

French protests continue, as gov’t uses riots, arson to smear struggle

BY ROY LANDERSEN

More than half a million working people in cities across France joined protests against the policies of the government of President Emmanuel Macron Oct. 17. A wave of protests by high school students against education cuts has won support from workers and farmers, who in turn have joined the students’ actions with their own demands against government assaults on their livelihoods, as the crisis of French capitalism deepens.

The big-business press played down the scope of the actions, focusing instead on rioting, looting and destruction orchestrated by middle-class radicals that took place alongside the demonstrations. Their rampage dealt blows to the fight to build solidarity with the massive union-backed protests.

The CGT, one of France’s main union federations, backed the Oct. 17 protests, calling for “higher wages and pensions, lower prices and the protection of public services that meet people’s needs.”

The police refused to authorize as-

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Cuba takes fight against US blockade to the UN

Cuban people act to defend their socialist revolution



U.S. Mission to the U.N.

Ambassador to U.N. Mike Waltz, right, speaks at U.S.-organized panel to peddle lies on Cuban Revolution, hoping to blunt effect of Oct. 27-28 U.N. vote against Washington’s blockade.

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

A striking report prepared by the government of Cuba detailing the U.S. government’s over six-decades-long record of attacks, sanctions and the recent oil blockade against its people will be presented and debated at a meeting of the United Nations General Assembly Oct. 27-28. It’s titled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial

embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.”

“During the past year, the U.S. government has stepped up its efforts to strangle and isolate the Cuban Revolution,” the report says. “Since early 2026, daily life has been marked by an almost total absence of fuel, long and distressing blackouts, widespread disruptions in the national power grid, recurring failures in water supply, severe obstacles to solid waste collection, and persistent shortages of food and medicine. At the heart of each of these hardships lies the

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Workers look to fight against the ravages of soaring prices

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The big-business press is excited by accounts of growing profits, especially in products aimed at the top 1% of the population awash in extra cash, like private jets, ever-bigger estates, cars like Ferraris that go for over \$300,000 and more. At the same time, its reporting admits workers face greater challenges in making ends meet.

With the midterm elections just two weeks away, the big-business press is full of stories about the Democrats holding the Republicans responsible for what workers face, and vice versa. But this crisis is not rooted in which capitalist party holds governmental power, nor in the hike in gas prices resulting from Washington’s war with Tehran. It is rooted in the normal workings of the capitalist system, where the bosses drive to maximize their profits off the backs of workers and farmers.

“Rising Costs Push Necessities Out of Reach for Nearly Half of Americans,” headlined an Oct. 14 *New York Times* article. It referred to a recent study by the Pew Research Center that reported “60% say they do not currently have enough income to lead the kind of life they want; 53% say they do not have emergency funds that would cover their expenses for three months.” Another 27% say they have to choose between

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Join Socialist Workers Party in a special push up through election day



Nelson Gonzalez, left, SWP candidate for Florida governor, talks with Keith Walker in Fort Lauderdale Oct. 16. He subscribed to the *Militant*, got book on fight for women’s liberation.

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

The Socialist Workers Party announced Oct. 19 that it is organizing an 11-day special effort, from Oct. 24 through election day Nov. 3, to introduce working people to the party’s candidates, and to the *Militant* and books by SWP leaders and other revolutionaries on the lessons of past working-class struggles, as well

as to help raise contributions for the \$140,000 Party-Building Fund.

Across the U.S. working people are looking for solutions to the deepening crisis of the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression, including the sky-high cost of living, deteriorating social conditions, lack of good-paying and safe jobs and the escalat-

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SWP is working-class alternative to bosses’ Democrats, Republicans

BY TERRY EVANS

As the 2026 elections near, Socialist Workers Party candidates find increasing interest in their campaigns. They offer the only class-struggle program to protect workers from the attacks

Hotel workers use rolling strikes in Chicago Loop

BY NAOMI CRAINE

CHICAGO — Members of UNITE HERE Local 1 are continuing their fight for a contract at dozens of downtown hotels here. Workers at six of the largest hotels struck for five days Oct. 9-13, when the bosses had looked forward to lots of profitable bookings on the weekend of the Chicago Marathon.

Workers at the Hyatt Regency Chi-

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we’ve faced under both Democratic and Republican administrations and the further assaults the bosses and their parties have in store.

Both the Democrats and Republicans exist to uphold the rule of the wealthy capitalist families and to advance their wars. In a world increasingly marked by conflicts over resources, markets, exploitable labor and spheres of influence, the U.S. rulers are driving to advance their position and maximize their prof-

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Ravages of soaring prices

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which bills they can pay each month, and 32% say they worry constantly about the cost of healthcare and the amount of debt they have.
For workers, those the center lists as having “lower income,” these crisis conditions are even worse.

Prices 30% higher in past six years
Workers in over four in 10 U.S. households said they had trouble paying for some basic necessities in the past year — medical care, food, daily transportation, rent or mortgage payments. Of those unable to cover food costs, 20% said they had to go to a food bank or food pantry to get enough to eat.
The consumer price index rose by 3.7% in September over the year before. While the biggest increases were in fuel oil, up 74.2%; gas, up 34.2%;

airfares, up 22.4%; and public transportation, up 15.6%, price hikes are broad-based and encompass almost everything. This includes hospital care, haircuts, paper towels, beef, childcare, having a roof over your head, and the list goes on. In fact, everyday goods are 30% more expensive today than they were six years ago.
And wages haven’t kept up with rising prices, as bosses are determined to attack workers and our unions — like they’re doing at the BP and Marathon refineries in Indiana and the Bay Area — to further increase returns on their investments. Real average hourly earnings nationwide fell 0.5% last month alone.
There’s no letup in the drive by the giant energy monopolies to extract bigger profits by boosting home heating costs. “Average heating costs for U.S. households are expected to rise by 8.3% this winter,” reported MarketWatch. And for the millions of households that use oil to heat their homes, their bills may be 50% higher. Utilities nationwide have requested \$23 billion in rate increases.
To cover the high cost of necessities, more and more workers are forced to go deeper into debt, using credit cards, payday loans, and the like to pay bills. And the giant banks that profit off these cards now charge interest rates for unpaid balances of 22% or more.
Last year the number of U.S. households behind on loan payments rose to nearly 20%, the Federal Reserve said, and 8.6% of families spent more than 40% of their income paying down on their debts. More than 74 million people are saddled with outstanding debt on their cars, and 36 million have student loan debts, to say nothing of medical,

Nepal floods show capitalism, not ‘climate,’ caused disasters



AP Photo/Rajesh Kumar Singh

After a landslide in the Gorkha district in the Himalayas about 60 miles west of Kathmandu blocked the Budhi Gandaki River, causing downstream flooding Oct. 11, authorities in Nepal urged villagers to move to higher ground. Rapidly rising river floodwaters swept away a dozen houses, two suspension bridges and a highway bridge, leaving five people missing and 49 rescued.
“We have asked villagers living along the river banks downstream to evacuate,” a local official said. Authorities belatedly dispatched army and police rescue personnel to the area. The event was a stark reminder of the effects of ongoing tectonic shifts in the mountains there that can translate into dangerous landslides and floods. It’s just a few months since the Aug. 26 catastrophe upstream from here where a glacier collapsed, causing a deadly tsunami-scale flood that killed 1,427 people, with thousands still missing. Above, survivors with salvaged belongings three days later.
Both of these events — the catastrophe and the more minor destruction Oct. 11 — were man-made disasters caused by the for-profit capitalist system. Capitalist developers, looking to build inns, hotels and other structures for tourism as well as hydropower construction in this mountainous region of Nepal and neighboring China-ruled Tibet, have brought more people to live and work in these flood-prone areas. The number of buildings sitting in harm’s way increased by nearly half from 2016 to 2023.

