



Defend Iran – Defeat U.S./Israel War Threatening World War III Skyrocketing Oil/Gas Prices Sets Stage for World Economic Crisis

Sink U.S. Empire in the Persian Gulf!



Aftermath of overnight strike on the Shahran oil refinery on the outskirts of Tehran, March 8. The next day, toxic black rain engulfed the city.

IRAN CLEARLY NEEDS NUCLEAR DETERRENT AGAINST NUCLEAR-ARMED U.S./ISRAEL TERRORISTS

Quagmire. That's the word Donald Trump fears like the plague, especially with midterm elections coming up in November. With the U.S./Israel war on Iran in its fourth week, the White House and Pentagon are panicked, desperately looking for ways out of the hot mess they have plunged the world into. Trump wanted to avoid a "forever war" like the U.S. invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, which lasted a generation. But for all the murderous firepower they have unleashed against Iran, the imperialist and Zionist warmongers have only managed to provoke the largest disruption of oil supplies in history. The reason this hasn't already led to a market meltdown is that Wall Street

This article was published on the internet and issued as a leaflet on March 28.

power brokers seem to believe in Trumpian fairy tales about non-existent "peace talks." Trump's "exit strategy" seems to be to stage an apocalyptic air/ground attack.

For liberal believers in the fiction of "international law," the present war on Iran (like the one last June) is one of the most blatantly lawless actions in the long history of Western gangsterism against Asia, Africa and Latin America. It began on February 28, with the assassination by an Israeli airstrike of Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Kamenei, a top cleric of the Shiite branch of Islam, along with several of his relatives. Hours later, a "double-tap" strike by a pair of U.S. cruise missiles hit an elementary school in the southern Iranian city of Minab, killing at least 175, over 100 of them children. This was a heinous war crime by any measure, while state-sponsored murder

of heads of state is considered a violation of sovereignty and international humanitarian law. But of course, as the whole unprovoked war by the United States and Israel was a massive violation of Iranian sovereignty, this just shows again that international law is a myth.

Within hours of the February 28 attack, the League for the Fourth International issued a statement calling to "*Defend Iran – Defeat U.S./Israel War!*" In the face of the brazen assault by the genocidal Israeli strongman Benjamin Netanyahu and the would-be Yankee emperor Trump, we emphasized that it is the duty of all revolutionary socialists, class-conscious workers and opponents of imperialist world domination to stand on the side of semicolonial Iran against the imperialist and Zionist aggressors. We called for *international workers action against the war* and to *stop U.S. arms shipments*. While giving no political support to the stifling clerical mullah regime, we called to *defend Iran as part of the struggle for workers revolution*. And, as we did in the "12 Day War" on Iran last June, we declared "*Iran Has the Right to Nuclear Weapons to Deter Israeli and U.S. Nuclear-Armed Terrorists.*"¹

For years, right-wingers in the U.S. and

Israel have called to "bomb, bomb Iran," but despite all the hype in the "mainstream" media, which is 90% unvarnished war propaganda, the macho posturing of the clueless U.S. war secretary Pete Hegseth, and the fabrications of the non-stop liar-in-chief Trump, the war is not going well for the aggressors. Meanwhile, Iran has been able to set off by far the largest oil supply crisis ever by hitting refineries and gas processing plants in the Persian Gulf area and closing the chokepoint of the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20% of the world's oil and natural gas passes. Not only has this sent gasoline prices skyrocketing (over \$8 a gallon in California, close to \$10 in Germany), it will soon cause a huge worldwide food crisis for lack of urea and nitrogen for fertilizer as the planting season begins. The war is not about to end any time soon, and may escalate exponentially.

The Israeli militarists, fresh off their horrific genocide in Gaza, want to use this war to nail down their domination of the Middle East, taking a step toward their goal of a Greater Israel from the (Mediterranean) sea to the (Euphrates) river, by annexing the West Bank and occupying southern Lebanon. The swashbuckling would-be dictator

¹ See statement on page 3 of this issue.

continued on page 6

German Imperialism on the Warpath 9

In Minneapolis and Everywhere: For Mass Strike Action to DRIVE ICE OUT 17

Feds Gas Labor March Against ICE 23

Prosecuted for Union Stopping War Cargo to Israel

Defend Greek Dockworkers President Markos Bekris

On the night of 17 October 2024, dockworkers in the port of Piraeus, Greece blocked a container with 21 tons of ammunition from being loaded onto a ship owned by the Israeli ZIM Lines, bound for Haifa, Israel. On the containers, workers spraypainted “Murderers out of the port” and “Free Palestine!” The blockade drew worldwide attention. *The Internationalist* published an article hailing the Piraeus port workers’ bold action as a sterling example of the League for the Fourth International’s call for international workers action against the genocidal U.S./Israel war on the Palestinian people of Gaza. (See “Greek Workers Block Arms to Israel and Ukraine,” *The Internationalist* No. 74, September-December 2024.)

Now, a year later, Greek authorities have begun prosecution of Markos Bekris, president of the Union of Container Handling Workers (ENEDEP) in the port of Piraeus for the union’s courageous action. The union is affiliated with PAME (the All Workers Militant Front) labor federation associated with the Greek Communist Party (KKE), and Bekris has run as a KKE candidate in elections for the European parliament. The October 2024 port action was not the first time Greek dockers stopped military materiel for the Zionist murder machine. The previous June they refused to load or unload an Israel-bound ship and in July 2025 they refused to transfer a cargo of military-grade steel, saying they would not touch this “cargo of death.”¹

The government of Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis of the hard-right New Democracy (ND) party is clearly trying to make an example of Bekris, and to do a favor for the ultra-Zionist Israeli government which is worried about the spread of port workers actions in Morocco, France, Italy and Greece that have begun to affect its war supplies. It also comes shortly after the European Dockworkers Conference in Genova, Italy on September 26-27 and mass strikes which shut down Italian ports, airports, railroads and highways in

¹ See “Mass Strike for Gaza Brings Italy to a Halt,” *The Internationalist* No. 76, June-October 2025.

solidarity with Gaza on September 22 and October 3, defying “security” decrees of the fascist-led Meloni government. (See “European Port Workers Call for Strike Action to Stop Arms,” *The Internationalist* No. 76, June-October 2025.)

But the attempt to intimidate the combative port workers is backfiring, as expressions of solidarity are coming in from unions in Palestine, Italy, Denmark and elsewhere. In Italy, a nationwide mass strike and mass march in solidarity with Gaza has been called for November 28-29. And in the United States, International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 voted a motion on November 20 saluting the Greek dockworkers action and defending ENEDEP president Markos Bekris. On May Day 2024, Local 10 unanimously voted a resolution to refuse to handle (“hot cargo”) military cargo to Israel, which was later squelched by the ILWU bureaucracy at the union’s international convention in Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

Citing the ILWU watchword, “An injury to one is an injury to all,” the Local 10 motion (printed below) calls on the ILWU leadership to send a letter to the Greek government demanding that the charges against Bekris be dropped.

Defend Markos Bekris, President of the Greek Dockworkers Union ENEDEP

WHEREAS, Markos Bekris, president of the Greek Container Handling Workers Union, ENEDEP, has been charged with blocking containers of ammunition from being loaded onto a ship bound for the port of Haifa, Israel last year; and

WHEREAS, blocking military cargo enabling Israel’s genocide in Gaza is not a crime but an act of solidarity with the besieged Palestinian people that is to be commended; and

WHEREAS, ENEDEP has continued to block war cargo to Israel, including shipments of military grade steel this past July; and

WHEREAS, this bold action has inspired dockworkers internationally and other European and Mediterranean ports

Statement of the League for the Fourth International

Defend Venezuela! Free Nicolás Maduro!

For Workers Mobilization Against the Yankee Pirates and Their Puppets!

The following statement was issued on 3 January 2026, hours after the U.S. attacked Venezuela, kidnapping President Nicolás Maduro, and distributed as a leaflet in protests.

In the early morning hours of today, January 3, the United States attacked Venezuela, bombing the capital, Caracas, several other cities and military installations, and kidnapping Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro and his wife Cilia Flores. Venezuelan authorities are demanding proof that Maduro is alive. This arrogant act of Yankee imperialist domination is a threat not only to the working people and the population of Venezuela but to all of Latin America and the oppressed peoples of the world. It is also a threat to the working people and defenders of democratic rights in the United States, a further expression of Donald Trump’s developing police-state regime and its war on immigrants using masked paramilitary forces marauding in the streets.

Although the Trump administration has made a lot of bogus claims about drug trafficking, it is clear that the offensive against Venezuela is intended to seize control of the enormous oil reserves of the Bolivarian Republic, the largest in the world, and to prepare the way for a counterrevolutionary assault on Cuba.

For now the Bolivarian government appears to be in control in Venezuela, but an attempt to seize power by the puppets of U.S. imperialism or to provoke a military coup d’état are possible at any time. While revolutionary Marxists do not politically support the Venezuelan government (which is not socialist but bourgeois-nationalist), defending Venezuela and defeating the Yankee imperialist aggression is in the vital interest of the workers and oppressed worldwide.

It is urgent that the workers and impoverished people of Venezuela mobilize against the Yankee pirates and their puppets, fighting to establish their own power with a workers and peasants government and a fight for socialist revolution in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and throughout the hemisphere.

The League for the Fourth International calls for full mobilization of our supporters and sympathizers internationally to demand:

Defend Venezuela!

Free Nicolás Maduro!

For workers mobilization against the Yankee pirates and their puppets!

U.S. hands off Venezuelan oil!

Defense of Cuba begins in Venezuela!

League for the Fourth International
3 January 2026

have followed the Greek and Italian dockworkers’ example; and

WHEREAS, the European Dockworkers Conference in September called on other port workers to deem arms to Israel as “hot cargo,” not to be handled, and to defend those who are victimized for taking this courageous action; and

WHEREAS, the prosecution of Markos Bekris is a threat by governments beholden to maritime capital against the labor movement worldwide,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in the best tradition of the ILWU, we demand charges be dropped against our brother Markos Bekris and will com-

municate our protest to the Greek government; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that ILWU Local 10 send a letter of solidarity to the ENEDEP dockworkers union in Piraeus under our watchword, “An Injury to One is an Injury to All,” solidary with their action and noting that on May Day 2024 our Local 10 voted to boycott military cargo to Israel and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that we request that our International Officers consult with other port workers unions about common action in defense of Markos Bekris and the Greek dockworkers union ENDEP.

Visit the League for the Fourth International/
Internationalist Group on the Internet
<https://www.internationalist.org>

The Internationalist

A Journal of Revolutionary Marxism
for the Reforging of the Fourth International

Publication of the Internationalist Group,
section of the League for the Fourth International

EDITORIAL BOARD: Jan Norden (editor), Fred Bergen, Mark Lazarus, Tristán Mirabal (pamphlets), Abram Negrete, Jay Wood, Ines Young

The Internationalist (ISSN 1091-2843) is published 5 times a year by Mundial Publications, P.O. Box 3321, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008, U.S.A.
Telephone: (212) 460-0983 Fax: (212) 614-8711 E-mail: internationalistgroup@msn.com
Subscriptions: US\$10 for five issues.

No. 77



January-March 2026



Greek port workers block containers with ammunition for Israel, 15 October 2024. A year later, Greece is prosecuting union leader for this courageous action.

For International Workers Action

Defend Iran – Defeat U.S./Israel War

For Iran's Right to Nuclear Weapons Against U.S. and Israeli Nuclear-Armed Terrorists

FEBRUARY 28 – For the second time in eight months the United States and Israel have launched a war against Iran with the aim of overthrowing the government with a pro-imperialist regime, destroying Iran's nuclear industry and its missiles. After kidnapping the president of Venezuela's Bolivarian republic Nicolás Maduro and taking control of Venezuela's oil, the would-be Yankee emperor Donald Trump is out to topple the Islamic Republic ... and grab Iran's oil. Israel's genocidal strongman Benjamin Netanyahu is seeking to cement Zionist dominance in the Middle East. At this crucial hour, the League for the Fourth International calls on all revolutionary socialists, class-conscious workers and opponents of imperialist world domination to *defend Iran*, a semicolonial country, and to take a stand for the *defeat of the genocidal imperialist and Zionist warmongers*.

In Iran, Trotskyists would call for workers to mobilize to crush the attempt to restore the rule of the bloody dynasty of Shah Reza Pahlavi, the imperialist puppets today being promoted by Israel. While giving no political support to the mullah regime, the fight should be for workers revolution. Internationally, the LFI calls for workers action against the war on Iran, and to stop arms to Israel, as we have since the outset of the genocidal Zionist/imperialist war on Gaza. And we reiterate our declaration at the time of the June 2025 attack on Iran, *"Iran Has the Right to Nuclear Weapons to Deter Israeli and U.S. Nuclear-Armed Terrorists."*¹

Since the outbreak of protests in Iran at the end of December by merchants in Iran's

¹ See "Defend Iran Against Criminal U.S./Israel War, Defeat Imperialist/Zionist Genocidal War-Makers" (22 June 2025), in *The Internationalist* No. 76, June-October 2025.

bazaars, against the plummeting exchange rate of Iran's currency, the rial, Trump has been cynically posing as the savior of the Iranian people. But the *bazaaris* have historically been the economic base of the Islamist regime, and the shortages and privations besetting the working people of Iran are largely the result of the crippling sanctions imposed by the U.S. and European imperialists. The protests were soon taken over by pro-shah provocateurs, and put down by the repressive forces of the Islamic Republic at a cost of several thousand lives. Revolutionaries gave no support to the pro-shah protests.

The delusional megalomaniac Trump claimed that his airstrikes with "bunker-busting" monster bombs last June "completely and totally obliterated" Iran's nuclear enrichment program. Nothing of the sort occurred. In fact, Iran's stocks of enriched uranium had already been moved to new sites. Iran's rulers have repeatedly said they are not seeking nuclear arms, but as we have written, the U.S./Israel attack "made clear that Iran needs to exercise its right develop a nuclear deterrent capability." Since then, the European imperialists sought to blackmail Iran into giving up its nuclear program, threatening to intensify economic sanctions. In recent weeks, Trump has again gone through a charade of "negotiations," but only as a cover for the impending war.

Reports from Iran indicate that the left and labor movement have been paralyzed. Opposition to the stifling clerical mullah regime is widespread among largely secular middle-class sectors and hard-pressed working people. If the Israel-backed son of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi – who was installed by the U.S. and British imperialists in the 1953 coup against the elected government of Mohammad Mossadegh to thwart his



Arash Khamooshi for The New York Times

U.S./Israeli attacks hit civilian targets in the capital city Tehran on February 28, the first day their war on Iran.

nationalization of oil – moves to install a puppet regime it would mean renewed imperialist control of Iran's oil, restoration of landlord domination in the countryside, brutal repression of unions and intensified hardship for working people. But as the Islamist regime still has bases of support and a powerful repressive apparatus, the likely outcome of the U.S./Israel war is chaos, which would destabilize the entire region.

After the January protests, the Kurdistan Freedom Party, an Iranian Kurdish separatist group, boasted that it had crossed Iran's border from Iraq to attack Iranian regime forces. This outfit, trained by the U.S., openly appealed for Zionist aid and has now greeted the U.S./Israel attack. A "Coalition of Political Forces of Iranian Kurdistan" was founded on February 22 by five Iranian Kurdish opposition parties, receiving much coverage in Israeli media. The alliance with genocidal Zionism, clearly with the hopes of establishing an Iranian version

of the puppet Kurdish regime in northern Iraq, underlines the bankruptcy of Kurdish nationalism as a strategy for the liberation of the oppressed Kurdish people, even as U.S. imperialism has sold out the Kurds in Syria to the Islamic reactionary regime there.

The U.S./Israel war on Iran, aided by the European imperialists despite their pious claims to oppose "escalation," is one more example of the deadly consequences of fraying imperialist domination. Even with the huge "armada" of U.S. military forces in the region, the largest since the 2003 attack and occupation of Iraq, military sources say they cannot keep up the attack for an extended period. The workers, peasants and all the oppressed – including women, oppressed national and religious minorities – must defend Iran against the imperialist/Zionist war while fighting for proletarian revolution. That would include self-determination for the Kurdish people and other oppressed minorities, and an Arab/Hebrew Palestinian workers state in a socialist federation of the Middle East, for which the key is socialist revolution in the imperialist centers.

In the United States, the Democratic Party – along with the Republicans – has paved the way for genocide in Gaza, supplying bombs and planes to deliver death from the skies, as well as for the takeover of Venezuela and now war on Iran. From World War II and the anti-Soviet Cold War to the Vietnam War and the "forever wars" in the Middle East, the Yankee imperialists have followed a bipartisan war policy, combined with racist repression "at home." The fight against the war on Iran is part and parcel of the struggle against the mass deportations and drive toward a police state in the U.S., requiring above all a break with all the capitalist parties and the forging of workers parties fighting for international socialist revolution, sections of an authentically Trotskyist, reformed Fourth International. ■



Internationalist photo

Internationalist contingent in Times Square, New York, protest against bombing of Iran, February 28.

Imperialist Wars Start with Imperialist Lies

Pinocchio Goes to War

The White House, Home of the Whopper, No Matter Who's in Office

In launching the joint war of the United States and Israel on February 28, Donald Trump stated that its “noble mission” was “to defend the American people by eliminating imminent threats from the Iranian regime. A vicious group of very hard, terrible people.” He claimed that “Iran is the world’s number one state sponsor of terror,” and that “this terrorist regime can never have a nuclear weapon.” But “Iran refused” to “renounce their nuclear ambitions,” Trump said: “They just wanted to practice evil.” And he told the “people of Iran,” that “the hour of your freedom is at hand,” as the attackers would bring down “this very wicked, radical dictatorship.”

Where previous commanders of U.S. imperialism would proclaim an overarching goal – like Woodrow Wilson falsely claiming that the U.S. entered World War I to wage a “war for democracy,” or Franklin D. Roosevelt piously saying the U.S. was fighting for “four freedoms” in the lead-up to its entry into World War II – Trump listed many different aims, all based on lies, for his “Operation Epic Fury.” Today, as he suggests that the U.S. is close to winding up operations in “the next two to three weeks,” none of those supposed war aims is even close to being achieved.

Iran an “imminent threat”? On what evidence? President Trump “had a good feeling that the Iranian regime was going to strike” U.S. assets in the region, said White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt. Yet on March 17, Trump’s counterterrorism center head Joe Kent resigned over the war, saying “Iran posed no imminent threat” to the U.S. An imminent Iranian nuclear weapon? On March 18, Trump’s national intelligence chief Tulsi Gabbard told Congress that Iran had not resumed nuclear enrichment since the U.S. bombing last June.¹ Iran as “No. 1 state sponsor of terrorism”? On the contrary, the top state terrorist is the U.S., which has killed over a million people in its Middle Eastern wars since 1990 (and millions more in Vietnam and Korea), with Israel as No. 2, specializing in assassinations and genocide.

As for dictatorship, at a meeting with corporate chiefs after his speech to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland this past January 21, Trump crowed that he got a lot of good reviews on the speech, unlike usually when people would say of him that “he’s a horrible dictator-like person.” He continued, “I’m a dictator, but sometimes you need a dictator.” This goes along with his repeated statements, for example at an August 2025 marathon cabinet meeting where every member got up to praise him, that “I have the right to do anything I want to do. I’m the President of the

¹ The League for the Fourth International defends Iran’s right to a nuclear deterrent against the nuclear armed U.S. and Israeli terrorist attackers (see “Defend Iran Against Criminal U.S./Israel War, Defeat Imperialist/Zionist Genocidal War-Makers” (22 June 2025) in *The Internationalist* No. 76, June-October 2025). As shown by the June 2025 U.S./Israel bombings (and the current war), it clearly needs to develop one.



Donald Trump lying again, this time about the assault on Iran. But he’s not the only president who lies about U.S. imperialist wars. Let’s do a short count.

United States.” He told cadets at West Point the same thing.²

Of course, Trump is not the first U.S. leader to use lies to go to war. Almost all imperialist wars start with and are based on lies. That is not accidental, since such wars are really about competition with rival imperialist powers over markets, defeating challengers to imperialist world domination, or conquering and subjugating colonial and semicolonial peoples, all in the interest of the ruling classes. That won’t motivate the working people who are called upon to fight and die in these wars. So the warmongers pitch them instead as wars for some virtuous goal (democracy, human rights) or against some atrocity, real or imagined.

Look at U.S. wars in the Middle East in recent decades.

- The 1990-91 Gulf War launched by President George Bush I following Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait was sold to the public with an appearance before Congress of a young woman who claimed to be a nurse in the Kuwait City hospital who described *Iraqi soldiers pulling babies from incubators* and leaving them on the floor to die. The story was a total fabrication and the woman was not a nurse but the daughter of the Kuwaiti ambassador to the U.S. and a member of the Kuwaiti royal family.

- The 2001 U.S. invasion and occupation of Afghanistan under George Bush II, which lasted for 20 years, was launched on the *pretext that Afghanistan was behind the 11 September 2001 attack* on the New York City World Trade Center and the Pentagon. It wasn’t, and the alleged mastermind, Osama bin Laden, was a disaffected member of the ruling elite of Saudi Arabia who had been financed by the U.S. to supply Islamist *mujahedin* waging a “holy war” against the Soviet-allied Afghan government during 1980-88.

- The alibi for the U.S. 2003 invasion and occupation of Iraq was the claim of the Bush II administration of *Saddam’s supposed arsenal of chemical and biological “weapons of mass destruction”* (WMD).

² See “Dying Imperialism Lashing Out on the Road to World War III,” *The Internationalist* No. 76, June-October 2025.

This story line, intended to justify “regime change” in Baghdad, was pushed in particular by *New York Times* journalist Judith Miller. It left out that the U.S. had supplied chemical weapons to Iraq in its 1980-88 war with Iran. After the invasion a search by United Nations arms inspectors turned up no WMDs. It was a fiction to sell the war.³

- Going back in time, there was the August 1964 “*Gulf of Tonkin incident*” used by the Democratic administration of Lyndon B. Johnson to ramp up U.S. imperialism’s war on Vietnam. It was claimed that a U.S. destroyer had come under attack by North Vietnamese naval vessels, although none had occurred, no North Vietnamese vessels were even present. The administration knew this, but used deliberately skewed “intelligence” by the National Security Agency to get the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution passed by Congress to escalate its anti-communist war on Vietnam. The vast scale of official lying about the war caused widespread indignation when the Defense Department’s own secret history of U.S. policy towards Vietnam (the “*Pentagon Papers*”) was leaked and published in 1971.

- Then there was the supposedly unprovoked *Japanese “sneak attack” on Pearl Harbor* in December 1941 that led to the World War II U.S. declaration of war on Japan. Trump recently joked about this in a visit to the White House by Japanese prime minister Sanae Takaichi. Yet in fact, U.S. war secretary Stimson was informed about the progress of the Japanese fleet, while President Roosevelt predicted almost to the day when an attack would occur, as the two sought to “maneuver them [the Japanese] into the position of firing the first shot” (from Stimson’s diary). The attack was provoked by U.S. sanctions on Japan, particularly to deprive it of oil.

- In the inter-imperialist war before that, the *1915 sinking of the British ocean*

³ See the Internationalist pamphlet, *The Great Chemical Weapons Hoax* (May 2003) for a detailed investigation of this ploy, and the history of U.S. imperialism’s use of chemical and biological weapons.

liner Lusitania by a German U-boat became a *casus belli* (an act or event used to justify a war) for bringing the United States into World War I a couple of years later. The ship was a Royal Navy Reserve Merchant Vessel, carrying thousands of crates of munitions in its hold, and the week before its sinking the First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill, had encouraged shipping from and to the then-neutral U.S. “in the hope especially of embroiling the United States with Germany.”

- And don’t forget “*Remember the Maine, to hell with Spain*,” the newspaper slogan about the U.S. Navy warship that sank in the Havana harbor in February 1898. This became the battle cry for the U.S.’ first imperialist war, to seize the Spanish colonies of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Philippines and Guam, begun two months later by President William McKinley, Donald Trump’s favorite president. While the sensationalist “yellow press” blamed Spain, several Navy investigations held that it was due to a fire in the coal room.

Adolf Hitler, in *Mein Kampf*, describes the technique of the Big Lie, which the broad masses are more likely to believe as they cannot imagine themselves fabricating “colossal untruths,” whereas they often tell small lies. Hitler falsely ascribed this technique to “the Jews,” but in fact it exactly describes the Nazi propaganda that blamed Germany’s loss in World War I on Jews and leftists. Donald Trump, according to his first wife, Ivana Trump, kept a book of Hitler’s speeches by his bed. Trump’s distinctive feature is that he tells lies – big, medium and small – about everything all the time.⁴ Kind of a sinister, big-time Pinocchio.

In June 2022, Trump sued CNN for defamation over the network’s references to his use of the Big Lie in alleging, against all evidence, that the 2020 presidential election was stolen. The suit was dismissed by a Trump-appointed judge in 2023, whose ruling was upheld in November 2025 by a three-judge U.S. District Court of Appeals panel (two of them Trump appointees). They found Trump’s suit “meritless,” since “by using ‘Big Lie’ to describe Trump, CNN was not publishing a false statement of fact.” And on March 17, Trump’s appeal for a hearing by the full court was turned down because not one of the judges (including five Trump appointees) would agree to hear it.

Trump’s non-stop lies are, in fact, a method. At a 2021 rally in Florida he said, “If you say it enough and keep saying it, they’ll start to believe you” (CNN, 5 July 2021). Of course he attributed this method to his opponents, just as Hitler pretended that Jews originated the Big Lie. Some have argued that Trump’s endless false statements are often “bullshitting,” making claims not knowing if they are true, which he bragged about over Canadian tariffs, for example. Often it is calculating that with the power of the presidency, he can make his claims true, for example by pardoning

continued on page 8

⁴ The Fact Checker data base at the *Washington Post* counted 30,573 false or misleading claims during Trump’s first four-year term.

War Criminals Carry Out AI-Assisted Mass Murder

U.S. Imperialists Massacre Iranian Girls School

Classes were underway at the Shajareh Tayyebah girls elementary school in Minab, southern Iran, on the morning of February 28 when a missile – part of the opening salvo of U.S. bombardment of the country – slammed into the building. More than 170 students, girls and boys (who were on another floor), and teachers were killed when the roof collapsed. Most of the victims were between the ages of 7 and 12. This massacre has become emblematic of the new face of imperialist warfare: automation of mass murder through the deployment of artificial intelligence (AI).

From the outset of their war to crush the Iranian regime, the United States and Israel have engaged in a relentless campaign of terror bombing, destroying residential areas, medical facilities and other civilian infrastructure. On the first day of the war alone the U.S. carried out nearly a thousand strikes. The Iranian Ministry of Health reports over 1,900 people killed, thousands of civilian buildings have been hit, including 600 schools, while 3.2 million Iranians have been displaced since the war began. By mid-March, the Pentagon listed some 8,000 targets struck (rising to 11,000 by the beginning of April), while Israel reported a similar number of sorties.

To generate such a high volume of targets and speed through what the military refers to as “kill chains” – from finding and tracking a target to firing the weapon and evaluating the result – the Pentagon has relied on Maven Smart System, a platform for integrating large quantities of data running on software from the notorious data analytics company Palantir, and since 2024 has used AI from Anthropic’s Claude chatbot. The Maven/Claude combo was used in the kidnapping of Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro in January. After it was reported that they were also used for targeting in the war on Iran, many asked if it was used on the Minab school strike.

The Trump administration attempted to disavow responsibility for the massacre. On March 8, Trump himself, speaking to reporters on Air Force One, disingenuously claimed that Iran bombed the school: “based on what I’ve seen, that was done by Iran ... they’re very inaccurate, as you know, with their munitions. They have no accuracy whatsoever. It was done by Iran.” Soon, MAGA (Trump’s Make America Great Again movement) swung into action, claiming this was proven by photographs of an Iran missile misfiring. But the photos were from the northern city of Zanjan, nearly a thousand miles (1,600 km) from Minab.

Investigations by the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and the *Wall Street Journal* all pointed to U.S. culpability for the bomb strike, but Trump doubled down. When the Iranian Mehr News agency published a video showing a Tomahawk cruise missile hitting an adjacent facility of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), Trump testily claimed in a press conference that Iran has Tomahawks, which is false. Finally, on March 11, the Pentagon leaked that a preliminary internal investigation found that the U.S. Central Command created the target coordinates for the strike using outdated information from the Defense Intelligence Agency.

That would have to be really outdated information, since the Minab school is clearly shown in satellite images as far back as 2013, and it had clearly been fenced off from the IRGC base for at least a decade. Still, the Pentagon investigators went to great lengths to deny the importance of AI targeting, claiming the attack was “unlikely to have been the result of new technology” and instead can be chalked up to “human error” (*New York Times*, 12 March). So someone may have signed off on it, but how were the targets generated? Given what’s known about the February 28 strikes, the Maven/Claude AI program was surely involved in the Minab girls school strike.

As we pointed out in our coverage of the U.S./Israel genocidal war on Gaza, the Israeli military’s wholesale use of AI-generated targeting (with programs called Hab-sora [The Gospel], Lavender and “Where’s Daddy?”) cutting down the approval time for strike targets to roughly 20 seconds, constituted “automated genocide.” (see “Gaza Genocide Made in USA,” *The Internationalist* No. 73, June-August 2024). With the integration of data analytics and AI into the imperialist war machine, the role of humans increasingly is simply to rubber stamp the decisions already made

by machines, increasing the breadth and speed of industrial slaughter.

The massacre of the Minab girls’ school came just a day after Trump ordered the Pentagon to terminate its relationship with Anthropic and label it a “supply chain risk,” over the company saying it drew the line at mass domestic surveillance and the development of fully autonomous weapons. Anthropic’s stance and Trump’s vituperation (he called it an “out-of-control, Radical Left AI company”) garnered it some kudos from techno-liberals. But the use of Claude to generate massive lists of targets so long as a human takes a few seconds to OK them and the surveillance of non-citizens don’t cross that threadbare red line.

Meanwhile, with all of the attention to Anthropic and Claude, there has been relatively little protest against Palantir, a sinister outfit that got started with a CIA contract and has worked for the U.S. government ever since. While Senate Democrats have tried to capitalize on the public blowback over the Minab massacre, submitting a letter of protest to Hegseth’s Department of War, at least 22 of the 46 signatories are on the take with money from Palantir. In fact, Palantir’s relationship with the military (as well as DHS/ICE) began during the Obama

continued on page 8



Community members searching for survivors at girls school destroyed by U.S. Tomahawk missile on February 28, killing 175. Trump blamed air strike on Iran, but missile fragments clearly show “Made in USA” markings and logo of Dayton, Ohio manufacturer.

Left: Abbas Zakeri/Mehr News, Right: IRIB



Left: Newly dug graves for the more than 100 children killed in U.S. air strike on elementary school in Minab, Iran on Day One of U.S./Israel war on Iran. Right: thousands came out on March 3 for funeral ceremony in Minab carrying Iranian flags and pictures of the victims.

Iranian Press Center

Mehr News Agency

U.S. Empire...

continued from page 1

in the White House, coming after his Pirates of the Caribbean escapade of kidnapping Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro and seizing control of the country's oil sales, said he was just taking a little "excursion" in the Persian Gulf. The ill-prepared and bloody U.S./Israeli adventure could easily backfire on them. But if faced with defeat, the crazed Zionists could be tempted to use their nuclear arsenal, and the mercurial Trump is gearing up to deliver a "knock-out blow" to Iran, which has been his obsession for decades. Yet you can't KO a country of 90 million with one spectacular bombathon.

