

Democrats Shield ICE – Mobilize Workers for *Feds Out Now!*

Abort Trump's Police State

Break with the Parties of Capital – For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

Under the administration of Donald Trump, the United States is building out a police-state regime, in which the arbitrary actions of the executive power are virtually unchecked by courts, laws, Congress or the Constitution they swear by. The U.S. is not there yet, it is only in the early stages, gutting institutions and softening up the population with a barrage of militarized repression. The military is being repurposed for internal war and the various agencies of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) turned into an all-purpose paramilitary police force. Spearheading this is Trump's campaign of mass deportations of immigrants, who make up a vital section of the U.S. workforce, but the ultimate target is all working people. And it is to the power of the working class that we must look to fight this drive for naked capitalist dictatorship.

After issuing a tsunami of executive orders in the spring, declaring all sorts of "national emergencies," the Trump regime got down to business unleashing police-state repression in Los Angeles, home to over 1 million immigrants who lack the papers demanded by the bosses' state. A couple of weeks earlier, the fas-



Ashlee Rezin / Chicago Sun-Times

Border Patrol marches in military formation through downtown Chicago on September 28.

cistic White House deputy chief of staff Stephen Miller called in top Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials and bellowed at them that if they didn't

start picking up at least 3,000 immigrants a day, they would be fired. No matter where immigrants came from or what their status is: detain first, ask questions

later was the order. "Operation at Large" was launched as a nationwide plan, slated to involve over 5,000 federal agents

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For Workers Strike Action – Stop ICE Gestapo!

Chicago Under Siege: Thousands Demand Stop Deportation Raids

CHICAGO, October 27 – "We're under siege. We're being invaded by our own military."

That's what Darrell Ballard said after witnessing ICE, Border Patrol, FBI and other federal agents executing a late-night, military-style deportation raid on a Chicago apartment building in the black working-class neighborhood of South Shore on September 30. Some 130 residents were jolted out of their sleep by the sound of helicopters, as their building shook violently from multiple flash-bang grenades. Well over 100 federal agents in full tactical gear rolled up in an armored personnel carrier, rented box trucks and unmarked vehicles, while others rappelled down into the building from Black Hawk helicopters. The pretext: hunting down supposed members of the Venezuelan Tren de Aragua gang. Cameras were set up around the building to produce a slick propaganda clip – a cross between

a Hollywood action thriller and the 1950s *Gangbusters* TV series – that was posted on social media two days later.

Inside the building, agents rampaged through the halls, blowing doors off their hinges, ransacking apartments, smashing walls and shattering windows. Residents, including U.S. citizens and the elderly, were zip-tied and detained in the back of vans and U-Haul trucks for hours. Trump's thugs shoved assault rifles in their faces, demanding proof of citizenship and searching for outstanding warrants of any kind. Toddlers and young children, some barely clothed, were separated from their parents, zip-tied together, and led outside through a fence to a school parking lot where dozens were held. One witness saw a federal agent tear a baby from its mother's arms. At least 37 people, mostly Venezuelans, were disappeared into the jaws of Trump's "Operation Midway

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Southeast Side Chicago residents face off with Customs and Border Protection (CBP) thugs on October 14.

Jamie Keller for the New York Times

Drop the Charges Against Anasse Kazib!

The following two articles are translated from a supplement to L'Internationaliste (June 2025).

On June 18, two activists from the group Révolution Permanente will be tried [in Paris, France] for “justification of terrorism” for a tweet in support of the Palestinian people. One of them is Anasse Kazib, the organization’s spokesperson, a railway worker, union activist, and their former presidential candidate.

“Justification of terrorism” is nothing other than a crime of opinion – introduced in 2014 by the government of the “socialist” François Hollande – a weapon of repression in the hands of the French imperialist state. The maximum penalty for online “justification of terrorism” is seven years in prison and a fine of €100,000. Since 7 October 2023, this weapon has been deployed against opponents of the Zionist genocidal war against the Palestinian people in Gaza – students, left-wing activists, union leaders like Jean-Paul Delescaut of the CGT (General Confederation of Labor), or members of parliament and others from La France Insoumise (France Unbowed).

In this case, the denunciation came from the Zionists of the “Jeunesse Française Juive [Jewish French Youth],” fans of [the French fascists] Le Pen and Zemmour who have both La France Insoumise and Révolution Permanente in their sights. But there is no doubt that the bourgeois state wants to make an example of Anasse Kazib



Protest outside the French Mission to the United Nations in New York City, June 17.

and hopes that an immigrant leader of a far-left group would be an easier target.

“Islamist-leftism” has long been the bogeyman of French reaction. The bourgeois state’s repression, coupled with its intensified campaign against Muslims under Interior Minister Retailleau and the systematic targeting of refugees as scapegoats for the misery caused by the crisis of French capitalism, all put wind in the sails of the fascist National Rally. Retailleau intends to dissolve [ban] both the Urgence Palestine [Palestine Emergency] group and the Jeune Garde [Young Guard], an anti-fascist group. *No to the dissolutions!*

We say: “an injury to one is an injury to all.” The potential power of the multinational, multi-ethnic working class must be mobilized to defend the comrades of Révolution Permanente!

The June 18 court hearing in Paris was postponed and no new trial date has been set.

Drop the Charges Against Gaël Quirante and the Other Sud-PTT Activists!

Eleven years after the alleged events, five postal workers, activists of the Sud-PTT trade union federation in Hauts-de-Seine [region around Paris], have been summoned to appear before the Paris Criminal Court on June 12. They are being prosecuted by the Post Office for occupying the Post Office headquarters in February 2014 during a strike against the workers’ precarious contracts – accused of “violence” and “invasion of a professional domicile,” which could earn them a five-year prison sentence and a €75,000 fine.

Among them is Gaël Quirante, not only

a union leader but also a prominent spokesperson for the NPA Révolutionnaires [New Anti-Capitalist Party – Revolutionaries]. This is not only a blatant example of the anti-union repression against French workers, but this Inspector Javert-like [the implacable cop from “Les Misérables”] persistence is surely politically motivated. Once again, this repression must be buried by mobilizing the power of the working class.

At the July 10 trial, Quirante and the other postal workers received suspended sentences of up to six months in prison. The verdict has been appealed. ■

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For Workers Action to Stop the Deportations! Students and Workers Demand “ICE Out!” at Hunter College Speak-Out



Protesters at speak-out chanted “ICE out of our schools, ICE out of New York.”

On September 4, outside the City University of New York’s (CUNY) Hunter College campus, a speak-out was held in solidarity with immigrants and to demand “ICE out of New York! Stop the Deportations!” The speak-out was initiated by the Hunter Committee to Defend Immigrants (HCDI) and cosponsored by the Hunter chapter of the Professional Staff Congress (PSC), the faculty/staff union at CUNY, and by the CUNY Internationalist Clubs. The event brought out upwards of 125 people, including students, faculty and labor activists, and was covered by the cable news station NY1 as the kickoff to fall college protests.

The HCDI was established not long after the November 2024 elections, following a call by the CUNY Internationalist Clubs to organize students, faculty and staff against the incoming administration’s plans for mass deportations. Scores of students attended meetings of the Committee, which held film screenings, a “Know Your Rights” event and joined with the CUNY Internationalists as well as other student groups and PSC members in protesting against the Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) presence at a job fair at CUNY’s John Jay College of Criminal Justice in January. A CBP recruitment event was canceled due to the protests.¹ The Committee has insisted that rather than looking to university authorities, courts or the Democratic Party, we need to link up to the power of labor to defend immigrants.

This standpoint was highlighted in the September 4 speak-out by the presence of leaders and activists from the Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants (LCDI), including Charles Jenkins of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and Transit Workers Union Local 100; Chris Silvera, secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 808; Fitz Reid and Andrew Hackman of AFSCME District Council 37, all founding members of the LCDI; as well as union activists from the United Federation of Teachers, PSC, Teamsters Local 804, UAW Local 2179, SEIU 1199, RWDSU and the New York State Nurses Association.

Charles Jenkins spoke about the LCDI, saying “we had a committee before this administration took over to strategize and fight like hell to defend immigrants.” In a live interview on WBAI radio during the speak-out Jenkins emphasized that “there’s an attack coming on all of us” and immigrants are up first. Chris Silvera stressed how destructive imperialist conquests forced many to migrate just to find work. Health care workers held signs remembering Marie Ange Blaise, Jakelin Caal Maquin and Felipe Gómez Alonso, all of whom died in ICE custody. Dr. Steve Auerbach of the NYDocs coalition called on all hospitals and health care organizations to say, “No ICE in healthcare, ICE out of the hospitals, out of the clinics, don’t you dare!”

Maeve Campbell, a social worker and delegate in 1199 SEIU, spoke of patients coming in with wounds that should have been treated weeks ago but who were afraid of being targeted by ICE, and emphasized that over half of health care workers in NYC are immigrants. The crowd responded, chanting “Hands off our patients! Hands off our nurses!” Standing in front of a union banner proclaiming “PSC Stands with Immigrants, ICE Out of New York!” a Brooklyn College professor called attention to the case of four adjunct professors at the College who were fired in July clearly in response to their defending students when the NYPD rioted at the college to crush an encampment protesting the ongoing genocide in Gaza.² Then on August 25, she reported, five full-time faculty and one staff member were hauled in for questioning.

High school teacher Yari Michel, a delegate in the United Federation of Teachers and supporter of Class Struggle Education Workers, spoke of how committees to defend immigrants formed in her and other NYC schools, and how a resolution she introduced encouraging the formation of such union-led school-based committees was passed at the UFT Delegate Assembly in June by an overwhelming 93% vote.

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² See “Vicious Cop Riot Against Pro-Palestinian Protesters at Brooklyn College,” in *Revolution* (No. 22, October 2025), the newspaper of the Revolutionary Internationalist Youth and CUNY Internationalist Clubs.

¹ See “Student/Labor Protests Stop Immigration Cops’ Provocation at CUNY Campus,” in *The Internationalist* No. 75, January-May 2025.

Mobilize Against Yankee Imperialist Threat to Venezuela!

OCTOBER 13 – From even before Donald Trump took office on January 20, it was clear that Venezuela would be in the cross-hairs of the new administration, as it was under Democrats Biden and Obama as well. This has zero to do with Trump’s ostensible pretext, the absurd claim that the United States is supposedly under military invasion by Venezuela via the Tren de Aragua gang, which even the U.S. National Intelligence Council declared is not connected to the Venezuelan government (that in fact combats it). When that didn’t fly, Trump resuscitated a mythical Cartel de los Soles, a right-wing invention used to brand the Venezuelan military as “narco-terrorists.”

For decades, U.S. imperialism has been attempting to overthrow the populist nationalist regime in Venezuela and install puppets who will be unconditional lackeys of whoever is in office in Washington. One reason, of course, is that Venezuela has the largest proven oil reserves in the world. Going back to the first Persian Gulf War in 1991, U.S. rulers have repeatedly gone to war to keep their hand on the oil spigot, even when – as in the case of Iraq – very little of that oil is imported to the U.S. They want to control the flow in order to keep their imperialist “allies” in line.

More importantly, U.S. rulers want to go after Venezuela as a stepping stone to overthrowing the workers state in Cuba, which although it is bureaucratically deformed is a thorn in the side of Yankee imperialism. Washington has been attempting (unsuccessfully) to destroy the Cuban Revolution ever since 1960. In July 2021 protests over shortages in Cuba were instigated, manipulated and exploited by *gusano* (Cuban exile counterrevolutionary) agents of the U.S. The League for the Fourth International called then, as we have since our inception, to unconditionally defend Cuba against imperialist threats, blackmail and attack, and domestic counterrevolution.

We also call to defend Venezuela against imperialist attacks and threats, and against the U.S.-sponsored domestic opposition. We do so without giving any political support to the government of Nicolás Mad-

uro and his predecessor Hugo Chávez, and their “Bolivarian” regime. Despite their popularity among many on the left, and their sometime “socialist” rhetoric, they are bourgeois nationalists. Venezuela is a capitalist state, which has spawned a domestic bourgeois layer connected with the regime – what many former supporters of Chávez who are disappointed in Maduro call the “Bolibourgeoisie.” But with the *gusano* U.S. secretary of state Marco Rubio as point man, Washington is hell-bent on installing a puppet regime in Caracas.

The U.S. has repeatedly staged coup attempts against the populist regime in Venezuela, from 2002 on. The 2003 Irish documentary *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised* depicts this quite powerfully. Now even the New York Times, house organ of U.S. imperialism, admits the aim of the current military build-up in the Caribbean is to carry out so-called “regime change” in Venezuela, just as the U.S. did in Iraq in 2003. The U.S. has an armada of four guided-missile carriers off the coast of Venezuela, and ten F-35 “stealth” bombers deployed to Puerto Rico, the kind of planes Israel used to bomb Iran in June. And the Air Force Special Operations Command just carried out a training exercise in the U.S. Virgin Islands of paratroopers seizing an airport.

That kind of hardware and that kind of training is useless to attack alleged drug-running speedboats. It’s for directly attacking Venezuela. At this time, working people must prepare to throw back any imperialist attack or provocation by their



Adriana Loureiro Fernández / New York Times

A unit of the Bolivarian Militia, a volunteer military auxiliary force, during a mobilization on September 20 in response to U.S. military threats. Workers brigades should be formed to combat any attempt to seize power in Venezuela by the imperialists and their agents.

local puppets. Holding a small protest by leftist groups in Venezuela to verbally distance themselves from Trump & Co. is not enough. Trade unions and all workers organizations in Venezuela must prepare to militarily defend the semicolonial country against the imperialists or they would be rightly considered traitors to the cause of the proletariat. There can be no neutrality against imperialist attack. There should be a call to form workers brigades and arm them to defeat any attempt at a coup d’état, invasion or U.S.-backed “uprising.”

To be clear, the so-called “democratic opposition” in Venezuela is nothing but imperialist marionettes. María Corina Machado, who was just awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, has been on the U.S. payroll going back to 2002, with her election monitoring outfits directly financed by the CIA conduit National Endowment for Democracy. The candidate that she ran in the elections last year, Edmundo González Urrutia, served as a bagman funneling Yankee dollars to the Salvadoran death squads and other Central American reactionary paramilitary groups in the 1980s when he was a diplomat in El Salvador, as revealed in declassified CIA cables.

While militantly denouncing the imperialist threat, revolutionary Marxists oppose Maduro’s current effort to replace trade unions with a “new movement of workers” directly controlled by the state. We similarly opposed an attempt by Hugo Chávez in 2000 to end the supposed “union dictatorship.” But we do so in fighting for a revolutionary proletarian leadership of the unions and the workers movement as a whole against all wings of the capitalist rulers and those pseudo-leftists who

hobnob off and on with the local agents of imperialism. It is necessary to forge a genuinely Leninist-Trotskyist communist party in Venezuela, to fight for a workers and peasants government and international socialist revolution.