— ROY LANDERSEN

The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us *The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward*



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.

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heating and all kinds of other debts.
More than half of raises won by workers in recent years have been eaten up by debt payments.

Skyrocketing cost of healthcare

One skyrocketing expense is the cost of medical care. Out-of-pocket spending on healthcare has risen nearly 50% in the past six years.
Jason King Jones from Center Valley, Pennsylvania, paid less than \$100 to have a cancerous tumor removed in 2022. Four years later he was hit with nearly \$1,000 in healthcare bills for a repeat of a similar procedure. “It feels like more burden is being put on the individual,” he told the *Financial Times*.

And more and more workers are being told that their insurance will no longer be accepted by the big hospital chains. For example, earlier this year Lehigh Valley Health Network in Pennsylvania dropped UnitedHealth insurance in a dispute over how much the insurance company should pay for patients’ coverage. The “dispute” left patients in the lurch. This is a perfect example of profits over people.
“Our healthcare industry really profits when people are sick or they need medication,” Melissa Hakim, a former doctor there who now works trying to help patients negotiate their health coverage, told the *Financial Times*. They’re “making money from people being ill.”

THE MILITANT

Pittsburgh strikers: ‘It was complete solidarity!’

In their first walkout in 50 years, some 1,000 members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers at Duquesne Light in Pittsburgh struck for 8 days over work hours, safety, pensions and union rights. Support for their picket lines was strong, the union told the ‘Militant.’



Militant/Tony Lane
IBEW Local 29 rallies Oct. 7 during strike against Duquesne Light Co. in Pittsburgh.

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Join Socialist Workers Party push

Continued from front page
ing drive by Washington and its rivals toward a third world war. Growing numbers reject the idea that voting for either Democrats or Republicans will help in any way.

Both parties “are viewed unfavorably by nearly 60% of Americans,” the *Wall Street Journal* reported Sept. 29.

Many workers are interested in party members’ explanations of why they should join in publicizing and building the SWP, the only party that fights for the working class to break with the bosses’ parties and organize independently to defend workers’ interests.

“I love the *Militant*, I know you are communists but I trust this paper,” Stephanie Vanzia, a subscriber in Port Neches, Texas, told Alyson

Kennedy, SWP candidate for governor of Texas, as they discussed her renewing her subscription. “I can see the truth from the workers’ point of view. The articles are based on facts and are well written and get to the many underlying reasons for the problems we face.”

Vanzia renewed her *Militant* subscription for a year and bought a copy of *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde: The Fall of the Last Colonial Empire in Africa*, a firsthand account by Victor Dreke, who led Cuba’s international volunteers who joined that struggle.

“Things are messed up,” Keith Walker, a landscaper originally from Jamaica, told Nelson Gonzalez, SWP candidate for governor of Florida, in Fort Lauderdale Oct. 16. “I don’t know when it will end.”

“We working people can end this unfolding global catastrophe of capitalism by making a socialist revolution to put our class, the working class, in power,” Gonzalez said. “Cuba opened that road in the Americas in 1959, and set an example for us today.”

“We had wonderful Cuban doctors in Jamaica, and Trump kicked them out,” Walker said. “Now we are left without doctors. It hurts my people.”

Walker subscribed to the *Militant* to learn more. And he bought a copy of *Cosmetics, Fashion, and the Exploitation of Women*. “It’s important for women to be part of the fight,” Walker said.

SWP: a fighting working-class party
Socialist Workers Party candidates are fighting union members who call for the unity of all workers — immigrant and native-born; of all colors, religions and nationalities; men and women — and promote a break with the bosses’ parties.

When they speak out or join in action — against Washington’s unconscionable oil blockade of Cuba; its war of imperialist plunder in Iran; in defense of the rights and struggles of African Americans, Puerto Ricans and women; and in defense of Israel’s place as a refuge from pogroms and against Jew-hatred — they are speaking and acting on behalf of the entire working class.

They promote a union-led fight for employment, with wage rates, work schedules and job conditions necessary for families to live, rather than be torn apart by the bosses’ relentless drive for profits. As the SWP said in its founding 1938 program, “*The right to employment* is the only serious right left to the workers in a society based upon exploitation.”

The party calls for a shorter workweek with no cut in pay, and with regular hours; for a massive public works program to provide employment for millions at union-scale wages to build hospitals, schools, childcare cen-

Teamsters locked out at Phillips 66 refinery in NJ



Militant/Craig Honts

LINDEN, N.J. — Some 385 oil refinery workers, members of Teamsters Local 877, were locked out by Phillips 66 bosses at its Bayway Refinery, the largest refinery on the East Coast, Oct. 19. Union members had voted down a contract proposal demanding concessions on wages, healthcare and safety protections.

“They can afford a fair contract, but they’re following the pattern set by the other big oil companies recently of pushing against the workers,” Alex Dimeo, a Teamsters business agent, above, second from right, told this *Militant* correspondent. “That’s the pattern from Marathon in California and BP locking out workers in Indiana. And now they are going after us.”

“One of the main issues is sick days,” he said. “The contract offer is only five days, the legal requirement in the state. After that they just start deducting from your vacation days.”

Local 877 President Jeff Sanford told the press another concession the company demands is to eliminate “fatigue days,” time off allowed under the current contract after workers do long periods of extended shifts. “Many of our folks can be forced to work 13 extended shifts in a row.”

BP locked out more than 800 members of United Steelworkers Local 7-1 at its refinery in Whiting, Indiana, seven months ago after workers rejected company demands to eliminate more than 100 jobs, cut wages and give up crucial bargaining rights. In Martinez, California, over 100 members of United Steelworkers Local 5 went on strike against Marathon in April over safety issues and company demands to gut seniority and hire nonunion workers. The company locked them out June 22.

Annual profits at Phillips 66 skyrocketed to \$3.85 billion this year, up from \$877 million in 2025. “They paid the company CEO \$23.1 million last year,” Dimeo said.

— CRAIG HONTs

Teamster Series

Lessons from U.S. labor battles of the 1930s

by Farrell Dobbs

“The principal lesson of the Teamster experience is not that under an adverse relationship of forces, the workers can be overcome, but that with proper leadership, they can overcome.”

\$16 each or all four for \$50

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Campaign to expand reach of ‘Militant,’ books, SWP fund

Sept. 26 - November 17 (week three)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	Fund received
UNITED STATES						
Atlanta	35	22	35	16	\$9,500	\$750
Chicago	55	17	55	21	\$13,500	\$3,622
Cincinnati	35	10	35	20	\$5,000	\$1,627
Dallas-Ft. Worth	60	26	60	29	\$5,000	\$0
Los Angeles	65	15	65	25	\$13,000	\$0
Miami	45	19	45	20	\$5,000	\$293
Minneapolis	55	16	55	16	\$7,000	\$3,225
N. New Jersey	60	26	60	24	\$7,500	\$3,618
New York	70	30	70	30	\$20,000	\$4,798
Oakland	75	36	75	40	\$15,000	\$6,769
Philadelphia	35	11	35	10	\$6,000	\$1,835
Pittsburgh	45	25	45	22	\$7,250	\$1,987
Seattle	50	21	50	19	\$15,000	\$2,480
Washington	40	18	40	18	\$4,500	\$1,435
Other		14		293		\$250
Total U.S.	725	306	725	603	\$133,250	\$32,689
Prisoners		76				
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	40	26	40	25		
Manchester	35	27	35	29		
Total U.K.	75	53	75	54		
Canada	65	30	80	49		
Australia	30	18	30	10		
Total	895	483	910	716	\$133,250	\$32,689
SHOULD BE	1,150	493	1,150	493	\$140,000	\$60,000

ters, housing and other things working people need.

In face of inflation the SWP demands cost-of-living escalators for wages — as well as retirement, and jobless and disability pay.