The world is on a knife edge. Israeli rulers would be happy to see Iran break up and collapse economically. But if Donald Trump were to carry out any of his multiple threats (to obliterate Iran's electrical energy system, to seize control of its oil, to grab its cache of enriched uranium and to militarily unblock the Strait of Hormuz), it all could explode dramatically. It could force Iran's allies Russia and China to intervene more directly rather than just by supplying information (satellite feeds for targeting), technology (advanced radar systems) and limited amounts of weaponry (advanced drones, anti-ship missiles). The Iran war, even more than the NATO imperialist proxy war against Russia over Ukraine, has the potential to trigger initial skirmishes of a third world war. China, a bureaucratically deformed workers state and recipient of 90% of Iran's oil exports, is after all the ultimate target.

From the get-go, a clear majority of the U.S. population (59% in opinion polls) has been opposed to war with Iran, a number that has only grown. Three quarters (74%), including a majority (52%) of Republicans,

oppose sending ground troops into Iran.² Yet as we write, two Marine expeditionary units and the headquarters staff of the Army's 82nd Airborne Division are bringing infantry to the war zone. The Democrats complain that Trump has not spelled out his war aims and invoke the War Powers Act (which Democratic presidents Clinton, Obama and Biden all ignored) to get Congress involved. *But they have not directly opposed the war* (and the establishment liberal *New York Times* says it "could" support a war). That's why there have been no major protests against the Iran war, as the opportunist left is always looking to build a class-collaborationist, "popular front" antiwar movement together with Democratic "doves."

More than ever, the situation cries out for the leadership of a genuinely communist party to defend Iran on a class basis against the imperialist/Zionist attackers, and to mobilize powerful workers actions against the war, as part of the struggle for international socialist revolution – the only way to put an end to imperialism and its endless wars.

Trump's War on Iran Stuck in Middle East Quicksand

On the part of the U.S. and Israeli rulers, this war is being waged without the usual hypocrisy about "human rights" and "democracy" in which the Western imperialists have cloaked their wars for domination since World War II. At the Munich Security Conference on February 14, two weeks before the war on Iran began, U.S. secretary of state Marco Rubio delivered a paean of praise to the "great Western empires" and "Western civilization" based on "Christian faith," coupled with xenophobic vituperation against "mass migration." The White House revels in domination, posting war propaganda with footage from video

² Quinnipiac University Poll, 9 March.



Mehr News Agency

U.S./Israel war crime. At least 175 people, mostly children, were killed when a girls school in Minab, Iran was hit in an airstrike in the imperialist/Zionist war on Iran.

games mixed with scenes of destruction of Iran. Responding to criticism of the bombing of a water desalination plant, Trump said of Iranians, "They are among the most evil people ever on earth. They cut babies' heads off. They chop women in half," recycling some of the lies about Palestinians used to justify Zionist genocide in Gaza.

This racist rhetoric spewed out in soundbites from aboard Air Force One spurs Muslim-bashing tweets and statements from MAGA (Make America Great Again) Republican congressmen and an orgy of Islamophobia on social media. But, of course, it is the U.S. that is slaughtering young girls and boys in an Iranian school, and it is the Israeli Murder Inc. that has made assassinations a centerpiece of state policy. By one count, the Zionist state carried out over 2,700 assassinations in the first seven decades of its existence, far more than any other "Western" state.³ Israel has made a special target of Iranian nuclear scientists, killing at least 19, including three by air strikes in June 2025 and the current war. The predictable result has been to produce mass revulsion in Iran against the attackers.

U.S. and Israeli leaders and war planners had convinced themselves that by murdering Khamenei, they would spark an uprising by the Iranian masses yearning to be free of the heavy-handed theocratic mullah regime. (Reputedly, this line was pushed by the head of Mossad, the Israeli foreign intelligence agency.) Nothing of the sort happened. There were a few videos of small groups cheering on the night the war started, February 28, and after that, zero. Instead, the next day, huge crowds turned out across Iran to mourn the slain ayatollah, many tearfully holding photos while chanting "Death to America!" and "Death to Israel!" One look at the photos of the tens of thousands dressed in black packed into Tehran's Engelab Square made it clear that the Islamic Republic still had fervent mass support such that, together with its hard-nosed repressive apparatus, it could not be brought down simply by "decapitating" it.

In the days since then, the U.S. and Israeli mad bombers have continued to strike at the Iranian capital and other large cities. Although the U.S. claims to have struck 8,000 "military targets," it has clearly hit many residential areas. When the Israelis "eliminated" Iran's de facto leader, security chief Ari Larijani, on March 17, they battered a whole neighborhood. A March 7-8 strike against an oil depot and a refinery on

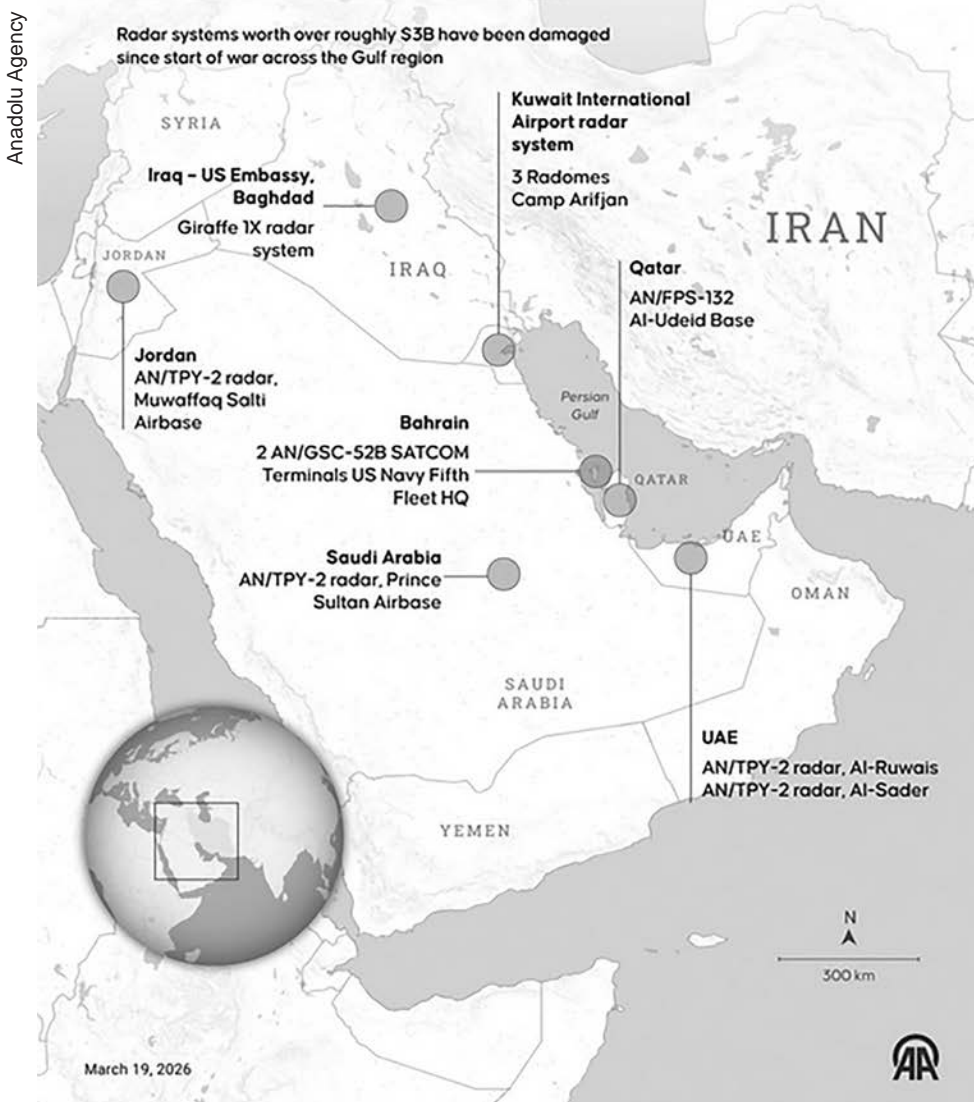
the city outskirts enveloped Tehran in a toxic black rain. Meanwhile, the bombing has damaged a number of Iran's cultural jewels and UNESCO World Historic Sites, including Isfahan's blue-tiled Jameh Mosque and the Golestan Palace in Tehran, seat of the Qajjar dynasty. Predictably, there has been a hardening of Iranian nationalist sentiment in the face of the imperialist and Zionist marauders, effectively pushing people into the arms of the regime.

The Supreme Leader of the MAGA cult and the would-be King of Israel both brag about their military prowess. On March 6, Trump said of Iran, "Their army is gone. Their navy is gone. Their communications are gone. Their leaders are gone. Two sets of their leaders are gone — they're down to their third set. Their Air Force is wiped out entirely." A few days later, he added, "They have no anti-aircraft apparatus at all. They have no radar," summing up: "Our military is the best. It's the most powerful in the world, and they're hitting them very hard." (This brings to mind Democratic presidential nominee Kamal Harris' boast during her 2024 campaign: "I will ensure America always has the strongest, most lethal fighting force in the world.") Much of this may be true, although we'll see about the anti-aircraft and radar, since on March 19 a U.S. F-35 "stealth" bomber was hit by Iranian fire. Many of the U.S. attacks have been by "stand-off" missiles fired from well outside Iranian airspace. But Iran has responded "asymmetrically," and powerfully, with military measures that have sent Washington and Tel Aviv into panic mode.

At the outset, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), fired off huge numbers of missiles and drones (over 1,200 a day), getting the U.S. and Israel to fire off a large portion of their available interceptor missiles, which are very expensive. That the number of Iranian launches has fallen off to much lower levels (30 to 40 a day) doesn't mean that their missiles or launching vehicles have mostly been destroyed, but rather that they are at a sustainable level for waging a long war. Moreover, in that first barrage, the Iranians were able to hit the vital radar bases for the U.S.' THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) anti-ballistic missile defense systems in the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. And Iran also hit most of the U.S. military bases in the Persian Gulf area, so that today, "Many of the 13 military bases in the region used by American troops are all but uninhabitable" (*New York Times*, 26 March).

³ The figure is from Ronen Bergman, *Rise and Kill First: The Secret of Israel's Targeted Assassinations* (2018).

12 US&allied radar systems hit by Iran since start of war



Anadolu Agency

For Workers Action Against the War and Deportations! Break with the Democrats and Republicans – For a Revolutionary Workers Party

So much for Trump's facile claims that Iranian missiles are inaccurate. From videos online one can see that they struck with pinpoint accuracy. Moreover, to shoot down swarms of drones (cost around \$30,000 each), the U.S. and Israel are using Israeli "David's Sling" interceptor missiles (\$1 million each), Israeli Arrow 2 and 3 interceptors (\$3 million each), Patriot PAC-3 interceptors (\$3.7 to \$7 million each), and THAAD interceptors (\$12.6 million each). Not very cost-effective. On March 21, Iran struck two towns bracketing Israel's nuclear weapons facility at Dimona with its hypersonic Fattah-2 missile that neither the U.S. nor Israel is able to intercept. And on March 24, the British Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) reported that the attackers used 11,000 munitions (worth \$26 billion) in the first 16 days of the war, and that Israel will run out of most of its missiles in somewhere between three days (!) and three weeks.⁴

But far more powerful has been Iran's one-two punch of shutting down oil and gas plants and preventing passage through the Strait of Hormuz of any but friendly vessels. Clearly, and by the admission of loose-lips Hegseth himself, the White House and Pentagon did not expect this, at least not so early on. When Israel, in a major escalation, attacked the South Pars natural gas field, on which most of Iran's electrical energy generation depends, the IRGC struck at the world's largest liquified natural gas (LNG) plant, putting it out of commission for at least five years. Iran already hit a refinery in Kuwait, and could easily do the same to numerous other installations in the Gulf. And by limiting transit through the Hormuz choke point, it has reduced shipping by over 90%, leading to a shortfall in oil supplies of at least 11 million barrels a day, or 10 percent of total supplies, which will almost inevitably soon lead to a mammoth world economic crisis.

Oil prices have already risen by over 50% to upwards of \$100 a barrel, while LNG and jet fuel prices have doubled. Market experts say that oil at \$150 would be "catastrophic," but if the present cutoff persists, it could easily reach \$200 a barrel. Economists are already detailing what this could mean for food supplies in Africa, where a lack of fertilizer could lead to widespread famine throughout the continent. The supply of generic medications from India would more or less shut down. There would be sharply increased inflation in the advanced capitalist countries, and interest rates would escalate (as they are already doing). This could spell bankruptcy for many major investment and private equity companies which have heavily loaded up on debt (\$200 billion in the last two years) to finance artificial intelligence (AI) data centers that are voracious energy consumers. Iran's "energy weapon" is extremely powerful.

⁴ This stunning report, flatly contradicting U.S. and Israeli claims that they were not running short of munitions – and giving exact numbers of pre-war missile stocks and of the number fired off by U.S., Israel and their Gulf allies – would normally never be made public; the U.S. would probably try to jail any reporter who revealed such obviously militarily sensitive information. By publishing it, RUSI was sending out a cry of alarm and a message to the Pentagon to "get real" about the war.

As Trump Escalates, Fight for Workers Revolution!

Israeli prime minister Netanyahu has been pushing for a full-bore war on Iran ever since the fall of the Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad in December 2024 to Sunni Islamist terrorists backed by Turkey, which was a result of the Zionist state's assassination two months earlier of the leadership of the Shia Islamist Hezbollah movement in Lebanon. Much has been made of Marco Rubio's admission that Israel talked Trump into it. (Rubio walked back this clearly true statement when isolationists in Trump's MAGA base objected to fighting "Israel's war.") But both U.S. and Israeli leaders figured they were on a roll and it would be an easy win, that the Islamic Republic was spent (witness the January 2026 protests). Trump told the *New York Times* (1 March) that the Iran war would last "four to five weeks," that it "won't be difficult," and "What we did in Venezuela" was "the perfect scenario." Didn't turn out that way.

In a video message on February 28, Trump told Iranians "Bombs will fall everywhere, and once we're done, take control of your government." After his call for regime change fizzled, he demanded "UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER" of Iran. (White House spokesperson Karoline Leavitt "clarified" that this would be when Trump "as commander-in-chief of U.S. armed forces determines" that Iran is "in a place of unconditional surrender.") As that went nowhere, lately he has been pushing a 15-point so-called "peace plan," which would amount to surrender. When Iranian leaders said they weren't interested in negotiations and there were no talks taking place with the U.S., Trump responded, "Of course they're negotiating. They've been obliterated." He cannot comprehend an ideologically committed regime or army that would fight to the end.

Trump's shillyshallying back and forth has reached ridiculous proportions. On Saturday, March 21, he issued an ultimatum saying that Iran had "48 hours" to open the Strait of Hormuz or he would order the bombing of Iranian power plants. Iranian spokesmen said that in that case they would bomb energy and

desalination plants in the U.S./Israel-allied Gulf states. Then, with hours to go, Trump said he was extending the deadline by five days because "strong talks" were underway. The speaker of Iran's parliament called this "fake news" and sources in Tehran said they certainly wouldn't talk with Trump envoys Steve Witkoff and son-in-law Jared Kushner, the two con artists who pretended to be negotiating as Trump was preparing to launch the war. Then, as the new deadline approached and stock exchanges were tumbling, Trump announced that he was extending the deadline for another ten days, to April 6.

It was, once again, time to TACO, quipped Wall Street insiders, using the acronym for "Trump Always Chickens Out," coined after his draconian Liberation Day tariffs, which went up and down, with deadlines set and canceled according to the U.S. president's whims. These could be set off by perceived insults or the vagaries of "Mr. Market," the embodiment of the S&P 500, Dow Jones and other indexes of investor confidence coined by Yves Smith and her informative (and frequently perceptive) website, *nakedcapitalism.com*. For the real estate mogul Trump, it's always about profit, property and personal aggrandizement. (In addition to issuing a gold commemorative coin with his image front and back, his signature will be on all U.S. paper currency.) It's surely noticeable that he repeatedly launches his invasions, wars and ultimatums (Venezuela, Iran ...) after trading closes in New York on Friday evening, and his climb-downs before markets open on Monday.

Trump's formula for the "art of the steal" is simply to bully everyone into submission. It certainly has worked with the European imperialist "allies," who were convinced to give up inexpensive Russian oil and gas, which were the foundation stone of German heavy industry, leading to the collapse of whole sectors of Germany's economy. Now, after enduring the U.S. president's accusations of cowardice for failing to participate in his war on Iran, the Europeans have been browbeaten into declaring that they might join in patrolling the Strait once the fighting is over. America Firster Trump, who at first said the U.S. and Israel could go

it alone and didn't even alert his closest friends in Europe, like Italy's fascist premier Giorgia Meloni, about the impending attack on Iran, then condemned the Europeans and NATO for not committing to join in blasting open the Hormuz Strait, and then declared that he didn't need their help anyway. The whole point was to make them complicit in this criminal enterprise.

An unspoken reason for Trump's backtracking on his 48-hour/five-day/ten-day ultimatum to Iran to open the Strait is that it would take that long for the U.S. ground forces slated to carry out the assault – the 11th and 31st Marine Expeditionary Units and the 82nd Airborne – to arrive in-theater. One possible target is Iran's oil export facility on Kharg Island, which Trump has obsessed about taking since at least as far back as in a 1988 interview with the London *Guardian*. This has led to a spate of articles in just about every major newspaper about what it would take to conquer and hold the island, which is only 15 miles off the coast, in easy range of Iranian artillery, short-range missiles or drones, with no place for troops to hide. They all cited the disastrous 1915 battle of Gallipoli against Turkey in World War I when Australian and New Zealand troops were chewed up attempting to seize control of the narrow mouth of the Dardanelles near Istanbul.

Even the U.S. Naval Institute chimed in with an article on "The Battle of Gallipoli's Sobering Lessons for the Strait of Hormuz," which could be summed up as "Been there, done that, never again." The consensus being that attempting to hold Kharg Island would be a suicide mission, attention turned to other islands near the entrance of the Hormuz Strait, but all have similar problems. The likelihood, then, is that the U.S. and Israel would unleash a monster "shock and awe" bombing campaign, declare that they had destroyed Iran's military forces, and leave it to the Europeans to figure out how to navigate the Strait (possibly by paying tolls to Iran). If the Iranian regime remains in place, however weakened, there is no way the outcome could be claimed as a victory for the West. If the Islamic Republic falls, it will turn the region into a tinderbox. Welcome to the quagmire.

Some leading capitalists are getting



alarmed. It's one thing to unleash market chaos, cause businesses to go bankrupt and subject working people to escalating inflation with stratospheric tariffs which cannot reindustrialize the U.S. It's another matter altogether to potentially set off a world conflagration. Trump's "AI and crypto czar," Silicon Valley venture capitalist David Sacks, declared on March 14 that it's time to "declare victory and get out" rather than escalate the war on Iran. Some in the ruling class see Vice President JD Vance (who softly questioned the Iran war) as a sane alternative to the war-crazed president and his "let-Trump-be-Trump" foreign policy/national security chief Marco Rubio. But beware, while Trump is definitely certifiable, Vance is a board-certified fascist ideologue who would turn young men into cannon fodder and young women into baby factories to replace the fallen soldiers. Impeachment is not an answer.

On the left, it is striking how little response there has been to Trump's Iran adventure. With a deeply unpopular war, where are the mass antiwar marches, as occurred in the lead-up to George Bush II's invasion and occupation of Iraq? On 15 February 2003 there were over a million protesting in the streets of Rome and London, and hundreds of thousands in Berlin, Sydney, Melbourne and New York. Today there are only tiny demos of at most a few hundred people here and there. Even the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) and its ANSWER Coalition, which specialize in popular-front peace demos, have not called a national mobilization. Instead, the PSL and the rest of the U.S. left are tagging along with the March 28 "No Kings" marches called by Democratic Party front groups like 50501, Indivisible and moveon.org. The same outfits are pushing the "May Day Strong" coalition's pretend "general strike," not based on workers exercising their collective power but taking individual action ("no shopping," calling in sick) on May 1. Their real purpose is to get out the vote for the Democrats in November.

The League for the Fourth International and its U.S. section, the Internationalist Group, have politically opposed the Islamist regime in Iran from our inception. We continue to uphold the position of our predecessor organization, the international Spartacist tendency, in 1979 when we called, uniquely on the left, for "Down with the shah, No to Khomeini," fighting for workers revolution in Iran while warning that the "Islamic Revolution" was a reactionary-led movement. The vast majority of the left, both inside Iran and internationally, instead embraced the nascent Islamist regime, which shortly rounded up thousands of leftists and executed hundreds. Today, the born-again International Communist League, which masquerades as the continuation of the Spartacist tendency while renouncing almost everything it stood for, including the Marxist line taken in 1979, calls for an "anti-imperialist united front" with the mullah regime. As a speaker at a March 7 LFI educational on Iran trenchantly put it, this amounts to telling the next generation of Iranian leftists to "stick their necks in the noose" again.

Meanwhile, much of the Iranian left, including the Europe-based Rahe Kargar (Organization of Revolutionary Workers of Iran), the Stalinist Tudeh (Masses) party and the Islamic leftist People's Fedayin have taken a "third camp" position, equally opposed to the Islamic Republic and the U.S./Israel foreign aggressors. On the other hand, a small Khuzestan Vanguard Socialist Workers' Cell reports that workers occupied oil and petrochemical factories in Mahshahr in southern Iran, setting

up barricades to defend them against foreign invaders and supporters of the imperialist puppet Pahlavi dynasty. Several Kurdish groups have formed a coalition hoping to establish an Iranian version of the U.S.-puppet Kurdish regional government in northern Iraq, as we noted in our February 28 statement. But having been repeatedly used and abandoned by the U.S. and Israel, these groups are reluctant to invade, and in any case are blocked by the pro-Iran central government of Iraq.

In the bourgeois opposition milieu, many of the "moderate" Islamists who rose up in 2009⁵ are going along with the heir to the bloody Pahlavi dynasty, who seeks to take power as a puppet of U.S. imperialism, just as his father was installed by the British imperialists in 1941 and seized full power in 1953 in a CIA-orchestrated coup d'état. But Washington is not enamored of the Pahlavi pretender, who has little organized support inside Iran, and Israeli assassinations have killed all of the regime figures that the Trump regime was looking to as the equivalent of Delcy Rodríguez, the U.S. collaborator now running Venezuela. As Trump said on March 3, "Most of the people we had in mind are dead.... Now we have another group. They may be dead also based on reports. So, I guess you have a third wave coming in. Pretty soon we're not going to know anybody." But the Iranian government is not acting like a headless regime.

We Trotskyists of the League for the Fourth International call to defeat the imperialist/Zionist war and defend Iran with international workers action, and to fight for workers to power. Against the Zionist oppression of the Palestinian people, we call for an Arab/Hebrew Palestinian workers state in a socialist federation of the Middle East based on the powerful proletariats of Egypt, Turkey and Iran. The struggle against this ruinous war is inseparable from the fight against the onslaught of the Trump regime against the U.S. populatoin, notably the mass deportations and violent attacks on immigrants and their supporters by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Border Patrol agents who are becoming a fascist paramilitary force spearheading the drive to install Bonapartist police-state rule. Imperialist war abroad invariably goes hand-in-hand with racist repression "at home."

From Iran and Palestine to Europe and the United States, the fight must be for workers revolution to overthrow decaying imperialism, which is violently lashing out as it seeks to stave off its demise. In 2022, Trump said of Democrat Biden's war on Russia over Ukraine that we could "end up in World War III and there will be nothing left of our planet" because "ignorant people" running the government "didn't have a clue" about the dangers of escalation. The same can be said of Republican Trump's war on Iran. But it's not just the Republicans: the fundamental policies of U.S. imperialism have been and are bipartisan, as was true throughout the anti-Soviet Cold War and ever since counterrevolution destroyed the Soviet Union and the East European deformed workers states in 1989-92, and as they are today in Ukraine, Palestine and Iran. To fight against the drive to world war, it is crucial, in the U.S., to break with the Democratic and Republican parties and build a revolutionary workers party on the authentically communist program of Trotsky's Fourth International. ■

⁵ See "Mass Protests Rock Iran: No to All Wings of the Mullah Regime!" where we called "For Workers Revolution Against the Islamic Dictatorship" and "U.S. Imperialism Hands Off!" in *The Internationalist* No. 29, Summer 2009.

Pinocchio...

continued from page 4

the 6 January 2021 rioters and seizing ballots from the 2020 election in Georgia.

For Trump, "facts" are whatever he decides they are. When he demanded "UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER" by the Iranian regime on his social media site, Truth Social, press secretary Leavitt explained that when Trump "as commander-in-chief of the U.S. armed forces, determines" it is no longer a threat, then "Iran will essentially be in a place of unconditional surrender. Whether they say it themselves or not. Frankly, they don't have a lot of people to say that for them because the United States and the state of Israel have completely wiped out more than 50 leaders" of Iran, "including the Supreme Leader himself."

The prevarications of this Pinocchio in power are purposeful. Again, he is not alone in this. Trump refers to the war on Iran as "major combat operations" in order to hinder efforts to invoke the 1973 War Powers Act, which reiterated that, under the U.S. Constitution, it is Congress, not the president, who can declare war. But since that act was passed every president, Democrat or Republican, has sought to get around it, using one subterfuge or another. Decades before that, in 1950, Democratic president Harry Truman termed the Korean War a "police action" under the authority of the United Nations, in order to avoid asking for a Congressional declaration of war.

At bottom Trump and his gang don't care about justifications for the war on Iran. After a U.S. submarine torpedoed an Iranian ship off the coast of Sri Lanka, killing over 100 sailors, he bragged at a March 9 Republican Congressional conference about destroying the Iranian navy. Trump said he asked "our people" why they didn't capture the ships instead. "They said, 'It's more fun to sink them.'" At a March 2 press conference, Trump's macho-posturing "Secretary of War" Pete Hegseth proclaimed, "No stupid rules of engagement, no nation building quagmire, no democracy building exercise, no politically correct wars." This is the "maximum lethality" this Christian nationalist war criminal announced last September.

When the U.S. president claims that the Iranian missiles have been destroyed, that "regime change" has already happened, that Iranian leaders are "begging" for a ceasefire, that he no longer cares about Iran's stocks of enriched uranium because they are buried under so much rubble – none of it true – it's because he wants to get out before getting bogged down in another "forever war." But in an unhinged April 1 prime time speech, Trump vowed that if he couldn't get a deal to reopen the Hormuz Strait, on his way out he would "hit each and every one of their electrical generating plants" and bomb Iran "back to the Stone Ages, where they belong."

This is the same language that the mad bomber General Curtis LeMay used about Vietnam, when he said (in his 1965 autobiography) that Washington should tell North Vietnam to stop its aggression (!) or the U.S. would "bomb them into the Stone Age." The Pentagon unleashed 7.6 million tons (more than triple the tonnage of munitions used by the U.S. military in all of World War II),⁵ as well as chemical weapons such as Agent Orange and napalm, to poison and incinerate the Vietnamese, but it didn't stave off defeat at the

⁵ See Edward Miguel and Gérard Roland. "Bombing Vietnam: The Long-Term Economic Consequences," *Milken Institute Review*, December 2006.

hands of the heroic Communist fighters.

U.S. president Donald J. Trump may assert that the facts are as he determines them to be, but U.S. leaders would do well to remember the maxim of Trump's first defense secretary, James Mattis, who said, "No war is over until the enemy says it's over. We may think it over, we may declare it over, but in fact, the enemy gets a vote." And as Iranian authorities put it in response to Trump's five-point "peace plan": the United States and Israel started the war, but "Iran will end the war when it decides to do so and when its own conditions are met" (Press TV, 25 March). ■

Girls School...

continued from page 5

administration and was subsequently expanded under Trump and Biden.

The Obama administration's push for the military to adopt the use of unmanned drones was a precursor to the current drive to develop lethal autonomous weapons systems powered by AI. By deploying drones as part of its major escalation of air war in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Somalia, Obama increased the devastation wrought by U.S. imperialism, dropping three bombs every hour 24 hours a day throughout 2016. According to the U.S. Army's own *Military Review* (May-June 2011), "The drone strikes have already caused well over a thousand civilian casualties, and have had a particular affinity for hitting weddings and funerals."

The harnessing of technological advancement to automate warfare will only serve to maximize destruction and human suffering – which is its very intention. The combination of AI efficiency with Pentagon lethality inevitably will lead to a skyrocketing of civilian casualties. One look at the genocidal slaughter and hellscape in Gaza, where over 100,000 Palestinians have been killed and the entire strip turned into rubble, will tell you that. Far from an anomaly, cold-blooded murder is a daily reality of U.S. imperialism and both major parties, Democratic and Republican, are responsible for its crimes.

There is, of course, another possibility: that the bombing of the girls school may not have been an "error" at all, but a reflection of the moral depravity of those in the Pentagon. After all, Hegseth has bragged that the U.S. is heeding "no stupid rules of engagement" to limit civilian casualties and is raining "death and destruction from the sky all day long." And it has now come out that on the same day that the Minab school was struck, the U.S. launched a short-range Precision Strike Missile, never tested in battle, against a sports hall and adjacent elementary school in the city of Lamerd, killing at least 21 people by spraying tiny lethal tungsten pellets.

The Trump administration's obsession with unleashing the U.S. war machine in an orgy of mass murder reflects the desperation of U.S. imperialism, seeking to regain its frayed global hegemony through sheer terror and proving that it is willing to drag the entire globe into a thermonuclear Third World War on its downward spiral. Defeating the U.S./Israeli warmongers in Iran would encourage mass resistance worldwide. A workers boycott of arms to Israel and the Middle East generally can contribute greatly to that effort. Ultimately, to stop the bloodbath requires bringing down the imperialist system, it is necessary to fight for world socialist revolution under the leadership of internationalist communist parties in solidarity with the workers and the oppressed under imperialist and Zionist guns and bombs. ■

For Workers Mobilization Against War on Russia and China

German Imperialism on the Warpath

Working People and Immigrants Targeted: Our Enemy Is the Ruling Class Here

The following article is translated from *Permanente Revolution* No. 8, Winter 2025-26, the newspaper of the *Internationalistische Gruppe*, German section of the *League for the Fourth International*.

In his first government statement after taking office on May 14, the new German chancellor Friedrich Merz promised, or rather threatened, to make the Bundeswehr (the German army) “the strongest conventional army in Europe.” Even before the newly elected Bundestag (parliament) was convened, he had pushed through a constitutional amendment in the outgoing legislature to permit unlimited increases in military spending. This will reach €108 billion euros (US\$127 billion) in 2026, an increase of 25% over the previous year. And preparations for the stationing of American medium-range missiles in Germany in 2026 are already in full swing. Flight time to Moscow: 6 minutes. Sold in the media as a “deterrent,” this is an enormous escalation of the nuclear threat against Russia.

In the same statement, Merz railed against an “escalating security situation” that would be met with increased police violence (“targeted strengthening and better equipping of security authorities”) and said that “enemies of our democracy” would be dealt with “with the utmost determination.” He would “declare war on the intolerable anti-Semitism that is reappearing in old and new forms on German streets and in German public life” – i.e., more repression against pro-Palestinian protests, continued military support for Israel, and, of course, not a word about the genocide committed by the Zionists (with bombs and bombers from the United States). In addition, increased European intervention in Ukraine, where “the peaceful order of our entire continent is at stake.”



The German Puma infantry fighting vehicle on maneuvers in Lithuania, December 2023. The Bundeswehr (armed forces) plans to send hundreds there, but will it have the soldiers?