The current administration in Washington is asserting with a vengeance the Monroe Doctrine, Marco Rubio style, of unrestrained Yankee plundering throughout Latin America. In Mexico, leftists and class-conscious workers must defend Venezuela, and demand that all agents of U.S. imperialism (DEA, CIA, ICE, military, etc.) be expelled from the country – especially in view of the threats to use U.S. military force in the so-called “war against drugs,” which in reality is a war against the poor and to maintain U.S. semicolonial domination in its “backyard.”

In the United States we fight for a revolutionary workers party against all wings of the imperialist ruling class, denouncing the Democrats who have repeatedly paved the way for Trump with their anti-worker policies and Cold War imperialist warmongering, from Ukraine to Gaza and Iran. We defend Gaza against the joint U.S./Israeli genocide, and call for the workers movement to mobilize its power to defend immigrants and defeat the mass deportations of the Trump regime which are being used as the spearhead in the imposition of bonapartist police-state rule.

The “Big Stick” regime in Washington wants to turn the Caribbean into an “American lake,” criminally murdering people on the high seas and riding roughshod over Latin American nations, from Mexico to the Southern Cone, in the guise of fighting “narcoterrorism.” The ultimate aim of the imperialist war drive, which leads straight to World War III, is to carry out counterrevolution in China and dismember Russia. Defend Venezuela against imperialist attack and by its agents rightly known as *escudidos* (scum)! Defend Cuba against imperialism, its *gusano* agents and counterrevolution in any form. For world socialist revolution! ■



Internationalists at “No U.S. War on Venezuela” demonstration in San Francisco, California, October 10.

Defend Iran Against Criminal U.S./Israel War, Defeat Imperialist/ Zionist Genocidal War-Makers

4

No to U.S./U.N. Colonial Rule – For an Arab/Hebrew Palestinian Workers Republic in a Socialist Federation of the Middle East

Gaza “Ceasefire”: There Is No Peace

Transport Workers: *Stop All War Cargo to Israel!*

OCTOBER 2025 – On October 9, representatives of Israel and Hamas (the Islamic Resistance Movement) signed an agreement for a ceasefire in the monstrous two-year Zionist genocidal war on the Palestinian population of Gaza. The truce was announced the day before by Donald Trump on his social media platform. Having received their instructions from on high, the negotiators, overseen by the president’s personal envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump son-in-law Jared Kushner, then put their signatures on the brief (one-page) document. When bombs stopped falling the next day, crowds of Palestinians in Gaza City, who had lived through 24 months of hell on earth, were jubilant. And when 25 Israeli hostages were returned alive, there was rejoicing in Tel Aviv. But this was only a pause in the unending Zionist war on the Palestinian people. There is no peace.

The ceasefire plan included immediately turning over all hostages held in Gaza and freeing 2,000 Palestinians being held in Israeli jails and prison camps, including 250 prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment; also, withdrawal of Israeli forces to an agreed-upon line; and the entry and distribution without interference of relief and rehabilitation supplies through the United Nations and other international bodies. The release of hostages, detainees and prisoners was carried out, but Israel refused to free several Palestinian leaders, and over 9,000 Palestinians are still being held as hostages in Israeli jails and camps. The “yellow line” to which Israeli troops pulled back still leaves them in control of 53% of Gaza. And while aid has begun to flow, from October 10 to 31 Israel let in on average only 152 trucks a day, barely a quarter of the agreed minimum of 600+.

In short, Gaza is still “the largest open-air prison in the world,” but its over 2 million people are now crammed into half the space they occupied before. Moreover, more than three-quarters of those residents are living in tents, makeshift shelters and overcrowded public buildings used as emergency refuges. Over 80% of all buildings in the Gaza Strip have been badly damaged or destroyed, including 89% of all schools and 92% of all housing units. Vast areas in the north and south have been completely leveled, with no structures left standing. This is the most massive destruction anywhere on the planet since World War II. And as we have previously reported, over 100,000 people have been killed in this slaughter. This is the barbaric toll of what is in fact a *U.S./Israel genocide* in Gaza, a war of annihilation against the Palestinian people.¹

That genocide has not stopped. At most, in response to the massive international outcry – particularly the powerful mass strikes for Gaza and millions-strong protests that shut down Italian ports, railroads and highways on September 22 and October 3 – the “ceasefire” paused some of its most notorious aspects, such as Israel’s daily bombing



Ceasefire? Israeli airstrike in Gaza on October 19 days after the truce was announced, killing at least 45 people. A week later the Zionist military unleashed bombs across the territory, killing 104, two-thirds of them women and children, and then cynically saying it was “renewing” the ceasefire.

of apartment buildings and total blockade of food and supplies for months at a time.² But already Israeli authorities have closed the Rafah border crossing, sharply cut back the amount of aid permitted to enter Gaza and are restricting suppliers. Then on October 19, Israeli airstrikes killed at least 45 people, and on October 28, Israeli forces killed at least 104, 66 of them women and children, after which spokesmen for the Zionist military cynically announced they were “renewing” the ceasefire.

The truce is only the first step in Trump’s 20-point plan for a “Comprehensive End of Gaza War.” Under the proposal unveiled on September 29, the next stage would be forming a “technocratic, apolitical Palestinian committee” of “qualified Palestinian and international experts” to govern the Strip under the supervision of an international “Board of Peace” headed by Donald Trump and including former British prime minister Tony Blair. An “International Stabilization Force” would be created by the U.S. working with “Arab and international partners” that would secure borders with Israel and Egypt and would train “vetted Palestinian police forces” in Gaza with the aid of Jordan and Egypt. All tunnels and weapons production facilities would be destroyed and weapons “decommissioned” (made unusable).

What of this elaborate plan (and the fabled “Trump economic development plan”) for a “New Gaza” would ever be carried out is open to question. Israel’s ultra-Zionist government led by Benjamin Netanyahu depends on the votes of outright fascist parties which are determined to annex Gaza and the West Bank and would not agree to any Palestinian governing body. Hamas, on the

² From March to May 2025, Israel closed all crossings into Gaza for over two months, and even after May 19 when it started letting some supplies in it continued to blockade northern Gaza, leading to the declaration of famine there in August 2025.

2025, almost three times as many as killed by gangs. So the U.S. is asking for a blank check to give Trump’s plan the imprimatur of international law (itself a fiction) to act as *border guards for Israel* with a *license to carry out massacres*. This is a formula for *colonial rule*, with Trump as overlord and his toady Tony Blair as governor general of Gaza.

Palestinians already had the bitter experience of such an international “mandate,” under the League of Nations, which led to the *Nakba* (catastrophe) in 1948 when Israel seized most of Palestine, then grabbed the rest in the 1967 war. Defenders of the Palestinians and opponents of imperialism should *oppose any U.N. resolution mandating the Trump plan* and *oppose any international force* imposing a vassal Gaza “government.” Class-conscious workers should *step up the fight for workers action to stop all military goods to Israel*. The mythical “two-state solution” was always a formula for Israeli domination and is by now impossible: there already is one state between the (Jordan) River and the (Mediterranean) Sea. In opposition to the inherently antidemocratic Zionist state of Israel, the League for the Fourth International calls (and has called throughout) to *defend Gaza* and *defeat the U.S./Israel genocidal war*, and stand for an *Arab/Hebrew Palestinian workers state* in a *socialist federation of the Middle East*.

The Zionist/Imperialist War on the Palestinian People Goes On

In the joint press conference announcing the Trump “peace plan,” Netanyahu declared that it “achieves our war aims,” including the “dismantling of Hamas’s military infrastructure.” False. Under orders from the prime minister, the IDF (Israeli army) was engaged in an operation to obliterate Gaza City and force out the entire population of 800,000. Yet on October 10, the hundreds of thousands walking to the south turned around, and half a million returned to live in the rubble. As for the Hamas military infrastructure, hardline



Palestinians in southern Gaza desperate to get relief supplies, on October 12, two days after ceasefire began.

¹ See “Gaza Genocide Made in USA,” *The Internationalist* No. 73, June-August 2024.

IDF general (retired) Giora Eiland, an architect of the Zionist genocide campaign to make Gaza unliveable, told NBC News (20 October) that Hamas still has up to 25,000 fighters, and that 70-80% of its vast tunnel network is intact, with much of its exact location unknown to the Israeli military.

Disarming Hamas – or more broadly the armed resistance groups³ – and inducing fighters to go into exile with promises of “safe passage” is a non-starter. To begin with, they and many others recall what happened after the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) evacuated from Lebanon after Israel’s 1982 siege of Beirut: thousands of Palestinians and Lebanese Shiite Muslims were murdered in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps by a fascistic Lebanese militia in a massacre engineered by Israel. Hamas may make a show of giving up some heavier weapons which are of little use to it now, but no fighter would be without their AK, if only for self-protection. The only purpose of the demand for disarmament of Gaza resistance fighters is as a pretext to resume full-scale war (which also wouldn’t disarm them).

While Trump is posturing as a man of peace, and desperately wants to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize,⁴ one of his immediate aims was to defend the Zionist state from being an international pariah. “Bibi [Netanyahu’s nickname] took it very far and Israel lost a lot of support in the world. Now I am gonna get all that support back,” Trump said in an interview (*Axios*, 4 October). Trump basically told Netanyahu to declare victory and move on, which the Israeli prime minister did. Not without some squirming, as when the U.S. president handed the mass-murdering Israeli leader a White House phone and had him read a scripted apology to the Qatari prime minister for having attempted to assassinate the Hamas negotiators in an Israeli airstrike on

³ In addition to Hamas’ military arm, the Al-Qassam Brigades, which is by far the largest, there are also the Al-Quds Brigades (Islamic Jihad), the Al-Nasser Brigades (Popular Mobilization Committees), the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades (a split-off from the PLO) and the Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine)

⁴ The prize was named after Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite and owner of the Swedish iron and steel manufacturer Bofors before his death in 1894, who made the company into a major weapons exporter. A premature announcement of Nobel’s death in a French paper referred to him as the original “merchant of death.”

Qatar, site of a major U.S. air base.

But Israel will never be able to wash off the stigma of carrying out a Nazi-like genocide in Gaza. It is the ultimate logic of Zionism, to “cleanse” the “promised” Land of Israel of its Palestinian inhabitants to erect a Jewish supremacist state. From 1948 to today is a straight line. The Israeli attackers of Gaza indiscriminately terror-bombed apartment buildings in 2014 and 2021, only this time it was on a vast scale, with AI-assisted targeting. At the onset of the present war, the head of the Israeli military’s COGAT (Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories), told the people of Gaza, “This is your *Nakba*.” And even after the “ceasefire,” Israel’s severe restriction of food aid shows that the Zionist rulers haven’t abandoned their policy of deliberate mass starvation.

Even when the industrial-scale slaughter was paused with the Trump “ceasefire,” the Zionist genocidal attitude comes through. Israeli propagandists complain of eight bodies of hostages that have not yet been returned which are likely buried under the rubble from Israeli bombing, as are thousands of Palestinians. Meanwhile, out of 150 bodies of Palestinians returned by Israel, 135 were mutilated (*Guardian*, 20 October). Many bore signs of torture, several had hands tied behind their backs, and a number were killed by “direct gunfire at point-blank range.” The bodies all came from the military base Sde Teiman in the Negev desert. But when videos of Israeli soldiers at that notorious torture center abusing a Palestinian were leaked by the top IDF law officer, Maj. Gen. Yifat Tomer-Yerushalmi, she was arrested while the torturers are free.

Then on October 22, during the visit to Israel by U.S. vice president JD Vance, the Knesset (parliament) passed by 71 to 13 (with both the right-wing government majority and much of the opposition in favor) a resolution proclaiming Israeli sovereignty over the West Bank and claiming a “legal right to all of the territories of the Land of Israel” – i.e., including Gaza as well. Trump said in an interview that the West Bank annexation “won’t happen” because he wouldn’t permit it. But he has never renounced his plan from earlier this year, under which “the U.S. will take over the Gaza Strip.... We’ll own it” and turn it into “the Riviera of the Middle East,” while pushing out the entire Palestinian population. As recently as May, the Trump administration was working on a plan to settle 1 million Gaza Palestinians in



Suzanne Plunkett / Reuters

Tony Blair, Donald Trump’s would-be viceroy for colonial rule of Gaza, shown here at October 13 “peace summit” in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt. Former British prime minister Blair played a key role in pushing lying war propaganda leading to the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

Libya (NBC News, 16 May).

Fight Illusions in the Phony Trump “Peace Plan”

The heroic endurance of the people of Gaza has at least temporarily stymied many of those plans. While Israeli leaders call Palestinians “human animals” (war minister Yoav Gallant at the outset of the war) and the like, the steadfastness of the Gaza population while being forced to trek from one end of the enclave to the other and then back again has been legendary. The Zionist militarists’ effort to terrorize Palestinians into abject submission failed. Even on the brink of starvation the population did not turn against resistance fighters. For Trump, Gaza is a “site” and Israel’s 2005 pullout was “one of the worst real estate deals ever made,” giving up prime “oceanfront property.” But while totally penned in, Gazans would not be stampeded into flight – enduring unbelievable suffering, they would not have another *Nakba*. They were staying put.

The Trump administration asserts that at a secret meeting, with Qatari officials acting as intermediaries, Hamas negotiators indicated to Witkoff and Kushner their agreement to disarm. Trump said that “If they don’t disarm, we will disarm them ... quickly and perhaps violently.” He did not explain how he would accomplish that when Israel didn’t come close over two years, even with hundreds of thousands of soldiers on the ground and devastating bombing. In any case, Hamas fighters reappeared at the handover of the hostages, and within a day 7,000 were deployed, directing traffic and overpowering militias that collaborated with and were armed by Israel (a fact confirmed by IDF commanders). Those militias, which are aligned with the Islamic State, were notorious for stealing relief aid from U.N.-organized convoys.

So contrary to Netanyahu’s declared war aim to “completely defeat” and “finish” Hamas (which even top IDF officers say is impossible), the Gaza armed resistance is still there and not going away. To give up the tunnels would be suicidal. Hamas agreed last March to play no role in civil government (who would want to administer this total devastation?), so this ceasefire could have been settled months ago – except that Trump gave the Israeli prime minister the green light to go ahead with his latest offensive. In fact, it could have been negotiated two years ago and 100,000+ lives saved had Israel agreed to the insurgents’ demand to free the thousands of Palestinian prisoners being held hostage in Israeli jails, many for decades. But the rabid Zionists were hell-bent on exacting revenge on the population of Gaza, and Democratic U.S. president “Genocide Joe” Biden backed them to the hilt, supplying the means to carry

out the genocide.

While Netanyahu tries to portray the ceasefire as an Israeli victory, which neither his fascist ministers nor the liberal Zionist opposition agree with, the Hamas leadership greeted the truce as a significant achievement. An October 9 statement portrayed it as “an agreement to end the war on Gaza, withdraw the occupation, allow humanitarian aid, and exchange prisoners,” which is quite an overstatement. It added,

“we value the efforts of U.S. President Donald Trump aimed at definitively stopping the war.” The next day Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem declared, “This ceasefire is a milestone in the struggle of our people.” The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) called it “the possible option under the current circumstances,” based on “clear American guarantees that prevent procrastination.” Don’t count on that.