In addition to advancing this program in the 2026 elections, the SWP joins with Communist Leagues in

Canada, Australia and the U.K. to win 1,150 new readers to the *Militant* and sell an equal number of books by SWP and other revolutionary leaders by Nov. 17.

Join us in this effort! There is no better course to devote your life to. Contact the nearest campaign headquarters listed on page 8.

Vote Socialist Workers! Build the Socialist Workers Party!

California

Margaret Trowe, governor
Laura Garza, mayor of Los Angeles

Florida

Rachele Fruit, U.S. Senate
Nelson Gonzalez, governor

Georgia

Sam Manuel, U.S. Senate

Illinois

Naomi Craine, U.S. Senate

Minnesota

Kevin Dwire, U.S. Senate

New Jersey

Joanne Kuniansky, U.S. Senate
Craig Honts, U.S. Congress

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Willie Cotton, lieutenant governor

Ohio

John Hawkins, U.S. Senate

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Abby Tilsner, U.S. Congress
Sergio Zambrana, U.S. Congress

Texas

Alyson Kennedy, governor
Dennis Richter, U.S. Senate

Washington, D.C.

James Harris, delegate to Congress
Samir Hazboun, mayor

Washington state

Jacob Perasso, U.S. Congress
Rebecca Williamson, U.S. Congress

After US diesel deal, Moscow steps up attacks on Ukrainians

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Washington is ramping up pressure on the Ukrainian government, claiming Kyiv is the chief obstacle to peace, at the same time offering concessions to normalize relations with Moscow, whose murderous invasion of Ukraine has now lasted longer than World War I. While the Russian army is stalled or losing ground on the front line amid heavy casualties, the Vladimir Putin regime has stepped up its aerial bombardment of Ukraine's cities and power grid as winter approaches.

The Kremlin's target is Ukrainian working people, in workplaces, apartments and on city streets. Civilian casualties are at record levels, with 328 killed and 2,105 injured in September, 85% higher than the same month last year.

President Donald Trump announced he had struck a deal after speaking with Putin by phone Oct. 9. Trump said this deal included lifting restrictions on Russian diesel exports, a move he hopes will stem fuel price rises in the U.S. going into the 2026 elections. He then put on hold new bipartisan U.S. sanctions against Russia and denounced Kyiv's defensive targeting of Russian oil refineries.

Washington later slowed Ukraine's access to Elon Musk's Starlink satellite system, crucial for both its defense and offensive strikes, at the same time delaying shipments of U.S. missiles vital to Kyiv's efforts to meet escalating Russian attacks on Ukraine's cities.

In July, Trump had backed Kyiv's strikes on Russian refining capacity, an attack on both Moscow's oil supply and an essential source of cash for its war effort. He said it was "an escalation that can help lead to an end" of Moscow's war. But now he regards Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky as an obstacle to his efforts for new agreements with Moscow to aid the U.S. rulers' push to defend their place as top dog in the imperialist world "order."

Displaying imperial contempt for Ukraine's national sovereignty, Trump said the country needed to get a new president. Seeking to weaken

Kyiv's position, he said Oct. 19 it was "time for somebody else to negotiate on behalf of Ukraine."

After announcing his new dealings with Moscow, Trump claimed Oct. 11 that both Moscow and Ukraine would observe an "energy ceasefire." Kyiv paused its strikes on Russian oil refineries for three days. Moscow simply ignored the "agreement," pounding Ukrainian electrical, oil and gas infrastructure 76 times the following week.

The steps by the White House to develop closer relations with Moscow are "in the national interest of the United States," Trump said Oct. 16. By this he meant the interests of the billionaire ruling families. As U.S. imperialism's rivalry with Beijing, its main capitalist competitor, sharpens, a central piece of the U.S. rulers' global foreign policy is to draw Moscow closer as an ally.

Washington no longer provides financial aid to Ukraine and only supplies



Reuters/Gleb Garanich

Apartment building in Kyiv, Ukraine, shattered by Russian drone attacks Oct. 21. As winter nears, Russian President Vladimir Putin targets pedestrians, housing and power plants.

weapons paid for by Kyiv and European governments. However, U.S. intelligence and access to Starlink remains critical to the country's defenses against Moscow's attacks, and its ability to strike military and infrastructure targets in Russia. The White House deliberately

cut this access back as part of applying pressure on Ukraine in its maneuvering. Despite Moscow's pounding of Ukraine's cities and Trump's reversal on protections, the large majority of Ukrainians favor continuing to fight to defend their national sovereignty.

Russian soldier joins Ukraine war against Moscow's invasion

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The story of a 26-year-old Russian officer, Lt. Lev Stupnikov, who defected after becoming completely disillusioned with participating in Moscow's murderous war in Ukraine, was featured in the Oct. 16 *Wall Street Journal*. Stupnikov's actions helped lead to severe setbacks for Russian forces as they tried to take the eastern Ukrainian town of Vuhledar. Ukrainian forces were able to guide him across the front in July 2024.

His story reveals growing political disaffection inside Russia, including in its military. And it graphically describes the shadowy war waged by Ukrainian agents who communicate over encrypted platforms with thousands of Russians, ranging from housewives who live near military factories to soldiers on the front line.

As Moscow's invasion began in February 2022, Stupnikov watched film of Russian bombardment of Ukrainian cities. "They were drop-

ping bombs on innocent civilians," he told the *Journal*. "It was evil."

His mother, Tatiana Yantsen, was an office worker active in anti-war protests in the Siberian city of Omsk. She helped motivate him to change sides. In November 2023, he sent her his orders — that he was to be sent to the front "for the timely replenishment of losses."

His disillusionment with the war grew, as well as with the Russian military, where to get a pass to go off base many had to pay a bribe. Stupnikov, who had graduated as a signals officer from a prestigious military academy in St. Petersburg, started collaborating with Ukrainian forces.

He was sent to a battalion tasked with taking Vuhledar, a stronghold central to Ukraine's defense of the strategic Donbas region.

As Moscow's "human wave" tactics decimated the unit, soldiers like Stupnikov were replaced with convicts released to go to war and untrained re-

cruits tempted by money. He watched as a group ransacked an liquor store, beating up its Ukrainian owner.

In February 2024, Yantsen wrote on her son's behalf to Dmytro Karpenko, a Ukrainian agent who works with Russian prisoners of war. With his help, Stupnikov began an active sabotage campaign to do damage to Russia's war, before defecting.

He passed on radio frequencies, troop locations and battle plans. Ukrainian commanders knew exactly when and where Russian officers would gather or tanks would advance. His brigade suffered serious casualties.

After his defection, Stupnikov decided to join the Russian Volunteer Corps, an elite paramilitary unit in the Ukrainian army of former Russian soldiers and other opponents of the Vladimir Putin regime. Some had set fire to Russian army recruitment offices while others joined anti-Putin protests.

Karpenko helped Yantsen escape abroad with her daughter. But she wasn't sure about Stupnikov's decision to join the pro-Ukraine combatants. She asked him, "Is this really our war?"

Stupnikov replied that he wanted to make up for having been part of Putin's brutal invasion force. He believed Russians needed to help end it. "Yes," he told her, "this is our war."

At the military academy, almost a decade earlier, he said, "I pledged to defend freedom, independence, and the constitutional order. But Putin destroyed all three."

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



October 29, 2001

HAVANA — Four hundred people from 60 countries participated in the World Forum on Food Sovereignty here, convened by the National Association of Small Farmers of Cuba. A delegation from the United States included farmers from Wisconsin, Iowa, and Florida. The conference provided an opportunity for farmers to meet and exchange experiences.

In the closing session Cuban President Fidel Castro congratulated participants for convening the first international forum on food sovereignty, but cautioned that "we are not asking for enough."