The whole thing is a declaration of war on Russia, which was declared the main enemy in the coalition agreement for the Christian Democratic (CDU) and Social Democratic (SPD) government: “The greatest and most direct threat comes from Russia.” Wrong. The greatest danger comes from trigger-happy, warmongering leaders in Berlin, Paris, and London who are trying to stir up war hysteria. Every day we receive “news” that Russia is about to attack Germany. Drones (made of wood) in Poland, drones in Denmark, Russian overflights of “Estonian airspace” (in the Baltic Sea), Russian “disinformation” that must be comprehensively suppressed. The topic of discussion at NATO HQ in Brussels: should Russian fighter jets be shot down? Seriously. As if otherwise, Putin will march into Berlin the day after tomorrow. It’s insane.

The CDU/SPD government statement promises “prosperity for all.” Even more madness. At the end of 2025, the

national deficit is soaring due to military spending; the metal and chemical industries are in crisis, with layoffs continuing in these sectors, and pensions and unemployment benefits are under attack. Unemployment reached its highest level in 15 years in August, at over 3 million. Volkswagen is closing a plant in Germany for the first time in 88 years. Real Gross Domestic Product (price- and seasonally adjusted): 2023: -0.27%; 2024: -0.5%; 2025: 0.0%. The conclusion: stagnation. The main reason is high energy prices, a consequence of the loss of cheap Russian natural gas due to sanctions, which led to mass layoffs and plant closures.

Merz repeatedly refers to a (mythical) Russian invasion of Germany or NATO territory. “We would respond to Russian attacks,” he said recently (*Die Welt*, 17 December 2025).¹ With its incessant propaganda barrage, the government has succeeded in convincing 49% of the German population that Russia poses a threat, according to a YouGov survey for the Deutsche Presse-Agentur (20 July 2025). On the other hand, 44% of those surveyed believed that Moscow posed little or no threat. Despite all the talk about Germany’s “war readiness”, it is clear that there is still no enthusiasm for war and no willingness to make sacrifices.

However, this rubbish can have serious consequences. When it was reported in mid-September that Russian fighter jets

were flying near Estonia’s Vaindloo Island,² the Italian NATO commander scrambled F-35 fighter jets that were on quick reaction alert to intercept the Russian Mig-31 jets. The NATO spokeswoman accused Russia of recklessness. On the contrary, the Western military alliance’s response was reckless gambling with nuclear war. And since the European NATO countries themselves will not be able to wage a direct war against Russia, even with their planned rearmament, this points to the main target of this militarization: their own populations. The tanks will be used in Germany and the EU.

The purpose of the current military build-up and political mobilization for war is to eradicate the last vestiges of the “welfare state” established after World War II in the imperialist countries of the European Union and NATO, which are in a prolonged economic and geopolitical crisis. It is to achieve “combat readiness” for capitalist class war against the working people in order to ward off the danger of revolution. That is why it is all the more important to counter the frantic war preparations and slashing of social programs with revolutionary class struggle. Above all, it is essential to take up the indispensable task of building a genuine communist workers party as the vanguard of all the exploited and oppressed.

The Europe-U.S. Divide: Intensification of Inter-Imperialist Competition

The Bonapartist police state regime being built up by the would-be dictator, U.S. president Donald Trump, released its National Security Strategy on December 5 under the watchword “America First.” With regard to Europe, its stated goals are to restore “strate-

² The island (one of over 2,000 that Estonia has in the Baltic Sea) is a speck in the middle of the Gulf of Finland, on a direct flight route from Saint Petersburg, and has an area of 1/40th of a square mile, or 1/10th the size of Roosevelt Island, the tiny sliver in New York City’s East River.



German war minister Boris Pistorius (left) and federal chancellor Friedrich Merz inspect a Bundeswehr combat brigade with Lithuanian president Gitanas Nausėda (right) and the prime minister Inga Ruginienė in Vilnius on 22 May 2025. This marks the first long-term deployment of a large contingent of German troops abroad since World War II.

gic stability with Russia,” “reduce the risk of conflict between Russia and European states” and “promote resistance to Europe’s current course.” And, of course, to “open European markets to U.S. goods and services.” So, it is aiming for a trade war and implicitly calling for “regime change” to promote “patriotic parties,” in this case, above all, the fascistic Alternative for Germany (AfD).

European leaders claim that Trump has allied himself with Putin against Ukraine. But the U.S. defense budget provides for further funding for Kiev, albeit at a reduced level of \$400 million over the next two years, as part of the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, which pays U.S. companies to supply weapons to the Ukrainian military. It also approved the Baltic Security Initiative and allocated \$175 million to support the “defense” of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. And the number of U.S. troops in Europe is not to fall below 76,000 (current level: 80,000). However, the European imperialists will have to self-finance the purchase of military equipment that would prolong or expand the war, such as the Taurus missile system.

Furthermore, the second Trump administration is continuing the Biden administration’s plan to station Tomahawk medium-range missiles and Dark Eagle hypersonic missiles, both with nuclear capability, in Germany starting in 2026. This means that if Russian defense systems detect their flight, Moscow must assume that Russia is under nuclear attack and respond accordingly. This provocation has already been given the green light by the German government as an “executive decision.” To stop this, workers action is urgently required. There should be mass resistance as in October 1983 when well over a million people took to the streets to prevent the deployment of U.S. medium-range missiles. A general strike against this was proposed.

The European NATO countries continue to cling to the illusion of an impossible Ukrainian reconquest of Donbass and Crimea, even as U.S. support in a land war with Russia is in serious doubt. And while the European imperialists talk of an “interposition force” or “peacekeeping force” to give Ukraine “firm security guarantees,” Russia will never tolerate this. This is another

reason why plans for a massive rearmament of Europe are coming to the fore, with Germany assuming a leading role. But the impossibility of the Europeans waging war against Russia on their own (without the U.S.) explains the repeated capitulations of the German bourgeoisie and the EU to the U.S. on tariffs and other economic issues.

The only surprise from Germany’s “black-red” (Christian Democrat/Social Democrat) coalition government was the anti-American stance of Friedrich Merz, the man representing US financial capital in Germany (he was head of BlackRock Germany, the branch of the New York investment giant). On 24 February 2025, he told *Handelsblatt*: “For me, the absolute priority will be to strengthen Europe as quickly as possible in order to step-by-step achieve genuine independence from the U.S.” The European Union (EU), originally founded as the economic backbone of the U.S.-dominated NATO, is now taking on its own military role, with increasing calls for a “European army.” This makes it clear that the slogan “Germany out of NATO,” raised by a range of left-wing groups, is nationalist and by no means anti-imperialist.³

A disturbing symptom: a few months after the start of the war over Ukraine, one of the editors of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (29 October 2022) asked: “Does Germany also need the bomb?” But German imperialism would also need missiles and fighter jets to drop the (nuclear) bombs. Recently, CDU parliamentary group leader Jens Spahn stated, “We need to talk about German or European participation in the nuclear arsenal of France or Great Britain, possibly also about our own participation with other European states” (*Tagesspiegel*, 28 June 2025). Merz responded: “No, the time is not ripe for that” (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 16 October). Not today, but tomorrow or the day after tomorrow?⁴

³ See “German Far Left in Crisis: Nationalist ‘Peace Movement’ or Internationalist Class War?” *The Internationalist* No. 71, June-October 2023

⁴ A paper by the Federal Academy for Security Policy, “Not Yet War, But Not Peace Either” (2025), argues: “The often-repeated mantra that nothing can be done to counter a nuclear power would be precisely the wrong and fatal conclusion, because nuclear weapons are not omnipotent.”

Making War Happen with Ever More Weapons

A key element of the war drive is the Bundestag’s decision of 18 March 2025 to exempt all defense spending above one percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from the “debt brake” (the constitutional amendment that a previous CDU/SPD coalition had pushed through in 2009 to limit the “structural” budget deficit to 0.35 percent of GDP). This means that military spending can now be increased without limit. Due to the poor showing of the SPD and the Greens (leaders of the previous governing coalition) in the February 2025 federal elections, the right-wing Alternative for Germany and the Left Party now have a “blocking minority” of more than one-third of the seats in the Bundestag. This allows them to block constitutional amendments and present themselves as opponents of the government. That is why Merz (and SPD Minister of War Boris Pistorius) had to get the outgoing Bundestag to pass the constitutional amendment [making an exception to the “debt brake” for military expenditures].

On 21 March 2025, these financial measures were then also approved by the Bundesrat (the upper house of Germany’s parliament). Since the Left Party (Die Linke) did not raise any objections, the states of Bremen and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (where Die Linke has ministers) agreed. The Bremen Left Party reaffirmed its support for the war credits, citing “the political responsibility of our Left [sic] participation in the state government.” At a Die Linke party conference in Chemnitz in May 2025, the leadership promised to pressure state branches to implement the party’s national policy of the Left Party. But nothing happened.

Then, on June 26, the Bundestag passed tax breaks for companies. The Greens and the Left Party voted against it. But on July 11, this measure was unanimously passed in the Bundesrat. Again there was no opposition from the Left Party in Bremen and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (nor from the Greens or the BSW⁵ in the federal states where they are part of the government). After making a big fuss in the Bundestag, they then simply

waved it through in the Bundesrat. And above all, when it really mattered in the Bundestag, on May 6, the Left Party rushed to Merz’s aid by agreeing to a change in procedural rules, thus enabling him to be elected chancellor in a second vote on the same day. “Federal-level political responsibility,” it seems.

Meanwhile, on 19 March 2025, the European Union under Ursula von der Leyen (the former German defense minister) presented its “ReArm Europe / Readiness 2030” plan. Military spending is now exempt

⁵ Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht, the populist party of the former leader of the Communist Platform in the Left Party.

from the EU’s Stability and Growth Pact, which since 1997 has limited national budget deficits to 3 percent of GDP and total government debt to 60 percent of GDP (around €800 billion in Germany). The program includes a €150 billion loan program called “Security Action for Europe” (SAFE). The von der Leyen clique used emergency powers, which only require a majority in the European Council, thereby bypassing the European Parliament and vetoes by individual European countries.

One need only recall the rigidity with which former German chancellor Angela Merkel’s government in Berlin, together with Frankfurt bankers and Brussels eurocrats, pushed Greece’s working class into poverty in order to stubbornly adhere to these financial rules. And now, in order to spend billions of euros on tanks and fighter jets, they are suddenly gone. The financial greed of the European imperialists is also reflected in their fixation on seizing Russian assets in order to arm the Ukrainian military. On December 19, this plan was definitively vetoed by Belgium, and now EU governments must take out loans for €90 billion, which taxpayers will later have to repay (with interest).

The EU is not a “superstate” but rather a loose imperialist coalition founded on a German-French axis. Coordinated European armament plans will prove difficult. Cooperation between Berlin and Paris is far from smooth, and cooperation with London remains limited since Brexit (the 2016 British exit from the EU). Most arms companies are relatively small, lacking economies of scale and research coordination. They lag behind their U.S. and other competitors in satellite and missile technology. In addition, they frequently compete with each other. Given the resources required, the billions of euros appear rather insufficient.

The masters of German capitalism have repeatedly shot themselves in the foot. First, they gave up cheap energy in order to “punish” the Russians. Now they are supposed to “decouple” from China, following losses and setbacks in export competition for cars and other industrial products. They must therefore continue to ally themselves with U.S. imperialism, which is stabbing them in the back, while they chase the illusion of recouping their losses through “reparations” from a defeated Russia. All they can get out of these efforts is to create a new arms giant. Based on current sales figures, Rheinmetall would rank second among arms companies worldwide, behind the U.S. giant Lockheed Martin, the manufacturer of the F-35 fighter jet.

Rheinmetall is now “Europe’s hottest stock” (recalling Rosa Luxemburg’s 1914 statement: “dividends rising, proletarians falling”). The company increased its annual production of 155 mm artillery shells from 70,000 in 2022 to 750,000 in 2024, and aims to reach 1.5 million by 2027. But its tanks and frigates could be easy prey if the company does not catch up in drone and satellite technology. For drones, Rheinmetall is collaborating with the notorious U.S. defense technology company Anduril – but the first field trials were not promising. Does the bourgeoisie really think that military spending will revive the economy? In any case, their tanks can only intimidate the smaller countries of Central Europe, certainly not Russia.

continued on page 13



“Donald Trump and the Seven Dwarfs.” On 19 August 2025, the U.S. president summoned Ukraine’s puppet president Zelensky (left) and European heads of state and government, including German chancellor Merz, European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen, and Italian prime minister Giorgia Meloni, to an audience in the Oval Office.

Students, Workers: For a Joint Struggle Against Conscription and Militarization

School Strike: No “Cannon Fodder” for German Imperialism!



Screenshots from a video of the Berliner Zeitung.

High school and university students, and also parents, demonstrate against the introduction of military conscription, Berlin, 5 December 2025.

The following article is translated from *Permanente Revolution No. 8 (Winter 2025-26)*, published by the *Internationalistische Gruppe, German section of the League for the Fourth International*.

On Friday afternoon, December 5 [2025], the area in front of the Hallesches Tor subway station in Berlin was buzzing with activity. Three thousand or more students assembled to express their opposition to the “Military Service Modernization Act,” scheduled to be voted on in the Bundestag (the lower house of Germany’s parliament) that same day. Across Germany, some 55,000 students in 87 cities took to the streets to protest this law, which has been met with widespread opposition from young people and their parents almost everywhere. The message of the demonstrations was clear: “We will not be cannon fodder for your crises.”

Nevertheless, the law was promptly passed by the ruling “black/red” (Christian Democrat/Social Democrat) coalition: nearly all CDU and SPD members of parliament voted in favor of it. It is the centerpiece of the militarization of society, which aims to make Germany “war-ready” by 2030. The imperialist bourgeoisie wants to increase the number of soldiers in the Bundeswehr from 180,000 to 260,000, an increase of nearly 50%. Including the reserves, the total number of Bundeswehr (Germany’s armed forces) soldiers is to be increased to 460,000 by 2030. This is initially supposed to be voluntary, but will become compulsory conscription (a draft) if the Bundeswehr, predictably, fails to meet its quota of volunteer recruits.

In the bourgeois media, the issue is portrayed as a personal choice: anyone who doesn’t want to go to the barracks is free to refuse. But this compulsory military service is about preparing for war in the East: once again, they are gearing up to send German soldiers to Ukraine, where the Wehrmacht

committed genocide during World War II. For three years, NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) members have been arming the fascist-infested army of the puppet government in Kiev to the teeth. Since they are losing the imperialist proxy war against Russia over Ukraine, they are now pushing for a “ceasefire” in order to escalate domestic militarization and send European Union (EU) “peacekeeping forces” to the front.

To effectively oppose a draft, you have to fight against the war it is intended to supply with disposable troops (*Einwegsoldaten*). It is the spearhead of a program to prepare the entire society for war – from “patriotic” education to converting auto factories into tank production to slashing social programs. It goes hand in hand with the offensive against immigrants and the brutal repression of protests against the imperialist/Zionist genocide in Gaza. And make no mistake: a direct war with Russia would be the beginning of World War III, with the medium-range missiles stationed in Germany starting in 2027 serving as a trigger for nuclear war.

Conscription is not just a problem for youth, but affects all working people. Refusing to become “cannon fodder” requires silencing the cannons. Yet most leftists and protests call only for individual refusal, because they want to avoid the issue of the war. So should preparations for war proceed “without us”? Absolutely not. Precisely because of the courageous willingness of young people to fight against this, we Trotskyists call to expand school strikes against military service into workers strikes and a general class struggle against militarization and imperialist war.

Young People, and Older People, Are Not Willing to Die for Germany

In his first policy address, German chancellor Friedrich Merz called for Germany to maintain “the strongest conven-

tional army in Europe.” To do so, it not only needs more tanks, but must also repair the dilapidated infrastructure (rail lines, highway bridges) for their transport, train military doctors to treat the wounded, and above all recruit more soldiers whom they can send into the clutches of the imperialist war machine. After the Bundestag approved the Military Service Law on December 5, the Bundesrat (the upper house of parliament, equivalent to the U.S. Senate) followed suit on December 18.

Starting on 1 January 2026, all men aged 18 (for women, it’s optional for now) must fill out a questionnaire to assess their suitability and recruitability for the Bundeswehr and report for a physical examination starting in July 2027. Again, recruitment will initially be voluntary. The Bundeswehr is to be made more attractive with monthly pay of €2,600 (currently about US\$3,000, or roughly the gross salary of a nursing assistant) and a bonus for having a driver’s license. Attacks on the social safety net and job cuts will lead to increased “poverty recruitment.” If too few volunteers sign up by 2027, the Bundestag will implement conscription as needed.

Although it describes itself as the only peace party, in 2020 (that is, before the start of the proxy war in Ukraine), Alternative for Germany (AfD) submitted a bill in the Bundestag to reintroduce compulsory military service, justifying it with the need to expand the Bundeswehr by 30,000 soldiers. This was rejected by the other federal parties. Five years later, the SPD and CDU agreed in their coalition agreement that an increase in the number of soldiers is necessary, but on a much larger scale. Although the AfD voted against the conscription law on December 5, it is now facing internal disputes over the issue.

Despite its dovish stance on the war in Ukraine – where it was disinclined to toe the anti-Russian line set by Washington under

Cold War hawk Joe Biden – the AfD is always in favor of strengthening German imperialism. And just as with its anti-Muslim campaign, the ruling parties draw inspiration from the fascist AfD to push through their racist, militarist agenda. The reason that the SPD cited in 2020 for rejecting the AfD’s motion was the lack of infrastructure and trainers. Even now, “voluntary” conscription is a stopgap measure until everything is ready, but the bourgeoisie’s decision to mobilize for war has been made.

Bundeswehr properties that were previously converted for civilian use must now be converted back into military facilities. Real estate companies are competing to restore closed barracks to operational status and to build new ones. Recruitment capacities must be built up and personnel trained to screen more than 300,000 young men (and a few thousand women) per year. And perhaps most importantly, the population must be prepared for the intended war so that they accept cuts to their living conditions and livelihoods, and that they or their children will be sent to the front.

The next war will look very different from the 20-year deployment of some 90,000 Bundeswehr soldiers in Afghanistan, of whom about 60 died (while they killed at least several hundred Afghans). In the event of a direct war with Russia, Colonel General Ralf Hoffmann estimates around 1,000 wounded soldiers per day (*Die Zeit*, 22 September 2025). A thousand seriously wounded every day? As one attentive reader noted, with casualty figures like that, “that’s what I call preparation for a Bundeswehr deployment in Ukraine.” And the dead? Given the usual 4:1 ratio of wounded to killed in war, this would correspond to 250 dead German soldiers every day. Cannon fodder, anyone?

But this will become even less popular than it already is. In an MDR opinion poll (December 17), 82% of 15- to



Social-Democratic war minister Boris Pistorius during May 2023 visit to the German Army Infantry school. The German Bundeswehr (armed forces) says it needs tens of thousands more soldiers in order to be battle-ready by 2030 to wage war against Russia in East Europe.

29-year-olds considered opposition to compulsory military service to be “justified.” This is likely to be even more true for the one-third of young people in Germany with an immigrant background who face racial discrimination.

Meanwhile, according to an RND survey (August 3), 59% of people across all age groups would “probably not” or “definitely not” take up arms in the event of an attack on Germany. Only 16% would be willing to defend the Federal Republic of Germany. By comparison, according to an international Gallup poll from 2024, 41% of Americans claim they would be personally ready to fight.

Bundeswehr Out of the Schools

With such widespread opposition, those in power are going to have difficulty regimenting the population for war. According to the law, “the new military service is intended to permanently and significantly increase willingness to serve through greatly increased attractiveness, recognition, and a meaningful, challenging period of service.” That will take a lot of propaganda, starting at a very young age.

And that’s exactly what they’re doing. The ZDF television channel children’s program “logo,” for example, has a segment on compulsory military service that is shown to children as part of their civics classes. The scenario assumes that Germany is going to war, and young people are asked how everyone can contribute. In this grotesque video, teenagers take a stand for or against compulsory military service. When asked if they could imagine defending their country, picking up a weapon and killing someone, a 14-year-old replied: “Personally, I couldn’t bring myself to kill innocent people just because politicians say, ‘Yes, these are our enemies; you have to kill these people now.’”

At the end of the video, the teenagers are pressured into a “compromise”: there should be mandatory military service, but those who do not want to kill or die for Germany can take on other roles in the military.

In addition, youth officers and army recruiters regularly visit schools to give presentations that are, in reality, war propaganda. The Bundeswehr has recruitment booths in schools and at career fairs.

The Education and Science Union (GEW) emphasizes that education is the responsibility of teachers with pedagogical training, not Bundeswehr recruiters. And according to the GEW, no teacher or student can be compelled to participate in an event with the army. The reality is quite different. In Bavaria, schools and universities have been obliged to cooperate with the Bundeswehr since 2024.

The GEW advocates “curbing the Bundeswehr’s influence in schools.” It “rejects and condemns the Bundeswehr’s attempts to recruit in schools and other educational institutions.” It “calls for action against Bundeswehr recruitment efforts.” Now it can and must do much more to counter the growing militarization of the school system. Because visits by the Bundeswehr to schools are legally permitted only by invitation, the GEW (in collaboration with students) should firmly reject such military interference, including organizing demonstrations and school strikes. If the school administration invites them anyway, then opponents of military service should be invited to counter them.

The teachers union must also defend students punished for their opposition to the draft, which could result in life-altering repression.

- In Leipzig, students at Humboldt High School organized a “die-in” protest last year as part of the “No Advertising for Death” campaign against a Bundeswehr event at their school, after which two students were threatened with expulsion (which was later withdrawn following a protest petition).

- In Gotha, two students at the State Technical School for Construction, Economics, and Transportation received six-day suspensions as punishment for a protest against a Bundeswehr recruitment booth, during which they surrounded the booth with pink balloons and held up a banner reading “Education Instead of Bombs.”

- In Freiburg, a 19-year-old was sentenced in December to 15 hours of community service for “insulting” a youth officer with two Instagram memes following a Bundeswehr event at his school.

These are just a few examples of repression against anti-war activists in schools by the German state and school administrations that defend the interests of that state.

In addition, the education union should actively support the next school strike, scheduled for March 5. On December 5, GEW members in various locations (e.g., Hesse) called for solidarity with the student strike. This time, teachers throughout Germany should declare their support. Efforts should also be made to expand the strike, especially since the youth wings of ver.di (service workers union) and IG Metall (metal workers union) have spoken out against conscription. And the struggle against militarization should be waged together with contract struggles in the public sector and protests against the erosion of social programs resulting from rearmament.

For Workers Mobilization Against the Imperialist War Drive

As courageous and refreshing as the protests against conscription may be, instead of mounting collective resistance against the imperialist drive for war – the reason for the reintroduction of conscription – they are almost all characterized by democratic illusions (“Conscription? No, thanks!”) and appeals to individual freedom (“Conscription: not with us!”, “Not my duty,” etc.). But the fact that the overwhelming majority of young people oppose it and many refuse to perform military service will not stop forced conscription. Even Wilhelm Liebknecht’s 1887 call, “Not one man, not one penny for militarism,” amounts to just saying “No” without a program for the revolutionary struggle against the imperialists’ war aims.

Much of the left is pinning its hopes on the Left Party (Die Linke) as a supposed opponent of war. The Left Party did vote against conscription in the Bundestag, and some of the party’s local chapters supported the school strike on December 5. Its youth groups – Die Linke.SDS and Linksjugend solid – played a major role in organizing student protests against conscription. But the Left Party does not represent an opposition to militarization. In a debate on the ARD TV channel between Heidi Reichinnek (Left Party) and Tim Klüssendorf (SPD), the Left Party spokesperson said, “no one can be forced to serve in the military. Period.” Does she really believe that?! Reichinnek continues: “We need to talk about how the Bundeswehr can become an attractive employer.”

The Left Party social democrats of the second mobilization are mainly concerned with proving that they are “fit to govern.” In May 2025, for in-

stance, their parliamentary group in the Bundestag helped pave the way for Friedrich Merz to become chancellor with their votes. Just last December, they enabled the ruling coalition’s “pension reform” by abstaining from the vote. And at the beginning of 2025, the Left Party in Bremen and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania voted in favor of the debt package, which provides for further investments in the military and infrastructure. Despite some verbal evasions, the Left Party is fully in line with the war campaign of NATO imperialism, particularly in blaming Russia for the war in Ukraine.

The Socialist German Workers Youth (SDAJ), the youth organization of the German Communist Party (DKP), claims to follow a Marxist line. It writes: “Militarism and war are inextricably linked to capitalism – and thus a consistent struggle against militarism and war is also a directly revolutionary and anti-capitalist struggle.” By this, however, they do not mean that a class-struggle-based opposition to military service should be organized; on the contrary, they are saying that the struggle against conscription is in itself anti-capitalist, even if it is waged on the basis of a liberal program (“without us”) and through popular-front-style alliances – e.g., with bourgeois groups such as the Young Liberals.

While paying lip service to the revolution, the SDAJ aligns itself with the pacifist antiwar movement and calls for “peace treaties and disarmament instead of further preparations for war, including conscription.” It demands: “Germany out of NATO and the EU! NATO out of Germany! No to an EU army!” As if an independent German Bundeswehr would somehow serve the interests of working people! Their program boils down to pushing for a different policy of the German imperialist state and promoting pacifist illusions. Thus, the SDAJ explains that it opposed the suspension of conscription in 2011 and now opposes its reintroduction. Go figure.

In contrast, at the height of the Iraq War, we wrote: “Proletarian revolutionaries reject all means by which the imperialists recruit labor for their war machine, whether through conscription or ‘volunteers,’ and fight against them.” Conscientious objection, as advocated by the SDAJ, accepts conscription and merely seeks an individual way out. As the U.S. section of the League for the Fourth International wrote in 2005: “Pacifists may push the illusion of ‘disarming’ the bourgeoisie, but revolutionaries seek through mass protest and working-class action to



General, dein Tank ist ein starker Wagen, Er bricht einen Wald nieder und zermalmt Hundert Menschen Aber er hat einen Fehler: Er braucht einen Fahrer

Bertolt Brecht

Verse from German Communist playwright Bertolt Brecht’s Svendborg Poems, “Against War” (1936): “General, your tank is a powerful vehicle. It smashes down forests and crushes a hundred men. But it has one defect: It needs a driver.”

hinder the bourgeoisie's ability to raise an army for imperialist invasion and colonial occupation."¹

At the forefront of efforts to encourage young people to refuse military service is the German Peace Society – United Conscientious Objectors (DFG-VK), which offers advice on how to file an application for conscientious objector status. But conscription cannot be circumvented: even after a successful application, a conscientious objector must perform alternative service in the Bundeswehr and thus continue to contribute to the war machine. Young people who choose to refuse military service certainly want to reject militarization. But organizing a movement against conscription on this basis helps the war machine make forced recruitment more palatable.

We Trotskyists, of course, support the right to conscientious objection. But conscientious objection is a petty-bourgeois strategy for individually evading the horrors of war. Many working-class youth will not be able to take advantage of this option. In any case, class-conscious young people should do military service, among other things to learn how to handle weapons and to carry out political education work among the young “workers in uniform” regarding their class interests and democratic rights. Otherwise, the expanded Bundeswehr will become an even greater recruiting ground for fascist forces than it already is.

Some may harbor the illusion that conscription has not yet gone into effect, since military service is initially supposed to be “voluntary.” That is false; the decision has been made. But the fact that the Bundestag must convene an additional session to make it compulsory provides time to organize opposition. In any case, revolutionary Marxists will continue to fight against imperialist militarism, which is heading toward a thermonuclear Third World War in which everyone will become “cannon fodder.” The key lies in forging a revolutionary leadership based on a program of internationalist class struggle.

So, once again: to effectively oppose conscription, one must fight against the war it is intended to supply with “cannon fodder.” The Internationalist Group emphasizes the need to mobilize the power of the working class to defeat NATO's imperialist proxy war against Russia. For workers actions to stop arms deliveries to Ukraine and Israel! For political strikes against the war! The only way to end conscription is to smash imperialist war mania once and for all through workers revolution. For the United Socialist States of Europe! ■

¹ “Which Side Are They On? Opportunists Straddle the Class Line,” *The Internationalist* No. 21, Summer 2005.

Warpath...

continued from page 10

The Eastern Front Is Everywhere

The Merz administration intends to escalate on the Eastern Front. It has announced that it will no longer disclose information about arms deliveries to Ukraine. If Merz carries out his plan to deliver Taurus missiles to Ukraine for use against Russia, the German population will be kept in the dark about this dangerous step toward world war.

On May 22, Merz traveled with Defense Minister Pistorius to Vilnius, Lithuania, to officially open the first long-term deployment of a large Bundeswehr unit

abroad since World War II — the 45th Tank Brigade with 4,800 soldiers. A few months later, a Bundeswehr propaganda film showed an eerie torchlight ceremony, accompanied by martial music from the Lord of the Rings movie, during a visit by the new army chief, Lieutenant General Christian Freuding. They are training there for rapid deployment against the presumed enemy, Russia. Back in February 2025, CDU politician Johann Wadephul, now foreign minister, declared: “Russia will always be an enemy to us.”⁶

Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the Baltic states, the former territory of the medieval Teutonic Knights and of the reactionary Freikorps⁷ after World War I. Furthermore, the Baltic governments are among the most vocal Russia-haters in Europe, like EU foreign policy chief Estonian Kaja Kallas, whose grandfather was one of the founders of the Estonian Defense League, which fought against the Bolshevik Red Army in 1918-1919. Kallas has vehemently called for the confiscation (theft) of Russian assets in European banks, spoken out against any territorial concessions in Ukraine, demanded that the war can only end with a Russian defeat, and called for Russia to be broken up into smaller countries.

As part of the German-led NATO “Lithuania Battle Group,” together with troops from the Netherlands⁸ — which are already integrated into the German Armed Forces — Berlin would place Belgian, French, Croatian, Luxemburg and Norwegian contingents under German command. “The protection of Vilnius is the protection of Berlin,” Merz claimed in his speech in Vilnius. As for the accelerated expansion of the German military, he says, “our allies rightly expect this of us; more than that, they are demanding it.” With his delusions of grandeur, Merz wants Germany to become the guardian of Eastern Europe. On the way to a “Pax Germanica”?

Preparations for war are not only evident on NATO's eastern border. Germany's role as a “hub” is now the buzzword in the government's war propaganda. This means that the German armed forces are to channel the transport of troops and weapons to the east.

“Berlin estimates that 20% of autobahns and over a quarter of autobahn bridges are in need of repair due to chronic underinvestment. According to the Central Association of German Seaport Operators, Germany's North Sea and Baltic Sea ports require investments of €15 billion, including €3 billion for the modernization of dual-use infrastructure,

⁶ On October 19, Merz announced to Russia: “We will have to defend ourselves again [our emphasis].” Again, like in 1914? Or 1941?

⁷ The paramilitary militias raised by the Social Democratic government to fight the Communists after the fall of the monarchy in November 1918 — including assassinating Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht in January 1919 — many of whose members went on to aid the rise of the Nazis to power.

⁸ The I German-Dutch Corps has been in existence since 1995. It now comprises 10 additional national contingents and was deployed in Afghanistan in 2003, 2009, and 2013.



Ominous torchlight ceremony on the grounds of the Bundeswehr brigade in Lithuania during a visit by army inspector Christian Freuding, October 2025.

such as the reinforcement of dock facilities.... Longer term, Berlin aims to spend €166 billion by 2029 on infrastructure, including more than €100 billion on the long-neglected railways, and give priority to dual-use infrastructure.”

— “Germany's Secret Plan for War with Russia,” *Wall Street Journal*, 27 November 2025

In addition to the special fund for armaments, there is also a “special infrastructure fund” amounting to a further €500 billion, which is far from sufficient for a comprehensive modernization of the entire national infrastructure. This means that there will be almost no investment in civil infrastructure in the foreseeable future.