Echoing this, many in the Palestinian solidarity movement have hailed the ceasefire as a victory. This has, after all, been the main demand of protests around the world for the last two years. In the U.S., the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL), which works closely with the Palestinian Youth Movement (PYM), put out an October 9 statement saluting the celebration of “the end of the war” in the streets of Gaza. Certainly, a halt to the Israeli bombing and ground attacks is positive, even if it is temporary. But, Donald Trump’s boasting to the contrary, the ceasefire does not represent an end to the war on Gaza, nor is it necessarily a “step toward peace.” The war of annihilation against the Palestinian people goes on, and the struggle to defeat that Zionist and imperialist war must step up, most crucially through internationalist class struggle by workers both in the region and internationally.

The PSL writes that “global public opinion has shifted irreversibly to the side of the Palestinian people,” and that “the ceasefire was won by the resilience of the Palestinian people and the global movement for Palestine, which forced a historic turning point in public opinion in support of the Palestinian cause.” It adds that in “the coming months and years, there will be an ever-stronger movement” to demand that the U.S. end all support for Israel. It is certainly true that the reality of the Zionist genocide, which millions around the world watched in horror in real time, has left an indelible imprint on the consciousness of an entire generation, which nothing that Israel and its imperialist backers do can erase. The Zionists definitely lost the battle of public opinion, but that does not determine the course of the war.

The very fact that Hamas and the other armed Palestinian groups have not been wiped out despite the horrendous death and destruction means that Israel did not win the war. Guerrilla groups seldom win wars against powerful regular armies. None of the groups in Gaza ever thought this round of fighting could bring down the Israeli behemoth. Hamas’ “Operation Al Aqsa Flood” aimed at stopping the slide toward an accommodation between Israel and Arab states (such as the 2020 “Abraham Accords” with Bahrain, the

continued on page 9



Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu did as he was told, reading scripted statement on phone handed to him by Donald Trump, apologizing to Qatar leader for attempting bomb assassination of Hamas negotiators on his territory.

White House

Vote No on Ballot Questions 2, 3, and 4

Zohran Mamdani and the NYC Housing Crisis

Not Democrats or Republicans – For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

OCTOBER 31 – On the eve of the New York City mayoral election, Democratic Party candidate Zohran Mamdani has maintained and even widened his double-digit lead over former governor Andrew Cuomo and Republican Curtis Sliwa. The race between Mamdani, a member of Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), the widely despised Cuomo and the vigilante/talk-show jockey Sliwa has gotten huge national attention, particularly as President Donald Trump has threatened to take reprisals if the “communist” is elected mayor of the center of world finance capital. The frothing hostility from Trump has no doubt won Mamdani votes, but the Democratic candidate is no communist, or even a socialist, but a liberal capitalist politician.

That hasn’t stopped the sky-is-falling doomsayers in the bourgeois political establishment, both Republican and Democrat, from pulling all the levers in a frantic “Stop Mamdani” drive. During the October 22 candidates debate, Cuomo’s campaign posted an AI-generated “Criminals for Zohran Mamdani” ad, then took it down while the subliminal message remains. The ex-governor has also spewed vile Islamophobic attacks on Mamdani, a Muslim, and tried to smear him as antisemitic for saying Israel’s



Democratic mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani speaks with NYC business leaders at event of the Partnership for New York City, July 15.

war on Gaza is genocide. Over \$26 million was raised from billionaires by political action committees, which spent some \$40 million in the “anyone but Mamdani” drive (compared to the Mamdani campaign’s total expenditure of \$9.8 million.)

While the mayoral race heads to the finish line, detentions of immigrants and provo-

cations by ICE and Border Patrol storm troopers continue to escalate in NYC. If Mamdani wins, Trump threatened, the city will have “big problems,” and not just a cutoff of federal funds. But while the president has declared “war” on “sanctuary cities,” asked in a *New York Times* (15 October) questionnaire about how candidates would handle Trump,

Mamdani said he would be “happy to work with him” on issues like “cheaper groceries”! Hello?! If Trump floods NYC with federal agents and sends in troops, **workers and students should shut the city down!**

Today, the fight to unchain labor’s power from the Democratic Party is more urgent than ever.

As a competent political operator, Mamdani has systematically tried to “reach out” and win support from older Jewish voters (his support base already includes many younger Jews), courted African Americans who earlier backed ex-cop mayor Eric Adams, announced he is keeping Jessica Tisch (of the multi-billionaire Tisch family) as NYC police commissioner, etc. And after saying in June that “we shouldn’t have billionaires,” the DSA Democrat has spent the last four months making nice with Wall-Street, including a sit-down with fellow Democrat Michael Bloomberg (net worth \$110 billion), who spent \$8.3 million trying to stop Mamdani in the primary, but then stopped. In fact, after Mamdani’s upset victory in June, the smart money stopped donating to stop him, leaving that to the “dumb money.”

Earlier stages of this were analyzed in our article “NYC Mayoral Primary: No Vote *continued on page 15*

For a Workers Party to Fight for a Workers Government

NYC Mayoral Primary: No Vote for Democrats, Or for Any Capitalist Parties or Politicians!

Cuomo, Mamdani and the Rest: All Would Do the Dirty Work for Capital

JUNE 23 – The impending Democratic Party primary election for New York City mayor, City Council and other citywide offices has awakened a great deal of interest, pitting conservative (and widely despised) former New York governor Andrew Cuomo against Queens assemblyman Zohran Mamdani, a member of the Democratic (Party) Socialists of America (DSA), as well as a number of other liberals. As the campaign comes down to the wire, big-business forces are running nonstop television spots including a million-dollar ad blaring that “New York Can’t Afford It” (referring to the liberal lash-up of Mamdani, Brad Lander and Scott Stringer), while the DSA candidate boasts of an army of 29,000 volunteers going door-to-door right up to Election Day.

The Democratic primary contest comes amid the offensive by the Republican administration of Donald Trump against Democratic-governed cities, with a bulls-eye on New York. This will soon come to a head with a showdown over Trump’s mobilization of federal police agencies to carry out his threatened largest-ever mass deportations of immigrants. That is directly tied to the collaboration of current NYC mayor Eric Adams with the new regime in Washington. As Adams was on trial on multiple corruption charges, he appealed to

president-elect Trump to come to his rescue. The Justice Department then dropped charges so that Adams could “devote full attention and resources to the illegal immigration” focus of Trump’s agenda. A classic *quid pro quo*.

Adams, a former New York Police Department cop, was elected in 2021 in a backlash vote against the massive protests that swept New York City and much of the country in the summer of 2020 touched off by the racist police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. The cop mayor narrowly won the Democratic primary with the complicated “ranked choice” voting system, and was frequently at odds with New York City liberals. This and his flamboyant “swagger,” and being on the take from just about every lobby, led his approval ratings to plummet to a lowest-ever 20% in opinion polls, so that by March 2025 there was a mass outcry for “anybody but Adams.” He thereupon resigned from the Democratic Party, leading to the present free-for-all.

The primary has come down to a heated two-man race, with conservatives and “moderates” lining up for Cuomo while left-liberals and many radical-minded youth are going for Mamdani. But the bottom line is that both of them – and all the rest – are candidates of the **capitalist** Democratic Party of racist police



New York City Democratic Party primary candidates Queens state assemblyman Zohran Mamdani and former governor Andrew Cuomo.

brutality “at home” and genocidal imperialist war abroad. As such, however “progressive” (or not) their agenda may be, once in office they will govern on behalf of Wall Street. The police, as the armed fist of capital, will continue to crack protesters’ heads, landlords will continue to gouge cash-strapped tenants,



Yuki Iwanura / AP

while workers – 45% of the NYC labor force was born in another country – will face ruinous immigration raids and deportations.

The historic curse on struggles by the working and oppressed people in the United States is that they have been hobbled and *continued on page 13*

Bring Out Workers' Power to Stop Mass Deportations and Police-State Occupation Labor Must Act: Drive ICE Out of L.A.!

JUNE 13 – Pounding on doors in pre-dawn raids. Masked police looking like terrorists grabbing people on the street. Unmarked vans hauling them off to be sent to concentration camps. People arrested when they show up in court for routine hearings. High school students seized and held incommunicado as parents are unable to locate them. Sound like Chile or Argentina under military dictatorships in the 1970s? *This is what a police state looks like – and immigrants across the United States are living in it right now.*

This is where the crisis of capitalism has brought us.

Since Donald Trump began his second term on January 20, pressure has been mounting on immigrant communities across the country. On June 6, the pressure cooker exploded in Los Angeles. The start of militarized workplace raids by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) police predictably set off angry protests. The next day Trump federalized and deployed 2,000 National Guard troops, inciting more protests. Two days later, some 700 Marines and 2,000 more Guardsmen were activated. Make no mistake, this was a long-planned provocation.

As the rabid immigrant-bashing president revs up federal forces to carry out his campaign threat to unleash the biggest mass deportations in U.S. history, he has focused on high-profile, made-for-TV actions to spread terror among millions of immigrants. At the same time, as he rules by decree in a drive toward a beefed-up “strong state” regime, he is seeking to get the population used to seeing the military repressing civilian protesters in U.S. streets, in blatant violation of U.S. laws. *Trump’s war on immigrants is an assault on the democratic rights of all.*

The ongoing protests in Los Angeles against *la migra*, the hated immigration police, will not stop so long as the raids and deportations continue, ripping up the fabric of society in the region. In fact, the fascistic White House deputy chief of staff Stephen Miller vows to escalate them, setting a national quota of 3,000 immigrant arrests a day. But spontaneous protests alone will not stop the deportation machine and the paramilitary repression now being showcased in L.A. And this is a foretaste of what the Trump regime intends for the entire country.¹

The arrest of David Huerta, president of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) California, as he protested the workplace raids was a warning to all of labor. Against Trump’s provocative display of force, it is urgent to ***mobilize the power of the working class***. Organized labor in Los Angeles, throughout California, up and



Federal agents (Customs and Border Protection and Border Patrol) fire gas and “less-lethal” rounds at protesters during immigration raid outside Home Depot in Paramount, California in Los Angeles County, June 7.

down the West Coast and nationwide must act, ***now***. There should be ***walkouts, work stoppages and strike action along with mass mobilization in the streets*** against military occupation. ***Flood the streets, with unions in the lead, to stop deportations!***

Above all, the escalating repression must be fought *politically*, against *both parties that do the dirty work for capital*. California Democratic governor Gavin Newsom postures as standing up to Republican Trump. But Democrats are up to their necks in the militarized crackdown. Some 1,000 people have been arrested since June 6 by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). Democratic mayor Karen Bass is using clouds of gas, hard munitions and mounted police cosacks to show that city and state authorities have the situation “under control.”

Democratic Party parades like the “No Kings” rallies across the U.S. on June 14, “Flag Day” – when Trump has ordered a Nazi-style *Aufmarsch* (show of military force) complete with tanks in Washington, D.C. to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Army and his birthday – won’t stop this would-be strongman. Built by liberal outfits like 50501.org, Moveon.org and Mobilize.us, these flag-waving events aim to corral protest into the *Democratic Party that paved the way for Trump, again*, with its policies of genocidal war in Gaza, mass repression² and deporta-

tions.³ And now many Democrats are backing Israel’s barbarous assassinations and missile strikes as opening shots in a war against Iran.

“Set Them Free, Let Them Stay, ICE Out of L.A.!”

What set off the showdown in Los Angeles over mass deportations was a pair of workplace raids by ICE agents in combat fatigues on Friday, June 6. First they arrested day laborers waiting for jobs at a Home Depot in Westlake, then moving on to a wholesaler, Ambiance, in the downtown L.A. garment district. ICE said it rounded up 44 undocumented immigrants, while Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) agents and the LAPD arrested union president Huerta as he and others sat down as an ICE van tried to leave an operations center for this military op.

Later that evening, hundreds of protesters outside the Federal Building were pepper-sprayed. Altogether more than 100 were arrested. The next day, Saturday, June 7, as ICE and Border Patrol agents prepared to carry out another Home Depot raid in Paramount south of downtown L.A., outraged protesters surrounded them. The L.A. County Sheriff’s Department fired tear gas into crowds. That afternoon, President Trump issued his memo federalizing 2,000 troops of the California National Guard, normally under state control, without consulting Governor Newsom.

³ Barack Obama expelled 5.3 million people from the U.S. in his two terms, while building up the ICE deportation machine, and Joe Biden “removed” 4.6 million immigrants in one term, both far more than Trump deported.

Significantly, rather than invoking the Insurrection Act, as he has threatened to do, Trump issued a detailed order under 10 U.S. Code § 12406 allowing the president to take over state forces when he is “unable with the regular forces to execute the laws of the United States.” Under the terms of the memo he could do the same “where protests against these functions are occurring or are likely to occur based on current threat assessments and planned operations.” So the L.A. scenario is pre-authorized to be repeated anywhere there are protests over deportations.

On Sunday, June 8, crowds of hundreds gathered outside the Metropolitan Detention Center. The White House and right-wing media made much of click-bait videos supposedly showing unruly mobs. OMG, a photo showed protesters kicking a Border Patrol vehicle. What they didn’t show is the clouds of tear gas, pepper balls and other munitions fired into the crowds by police and federal agents, including 40 mm hard plastic rounds, beanbag rounds and flash-bang grenades. Another shocker, some Waymo taxis caught fire. Those driverless cars shouldn’t even be allowed on the streets.

Another theme pushed by the xenophobic president and his backers was that demonstrators carried “foreign flags.” Yes, Mexican Americans carried the Mexican flag as a population under siege standing up to their repressors. And by the way, most of the demonstrators are not immigrants, many of whom are understandably afraid to protest, but instead are their children, friends, neighbors and other defenders of democratic rights. Right-wingers, and many Democrats, said the same of demonstrators carrying the Palestinian flag as they protested the U.S./Israel genocide in Gaza.

As Democratic politicians cower, repeatedly contrasting “peaceful protesters” to those who offend the sensibilities of the immigrant-hating reactionaries, demonstrations of solidarity with L.A. protesters have spread to dozens of cities. This has led to talk of a repeat of the mass marches in the summer of 2020 against the racist cop murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. But those huge outpourings of outrage by millions did not end, or even diminish, the rampant police killings of civilians which are endemic to the racist capitalist system in the U.S.

The protests in Los Angeles reflect the 100% justified fury of those under the gun of police-state repression in Trump’s America. As top federal officials, from the sociopath “border czar” Tom Homan to the psychopathic cruelty freak Kristi Noem at the helm of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), issued blood-curdling threats, those targeted want to fight back. But to defeat the militarized onslaught, and to stop the mass deportations, requires bringing to bear a power greater than that of the gang controlling the White House and both Houses of Congress.

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Break with Democrats and Republicans: Imperialist Parties of Mass Deportations and Genocidal War – Build a Class Struggle Workers Party



Internationalist Group at May Day 2025 march in Los Angeles, calling for international workers action against the U.S./Israel genocidal war on Gaza.

Gaza...

continued from page 6

United Arab Emirates and Morocco) and the inexorable expansion of settlements of fascist Zionist settlers on the West Bank. The war in Gaza did put the Palestine question in the center of world attention, but the settlements continue to grow and the ceasefire may *increase* Arab states' cooperation with Israel.