"What can the peasant do with land, if he doesn't have schools, doctors, hospitals, vaccines, protection against illness, credit, a price for their products, a market, and if he receives each time less and has to work harder?" Castro said that the current world order could not resolve problems raised at the meeting.



October 29, 1976

WHY YOU SHOULD VOTE SOCIALIST WORKERS

A *Militant* editorial:
When you pull the lever November 2, pull it for the Socialist Workers Party! The Peter Camejo and Willie Mae Reid campaign champions the struggles of the workers:

For full employment at adequate wages, to be provided for by ending military spending and inaugurating a massive federal jobs program;

For equal rights and opportunities for Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Native Americans, and all other oppressed nationalities;

For women's rights, for the right of abortion, for the Equal Rights Amendment;

For an end to the cutbacks; for decent education for all; for adequate health and medical care for the elderly;

No other party has this program.

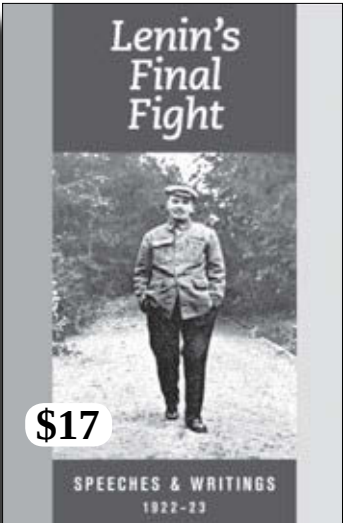


October 29, 1951

The 82nd Congress, which adjourned last week, gave the capitalists, brass hats, price-gougers and rent hogs practically everything they wanted — the biggest arms program in peacetime history and the biggest profits of all time.

It gave the workers one blow after another, raised their cost of living, increased their taxes and dragged them closer to another world war. The overwhelming majority of the American people want the war stopped in Korea, and the troops brought home. Instead, Congress gave \$57 billion to the brass hats in this country and \$7.3 billion to brass hats abroad.

It raised the taxes of workers 12% while the growing number of millionaires will have to pay only 1% more. Experience with the 82nd Congress has taught that labor is paying a heavy price for its leaders' opposition to the formation of an independent labor party.



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Communist League: ‘Building a working-class party in Canada’

BY BEATRICE BOWEN

MONTREAL — “There are growing conflicts among rival capitalist powers, which are marching humanity toward a third world war, and Canada’s imperialist rulers are an important part of these sharpening clashes,” Joe Young, the Communist League candidate in the recent Quebec elections, told a Militant Labor Forum here Oct. 17.

“The rulers in Ottawa have massively increased military spending in preparation for future wars. Liberal Prime Minister Mark Carney acts to defend the interests of Canada’s capitalist class, at home and abroad. We need to build a working-class party to lead working people in their millions to take political power out of their hands,” he said.

Canada’s rulers are in a trade war with their counterparts in the U.S., a declining but still the most powerful imperialist power. Ottawa is responding to Washington’s tariffs with its own tariffs on U.S. goods. They’re looking to find new trading partners to reduce Canadian capital’s dependency on the U.S.

Over 70% of Canadian exports and 46% of its imports come from trade with the U.S. Deepening international competition and the trade war were important factors in the loss of 68,000 jobs in Canada in September, 49,000 of them in Quebec.

Canada’s rulers have used this tariff war to foster Canadian nationalism. Both Carney and Conservative leader Pierre Polievre spoke at a number of chauvinist “Canadian unity” rallies leading up to the Oct. 19 Alberta referendum. One item there calls for organizing a vote on independence for Alberta, which was voted down. Carney said, “Canada is facing real threats to our economy, to our security, to our way of life. We have to be strong and we are stronger together.”

“But there is no we! There is them and us,” Young explained. “Canada is a class-divided society. The 1,200 steelworkers on strike at National Steel Car for safer working conditions, where seven workers have been killed on the job since the 1970s, are taking on a *Canadian* boss, Gregory Aziz, not one from the U.S.”

Our unions need to be internationalists, Young added, pointing to the example of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 401 in Alberta, which sent a powerful message of solidarity to 3,800 striking UFCW members at JBS meatpacking in Colorado. It said that the union stands “shoulder to shoulder” with “our brothers and sisters in Greeley,” and “we know when workers unite across borders, we are strongest together.” This is the kind of solidarity that’s needed.

Cross-class Canadian unity is a trap

On Sept. 21 Carney’s Liberal government in Ottawa introduced the “Building Canada Strong Act,” known as Bill C-39, which has now passed second reading with the support of the Conservatives. It would expand the circumstances under which the federal labor minister can act unilaterally to end a strike or lockout, a further attack on the right to strike. Over the last couple years, Ottawa has moved to shut down important strikes, including in rail, on the docks and more.

On Oct. 13 the Canadian Labour Congress organized a town hall meeting by Zoom to help prepare a fight in defense of the right to strike. Two days later there were actions in some 21 cities across Canada. “This is an important fight that will continue, whatever happens with Bill C-39,” Young said. “But the CLC’s support for Carney’s ‘Team Canada,’ a class-collaborationist alliance of bosses and labor, deals a blow to the fight to defend the right to strike.”

With this election, the Parti Quebecois returned to power in a minority government, with only 28% of the vote, the lowest vote for a ruling party in Quebec’s history. People voted for the PQ despite its position for independence, which polls show is only supported by 30% of the population. Workers were voting against the highly unpopular Coalition for Quebec’s Future, which received only 13% of the vote and failed to win a single seat in the legislature. But, Young pointed out, voting for capitalist lesser evils is not the way forward for working people. Instead, we need to build a party of our own.

“Because of the victory won by successful mass struggles opposing discrimination against French-speaking

6,000 join to condemn ‘genocide’ slander against Israel

BY JANET POST

More than 6,000 political and public figures in the arts, academia, government, civil liberties, religious and other organizations have issued an open letter condemning the slander that Israel is responsible for “genocide” when it defends itself and the Jews who live there from murderous pogroms by Hamas.

“We the undersigned are outraged and sickened by the latest blood libel to be inflicted on the Jewish people: the lie that Israel committed ‘genocide’ in Gaza. We reject this accusation with contempt,” the letter says. The ancient blood libel that Jews drank Christian blood was long used by reactionary groups to justify the repeated slaughters visited on Jews.

The letter was published Sept. 9 by the Creative Community for Peace, a Los Angeles-based coalition seeking “to build bridges through the arts, to educate and counter rising antisemitism,” and “to galvanize support against the cultural boycott of Israel.”

The four authors of the document are writer Yossi Klein Halevi, Rabbi Yitz Greenberg, Rabbi Micha Odenheimer and Jonathan Karp, professor of history and Judaic studies at Binghamton University in New York.

Introducing the letter on the community’s website, Ari Ingel, the organization’s executive director, said, “Falsely branding the Jewish state as genocidal carries consequences, and Jews around the world are living with them.” The website points out, “The letter places the current accusation within a longer history of false claims about Jews and warns against such rhetoric to become normalized in public life.”

“The unprecedented combat conditions of the war — hundreds of kilometers of tunnels, thousands of boobytrapped homes — the conflating of



Militant/Ernest Mailhot

As Ottawa steps up trade war with Washington, it has moved to shut down labor rights. Workers rally in Montreal Oct. 15, part of actions in 21 cities, fighting to defend right to strike.

Quebecois decades ago, the demand for Quebec independence today is no longer a fight against the national oppression of the Quebecois. Rather, it is an attempt to further the interests of a layer of Quebec capitalists and middle-class hangers-on. The chauvinist PQ campaigns call to slash immigration to Quebec in half, falsely claiming immigrants are responsible for the shortage of housing and needed social services, is reactionary and divisive.”

The CL campaigns for permanent residence for all immigrants in Canada and an end to deportations. “We de-

mand a massive government-funded public works program to create jobs to build housing, schools, hospitals and provide the social services working people need,” Young said.