However, the build-up is not just about armament and deterrence — the top brass at Germany's Ministry of Defense are preparing for action. German military trainers complain that there are “too many soldiers who have never experienced war.”⁹ There is zero chance that Russia would attack Germany, as it has neither the power nor the interest to do so. If, on the other hand, fighting were to break out along the 100 km long “Suwalki Gap” along the Polish-Lithuanian border separating Belarus from the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad,¹⁰ it would be over quickly, as Russia would have the upper hand. However, there could be Western provocation, as the commander of U.S. forces in Europe hinted in July when he threatened that NATO could “take down” Kaliningrad with “unprecedented” speed.¹¹

But when the Chief Medical Officer of the German Armed Forces talks about preparing for 1,000 casualties per day,¹² it is clear that this refers to deploying German troops to Ukraine. Even if they are

⁹ See “Germany's Army Is Rebuilding. What Could Go Wrong?” *Politico Magazine*, September 2025.

¹⁰ See the lead scenario in the “war edition” of *Politico Magazine* (September 2025).

¹¹ See “Dying Imperialism Lashing Out on the Road to World War III,” *The Internationalist* No. 76, June–October 2025.

¹² See reference in the article on “School Strike: No ‘Cannon Fodder’ for German Imperialism!” in this issue of *The Internationalist*.

described as “peacekeeping forces,” neither the German army nor NATO troops would be accepted by Russia, and their deployment would be a war provocation. This is so obvious that such plans could be classified as utter nonsense. However, one should never underestimate the senselessness of warmongering imperialists. An example of this was the wiretapped telephone conversation between high-ranking German generals in February 2024 about the delivery of Taurus missiles to Ukraine, at a time when then-chancellor Olaf Scholz declared that these missiles would not be sent.

The German army that carried out Hitler's carnage, the Wehrmacht, was disbanded after World War II. However, when the Bundeswehr was founded in 1955 at the height of the anti-Soviet Cold War, its first leaders were former Wehrmacht staff officers. Its first commander, Lieutenant Colonel Karl-Theodor Molinari, was accused of participating in the murder of 105 French resistance fighters in Tulle in 1944. Despite all the talk of “inner leadership” and commitment to a “democratic order,” there have always been fascist networks in the Bundeswehr that have supplied Nazi terrorists. In 2024, there were nearly 100 dismissals of soldiers for right-wing extremism (and 875 cases), but that is only the tip of the iceberg.

For the German imperialist army and the sinister forces stirring within it, Russia has been the enemy since 1900, through two world wars and decades of Cold War. Now the Bundeswehr is being armed for war on the Eastern Front, but it also coordinates with the internal repressive apparatus, especially when a state of emergency is declared.¹³ While conscripts are “workers in uniform,” the army (together with the police, judiciary, domestic intelligence agency, etc.) is the armored fist of capital. The struggle against militarization is therefore a defense of democratic rights and must be based on the mobilization of the working class to defend all those who are exploited and oppressed by capital. ■

¹³ See “Life in an Armored Republic” on page 14 of this issue.

Life in an “Armored Republic”

The following article is translated from *Permanente Revolution* No. 8, Winter 2025-26.

The NATO exercise “Red Storm Bravo,” conducted in Hamburg from September 25 to 29, was intended to test cooperation between the German Armed Forces and the police, fire department and disaster control forces. According to a detailed article in the *Wall Street Journal* (27 November 2025) on “Germany’s Secret Plan for War with Russia”, the exercise was part of a plan contained in a 1,200-page document titled “Operations Plan Germany”, or OPLAN DEU for short. The newspaper reported:

“The scenario was a miniature OPLAN in action: 500 NATO troops would land in the port to form a convoy of 65 vehicles headed eastward through the city.... “Disembarking at sunset ... the camouflaged soldiers assembled silently on the dock, helicopters circling overhead. Shortly before midnight, the convoy departed for the city.

“Then things began to go off-script.... [A] black drone buzzing overhead caused a brief commotion before someone radioed in confirmation that it was the Bundeswehr’s.

“Then, protesters jumped from bushes and glued themselves to the tarmac ahead of the vehicles. The incident was part of the drill and the demonstrators were reservists.... The police ... turned out not to have the solvents needed to unglue the mock protesters.

“It took two hours for the vehicles to restart. By then, it was early morning and the convoy had traveled all of 6 miles.”

So in a plan for war with Russia, the exercise deals with demonstrators in Germany. They are practicing for war at home.

It was not the only exercise. Next came “Marshal Power” in Bavaria from October 22 to 29 (2025), which deployed 500 military police who were to coordinate with 300 “civilian emergency personnel.” According to the scenario, it was a fictional NATO alliance case in which a NATO country was attacked by an “authoritarian aggressor,” and therefore Germany was to send soldiers to the east. Here we have the culmination of the demonization of opponents of war as “Russian agents.”

“According to the Bundeswehr, the task forces are to train for action against threats behind a fictitious front line, in the so-called ‘rear area’ – for example, against drones, sabotage, or so-called ‘irregular forces.’ This refers to armed fighters who are not part of a state army. The scenario assumed is one in which a NATO member state is attacked and the alliance must be defended.” –*Die Welt*, 23 October 2025

This time, as well, the exercise went wrong when a police officer, unaware of what was happening on the ground, fired live ammunition at a soldier and injured



Tobias Schwarz / AFP

him (BR24, 27 October), causing considerable disruption in the 3,000 square mile exercise area northeast of Munich.

And finally there was, “Bollwerk Berlin III” from November 17 to 21 in Berlin. This involved the Guard Battalion, tasked with defending the federal government. Here, they entered a tunnel at the Jungfernheide subway station for an “underground firefight” and “a prolonged battle with armed irregular forces” (*Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 20 November). They also trained at the abandoned chemical plant in Rüdersdorf, and at the “Fighting City” police training ground in Ruhleben, practicing urban and house-to-house combat and securing against ‘saboteurs.’ Turns out, the “Eastern Front” is everywhere!

The maneuvers carried out this fall to test Germany’s capabilities as a “hub” clearly reveal the intentions of the ruling class. The exact content of the Bundeswehr’s Oplan Deutschland (“Operation Plan Germany”) remains secret, but it is reflected in the “Green Paper” *Civil-Military Cooperation 4.0 in Military Crises* (January 2025), written by six current and former members of parliament (including André Hahn of the Left Party). The Green Paper shows no interest in the deterioration of physical infrastructure, but rather in breaking people’s resistance to militarization. Here, the famous “hybrid warfare” reappears in the demand for “modernization of laws” in order to enforce “more effective punishment.”

The media are now pushing for a debate on declaring a “state of tension,” a precursor to a “state of defense” under the emergency laws introduced in 1968 by a previous SPD-CDU “grand coalition” to allow the deployment of the Bundeswehr within Germany. This triggered huge demonstrations and resistance from workers, who were then betrayed by the SPD and

trade-union bureaucrats. On 12 November 2025, foreign and military policy advisor Roderich Kiesewetter (CDU) proposed declaring a state of tension under the pretext of a threat from “Russian drones”. This alone would introduce conscription and the requisitioning of civilians, means of transport and entire companies for military purposes.

The government’s tactic of introducing conscription gradually but relentlessly (see “School Strike: No Cannon Fodder for German Imperialism” on page 11 of this issue) is somewhat at odds with such a precipitous approach. But “Germany’s role as a hub could make the ASG [Employment Security Act – a supplement to the emergency laws] particularly important,” says a former officer in a commentary piece by the German Institute for Defense and Strategic Studies (GIDS), who considered the 1968 provisions for the requisitioning of civilians to be too limited. Even those who are unsuitable as soldiers are to be obliged to help the military.

The ultimate goal of the bourgeoisie, today as in 1968, is to ban strikes, increase the pool of forced laborers, and prepare the army for civil war. In this context, medical care will also be targeted in preparation for a crisis. Hospitals and clinics would be privatized or closed, and nursing staff drastically reduced. But money from the special fund is to be spent, for example, on bunkers, material storage, and the construction of bed capacity for wartime. The government is planning a “health security law.” Once again, this is emergency legislation and forced recruitment in the event of “tension.”

Nadja Rakowitz from the Association of Democratic Doctors describes the horror of these cold-blooded measures:

“We find it particularly worrying that ‘reverse triage’ is being considered: military personnel are to be given priority over civilian patients so that they can

quickly return to the front line.... In this context, the Berlin Framework Plan addresses the issue of letting ‘hopeless’ patients die. The arrival of acutely ill people from nursing homes in emergency rooms is identified as a disruptive factor. Consideration is being given to discontinuing or postponing medically necessary elective procedures such as hip operations in the longer term. To obscure the issue, it is said that individualized medicine must be converted to disaster medicine. However, the goal is to subject medical care to military criteria.”

– “What Does the Bundeswehr Want from Hospitals?” *Junge Welt*, 12 November 2025

The goal of all this cruelty, which is being presented as planning for a hypothetical war, is to get people to not be “soft-hearted” and to ration dwindling healthcare resources. CDU “health policy expert” Hendrik Streeck, with his infamous statements – such as “Health is not an all-inclusive service provided by the state,” “Not everything that is medically possible is also sensible,” etc. – is just a slightly overzealous pioneer.

We are seeing provocation upon provocation: “It is too easy to get sick leave in Germany,” says Britta Seeger, head of human resources at Mercedes-Benz (*Handelsblatt*, 20 December 2025). The title of the interview: “Ms. Seeger, Are Employees Too Lazy?” Tesla in Brandenburg is notorious for its relentless crackdown on workers who get sick. The campaign against “slackers” has now reached companies where workers should actually be protected by unions. There were over 500 dismissals at Volkswagen for “misconduct” in the first half of 2025. But the VW works council kept silent. This deeply intrusive interference in workers’ daily lives is made possible by the complete capitulation of the union bureaucracy.

All these exercises focused on “civil-military cooperation,” in particular joint action by the Bundeswehr with fire departments, technical assistance agencies, and police, but also with authorities, including the Federal Employment Agency, port authorities, and various companies. It is precisely for this purpose that the German Institute for Defence and Strategic Studies is developing proposals to expand the pool of compulsory laborers. But mobilizing the social power of the dockworkers (which was evident in the defeat of the police during the July 2022 harbor workers strike in Hamburg) could nip this provocation in the bud. And determined resistance on the part of healthcare workers and metalworkers can nullify these anti-human, strikebreaking powers. Above all, this requires fighting for a class-struggle leadership against bureaucrats and reformists who bow to capitalist war logic. ■

Tobias Schwarz / AFP



NATO maneuver Red Storm Bravo, Hamburg, September 2025.



NATO maneuver Marshal Power, Bavaria, October 2025.

Bundeswehr

Equating Protests Against Gaza Genocide with Antisemitism

Australia Weaponizes Bondi Massacre to Crack Down on Pro-Palestinian Protests

“Hate” Laws Escalate Attacks on Free Speech

SYDNEY, Australia, February 27 – There have been nearly weekly protests in Australia’s major cities against the genocidal U.S./Israel war on Gaza since October 2023. These have been held, in the main, without major incidents. But the evening of Monday, February 9, in Sydney was different. The occasion was a rally and march protesting a visit by Israeli president Isaac Herzog, a virulent Zionist war hawk. The state government of New South Wales (NSW), of which Sydney is the capital, declared Herzog’s visit a “Major Event,” a legal designation normally reserved for large potentially unruly sporting events, allowing police to close off areas and disperse crowds. Minutes before the protest was to begin, the state Supreme Court rejected a challenge to this designation by the organizers, the Palestine Action Group (PAG).

As the protest began, 3,500 police were deployed in Sydney’s central business district. Town Hall Square was packed with 10-15,000 demonstrators with another 5-10,000 sealed off by police on streets leading to the main assembly area. When some protesters said they intended to march, a senior police official on a bullhorn (which only those nearby could hear) said that would not be allowed. Then, after an extended stalemate, the police riot began. Suddenly hundreds of cops in massed formation charged into the crowd, shoving and beating demonstrators who had no exit to escape (*Consortium News*, 9 February). “Punches were thrown and capsicum [pepper] spray was used on dozens of demonstrators as police moved the crowd away,” reported the *Sydney Morning Herald* (9 February) in a rather sanitized account.

Videos show police (including on horseback) “kettling” protesters, then pinning down and repeatedly punching them. Muslim men kneeling in prayer were violently dispersed, people were knocked off their feet, others were tackled, many were pepper-sprayed and sometrampled. Twenty-seven people were arrested. NSW Police assistant commissioner Peter McKenna said he was “very proud” of the cops’ conduct. For thousands of demonstrators, however, this was a police riot like they had not seen in their lifetimes. Some commented that it “resembled police crackdowns they had previously seen only on television in the United States” (*Stories Framing the Globe*, 10 February). PAG organizer Josh Lees said that NSW’s Australian Labor Party (ALP) premier Chris Minns “appears to be trying to import elements of Donald Trump’s America into Sydney.” It was a frontal attack on the right to protest.

As president of the Zionist state, Isaac Herzog is one of the top Israeli politicians – along with prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, fascist security ministers Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich and former war minister Yoav Gallant – responsible for the horrendous genocide visited on the Palestinian population of Gaza. The son of former president Chaim Herzog, he is a



Thousands came out in Sydney, Australia on February 9 to protest visit by Israeli president Isaac Herzog, accused by a United Nations panel of inciting genocide in Gaza. They were set upon by a brutal cop riot which demonstrators said recalled TV coverage of police attacks in Donald Trump’s U.S.

Matthew Abbott for The New York Times

Aftermath of the Bondi Beach Massacre

The orgy of police violence on February 9 was part of a wholesale crackdown on dissent, particularly on pro-Palestinian demonstrations, since the mass shooting at a Hanukkah festival at Sydney’s Bondi Beach last December 14. In that horrific antisemitic attack on the gathering called by the Chabad movement of Hassidic Judaism, 15 people were killed and 40 more wounded. The alleged perpetrators were a father – India-born Sajid Akram, killed at the scene – and his son Naveed Akram, being held on charges of murder, causing grievous bodily harm with intent to murder, and committing a terrorist act. According to the police and Australia Security Intelligence Agency (ASIO – Australia’s CIA), the two had been won by “radical clerics” in immigrant milieus to the Islamic State and received recent training in the Philippines.

Government and security officials were quick to label this the deadliest terror incident in Australia’s history, conveniently ignoring the genocidal violence against Aboriginal people. But contrary to raging Zionists and bourgeois politicians there is absolutely no evidence tying the massacre to protests against Israel’s war in Gaza or more generally to the Palestine solidarity movement. The Palestine Action Group immediately declared it was “absolutely horrified by the terrorist attack at Bondi Beach, which targeted the Jewish community on the first day of Hanukkah,” reiterating “our

continued on page 28



New South Wales state police in mass formation charged into the crowd of pro-Palestinian protesters in Sydney on February 9, pepper-spraying, tackling and slamming many to the ground.

Izhar Khan / Getty Images

former leader of the Labor Party and long-time cabinet minister. In December 2023 a photo of Herzog signing a bomb to be used on Gaza went viral on the internet. The next month, defending the Zionist military’s annihilation of the Gaza population, Herzog called the International Criminal Court (ICC) investigation of the charge of genocide against Israel a “blood libel.” At the February 9 protest, demonstrators chanted, “From the river to the sea, Herzog to the ICC.”

Herzog was personally responsible for instigating the slaughter. A week after the 7 October 2023 attack by Hamas and other Palestinian commandos, he declared “it’s an entire nation out there that is responsible.” In September 2025, the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory analysis of the conduct of Israel in Gaza regarding genocide held that Herzog’s statement amounted to “incitement to the Israeli security forces personnel to target the Palestinians in Gaza as a group as being collectively culpable for the 7 October 2023 attack in Israel.” It concluded that Netanyahu, Gallant and Herzog were all guilty of “direct and public incitement to commit genocide.” Navi Pillay, Chair of the Commission declared: “It is clear that there is an intent to destroy the Palestinians in Gaza through acts that meet the criteria set forth in the Genocide Convention.”¹

¹ United Nations Human Rights Commission, “Israel has committed genocide in the Gaza Strip, UN Commission finds” (16 September 2025).

Democrats, Courts Won't Do It – Bring Out Workers Power!

Twin Cities: For a Real General Strike to Drive Out ICE Gestapo!

JANUARY 20 – For the past two months, paramilitary forces of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) police and Border Patrol – part of the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) division of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) – have been terrorizing Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. Carrying out Donald Trump's plan for the "largest deportation operation" in U.S. history, this army of masked federal agents initially targeted the tens of thousands of refugees from war-torn Somalia in Africa, who the racist Republican president calls "garbage." Soon they were targeting Minnesotans based on racial profiling. Immigrants are afraid to go to work, their children fear going to school. After unleashing some 1,000 armed DHS agents – the modern-day equivalent of 19th-century slavecatchers, in mid-January Trump sent in 2,000 more feds to supposedly go after "fraud" and "crime" in "Democrat-run cities." Now the Pentagon has put 1,500 Army troops on standby to beef up the occupation of the Twin Cities.

This is the war on the "enemy within" that Trump told an assembly of all 800 top generals of the U.S. armed forces last September they would soon be waging. And as his "war secretary" Pete Hegseth vowed, they are doing it with "maximum lethality." The January 7 murder of Renee Nicole Good, shot in her car by ICE cop Jonathan Ross as her wife filmed the feds, shocked the nation. Over 1,000 protests took place across the country in the next several days, with tens of thousands

marching in Minneapolis on January 10. The fact that this took place a mile from where in 2020 George Floyd was choked to death by a Minneapolis cop drove home the brutal reality that police murder never stops. Posters appeared of "Renee Nicole Good, American Mom, Murdered by ICE." Yet since Trump took office a year ago, *at least 40 immigrants* have died in ICE custody or raids. And protests didn't stop the trigger-happy feds: on January 14 ICE agents shot a Venezuelan immigrant in North Minneapolis and arrested two people who came to his aid.

What is urgently needed right now in Minneapolis-St. Paul is to *bring out the power of organized workers* at the head of the courageous and inspiring actions by thousands of community residents to *put an end to the federal occupation and force ICE out!* Activists of the Internationalist Group and Revolutionary Internationalist Youth have been in Minnesota for the last two weeks. We have joined protests by postal workers, high school students who walked out against ICE and other actions with our signs calling to "*Mobilize Workers Power For ICE/Feds Out of the Twin Cities*" and "*For Mass Workers Action to Stop the Raids and Deportations*," while emphasizing "*You Can't Fight Trump with the Democrats – For a Revolutionary Workers Party!*" Now labor and religious leaders have called for a day of "no work, no school, no shopping" on January 23. But much more is needed. The IG/RIY call "*For a Mass Strike and Workers Mobilization to Stop ICE Terror!*"

No "Minnesota Nice" With ICE! This Is Class War

The grotesque, wanton brutality of the immigration police shocked and outraged the population of Minnesota, which prides itself on community solidarity. The ICE cop who murdered Renée Good in cold blood walked away from the scene muttering the vile epithet "fucking bitch." Witness statements and videos in a court suit going back to December documented how a woman who was observing ICE was thrown face down in the snow with an agent's knee in her back and then dragged across an icy road even as bystanders yelled that she was pregnant. A woman observer was arrested, stripped of her clothes and had her bra and wedding band cut off in retaliation for asking for identification of an ICE agent. Among the most recent atrocities was a January 18 raid in St. Paul where they broke down a door and dragged a Hmong man, a U.S. citizen for decades with no criminal record, in his underwear out of his home in 12-degree weather, without a warrant, driving him to the middle of nowhere, forcing him to get out in the frigid weather so they could



Renee Nicole Good, shown on ICE agent's cellphone video as she said to him, "That's fine, dude. I'm not mad at you." Moments later, he murdered her.

photograph him, before releasing him two hours later.

What is most striking is that, first in Los Angeles, then in Chicago and now in Minneapolis, huge numbers of ordinary people, including many workers and youth, have come out to protest, to blow whistles and honk car horns warning of the presence of ICE agents. The city has been honeycombed with Signal group chats of rapid responders reporting the feds' movements, some with hundreds of members and well over 10,000 participants overall. DHS chief Kristi Noem, the unspeakable cruelty freak, has called them "domestic terrorists," as she and other top Trump administration officials also labeled Renee Good while declaring her murderer to be a "hero." Fascistic vice president JD Vance proclaimed that the killer cop has "absolute immunity" from prosecution. As we have said, the *mass deportations and militarized hunt for immigrants are spearheading a drive for police-state rule* (see "Abort Trump's Police State," *The Internationalist* No. 76, June-October 2025).

Democratic Farmer-Labor (DFL) mayor Jacob Frey (who was also in office when George Floyd was murdered by the cops Frey is the boss of) grabbed headlines by telling ICE to "get the fuck out of Minneapolis." Yet, like Democratic mayors and governors across the U.S., Frey says the feds aren't "needed" to help uphold capitalism's racist "law and order." And he denounced "agitators that are trying to rile up large crowds" while local police arrested 29 people during the January 10 mass march against ICE terror. DFL governor

continued on page 21



Minneapolis residents face off with federal agents on January 13.

You Can't Fight Trump with the Democrats – Mobilize Workers Power to Stop the Deportations!

In Minneapolis and Everywhere:

For Mass Strike Action to DRIVE ICE OUT



David Guttenfelder / New York Times

Border Patrol officers fire tear gas at protesters after executing Alex Pretti in Minneapolis on January 24.

FEBRUARY 11 – On January 23, as over 75,000 people marched in Minneapolis to demand “ICE Out!” all eyes were on Minnesota. Since early December, masked federal agents in military gear had been brutalizing and kidnapping immigrants there, terrorizing the population of the Twin Cit-

ies of Minneapolis and Saint Paul. Some 3,000 Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Border Patrol agents flooded the area in what was billed as “the largest immigration operation ever,” carrying out would-be dictator Donald Trump’s “largest mass deportation program in history.”

Then on January 7, Renee Nicole Good, a substitute teacher in Minneapolis schools, was killed in cold blood by an ICE agent as she sat in her car observing the marauding feds. While the White House declared the victim a “domestic terrorist” and fascist vice president JD Vance declared that the murderer, Jonathan Ross, had “absolute immunity” from prosecution, a wave of shock spread across the country.

After tens of thousands protested in the streets of Minneapolis and more than 1,000 protests were held nationwide on the weekend, a group of Minnesota union, community and religious leaders called a statewide day of “no work, no school, no shopping” on Friday, January 23. In the following days, momentum built as over 1,000 businesses announced they would shut down in solidarity. Several left groups and even some mainstream media proclaimed it a “general strike.” High school students in the Twin Cities staged a walkout while postal workers called a march for “ICE out!” When Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents shot a Venezuelan immigrant in north Minneapolis, angry residents came out. Border Patrol commander-at-large Gregory Bovino, who revels in imitating Hitler’s Gestapo (secret police), lobbed tear gas at the crowd and the paramilitary marauders fled in their SUVs, dropping a loaded rifle ammo clip in the snow.

On the 23rd there was a massive outpouring of the population in the extreme cold. In the morning, 1,000 protesters gathered at the MSP airport with the temperature at -20°, AFL-CIO marshals kept people off the road as 100 clergy members were arrested by the state police. As we headed downtown for the afternoon march, rivers of protesters walked to the starting point: families, neighborhood groups, church groups. Altogether, more than one-tenth of the population of Minneapolis and St. Paul came out. At 75,000+ it was huge, but it wasn’t a general strike. Unions didn’t walk out, and some of those that endorsed the call told their members to stay on the job if they had a “no-strike” clause in their contract, which most do. In a poll of Minnesota voters, 23% responded that they or a loved one participated in the “Day of Truth and Freedom,” but of those, only 38% (or 9% of the total) didn’t go to work.¹ Still, that’s a significant number of workers not working as a political protest. Many called out sick. Sick of ICE.

The next day, the Trump regime gave its answer to this massive outpouring of opposition to its brutal and deadly depor-

¹ The poll of 1,940 Minnesotans who voted in the 2024 elections was conducted by Blue Rose Research for the May Day Strong coalition. By far the largest form of reported participation was not shopping.



January 23, New York City educators stand with Minneapolis mobilization against ICE. United Federation of Teachers called solidarity rally with the Minnesota “ICE Out” day of action. Photo shows teachers from Claremont International High School (Bronx), Franklin Delano Roosevelt High School (Brooklyn) and NYC Lab School for Collaborative Studies (Manhattan). All have Committees to Defend Immigrants.

New York Teacher

tation drive. As a group of residents were alerting neighbors in central Minneapolis to the presence of an ICE snatch squad, federal agents *executed* Alex Pretti, a nurse at the intensive care unit of the Veterans Administration hospital. Once again, Department of Homeland Security secretary Kristi Noem, White House deputy chief of staff Stephen Miller and Donald Trump immediately labeled Pretti a “domestic terrorist.” But very quickly video footage surfaced showing that when Pretti, who was filming, came to the aid of a woman who was shoved, four Border Patrol agents threw him to the ground, pepper-sprayed him in the face, and then, after an agent removed a pistol from Pretti’s holster, another shot him in the back, then fired three more times while a third agent pumped six more bullets into Pretti’s motionless body.

The execution of Alex Pretti and the grotesque celebration of that crime by the Trump administration in Washington underlined that the murder of Renee Good was not an aberration, not federal agents run amok, but a deliberate policy. The feds were not only acting as modern-day slave catchers.² Using the mass deportations drive as a wedge they are akin to death squads of a Latin American dictatorship from the 1970s, snatching people off the street and gunning down anyone who gets in their way. And while public outrage has focused on the horrendous murders of Good and Pretti, few know the name of Keith Porter Jr, a black education worker in Los Angeles murdered by an off-duty ICE officer on New Year’s eve, or of the 32 immigrants who died in ICE custody last year, or of the at least six so far this year, including Geraldo Lunas Campos, who died in highly suspicious circumstances in an immigration police camp in Texas.

ICE, CBP and the Border Patrol in particular have become a paramilitary militia of a Bonapartist “strong state” regime intent on installing police-state rule. The wanton cruelty is aimed at terrorizing and intimidating immigrants and the population as a whole. But the population was not intimidated – on the contrary, its will to resist hardened. Even among Trump supporters, some said ICE had “gone too far.”

² See “Wall Street’s Slave Catchers and the Fight for Black Freedom,” a review of the book *The Kidnapping Club*, in *Revolution* No. 22 (October 2025).

The Left in the Twin Cities: A Tale of Two Meetings

On Sunday, January 25, there were meetings in Minneapolis of two activist groups, the first by Socialist Alternative in the afternoon and the second by the Party for Socialism and Liberation in the evening, each with upwards of 250 participants. In both cases, the organizers and many of the participants had been heavily involved in building the January 23 mobilization. The question of the hour was: where do we go from here? Both referred to Friday’s “no work, no school, no shopping” day of “truth and freedom” as a general strike (which, as we have explained, it unfortunately was not), albeit only a first step. But, again in both cases, the next step they proposed amounted to class collaboration, an “alliance” of the left and labor with sectors of the bourgeoisie rather than a fight to mobilize the power of the working class independently of and against all sections of the capitalist ruling class.

The Socialist Alternative meeting, which brought out quite a few labor

activists, had been advertised in a flier that posed a number of key questions, including saying “The Democrats won’t defeat ICE – We need a new party!” But what kind of party? An Internationalist supporter (a transit worker from Los Angeles) spoke from the floor, noting that he had worked in a united front with SAlt and other left groups to defend L.A. bus drivers fired for saying they would not let ICE on board. He pointed out that SAlt had repeatedly supported Bernie Sanders when he was running for the Democratic nomination for president. Instead, he said, “We need revolutionary leadership in the unions,” like the Trotskyists who led the 1934 truckers strike. *Socialist Alternative* (6 February), in contrast, says “unions should organize their biggest ever contingents on mass days of action, such as at the next No Kings Day.” But the “No Kings” marches are organized by front groups of the Democratic Party.

At the PSL event, organizers got the crowd going with chants of “strike,

strike,” and put out a lot of self-congratulatory rhetoric about having organized the general strike, as they called it and Minnesota showing the way. Most notable was that in describing the outreach prior to January 23, it was all about convincing shop owners to shut down, including saying how ICE raids were “bad for business.” That was pretty successful, getting up to 1,000 businesses to shut down for ICE out of MN. Appealing to sectors of the petty bourgeoisie could be an auxiliary tactic in a general strike, but it is a far cry from mobilizing workers’ power to halt industry, commerce and transportation. In the breakout group of a dozen or so trade-unionists, IG supporters stressed that to organize a real general strike would take a fight against the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy, specifically to free the unions from the death grip of the Democratic Party. The moderator said that would have to be addressed “at some point,” meaning not now. ■

In the lead-up to the January 23 mobilization, the Internationalist Group had a team in the area actively participating in protests and selling hundreds of copies of *The Internationalist*, calling to “Abort Trump’s Police State,” and of *Revolution*, the newspaper of the Revolutionary Internationalist Youth, headlined “For Mass Worker/Student Action to Stop Raids and Deportations.” We put out a four-page leaflet, nearly 1,000 copies of which were distributed in Minneapolis, with a program for action, “Twin Cities: For a Real General Strike to Drive Out ICE Gestapo!” (See page 16 of this issue.) The Democratic Party and the courts wouldn’t stop the mass deportations, we emphasized, it is necessary to “Bring Out Workers Power!” In the aftermath of the massive mobilization, and the fact that the bloodshed continues, across the country the view has become widespread that much more is needed to stop the serial killers and kidnapers of ICE.

A common theme of the reformist left is for more of the same, to see the Minnesota January 23 “general strike” as a first step and to repeat it nationwide. Students at the University of Minnesota called for

a “no work, no school, no shopping” national shutdown on January 30, which in a number of cities brought out thousands of students, often organized by the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL), the Freedom Road Socialist Organization (FRSO) and Socialist Alternative (SAlt). But a general strike, it wasn’t. *Labor Notes* (30 January), the mouthpiece of the “progressive” wing of the pro-Democratic Party labor bureaucracy, wrote on “How to Spread the General Strike Beyond the Twin Cities,” looking to the May Day Strong coalition formed last year by the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU). It foresaw “No Kings Day protests on March 28, and then May Day 2026 as a possible national day of no work, no shopping, and no school.”

May Day Strong includes the CTU and United Teachers of Los Angeles (both of them locals of the American Federation of Teachers), the National Education Association, National Nurses United, the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA-CWA), SEIU (service workers) Local 26 in Minneapolis and other unions. But it is in reality a “popular front”-style coalition “allying” these workers organizations with Democratic Party front groups such as “50501” and “Indivisible.” At a February 1 Zoom meeting, AFA leader Sarah Nelson (a big booster of Bernie Sanders when he sought the Democratic presidential nomination) called for “preparing for a general strike” on May Day, saying “This is the fundamental check we have on capitalism. The greatest power that we have is our labor.” But a pretend “general strike” along with the Democratic Party of racist repression and imperialist war means keeping workers chained to this pillar of U.S. capitalism.