The fact is that neither the Zionist Israeli military machine nor the Gaza armed resistance forces groups won, and neither definitively lost: amid exhaustion on both sides, the war on the Palestinian people goes on to the next round. The coming battle may be fought out increasingly on the global scale. Calls for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) have failed to budge Israel one centimeter, precisely because they are ultimately an appeal to the imperialists, for whom the Zionist state is a pillar of their domination of the Middle East. On the other hand, the campaign for *workers action to stop delivery of military material to (and from) Israel*, which the League for the Fourth International has called for from the outset, has escalated in the last several months, and has sent shivers down the spines of the Zionist militarists.⁵

Only Proletarian Revolutionary Struggle Can Bring Peace to the Middle East

In the imperialist countries, the rulers have sought to smear any support to the Palestinians and opposition to the Zionist slaughter as “antisemitism,” weaponizing this slander with vicious repression. The real antisemites, fascists and white supremacists who would destroy the Jewish people support Israel, while tens of thousands of Jews in the U.S., and more elsewhere, have protested in in solidarity with Palestinians. The stunning breakout on 7 October 2023 by fighters overwhelmed the military apparatus and 30-foot-high wall that have kept over 2 million Gazans locked in for over half a century, stirred supporters of the Palestinian cause worldwide. Yet this was undercut by the indefensible indiscriminate attacks on the population of nearby areas

⁵ See our articles, “Mass Strike for Gaza Brings Italy to a Halt – For International Strike Action to Stop U.S. / Israel Genocide” (24 September) and “European Port Workers Call for Strike Action to Stop Arms” (8 October).

that killed 815 civilians.⁶ This was used by the Zionist butchers as the pretext to murder over 100,000 Palestinians and destroy Gaza.

The establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 was a historic crime, the result of the monstrous historic crime of the Nazi genocide that annihilated 6 million European Jews in World War II, and of the large-scale refusal of the “democratic” imperialist countries to accept Jewish refugees and Holocaust survivors. Even after the mass expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in the 1948 Nakba, today the state of Israel is inhabited by 7.2 million Hebrew-speakers and rules over 7.7 million Arabs (both Muslim and Christian), 2 million as second-class citizens and the rest with no rights at all. There are two nations, Hebrew (including both religious Jews and a secular near-majority)⁷ and Palestinian Arab – the first the oppressor, the second the oppressed – living intermixed⁸ on the same sliver of land on the eastern Mediterranean shore.

As Israel is vastly stronger economically and militarily, any “two-state solution” under capitalism will inevitably be one of Israeli domination over a Palestinian pseudo-state. From the standpoint of proletarian internationalism, and of the survival of both peoples, the only equitable solution is a binational state, which will only be realized by an Arab/Hebrew workers revolution. That requires that sizable numbers of Hebrew speakers break with Zionism. When Netanyahu spoke in September of Israel becoming a “super-Sparta,” referring to the militaristic state of ancient Greece, many Israelis piped up that they didn’t want to live in a garrison state forever. But that is the future they face, and while a tiny country of 7 million Hebrew speakers may be militarily dominant today, in the long run it cannot

⁶ See “Gaza Genocide Made in USA,” *The Internationalist* No. 73, June-August 2024.

⁷ The designation of all Hebrew speakers as “Jewish” reflects the Zionist claim that Israel is a “Jewish nation-state.” But Jewish people around the world do not constitute a nation, while in Israel about 45% of Hebrew speakers classify themselves as *hilonim* (secular or non-observant), around 25% as *masortim* (traditional Jews, who observe some religious practices), 17% as *datim* (religious Zionists) and 14% as *haredim* (ultra-orthodox).

⁸ According to demographic estimates, in Israel proper, where Palestinian Arabs constitute 20% of the population, around three-quarters of Hebrew speakers live within 20 kilometers of an Arab community, and in many cities they are within walking distance of each other, while on the West Bank nearly all settlers live in close proximity to Arab communities.

dominate a region of over 300 million Arabs.

As proletarian internationalists, the LFI stands firmly on the side of those fighting against the U.S./Israel genocidal war on Gaza, stating from the outset that, “Any real blow against the Zionist state by Palestinian forces, even by reactionary Islamists, is in the interests of the workers and oppressed of the world.”⁹ At the same time, we politically oppose those seeking to impose Islamic rule, as well as bourgeois nationalists and the various monarchist and militarist regimes of the region. The Zionists and imperialists, in contrast, often use reactionary Islamist forces to combat leftists and secular nationalists. Thus since 2018, Israel (which spawned Hamas to counter the PLO)¹⁰ and the U.S. approved \$30 million monthly payments to Gaza from Qatar,¹¹ which has long-standing relations with the Muslim Brotherhood, of which Hamas is an offshoot.

Should Trump’s fantasy of a Gaza ruled by a puppet committee under his thumb begin to take form, with the wretched Tony Blair as his viceroy and policed by an international mercenary force, defenders of Palestinian rights must support struggles against this colonial monstrosity engendered by the October 2025 ceasefire. The Internationalist Group in the U.S. along with the other national sections of the LFI never called for a ceasefire, precisely because, as we explained, this would leave Israeli troops in Gaza and the Palestinian people under occupation. We call instead to *mobilize the power of the working class* worldwide to *drive the Zionist occupiers out of Gaza and the West Bank*, and to *defeat the U.S./Israel genocide in Gaza* and the *imperialist/Zionist war on the Palestinian people*.

The likelihood is that Gaza will return to something akin to the situation before October 2023 with periodic deadly Israel airstrikes and ground incursions, only under far worse conditions, with the vast majority of the population living in ruins. The chances that someone comes up with the \$70 billion (UN/European Union/World Bank estimate) or much more that it will take to rebuild the enclave are not great, and in any case it would take years. Nor will there be peace in the region. For the Zionist militarists, a ceasefire in Gaza could be the trigger for a new attack on Iran, which both the IDF and Pentagon are preparing. And globally, a major reason the Trump administration (as well as the Biden administration before it) wants to end full-scale war in Gaza is in order to concentrate on building up U.S. forces for imperialist war for counterrevolution in China and dismembering Russia – in other words, a thermonuclear World War III.

Today, with everyone from the Israeli Hostage Forum to Benjamin Netanyahu to Hamas looking to Donald Trump to conjure up a new era, or just to provide a stepping stone to an imaginary permanent settlement in the Middle East, it is necessary to combat illusions in the ceasefire and phony “peace” plan imposed by U.S. imperialism. Israel, having faced severe shortages of the 2,000-lb. bombs it used to destroy just about every home in Gaza, will rebuild its stocks. The German government is preparing to resume war cargo shipments to Israel (which never really stopped). The

⁹ See “Defend the Palestinians Against U.S./Israel Genocidal War on Gaza!” *The Internationalist* No. 71, June-October 2023.

¹⁰ See “The Origins of Hamas,” *The Internationalist* No. 71.

¹¹ See “What Is the Hamas Chief Doing in Qatar?” *Spiegel International*, 2 November 2023.

League for the Fourth International calls to intensify efforts for transport workers (air and sea) to “*hot-cargo*” (*refuse to handle*) *military goods of all sorts to Israel*, and to *shut down Israeli exports of weaponry and police surveillance technology*.

To achieve a just peace in historic Palestine, the war criminals responsible for the genocide must be brought to justice administered by a workers state resulting from joint Arab/Hebrew socialist revolution. The presence of interpenetrated peoples, both oppressors and oppressed, is not unique to Palestine but is also the case in neighboring Lebanon, Syria, Turkey and elsewhere in the Middle East. Breaking with the dead-end of nationalism, in order to lead a common struggle by the workers of the myriad peoples of the region against national oppression and capitalist exploitation, it is necessary to mobilize the proletarian powerhouses of Egypt, Turkey and Iran. To do so requires above all building genuine communist parties on the internationalist program of Lenin and Trotsky.

In their heroic refusal to bow down to oppression and even outright genocide, the Palestinian people of Gaza have inspired millions of workers and youth around the world – and together we will win. ■

Hunter...

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The resolution calls to mobilize the power of labor independently of the Democratic and Republican parties, and ends defiantly: “We will not let them take our students.” Domino, a Hunter student from the Internationalist Club, recalled how Democratic president Barack Obama set the record for the most deportations of any U.S. president at the same time as racist cop murder continued unabated, and how Democrat Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez pushed the illusory slogan to “defund ICE,” and then voted to fund ICE on her first day in office.

A high point in the speak-out was when brother Chris Silvera of Teamsters Local 808 said, “We have to build our own workers party.” The crowd responded enthusiastically, chanting “Not Democrats or Republicans – Build a workers party!” Hunter PSC member Sándor John, a supporter of the CSEW, stressed that “if they send the National Guard to this city, workers and students need to shut the city down.” “We have the power to do that,” he continued, but the power of the working class is chained to the capitalist system through the Democratic Party, and the labor bureaucracy is a key link in that chain. “That’s why we’re fighting for a class-struggle leadership of the labor movement to unchain the power of the working class.”

That chain of the Democratic Party and the capitalist politicians keeps getting made and remade, from generation to generation, John noted, asking the protesters, “Are you going to help remake that chain, or are you going to help break that chain?” “Why is Gaza devastated by this genocidal war?” he asked. Because U.S. bombs were provided by “Genocide Joe” Biden, the Democratic president that Bernie Sanders and AOC campaigned for. Democrats and Republicans are “two heads of the capitalist beast” of repression, imperialism and war, he said, and “to put an end to that we need to overthrow that system. We need a socialist revolution. There is no reform way out.” The event concluded with the chant, “ICE out of our schools, ICE out of New York!” ■

Chicago...

continued from page 1

Blitz.”¹ When the rest were finally released, they returned to vandalized homes, with many of their personal belongings stolen or destroyed.

The feds have marketed their anti-immigrant blitz in Chicago as a twisted entertainment ploy. Trump kicked it off with his September 6 “Chipocalypse Now” post on Truth Social, a takeoff on the Vietnam War movie *Apocalypse Now*, with an AI-generated meme portraying himself as madman lieutenant colonel Larry Kilgore. Where the movie character declared “I love the smell of napalm in the morning” – referring to the deadly chemical the U.S. used to slaughter untold numbers of Vietnamese villagers – Trump declares “I love the smell of deportations in the morning.” He added, “Chicago is about to find out why it’s called the Department of WAR.” The video of the September 30 raid posted on the X channel of Kristi Noem, the psychopathic cruelty freak who heads the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), revels in scenes of federal agents terrorizing and humiliating Latino immigrants at gunpoint.

The made-for-social-media raid on the South Shore apartment building was a dramatic escalation of the Trump administration’s tactics in its mass deportations drive, and a foretaste of what was to come. Since “Midway Blitz” started in early September, some 3,000 immigrants have been detained in the Chicago area, the DHS announced in late October. The administration has tried to bring in 200 federalized National Guard troops from Texas, but was stymied by an injunction by a federal district judge which was upheld in a unanimous ruling by the federal appeals court. (The Guard troops are now sitting in barracks 50 miles southwest of the city.) Trump has appealed to the pliant Supreme Court, whose reactionary supermajority may greenlight his deployment. Meanwhile, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents continue to rampage through the city.

This is not simply a war on immigrants. Trump said as much. Just hours after the Chicago raid, he proclaimed a “war” against “the enemy within” in a typically meandering speech to the 800 top U.S. generals and admirals summoned to an unprecedented mandatory command conference at the Marine

¹ No information has been released by the DHS about the status of those arrested, other than that only two were reputed gang members. Meanwhile, “the apartments of dozens of U.S. citizens were also targeted,” and “at least a half-dozen Americans were zip-tied and held for hours” (WTOP News, 21 October).

Corps base in Quantico, Virginia. And who is this “war from within” directed at? Trump listed cities like San Francisco, Chicago, New York and Portland, “the ones that are run by the radical left Democrats,” saying “we should use some of these dangerous cities as training grounds for our military.” Trump also proclaimed that he had issued an executive order for a National Guard “quick reaction force” to “quell civil disturbances.” This was after his war secretary toady Pete Hegseth vowed that the U.S. military would have “no more stupid rules of engagement,” just “maximum lethality.” *Trump & Co. are gearing up to gun down protesters in the streets.*

The administration’s militarized mass deportation operation has become the spearhead of its drive to impose authoritarian *police-state rule*, which *The Internationalist* has warned of for months. Governing by decree, the criminal gang that has all three branches of the federal government in its grip is brazenly violating laws and court orders, ripping up the Bill of Rights. It is going after immigrants, leftists, liberal and even “centrist” Democratic officials, besieging the population of Democrat-run cities in a war on workers and democratic rights. But the MAGA regime is not the only enemy working people face. Don’t forget that the Democrats under Barack Obama and Joe Biden, who both paved the way for Trump, deported far more immigrants than the would-be autocrat in the White House, building up the deportation machine with its concentration camps to hold our fellow workers.

Yet as federal agents are marauding through the streets of Chicago, even more wildly than they did earlier in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., they are facing growing resistance from the bulk of the population. There have been repeated emergency demonstrations downtown against the ICE raids, on September 6, with several hundred protesters; September 27 (500), on September 30 (3,000+) and on October 8 (at least 7,000) called by a Coalition Against the Trump Agenda made up of liberal, labor, community and left groups. Beyond these “popular-front” pro-Democratic Party rallies, there have been weekly and later near-daily protests outside the ICE facility in the suburb of Broadview. And now, as federal agents are grabbing people off the streets, large crowds have been spontaneously forming yelling “fascists,” “racists” and “get out of Chicago” at the modern-day slave catchers, sometimes forcing the feds to retreat.

Unlike Democratic politicians in Congress and officials in much of the country, who have basically “rolled over and played dead,” the billionaire Democratic Illinois

governor JB Pritzker and Chicago mayor Brandon Johnson, a former Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) organizer, have been pretty feisty in verbally standing up to President Trump, who has called for them to be jailed. “Come and get me, Donald,” Pritzker shot back. On October 6, Johnson signed an executive order to prohibit ICE and other federal agencies from using city property (including parks, and school parking lots) for immigration enforcement. The order also mandated massive distribution of Know Your Rights materials and official signs saying no law enforcement official can enter premises for immigration enforcement. The city and state have also sued Trump, demanding that National Guard troops be kept out. But lawn signs and court suits will not stop the fascistic ICE Gestapo.

What’s needed to throw a wrench in the gears of the monstrous deportation machinery, to make Chicago a “no-go” area for the federal storm troopers, is **a massive mobilization of the power of the working class against the mass deportations and police-state repression.** If the National Guard is brought in, the call should go out from labor, “All Out for Feds Out!” Industry and commerce in the “city that works” should grind to a halt.

