervention accelerated economic and political crises and breakdowns in the region and worldwide.

Washington used its massive military superiority to defeat Saddam’s 1990 predatory invasion of Kuwait. After six weeks of incessant U.S. bombardment and a murderous 100-hour invasion that began Feb. 24, 1991, tens of thousands of demoralized Iraqi soldiers fled Kuwait — putting up no resistance — along with civilians and immigrant workers.

Demonstrating U.S. imperialism’s ruthlessness, its armed forces bombed one end of the road from Kuwait City to Basra in Iraq and then the other, trapping and slaughtering the fleeing soldiers and civilians.

Having defeated the Iraqi army and with few losses on their side, the U.S. rulers decided not to occupy Iraq, leaving Saddam in power to crush rebellions by the Kurds in the north and Shiites in the south. By April 1991 the last U.S. troops had withdrawn.

Washington deals blows to rivals

This assault “was the first of Washington’s wars since World War II in which it sought to use its military might to deal blows, indirect but palpable, to U.S. imperialism’s rivals, especially in Bonn, Tokyo and Paris,” explained Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes. It marked the most far-reaching shift in Washington’s military policy and organization since the late 1930s.

London enthusiastically, and Paris reluctantly, joined the U.S. war, while Berlin and Tokyo stood aside.

Washington invaded Iraq again in March 2003, on the pretext that Saddam had weapons of mass destruction. This time Washington could only cobble together an even narrower “coalition of the willing,” still more than enough to overthrow Saddam.

But establishing a stable pro-U.S. regime proved impossible. The U.S. occupation unleashed uncontrollable forces among competing bourgeois forces within Iraq where some 54% are Shiite Arabs, 14% Sunni Arabs, 18% Kurds, with several other smaller nationalities.

Shiite-based militias — often backed by Tehran — began challenging the U.S. forces. Former members of Saddam’s Sunni-based capitalist dictatorship joined with al-Qaeda in challenging both the new predominantly Shiite government and the U.S. occupation.

In northern Iraq the oppressed Kurdish nationality stepped up its fight for national rights, winning control over an autonomous region.

In December 2005 conflicts between the Shiite-based bourgeois government and various Shiite and Sunni factions sharply accelerated.

Then in January 2007 President George W. Bush sent 30,000 more troops in an attempt to stabilize the country. U.S. forces had pushed al-Qaeda back by September 2008, handing control of its key strong-

holds to the Iraqi government. In December 2011 the last U.S. troops pulled out.

But in 2013 a new, Sunni-based, insurgency erupted, led by Islamic State, aided by former members of the Saddam regime.

Islamic State inflicted a reign of terror on people in the areas it controlled, seizing some 40% of the country by 2014. President Barack Obama ordered U.S. troops in later that year.

For several years a heterogeneous coalition of Iraqi government forces, Kurdish groups, U.S. special forces and Tehran-backed groups — all aided by U.S. air cover — fought pitched battles against Islamic State. Tehran took advantage of the fighting to greatly expand the militias it backed and its influence in Iraq.

By 2018 Islamic State had been defeated. While Washington reduced its military presence, for years it maintained some 2,500 U.S. soldiers, mostly at a base near Erbil in the Kurdish region.

President Donald Trump says that the U.S. troops are no longer needed and that Washington has good relations with Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi, despite Tehran using its proxy forces in Iraq to launch drone and missile strikes at Israel and Arab countries in the region.

Al-Zaidi, who has tried to balance between the pressure from Tehran and Washington, called on the Iranian-backed militias — which have dozens of seats in Iraq’s parliament — to hand over their weapons to the government. No one believes that’s likely.

‘Anxiety and uncertainty’

The Kurdish Regional Government viewed the U.S. troops as protection from threats by the Iraqi government and Tehran, which both oppose Kurdish national rights. The absence of U.S. troops, “creates a sense of anxiety and uncertainty,” Kifah Mahmoud, an adviser to Kurdish leader Masoud Barzani, said.

U.S. imperialism remains the most powerful military force in the region, embroiled in conflict with the capitalist rulers in Iran. The Pentagon sent a third aircraft carrier and thousands of additional troops to the Middle East in early October, maintaining its blockade on Iranian ports.