We need to unchain workers’ power. Different political forces mean different things when they talk of a general strike. Classical anarchists dream of a mythical “great night” when “the people” rise up in unison – a convenient fiction that allows for alliances with liberal bourgeois forces (let’s say the Democratic Farmer-Labor Party in Minnesota). For many labor reformists, particularly in Europe, it is a one-day work stoppage and a parade. For

revolutionary Marxists, however, a general strike is the mobilization of the power of the working class against the capitalist class, posing the struggle for state power. Workers must shut down production and transport in key sectors, and keep them shut until the demands are met, while taking on the parties and repressive forces of capital. Today *labor must take the lead in defending immigrants in a real general strike to drive out ICE and shut down the deportation machine.*

The Battle of Minneapolis – Working People vs. ICE

It was stunning on January 23 the extent to which whole sections of the Twin Cities population came out, about a tenth of the inhabitants of Minneapolis and St. Paul. There were numerous church and community groups, and lots of liberal slogans, like “Love melts ICE.” Also quite a few Minnesota North Star state flags. There was some mention of immigrant rights, but most signs were about “Stop Kidnapping Our Neighbors.” Also “No Secret Police,” “ICE Out of MN” and signs demanding the release of Liam Conejo Ramos, the five-year-old grabbed by the feds in his bunny hat who became a national symbol of the inhumanity of the deportation drive. Some hardy souls braved the frigid wind holding banners on bridges over the freeways saying “ICE Out for Good.” Printed signs declared, “General Strike: The Path to Justice.” At the end of the three-hour march, Somali community groups handed out sambusas.

Supporters of the Internationalist Group and Revolutionary Internationalist Youth carried signs declaring, “For a Mass Strike and Workers Mobilization to Stop ICE Terror,” “George Floyd, Renee Good – Capitalist State: Murder, Inc.,” “For a Real General Strike to Drive Out ICE Gestapo” and “You Can’t Fight Trump with Democrats – For a Revolutionary Workers Party.” They also chanted, “ICE out, shut it down – Minneapolis is a union town!”

The next morning, Saturday, as word spread that another observer had been killed by federal agents, people rushed to the scene. Hundreds stayed all day and



Internationalist supporters at the “ICE out” protest at the MSP airport on the morning of January 23. At least 36 members of SEIU Local 26 and UNITE-HERE Local 17 in Minneapolis have been detained by ICE.

well into the night. You could feel the fury, with chants of “Fuck ICE” over and over. A supporter of Class Struggle Education Workers and the Internationalist Group was helped onto a dumpster to speak to the crowd, bringing greetings from New York and saying that the murder of Alex Pretti was the feds’ answer to the many thousands who protested ICE terror the day before. He stressed the need for a real general strike, as in the 1934 Teamsters strike, to completely shut the city down, and pointed out that it was not just the feds but state and city repressive forces, and their bosses in the Democratic Party, ending with a call for a revolutionary workers party. (See page 20.) That evening several thousand came out to protest in nearby Whittier Park and then marched to the site of the murder.

In the weeks since January 23, Trump appeared to backtrack, talking of “deescalating” the situation in Minnesota and announcing the withdrawal of 700 federal agents, but the ICE, CBP and Border Patrol have continued kidnapping immigrants. Signal chat groups blanketing south Minneapolis reported no change on the ground, and the “People Over Papers” map regularly reported 80-100 ICE sightings a day in the Twin Cities area. Many of those groups arose after the May 2020 racist police murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis cop. Today “hundreds of parents are standing watch for federal agents outside schools during bus drop-off and pick-up times, organizing grocery deliveries for families in hiding, transporting others to critical medical appointments and rallying to help with rent payments” (“The Unexpected Resistance to ICE in Minnesota: The Soccer Moms of Signal,” *Minnesota Star Tribune*, 11 February).

Much of the resistance to the federal occupation has been focused on schools, where attendance has fallen sharply due to students’ and families’ fears of being seized by ICE, whose agents prowl the area looking for easy prey. Almost everywhere in the Twin Cities, teachers, staff, parents and school authorities have organized patrolling at the start and the end of the school day. Some schools whose students are overwhelmingly from immigrant families have gone over entirely to remote instruction while educators and community members have organized to get food and educational materials to families that are afraid to leave their homes. Gymnasiums and local businesses have become distribution centers, and thousands of residents are operating a supply chain under the noses of the feds, who are tracking them (“Hungry Families, ICE and Secret Grocery Networks in Minneapolis,” *New York Times*, 11 February).

The federal agents act as an occupying army. The wanton violence of paramilitary ICE and Border Patrol officers reflects the fact that, faced with overwhelming opposition, they treat the population as a whole as “hostiles.” This is what Trump meant when he told the Pentagon brass last September that they would soon be waging war against the “enemy within.” The population has reciprocated with organized resistance. In a state where it is proverbially a Commandment that “thou shalt show up on the doorstep of a new family moving in nearby bearing a casserole of hot dish to welcome them,” the war on their immigrant neighbors is a slap in the face of the Minnesota ethos. But while mass rejection

by the population has been an obstacle for ICE, it has not stopped them from seizing 4,000 Minnesotans to be deported. To defeat the occupation force, we need to bring out a superior force, that of the working class championing all of the oppressed.

For Militant Mass Action by Labor to Stop the Deportations

On January 26, as Trump talked of “deescalation,” it was reported that the feds’ operations commander Gregory Bovino and some of his agents would be leaving Minnesota. The fascistic violence freak Bovino would be sent back to his old post as head of the El Centro district on the California-Mexico border. He would be replaced by White House “border czar” Tom Homan, a no less sinister figure, who would begin to “draw down” federal forces in the state. Today, February 11, Homan announced that the “surge” of immigration agents in Minnesota would be ending. Democratic governor Tim Walz immediately posted on social media, “Thank you, Minnesota.” The president of the Minneapolis City Council said skeptically, “I’ll believe it when I see it,” and vowed to keep patrolling. If true, it’s Trump’s typical bully boy *modus operandi*: faced with significant opposition, cut the losses, declare “mission accomplished,” and move on.

Ending the “surge” would certainly be a political setback for Trump, and quite possibly demoralizing for his shock troops, backing down in the face of mass popular opposition. To a degree, the Minnesota operation, like its predecessors in Chicago and Los Angeles, represented a miscalculation by the White House deputy chief of staff and “homeland security advisor” Stephen Miller, who demanded a body count of one million deportees by December 31, seizing 3,000 people a day by whatever means. (He didn’t even come close.) But surge or no surge, even if the optics change with less spectacular fireworks, the drive for mass deportations will continue, as Homan vowed. Look at the famous 2007



David Guttenfelder / The New York Times

An aerial shot of the crowd of more than 75,000 that marched on January 23 in Minneapolis demanding “ICE out!”

“surge” of U.S. forces in Iraq. It officially ended in mid-2008, but around 2,000 U.S. troops still remain “in country,” and thousands more in bases and on ships around the Persian Gulf. And in any case, we’ll believe it when we see it.

The issue remains of how to defeat the program of mass deportations that is spearheading the drive for police-state rule and aims to radically transform U.S. society by excising its vital immigrant component. In the long run, Trump is on weak ground: not only is there mass opposition in “Democrat-run” large cities, it is beginning to dawn on people in many rural areas that if the immigrants are gone, depopulation will set in. There will be no services, motels, gas station attendants, local grocery stores, and forget about nursing homes for aging parents. Or steaks and fresh vegetables. Ditto for new home construction in the suburbs. And with abortion clinics shut, the Trump regime wants to force white women to become baby factories. Not a popular program once reality hits, but to sink it requires a working-class offensive taking on both capitalist parties, the enemies of black people, Latinos, immigrants and all working people.

The Democrats will not wage a real fight to stop the raids, because from Clinton to Obama to Biden, they, too, are a party of mass deportations. Currently they are engaged in a charade in Washington, threatening to refuse funding for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) unless certain cosmetic changes are made to ICE operations, such as requiring body cameras and identification tags, no masks, ending indiscriminate arrests, protecting sensitive locations (schools, churches, hospitals) and stopping racial profiling. Trump knows that if he hardlines it, the feckless Democrats will cave (one senator already did). Moreover, most of the demands are vague enough to get around or have no mechanism to enforce them. In any case, ICE won’t shut down. Of the whopping \$170 billion slated for immigration enforcement in Trump’s “Big Beautiful Bill,” tens of billions have already been turned over to the DHS, more than enough to carry it through the end of the year.

The battle of Minneapolis underscores that to *defeat* the mass deportations will take a mobilization of labor’s power on the ground wherever the immigrant hunt-

The “Minnesota Model” of Class Collaboration

While “progressive” union bureaucrats are now joining reformist leftists in tossing around calls for general strikes, what they generally mean is to spread the January 23 “no work, no school, no shopping” day of action in Minnesota nationwide. And they propose to do so not against Trump and the Democratic Party of “Genocide Joe” Biden and former “deporter-in-chief” Barack Obama, but as an *anti-ICE, anti-Trump movement together with the Democrats*. That is not class struggle but class collaboration.

The reformist *Labor Notes* (30 January) in its recipe for spreading the Twin Cities “general strike” hails the “Minnesota model” as the way to go. This “model” grew out of the Minnesotans for a Fair Economy (MFE), an initiative sponsored by the SEIU. The MFE joined with the CTUL (Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en la Lucha), Unidos MN and the interfaith religious group ISAIHAH to formulate policy papers for its “fair economy.” There is a lot of talk of “solidarity,”

for example in the article “The Minnesota Model Is Transforming Organizing as We Know It,” by *In These Times* (6 August 2024), a publication close to the right wing of the Democratic (Party) Socialists of America (DSA). But the “success” of this model is what *Labor Notes* calls its alliance with “long-term allies” in a “new governing bloc.”

What the labor reformists of *LN* mean is that the MFE acted as a think tank working up policies that the Democratic Farmer-Labor Party then implemented when it retook the governorship and both houses of the state legislature from Republicans in 2012. But that labor support for the capitalist DFL was under Governor Mark Dayton, the heir to the Dayton department store chain that became Target. That also explains some of the fury against Target: it was supposed to be a “progressive” corporation in line with its Minnesota roots. Turns out, Target bosses are capitalists after all, and while there are lots of calls to mobilize labor to pressure the corporations to “do the right thing,” a letter by 60 CEOs of Minnesota companies

after the murder of Alex Pretti just called to lower the temperature, like Walz and other Democrats called for.

Eric Blanc writing in *Jacobin* (2 February), close to another wing of the DSA, admitted that January 23 in Minnesota was not a general strike, and presented a recipe for “How to Organize a Real General Strike in the US.” The recipe involves “three ingredients: momentum, organization, and militant, risk-tolerant leaders.” Not a word about the Democratic Party. Blanc refers to the “Minnesota Miracle” of 2023, when again a raft of “progressive policy changes” was passed into law by the DFL under Governor Tim Walz. This includes a number of supportable measures for abortion rights, transgender rights, drivers licenses for undocumented immigrants, some more protection for workers seeking unionization. But these are only changes at the margins: the national right to abortion has been abolished, unionization in Minnesota is only 14% of the workforce, and Walz has done nothing to stop the mass deportations. ■

ers show up. The Friday, January 23 shutdown and mass mobilization against ICE in Minneapolis inspired defenders of immigrant rights across the country. From Portland, Maine to Portland, Oregon there were solidarity rallies. In New York City, a supporter of Class Struggle Education Workers put forward a resolution in the Delegate Assembly of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) calling for an emergency demonstration in solidarity with fellow unionists, students, faculty, staff and immigrant communities in Minnesota. (See page 22.) For the first time in a long time, the UFT actually mobilized, bringing perhaps a thousand teachers to NYC's Union Square. Altogether some 5,000+ people came out as other unions joined in the rally and march. Of course, the labor tops sought endorsements from the Hands Off NYC popular front to get some bourgeois cover.

Elsewhere in the U.S., there was a labor march for "ICE Out" in Portland, Oregon on January 31 that brought out thousands of union members and supporters. However, when federal agents at the ICE facility tear-gassed the crowd, as they have regularly done, the union tops kept on marching, leaving the rest of the marchers to fend for themselves. (See page 23.) The same day there were three union-backed "ICE Out" demonstrations in Seattle, Washington. Unions across the country, from the CWA (Communications Workers of America) and SEIU (Service Employees International Union) to the ILWU (International Longshore and Warehouse Union) issued statements condemning the killing of Renee Good (a member of the Minneapolis Federation of Educators) and of Alex Pretti (a member of the American Federation of Government Employees Local 3669). But what is crucial is to *mobilize union power to stop the deportations*.

While Trump's stormtroopers have enraged the public, the Minnesota state police under DFL governor Walz, and Minneapolis city police under DFL mayor Jacob Frey (who was the boss of the Minneapolis Police Department when a MPD cop choked George Floyd to death in May 2020), have shielded the ICE immigrant snatchers from angry protesters in the name of "public safety." The latest case was on February 7 when State Patrol troopers, at the request of the Minneapolis sheriff, arrested at least 50 protesters at the Whipple Federal Building that has been the staging ground for the immigration raids. The arrests came after a

fascistic provocateur, Jake Lang, drove past screaming racist epithets against Somalis and chanting, "This is our country. Muslims go home." Whether under Trump or the Democrats, the city and state police, ICE and other federal agencies, and the military are all part of a repressive apparatus that defends the interests of the capitalist exploiters against those they exploit and oppress.

So, too, are the courts. Some judges have written powerful and eloquent orders calling to free a number of the thousands of residents who have been kidnapped from the streets, hauled out of their cars and dragged from their homes by federal agents over the last year, including Liam Conejo Ramos who was grabbed as he returned home from pre-school with his father. But even that court order, which unlike many others was carried out, will not stop Liam's deportation, as the judge admitted. Nor will the Democrats' performative shenanigans in Congress, or calls to "abolish ICE" along with more demonstrations. The courageous actions of the residents of Los Angeles, Chicago, Minneapolis, Memphis, New Orleans, Washington, D.C., who have stood by their immigrant neighbors and coworkers are truly inspiring, and have doubtless played a role in the Trump regime's shift in strategy. But to actually stop the deportation machine will take a showdown with both capitalist parties of mass deportations, racist repression and imperialist war.

Only a militant, class-conscious working class can do that, at the head of a mass mobilization of all those who would oppose the ravages of capital. The key in the battle over immigration and against the mushrooming police state, as in the fight against black oppression, for women's rights and trans rights and so much else, is to forge a revolutionary leadership that acts as a champion of all the oppressed. The Internationalist Group and Revolutionary Internationalist Youth are fighting to build the nucleus of such a vanguard, a continuation of the revolutionary Trotskyists who won the 1934 battle of Minneapolis leading the militant Teamsters strike to victory. Above all, it is necessary to fight for working-class independence from the capitalists, their government and parties, and to build a *revolutionary workers party* on a program of international socialist revolution.

For militant workers strike action to drive out ICE and stop the deportations!

Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

Minneapolis: For a Real General Strike! The Murder of Alex Pretti: "It's a Question of Power, on Their Side and on Ours"

We print below the remarks by an activist of the Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants and Class Struggle Education Workers from New York who spoke from atop a dumpster at an impromptu protest in Minneapolis, Minnesota on January 24, on Nicollet Avenue and 26th Street half a block from where Alex Pretti, a Veterans Administration Intensive Care Unit nurse, was executed by DHS/Border Patrol agents a few hours earlier.

[Crowd chants:] Say it loud, say it clear – immigrants are welcome here!

Can you hear me? Hello – I want to bring some words of solidarity from New York City. Can I bring some words of solidarity from New York City? I'm a teacher, I'm a member of an education union in New York City. I'm not speaking officially on their behalf, I am part of a group called Class Struggle Education Workers.

We saw, yesterday, the many thousands of people that came out to denounce the murder and the terror by the ICE Gestapo here in the Twin Cities and to join our voices as unionists saying *ICE Out of Minnesota, now!*

And not just ICE, but the Border Patrol – the ICE and Border Patrol Gestapo. In New York City [on January 23], about 15,000 people marched, including many unionists, in solidarity with Minnesota.

But what today seems to be the response of the ICE and Border Patrol Gestapo? It looks like, it seems like, even though the facts are still rolling in – to everyone's horror, it looks like this execution was their answer. It looks like this execution was their answer to the massive protest that occurred here and in many other places [yesterday].

There is no question of appealing to their morality, sense of humanity or any such thing. What they are showing and keep showing is that it is a question of power – and they seek to use their power and their weapons to terrorize and to silence and to make everyone afraid.

Are you afraid? *[Crowd responds: No!]* Are you going to let them silence you? *[Crowd: No!]* Are you going to keep chanting? *[Crowd: Yes!]* Are you going to keep marching? *[Crowd: Yes!]* That's good.

[Say his name!] I do not know his name. *[Voice from the crowd: They just reported an hour ago, his name was Alex Pretti. He was a nurse who had a permit to carry a gun. He was a 37 year-old white man.]* Before coming up here, I asked a bunch of people his name, which they did not know. *[Crowd: Say his name!]* Alex Pretti! *[Crowd chants "Alex Pretti."]* Renee Good! *[Crowd: Renee Good!]* George Floyd! *[Crowd: George Floyd!]*



Internationalist photo

Speaking to the crowd that rushed to the scene of where ICU nurse Alex Pretti was killed by federal agents in Minneapolis, January 24.

But I want to also talk about those whose names are never mentioned. *What about those whose names are never mentioned?* What about the at least 40 immigrants who have died in ICE detention? What about them? What about the immigrant who was murdered in detention in Texas [in January], and it was ruled a homicide?

I want to just say two more things, with your permission.

It is a question of power on their side, but it's also a question of power on *our* side. What I believe, as a unionist, is urgent is a *real general strike*, like in 1934 here in Minneapolis, which shut down the city and in which the working class and youth and oppressed people *use our power to completely shut it down*.

A real general strike, in which the unions *go on strike*. And in any goddamn strike, there's two sides: which side are you on is always the question. And the question is to make sure to use our power so our side wins – it is a class struggle.

The last thing I want to say, is it's not just the federal repressive forces. It's the state and the city repressive forces. How many of you were at the airport yesterday? Who did the arrests? *[Crowd: The state!]* The state of what? *[Crowd: Minnesota!]* Who are the police that killed George Floyd? *[Crowd: MPD! The city!]*

Okay. So, who are their bosses, at the state level and the city level? Democratic Party politicians. It is the allegiance to the Democratic Party, the party of genocide in Gaza, the party of racist police terror. It is that allegiance by the unions and social movements that keeps the union's power chained. We need to *unchain that power*. Speaking for myself, I think that that means not only a genuine general strike here and mass strikes elsewhere, but a revolutionary workers party. I am a supporter of the Internationalist Group. Thank you. *[Crowd chanting: ICE OUT!]*



Thousands protested the racist police murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis cop, 26 May 2020. Millions took to the streets to denounce systemic racism. The cops kept on killing.

Organize Against ICE Terror, Raids and Deportations – And to Defend the Rights of Us All

Health Care Workers Say: No ICE in the Hospitals!

By the Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants, Health Care Workers Working Group

“Are you okay?” Those were the last words of our fellow health care worker Alex Pretti, a 37-year-old ICU nurse at the Minneapolis VA Hospital, as he shielded a woman who had been shoved and pepper-sprayed by the marauding Border Patrol/ICE agents. In seconds, he was smashed into the ground – and shot to death by the federal agents. Videos show that they fired at least 10 times at his back.

Alex Pretti was videotaping an immigration raid, as one among the thousands of “rapid responders” who have so courageously come out to oppose the racist reign of terror in Minneapolis. *All nurses unions should officially declare Alex Pretti to be a hero for health care workers, while heightening and intensifying the struggle demanding: No ICE / Border Patrol / DHS in hospitals or any health care facilities!*

The murder of our union brother Alex Pretti was an *execution* by the DHS / ICE / Border Patrol Gestapo. The Trump administration’s torrent of lies cannot blot out what we have seen with our own eyes. It occurred one day after tens of thousands of Minnesota unionists, youth and community members marched demanding “ICE Out,” and many more nationwide joined marches in solidarity with them. Alex’s murder on the streets of Minneapolis occurred 17 days after that of Renee Nicole Good, killed barely a mile away from where a Minneapolis cop murdered George Floyd in 2020. And as we must never forget, it occurred after at least 32 immigrants died last year in ICE custody, followed by growing numbers in 2026, among them Geraldo Lunas Campos, whose death on January 3 in a Texas ICE dungeon has been ruled a homicide.

Speaking to a downtown Minneapo-



lis rally on January 25, an immigrant activist noted that as an ICU nurse, “Alex Pretti spent his life saving the lives of others,” and was killed seeking to do the same the previous day. Across the country, health care workers have expressed horror, indignation and determination to take action together.

On the picket line at Mount Sinai here in NYC, New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA) members, who are in their third week on strike against the greedy hospital barons, gathered to mourn brother Pretti and demand an end to ICE terror. For all labor, that demand must be put into practice, by bringing out workers power, and joined with the fight for *victory to the NYSNA strike – Picket lines mean don’t cross.*

Other health care workers unions have echoed members’ shock, sorrow and anger. The day of Pretti’s murder, National Nurses United (NNU), the largest union of registered nurses in U.S. history, stated:

“The nation’s nurses, who make it their mission to care for and save human lives, are horrified and outraged that immigration agents have once again committed cold-blooded murder of a public observer who posed no threat to them. This time, they have executed one of our fellow nurses, Alex Pretti...”

NNU, whose affiliates include NYSNA, called a “week-long series of actions to honor Pretti and all who have been murdered by ICE,” saying: “ICE messed with the

wrong profession.” Indeed they did.

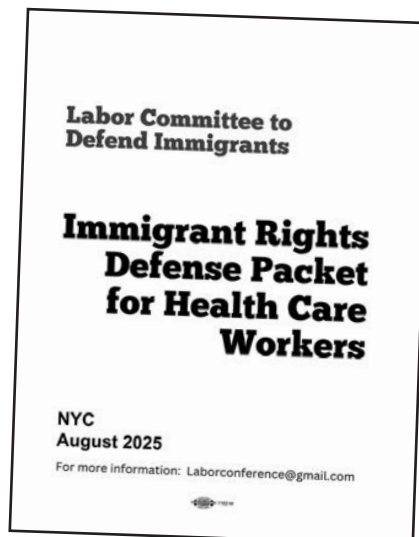
Not only do nurses and other health care workers have a responsibility to defend our patients, many of whom are immigrants, but in New York State over a quarter of nurses are immigrants. It is crucial that we organize and fight collectively in defense of the rights of immigrants and the rights of us all, throughout the health care system and everywhere else.

Under the impact of current events, growing numbers of workers are seeking serious and well-organized ways to mobilize against the anti-immigrant offensive. In their contract negotiations, striking NYSNA nurses have sought to make the bosses establish protections and trainings on this issue, which execs have reportedly refused. While Democratic politicians claim to support the strike, Governor Hochul is assisting the bosses’ scab-herding. Mayor Mamdani, who is now closely allied with her, came to the picket line but upped pressure on the union to “return to the bargaining table.”

The *Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants* (LCDI) was formed in early 2025, bringing together activists from many unions and immigrant rights groups. We organize to help bring labor’s independent class power into the fight to *stop* the raids and deportations and defeat the anti-immigrant onslaught, which spearheads the assault on the rights of all working people.

The LCDI’s Health Care Workers Working Group published the *Immigrant Rights Defense Packet for Health Care Workers*, organizes “Know Your Rights” trainings, promotes the formation of immigrant rights defense committees in unions and workplaces, and brings coworkers and fellow unionists out to many key protests and events. Today, with the murder of Alex Pretti, the ICE Gestapo seeks to intimidate and silence us all. They will not succeed! Instead, we redouble our commitment to fighting for the rights of immigrants and the whole working class.

From Minneapolis to NYC: ICE Out Now!



The labor movement must “*organize now* to use its strength and numbers in the struggle to stop attacks on immigrant workers’ rights and the rights of us all. The fact that immigrants are a vital part of the working class is shown every day here in New York City, where people born in other countries make up 45% of the workforce. In NYC, immigrant workers have been central to building the labor movement and making our city a union town. Solidarity is key to our power – and it’s never been more needed than now. With the new administration building on the deportation record and structures ramped up by its predecessors, we can’t look to the government, police, courts or politicians of any capitalist party to protect immigrants. It is crucial to bring to bear the organized *power of labor*, and the principles of working-class solidarity, in defense of immigrant workers and their families”.

– From “*Join the Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants*,” January 2025.

Twin Cities...

continued from page 16

Tim Walz, the running mate of Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris, who bragged about being California’s “top cop,” mobilized the Minnesota National Guard on January 17 to “support local law enforcement.” Frey says he only has 600 police compared to 3,000 federal agents, but from L.A. to Washington, D.C. to Chicago and Minneapolis, Democrats have used local cops to shield the feds from protesters. They are all on the same side: police, National Guard, ICE, CBP, DHS, the military are all the armed fist of capital to keep down working people and the oppressed.

The courageous action of the population has exposed and made things difficult for the immigrant snatchers as they maraud around the Twin Cities, *but this has not stopped ICE*. Nor will the Democrats or the courts get the feds out of Minneapolis or tie the hands of these racist criminals. *La migra* – the hated immigration police – acts like it is above the law because it is; its masked agents look like terrorists because they are. What counts is power. *Unless his rampage is stopped by a superior force, Trump will just tough it out* – and he has already more than doubled the manpower of ICE. The vastly greater force that can put a halt to this hellscape is the working class, which can bring the wheels of commerce and industry to a grinding halt and through mass mobilization can stymie the action of capitalism’s corrupt armed agencies of repression. But to do so, *to bring workers’ power to bear in militant class struggle, requires revolutionary leadership* – as was the case in the world-famous Minneapolis general strike of 1934, which was led by Trotskyists committed to the fight for socialist revolution.

As the assault on immigrants and the working people of Minnesota as a whole continues and even escalates, representatives of the state’s labor unions, as well as religious leaders and community organizations, have called an “ICE out of MN: Day of Truth and Freedom” for January 23. A press release by the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO called the action along with the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation and other area labor councils around Minnesota. Also endorsing the call are SEIU Local 26, UNITE HERE Local 17, CWA Local 7250, the St. Paul Federation of Educators Local 28, ATU Local 1005, the Committee of Interns and Residents and the Minnesota AFL-CIO. The action called for “No Work, School or Shopping” to demand ICE out of Minnesota now; that the agent who killed Renee Good “be held legally accountable”; that there be no new funding for ICE in the federal budget, and that Minnesota corporations not cooperate with ICE. A demonstration in downtown Minneapolis is scheduled for 2 p.m. this Friday.

Break with the Democrats – For a Revolutionary Workers Party

A number of left groups and even some in the bosses’ media (like the *Pioneer Press*) are referring to January 23 as a “general strike.” Over 80 co-ops, businesses and stores in the Twin Cities area are planning to close on Friday. And many workers we’ve spoken with want to participate. But while top labor leaders signed on, and there is some unaccustomed tough talk, they are not



Defeat Governor's Legislative Coup d'État

Wisconsin: For a General Strike *Now!*

Thousands jam into the Rotunda of the Wisconsin State Capitol, Feb. 18, to protest union-busting bill. Break with the Democrats, Republicans and All Capitalist Parties! Build a Class-Struggle Workers Party!

MARCH 13 - A law challenging the very existence of unions of government workers has just been rammed through. We have said from the outset that "it will take nothing

a one-day work stoppage with a demonstration, which is what militant-talking labor bureaucrats and opportunist leftists mean when they talk "general strike," is not going to kick out ICE or even modify the feds' brutal tactics. It is essentially symbolic.

The Internationalist Group says that what's needed is **A REAL GENERAL STRIKE TO DRIVE OUT THE ICE GESTAPO**. That would have to be a *sustained labor action to shut down the economy and mobilize workers by the tens of thousands to use their power to put an end to the feds' reign of terror*. And that will require serious preparation. *For Minnesota labor, the struggle for ICE out now must not end on January 23*.

In Madison, Wisconsin tens of thousands of union members and supporters marched around the state capitol daily and occupied it for weeks opposing a union-busting bill. "Progressive" labor leaders talked of a general strike, but then caved in out of fear that the ranks could get out of hand. Instead they told demonstrators to go home and vote for Democrats.

necessarily calling on their members to strike. Teamsters Local 638, for example, issued a statement, supporting the call for "statewide community and labor action," but just called for "any members not scheduled to work" that afternoon to participate in the demo and told members covered by "no-strike" clauses in their contracts (i.e., most of them) that "you are not legally permitted to strike" and anyone with a "legitimate reason" to take off work had better "follow the proper procedures." Other union leaders are talking about a "sick-out" rather than an official strike. This puts it all on the members rather than taking responsibility for calling a strike themselves.

Unfortunately, at this point January 23 is not a general strike – far from it. What's urgently needed is a struggle to turn the widespread desire for mass strike action into reality, and that struggle can't and must not be postponed. A real general strike would mobilize the organized workers (and bring out many not yet unionized) for *all-out class struggle* against the bosses, their forces of repression and their parties and politicians. The January 23 action has more of the character of a "civic strike," done in cooperation with local businesses and at least tacitly in conjunction with the Democratic Farmer-Labor Party. Yet

If a real general strike were to occur in Minneapolis, it would be the first in the United States since the Oakland, California general strike of 1946 that involved up to 100,000 workers, sparked by a walkout of women department store employees fighting for unionization amid a postwar strike wave across the U.S. In Wisconsin in 2011, tens of thousands of workers marched daily around the state capitol in Madison in opposition to a bill from labor-hating Republican governor Scott Walker to gut the right to unionize of public employees. Local labor leaders announced there would be a general strike on the day the legislation was voted on, but when the day arrived, these "progressive" bureaucrats called off the demonstration and told workers to go home and vote for Democrats in a special election. The Democrats lost, the legislation passed, and the teachers unions membership fell by 30%.

This is yet another example of how support to the Democrats means chaining labor's power. To wage and win the struggle it was necessary to oust both mainline and "progressive" union tops with a class-struggle leadership. Such a leadership can only be built on a program getting to the root of racist terror, imperialist war and every form of oppression:



Battle of Deputies Run, 22 May 1934. Trotskyist-led Minneapolis Teamsters drive off police and deputized strikebreakers, winning what became a citywide general strike.

Resolution for UFT Demonstration for Renee Nicole Good and in Solidarity with Minneapolis Teachers

The following resolution, introduced by a supporter of Class Struggle Education Workers, was overwhelmingly passed by the United Federation of Teachers Delegate Assembly on January 14.

WHEREAS, education unionists and many other sectors of the labor movement have expressed indignation and alarm at the brutal targeting of our immigrant fellow workers, family members, and communities in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, including students, teachers, and staff at schools there, workers at the local Target store, families in their homes and cars, and many others; and

WHEREAS, last Wednesday, January 7, the ICE invasion of Minneapolis led directly to Renee Nicole Good being shot and killed by an ICE agent there, approximately one mile from where George Floyd was murdered in 2020; and

WHEREAS, Renee Nicole Good was a substitute teacher in the Minneapolis schools; and

WHEREAS, shortly after the killing of Renee Good, the Border Patrol attacked Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis brutalizing and threatening students, teachers, and staff there; and

WHEREAS, teachers' unions in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area have con-

demned the murder of Good, the ICE Border Patrol onslaught against immigrants, and the population at large, and demanded that these federal forces leave town; and

WHEREAS, teachers, communications, transport, health and other workers' unions have joined with community and religious groups to call a day of no work, no school on Friday, January 23 throughout Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, the latest death at the hands of ICE is being used to even further trample basic rights and terrorize people there and nationwide, while top officials of the federal government intensify the demonization of entire immigrant communities together with the victim of the January 7 killing by ICE; and

WHEREAS, the UFT has spoken out in defense of immigrant rights, and at last June's delegate assembly meeting passed an important resolution for union-led defense of immigrant students, faculty, and staff; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the UFT will call for an emergency demonstration and day of action here in New York, in solidarity with our fellow unionists and with students, faculty, staff, and immigrant communities in Minnesota on Friday, January 23rd.

a program for the working class here to overturn this decaying capitalist system and take power into its own hands.