The more than 10 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S. are a vital part of the working class, along with millions more whose legal status is now threatened. Whole sectors of industry would collapse without their labor (agriculture, meatpacking, residential construction, restaurants, nursing homes, to list a few). The fundamental slogan of a fighting union movement is the old IWW slogan, “an injury to one is an injury to all!” **All of labor must defend our immigrant sisters and brothers!**

The harsh reality is that the war on immigrants and relentless push toward an authoritarian Bonapartist “strong state” embodied by Donald Trump are international in scope and rooted in the rotting capitalist system. Sizeable fascistic and outright fascist parties and movements have proliferated from Europe to the Southern Cone of South America. Racist reaction is rampant. As the imperialists and their Zionist allies carry out genocide against Palestinians in Gaza, and pursue a war drive against Russia and China careening toward a thermonuclear Third World War, the social institutions of “welfare state” capitalism (health care, education, social security programs, even postal services) are being privatized, demolished or existentially threatened. Ultimately, to put a stop to the deportations and the descent into barbarism will require nothing less than socialist revolution, led by a revolutionary workers party.



Screenshot from TikTok video

In the early morning hours of September 30, over 100 federal agents in military gear stormed an apartment building in the South Shore neighborhood of Chicago.

Repression and Resistance

On September 12 federal agents began Trump’s “war” on Chicagoans by gunning down Silverio Villegas González in the majority Latino, working-class suburb of Franklin Park. Villegas had just dropped off his 3-year-old son at a daycare center when his car was cut off by ICE agents. The DHS claimed that their victim tried to run over an agent and “seriously injured” him. But video footage shows that Villegas did not hit the agents with his car and was shot in neck from some distance behind, while the agent told local police his injury was “nothing major.” A DHS statement called Villegas, a cook from Michoacán, Mexico, “a criminal illegal alien,” yet according to U.S. law, being in the country without authorization is *not a crime* but only a civil violation. As Internationalist protesters chant, undocumented immigrants are “*Ni ilegales, ni criminales, somos obreros internacionales*” (neither illegals nor criminals, we are international workers).

The ICE murder of Silverio Villegas González sent a wave of fear through heavily Latino neighborhoods like Pilsen, Little Village, Back of the Yards and Brighton Park on Chicago’s Southwest Side. The killing also sparked mounting anger and escalating protests around the city. As federal agents prowled the streets in unmarked vehicles, Chicago residents began following them in “people’s patrols,” ready to sound the alarm to warn the population of danger. Community and activist groups, and even local businesses, distributed whistles to alert people to the presence of ICE (with a broken rhythm) or attempted detentions (with a continuous steady blast). *Chinga la migra* (fuck the immigration police) T-shirts abound, and following the September 30 South Shore raid, the city issued official signs

Truth Social



President Donald Trump portrayed himself as a kill-crazed madman in announcing war on Chicago.

The First Month of “Operation Midway Blitz”: A Partial Chronology

The First Month of “Operation Midway Blitz”: A Partial Chronology

September 4: ICE began staking out domestic violence court, detaining and abducting men and women with hearings there.

September 12: Fatal shooting of Silverado Villegas González as he tried to escape ICE agents in Franklin Park after they pulled him over in a warrantless traffic stop. According to a 1985 Supreme Court decision, police use of deadly force simply to stop a subject from fleeing is illegal, and ICE regulations prohibit it. But the DHS defended their agents’ murderous action.

September 16: DHS secretary Noem showed up in Elgin, Illinois, west of Chicago, to stage a videotaped predawn raid with an armored personnel carrier, low-flying helicopter and smoke bombs, busting into the home of a father of five who, it turned out, is a U.S. citizen, born in Texas, and was later released. (Noem didn’t mention that in her video.)

—In Chicago, Greg Bovino, the commander of the feds’ militarized deportation operation in Los Angeles this summer — who has been the subject of two court orders for racial profiling — arrived vowing to intensify Operation Midway Blitz with his rapid-fire hard-charging tactics, what he dubbed “turn and burn” in an interview with AP (4 September).

September 24: A protester outside the ICE facility in the suburb of Broadview, just west of Chicago, was hit by a truck that deliberately jumped the sidewalk to run him down.

September 28: Hundreds of armed

ICE and CBP agents in military fatigues marched through the downtown areas of Millennium Park, the Gold Coast and Magnificent Mile, harassing street vendors and grabbing immigrant families without cause. CBP commander Greg Bovino readily acknowledged that detainees were picked out from the crowds “based on how they look.”

—At Millenium Park, Noemi Chávez and Jaime Ramírez were having a Sunday outing with their two children, ages 3 and 8, who were playing in the fountain when the CBP seized them all, hauling them to the Broadview facility. Noemi and her children were shuttled to O’Hare Airport’s Terminal 5 and released there, but Jaime was flown to a Texas facility and dumped. Immigrant rights defenders continue to fight for Jaime’s release.

—In the neighborhood of Back of the Yards (named for the vast stockyards and meatpacking plants that were a hub of Chicago industry, and a stronghold of the left-led United Packinghouse Workers), members of the Southwest Rapid Response Team were detained for filming agents prowling through the Mexican American working-class area.

—At the ICE Broadview facility, CBS2 Chicago reporter Asal Rezaei, having wrapped up a news assignment, was driving away when a masked ICE agent fired pepper balls into her vehicle. Other journalists have suffered arrest, and NABET-CWA Local 54041, along with the Chicago Newspaper Guild and others, have filed lawsuits against DHS and CBP for the use of extreme force against reporters and TV crews.

September 30: Militarized raid on the apartment in South Shore (see main article). There is still no information about

what happened to the 37 people kidnapped by the feds there.

October 1: In the poor and working-class black neighborhood of East Garfield Park, a black man alleged to have fled a car accident was rammed by federal agents, pulled out of his vehicle, slammed to the ground, stomped on and put in a choke hold. When staffers from a nearby community organization, Equity and Transformation, came out of their office to video and challenge the brutality, the agents fled the scene.

—A Bronzeville homeless shelter, just blocks from the massive McCormick Place trade show complex, was raided by ICE. Agents rolled up and began chasing people, seizing at least four.

October 3: In the near Northwest Side neighborhood of Logan Square — an increasingly gentrified neighborhood that is still home to many Puerto Ricans, Mexicans and Brazilians — ICE agents targeted Rico Fresh Grocery. Just outside the parking lot, agents threw smoke grenades in the street near a school around the time parents were walking their kids home.

—DHS secretary Noem showed up at the Broadview ICE facility, with a right-wing YouTuber (Benny Johnson) along to videotape the photo op visit. A crowd of several hundred protesters were held at bay and 13 arrested by federal agents, state and local police and Cook County sheriff’s deputies standing shoulder to shoulder. After a worker foiled Noem’s stunt of trying to enter the municipal building on the pretext of using the bathrooms, she and her posse joined a raid on a Walmart in the predominantly black West Side neigh-

borhood of Austin where random shoppers were zip-tied and held for hours.

—In the Puerto Rican neighborhood of Humboldt Park, Alderwoman Jessie Fuentes, who represents the area on Chicago’s city council, was manhandled and handcuffed after she questioned ICE agents at a hospital, demanding to see a warrant for an arrested man who had broken his leg while being chased by ICE agents.

October 4: In the Brighton Park neighborhood, a young woman activist, Marimar Martinez, was shot five times in her car by CBP agents after she and others had been trailing them to warn neighbors. The feds rammed her vehicle, causing a multicar accident, then got out and shot at her. Luckily, she was able to drive herself to a nearby auto parts store, where employees applied tourniquets and compresses until an ambulance arrived. As word spread, the neighborhood poured into the street to confront CBP and ICE in a several-hour standoff on Kedzie Ave. Martinez and others who were rammed now face frame-up federal assault charges, and up to 20 years in prison.

October 6: Dariana Fajardo, a dual citizen of the U.S. and Mexico, was arrested by CBP in Waukegan, an integrated, industrial working-class town north of Chicago. Fajardo was in her car with a large Mexican flag on its hood in a line of cars near City Hall when eight CBP agents surrounded her vehicle, telling her to move her car, which would have been impossible without hitting them. When she refused, they yanked her out of her car and arrested her for supposedly impeding a federal law enforcement operation.

saying “*Migra fuera de Chicago*” (ICE out of Chicago). Soon, people started confronting federal agents on the streets.

Over at the ICE facility in Broadview, the regular Friday morning protests were routinely met with tear gas, pepper spray and rubber bullets. On social media one protester posted a screenshot of his back, covered in huge welts from rubber bullets; another was knocked to the ground and nearly run over by ICE agents, as protesters tried to stop a vehicle at the gate. A pastor was shot in the eye with a pepper ball by agents on a sniper’s perch above. Broadview is a heavily black (71% of the population) and Hispanic suburb, home to many unionized work-

ers and not at all sympathetic to ICE, which, as Mayor Katrina Thompson complained in a letter to DHS, is “making war on my community. And it has to stop.” But Thompson has shrunk the protest area in front of the facility, and used Broadview police against demonstrators.

This came to a head on October 3 as Kristi Noem showed up at the Broadview ICE facility with a right-wing videographer in tow. When the DHS secretary and her motley crew tried to enter the municipal building unannounced, hoping to ambush the mayor (who was not there), a worker refused to let the feds in. He still wouldn’t open the door when she said she just wanted to use the bathroom. Having

failed to pull off her media stunt, Noem slunk off, muttering about non-cooperation. The next day, CBP commander Bovino had ICE agents throw smoke bombs at the large crowd of protesters who were heckling them, and then personally tackled a man who was asking him, “What are you going to tell your children?” Also on October 4 (see chronology box), in Brighton Park federal agents shot five times a woman who had been trailing them. Video footage of these scenes of wanton violence by feds have further enraged Chicagoans.

In the following weeks, federal agents have roamed the city, stopping people outside homeless shelters, apartment buildings, churches, parks, sometimes doing U-turns to grab someone walking on the sidewalk to demand to see their papers — like back in the racist police state of apartheid South Africa. Amid reports of federal agents lurking around schools, the Chicago Teachers Union and community members formed ICE watch teams with orange whistles around schools and on nearby corners at drop-off and dismissal times, practicing “sidewalk solidarity.” At one school, a CTU video reported, a teacher blew her whistle when she sighted federal agents, alerting everyone. The school called students in from recess in a “soft lockdown” (outside doors locked) and a crowd formed outside. It grew to 100 despite the feds lobbing tear gas, as neighbors were alerted on rapid response chats, forming corridors to ensure safe passage for students.

As ICE and the Border Patrol expanded their operations to ethnically diverse North Side areas, residents held protests. After a tamale street vendor was arrested in Rogers Park, on October 11 some 400 neighbors

came out near the site to show solidarity (*Block Club Chicago*, 12 October). The next day in Albany Park, where many Latinos live, when federal agents were spotted confronting someone, neighbors started shouting warnings in Spanish. Soon people came out of their homes, locking arms to block the agents’ path. One woman barefoot in a bathrobe stood in front of their car. People screamed “Nazis” at them and after half an hour ran them off, despite the feds tear-gassing the neighborhood as they fled. “We chased federal agents out of Albany Park today,” one person shouted to a cheer from the dozens of residents who were out on the street,” the *Sun-Times* (12 October) reported.

Then on October 14, federal agents in a speeding SUV deliberately rammed a vehicle they were chasing on the Southeast Side. As people came out of their houses, dozens of feds in gas masks flooded the area, repeatedly throwing gas grenades at the crowd. Residents were shouting “ICE go home” during the standoff that lasted a good hour and a half. Feds also barged into a nearby Walgreens where shoppers yelled at them; a young black man was arrested as people cried out that he was a citizen. The next day at the United Workers’ Center, an activist from 10th Ward Rapid Response said that “hard-working people, landscapers, construction workers and street vendors [have been] specifically targeted.” Contrary to DHS claims that it has targeted gang members, rapists, abusers, “the worst of the worst criminals,” of 60,000 people in ICE detention nationally as of September 21, 71.5% had no criminal record (*USA Today*, 3 October).



On October 4, when federal agents shot a woman five times for trailing after them to alert people in Brighton Park on the Southwest Side, the neighborhood poured into the streets to block the feds in a several-hours standoff.

Trump has tried to pitch his raids as a “crackdown on crime,” calling Chicago a “hell-hole” and claiming the support of black Chicagoans. But seeing Latinos singled out because of their ethnicity, many recall African Americans’ own experience with racial profiling and racist killings by the police. The 1969 murder of Chicago Black Panther leader Fred Hampton by the FBI and Chicago Police Department has not been forgotten. And the military raid on the apartment building in the black South Shore neighborhood drove home that we face a common enemy, ripping up the rights of all. Eboni Watson, who lives across from the building, confronted the agents demanding to know why they picked up U.S. citizens, saying “That’s illegal. You can’t just pull them out of their house and run their names for warrants” (*New York Times*, 20 October). She’s so right, it’s a violation of the U.S. Constitution’s Fourth Amendment against unreasonable search and seizure.

Try telling that to Greg Bovino, the CBP commander who is running the feds’ Chicago blitz. Everything he is doing is against the Constitution and U.S. law, as well as violating explicit court orders. Specifically, a 2022 consent decree bars ICE agents from carrying out warrantless arrests unless they can prove probable cause. (This applies across the country, although it resulted from a suit brought by the Illinois Civil Liberties Union.) A federal judge in Chicago has extended that decree to February 2026, while another issued an order limiting immigration agents’ use of chemical irritants against protesters without warnings. On October 23, Bovino personally tossed tear gas canisters into a crowd protesting a raid in the Mexican neighborhood of Little Village. The government was ordered to produce agent Bovino in court on October 28, but don’t expect that to end the feds’ assault on brown and black people. To stop the racist people-snatchers will take nothing less than a full-scale mobilization of Chicago’s powerful working class.

Democrats Won’t Do It, For Workers Mobilization to Stop Deportations

In the face of Trump’s assault, we’ve heard a good deal of tough talk by Democratic officials in Chicago and Illinois against the federal invasion. Governor JB Pritzker denounced ICE and CBP agents as “jackbooted thugs” who were “abusing their power, intimidating innocent civilians and waging war on our people.” He told a press conference on September 29 that “All of this has been aimed

at causing chaos and mayhem in the hopes of creating a pretext to deploy military troops to Chicago.” It’s all true, of course. The governor often poses as a “friend of labor,” and can be seen occasionally at the head of marches in defense of abortion and trans rights. Yet Pritzker, a former businessman (net worth \$3.9 billion) is a member of one of the ten richest families in the U.S., owners of the Hyatt hotel chain. And as a bourgeois politician he is part of and beholden to the machinery of the capitalist state now headed by Trump.

Mayor Brandon Johnson plays up his career as a former history teacher, and CTU organizer and strike leader. He often speaks eloquently about black slave labor building the wealth of the country and the power of working people. He and attorney general Kwame Raoul continue to channel outrage and demands for action into multiple lawsuits, hoping for temporary restraining orders from federal judges. The district judge who issued a TRO blocking the deployment of the National Guard and the circuit court of appeals, in upholding it, both held that Trump’s description of Chicago and claims of a “rebellion” are at odds with the actual situation. But even if the U.S. Supreme Court does not grant the Trump administration’s request for an emergency order overturning those rulings, the federal agents already in Chicago will continue to run riot.