“Election campaigns like the one the Communist League ran this fall, where we campaigned not only in Quebec, but across Canada and in the U.S., are a step toward building the internationalist working-class party we need,” he said.

“There is a federal by-election coming up in the Montreal area and the CL plans to run. Join us to build the Communist League!”

combatants with ‘journalists’ and ‘human rights workers,’ the ratio of civilian-to-terrorist casualties, considered low for asymmetrical urban warfare, the absence of mass starvation despite repeated claims of imminent catastrophe, the warnings given to civilians before attack: All these factors were erased in the eagerness to indict Israel for genocide,” the letter says.

“In this war, only one side intended to commit genocide, and that is Hamas.”

On Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas thugs, armed and financed by Tehran, systematically slaughtered over 1,200 people, overwhelmingly Jewish civilians, took more than 250 hostages and raped and mutilated dozens of women in Israel, and have threatened to do so “again and again.”

This was “the darkest day in Israel’s history,” said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu when he addressed the U.N. General Assembly Sept. 24. “Hamas terrorists committed the worst slaughter of Jews since the Holocaust.”

‘Turn the Jewish state into a pariah’

“To accuse Israel of genocide, the massacre of October 7 has been systematically downplayed, while Israeli actions have been distorted and amplified,” the letter states. “Israel went to war on October 8 not out of vengeance, as its detractors claim, but to break the Iranian-led siege of terror enclaves on its borders, and to restore its deterrence, without which it cannot survive in the long term in the Middle East. Thousands of rockets and missiles were fired at Israel in the weeks following the massacre, while Hamas starved and tortured 250 Israelis, some of whom were murdered in captivity.”

The large number signing the letter shows that more people are standing up

to speak out against Jew-hatred, despite the growth of Jew-hatred today.

Some of the prominent signers include former U.S. diplomat Elliott Abrams; former U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson; former Canadian government minister Irwin Cotler; Alex Ryvchin, co-CEO of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry; the Anti-Defamation League and its CEO Jonathan Greenblatt; Harvard professor and author Steven Pinker; Soraya Deen, founder of the Muslim Women Speakers Movement; TV host Bill Maher; actors Debra Messing, Maureen Lipman, Anthony Edwards, Patricia Heaton and Mayim Bialik; and singer Boy George.

“Already on October 8, as Israel was still fighting terrorists within its border communities and hadn’t yet begun burying its dead, anti-Zionists began raising the cry of ‘genocide,’” the letter says. “In fact, Israel’s enemies have been accusing it of genocide for decades.”

Genocide is the systematic attempt to exterminate an entire people. That is what the Nazis tried to do during World War II when they murdered 6 million Jews, two out of every three Jews in Europe, 40% of the world’s entire Jewish population.

“The accusation of genocide has become a pretext for excluding, attacking and even murdering Jews around the world,” the Creative Community for Peace-initiated letter explains. “Its purpose is to delegitimize Jewish self-determination and to turn the only Jewish state into the world’s arch criminal and pariah.”

The letter closes, “We urge our fellow Jews and our non-Jewish friends to treat the accusation of genocide with revulsion — as the latest in a long history of lies about the Jewish people. ‘A lie has no legs,’ notes the ancient Hebrew proverb.

“We will not allow this lie to stand.”

Protests in France continue

Continued from front page
semblies in Paris for the demonstration until a few hours before the start of the mass action. Then people were only allowed to gather at the Place de la Republique. Elsewhere, demonstrators were attacked by cops for holding “illegal” assemblies.

For weeks high school students held protests against government policies that have led to overcrowded classrooms, a lack of equipment and thousands of teachers’ jobs unfilled. Violent police attacks against the protests resulted in injuries to some students, spurring solidarity for their demonstrations among working people.

Veterans of the yellow vest movement joined the Oct. 17 actions in some towns. Yellow vest protests took place in 2018 and 2019, initially in rural areas protesting rising diesel taxes, before becoming a movement against the broader effects of the Macron government’s attempts to dump the capitalist crisis on workers’ backs.

“High schoolers have not been listened to for several weeks,” Arthur Leveque, a geography student told *Le Monde* at the Oct. 17 march in Angers in western France, just like “the yellow vests and others before them.”

French authorities said at least 550,000 participated in the Oct. 17

protests in 140 cities and towns across the country. One-fifth of the demonstrators were in Paris.

Thousands of hooded anarchists and other middle-class radicals, as well as jihadists from the suburbs, set fires, sacked stores and government offices and gave a handle to attacks by the cops and government restrictions on rights in wake of the actions. This thuggery took place in Marseille, Paris, Bordeaux, Lyon and Nice. The historic City Hall in Limoges, in central France, was gutted by fire.

The government seized on the violence to impose overnight curfews in parts of these cities and several towns in northern France. Authorities in Marseille banned demonstrations. Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu refused to rule out declaring a state of emergency.

Unions, farmers join protests

In the industrial city of Ales in the south of France, the Oct. 17 march of 1,300 was led by a contingent of workers from the local hospital.

The Confederation Paysanne, a union of smaller farmers, denounced police violence against the high school students and organized contingents in some 20 different demonstrations. But the two largest farmers’ organi-



Sipa via AP Images

March in Angers, France, Oct. 17 led by students and “yellow vests,” protests high cost of living and cuts to education. Some half a million joined actions in cities and towns across France that day, but big-business media focused its reporting on riots initiated by anarchists and antifa.

zations in France, dominated by large capitalist farmers, did not support the student-initiated actions.

Farmers have also fought to defend their livelihoods in recent weeks, holding protests against fuel prices and intrusive European Union regulations. Hundreds of farmers driving tractors converged on the National Assembly in Paris Oct. 8 to protest EU budget proposals that would slash their income by 13% to 15%.

At least 2,400 people were arrested Oct. 17, one-third of them under 18 years of age. Macron said “radical far-left groups, joined by numerous criminals” had “sought to bring down the Republic.”

The actions come six months before a scheduled election to replace the president. His unpopular minority government faces growing resistance to its attempts to cut public services as it ensures government bondholders get paid. Wealthy capitalist investors are pressing the government to reduce its mushrooming

debt, which is 115% of the country’s gross domestic product.

Different French political parties have sought to utilize the protests for their own electoral advantage. Marine Le Pen, leader of the right-wing National Rally, is the current front-runner in the presidential campaign. She attacked Macron, presenting herself as the only candidate who can restore order. She blamed an “alliance between politically motivated rioters and delinquents from the banlieues,” the poorer urban outskirts where much of France’s Muslim immigrant population lives, for the riots.

Jean-Luc Mélenchon — a leader of France Unbowed, a party on the left of capitalist politics — who marched in the Oct. 17 protest in Paris, has emerged as Le Pen’s main rival. Support for candidates across the traditional French bourgeois parties is waning.

Nat London in Paris contributed to this article.

Paris synagogue ransacked, desecrated during riot



Members of the Ohalei Yaakov congregation discovered that their temporary prayer space on Rue Burnouf had been broken into, ransacked and desecrated, while massive protests by students and unionists took place across France Oct. 17. The congregation had been holding services there while its synagogue on Rue Henri Murger, above, was renovated. Jewish-owned shops in Marseille were also attacked.

“When chaos and violence take over the streets, synagogues are the first to suffer,” Sacha Roytman, the head of Combat Antisemitism Movement, told the press. “The desecration of the synagogue in Paris is a clear warning sign: What begins against Jews never stops there.”

Prayer books and other objects were scattered across the floor and the rabbi’s office ransacked after thugs broke into the temple.

A masked rioter in the city that day had held up a Jew-hating sign reading, “Stop gassing us, we are not Jews.”