Many liberal Democrats, including Democratic (Party) Socialists of America New York City mayor Zohran Mandani, are resuscitating the call to "abolish ICE." As we explained when this demand was popularized by DSA Democrats like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in Trump's first term, the revulsion at the vile police force that is terrorizing millions of immigrants is fully justified. But the radical-sounding slogan "is being pushed by various 'progressive' Democrats precisely in order to pin the blame for the anti-immigrant offensive on Trump alone ... and to obscure the fact that Obama deported far more immigrants than any Republican. In the remote possibility that this criminal agency were ever 'abolished' by Congress or the executive, the result would be another racist and Bonapartist police agency" like those that preceded ICE. So long as the capitalist class retains state power, it will never give up its machinery of repression. We also noted that those calling to abolish ICE were not calling to abolish the Border Patrol. Warning that "U.S. Immigration Policies Always Have Been Racist," we called to "Smash the I.C.E. Gestapo with Workers Revolution!" (*The Internationalist* No. 53, September-October 2018).

The Battle of Minneapolis will go on. Class-struggle unionists and the growing number of activists looking for revolutionary answers must build on the mass resistance to ICE, which has kept growing since the feds invaded in early December. By sending

thousands of paramilitary police and, potentially, military forces to occupy the Twin Cities, Trump may be setting a trap for himself, *if* labor mobilization grows. Workers, immigrants and youth across the country are intensely watching what is happening in Minnesota. A victory forcing ICE out would reverberate in cities across the country, and even in small towns and rural areas where immigrants are now a key section of the workforce. There is a lot of loose talk about a "civil war," in which right-wingers boast that gun owners in Republican-governed states have 80 billion rounds of ammunition. But many gun owners in Minnesota are outraged over ICE's antics, and in a hard-fought *class war*, the power of the workers dwarfs that of the fascists, the paramilitary cops and the billionaire masters of the capitalist government.

The urgent task is to *build a leadership fighting for a workers government here and internationally, on the revolutionary internationalist program of Lenin and Trotsky*. The victorious general strike that the Trotskyists led in Minneapolis in 1934 was one of the vital battles that led to mass unionization in the midst of the Depression, despite the attempts by the Democratic government of Franklin D. Roosevelt (and of Farmer-Labor governor Floyd B. Olson) to derail it. Now more than ever a revolutionary workers party, with a program of intransigent class struggle, is needed to lead all the oppressed to victory. *For militant mass workers action to stop the raids and deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! FOR A REAL GENERAL STRIKE TO DRIVE ICE OUT!* ■

Feds Gas Labor March Against ICE For Mass Workers Action to Stop Deportations!

PORTLAND, Ore., March 12 – The assassination of Alex Pretti by Border Patrol agents on January 24 sent shock waves across the country. This was particularly felt among trade unionists, since Pretti, an Intensive Care Unit nurse at the Minneapolis Veterans Affairs Medical Center, was a member of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 3669. Pretti's murder came only weeks after the murder of Renee Nicole Good by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) cop in Minneapolis. Around the country, nurses took to the streets to memorialize Pretti. National Nurses United held a week of action dedicated to protesting his murder and demand "ICE out of the hospitals." On January 30, students across the country held a "national shutdown," which brought out hundreds of high schoolers in Portland.

The next day, January 31, a mass march of trade unionists and supporters was held in Portland under the banner, "Labor Says: ICE Out!" The two nurses unions – Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) and Oregon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals (OFNHP) – headed up the march, which was endorsed by 30 unions and other labor organizations. The turnout exceeded the organizers' expectations: as union workers and their families poured into Elizabeth Caruthers Park that afternoon, even the Portland police reported that attendance was "well into the thousands." The march began at 4 p.m., passing by the Portland ICE facility on South Macadam Avenue. Then, all hell broke out.

After the front end of the procession, including the protest organizers, had marched past the facility, the feds suddenly launched a massive barrage of tear gas. Flash-bangs followed in short order, then pepper balls and rubber bullets. Hundreds of protestors, among them many young children and elderly people, were enveloped in the noxious gas, which drifted for several blocks into residential areas nearby where it had lingering effects for days. Scores of protestors found themselves blinded and overcome with burning eyes, skin and throats. Many were struck by coughing fits and vomited. Initially many sought to vacate the area, pushing out away from the gas. Videos show a young girl having her eyes rinsed to treat the effects of the burning gas.

While the leadership of the march continued on to their planned destination, return-

ing to Elizabeth Caruthers Park, the crowd made up of nurses, teachers, construction trades and transport workers was caught off guard. The Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants (LCDI) contingent administered first aid to many of the unprepared marchers. Despite the lack of a clear plan, the protestors organized themselves on the ground to respond to the attack, using their signs as fans to keep the cloud of gas at bay. A large group staunchly remained in the street just past the thickest teargas cloud in defiance of the feds. The LCDI chanted, "ICE Out, shut it down, Portland is a union town," and "Union workers lead the way, shut it down for Renee – In every town, in every city, shut it down for Alex Pretti."

The feds' barbaric display of vengeance set off a firestorm of protest. On February 3, a federal judge issued a temporary restraining order (TRO) prohibiting ICE officers from using crowd control munitions, including tear gas and other dispersal agents, at the South Macadam facility unless protestors pose a "direct and immediate threat." Of course, for the sadistic Department of Homeland Security (DHS) secretary Kristi Noem, who lied about the killings of Good and Pretti, peaceful protesting is such a "threat." In another case, residents of the low-income housing complex Gray's Landing across the street from the ICE facility sought a court order against the use of chemical irritants there, citing long-term harm to residents in frequent assaults by the feds.

The use of tear gas on protestors in Portland has been so pervasive that the sheer quantity constitutes a risk to the population long after. In 2020, Portland banned using tear gas within city limits, though that didn't stop the police. In 2022, state legislation permitted its use to control "riots." In April 2023, a study by the Forensic Architecture group (which has produced detailed accounts of the genocidal destruction of Gaza) on the use of gas on "Teargas Tuesday," 2 June 2020,



A week after Alex Pretti was murdered by federal immigration agents in Minneapolis, a mass labor march against ICE in Portland was attacked by the feds. Agents on the roof of the ICE facility fired a barrage of tear gas, pepper balls and rubber bullets on the crowd which included older people and small children.

demonstrated that "Portland police deployed gas well above harmful levels" (KGW8, 20 April 2023). At 15 surveyed locations, airborne concentrations of CS gas far exceeded the 2 mg/m³ levels at which exposure is "immediately dangerous to life and health" (according to federal agencies), in one case reaching 4,568 mg/m³, over 2,000 times the potentially lethal level.

Last summer, Donald Trump loudly threatened to send the National Guard into Portland, a special target of his hatred for the Democrat-run major cities. He was stopped by a federal judge. Though National Guard troops were eventually sent home from their stand-by positions outside Chicago and Portland, the threat of the National Guard invading those cities – and New York City – is still real. And in any case, thousands of federal agents have been unleashed on these cities, to hunt down immigrants and terrorize the population. What's needed is to bring labor's power to bear with a mass worker-led mobilization to drive *la migra* (immigration cops) out. "All out for *FEDS OUT*," as an LCDI leaflet (7 November 2025) proclaimed.

Not Frogs and Peacocks or Looking to the Capitalist State ...

There is a pre-history to the events of January 31 and the brutal assault by federal agents on peaceful protestors. Ever since Trump sent feds into Portland last June to bolster ICE, the response of city leaders has been to make fun of these paramilitary forces, and to pester them with petty subterfuges. Protesters who regularly gathered outside the ICE facility dressed up in whimsical inflatable costumes of frogs, dinosaurs, cows, peacocks, a unicorn, and the Portland Chicken. On Sundays, there were "pajamas and pastries" parties. But as the LCDI leaflet said, "Farce, frog suits and pajama parties outside the ICE jail won't deter the sinister forces determined to intimidate us and destroy our communities."

Behind the mocking response to the ominous assault by ICE, Border Patrol, Customs and Border Protection, Federal Protective Service and other DHS outfits is the desire by Portland rulers to avoid at all costs a repeat of the explosive protests of summer 2020 over the racist police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. It is also relevant that out of the 12 members of the

Portland City Council, four are Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) members, two more join with the DSA Democrats in a "progressive caucus," or Peacock for short, while a seventh often votes with them, sometimes giving them a working majority. And the main organizer of the January 31 "Labor Against ICE" march was the DSA.

This background helps to explain why the several thousand marchers were unprepared for the feds' attack. While the volume of gas grenades, pepper balls and other supposedly "less lethal" munitions exceeded anything recently experienced, everyone in Portland knows that federal agents have repeatedly fired tear gas at protests outside the ICE facility. Yet the DSA, as part of the Democratic Party of genocide, deportations and racist repression, looks to the bourgeois state apparatus as its "answer" to the capitalist assault on working and oppressed people. In addition to frog outfits, the city's initial response to the feds' invasion was to do what city councilors do best, fiddle with zoning regulations. To no avail.

And now, in response to the January 31 attack, what did the demonstration organizers do? A February 2 letter by DSA labor leader Jamie Partridge, a former officer of National Association of Letter Carriers Local 82, called on Mayor Keith Wilson to "enforce all violations of city code at the Macadam ICE facility" and "enforce the city's provisions against prohibited nuisances." Hello?! ICE is not a "nuisance" but dangerous commandos acting as Trump's personal shock troops in the drive toward a Bonapartist police state. The "Peacock" strategy tries to make light of this deadly threat to immigrants and to the rights of working people generally, channeling the widespread anger at Trump and ICE into the dead-end of looking to the capitalist state.

The role of the DSA is to put a friendly face on the Democratic Party, which built up the whole deportation machinery that Trump is now using (including putting kids in cages). Counterposed to this is the program of Class Struggle Workers – Portland (CSWP), a tendency of labor militants which works fraternally with the Internationalist Group and which initiated the Portland Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants. The CSWP participated in the January 31 labor demonstration with its banner calling for "Full Citi-

continued on page 27



At the 31 January labor march for "ICE out!" with Oregon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals and the Oregon Nurses Association in in the lead.

In Six-Week Strike, Nurses Resisted NYSNA Tops' Betrayals

NYC Nurses Strike Knifed by Democratic Governor Hochul

On January 12, more than 15,000 New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA) members launched the largest nurses strike in New York City's history. It also became the longest, as the strikers held out on the picket lines for over a month in the dead of winter, amid heavy snow and the coldest stretch NYC has seen in four decades. They struck against the top three private "non-profit" hospitals in the city, Mount Sinai, Montefiore and New York-Presbyterian/Columbia. In mid-February the union settled with Sinai and Montefiore. At Presbyterian, NYSNA tops tried to ram through a tentative agreement (TA), proposed by a mediator, over the opposition of the unit's executive committee, but nurses voted it down by a whopping 3,099 to 867. So 4,200 "Presby" nurses stayed out for another two weeks until ratifying a new contract on February 21.

Key issues for Sinai and "Monte" nurses were maintaining enforceable safe staffing ratios, layoff protections and full health care won in a three-day strike in 2023, all of which the hospital managements sought to undercut. But Presbyterian, which settled without a strike in '23, had weaker contractual enforcement language, and it laid off 1,000 nurses and other healthcare workers last year. Under the old contract, Presby nurses won \$675,000 in arbitration awards for the hospital's short-staffing, but the bosses refused to pay up, and hard-lined it against NYSNA's demands. Staffing issues have been at the center of nurses' struggles across the country, as a key way "non-profit" hospitals make money is by overburdening nurses with too many patients to attend. Thus the striking nurses' demands were also key to patients' well-being, and saving lives.

The NYSNA strikers with their red beanies and scarves had tons of public support. Everyone remembered the nurses as well as doctors and other hospital workers as heroes who risked their lives to save people during the COVID-19 pandemic. For our part, the Internationalist Group and CUNY Internationalist Clubs were on the lines almost daily, with signs saying "Picket Lines

Mean Don't Cross." And when the Presbyterian nurses dug in their clogs and refused to accept the sellout "deal" that NYSNA leaders were trying to foist on them, Internationalists were there calling for "All Labor Must Support Presby Nurses" and "NYSNA: Don't Go Back Until Presbyterian Settles." Other signs read, "NYSNA Strikers Knifed by Democrats! For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!" and "Put Hochul's Scab-Herding Order in the Toxic Waste!"

The latter referred to Democratic New York state governor Kathy Hochul's Executive Order No. 56, issued on January 9, and renewed repeatedly over the course of the strike, declaring a "disaster emergency" to allow the hospital bosses to bring in nurses and other health care workers from other states and Canada to work in NYC without New York State licenses. The hospital administrators, media and even NYSNA refer to them politely as "traveling nurses," but they are *strikebreakers*. According to the *New York Times* (10 February), the hospitals spent over \$100 million on these *scabs* supplied by Hochul. Without her scab-herding order, the hospitals would have had to drastically curtail operations. And when Presby nurses refused to give in and continued striking, Democrat Hochul renewed the order again.

New York-Presbyterian/Columbia is the richest hospital system in New York State, with assets of over \$14 billion in 2024. It is the top private "non-profit" hospital in the country in money-making from medical services, raking in \$9.3 billion in net patient revenue in the most recent 12-month period. It's also No. 1 in the number of discharges, pushing patients out more quickly than others. Presbyterian is under investigation for colluding with insurance companies to keep prices high for common procedures. The investigation was demanded by SEIU Local 32JB, whose members needing medical care were steered to Presbyterian by insurance companies instead of to lower-cost hospitals. And it doles out hefty pay packages to its top execs: Presbyterian CEO Steve Corwin made a cool \$26.3 million in compensation last year.



James Estrin / The New York Times

In the New York City nurses strike at three major hospital systems, the largest and longest in NYC history, the membership stayed solid to the end, but the leadership tried to play ball with the Democratic governor who issued executive orders to let out-of-state strikebreaking nurses work without a New York state license.

The bottom line is that, while hospitals are under financial pressure with Trump's slashing of Medicaid funds, the nurses were battling huge capitalist corporations with deep pockets. "Non-profit" hospitals supposedly don't have profits, but they do have "operating surplus" revenue, a lot of it. Many also own profit-making auxiliaries (laundry, cafeteria, parking), as well as profit-making foreign operations, and they dedicate much of their income to paying off bondholders, who profit handsomely with a steady cash flow by financing new buildings and mergers, gobbling up smaller hospital systems (Kaiser Family Foundation, "Why Many Nonprofit (Wink, Wink) Hospitals Are Rolling in Money," 29 July 2024).

The NYSNA strike was an important battle for the entire labor movement. As one nurse told us, "In this political climate they think they can get away with anything. This isn't just a nurses' strike, it's a fight for unions everywhere." Facing the hard-nosed Presbyterian bosses, one striker said, "If we give up on staffing, maybe next time around they'll try to hire non-union nurses." Cutting off health benefits at the beginning of February, the hospitals cynically hoped to stampede strikers back to work. After Presby nurses voted down the TA that NYSNA tops tried to push on them, Presbyterian barraged them with texts and emails urging them to cross the picket lines. But the flood of scabs the bosses hoped for did not happen, with only a trickle going back. The strikers stayed admirably solid throughout.

Having been caught flat-footed by the brief 2023 strike at Mount Sinai and Montefiore, this time around the hospital managements were determined to grind strikers down. At all three hospitals, NYSNA managed to beat back outrageous takeback demands. The bosses eventually dropped demands for cuts to the nurses' health care. They also reportedly backed off on threats to force nurses to follow AI instructions. But

the union's initial demand for raises totaling 30% over three years was cut down to only 12%, which may end up a pay cut after inflation. And as some ruefully pointed out, after weeks on the picket line, strikers had already lost more money than the supposed pay hike would bring. Moreover, three Mount Sinai nurses who were fired at the start of the strike, for supposedly "hiding" supplies from scabs, were not rehired.

An important issue raised by NYSNA during the strike was for protection of patients and staff against Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) police and other immigration agents. After Veterans Administration hospital nurse and union member Alex Pretti was murdered by Border Patrol agents in Minneapolis on January 24, NYSNA strikers gathered on picket lines and outside the Manhattan VA hospital in his memory and to demand an end to ICE terror. The Health Care Workers Working Group of the Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants (LCDI) put out a leaflet calling for the unions to officially declare Pretti a hero and calling to intensify the struggle, demanding: "No ICE/Border Patrol/DHS in hospitals or any health care facilities!"

In negotiations at one of the hospitals the union raised a series of demands, including that judicial warrants be required for immigration agents to enter; training for employees on how to handle ICE; protections for employees who stand up for patients; protection for employees who are immigrants or have Temporary Protected Status; extensive signage with Know Your Rights information; and a public statement that the hospital welcomes immigrant patients. But the hospitals adamantly refused to consider this, saying it was not a "germane" issue of working conditions. In announcing the end of the strike, NYSNA declared that the settlement would "Protect immigrant patients and nurses." Not really – all that amounted to was the hospitals writing up their policy of how to handle ICE.

continued on page 27



NYSNA nurses outside New York-Presbyterian Hospital celebrating settlement after holding out on the picket lines for six weeks in the dead of winter.

Hiroko Maisuke / The New York Times

Overcrowded Classes, Underfunded Schools, Underpaid Teachers, Students Targeted by ICE

For a California Statewide Educators Strike

Break with the Democrats – For a Class-Struggle Workers Party

Across California, teacher unions have been stalled for months in negotiations with their school districts since their contracts ended in June 2025. The affected districts employ over 80,000 education workers statewide. Several have already led strikes to demand better conditions for education. First was the United Teachers of Richmond (UTR) in December, then the United Educators of San Francisco (UESF) in February, both for four days. Coming up are contract battles in Oakland, Berkeley, Los Angeles and elsewhere. Meanwhile, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and other federal agents have been threatening students and parents, particularly in the L.A. area. The California Teachers Association (CTA) launched a “We Can’t Wait” campaign for 32 of these districts, underlining that educators face common conditions of overcrowded classes and underfunded schools. But although these conditions require statewide action, teachers are bargaining on a district-by-district basis, undercutting their power.

While education unions have historically seen themselves as “professionals,” the education workers involved range from teachers, counselors, nurses and social workers to custodians, bus drivers and aides. This came to the fore in the December strike in Richmond (West Contra Costa School District), the first in the history of the UTR and of Teamsters Local 856 that represents auxiliary and classified staff. The strikers, including many young teachers, were enthusiastic. The district hired scabs, security guards and a high-paid strikebreaking lawyer. Yet two days into the strike, the Teamsters accepted a deal and the leadership ordered members to cross UTR’s picket line, which many did. This break in union solidarity is a prime example of the role of the labor bureaucracy, sabotaging workers’ struggles on behalf of the capitalist bosses. Weakened by this betrayal, the teachers nevertheless won some gains, including fully funded health care. The 8% raise spread over two years will, at best, barely keep pace with inflation.

Next were the 6,500 UESF teachers across the Bay who began their strike on February 9, the first San Francisco teachers strike since 1979. This time the administrators’ union declared a sympathy strike and 1,000 custodial and food service workers in SEIU (Service Employees International Union) Local 1021 also walked out, forcing the district to close most schools. Superintendent Maria Su shed crocodile tears at a press conference before the strike and absented herself from the bargaining on one day. United Educators mobilized rallies and marches every day of the strike: in the Civic Center, Dolores Park, in front of the school district headquarters and at Embarcadero Plaza. The upwards of 15,000 demonstrators, including many students,

far outnumbered the strikers, underscoring the wide public support for the strike. Working people in SF, one of the most expensive cities of the country, connected with the teachers’ lament that their salaries didn’t cover their living costs.

Over the four days of the UESF strike, members of the Revolutionary Internationalist Youth and the Internationalist Group participated in the daily picket lines and mass strike rallies with signs calling for students, teachers and all workers to unite in this crucial struggle. While the overwhelming majority of the 100+ schools in SFUSD were closed, a handful of facilities were open to scabs. At one of these, John O’Connell Technical High School, Internationalists joined several dozen striking teachers, SEIU members and high school students on the picket line with our signs saying “Picket Lines Mean Don’t Cross.” With thousands of members on the street, the strike leadership could have easily shut all the schools with mass pickets that no one dare cross.

The UESF and the district reached a tentative agreement in the early morning of February 13, including fully employer-funded health care for teachers’ dependents. This is an important gain: while individual teachers were already covered, premiums for families were \$1,200 a month, and slated to rise to \$1,500, eating up a huge portion of paychecks. The union leadership said it had won “sanctuary protections for students and teachers,” which mainly consisted of putting in the contract the existing city and school district policies, under which ICE agents must show a judicial warrant signed by a federal judge or magistrate to enter school grounds. But California is already a “sanctuary state,” and that hasn’t stopped ICE and Border Patrol from deporting at least 8,250 people in the first nine months of 2025.¹ SF teachers should form immigrant defense committees to see that *la migra* does not enter or lurk around schools at all, and to use labor’s power to drive out the feds’ masked paramilitary snatch squads that are a danger to all.

The Tentative Agreement also includes some relief for overworked special education educators. But the salary “raise” is another matter. The overall increase, of 5% over two years is way less than the 14% that the union originally demanded, and actually amounts to a *pay cut*, as inflation in San Francisco is running at 3% annually. The fact that classified (school staff) employees got a higher pay hike (8.5%) is important, as they are lower-paid. In the previous (2023-25) contract, SF teachers got \$9,000 across the board, plus 15% over two years, appreciably raising salaries. But with the district screaming “deficit,” the

¹ “ICE deportations in California surged in the thousands as 2025 went on,” *Sacramento Bee*, 12 January. Figure based on a report by the Deportation Data Project at the University of California Berkeley Law School.



Internationalists and members of SEIU local 1021 at rally at Civic center, 9 February 2026.

new agreement has teachers essentially paying for much of the increased health coverage by accepting sub-inflation pay. This is hardly a “historic contract victory,” much less a “transformational victory,” as claimed by *Liberation* (13 February), the online newspaper of the Party of Socialism and Liberation (PSL), which has several supporters in the UESF leadership.

Now, barely a week after the strike ended, the school district announced “preliminary” layoff notices for several dozen employees, citing falling attendance and saying that even those cuts will not resolve the district’s financial crisis (*San Francisco Standard*, 21 February).

Mobilize Teachers and Unions Across California

The outcome of the San Francisco teachers strike underscores how bargaining on a district-by-district basis is an obstacle to winning a real victory. This will soon come up in Oakland, where a strike is pending. The demands put forward by the Oakland Education Association (OEA) are similar demands to those raised by the UESF, notably protections for immigrant students and a 14% raise. Oakland teachers are still some of the lowest-paid in the region, which part of the reason why nearly 400 educators leave the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) every year. The OUSD is balking at the union’s demands, citing a \$50 million deficit. Teachers and parents worry that fixing the deficit will be at the cost of the students, the majority of whom are black, immigrant and working class. In a district with a sordid history of billionaires buying a school board majority, two decades of state receivership and a sold-out strike in 2019, Oakland educa-

tors are in for an intense struggle to win the demands they and their students deserve.

In particular, Oakland has 38 charter schools, 27 of them under OUSD. The high proportion of charter schools in Oakland is part of the assault on public education by capitalists who are out to commoditize a democratic right. The insidious profit-making scheme of privately managed schools financed with state funds (along with funding from real estate speculators and private equity investors) has been promoted by many Democrats around the U.S., including by Barack Obama at the national level. Locally in Oakland, leading capitalists such as Michael Bloomberg and their instruments including the Gates Foundation (Microsoft) and the Walton Foundation (Walmart) pumped hundreds of thousands of dollars into political action committees (PACs) to finance pro-charter school board candidates. By 2020 five out of the seven directors on the OUSD board backed charter schools. With the support of Democratic politicians, they turned the district into a guinea pig for privatization of public schools.

Meanwhile, Oakland schools have been under the thumb of state control since 2003, when facing bankruptcy, the state offered a \$100 million loan in exchange for complete control over the district’s financial and administrative functioning. In the first four years of the receivership the number of charter schools more than doubled, from 16 to 33. Many large schools were broken up, with up to ten schools on one campus at the height of the small schools craze.² Then the board sought to close many small schools in African American

² “The Small Schools Movement Remade Oakland Education. Is This the End?” *Oaklandside*, 11 December 2024.

Internationalist Photo

and Latino neighborhoods to replace them with charters. In 22 years of forced servitude, ever-changing state administrators cut the adult education program, forced a 4% pay cut for teachers and drained millions of dollars from the OUSD budget to feed the parasitic charters. In a 2018 report analyzing the financial impacts of charter schools, University of Oregon economist Gordon Lafer found that by 2016-2017 charter school development cost the Oakland school district \$57.3 million yearly.³

The balance of power began to change with the gains of the OEA's 2023 strike that in addition to a 15.5% raise over three years won reduced class size and measures to aid homeless students and their families. In the 2024 school board elections, only a couple of pro-charter PACs were active and four union-endorsed directors (a majority) were elected. In July 2025, California school superintendent Tony Thurmond announced that the conservatism was over (and right-wing "education reform" media and organizations immediately began denouncing union power). But some 27 schools, many of them with majority black enrollment are still at risk of closing, and Oakland educators' pay is still third from the lowest of 101 districts in the Bay Area. The OEA is calling for vacant district buildings to be converted into affordable housing. Even with a union-backed majority, the OUSD board is still the representative of the capitalist bosses, and the stringent budget constraints cannot be undone solely on a local basis.

Meanwhile, the United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA) has also voted to authorize a strike against the Los Angeles United School District (LAUSD), the largest public school district in the California and second largest in the nation, with 390,000 students, many of them immigrants. UTLA is calling for a 16% increase in starting salaries, a restructuring of the salary steps to increase pay, with lower-paid employees getting a 3.25% increase immediately, and a 3% raise for all in 2027. Again, this is at or below the rate of inflation. And, as in San Francisco, the LAUSD is threatening layoffs, but on a much larger scale. Last week, the school board voted (by 4 to 3) to issue 3,200 preliminary layoff notices, intending to cut at least 657 jobs, almost all from the classified staff. The stated reason is, again, a "structural deficit" due to falling enrollment and the end of COVID pandemic payments. Yet those cuts would only "save" \$150 million out of an \$18.8 billion budget, and the district has \$5 billion in reserve funds.

Above all, L.A. is ground zero for the militarized immigration raids that the Trump administration launched last June. Some schools introduced remote instruction as families were too afraid to send their children to school, and some posted lookouts for ICE agents to ensure that immigrants could safely attend graduation ceremonies. Last August, UTLA marched on the district headquarters demanding greater protection for immigrants. Now, on February 10, a right-wing website posted a series of notes and documents witch-hunting UTLA for its school safety plans on how to respond to an incursion of ICE or other immigration agents. Although presented in a sensationalist fashion, claiming that the materials "appear to advocate for the use of school and district resources," it only shows that teachers are seeking to protect their students from the masked paramilitary kidnapers.

³ "Report: The Cost of Charter Schools for Public School Districts," *In the Public Interest*, 8 May 2018.

According to the notes and documents, the preparations call for patrolling school sites, using encrypted apps to alert people of the presence of *migra* agents; for school lockdowns if ICE should attempt an incursion; and for the union to notify the Los Angeles Rapid Response Network, to "surround the school with supporters" and alert the media – all prudent steps to defend immigrant students (and staff). But beyond these basic measures, the union should *join with all labor in mass strike action to drive ICE out*.

Recently there has been a wave of high school and middle school walkouts and marches to the Municipal Detention Center and City Hall in downtown Los Angeles involving hundreds and sometimes several thousand students protesting ICE raids. There is a long history of such actions in L.A. going back to the 1968 East L.A. walkouts of tens of thousands of students that touched off the Chicano movement. In March 2006, 40,000 students walked out against the infamous Sensenbrenner "border control" bill that called for draconian sentences for "illegal aliens." The bill never passed Congress, but what really killed it was the massive strike by immigrant workers on May Day 2006, in which millions stopped work across the country. This underscores the need for the organized workers movement to bring its power to bear, to back up the students and shut down the ICE Gestapo.

Who's Responsible for Underfunding? Prop 13 and the Democratic Party

The "We Can't Wait" campaign and numerous initiatives by public education advocates, such as a 2020 report by the Policy Analysis for California Education research center on the chronic underfunding of education have emphasized that California has the fifth largest economy in the world and is the richest state in the United States, with a median annual income \$10,000 above the U.S. average. Yet even before the COVID-19 pandemic, school funding was – and continues to be – woefully inadequate. California has the largest class sizes in the country, some (in Los Angeles) of as many as 35-44 students, with almost double the number of students per instructional employee (22) compared to New York (12). Last year California spent barely \$18,000 per public school K-12 student, compared to \$26,500 in New Jersey and over \$33,000 in New York state. Currently it is 33rd in the U.S. in per pupil spending. But it wasn't always that way. In the 1960s and '70s, California was in the top ten states in education spending.

All across California school districts, teacher union demands mirror each other: a livable wage increase in the face of California's sky-high and ever-rising cost of living; adequate resources for special education students; filling hundreds of vacant classified staff positions; size caps for overflowing classrooms; more support for homeless students and their families (which in California number about 250,000 students); protections for immigrant students in the face of the violent onslaught by ICE nationwide; and, fully funded healthcare. Add it up and teachers are fighting to save the public school education system under attack from privatizers, charterizers and immigrant kidnapers. One district alone cannot defeat this assault – what's needed is to bring out the power of labor across the

state. Above all it requires breaking from the parties of capital, particularly the Democratic Party which controls every aspect of education in California.

We can trace the heart of the underfunding of California education back to Proposition 13, passed in 1978, which devastated California public education. Prop 13 limited local property taxes, which traditionally funded the bulk of public education, to 1% of the assessed value of the property, and limited increases to 2% a year. This was ostensibly driven by a "taxpayer revolt" of small homeowners, although the lower taxes overwhelmingly benefitted the superrich. But it went hand-in-hand with a racist reaction to providing public education for the children of the growing number of Mexican immigrants. Following passage of Prop 13, property tax revenue was cut in half, spending on education fell sharply and only crept back up at a rate below almost all other state and local expenditures. State funding of education could counteract inequality of funding between richer and poorer districts, but Prop 13 "equalized" education spending by underfunding all districts. That is the main reason for the deficits of almost all districts today.

In 1978, Proposition 13 was passed by an overwhelming majority of Democrats and Republicans alike. In the 48 years since then, not a single Democratic governor has touched this pillar of California public policy. Measures like Prop 98 (1988) and the Local Control Funding Formula (2013) have barely improved financial conditions for schools. Meanwhile, the Democrat-backed drive to reap profit from public education (led by outfits like Democrats for Education Reform who backed Obama) encouraged charter school developers. Today, three members of the state Board of Education appointed by Democratic governor Gavin Newsom have interests in charter schools, and California has the largest number of charter schools – 1,300 – in the U.S. Yet for decades, the California Teachers Association (CTA) and the smaller California Federation of Teachers (CFT) have been major funders of the Democratic Party.⁴

In 2025, the CTA spent \$4 million on Proposition 50, a purely partisan measure allowing the Democratic-controlled legislature to gerrymander Congressional districts to match Republican gerrymandering in Texas. In his January 2026 budget review, Governor Newsom shifted \$5.6 billion from this year's education budget to the 2026-27 school year – funding that schools need now, among other things to pay for the cost of contract gains. (The San Diego school district says it can't pay for raises agreed to in negotiations unless the state releases that money.⁵) Yet in 2018 the CTA contributed a cool \$1 million to Newsom's campaign for governor. In that same election it contributed \$8 million to the campaign of Tony Thurmond for state superintendent who pushed the OEA leadership to sell out the members in the 2019 strike, and who presided over the state receivership of Oakland schools for eight of its 22 years.

The insidious policies of the phony "friend of labor" Democrats and of the "labor lieutenants of capital" leading the

⁴ "California Teachers Assn. a powerful force in Sacramento," *Los Angeles Times*, 18 August 2012.