The Democratic mayor and governor have denounced the endless legal and constitutional violations. They have assured one and all that they will not collaborate with Trump’s militarization of Chicago. But Pritzker’s idea of “defending” immigrants was setting up a toothless Illinois Accountability Commission to collect video evidence of the feds’ misdeeds. It’s crucial to understand that looking to the Democratic Party and its politicians is a dangerous illusion – remember that Obama was rightly called the “deporter-in-chief.” Yet many activists believed the Democrats’ posturing, and were stunned when Illinois State Police were deployed to the Broadview ICE facility during DHS czarina Noem’s October 3 photo op. Pritzker said they were there to protect protesters. But there were the state cops in solid lines, riot batons in hand, forcing protesters off the streets and keeping them away from vehicles going in and out of the facility. And there were the Chicago police two days later holding back crowds protesting the CBP’s shooting of Marimar Martinez in Brighton Park (see box).

As for the labor leadership, the powerful

Chicago Federation of Labor drew upwards of 7,500 people to its “Workers Over Billionaires” Labor Day march, which included calls to stop deportations, defend immigrants and oppose the presence of ICE and possible National Guard troops. The CFL and several unions – including the CTU, AFSCME, SEIU and IUPAT (Painters) District 14 – called a February 2025 Chicago Labor Forum on immigrant rights, and some (including the Iron Workers Local 63 president) spoke at the protests in Broadview. But as state violence against black and brown working-class neighborhoods has escalated, the labor tops have been notably silent. Their big event was a pilgrimage of local union leaders to Rome for an audience with Chicago-born and raised Pope Leo XIV (Robert Francis Prevost) to appeal for his thoughts and prayers for immigrants and his home town. But the pope’s prayers won’t cut it.

Meanwhile, federal workers are under frontal attack, facing mass layoffs and firings by the Trump administration, which has slashed the jobs of 200,000 employees since taking office, and now the federal government shutdown. Yet less than a hundred were mobilized for an emergency protest downtown in early October. At the same time, close to 2,000 layoffs at the Chicago Transit Authority are slated for coming months amid the latest funding crisis, which also promises fare increases and massive service cuts. Today many Latino and Latina CTA workers face racial profiling and harassment as they travel to and from work. But rather than building union defense of the members and immigrants, the two Amalgamated Transit Locals (241 and 308) held a protest in front of CTA headquarters to demand the agency “do something” about violence against bus and rail workers. That’s practically inviting ICE and CBP agents to militarize public transit!

The labor *mis*leaders are part of a bureaucracy that sits atop the unions – the mass defense organizations of the workers – while chaining them to capitalist parties, mainly the Democrats. Under pressure from the ranks and facing the threats coming from the Trump gang, some may go through the motions of going to bat for immigrants. But the “labor lieutenants of the capitalist class” will ultimately bow to the Democrats and/or Trump. The Democratic politicians may rouse a crowd with talk of labor action: at the October 18 pro-Democratic Party “No Kings” rally, amid the chants of “U.S.A.” and “I love America,” Johnson conjured up a nationwide “general strike” to “stand up to this tyranny” and to send a “message” to the “ultra-rich and big corporations” to make them . . . “pay their fair share of taxes”! A real general strike would mobilize the workers against the bosses and *all* their parties.



CBP operations commander Gregory Bovino channeling his inner Gestapo at CNN interview, October 8.

At the “No Kings” event, which sported a number of Democratic (Party) Socialists of America (DSA) City Council members on stage, the mayor called on people to “take it to the courts and take it to the streets.” But getting favorable legal rulings by lower courts will not stop a regime bent on erecting a police state and whose fascistic mastermind Stephen Miller has lambasted federal judges’ rulings as a “legislative insurrection against federal power.” The capitalist rulers have 1,001 ways to circumvent, appeal and tie up cases in federal court for months or even years, while those who have been swallowed by the monstrous deportation machine have their lives ripped up or die in detention, as the slide towards authoritarian rule kicks into high gear. Capitalist politicians (including DSA Democrats) will only lead immigrants, black people and working people as a whole into a dead end.

The war on immigrants and drive toward a police state are a result and reflection of the putrefying capitalist system. The millions of workers who do the worst and lowest-paid jobs are made scapegoats for the declining living standards of the mass of the population. Those who defend them are labeled the “enemy within,” while those who exploit their labor wallow in obscene luxury. It is summed up by Kristi Noem flashing her \$60,000 Rolex watch in front of inmates at the torture center in El Salvador where deportees have been sent. The governor accuses Trump of carrying out a “power grab,” having the military in the streets to intimidate people in the lead-up to the midterm 2026 elections. It is much more than that. We are witnessing the descent of moribund capitalism into militarized repression and witch-hunting at home and barbaric war (genocide in Gaza) abroad.

In New York City and Portland, Oregon, the Internationalist Group and fraternally allied groups of labor militants (including Class Struggle Education Workers and Class Struggle Workers – Portland) have undertaken initiatives leading to the formation of Labor Committees to Defend Immigrants. These include activists and



DHS head Kristi Noem (sporting her \$60,000 Rolex watch) in March 2025 outside the infamous CECOT jail and torture center in El Salvador where the U.S. sent immigrants abducted by ICE. Although Noem claimed they were “terrorists,” the large majority had no criminal record at all.

Alex Brandon / AFP

Mustafa Hussain for CNN

leaders of unions representing teachers and other school workers, warehouse and transportation workers (including, in NYC, several Teamster locals), construction workers (in Portland, Painters, IBEW, Carpenters, Iron Workers), healthcare workers, municipal employees, restaurant workers, arts and entertainment workers, and others. They have taken the lead in getting resolutions passed in a number of unions to defend immigrants against deportations, built workplace committees as part of this struggle, carried out workplace trainings, and mobilized to defend our coworkers, students and community members independently of the bosses parties and politicians.

Today we face a deadly onslaught by Trump, who is itching to invoke the 1807 Insurrection Act and impose martial law. But remember that in 2020 it was overwhelmingly police in Democratic-run cities who arrested demonstrators protesting racist cop murder, while both Biden and Trump called to shoot “rioters” in the legs. The outpouring of community members across Chicago to resist the masked terrorists who are abducting their neighbors is extremely important, and an inspiration to immigrants and their defenders around the country. But to turn the cities into “no-go” areas for ICE and other federal agents requires a **class-struggle leadership** with a revolutionary program to mobilize the **power of the working class**. Facing a mortal threat to the rights of all, we seek to oust the bureaucrats, who keep that power chained; to break with the Democrats and build a workers party to champion the oppressed and fight for a workers government.

All out for FEDS OUT!

For workers mass action to stop deportations!

Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

NYC Primary...

continued from page 7

sold out by misleaders who chain them to the Democratic Party. The exploited vote for their exploiters. What is vitally necessary is to **fight for the political independence of the working class from the capitalist class**, the bourgeoisie, whose obscene wealth and opulent lifestyles derive from the profits they squeeze from the labor of millions. Class-conscious militants urgently need to break from Democrats, Republicans and all parties of capital to **build a workers party to fight for a workers government**.

Such a party will be built not through reformist gimmickry but in the course of convulsive struggles of the multiracial working class – including the huge number of immigrant workers denied even the right to vote by this racist system. The issue is not having merely another ballot line for a slightly more left-wing party, but to forge a party based on the power and organizations of the working class in order to lead the oppressed in a **class** struggle against all the oppressors. This means forthrightly opposing attempts by Mamdani et al. to corral youth and workers back into the Democratic Party of U.S. imperialism.

To combat the “antisemitism” slander against anti-Zionists fighting against the U.S.-funded and -armed genocide in Gaza, to defend the right of free speech, to fight the systemic racism integral to American capitalism, to combat attacks on transgender people or simply to fight for higher wages and health care in the face of the rising cost of living, requires breaking free from the stranglehold of the bosses’ parties and politicians.

At the present time, a key task is to **build committees to defend immigrants in schools and workplaces** to be able to mount a labor-led, working-class mobilization against the escalating immigration raids and the mass deportations, mass layoffs and attacks on democratic rights that pose an impending catastrophe for the vast majority of the population of New York City, and for millions across the U.S. and beyond.

Big Business Pushing for Cuomo

After Mayor Adams dropped out of the Democratic primary in order to court conservatives, his place was taken by disgraced former governor Andrew Cuomo, who is trying to claw his way back to office after his resignation amid state and federal investigations of accusations of sexual harassment, and continuing anger over his disastrous actions in the COVID pandemic when his orders as governor escalated the death toll. What is driving his candidacy at present is a concerted effort by big money interests to ensure that neither Mamdani nor any of the liberal candidates wins the Democratic nomination.

The *New York Times* (1 June) ran an article on “The Business Interests Bankrolling Andrew Cuomo’s Run for Mayor.” These include DoorDash, the food delivery app, that chipped in a million dollars, Vornado Realty Trust, and “at least 16 donations [that] can be tied to individuals Forbes magazine identified as billionaires (that does not include four donations from Rockefellers).” All this money has poured into the nominally independent Fix the City political action committee. Since then, former NYC mayor and billionaire Michael Bloomberg gave over \$8 million to the same super PAC.

Cuomo’s pitch is that in this time of crisis, the city needs “experienced leadership.” But while his ads cite his self-aggrandizing daily press conferences as governor during the COVID-19 pandemic, his “leadership” contributed to thousands of deaths by a 25 March 2020 order forcing nursing homes to accept COVID-positive patients. Although he was forced to revoke the order a month and a half later, to deflect blame for this catastrophe he had his Department of Health write a report (which he personally edited, and then told Congress he didn’t recall it) claiming the main cause was that “nursing home workers transmitted the virus unknowingly.”

Countering the cover-up, the New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA) union said the claim “did not reflect the experiences of frontline nurses,” who far from being clumsy COVID spreaders “were pointing at critical shortages of personal protective equipment and calling for widespread testing.” Meanwhile, in the early months of the pandemic when tests were nowhere to be found, Cuomo dispatched state Department of Health officials to test individuals close to his family. This included having a top DOH doctor do an at-home visit to swab Andrew’s brother and then-CNN anchor Chris Cuomo in the Hamptons.

Cuomo’s supposedly masterful management also included putting together a 1,000-bed medical hub in the Javits Center that at its high point only had 138 patients, and showing off the Navy hospital ship sent by Trump that sat virtually empty as hospitals overflowed. Meanwhile, the state attorney general found that Cuomo’s report undercounted the number of nursing home deaths by 50%. Two lawsuits by relatives of nursing home patients who died as a result of Cuomo’s policies were dismissed by courts in October 2024 and April 2025. Those relatives complained that Cuomo should have been jailed for his actions. We agree.

More recently, as raids by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) police and other agents of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) set off a firestorm in Los Angeles, the Cuomo for NYC, Inc. campaign committee put out a palm card headlining “L.A. IS JUST THE START,” saying that “Donald Trump is coming for NYC,” “Andrew Cuomo has battled Trump before – and won,” and “We need experienced leadership now.” However, what Cuomo said in a June 10 interview on CBS News was “they are going to send in ICE in NYC, they are going to do things that are illegal and unconstitutional, but let’s not overreact.”

Concretely, in Cuomo’s “6-Point Plan in Response to Trump’s Deployment of Federal Troops to Los Angeles,” point 3 is “The NYPD should be pre-deployed” and point 4 is “the Governor should have the National Guard on standby ... to act in advance of President Trump.” So he signaled his acceptance of Trump’s campaign of mass deportations and his only frustration with how it went down in L.A. is that protests were not quashed before Trump sent in the National Guard and Marines. As mayor, Cuomo would be in a race against Trump to see who could send shock troops to break the ribs of protesters against ICE raids first.

Mamdani Asks: “Will You Be My Democrat?”

After several years of inflation that eroded the paychecks of working people across the U.S., and 19 months of Zionist genocide in Gaza made possible by the bombs and planes sent to Israel by the Democrats, as well as Democrat Biden’s outlawing of a strike by railroad workers, the Democratic vote in New York City plummeted by more than 400,000 in 2024 compared to 2020. Amid this crisis of trust, DSA member of the NY State Assembly Zohran Mamdani rushed to the rescue of the Democratic Party. While previous polls consistently showed Cuomo in the lead, in the last days of the campaign a June 18-20 poll by Emerson College showed Mamdani winning the primary over the former governor by 52% to 48% after ranked-choice voting kicks in.

With the labor bureaucracy unanimous on continuing to tie working people to the Democrats, it is divided on which specific ones to endorse in NYC this time around. Cuomo got the nod from health workers’ SEIU Local 1199, building workers’ Local 32BJ and others. Mamdani won the backing of UAW Region 9A, Teamsters Local 804 and DC37 (municipal workers), the latter possibly explaining why he has **not** denounced the scheme to force retirees into the Medicare Advantage scam.¹ The City University of New York faculty/staff union (PSC-CUNY) ranked City Council speaker Adrienne Adams, Mamdani and NYC comptroller Brad Lander as its top three choices, while the mam-

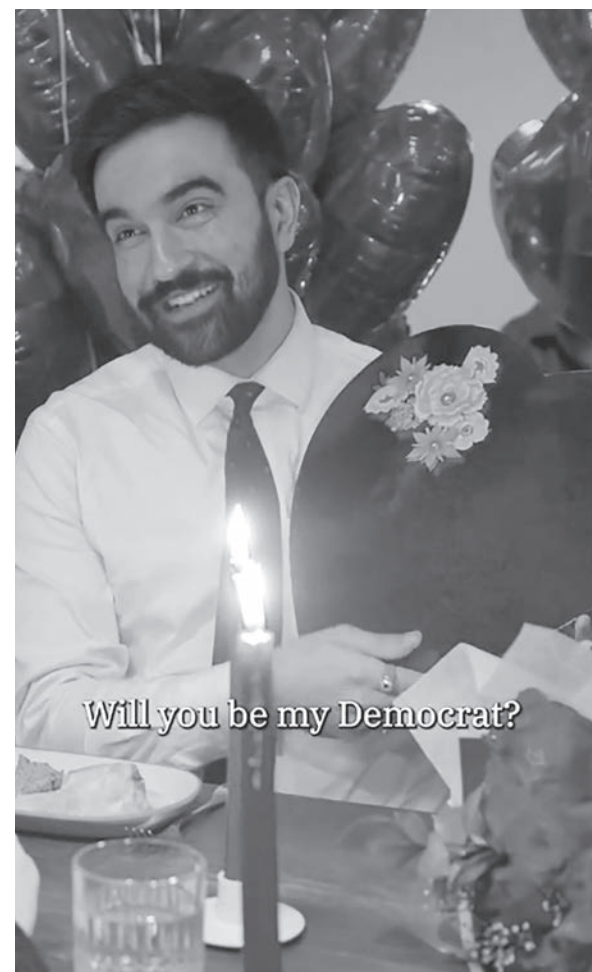
¹ Over strenuous objections and sustained protests by retired city workers, the leaders of the Municipal Labor Committee have pushed this scheme to save New York City \$600 million a year to go into a slush fund by forcing retirees off of traditional Medicare into a “managed care” plan in which the insurance company decides what treatment patients receive (see *The Chief*, 13 June).

moth United Federation of Teachers decided to sit this one out.