In Marseille, France’s second-largest city, rioters vandalized dozens of shops, including a number owned by Jews, with some set ablaze. Bruno Benjamin, president of the Marseille-Provence branch of CRIF, an umbrella coalition of French Jewish institutions, reported that groups of marchers there carried Palestinian flags and chanted, “Intifada.” This word has become increasingly synonymous with extending around the world Hamas’ bloody Oct. 7, 2023, massacre of Jews in Israel.

On Paris’ Boulevard des Capucines, “Free Gaza” was written across a shop’s shutter. In Lyon, “Free Palestine” graffiti was painted next to smashed storefronts. Supporters of Hamas falsely present the reactionary Jew-hating outfit as fighting for the liberation of Palestinians.

France has the largest Jewish population in Europe. In 2025 the number of reported acts of Jew-hatred rose to 1,320, three times that in 2022 before the Oct. 7 Hamas pogrom that killed over 1,200 people, most of them Jews.

— ROY LANDERSEN

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Cuba takes fight against Washington's blockade to the UN

Continued from front page
blockade as the common cause.”

Washington — under every administration, Democratic and Republican alike — has carried out this course since the first months of the victory of the Cuban Revolution in 1959. “The majority of Cubans support Castro,” Lestor Mallory, then U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for Inter-American affairs, wrote in a secret April 6, 1960, State Department memorandum. “It follows that every possible means should be undertaken promptly to weaken the economic life of Cuba.” To make “the greatest inroads in denying money and supplies to Cuba, to decrease monetary and real wages, to bring about hunger, desperation and overthrow of government.”

On page after page, Cuba's report to the U.N. details the hardships Washington's actions have imposed on the Cuban people from March 2025 to February 2026. Despite these attacks, they are determined to find ways to stand firm in defending their country's sovereignty.

Cuba's healthcare system, long a key gain of the socialist revolution, has been a central target of the U.S. rulers. The blockade of medical supplies, parts for medical equipment and crucially needed drugs, along with daily interruptions of electrical power, has led to a doubling of infant mortality and reduced the rate of survival from cancer for children and youth, from 85% to 65%. “Today, Cuba's surgical waiting list stands at 100,000 patients, including 12,000 children,” the report says.

Food production and distribution has been severely affected. Cuba had 20,000 tons of food in national warehouses, but its distribution “has slowed to a crawl,” overwhelmingly due to lack of fuel for transportation. Crop yields have fallen as the daily average hours of irrigation have been reduced from 16 to two because of severe cuts in electrical power.

Yields in rice production fell to 1.9 tons per hectare in 2025, down from 4.21 tons in 2018, the report says. Cuba's 2024-25 sugar harvest fell below 200,000 tons, the lowest production level in more than a century.

Thousands of containers filled with food, medicine and other goods bound for Cuba have been stranded across the Caribbean since two international shipping companies stopped all deliveries after Washington issued an executive order in May authorizing the freezing of assets and sanctions against companies that trade with Cuba.

Operations in hotels, banking, mining, airlines and more have been systematically cut back, as the U.S. rulers have wielded their sanctions and threats to foreign companies.

Cubans respond to attacks

After discussions organized in people's assemblies all across the island, the Cuban government has adopted a series of sweeping measures affecting almost every aspect of the country's economy, including property relations, economic planning and the state monopoly of foreign trade. Its goal is to revive agricultural and industrial production.

The Cuban people have responded by using their creativity to find ways to provide at least some essential services. These include initiatives by the thousands of members of the National Union of Energy and Mine Workers, who are



Cuba's report to the U.N. on the brutal effects of the U.S. rulers' blockade details its blows to Cuba's historic healthcare system. Above, Mártires de Las Tunas Provincial Pediatric Hospital.

waging a daily battle to keep the country's electrical grid functioning. Efforts by Cuban workers organize the distribution of water to those in need and the collection of piles of accumulated trash.

Thousands of electric tricycles, many solar-powered, have sprung up to transport passengers and deliveries. Solar-powered charging stations are being set up in a growing number of cities, allowing residents to charge everything, from electric vehicles to

key household devices.

Despite the damage from Washington's punishing assault, more than 1.5 million students started the school year Sept. 1, with funding to assure children's special needs will be met.

Ten thousand new medical students also began courses that day, determined to find a way to pursue care as widely as possible, in line with the historical record of Cuba's socialist revolution — every person's right to healthcare offered

Cuba takes steps to improve its production of electricity

BY RÓGER CALERO

“We are moving forward with the solutions we've decided on. Without resources it's a long, hard road, but we're alive and we're slowly making progress — with our people,” Vicente de la O Levy, Cuba's minister of energy and mines, told Reuters Oct. 9. (A more complete version of the interview was posted on YouTube by the Cuban News Agency.)

He described the brutal effects of the U.S. rulers' oil blockade and sanctions imposed on the Cuban economy and people, and responded to Washington's latest round of threats of attack.

In early October, U.S. authorities announced the Coast Guard had intercepted a loaded oil tanker they claimed was bound for Cuba.

“We can assure you that there was no contract of any kind with Enetec S.A.,” said de la O Levy, “No Cuban state-owned company has managed to secure a fuel contract, whether for small or large quantities.” This is nothing more than an effort by Washington to put additional pressure on the Cuban government, and to show the world how difficult it is to get fuel to Cuba, he said.

The oil blockade imposed by the Donald Trump administration in January has succeeded in preventing any fuel deliveries to the Cuban government, crippling the country's industry, transportation and basic services. Washington has allowed some U.S. fuel exporters to ship gasoline and diesel to the island's private sector.

The U.S. media speaks of “millions of gallons” of imported fuel coming to the private sector, said de la O Levy, but these are small quantities compared to the country's needs. “We continue suffering blackouts. We lack fuel to transport medicine, raw materials for production, irrigation, virtually everything.”

The U.S. ban also applies to liquified gas sold in small cylinders for cooking, which a large percentage of Cuba's people depend on. “This is another concrete example of how the blockade directly attacks the people,” he said.

New gov't steps ease scarcities

As part of steps recently rolled out by the Cuban leadership, private businesses and individuals are now allowed to import and resell fuel, lubricants and other products. They are also able to lease state-run facilities to sell these products. Up to now, much of the imported fuel brought to Cuba has been sold chaotically from people's apartments and private convenience stores. Prices have ranged from \$19 to \$38 a gallon, which gets added on top of the cost of everything, from produce at the market to taxi fares.

Now farm cooperatives, made up of individual private farmers, are pooling their resources to import U.S. fuel directly, not through middlemen sprouting up across the island in search of profits.

Some cooperative members “bought 1,500 liters, and some 200,” Pablo Pérez Guzmán, president of the Frank País Cooperative in Artemisa province, told the local newspaper. “We didn't get it to resell it, but for the producers directly.” Farmers will pay \$2.40 a liter, instead of the \$7 demanded by private sellers.

The cooperative also allocated 20 to 50 liters for some farmers who couldn't afford to pay. “It's not possible to supply everyone, but even so, collectively we have planted more than 50% of our land in order to bring food to the people,” said Pérez.

US goal: crush the Cuban people

The U.S. government's sanctions are intended “to break the Cuban government and people,” said the energy minister. They tell us “we must privatize

with human solidarity.

While transportation is still scarce, every morning 178 young students gather for classes at the National Ballet School in Havana, where rigorous dance instruction is organized, along with math, history and science classes. Over the decades, Cuba has produced dozens of internationally renowned dancers and choreographers. Classical ballet remains a celebrated part of the country's culture. Tickets for performances there cost less than \$1.

For years, the U.N. General Assembly has overwhelmingly adopted resolutions calling on Washington to end its decades-long economic war against Cuba. In 2025 the vote was 165 in favor, seven against and 12 abstentions.