⁵ "San Diego teachers cancel strike as deadline neared," *CalMatters*, 18 February.

unions stand in the way of an all-out fight against the destruction wrought by decaying capitalism. Unlike New York, where public employees are hamstrung by the "no-strike" Taylor Law (which the union bureaucrats hide behind), California teachers regularly exercise their right to strike. While the "We Can't Wait" campaign shines light on the common problems facing educators across California, it does not provide what is desperately needed: a class-struggle program of militant common struggle to overcome those threats. The CTA misleaders prefer to wheel and deal behind closed doors in Sacramento as an unofficial "fourth branch of government" (as a former state Senate leader put it), leaving teachers and students to scramble for crumbs.

Nationally, Democrats built up the immigration machine that Trump is now using to expel immigrant coworkers and neighbors. In the Middle East, Democrats not only funded but delivered the bombs and planes to carry out the Zionist genocide against the Palestinians. The Democrats are responsible for the destroyed schools of Gaza. When students across the U.S., including in the University of California and California State University, protested this abominable crime, Democratic president Joe Biden denounced them and Democrats from university presidents to big city mayors took the lead in violently repressing them. It was Democrats who have been closing schools with African American and Latino students. From Minneapolis to the Bay Area, Democrats were and are the bosses of the racist killer cops.

In California, every "decision maker" on public education – from the governor to state schools superintendent to both houses of the state legislature to the mayors of big cities *and the leaders of the teachers unions* – are all members of the capitalist Democratic Party. Union leaders often argue that this gives them extra "clout" and an "in" with the power brokers in Sacramento. In reality, the labor bureaucrats' ties to the Democrats chain union members to the bosses. Whether it is fighting for smaller class sizes or resisting the assault by immigration cops, neither the union tops nor school administrators challenge the power of capital. Against this unholy alliance, Class Struggle Education Workers, a union opposition tendency fraternally allied with the Internationalist Group, calls to unchain the power of the unions from the death grip of the Democrats and to forge a workers party fighting for a workers government.

Today, the assault on public schools, on immigrants and on the democratic rights of all cannot be defeated by allying with the Democrats in an "anti-Trump" alliance – a "popular front" of class collaboration. To defeat the developing police state requires mobilizing the power of the organized workers movement in defense of all the oppressed against the oppressors. The Revolutionary Internationalist Youth join the CSEW in calling for democratic control of the schools by educator-led councils of teachers, students, parents and workers. Today, as educators across California are stiff-armed by the education bosses, the fight to defend public education should begin with a *statewide teachers strike*, with mass pickets including students and parents, backed up by the powerhouse dockworkers (ILWU) and transit (ATU) unions, by statewide unions like the SEIU and federations like the SF Labor Council and the L.A. Fed. ■

Portland...

continued from page 23

zenship Rights for Immigrants,” to “Break with the Democrats and Republicans” and “For a Class-Struggle Workers Party!”

While denouncing the violent ICE attack on the demonstration, an article in the *Northwest Labor Press* (5 February) quotes organizers asking protesters just before the march began, “Will you stay peaceful while you are part of our march?” to which the crowd responded, “I will.” This account (which shows that the organizers were aware of potential problems) talks about “a group of individuals” who allegedly “crossed the [ICE] building’s property line and approached its security gate. At that point, agents marched out and began firing volleys of tear gas canisters and other projectiles into the crowd...” (Actually, the feds fired tear gas and flash-bangs from the roof of the ICE facility.) The *Labor Press* account implicitly blames “uncontrollable” elements for the ICE attack, echoing the liberals’ refrain from 2020, blaming police violence on the “black bloc” that supposedly provoked the cops.

... But Mobilize Labor’s Power to Stop Deportations and ICE Terror

The *Northwest Labor Press* article also says “no building trades or industrial unions were listed as endorsers,” saying “some members” believe that “taking a stand against immigration enforcement” would go against their “sole focus” on “wages, hours and working conditions.” Contrary to this liberal caricature of narrow, reactionary construction workers, in Portland the opposite is the case. Building trades unions including IUPAT (Painters) Local 10, Iron Workers Local 29, Carpenters Local 503, IATSE (Stage Hands) Local 28 and IBEW (Electrical Workers) Local 48, along with other unions, have passed resolutions calling to mobilize labor in defense of immigrants, and members are participating in the LCDI.

On January 31, the IBEW had a contingent of 40 union members. And in Trump’s first administration, on 4 June 2017, the CSWP initiated a “Portland Labor Against the Fascists” mobilization of 300 union members (many from those same unions) and other supporters against a fascist provocation. At Pride demonstrations in Portland, class-conscious construction workers have marched behind banners proclaiming “Hard Hats for Gay Rights” and “Defend Transgender People.” Painters Local 10, which has been in the

forefront, has called to “Defend Immigrants – Break with the Democrats and Republicans – For a Class Struggle Workers Party.”

Outrage over the obvious act of vengeance on the part of the feds in Portland on January 31, smarting over the union-initiated January 23 mass mobilization against ICE in Minneapolis, is totally justified. The issue is where that anger should be directed. Rather than tailoring the response to pressure Portland mayor Wilson, Multnomah County district attorney Nathan Vasquez and Oregon governor Tina Kotek and looking to the Peacocks of the Portland City Council; rather than begging the Democrats, who wax nostalgic about when “deporter-in-chief” Obama and Biden expelled millions without rocking the boat, the only way to stop the reign of terror unleashed on immigrants is for workers themselves to use their power to stop it.

As a sequel to January 31, on February 18, federal judge Michael Simon extended the TRO against using crowd control munitions outside the Portland ICE facility to March 3. On March 6, another federal judge issued a temporary injunction against using tear gas at the ICE outpost in the Gray’s Landing case. And on March 9, Judge Simon turned the TRO in the case brought by January 31 demonstrators into a preliminary injunction while their suit proceeds. The judge commented that the federal agents’ repeated use of pepper balls, pepper spray and tear gas against crowds of peaceful demonstrators “chill” their First Amendment rights to freedom of speech. Think an injunction will stop the feds? Don’t count on it.

Labor must use its own power to stop the racist ICE thugs. The thousands of union members and supporters who turned out on January 31 were inspired by the tens of thousands who turned out in Minneapolis the week before in a huge labor-initiated demonstration. Labor reformists seek to turn this into appeals to the courts and pressure on the capitalist politicians, but as the Portland LCDI wrote last November:

“[O]ne thing is certain: we can put no faith in the capitalist courts or politicians of either big-business party. Instead, Portland’s working class must bring out its own power — we need to use it now, or the hard-won rights of the whole working class will go down the drain. As federal agents seek to terrorize immigrants and the whole of the population, the Portland Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants calls on workers throughout the city to organize *now* for bringing out labor’s power to say *All out for FEDS OUT!*”

Nurses...

continued from page 24

The previous (2023) contracts established committees to review staffing levels, with specific standards set for different departments. Yet within a year, NYSNA won more than \$2 million in arbitration awards from Mount Sinai alone for understaffing violations: the hospitals prefer to pay more, like extra overtime, than actually reduce the workloads. Under the Memorandum of Agreement with Montefiore, which is now public, there are some improved nurse-patient staffing ratios and a number of nurses are to be hired in various units. At Presbyterian, the contract reportedly calls for hiring 78 full-time equivalents over three years, a tiny amount in a hospital with 4,000 nurses. But as these “non-profits” (in name only) operate as capitalist enterprises, they will always counterpose “efficiency” to ensuring quality patient care. The fight will go on.

None of this amounts to a victory, much less a “historic” one, as the NYSNA leadership claimed. Despite the betrayals of the union misleaders, at best one could say that, due to the members’ militancy and determination, they managed to stave off what could have been a major defeat. But for six weeks on the picket line, the nurses should have won far more. They didn’t because, first, the strike didn’t shut down the hospitals’ operations, and second, the NYSNA tops sought to work in tandem with the Democratic Party politicians who run both the city and state governments, and who were working against the strike. Instead of mounting a mainly defensive strike, NYSNA should have demanded *union control of nursing staffing*. And they should have run the scabs out.

A major problem in this and every other nurses strike, is that the hospitals keep functioning. Class-struggle unionists must fight to *stop all scabs and scab operations*. How? By NYC labor going all-out to form *picket lines so big and militant that no one dares cross*. To that end, there should be a fight for *a single union of all health care workers*, with appropriate representation of the different categories. In a strike, the *union should decide what limited emergency care is permitted*, and shut the rest down. Overall, to ensure adequate numbers of nurses and other personnel, to make hospitals off-limits to the immigrant snatchers, to ensure maximum safety in emergency conditions (as in the COVID pandemic), class-conscious unionists should *fight for workers control of the hospitals, led by medical professionals*.¹

To raise such a fighting program requires a fundamental change of leadership in health care unions. NYSNA president Nancy Hagans, in pushing to end the strike on the mediator’s terms, sent a video message to nurses in which NYSNA executive director Pat Kane declared, “The simple fact is that we’ve reached the end of negotiations.” But when the Presbyterian executive committee angrily denounced the rotten deal and the members overwhelmingly

voted it down, 1,500 nurses quickly signed a petition demanding that the union investigate and discipline Hagans and Kane for bypassing the bargaining committee. A delegation of 50 nurses marched and delivered the petition to union headquarters. A reckoning is coming in NYSNA, but to form a solid leadership capable of successfully waging hard class struggle will require a political fight.

Central to that is the question of the Democratic Party. On February 2, hundreds of angry nurses marched to Democratic governor Hochul’s Manhattan offices to protest her scab-herding executive order. According to an interview with NYSNA executive board member from Montefiore, Michelle Gonzalez, published on the social-democratic site *Jacobin* (5 March), that march “had no involvement from NYSNA’s upper leadership. They did not want us to do things that were going to put Hochul in a bad light.” NYSNA president Hagans was tight with Hochul, and was herself a delegate to the 2024 Democratic National Convention. She certainly felt pressure from Hochul to end the strike. One nurse said of the NYSNA main leadership, “they’re probably trying to get a spot in (Hochul’s) administration.”

So Hochul is a “centrist” (i.e., overtly pro-business) Democrat. Meanwhile, New York City’s “progressive” Democratic mayor Zohran Mamdani stopped by the strike for some grandstanding, joining the picket line on January 20. Mamdani, a member of the Democratic (Party) Socialists of America (DSA) was accompanied by Vermont senator Bernie Sanders, the self-proclaimed “democratic socialist” who ran for the Democratic nomination for U.S. president in 2016 and 2020 (and then endorsed Hillary Clinton and Joe Biden). Despite their phony “socialist” rhetoric, both Mamdani and Sanders are bourgeois politicians. Mamdani then endorsed Hochul for reelection, in the middle of the NYSNA strike she was doing her best to break. Both pushed to end the strike.

DSAer Mamdani was showing that he is a loyal administrator of the capitalist order. He is, after all, the boss of the NYC police who arrested 13 NYSNA strikers protesting at the hospital bosses’ lair at the Greater New York Hospital Association on February 5. While the left-talking mayor is enormously popular (63% in a Siena poll, more even than when he was elected), the role of Mamdani and DSA Democrats everywhere is to sucker activists, young people, people who hate the white supremacist in the White House, etc., back into the deeply discredited party that supplied the bombs and planes for the U.S./Israel genocide in Gaza, that deported millions of people, far more than the current MAGA Republican administration, in short, the party that paved the way for Donald (“I’m a dictator”) Trump.

To break the stranglehold of the Democratic Party, that elephants’ graveyard where social movements go to die, we need to expose its real role, including *the Democrats’ scab-herding in the New York City nurses strike of 2026*. That’s right up there with Biden pushing strikebreaking legislation through Congress in 2022 (aided by DSA “Squad” leader Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez) to block railroad workers from striking for sick days in their contract. However much they feud, Democrats and Republicans are both parties of Wall Street and the Pentagon. The Internationalist Group calls to *break with the Democrats* and build a *class-struggle workers party. Expropriate the hospitals, pharmaceutical and insurance companies* and replace profit-driven health care with *socialized medicine* under a *workers government. Free, quality health care for all!* ■



Class Struggle Workers – Portland at the rally on January 31. Counterposed to the Democratic (Party) Socialists of America, who lead struggles back into the party of genocide and deportations, the CSWP calls to break with the Democrats, for a class struggle workers party and full citizenship rights to all immigrants.

¹ The Internationalist Group and League for the Fourth International have raised the call for *workers control of health care facilities and systems* in a number of situations of crisis, including in the Eurobankers’ assault on public sector workers in Greece in 2015 and during the COVID-19 pandemic in hospitals, nursing homes and cruise ships in the U.S., and in the public health systems of Brazil and Italy as they were near collapse. Councils of the workers who make the health care system run, led by medical professionals, are far better qualified than the managers focused on the bottom line rather than saving lives.

ICL Admits “Frame-Up,” Purge, Lies

In June 2025, the International Communist League (whose U.S. section is the Spartacist League) issued a public bulletin with the results of an internal ICL investigation on what it accurately calls the ICL’s “bureaucratic purge” and “frame-up” of Internationalist Group founders in 1996 and its “completely unprincipled” breaking of fraternal relations with Trotskyist workers in Brazil’s “Steel City,” for refusing to call off their struggle to oust police from the municipal workers union. Retrospectively denouncing these betrayals, which it calls “the very antithesis of revolutionary leadership,” the bulletin also repudiates the torrent of lies and slanders the ICL pumped out for decades to justify them.

These developments are significant for Marxists today, as the programmatic legacy of the Spartacist tendency during the years when it fought for genuine Trotskyism continues to be key to revolutionary struggle. It is a good thing that the SL/ICL has now – three decades after the fact – made these self-damning admissions about the events its bulletin describes. Yet the political degeneration manifested starkly by the ICL’s 1996 crises has moved it now qualitatively to the right of the revolutionary program it used to uphold. Here we reprint “A Brief Postscript” (July 2025) from the new Internationalist pamphlet Trotskyism’s Legacy Today (see ad below), describing the context of the ICL’s investigation and its results.

In “Just Asking...” [reprinted in Trotskyism’s Legacy Today], comrades from the Revolutionary Internationalist Youth posed a series of pointed and specific questions to the ICL regarding its 1996 purge of long-time cadres who went on to found the Internationalist Group, and its break with Luta Metalúrgica (now Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil [LQB], section of the LFI) amidst the struggle to oust police from the municipal workers union in Brazil’s “Steel City,” Volta Redonda. Those events were among the many political issues raised at the January 2024 LFI-ICL debate, at which the ICL’s leader Perrault reiterated that it was carrying out an internal investigation on this subject.

Last month (June 2025), the ICL came out with a public bulletin on the results of that investigation. It is a damning document, in which the ICL today declares, unequivocally, that everything we said about the purge and the ICL’s betrayal of the LQB comrades and the struggle in Brazil was true, and everything the ICL said about it was a lie. The mountain of accusations spewed out against us and hurled hysterically by the ICL’s press and members for almost 30 years were **exactly what we said they were from the beginning: willful falsehoods designed to cover up the bureaucratic purge and ignominious betrayal carried out by the ICL in 1996.**

Here we will comment on the ICL bulletin only briefly, as we intend to respond further in the LFI press.

The ICL bulletin is titled *Report on the Bureaucratic Purge of IG Founders and the Break in Relations with Luta Metalúrgica*. The report itself (dated 28 March 2025), by the ICL’s International Control Commission (ICC), takes up a little over 7 of the bulletin’s 71 pages. Preceded by a short editorial note, it is followed by 57 pages of appended documents. Striking is the fact that all but a half

page of these were already published, almost three decades ago.¹ Nor do the report and editorial note provide any new information. The bulletin leaves unanswered many of the factual questions posed in “Just Asking...” and in the LFI letters from September-October 2023 reprinted in this Internationalist pamphlet.

What the ICL’s June 2025 bulletin does do is state:

“The ICC investigation concluded that the comrades who went on to found the LFI were driven out of our organization through frame-up internal trials, demagogic fights and multiple breaches of the party’s internal democratic norms. The investigation also concluded that the break in fraternal relations with LM/LQB was completely unprincipled and destructive.”

The report of the ICL’s internal investigation declares, “From beginning to end, the 1996 fight against Norden, Negrete, Stamberg and Socorro was an exercise in bureaucratic abuse”; it recommends that the ICL “renounce” the “corrosive” and “bureaucratic” maneuver it carried out by breaking, on false pretenses, with LM/LQB in 1996; and calls for “the repudiation of the slander of LM/LQB as union-suers.”

The report also repeatedly “concur[s]” with characterizations of the ICL’s actions that we made in our July 1996 pamphlet on the purge. It admits, for example, that we “correctly accused the ICL of ‘pulling its hands out of the boiling water’” of the struggle to expel cops from the municipal workers union, and it characterizes the ICL’s “abandonment of LM/LQB” as “ignominious” – “the very antithesis of revolutionary leadership.”² The bulletin notes that the re-

¹ The ICL bulletin reprints four documents from our July 1996 pamphlet *After Spartacist League Purges Leading Cadres, ICL Flees from Class Battle in Brazil: From a Drift to Abstentionism to Desertion from the Class Struggle*, two articles from *Workers Vanguard* No. 648, 5 July 1996, and one item from Spartacist League *Internal Bulletin* No. 59, September 1996.

² The report notes that “despite pledging to ‘continue to defend LM and its supporters against attacks by the bourgeois state and pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy,’ the ICL for all intents and purposes dropped any such defense” after its break with the Brazilian comrades amidst the struggle to expel police from the municipal workers union. However, the ICL’s June 2025 bulletin makes no mention of the fact that it actively sought to *stop* others in the left and labor movement from supporting the international campaign to defend the Brazilian comrades against bourgeois state repression (see “After Courts Order ‘Search and Seizure’ of Militants’ Leaflets: ICL Seeks to Sabotage Defense of Brazilian Trotskyist Workers,” reprinted in the May 2010 Internationalist pamphlet *Responses to ICL Smear Campaign Against Brazilian Trotskyists*).

port’s recommendations were adopted by the ICL’s international executive committee.

So yes, it is a good thing that the ICL now admits these facts, as circumscribed as these admissions are. But what, then, do the facts they now admit to say about an organization that with apparent unanimity persisted in these lies and slanders for three decades? Meanwhile, the ICL bulletin repeats the self-justifying mantra that the ICL and LFI were supposedly political twins (“two satellites orbiting around American liberalism”) for decades after the 1996 purge.

No, there was a fight, on issue after issue, over the continuity of the program of Lenin and Trotsky, which the ICL abandoned and the LFI upheld. The born-again ICL’s “plague on both your houses” position is aimed at justifying the new management’s throwing overboard just about everything the SL/ICL stood for when it was the champion of revolutionary Trotskyism.

Meanwhile, the *programmatic* counterposition between the two organizations kept growing wider over the years, and has become an even bigger gulf with *the ICL’s explicit disavowal of the Spartacist political tradition.*

The damage the ICL’s actions did to the struggle for revolutionary Trotskyism cannot be undone by proclamations reminiscent of a “truth and reconciliation commission” that admits what is already known in a quest to “let bygones be bygones.” Meanwhile, key individuals who carried out these deeply unprincipled actions continue to speak authoritatively for the ICL. Entirely left out from the ICL bulletin is their deliberate and declared drive

to “humiliate” the North African comrades of the Permanent Revolution Faction in the French section of the ICL, repeated attempts at physical intimidation of our comrades and so much more.

Yet the ICL’s cynical attempt to break revolutionary cadres failed. What it did “achieve” was the irreparable squandering of its political capital and the politically terminal demoralization of its own membership. ■

Australia...

continued from page 15

complete condemnation of antisemitism and all other forms of racism.” It also hailed the heroic actions of Ahmed al-Ahmed, an immigrant from Syria, who bravely tackled one of the gunmen, saving countless lives.

Nonetheless, Australia’s Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism, Jillian Segal, cynically tried to blame the Bondi Beach massacre on pro-Palestinian demonstrations, notably the 3 August 2025 “March for Humanity” when up to 300,000 marched across the Sydney Harbour Bridge in a downpour to protest genocide in Gaza. Segal is an arch-Zionist and former president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry. She has called to withhold or terminate government funding for universities, public broadcasters, arts festivals and cultural bodies that promote or fail to act against what she terms antisemitism. Max Kaiser of the Jewish Council of Australia said this use of funding as a pressure tactic echoes “Trumpian” authoritarian tactics. Segal has also called to screen visa applicants for “antisemitic” views and to toughen “hate speech” laws.

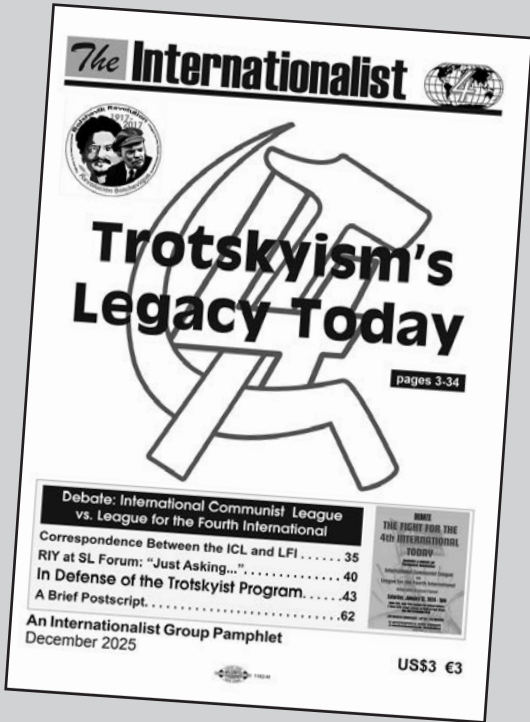
After a tongue-lashing from Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who blamed the Bondi massacre on Australia’s supposed failure to take action against antisemitism and its formal recognition of a Palestinian state, ALP federal prime minister Anthony Albanese declared that the government would adopt all the “recommendations” of Special Envoy Segal. This includes laws and procedural changes allowing the police to peremptorily ban demonstrations for extended periods of time without getting a court order; to declare whole areas off-limits for protests; to classify expressions deemed to be antisemitic as punishable “hate crimes”; and to designate organizations as “hate groups” whose members and leaders would be subject to imprisonment of between 5 and 15 years.

The ruling Australian Labor Party government, both at federal and state levels, swung into high gear to order the expanded police powers and fast-track the required “hate” legislation. On December 23-24, barely a week after the shootings, NSW premier Minns called a two-day emergency session of the NSW Parliament to rush through the “Terrorism and Other Legislation Amendment Act.” Claiming that the “implications” of pro-Palestine demonstrations could be seen in the Bondi massacre, a little before 3 a.m. on Christmas eve, Minns got his bill passed restricting access to firearms and demonstrations. Police can now ban protests and marches for 14 days following a “terrorist incident,” which can be extended in two-week increments up to three months. Not even a court can overrule them.²

At the same time as NSW ALP premier Simms was getting his “Terrorism” act

² See “NSW to effectively ban protests for up to three months as premier links Gaza rallies to Bondi terror attack,” *Guardian*, 19 December 2025..

“Trotskyism’s Legacy Today”



The Internationalist

Trotskyism's Legacy Today

pages 3-34

US\$3 €3

What does genuine Trotskyism mean today – and why is the genuine “Spartacist programmatic legacy” crucial for revolutionary struggle? This 62-page pamphlet contains a talk on Trotskyist history addressing these issues, together with key League for the Fourth International materials from the January 2024 debate between the LFI and the International Communist League.

\$5 including postage

To order, send check/money order to: Mundial Publications, Box 3321, Church St. Station, New York, NY 10008 USA

Or click on <https://www.internationalist.org/trotskyism-legacy-today-pamphlet-web.pdf> to download a pdf.

passed, on December 23 federal ALP prime minister Albanese announced that he had invited Israeli president Herzog to visit Australia to “honour and remember victims of the Bondi antisemitic terrorist attack and provide support for Jewish Australians and the Australian Jewish community.” In response, pro-Palestinian coalitions in over 30 cities and towns launched calls for demonstrations against Herzog every day over his planned four-day visit. The stage was set for the February 9 police riot and a raft of legislation attacking basic democratic rights, both at the state and federal levels, carried out not by the immigrant-bashing right wing but by the social-democratic Australian Labor Party.

Australia already has some of the most repressive gun laws in the world. In New South Wales, a license to possess a firearm can be denied or revoked if the NSW Police decide that the holder is no longer a “fit and proper person,” an arbitrary standard that could include having “concerning police interactions.” Licenses can also be revoked if police decide it was not being used for the “genuine reason” the license was issued, which reasons do not include self-defence. Now license holders will no longer be able to contest such peremptory police rulings before an administrative tribunal, and thanks to an amendment by the Greens, gun ownership will be denied to “anyone investigated for terrorism-related offences,” a category that will surely be applied to those defying the protest bans (SBS News, 23 and 24 December 2025).

Grounds on which protests can be restricted or prohibited include if police officials are “satisfied” that holding the protest “would be likely to cause,” among other things, a “risk to community safety.” This ultra-vague formulation could be used to criminalise just about any demo. Such a ban would be valid even if it was not made public.³ This effectively cancels the right to protest in periods of tension.⁴ The Bondi massacre was only a convenient excuse: Simms tried to ban the August 2025 pro-Palestinian march across the Harbour Bridge, but was stymied by the state supreme court. As for the Israeli president’s February visit, the NSW government simply declared it a “Major Event,” even though the law explicitly states that its “regulations may not declare an industrial or political demonstration or protest to be a major event.”

This is how the very model of a modern prime minister goes about entrenching emergency police powers: administratively altering exceptions until they are normalized, geographically confining public space, transforming extraordinary security measures into routine tools for suppressing political dissent, and if no other subterfuge will do, simply ignoring the law. This is also what the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) police and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) agents are doing in the United States. But here, lacking any supposed constitutional protection for “freedom of speech” such as the First Amendment to the

³ Wikisource, “Terrorism and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2025.”

⁴ As an example from the United States of the kind of protest that would be hit, three days after the 11 September 2001 attack on New York’s World Trade Center, the Internationalist Group/U.S. participated in an NYC protest of several hundred people against threatened restrictions to civil liberties. The IG called to defend Afghanistan and to defeat the impending U.S. imperialist invasion. Under the amended NSW laws, such a protest would be outlawed.

U.S. Constitution, Australia can go down this route rapidly, with a thin social-democratic veneer. The Australian Labor Party soon did that with its “hate speech” laws.

Simms had indicated that particular chants used at pro-Palestine rallies should be banned, including “Globalise the intifada!” (a reference to the Palestinian uprisings of 1987-93 and 2000-05).⁵ He also proposed to give local councils new powers to shut down “illegal” places of worship (referring to mosques in inner west suburbs in Sydney), which he dubbed “factories of hate.” Meanwhile, federal ALP prime minister Albanese on January 20 rammed through the “Combatting Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism Acts,” billed as the “toughest ever” hate laws and sold as providing community protection against extremists.⁶ This creates new federal offences making it illegal to publicly incite “conduct” that would lead a “reasonable person” of a “targeted group” to “be intimidated, to fear harassment or violence, or to fear for their safety,” or that “could incite” others to “offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate.”

Note that actual intimidation, harassment or violence are not needed to convict, only that a mythical member of a targeted group would feel that some conduct (chanting slogans?) could offend or insult. What’s next, thought crimes? Already included: public statements deemed “antisemitic” are classified as “harmful ideas” and proscribed. And not only ideas: the police may seize harmful “things” with “prohibited symbols” (like a Palestinian flag?). The laws also increase penalties for ill-defined “hate” crimes, empower the government to list “prohibited hate groups” and criminalise their promotion or support. Directing, fundraising, doing training to assist, or providing “support” for a banned “hate group” gets 15 years in prison; membership gets 7 years. So who designates the groups? The ASIO, with no appeal before listing.⁷

Plus, there are new powers for the Home Affairs minister to arbitrarily refuse or cancel visas and deport immigrants based on conduct tied to “hatred” or “extremism,” including if a person “is or has been a member of,” or “had an association with” a “hate group.” (U.S. McCarthyite equivalent: “Are you now, or have you ever been a member of the Communist Party?”) Parallel firearms and customs laws enable security checks in gun licensing, tighten import controls, and criminalise online material. This horror show legislation was opposed by the Australian Human Rights Coalition, Civil Liberties Australia and numerous constitutional law scholars, as well as the Jewish Council of Australia, the Tzedek Collective and other Jewish groups that warned the laws would criminalise pro-Palestinian advocacy and would not diminish real antisemitism.

Also in January, Albanese abandoned his earlier opposition to calling a Royal Commission on Antisemitism, caving to the Israel lobby with \$130 million in funding and a year to deliver recommendations. By early February, the Commissioner, Virginia Bell, stated that the definition of “antisemitism” of the International

⁵ See “Defend the Palestinian People! For an Arab/Hebrew Palestinian Workers State in a Socialist Federation of the Near East,” *The Internationalist* No. 9, January-February 2001.

⁶ “New hate laws have passed Parliament. What do they actually do?” ABC (Australian Broadcasting System), 21 January.

⁷ For the text, see *Combatting Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism (Criminal and Migration Laws) Act 2026*.



New South Wales Police gave approval to openly antisemitic rally by neo-Nazi National Socialist Network in November 2025, attacked pro-Palestinian demonstration in February 2026.

Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) would guide their “investigation” (*Green Left Weekly*, 25 February). The IHRA definition calls labelling Israel racist or opposing the existence of a specifically Jewish state antisemitic. The peak Zionist organisation, Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC), equivalent of AIPAC in the U.S., will undoubtedly play a major role. AIJAC has spent decades building relationships across Labor and the Liberal/National Party Coalition.

But what about real antisemites, like the fascist National Socialist Network (NSN) that built and spoke at the 31 August 2025 “March for Australia” called by xenophobe Pauline Hanson’s anti-immigrant One Nation Party? Combat Antisemitism envoy Segal specifically refused to criticize the neo-Nazi presence. And when 70 black-jacketed members of the NSN staged a rally outside the New South Wales parliament on 8 November 2025 with a banner proclaiming “Abolish the Jewish Lobby” and chanting slogans from the Hitler Youth, it was given a permit by the NSW police who sent a squad to stand watch over it. The NSN has announced it will disband in light of the new “anti-hate” laws, but it will simply rebrand as the White Australia Party.

Mobilize Workers’ Power Against Police-State Attacks

The ALP crackdown on anti-Zionist protest in Australia is of a piece with the July 2025 move by Pier Starmer’s Labour Party government in Britain to ban Palestine Action (PA) as a “terror” group, under a definition of “terrorism” as including “serious damage to property.” (PA allegedly sprayed two military aircraft with red paint symbolizing Palestinian blood.) Under that ban, police have arrested 1,500 people with signs saying “I support Palestine Action,” including nearly 900 at a single protest on 6 September 2025. Demonstrators, many of them elderly, face up to 14 years in prison on charges of supporting terrorism. The United Kingdom High Court ruled on February 13 that the ban was unlawful and disproportionate, but charges have not been dropped, the law is still on the books and Starmer’s pro-Zionist Labour government is appealing.

While demonstrators in Sydney’s Town Hall Square saw parallels to the police onslaught in Donald Trump’s U.S.A., there has been an upsurge in repressive laws and cop violence across the imperialist world in recent years. In Britain, France, Germany, Netherlands and, of course, the United States there have been mass arrests of protesters against the U.S./Israel genocide in Gaza, no matter what government was in office. This is part of an overall drive toward Bonapartist, police-state rule in the

decaying capitalist system. Interestingly, the same device of extending repressive measures designed to suppress soccer riots to proscribing political protests as is occurring in ALP-governed Australia has been introduced by the right-wing Italian government led by Giorgia Meloni’s fascist Fratelli d’Italia (Brothers of Italy) party.⁸

It is also in Italy that we have seen the answer to this escalating repression. In September-October of last year, Italy’s combative “rank-and-file” unions called mass strikes that effectively shut down the country on September 22 and again on October 3, in solidarity with Gaza. The union-led strike action shut down ports and rail lines and brought millions into the streets, blocking city centres and motorways across the peninsula.⁹ All such actions had been outlawed by a decree-law enacted by Meloni’s right-wing government in April 2025, but that law was effectively shredded by the workers’ action. In Australia, as a comment to the *Consortium News* article on the February 9 cop riot put it:

“What that rally needed was big organised contingents of strategic workers to: (i) provide the muscle to defend them from the cops;

(ii) shut down key parts of the economy to show the rulers that the working class can’t abide genocide.