Mamdani has picked up a lot of support, especially from younger people, from videos on TikTok, Instagram and other social media. In an appeal pointing to the February 13 deadline for party registration, he put out a Valentine’s Day-themed video in which he is carrying pink balloons and a heart-shaped box of chocolates, acting the part of a spurned ex-lover, saying, “I know you’ve been let down so many times, the whole working class has been let down. This time I want it to be different.” He lists some of his reformist campaign demands and finally pops the question: “Will you be my Democrat?” This is not just some cringe-worthy shtick – the video captures the essence of the politics and social function of Mamdani and the DSA.

Any class-conscious worker or defender of democratic rights should answer: “Hell no! We will not be wooed with promises of a few piecemeal reforms into the party of Gaza genocide, imperialist war and racist police repression.” As the ICE raids escalate and the cost of living skyrockets, now under Republican Trump as before under Democrat Biden, to defeat these attacks will require class-struggle leadership. This is directly counterposed to Mamdani’s effort to sweep people back into the Democratic Party that built the immigrant detention centers, sent Israel the bombs that leveled Gaza, launched the imperialist proxy war in Ukraine and paved the way for Donald Trump, again!

Case in point: the response to the feds’ invasion of Los Angeles. Mamdani took the clip of Cuomo telling New Yorkers not to “overreact” as an opportunity to pose as an alternative, vaguely declaring that New York deserves a mayor with a plan to “stand up and fight back.” But fight back how? Echoing Cuomo, Mamdani calls for New Yorkers to “peacefully protest,” and to build on “sanctuary city” laws and “ensure 100% compliance with them.” Where Cuomo calls for “a standing interagency team ... to track federal overreach,” Mamdani calls to “increase funding for immigration legal services,” and



Mamdani’s Valentine’s Day-themed video sums up his and the DSA’s politics and function.

Screenshot from TikTok video



Strategic Response Group of the NYPD brutally attacks Gaza solidarity encampment of New School faculty, May 2024. Disbanding the SRG, as Mamdani calls for, would simply mean that riot cops would have a different set of initials on their uniforms as they beat protesters.

to “muscle up the NYC Law Department.”

Certainly, legal assistance to immigrants is important and should be expanded, and local laws (often violated) restricting cooperation with federal immigration police can provide some limited protections. But Los Angeles also has “sanctuary city” laws and that hasn’t stopped ICE from prowling the streets of L.A., or the LAPD from suppressing protests against *la migrá*. As masked DHS and ICE agents have been nabbing immigrants when they step out of courtrooms across the country, a couple extra lawyers in the room won’t cramp their style. What’s urgently needed is to “muscle up” the organized working class to bring its tremendous power into play.

A recent (June 12) resolution by the Delegate Assembly of the United Federation of Teachers, representing 100,000 education workers in the city, encourages local chapters to initiate school-based committees to defend immigrants, and calls on “all of labor to initiate such defense committees and to mobilize its power in defense of immigrants.” Of course, the union bureaucracies, intimately tied to the Democratic Party (American Federation of Teachers president Randi Weingarten is a longtime member of the Democratic National Committee), will do nothing to implement such calls. But we can and must. It will take class-struggle militants to turn calls for “ICE out of New York” into reality and make the city a no-go zone for *la migrá*.

Capitalism’s Cops Can’t Be “Reformed” (and Mamdani Vows to “Work with” Them)

To put a little distance between himself and Cuomo, Mamdani conjures up illusions in “reforming” the capitalist state. When asked on TV, “should ICE be abolished?” he answered “I believe it should,” and went on to praise Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez for endorsing that illusory call. As we pointed out during AOC’s 2018 Congressional campaign,² she contrasted ICE to its predecessor, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). So “abolishing ICE” would just mean masked federal agents with different letters on their backs snatching people off the street. She later added, “We need to make sure that people are, in fact, documented.”

There is an “Abolish ICE dad hat” available for purchase on AOC’s online store for \$28. It’s a fitting use for the slogan, which

peddles cheap illusions to convince people outraged over the threat of mass deportations to buy into the Democratic Party that for years waived the bait of a “path to citizenship” even as Democratic presidents deported far more people than Trump did in his first term. The Internationalist Group fights for *full citizenship rights for all immigrants*. This elementary democratic demand was put into practice in the 1871 Paris Commune and the 1917 October Revolution in Russia – and it will take a workers government to win it here today.

A new member of the DSA family of illusory slogans, similar to the call to “abolish ICE” is Mamdani’s vow that “as mayor, I will disband the SRG” – referring to the infamous Strategic Response Group of the NYPD. This outfit brutally beat demonstrators in the 2020 protests against racist police terror and Gaza solidarity demonstrators in 2024. This past May, the SRG staged a cop riot against pro-Palestinian protesters at Brooklyn College. And Mamdani’s tweet about disbanding this “anti-terrorism” squad came in response to its arrest of Teamsters at a strike by Amazon drivers in December.

If the SRG were dissolved, its role would just be taken up by some new unit like the increasingly violent “Community Response Team.”³ The result would be the same as when the NYPD’s Street Crimes Unit that murdered Amadou Diallo on his doorstep with 44 bullets in 1999 was disbanded three years later over its blatant racial profiling, then reinstated in 2015 only to be disbanded again in 2020. Or the “repurposing” of the Club Enforcement Unit after it gunned down Sean Bell on his wedding night in 2006. The names of the units may change but the essential function of the police as the enforcers of capitalist “law and order” stays the same.

This brings us to the call to “defund the police,” a staple of the DSA since 2020 when they pushed it heavily ... in order to corral votes for liberal Democrats who cynically raised the slogan, only to drop it like a hot potato after the elections that year. *All* the candidates in the Democratic primary oppose cuts to the NYPD, and almost all want to expand the nation’s largest police force. On stage at the June 12 mayoral debate Mamdani said “I will not defund the police; I will work with the police because I believe the police have a critical role to play in making public safety.” In a Breakfast Club radio interview the day

before he was even more explicit:

“I want to be very clear we are not defunding the police. What we are talking about is sustaining the number of police that we have within the Police Department.”

That one must’ve been awkward at the DSA watch-parties. Of course, Mamdani is following the (Democratic) party line on this – all across the country, Dems have ostentatiously reversed the claims and pledges they made at the height of the George Floyd protests. As for the DSA, even as its Democratic Party “socialist electeds” have disavowed the slogan, the DSA still includes “Defund the police,” and “Disarm law enforcement officers, including the police and private security” in the “political platform” on their website. When rabid Zionist Democratic mayoral candidate Whitney Tilson asked Mamdani in the debate if he supports the DSA’s program, he responded: “I am a member of the organization [DSA] and the organization’s platform is not the platform of this campaign. The platform of this campaign is the one you can find on the website at zohranfornyc.com.”

This question goes to the heart of why revolutionary Marxists do not support Zohran Mamdani or any other Democrat, Republican or any candidate of smaller capitalist parties such as the Greens. It concerns the core of the capitalist state, which as Vladimir Lenin underlined in *The State and Revolution* (1917) – referring back to Friedrich Engels, the co-author with Karl Marx of the *Communist Manifesto* (1848) – consists of “special bodies of armed men,” like the military and police, along with courts and prisons, whose purpose and function is to defend the power, property and interests of the capitalist ruling class. That apparatus of repression cannot be reformed, it must be smashed by a proletarian revolution overthrowing capitalist rule.

The “defund the police” slogan was used to court voters amid the mass protests against police terror in 2020, but after Joe Biden was elected, the Democrats decided it had done its job and they didn’t want to play around with it anymore. In New York City, Chicago and other big cities, police budgets expanded in the last three years. At the time when it was all the rage among liberals and reformist pseudo-socialists, in July 2020, the Internationalist Group told the truth about this slogan, saying “the idea that a central pillar maintaining capitalist rule would disappear as a result of a referendum, legislative act or charter amendment is liberal/reformist illusion-peddling of the highest order, no matter how much ‘mass pressure’ is thrown in.”⁴

To divert attention from his stance on the NYPD (which is not mentioned in his Platform on zohranfornyc.com), Mamdani has an elaborate plan for a new “Department of Community Safety” with a billion-dollar budget. In the Breakfast Club interview, he said that this “DCS” would deal with mental health calls so “the police can just focus on their job,” to “make it easier to do that job.” He also decried “forced overtime” affecting police decision-making. But cops feed off the overtime pay, and the issue is not long hours causing lapses in judgement. Rather, the job of the police is to enforce racist capitalism and beat down strikers and protesters.

Build a Class-Struggle Workers Party!

Speaking over a century and a half ago, at the London Conference of the International Workingmen’s Association, the first international revolutionary workers party, Karl

Marx said, “our politics must be working-class politics. The workers’ party must never be the tagtail of any bourgeois party; it must be independent and have its goal and its own policy” (“Apropos of Working-Class Political Action,” 21 September 1871). The Democratic Socialists of America is precisely “the tagtail” of the capitalist Democratic Party, registering new members for the Democrats, directly campaigning as Democrats.

Revolutionary Marxists denounce the vile anti-Muslim rhetoric, death threats and lying claims of antisemitism against Zohran Mamdani for his moderate criticisms of Israel. At the same time, it is the elementary duty of those who fight for working-class politics to tell the truth that he is not a socialist in any real sense of the term, but a bourgeois politician, elected to the state assembly as a Democrat in 2019 and running to be the Democratic mayor of NYC today. And if Mamdani wins, he won’t be the first DSA Democrat to run the city for finance capital. That was DSAer David Dinkins, NYC’s mayor in 1990-93. When Wall Street worried that workers and black people would oppose massive budget cuts, Dinkins – who had large-scale labor support and was the city’s first black mayor – famously declared: “Don’t worry, they’ll take it from me.” Sure enough, Dinkins slashed the budget and axed thousands of jobs.

Months ago, the *New York Times* announced that for the first time ever, it would not endorse candidates in local elections. But as Election Day approached, speaking as the voice of the bourgeois establishment, the *Times* (16 June) editorialized that Mamdani does not “deserve” a “spot on New Yorkers’ ballots,” and while it had objections to Cuomo’s “ethics and conduct,” the ex-governor “would be better for New York’s future than Mr. Mamdani.” Naturally, AOC and Bernie Sanders back Mamdani, but other “mainstream” Democrats such as former mayor Bill de Blasio have gone to bat for him as well, mainly out of hatred for Cuomo.

In the home stretch of the primary campaign, Mamdani formed an alliance with liberal Democrat Brad Lander, in which each urges his supporters to list the other as their second choice, with no vote for Cuomo. Lander, who gained national fame last week when he was roughly manhandled by masked federal agents as was escorting a Guatemalan asylum seeker from an immigration court hearing, is a regular Democratic Party liberal of the old school. But one can hardly fault DSAer Mamdani for making this political alliance, as at bottom he is one of those “progressive” capitalist candidates himself.

On June 24, there is no candidate that defends the genuine interests of workers and the oppressed against the capitalist class and its state. Those who really want to defend the Palestinians, stop ICE raids and deportations, put an end to the U.S. imperialist proxy war against Russia in Ukraine and Israel/U.S. genocide in Gaza, and fight against racist repression and strikebreaking in the U.S. must break with the capitalist Democrats and all the bosses’ parties. They should take inspiration from the action of Portland, Oregon IUPAT (Painters) Local 10, which in 2016 called for “the labor movement to break from the Democratic Party, and build a class-struggle workers party.”

The Internationalist Group seeks to forge such a party that can act as a vanguard in the struggles of the exploited and oppressed for their liberation from the putrefying capitalist system through socialist revolution. ■

² See “Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez to the Rescue of the Democratic Party,” *The Internationalist* No. 53, September-October 2018.

³ See “How Eric Adams Has Backed a Secretive NYPD Unit Ridden With Abuses,” Pro-Publica, 11 March.

⁴ See “‘Abolish the Police’ Under Capitalism?” *The Internationalist* No. 60, May-July 2020.

NYC Housing...

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for Democrats, or for Any Capitalist Parties or Politicians!” (23 June). After the Democrats’ debacle in 2024, in good part due to the support of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris for the U.S./Israeli genocidal war on Gaza, and attacks on pro-Palestinian protesters in the U.S., as well as their administration’s anti-labor policies (banning a rail strike), a lot of people had had it with the Democrats. The lead back-page article in the Revolutionary Internationalist Youth’s newspaper *Revolution* (No. 22, October 2022), “No Way – You Can’t Fight Trump with Democrats,” spells out how the Mamdani campaign has brought many young people back into the deadly grip of that party of imperialist war and racist repression.

While Mamdani has campaigned on the theme of “affordability,” proposing reforms like free buses (why not free mass transit?), universal pre-kindergarten childcare and one (!) city-owned grocery store per borough – nothing that hasn’t been done elsewhere – the establishment Democrats and Republicans reject them all as “unaffordable.” In reality they are a drop in the proverbial bucket, deliberately avoiding any real challenge to the power of Wall Street. Meanwhile, the DSA Democrat has sought to connect with the money men over his pledge to build 200,000 “affordable” apartments over the next ten years. And new housing construction is definitely of interest to real estate barons.

New York City’s current Democratic mayor Eric Adams is now a “lame duck” as his reelection bid flopped, largely due to the multiple corruption cases against him and his pals – and to acting as Donald Trump’s toady as a *quid pro quo* for dropping those prosecutions. But one of his campaign planks is on the ballot for the November 4 elections, namely three propositions that would revise the NYC City Charter on “affordable housing” construction. The measures would ostensibly allow certain publicly financed construction projects to be “fast-tracked” for approval – by undermining or cutting out the City Council from the approval process.

New York City is in the midst of a huge housing emergency. Most renters pay over 30% of their income to their landlord, and a quarter pay over 50%. Average market-rate rents are \$3,500 a month, some of the highest in the country; the vacancy rate is barely 1.4%, and an estimated 350,000 people are homeless, either sleeping in shelters (over 100,000), on the streets or doubled-up in overcrowded apartments. Some 154,000 NYC public school students have no stable housing, an all-time record.

Adams and his allies in the Real Estate Board of New York have said that 500,000 new housing units are needed.

There is certainly an urgent need for massive, quality housing construction for working people in New York City. But that is not what Ballot Questions 2, 3, and 4 are about. Behind the deceptive talk of “fast-tracking” projects, they want to eliminate any semblance of democratic control, in order to maximize profitable market-rate housing while tacking on a small percentage of “affordable” units. Under existing procedures, typically 70% of new housing would be for “free market” rates. Even the term “affordable” is misleading, as the rents in some projects built in low-income areas are higher than most residents could afford.

On the ballot, **Proposal 2** would “fast-track” projects with 100% affordable housing and housing in 12 community districts (out of 47) with the least amount of affordable housing built. **Proposal 3** would “fast-track” housing and infrastructure projects that do not require an environmental review. In both cases, the speed-up is by cutting out the City Council entirely. If the City Council did reject or amend any project, **Proposal 4** would allow a board of the mayor, Council speaker and borough president to override them with no appeal. (Under the current system, the mayor can veto a City Council decision, but the City Council can override the mayor’s veto).

A coalition calling for a “no” vote on the ballot measure, consisting of the City Council, construction trade unions and the Central Labor Council measures has emphasized that it is through City Council review that it has been possible to secure requirements to use union labor, to secure higher percentages of “affordable” housing, and to require that developers build schools, playgrounds, mini-parks and include space for grocery stores. Supporters of Props 2, 3 and 4 claim that the City Council defers to NIMBY (“not in my back yard”) members opposing projects in their districts, but opponents say that the Council has approved 93% of the projects it reviewed.