In preparation for this year's hearing, Washington has been using both offers of aid and threats to cut it off to place pressure on governments to vote “No.” But despite this pressure, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez told the press in September, “Our people are confident in the overwhelming support of the world for the demand to end the blockade.”

Leading up to the vote, many groups across the country and around the world are planning actions demanding an end to Washington's efforts to strangle the Cuban people.

CUPET” — the state-owned oil and gas company — and that we “must privatize tourism, the entire Cuban economy; that there must be ‘free’ elections, that there must be this, and there must be that.”

The U.S. rulers' aggression didn't start with Donald Trump's executive order, he said. It began on Jan. 1, 1959, with the triumph of the Cuban Revolution. And it has continued for over six decades, under Republican and Democratic administrations alike.

“Are they going to lift the blockade if we privatize CUPET? Are they going to end the pressure? We're not infants to believe that,” he said. “Their intention is to break the Cuban people, and the Cuban people have decided that is not going to happen.”

Asked by Reuters about the slight improvement seen in the energy supply since the end of the summer, de la O Levy attributed it to maintenance done on power plants, the installation of 144 solar farms and countless numbers of solar panels installed on the roofs of homes and institutions.

As part of this effort, priority has been given to providing electricity to schools, health clinics, maternity homes and elderly centers, he said. All of Cuba's polyclinics now have a basic solar unit that provides enough energy for minimal light, ventilation and keeping medications refrigerated.

He said 44 electric charging stations have been installed around the country. More than 1 million electric scooters and tricycles, many of them providing public transportation, are circulating. “It's a bare-bones means of transportation, not the big air-conditioned buses with comfortable seats we used to have, and they can't cover long routes. But we are moving,” said de la O Levy. “That's what this siege has imposed on us, but we're coming out of it.”

Rapid spread of new Ebola epidemic in Africa is a deadly threat

BY LESLIE DORK

Today's largest and fastest growing Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo reached 9,552 confirmed cases with 4,602 deaths by Oct. 19. This is the most rapid spread of Ebola-caused deaths ever. Washington and other imperialist powers are doing nothing to provide aid and treatment, in sharp contrast to the response of Cuban medical volunteers during the Ebola outbreak in Africa in 2014.

First detected in May, the epidemic has now spread to Uganda and Kenya. Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, reported its first case Oct. 20. It's caused by the Bundibugyo strain of Ebola, with no known vaccine or treatment.

"I have never seen [an Ebola epidemic] get this far ahead of us," Heather Kerr, director of the International Rescue Committee in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, told the *New York Times*. Most new cases are people not on contact lists used to track potential cases, because lack of serious attention means "deaths are occurring not in treatment centers but in people's homes and communities."

The outbreak started in eastern DRC, where the ability to deal with it was severely weakened by 30 years of armed conflicts between government and opposition forces. The United Nations reports 243 acts of violence, threats, or interference affecting aid workers since the beginning of the year.

When Ebola hit a displaced persons camp with a treatment center



Estudios Revolución

In October 2014 then Cuban President Raúl Castro sees off volunteer medical brigade members going to Sierra Leone to combat Ebola. Today Washington is doing nothing to treat new Ebola outbreak in Democratic Republic of the Congo. Instead, it is preventing Cuban help.

last month, soldiers came looking for weapons and burned the camp to the ground. Some 19,000 people had to flee, spreading the infection.

Toilers there have a distrust of health workers, international responders and government institutions.

The mortality rate of those infected is averaging 50%. Many who develop Ebola symptoms choose to stay home with their families instead of going to treatment centers where they fear dying alone. Deep cultural and spiritual traditions surround death and burial, which are ignored in treatment centers.

Local healthcare workers have gone unpaid, and since the outbreak began at least 50 have died of Ebola.

The World Health Organization declared the outbreak a public health emergency in June, announcing a \$518 million six-month emergency response plan, offering \$3.9 million from its contingency fund.

The U.S. government sharply cut funding to humanitarian groups in Africa last year and plans to cut billions of dollars more from global health spending. Other imperialist governments and donors have also tightened their aid.

Washington responded not with aid, but imposed a ban on travel from the Democratic Republic of the Congo by anyone who was in the country over the previous 21 days. The government of Canada followed suit with an entry ban.

In September, Washington convened

a meeting of foreign ministers from the Group of 20+. Participants pledged \$700 million to fight the epidemic. But this has had little impact.

Big capitalist pharmaceutical companies like Moderna and Serum Institute of India are competing to develop a lucrative vaccine for Bundibugyo. Merck, the maker of the Ervebo vaccine used against the more common Zaire Ebola virus, sent the vaccine for clinical trial in the DRC hoping to show it could be profitable for combating Bundibugyo. And the makers of a number of antiviral drugs are rushing to clinical trials to see if they can be effective.

Cuba barred from fighting Ebola

The most effective response to any Ebola epidemic was shown by Cuban volunteers in the worst outbreak to date, centered in the West African countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea from 2014 to 2016. A powerful account of that battle is told in *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa* by Enrique Ubieta Gómez.

Within three days of the U.N.'s call for assistance in that epidemic, Cuba selected and started training 256 doctors, nurses and healthcare technicians, out of 12,000 who volunteered to join the fight against Ebola. Cuba was the only country to send medical personnel for patient care.

After Cuba responded, governments

in Europe increased financial aid and Beijing built another laboratory in Sierra Leone. Washington announced it would send 500 soldiers to Liberia to build a hospital and other facilities.

Rather than treating their Ebola patients as a threat, the Cuban medical workers provided hands-on care to thousands of critically ill people, their families and in communities traumatized by the disease. As people in Sierra Leone got to know the Cubans, suspicion of treatment from "outsiders," who had no care for the customs there, was gradually overcome.

The human connections made by Cuban healthcare providers made a life or death difference for many struck by the deadly disease and allowed a dignified death for others. When the last member of the medical brigade returned home after eight months, the Ebola epidemic was effectively eradicated.

Ubieta Gómez noted his book is "about the solidarity and internationalism that are at the heart of the Cuban Revolution." Sending "doctors and nurses to the West African countries struck by the Ebola epidemic continued a tradition spanning more than five decades." Cuba's response was a product of the transformation resulting from its socialist revolution.

As part of Washington's drive today to overturn that revolution, the U.S. rulers slander Cuban medical volunteers around the world and pressure governments who have benefited from Cuba's medical missions to shut them down. Secretary of State Marco Rubio slanders Cuban doctors serving abroad, claiming they're "forced labor" and part of a system of "state-sponsored human-trafficking."

In 2014, upon hearing Cuba would respond to its appeal for help with Ebola, Ernest Bai Koroma, the president of Sierra Leone, told Cuban Ambassador Jorge Fernando Lefebvre, "I knew Cuba would not abandon us. You are true to your heritage, to your African roots. That is what Fidel [Castro] has taught you. I knew Cuba would continue to be a friend of Africa. Tell Raúl [Castro], tell the people of Cuba, that we will never forget that."

The U.S. government is preventing Cuba from responding today and the Congolese people are paying for it with their lives.

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Lessons for today from past union struggles

Fighting to protect working people from the destructive effects of rising prices for food, housing, childcare and other essentials is a central responsibility in front of the unions. It goes side by side with fighting for jobs, safe working conditions and organizing solidarity with workers who are on strike or fighting bosses' lockouts.

Socialist Workers Party candidates call for a shorter workweek with no cut in pay to create jobs for the unemployed and for cost-of-living adjustments in all contracts, benefits and pensions, so whenever prices rise our wages go up to match.

These proposals are neither unrealistic, nor new. They arise out of workers' own struggles and have been adopted, fought for and in some cases won by unions.

The United Auto Workers won its first escalator clause in 1948 after 75,000 workers at Chrysler went on strike. Like any wage raise, this came out of the bosses' profits. In 1970 UAW members at GM struck and won regular cost-of-living increases tied to the rise in inflation — with no ceiling.