“Imagine if contingents of striking train drivers, air traffic controllers and long-shoremen/wharfies defied their sellout leaders and shut down the rail system, ports and airports while Herzog was there and joined the ‘illegal’ rally and march. That would have made the world of difference.”

We can easily imagine, as Italian workers have shown the way.

But it’s also not hard to imagine the obstacles that stand in the way of such a mobilization, starting with elaborate compulsory arbitration system that has crippled the Australian labour movement since 1904, and the betrayals by the ALP and leaders of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) that have sent strikes to a 40-year low.¹⁰ Solidarity strikes and political strikes are already illegal. Even the leaders of the historically militant Construction, Forestry and Maritime Union (CFMEU) have failed to mobilize strike action against the government

⁸ See “Italy: For a Real General Strike to Stop the ‘Security’ Decree and Arms Build-Up!” in *The Internationalist* No. 75, January-May 2025.

⁹ See “Mass Strike for Gaza Brings Italy to a Halt: For International Strike Action to Stop U.S./Israel Gaza Genocide!” and “European Port Workers Call for Strike Action to Stop Arms,” in *The Internationalist* No. 76, June-October 2025.

¹⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics, “Industrial Disputes, Australia” (September 2025), table.

takeover of its construction division.¹¹ To break the bureaucratic stranglehold that chains Australian workers to their exploiters, it's necessary to forge a class-struggle opposition in the unions going beyond industrial militancy to build a revolutionary workers party.

To combat the elaborate web of repression being spun to squelch pro-Palestinian protests means taking on a political system in which pro-Israel influence networks are firmly embedded in ruling circles. Australia is deeply enmeshed in imperialist military alliances, particularly with the U.S. and Britain. While there have been protests of unprecedented size against the genocide in Gaza, including marching to the ports, Australia's alignment with Israel – a key ally of the U.S. and linchpin of Western strategy in the Middle East with its vital oil production – has long been institutionalised. Since the beginning of the current war, over 70 Australian companies continue to supply crucial military components to Israel, notably parts for the F-35 fighter jets that have dropped genocidal ordnance on the largely defenceless people of the Gaza Strip.

Moreover, as a mid-sized imperialist power, Australia is key to the U.S. imperialist strategy of encircling China in the Asia-Pacific. This includes pressuring the federal government in Canberra to curtail economic ties to China, which absorbs one-third of Australia's total exports. In a similar vein, the U.S. imperialists forced European countries in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation to forgo cheap Russian energy as part of the U.S./NATO imperialist proxy war against Russia over Ukraine. An AUKUS (Australia-United Kingdom-United States) alliance submarine program promises Australia eight nuclear-powered submarines by the early 2040s, in order to target China. Yet by mid-2025, two-thirds of Australians wanted a parliamentary enquiry into the deal, while less than half believe the agreement will make Australia safer.¹²

After the recent events, there may be calls for enquiries into police misbehaviour. A few

¹¹ See "Fight the Australian Labor Party's Union-Busting Attacks on the CFMEU," *The Internationalist* No. 75, June-October 2025.

¹² Australia Institute, "Two-thirds of Australians want a review of AUKUS, while less than half think it will make us safer: poll" (14 July 2025).

hands may be slapped. But the laws will be in place now and precedents set for when they are needed again. With the rise of xenophobia since the Bondi Beach massacre, it is the venomous immigrant-bashers of Pauline Hanson's One Nation party (with its neo-Nazi hangers-on) that are garnering support. "For the first time in its 29-year history, One Nation is polling above 20 per cent nationally and is ahead of the combined vote of the Liberal and National parties" (*ABC News*, 15 February). There is plenty of opposition to the burgeoning repressive apparatus being built on a phony pretence of fighting antisemitism. Also to a foreign policy in lockstep with U.S. imperialism, which both under "Genocide Joe" Biden and its current maniacal commander-in-chief in the White House is heading pell-mell for a nuclear World War III, which will not exempt Australia. What's lacking is a revolutionary leadership of the workers and oppressed.

Staying within the limits allowed by capitalism is a mug's game. The machinery of authoritarianism now being assembled is all about stabilising power in a period of global fracture. It will not stop with proscribing protest over Gaza. It will not stop with outlawing chants. It will not stop with designated zones. It will remain and grow more intense until it is confronted by a movement capable of dismantling it. The choice is between accepting the steady normalisation of repression or building the collective force required to defeat it. The League for the Fourth International seeks to build revolutionary workers parties to fight growing authoritarianism, austerity and capitalist privation the world over. It will take international socialist revolution to stop the ticking doomsday clock. ■

Golfo pérsico...

sigue de la página 32

El mundo está al filo de la navaja. Los gobernantes israelíes estarían encantados de ver a Irán desintegrarse y colapsarse económicamente. Pero si Donald Trump llevara a cabo cualquiera de sus múltiples amenazas (destruir el sistema eléctrico iraní, apoderarse de su petróleo, confiscar su alijo de uranio enriquecido y desbloquear por medios militares el estrecho de Ormuz), todo podría estallar de manera dramática. Esto podría obligar a los aliados de

Irán, Rusia y China, a intervenir de forma más directa, en lugar de limitarse a proporcionar datos de inteligencia (imágenes satelitales para la localización de objetivos), tecnología (sistemas de radar avanzados) y cantidades limitadas de armamento (drones avanzados, misiles antibuque). La guerra contra Irán, aún más que la guerra sustitutiva de los imperialistas de la OTAN contra Rusia en torno a Ucrania, tiene el potencial de desencadenar las primeras escaramuzas de una tercera guerra mundial. China, un estado obrero burocráticamente deformado y receptor del 90 por ciento de las exportaciones petroleras de Irán, es, después de todo, el objetivo último.

Desde el principio, una clara mayoría de la población estadounidense (59 por ciento en las encuestas de opinión) se ha opuesto a la guerra con Irán, una cifra que no ha hecho más que aumentar. Tres cuartas partes (74 por ciento de la población), incluyendo una mayoría (52 por ciento) de republicanos, se oponen al envío de tropas terrestres a Irán.² Sin embargo, mientras escribimos esto, dos unidades expedicionarias de los marines, así como el estado mayor de la 82ª División Aerotransportada del Ejército están llevando tropas de infantería a la zona de guerra.

Los demócratas se quejan de que Trump no ha especificado sus objetivos bélicos e invocan la Ley de Poderes de Guerra (que los presidentes demócratas Clinton, Obama y Biden ignoraron) para involucrar al Congreso, *pero no se han opuesto directamente a la guerra* (y el *New York Times*, portavoz del establishment liberal, afirma que "podría" apoyar una guerra). Es ésta la razón por la que no ha habido protestas de envergadura en contra de la guerra contra Irán, ya que la izquierda oportunista siempre busca construir un movimiento pacifista de "frente popular" de colaboración de clases junto con "palomas" del Partido Demócrata.

Más que nunca, la situación exige la dirección de un partido genuinamente comunista para defender a Irán sobre una base clasista en contra de los atacantes imperialistas y sionistas, y para movilizar poderosas acciones obreras contra la guerra, como parte de la lucha por la revolución socialista internacional, la única manera de poner fin al imperialismo y sus guerras interminables.

La guerra de Trump contra Irán atrapada en las arenas movedizas del Medio Oriente

Los líderes y planificadores de guerra estadounidenses e israelíes se habían convencido de que, con el asesinato de Jamenei, provocarían un levantamiento de las masas iraníes, ansiosas por liberarse del régimen teocrático y autoritario de los mulás. (Según se informa, esta idea fue promovida por el jefe del Mossad, el servicio de inteligencia exterior israelí.) Pero no sucedió nada de eso. Hubo algunos videos de pequeños grupos que celebraban la noche en que comenzó la guerra, el 28 de febrero, y después nada. En cambio, al día siguiente, multitudes inmensas se congregaron en todo Irán para rendir homenaje al ayatolá asesinado; muchos, entre lágrimas, sostenían fotografías de él mientras coreaban "¡Muerte a Estados Unidos!" y "¡Muerte a Israel!". Una sola mirada a las fotos de las decenas de miles de personas vestidas de negro que se agolpaban en la plaza Engalab de Teherán dejaba claro que la República Islámica aún cuenta con un ferviente apoyo popular de tal magnitud que, junto con su férreo aparato represivo, no podría ser derrocada simplemente "decapitándola".

El líder supremo del culto MAGA y el

² Encuesta de la Quinipiac University, 9 de marzo.

aspirante a rey de Israel alardean de su poderío militar. El 6 de marzo, Trump dijo sobre Irán: "Su ejército ha desaparecido. Su armada ha desaparecido. Sus comunicaciones han desaparecido. Sus líderes han desaparecido. Dos capas de sus líderes han desaparecido; ahora sólo les queda un tercer grupo. Su fuerza aérea ha sido aniquilada por completo". Unos días después, añadió: "No tienen ningún aparato antiaéreo. No tienen radares" resumiendo: "Nuestro ejército es el mejor. Es el más poderoso del mundo y está atacando a Irán con mucha fuerza". (Esto recuerda la jactancia de la candidata presidencial demócrata Kamala Harris durante su campaña de 2024: "Me aseguraré de que Estados Unidos siempre tenga la fuerza de combate más fuerte y letal del mundo".) Gran parte de esto puede ser cierto, aunque habrá que ver lo del armamento anti-aéreo y los radares, ya que el 19 de marzo un bombardero furtivo F-35 estadounidense fue alcanzado por fuego iraní. Muchos de los ataques estadounidenses se han realizado con misiles de largo alcance disparados desde fuera del espacio aéreo iraní. Pero Irán ha respondido de forma asimétrica y contundente con medidas militares que han sumido a Washington y Tel Aviv en el pánico.

Al principio, la Guardia Revolucionaria Islámica (GRI) lanzó una gran cantidad de misiles y drones (más de 1,200 al día), lo que obligó a Estados Unidos e Israel a utilizar gran parte de sus misiles interceptores disponibles, que son muy costosos. En ese primer ataque, los iraníes lograron alcanzar las bases de radar vitales para los sistemas de defensa antimisiles THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) de Estados Unidos en los Emiratos Árabes Unidos, Arabia Saudita y Jordania. Irán también atacó la mayoría de las bases militares estadounidenses en la zona del Golfo Pérsico, de modo que hoy en día, "muchas de las 13 bases militares en la región utilizadas por las tropas estadounidenses son prácticamente inhabitables" (*New York Times*, 26 de marzo). Y el 21 de marzo, Irán atacó dos ciudades cercanas a la instalación de armas nucleares israelí de Dimona con su misil hipersónico Fattah-2, que ni Estados Unidos ni Israel son capaces de interceptar.

Pero mucho más contundente ha sido la doble ofensiva de Irán: la paralización de plantas de petróleo y gas y la prohibición del paso por el estrecho de Ormuz a cualquier embarcación que no sea amiga. Claramente, y según admitió el propio Hegseth, la Casa Blanca y el Pentágono no esperaban esto, al menos no tan pronto. Cuando Israel, en una intensificación de envergadura de sus ataques, arremetió contra el yacimiento de gas natural de South Pars, del que depende la mayor parte de la generación de energía eléctrica de Irán, la Guardia Revolucionaria Islámica atacó la planta de gas natural licuado (GNL) en Qatar, la más grande del mundo, dejándola fuera de servicio durante al menos cinco años. Irán ya atacó una refinería en Kuwait y podría fácilmente hacer lo mismo con muchas otras instalaciones en el Golfo. Al limitar el tránsito por el estrecho de Ormuz, ha reducido el transporte marítimo en más del 90 por ciento, lo que ha provocado un déficit en el suministro de petróleo de al menos 11 millones de barriles diarios, o sea el 10 por ciento del total a nivel mundial, lo que casi inevitablemente conducirá en poco tiempo a una gigantesca crisis económica global.

Los economistas ya están detallando las posibles consecuencias para la provisión de alimentos en África, donde la escasez de fertilizantes podría provocar una hambruna generalizada en todo el continente. El suministro de

The Internationalist



A Journal of Revolutionary Marxism for the Reforging of the Fourth International

Publication of the Internationalist Group, section of the League for the Fourth International

Annual subscription US\$10 for five issues.

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Apt. # _____ Tel. (____) _____

City _____ State/Province _____

Postal Code/Zip _____ Country _____

Make checks/money orders payable to Mundial Publications and mail to:

Mundial Publications
Box 3321, Church Street Station
New York, NY 10008 U.S.A.

Write the Internationalist Group at the above address, or contact:

Tel (212) 460-0983 Fax (212) 614-8711

E-mail: internationalistgroup@msn.com

¡Movilización del poder obrero en contra de la guerra y las deportaciones! ¡Romper con demócratas y republicanos! ¡Forjar un partido obrero revolucionario!

medicamentos genéricos procedentes de la India prácticamente se paralizaría. Se produciría un fuerte aumento de la inflación en los países capitalistas avanzados y los tipos de interés se dispararían (como ya está ocurriendo). Esto podría suponer la quiebra de muchas grandes empresas de inversión y de capital privado que se han endeudado considerablemente (200 mil millones de dólares en los últimos dos años) para financiar centros de datos de inteligencia artificial (IA), voraces consumidores de energía. El “arma energética” de Irán es extremadamente poderosa.

Mientras Trump intensifica la guerra, ¡luchemos por la revolución obrera!

El primer ministro israelí Netanyahu ha estado presionando para desencadenar una guerra total contra Irán desde la caída del régimen sirio de Bashar al-Asad en diciembre de 2024 a manos de terroristas islamistas sunitas respaldados por Turquía, lo cual fue resultado del asesinato, dos meses antes, por parte del estado sionista de la cúpula del movimiento islamista chiita Hezbolá en el Líbano. Tanto los líderes estadounidenses como los israelíes creían que tenían la victoria asegurada y que sería fácil obtenerla, que la República Islámica estaba acabada (como lo habrían demostrado las protestas de enero de 2026). Trump declaró al *New York Times* (1 de marzo) que la guerra contra Irán duraría “de cuatro a cinco semanas”, que “no sería difícil” y que “lo que hicimos en Venezuela” era “el escenario perfecto”. No resultó así.

En un mensaje televisado del 28 de febrero, Trump les dijo a los iraníes: “Caerán bombas por todas partes, y cuando terminemos, tomen el control de su gobierno”. Tras el fracaso de su llamado al cambio de régimen, exigió la “RENDICIÓN INCONDICIONAL” de Irán. (La portavoz de la Casa Blanca, Karoline Leavitt, “aclaró” que esto ocurriría cuando Trump, “como comandante en jefe de las fuerzas armadas estadounidenses, determine” que Irán está “en una posición de rendición incondicional”.) Como esto no prosperó, últimamente ha estado impulsando un supuesto “plan de paz” de 15 puntos, que equivaldría a la rendición. Cuando los líderes iraníes dijeron que no estaban interesados en negociar y que no se estaban llevando a cabo conversaciones con Estados Unidos, Trump respondió: “Por supuesto que están negociando. Han sido aniquilados”. El mandatario norteamericano no alcanza a comprender a un régimen y a un ejército ideológicamente comprometidos que estén dispuestos a luchar hasta el final.

Los giros y vueltas de Trump han alcanzado proporciones ridículas. El sábado 21 de marzo, emitió un ultimátum diciendo que Irán tenía “48 horas” para abrir el estrecho de Ormuz u ordenaría el bombardeo de las centrales eléctricas iraníes. Portavoces iraníes dijeron que, en ese caso, bombardearían plantas de energía y desalinizadoras en los estados del Golfo aliados de Estados Unidos e Israel. Luego, a pocas horas de que venciera el plazo, Trump dijo que lo extendería por cinco días porque se estaban llevando a cabo “conversaciones intensas”. El presidente del parlamento iraní calificó esto de “fake news” (noticia falsa) y fuentes en Teherán dijeron que ciertamente no hablarían con los enviados de Trump, Steve Witikoff y su yerno Jared Kushner, los dos estafadores que fingieron estar

negociando mientras Trump se preparaba para iniciar la guerra. Luego, cuando se acercaba el nuevo plazo y las bolsas se desplomaban, Trump anunció que lo extendía por diez días más, hasta el 6 de abril.

Una razón tácita para que Trump diera marcha atrás en su ultimátum de 48 horas/cinco días/diez días a Irán para que abriera el estrecho de Ormuz es que las fuerzas terrestres estadounidenses destinadas a llevar a cabo el asalto –las Unidades Expedicionarias de Marines 11ª y 31ª y la 82ª Aerotransportada– tardarían ese tiempo en llegar al teatro de operaciones. Un posible objetivo es el complejo de exportación de petróleo de Irán en la isla de Kharg, que Trump ha estado obsesionado con tomar al menos desde 1988, cuando lo citó en una entrevista al *Guardian* de Londres. Esto ha dado lugar a una serie de artículos en casi todos los principales periódicos sobre lo que se necesitaría para conquistar y mantener la isla, que está a solo 24 kilómetros de la costa, al alcance de la artillería iraní, misiles de corto alcance o drones, sin ningún lugar donde las tropas puedan esconderse.

Lo más probable, entonces, es que EE.UU. e Israel desaten una campaña de bombardeos masivos de “*shock and awe*” (conmoción y pavor), declaren haber destruido las fuerzas militares iraníes y dejen que los europeos se las arreglen para navegar por el estrecho (posiblemente pagando peajes a Irán). Si el régimen iraní se mantiene en el poder, por muy debilitado que esté, no hay forma de que el resultado pueda considerarse una victoria para Occidente. Si la República Islámica cae, convertirá la región en un polvorín. Bienvenidos al atoladero.

Algunos capitalistas poderosos están alarmados. Una cosa es desatar el caos en el mercado, provocar la quiebra de empresas y someter a los trabajadores a una inflación galopante con aranceles estratosféricos que impiden la reindustrialización de Estados Unidos. Otra muy distinta es provocar potencialmente una conflagración mundial. El “zar de la IA y las criptomonedas” de Trump, el inversor de capital de riesgo de Silicon Valley David Sacks declaró el 14 de marzo que es hora de “declarar victoria y retirarse” en lugar de intensificar la guerra contra Irán. Algunos miembros de la clase dirigente ven al vicepresidente JD Vance (quien cuestionó cautelosamente la guerra contra Irán) como una alternativa sensata al presidente enloquecido por la guerra y a su jefe de política exterior y seguridad nacional, Marco Rubio, partidario de “dejar que Trump sea Trump”. Pero cuidado: si bien Trump está claramente demente, Vance es un ideólogo fascistoide certificado que convertiría a los jóvenes en carne de cañón y a los jóvenes en fábricas de bebés para reemplazar a los soldados caídos. El juicio político (*impeachment*) de Trump no es la solución.

En la izquierda, llama la atención la escasa respuesta a la aventura iraní de Trump. Ante una guerra profundamente impopular, ¿dónde están las multitudinarias marchas contra la guerra, como las que precedieron a la invasión y ocupación de Irak por parte de George Bush II? El 15 de febrero de 2003, más de un millón de personas protestaron en las calles de Roma y Londres, y cientos de miles en Berlín, Sídney, Melbourne y Nueva York. Hoy en día, solo se observan pequeñas manifestaciones de apenas unos cientos de personas aquí y allá. Incluso el Partido

por el Socialismo y la Liberación (PSL) y su Coalición ANSWER, especializados en manifestaciones frentepopulistas por la paz, no han convocado ninguna movilización nacional. En cambio, el PSL y el resto de la izquierda estadounidense se suman a las marchas del 28 de marzo de “No Kings”, convocadas por grupos afines al Partido Demócrata como 50501, Indivisible y moveon.org. Los mismos grupos están impulsando la supuesta “huelga general” de la coalición “May Day Strong” (Primero de Mayo Fuerte), que no se basa en que los trabajadores ejerzan su poder colectivo, sino en acciones individuales (“no ir de compras”, no ir al trabajo por enfermedad) el 1º de mayo. Su verdadero propósito es movilizar el voto a favor de los demócratas en noviembre.

La Liga por la IV Internacional y su sección estadounidense, el Grupo Internacionalista, se han opuesto políticamente al régimen islamista en Irán desde su formación. Mantenemos la postura de nuestra organización predecesora, la tendencia espartaquista internacional, de 1979, cuando, de forma única en la izquierda, dijimos “¡Abajo el sha, no a Jomeini!”, al luchar por la revolución obrera en Irán y advirtiendo que la “Revolución Islámica” era un movimiento reaccionario. La mayor parte de la izquierda, tanto dentro de Irán como a nivel internacional, apoyó al naciente régimen islamista, que poco después detuvo a miles de izquierdistas y ejecutó a cientos. Hoy, la Liga Comunista Internacional, que se disfraza como la continuadora de la tendencia espartaquista, renuncia a casi todo lo que representaba, incluyendo la línea marxista adoptada en 1979, y aboga ahora por un “frente unido antiimperialista” con el régimen de los mulás. Como bien lo expresó un ponente en un encuentro educativo sobre Irán organizado por la LIVI el 7 de marzo, esto equivale a decirle a la próxima generación de izquierdistas iraníes que vuelvan a “subirse al cadalso”.

Los trotskistas de la Liga por la IV Internacional hacemos un llamado a derrotar la guerra imperialista/sionista y a defender a Irán mediante la acción obrera internacional, y a luchar por el poder obrero. Contra la opresión sionista del pueblo palestino, nos pronunciamos a favor de un estado obrero palestino árabe/hebreo como parte de una federación socialista de Oriente Medio, basada en los poderosos proletariados de Egipto, Turquía e Irán. La lucha contra esta devastadora guerra es inseparable de la lucha contra la ofensiva del régimen de Trump contra la población estadounidense, en particular las deportaciones masivas y los violentos ataques contra inmigrantes

y sus simpatizantes por parte de los agentes de la policía de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas (ICE) y de la Patrulla Fronteriza, quienes se están convirtiendo en una fuerza paramilitar fascistoide que funciona como la punta de lanza de la imposición de un régimen policíaco bonapartista. La guerra imperialista en el extranjero invariablemente va de la mano con la represión racista al interior del país.

Desde Irán y Palestina hasta Europa y Estados Unidos, la lucha debe ser por una revolución obrera que derribe al imperialismo decadente, que se sacude con violencia para evitar su desaparición. En 2022, Trump dijo sobre la guerra del demócrata Biden contra Rusia por Ucrania que podríamos “terminar en la Tercera Guerra Mundial y no quedaría nada de nuestro planeta” porque “gente ignorante” que dirige el gobierno “no tenía ni idea” de los peligros que representaba una escalada bélica. Lo mismo puede decirse de la guerra del republicano Trump contra Irán. Pero no se trata sólo de los republicanos: las políticas fundamentales del imperialismo estadounidense han sido y son bipartidistas, como lo fue durante la Guerra Fría antisoviética y desde que la contrarrevolución destruyó la Unión Soviética y los estados obreros deformados de Europa del Este en 1992, y como lo son hoy en Ucrania, Palestina e Irán. Para luchar contra el curso hacia la guerra mundial, en Estados Unidos es crucial romper con los partidos Demócrata y Republicano y construir un partido obrero revolucionario basado en el programa auténticamente comunista de la IV Internacional de Trotsky. ■

League for the Fourth International

LFI, Box 3321, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008, U.S.A. E-mail: internationalistgroup@msn.com

LFI in Australia

E-mail: lfi_aus@proton.me

Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil

Brazil: write to Caixa Postal 084027, CEP 27251-740, Volta Redonda, RJ, Brazil

Rio de Janeiro: write to Caixa Postal 3982, CEP 20001-974, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil
E-mail: lqb1996@hotmail.com

Internationalistische Gruppe/Deutschland

Germany: write to Postfach 80 97 21, 21007 Hamburg, Germany
E-mail: permanenterevolution@posteo.de

Nucleo Internazionalista d'Italia

Italy: write to Anna Chiaraluce, C.P. N. 78, Ufficio Postale San Sisto, 06132 Perugia (PG), Italy
E-mail: it_internazionalista@yahoo.com

Grupo Internacionalista/México

México: write to Apartado Postal 12-201, Admón. Postal Obrero Mundial, CP 03001, México D.F., México
E-mail: grupointernacionalista@yahoo.com.mx
Tel. Mexico City: 55-3154-7361; Guadalajara: 33-1752-6643; Oaxaca: 951-185-6815

Internationalist Group/U.S.

Internationalist Group, Box 3321, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008, U.S.A.
E-mail: internationalistgroup@msn.com
New York Tel. (212) 460-0983 Fax: (212) 614-8711
Los Angeles Tel. (323) 984-8590
New England Tel. (617) 213-5010
Pacific Northwest Tel. (503) 303-8278

¡Defender a Irán! ¡Derrotar la guerra de EE.UU./Israel que amenaza con provocar una Tercera Guerra Mundial!

¡Hundir al imperio de EE.UU. en el Golfo Pérsico!

IRÁN CLARAMENTE NECESITA UNA FUERZA NUCLEAR DISUASIVA CONTRA LOS TERRORISTAS EE.UU./ISRAEL PERTRECHADOS CON ARMAS NUCLEARES

Atolladero. Ésta es la palabra que Donald Trump teme como a la peste, especialmente con las elecciones de medio mandato a realizarse en noviembre. Con la guerra de EE.UU. e Israel contra Irán ya en su cuarta semana, la Casa Blanca y el Pentágono están asustados y buscan con desesperación vías para escapar del desastre en el que han metido al mundo. Trump quería evitar una “guerra sin fin” como fueron las invasiones norteamericanas a Afganistán e Irak, que duraron una generación. Pero pese a todo el poder de fuego asesino que han desatado en contra de Irán, los guerreristas imperialistas y sionistas sólo han logrado provocar la mayor interrupción de la provisión de petróleo en la historia. La razón por la que esto no ha producido un cortocircuito en los mercados es que los potentados de Wall Street parecen creer los cuentos de hadas trumpianos acerca de unas inexistentes “conversaciones de paz”. La “estrategia de salida” de Trump parece ser la de montar un ataque apocalíptico por tierra y aire.

Publicamos aquí extractos del artículo que es accesible en su totalidad en la sección en español del sitio web de la Liga por la IV Internacional, www.internationalist.org.

Para los liberales que creen en la ficción del “derecho internacional”, la actual guerra contra Irán (igual que la de junio pasado) es una de las acciones más flagrantemente ilegales en la larga historia de gangsterismo de Occidente contra Asia, África y América Latina. Comenzó el 28 de febrero con el asesinato, mediante un ataque aéreo israelí, del líder supremo de Irán, el ayatolá Alí Jamenei, un alto clérigo de la rama chiita del islam, junto con varios de sus familiares. Horas después, un ataque simultáneo con dos misiles de crucero estadounidenses impactó una escuela primaria en la ciudad de Minab, al sur de Irán, matando al menos a 175 personas, de las cuales más de 100 eran niños. Esto fue un crimen de guerra atroz en toda regla, toda vez que el asesinato de jefes de estado perpetrado por los gobernantes de otro país se considera una violación de la soberanía y del derecho internacional humanitario. Pero, por supuesto, dado que toda la guerra no provocada de Estados Unidos e Israel es una violación masiva de la soberanía iraní, se demuestra una vez más que el derecho internacional es un mito.

A las pocas horas del ataque del 28 de febrero, la Liga por la IV Internacional emitió una declaración en la que llamaba a “¡Defender a Irán! ¡Derrotar la guerra de Estados Unidos e



Air Force am/hco/snco

Avión de guerra electrónica E3 Sentry de EE.UU. destruido por un ataque con misiles iraníes en una base aérea de Arabia Saudita, el 27 de marzo.

Israel!”. Ante el descarado ataque del genocida líder israelí Benjamin Netanyahu y el aspirante a emperador yanqui Donald Trump, enfatizamos que es deber de los socialistas revolucionarios, de los trabajadores con conciencia de clase y de todos los que se oponen al dominio mundial imperialista, ponerse del lado Irán, un país semicolonial, contra los agresores imperialistas y sionistas. Hicimos un llamado a la **acción obrera internacional contra la guerra** y para **detener los envíos de armas estadounidenses**, además de, sin dar el menor apoyo político al asfixiante régimen clerical de los mulás, **defender a Irán como parte de la lucha por la revolución obrera**. Y, como hicimos en la “Guerra de los Doce Días” contra Irán en junio pasado, declaramos: **¡Irán tiene el derecho a disponer de armas nucleares para disuadir a los terroristas israelíes y norteamericanos con su armamento nuclear!**¹

Durante años, derechistas estadounidenses e israelíes han exigido que se bombardeara a Irán; pero a pesar de la exageración en los medios de comunicación masiva (que en un 90 por ciento de los casos vomitan pura propaganda de guerra), del pavoneo machista del despistado secretario de guerra estadounidense Pete Hegseth y de los embustes del mentiroso compulsivo Trump, en la guerra no les está yendo bien a los agresores. Mientras tanto, Irán ha logrado desencadenar la mayor crisis de suministro de petróleo jamás vista al atacar refinerías y plantas

de procesamiento de gas en la zona del Golfo Pérsico y bloquear el estrecho de Ormuz, por donde transita el 20 por ciento del petróleo y gas natural del mundo. Esto no sólo ha disparado los precios de la gasolina (más de 8 dólares el galón en California, cerca de 10 en Alemania), sino que pronto provocará una grave crisis alimentaria mundial por la escasez de urea y nitrógeno para fertilizantes al comienzo de la temporada de siembra.

Los militaristas israelíes, tras su horripilante genocidio en Gaza, quieren usar esta guerra para afianzar su dominio en Medio Oriente, dando un paso hacia el objetivo de un Gran Israel que se extienda del mar (Mediterráneo) hasta el río (Éufrates), anexionándose Cisjordania y ocupando el sur del Líbano. El bravucón aspirante a dictador en la Casa Blanca, tras su escapada tipo Piratas del Caribe al secuestrar al presidente venezolano Nicolás Maduro y apoderarse de las ventas de petróleo del país, dijo que sólo estaba realizando una pequeña “excursión” en el Golfo Pérsico. La mal preparada y sangrienta aventura estadounidense-israelí podría fácilmente volverse en su contra. Pero si se enfrentan a la derrota, los dementes sionistas podrían verse tentados a usar su arsenal nuclear, mientras el volátil Trump se está preparando para asestar un “golpe noqueador” a Irán, que ha sido su obsesión durante décadas. Sin embargo, no se puede noquear a un país de 90 millones de habitantes con un espectacular bombardeo.

sigue en la página 30

Grupo Internacionalista exige petróleo para Cuba



En respuesta al nuevo bloqueo imperialista del petróleo a Cuba impuesto por el gobierno estadounidense de Donald Trump, y a la capitulación de la presidenta mexicana Claudia Sheibaum ante el dictado de Trump, el Grupo Internacionalista, sección mexicana de la Liga por la Cuarta Internacional, ha

puesto en marcha una campaña sindical para recaudar fondos destinados a la compra de petróleo para Cuba. Arriba: camarada Sherzada, del GI/M habla en una manifestación del Movimiento Mexicano de Solidaridad con Cuba, el 1° de febrero frente a la antigua embajada de EE. UU. en la Ciudad de México.

¹ Véase “¡Defender a Irán! ¡Derrotar la guerra de EE.UU. e Israel!”, 28 de febrero de 2026.