The regime in Iraq has made some progress in stabilizing the country. The *New York Times* reports that “blast walls that once snaked through Baghdad have come down. Malls, restaurants and construction sites” are buzzing once again.

Numerous articles in the U.S. bourgeois press express the fear that with U.S. troops gone, Tehran will advance its power in Iraq.

But none of these commentators point to the most important unintended consequence of the wars — the space that opened up for the working class, peasants, women and oppressed nationalities to organize and fight to advance their own interests. In 2019 mass protests for jobs and political rights brought down the government of Prime Minister Abdel Abdul-Mahdi. More struggles lie ahead.

Botched execution torture

Continued from front page

“This event is the worst we’ve seen and unlike any other botched execution in the modern era,” said Rob-in Maher, executive director of the Death Penalty Information Center. “There is no precedent.”

The crime a then 18-year-old Pike was convicted of was horrific. She and her boyfriend tortured and cold-bloodedly murdered Colleen Slemmer, a young woman Pike thought was trying to steal her boyfriend.

Pike had lived through a brutish childhood, including being raped twice, at ages 11 and 17.

Pike was the first person to ever survive after being injected with lethal drugs. Seven others have escaped state attempts to kill them when executioners were unable to establish IV lines.

Sixty opponents of the death penalty protested outside the prison, including Amanda Buck, a former prisoner who had become Pike’s friend. She’d asked to stay longer in solitary confinement to be near her.

Pike was told she would be executed at 10 a.m., but an hour before a split three-judge panel at the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals issued a stay to review whether her brutal childhood had been taken into account at her trial. The state appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which voted 6-3 to vacate the stay.

In a procedure that was supposed to last 10 minutes, the “special operations team” tried repeatedly to establish an IV line to inject the lethal drug pentobarbital. This went on for an hour. At one point they shut the curtain so those attending the execution could no longer see what was going on. When they reopened it, Randy Spivey, one of Pike’s attorneys, counted seven needles in her left arm alone.

Small veins, blood disorder

Pike has small veins and a blood disorder that her lawyers told state officials could cause blood clotting at the injection site, or bleeding affecting the lungs. Because she knew the pain and other serious problems she would likely face with lethal injection, Pike had asked a state court that she be hung instead. This appeal was denied.

With her spiritual adviser, Rev. Mikey Noechel, in the room, at 7:30 p.m. Pike spoke what she thought would be her last words. “I’m going to leave this world the way I spent most of my life, and that is with love,” she said. “I’m ready to be free. This is a happy day.”

Witnesses next to the execution chamber heard her try to help the executioners find a vein. “Over and over again she said, ‘Please try up on my shoulder higher, please try here,’” said Spivey.

Four minutes later Pike was in obvious pain. “The vein in my arm feels like it’s about to bust,” she said. Pike asked Noechel, “Does it happen like that?” He replied, “Relax.” “I’m trying,” said Pike. A TV reporter from Knoxville, Will Puckett, told media, “I saw a tear roll down her right eye, and then she said, ‘One spot is really throbbing.’”

As time went on, witnesses could hear Pike choking, and then snoring. Then prison authorities ordered a second injection. “The attorneys said that the execution team never realized that the intravenous lines were not properly placed,” the *Washington Post* wrote Oct. 2.

The prison doctor handling the injections, Mark Walton Fowler, was the same one who had botched the execution of Tony Carruthers months earlier.

Prison authorities had no emergency medical personnel or vehicle in place during the execution. Witnesses are not allowed to have cellphones, so Pike’s legal team on the outside scrambled to reach authorities to stop the execution, saying she was in “unnecessary agony,” and the procedure violated her right to be executed free of cruel and unusual punishment. Neither the governor’s office nor the State Supreme Court answered. The attorneys were finally told the state attorney general’s office had just called for an ambulance.

When Pike arrived at the hospital, both of her arms were swollen, burned and blistered. “We at this point do not know the ramifications of the chemical torture that she has endured,” said Spivey.

In a 2006 interview, journalist Helen Roberts said Pike told her she’d “lost her mind” when she killed Slemmer and was deeply sorry for what she did.

After the botched execution, Gov. William Lee paused the Dec. 3 execution of Gary Wayne Sutton. On Oct. 3 Tennessee Department of Correction Commissioner Frank Strada resigned.