After striking in 1956, the United Steelworkers won an escalator clause. The United Mine Workers won COLA after a 54-day strike in 1974 covering 120,000 miners.

The demand for a 30-hour workweek with no cut

in pay was adopted by the UAW in 1943, as workers were beginning to break through the no-strike pledge imposed by the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt during World War II.

These demands are central today because they protect workers from the most basic afflictions we face under capitalism — joblessness and soaring prices. The SWP also calls for a government-funded public works program to provide jobs at union-scale wages to build housing, hospitals, roads and other sorely needed infrastructure. And it calls for a guaranteed income supplement for families that encourages employment rather than dependence on welfare programs.

These proposals, adopted by the SWP in 1938, are aimed at strengthening working people's "confidence in our own worth, and our ability to organize together and fight," the party said in its 2022 resolution, available in *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward* by party leaders Jack Barnes, Mary-Alice Waters and Steve Clark.

Join SWP candidates in discussing these proposals with fellow workers and advance a road for workers to fight for a government of our own, one that can put an end, once and for all, to the miseries inflicted on the toiling majority by the capitalist exploiters.

SWP is the alternative to Democrats, Republicans

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its on the backs of the working class and to turn us against each other.

As SWP candidates knock on doors, join strike picket lines and political protests, they find disgust with the bosses' parties and serious interest in discussing what workers can do to strengthen our unions, combat the rise in Jew-hatred and unify workers — native-born and foreign-born alike. SWP candidates explain the working class represents the vast majority, and can chart a course to take political power into our own hands and reorganize society from top to bottom in the interests of the toiling majority. They urge those interested to join the SWP and build the revolutionary workers party needed to lead this fight.

In previous decades the Democratic Party claimed it looked after workers' interests. But today it openly expresses the narrow concerns of liberal middle-class meritocrats who dominate the party. These social layers consider themselves the "smart people," most capable of making decisions *for* the working class and controlling us on behalf of the capitalist rulers. They hope to preserve their own privileged position, fearing a deepening crisis will drive them down into the working class. These layers are an important source of the rise of Jew-hatred, especially since Hamas' murderous Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom in Israel.

Democrats, from both the party's liberal and so-called socialist wing, increasingly slander Israel. They claim it's carrying out "genocide," when the simple fact is Israel does the opposite — it fights to defend itself from the ceaseless efforts of Hamas and its sponsor in Tehran to destroy the one country that offers Jews a refuge.

The only road to create openings for Palestinians in Gaza to be able to advance is through the defeat of Hamas.

Former President Barack Obama pointed a finger at Israel Oct. 13, accusing it of having "ceded the moral ground" in its war with Hamas.

Michigan's Democratic attorney general, Dana Nessel, went further, telling a group of Jewish Democrats they should place "the needs of the world" above Israel's "right to exist." Jews must "sacrifice the comfort, safety and security and even the very future of our own people," she declared.

The normalization of Jew-hatred is pronounced in the Democratic Party and its allies in the liberal press, but extends to both main capitalist parties. From Congress, to the arts and media, efforts abound to bar supporters of Israel's right to exist from the right to speak or perform. These attacks are deeply unpopular in the working class.

During the 2024 presidential election campaign, Donald Trump claimed to speak for the working class. But at the same time he demonized immigrant workers. His administration has continued to expand raids and deportations of workers without papers, slandering them as "criminals." His aim is to terrorize and push a section of the working class into a second-class, pariah status. Immigration and Customs Enforcement roundups have been unleashed by the administrations of both parties. They hit record highs this summer.

The U.S. rulers' are not out to deport all undocumented workers, but to keep them living in fear so they don't challenge the bosses' efforts to super exploit them. But raids targeting meatpacking workers and others in Kansas last month spurred thousands of workers and youth to protest. They stood in solidarity with their co-workers and neighbors, demanding a halt to ICE's sweeps.

US rulers' foreign policy is bipartisan

Many workers recognize with growing apprehension that the spread of trade wars, border conflicts and the growing arms race among capitalist powers today threaten a third world war.

Both the Democratic and Republican parties back expansion of the U.S. military. U.S. foreign policy is bipartisan, to counter the rising challenge Washington faces from Beijing, to advance the U.S. rulers' hold in the Middle East and extend their domination in "their" Western Hemisphere, and especially to overturn Cuba's socialist revolution.

Democrats share the Trump administration's aim of advancing the U.S. rulers' predatory interests. Sen. Chuck Schumer says Trump's war on Iran has handed Tehran "leverage over the Strait of Hormuz" and "made the United States' position worse." He complains, "We're in much worse shape when it comes to all the oil," as if it belonged to Washington! When he says "we" he is talking about the U.S. capitalist class.

Only the Socialist Workers Party calls for the withdrawal of all U.S. forces and weaponry from the Middle East and defends Israel's right to exist as a refuge for Jews. Its candidates explain the U.S. rulers' wars arise from conflicts among the capitalist powers over redividing the world. Democrats and Republicans alike are ready to sacrifice millions of workers as cannon fodder. That will *not* change whichever capitalist party controls Congress.

The Socialist Workers Party is convinced working people have the capacity to change the world. That's why they offer working people something to vote for — and to join the fight to replace capitalist rule with a government of our own.

Chicago hotel strike



Militant/Naomi Craine

Striking members of UNITE HERE Local 1 picket the Palmer House Hilton in downtown Chicago Loop Oct. 13.

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cago and Chicago Hilton began a five-day work stoppage Oct. 18, and union members at other hotels have been joining the picket lines, as well as holding informational pickets at their own workplaces. Overall, 7,000 workers at more than 40 hotels have been without a contract since Sept. 1.

At the lively, noisy picket line outside the Hilton Oct. 18, several workers told *Militant* correspondents what they're fighting for. "The hotels are putting out misleading information," Kristy Babiarz, a server at Kitty O'Sheas pub inside the hotel, said. "They say they will pay us an increase of \$7.05 an hour over the next five years. But that includes adding together healthcare, pensions and wages. The actual wage increase comes out to be 64 cents for the first year, or 37 cents for tipped workers like me. That's an insult! That doesn't even make up for inflation.

"And this is while the CEOs are making record profits," she noted. "They say they will only raise one — either our wages or our healthcare benefits. We need both!"

"We work very hard. The hotel gets guests to opt out of daily cleaning, then gives us more checkouts to work," which take more time, said Christianell Mitchell, who has worked at the Hilton in housekeeping for seven years. They don't put enough people on the schedule, "and then we come to work and find out there's mandatory overtime. But I have to go pick up my child!"

Going on strike "shows we're serious about getting what we deserve," Mitchell said.

Zeruiah Eason, a housekeeper from the Palmer House, where workers struck the previous week, came by to offer her support. "We're still fired up about the strike," she said. "We're optimistic we're going to win this fight." She said for her, one of the central questions is the pension. "I don't want to have to work when I retire. I want to be able to relax."

When this *Militant* correspondent visited the Palmer House picket line Oct. 13, Pearline Wilson said housekeepers there "have to do 16 doors a day. Just about all the other downtown hotels are 15 or less.

"We have to clean up after people and their pets," she said, and housekeepers only get an extra \$10 for cleaning a "pet room," even though the hotel charges guests a lot more than that to bring their cats and dogs.

Like several other workers we spoke to, Wilson was interested to learn about the BP oil refinery workers' fight against the company lockout in nearby Whiting, Indiana. She lives in that area, "and I ride past the picket line all the time," she said. "I didn't know they'd been locked out six months already. Now that I know more, I'll stop and bring them some support."

To send a message of solidarity to the hotel workers' fight, or to get information on joining a picket line, contact UNITE HERE Local 1, 218 S. Wabash Ave., 7th Floor, Chicago, IL 60604.