The process the ballot measures would amend is called the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), which applies to any housing or infrastructure project that requires a zoning waiver. The ULURP was instituted in 1975, in response to decades of construction by bureaucratic, centralized fiat, primarily under racist “urban planner” Robert Moses, who ran roughshod over working-class, African-American and Hispanic neighborhoods – for example, tearing down and polluting a huge swath of the South Bronx with the Cross-Bronx Expressway instead of putting it underground.

In the election campaign, Mamdani’s program for building 200,000 units of “affordable housing” over the next ten years is hardly radical, let alone socialist. New York City built or renovated 27,000 such units in 2024. He says his plan would be “fast-tracked,” “union-made” and “100% affordable.” It would be paid for by a \$100 billion capital plan, paid for with \$70 bil-



Internationalists in July 2020 demonstration outside Housing Court in Manhattan protesting threatened cutoff of pandemic rent moratorium.

lion in new municipal bonds, which would certainly please the Wall Street bankers. Mamdani has come under fire (including in the second mayoral candidates debate) for not taking a position on the ballot measures, saying this is a “hard question.” Since the questions are considered likely to pass anyway, ducking the issue won’t cost him labor votes.

Moreover, by staying mum, the reputed “socialist” candidate of the Democratic Party that is one of the two pillars of U.S. capitalism can offer a carrot to the real estate and banking interests who stand to profit from shared interests in pushing his housing program. One leading capitalist who is pushing for that is Robert Wolf, the former chairman and CEO of UBS America, the leading Swiss bank on Wall Street and an influential member of the Partnership for New York City (PNYC), a coalition of 300 leading corporations, investment firms and real estate developers, with which Mamdani met in July.

Wolf, who was a major contributor and fundraiser for Barack Obama, serving on several presidential advisory panels, as well as a member of Eric Adams’ 2021-22 corporate-sponsored transition team, had a lengthy call with Mamdani following the PNYC meeting and declared in an interview with *The Hill* (1 October): “I applaud that he’s reaching out to business leaders and that business leaders are reaching out to him.... It’s imperative that the public and private sector work together.” And that is what Mamdani is calling for, notably through the OneNYC coalition of businessmen supporting his campaign, to “Drive private-sector investment and public-private partnerships.”

Today mass homelessness is a crisis across the United States and throughout the capitalist world. In June 2024, the Supreme Court ruled, in the same session in which it declared that the U.S. president has immunity for any official act, that the city of Grants Pass, Oregon, and by extension all U.S. cities, counties and states, could ban homeless encampments, even if people have nowhere else to go. This recalls the ironic quote from the great French writer Anatole France, who wrote in 1894 that, “The law, in its majestic equality, forbids the rich and poor alike to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal bread.”

Today, as the Trump administration carries out its horrific campaign of mass deportations of immigrants, spearheading its drive to erect a police-state regime, it is gearing up to drive homeless people out of the cities and into concentration camps, as Salt Lake City, Utah is now preparing to do. Already under the Democratic administration of Bill Clinton in the 1990s, many of the public housing projects built from the late 1930s through the ’70s were demolished in many cities after decades of deliberate neglect. This is a graphic

expression of the terminal decay of the capitalist system as public services are slashed and hunger and homelessness spread.

A real plan to address the housing emergency facing working people would have to defeat the powerful forces that milk *trillions* of dollars annually in profits from real estate holdings valued at a staggering \$654 trillion worldwide, and \$137 trillion in the U.S. alone. Such an effort, in addition to *maintaining and extending rent controls* and *slashing sky-high rents*, would have to fight to *expropriate the real estate barons, occupy the estimated tens of thousands of empty housing units* in NYC, and undertake *a massive program of construction of new public housing* – and to fully repair existing deteriorated units – with *union control of construction* and *worker-tenant control of buildings*.

The Internationalist Group underlines that ultimately the housing emergency cannot be solved under capitalism. The bottom line is that capitalists do not provide high-quality housing that poor and working people can afford (which is far less than current “affordable” rates) because there is no profit in it. As Friedrich Engels wrote back in 1872 in his pamphlet *The Housing Question* (1872) on “how the bourgeoisie solves the housing question in practice”:

“The breeding places of disease, the infamous holes and cellars in which the capitalist mode of production confines our workers night after night, are not abolished; they are merely shifted elsewhere! The same economic necessity which produced them in the first place, produces them in the next place also. As long as the capitalist mode of production continues to exist, it is folly to hope for an isolated solution of the housing question or of any other social question affecting the fate of the workers. The solution lies in the abolition of the capitalist mode of production and the appropriation of all the means of life and labor by the working class itself.”

Needless to say, for forthrightly stating this fundamental point, Engels would today be condemned as a hopeless “sectarian” by most of what passes for “the left.”

In short, what is required is a struggle for socialist revolution, here and internationally, led by revolutionary workers parties. That is the housing program that genuine socialists fight for. The Democratic (Party) Socialists of America, on the other hand, have long opposed the call to expropriate the capitalist class (see “The ABCs of the DSA,” in the Internationalist pamphlet, *DSA: Fronting for the Democrats* [February 2018]).

No vote for any capitalist candidate or party! Vote “No” on NYC Ballot Proposal 2, 3, and 4! Quality housing for all! Expropriate the banks and real estate barons through workers revolution!



On typical winter nights in New York City, over 100,000 people are in city shelters and thousands more sleep in the subway or on the streets.

European Port Workers Call for Strike Action to Stop Arms

On Friday and Saturday, September 26-27, a meeting of European dockworkers was held in Genova, Italy to discuss common action around the watchword, "Dockers Will Not Work for War." The meeting built on recent actions by port workers in Morocco, France, Italy and Greece blocking arms to Israel's genocidal war on Gaza. It was called by the Unione Sindacale di Base (USB), one of the larger "rank-and-file" unions in Italy, with affiliates in several ports, including the CALP (Autonomous Collective of Port Workers) in Genova. The League for the Fourth International was there as Jack Heyman, long-time dockworker and maritime activist and retired member of the West Coast U.S. International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) spoke to the assembly on the second day, bringing solidarity greetings from ILWU Local 10 and a message of international class struggle against the imperialist warmongers and Zionist butchers.

In the days before the meeting, on Tuesday, September 22, the USB and other rank-and-file unions called a "general strike for Gaza." The strike was huge, with a reported one million marchers in protests across Italy, the main ports shut down, rail lines struck, highways blocked and piazzas filled (see "Mass Strike for Gaza Brings Italy to a Halt: For International Strike Ac-

tion to Stop U.S./Israel Gaza Genocide!") The unions vowed to strike again if Israel attacked the Global Sumud Flotilla, which it did on the evening of October 1, seizing hundreds of volunteers bringing aid to Gaza. Immediately, protesters went into the streets all across Italy. On October 3, another "general strike" was held, this time called by all the rank-and-file unions *and* the CGIL, the largest labor federation, something previously unheard of.

The October 3 pro-Palestinian mass strike was even larger than September 22, with some 2 million marchers in 100 cities. Once again, ports were closed, rail lines and highways blocked. The fascist premier Giorgia Meloni, head of the right-wing coalition government, dismissed the "pro Pal" strike action as a "long weekend." Transport minister Matteo Salvini of the far-right Lega again threatened to "regulate" the right to strike. But the "human wave for Gaza" (*Il Fatto Quotidiano*, 4 October) was so massive, filled with young protesters (the "Gaza generation"), that insults and threats only intensified anti-government fury. The next day a national Gaza solidarity demonstration called by several Palestinian groups brought a million protesters into the streets of Rome, with Palestinians at the head of the march, followed by the militant unions.

At the September 26-27 dockers meeting, in addition to port workers from Civitavec-

chia, Genova, Livorno and Trieste in Italy, there were delegations and representatives from CGT dockworkers in France; EN-EDEP port workers in Greece; the LAB union in the Basque country; SZPD port workers in Slovenia, as well as representatives from Cyprus and Hamburg, Germany and Spanish observers from the European Dockworkers Council. The ODT union in Tangier, Morocco and the Liman İş dockers union in Turkey were unable to attend because the Italian government refused them visas. Francesco Staccioli of the USB reported on the second day of the meeting that they had agreed on a common document, and "We are now aiming at an in-

ternationally coordinated strike in the near future." The assembly hailed recent actions stopping shipments at the U.S. military base at Camp Darby, in Taranto and Ravenna. The League for the Fourth International has called from the outset to "Defend the Palestinians Against U.S./Israel Genocidal War on Gaza!" (10 October 2023), and in particular for "workers action against the shipment of arms to Israel and Ukraine." Many leftists and trade-union militants see labor action as part of a popular-front "antiwar movement" built on pacifism and butter-not-guns reformism aiming at a cease-fire. The Flotilla included representatives of the Five Stars Movement and Democratic Party, mainstays Italian imperialism, and it had an escort of warships of NATO members Spain, Italy, Greece and Turkey (up until the last moment, when they peeled off to let Israel do its dirty work). In contrast, the LFI has emphasized that "Class-conscious workers must seek to use their proletarian power to drive the Zionist occupiers out of Gaza and the West Bank," including calling for "mass strikes against the imperialist rulers."

Jack Heyman's speech was well received, particularly in recounting actions by the ILWU against South African apartheid

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CGIL trade-unionists along with USB, SI Cobas and other rank-and-file unions block the port of Genova during "general strike for Gaza," October 3.

Emanuela Zampà / Getty Images



Poster for European dock workers meeting.



Jack Heyman (center) with Genova dockworkers outside European port workers meeting to stop war cargo.

L'Internazionalista

Mass Strike for Gaza Brings Italy to a Halt

Build a Leninist-Trotskyist Communist Party!

SEPTEMBER 24 – As devastating famine spreads through Gaza as a result of Israel’s policy of deliberate mass starvation of the Palestinian population,¹ on September 17 the army launched its long-threatened, full-scale assault on Gaza City. Photos and wrenching videos show the exodus of 350,000 residents carrying their essential possessions on their trek to the latest declared “security zone,” which the Israeli military has repeatedly bombed in the past. Yet more than half a million people remain behind, refusing or unable to leave. The unrelenting Zionist slaughter, which by now has claimed over 100,000 lives,² is escalating daily. Horrified by the cataclysm they are seeing in real time, throughout the world millions of people are desperately crying out to *stop the destruction of the Palestinian people*.

Now this outcry has combined with a dramatic mobilization of working-class power. On September 22 Italy was convulsed by a *mass strike against genocide in Gaza* called by militant rank-and-file unions under the watchword, “*Blochiamo tutto!*” (Block everything). There were protests in 80 cities, with marches of 20,000 in Genova, 50,000 in Bologna, over 60,000 in Milan where police battled demonstrators, and an outpouring of at least 300,000 in Rome (*Il Manifesto*, 23 September). Unions struck the Trenitalia, Italo and Trenord railroad lines. Rail stations were occupied, schools shut down, the A1 highway from Rome to Milan was

¹ The Famine Review Committee of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification concluded in its August 2025 report that conditions in Gaza City had reached famine proportions, affecting more than a third of the population, and that conditions in the area to its north are “similar or worse.”

² As of 14 September 2025, the Gaza Ministry of Health reported some 66,000 Palestinians killed in the Israeli war. A study published in the British medical journal *Lancet* (8 February 2025), comparing three separate lists of named individuals who had died, concluded that the health ministry figures *underreported* the actual number of deaths by at least 41%. The London *Economist* (5 May), using the same study, estimated that the undercount was even greater, and the true numbers of Palestinians killed were 46–107% higher. That would mean that the actual death toll from the war would be in the range of 96,000 to 136,000.



Members of the Collettivo Autonomo Lavoratori Portuali (CALP, Autonomous Collective of Port Workers) at the head of the march in Genova during the mass strike in Italy on September 22 that brought out a million people, shutting down ports, railroads and highways, in solidarity with Gaza. CALP has previously stopped arms shipments to the Middle East.

cut by protesters in three different places and the ports of Genova, Livorno, Trieste, Venice, Ancona and Palermo were blocked. Three days earlier, a more limited “general strike” for Gaza was called by the main union federation, the CGIL.

The Gaza slaughter is not *just* an Israeli crime, it is a *joint Zionist/imperialist genocide*. It would not be possible without the direct participation of the U.S., which supplies *all* the huge bombs and *all* the warplanes that drop them, as well as of the other NATO imperialists, who send weapons, parts and munitions for this war of extermination against the Palestinian Arab population.³ From the outset, the League for the Fourth International has called for “workers action against the shipment of

³ See “Gaza Genocide Made in USA,” *The Internationalist* No. 73, June-August 2024.

arms to Israel and Ukraine.”⁴ Leading up to May Day 2024, in response to an appeal by the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions – Gaza, the LFI campaigned for this. In the U.S., Local 10 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) voted unanimously to “refuse to handle military cargo to Israel.”⁵

The urgency of such action was underlined in a recent (September 1), appeal by the PGFTU to labor and human rights groups, in the U.S. and around the world:

“We call on you to mobilize all your energy, resources, efforts, and initiatives to ban Israeli weapons of mass murder, and to use all possible means to halt the ongoing holocaust to which our Palestinian people are subjected daily, and to prevent the US administration from supplying this occupation with weapons.”

Meanwhile, a Global Sumud⁶ Flotilla with relief supplies for Gaza has gained a lot of attention from media, human rights, labor and left groups worldwide. The flotilla of some 50 ships has hundreds of activists and volunteers from some 45 countries on board. Every such attempt since 2008 has been met with brutal Zionist repression. This one has already been attacked by drones while anchored off Tunisia. On August 30, as 40,000 demonstrators gathered on the waterfront in Genova, Italy, the night before ships set sail, a leader of the Col-

lettivo Autonomo Lavoratori Portuali (CALP – Autonomous Collective of Port Workers) in Genova told the crowd that if the Flotilla is attacked, “We will launch an international strike, we will block the roads, we will block the schools, we will block everything.”

The Flotilla is intended to draw international attention to the carnage in Gaza, and also to pressure Western governments to rein in the Israelis. How little the Zionist regime cares about public opinion was demonstrated in 2010, when Israeli marines stormed the Gaza Freedom Flotilla and murdered at least nine of the activists, many shot at close range, and wounded 57.⁷ As for pressure from the NATO countries, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France and Portugal have announced they will recognize a Palestinian state at the United Nations General Assembly now in session (joining the 147 UN member states that have already done so). But that symbolic gesture will not slow down the Israeli mass murderers for even a second as the NATO imperialists continue to arm Israel.

Many liberals and leftists, and a fair number of unions look to “their” governments to stop sending arms to Israel. Many also advocate boycotts, divestment and sanctions (“BDS”) against Israel, which is ultimately an appeal to imperialist rulers. This is a dead end, as the Zionist state is a vital ally for Western domination of the Middle East, and it serves to hide the basic fact that the imperialists are co-responsible for the Zionist genocide. One account of the September 22 strike said that protesters sought to “force the Meloni government to stop supplying

⁷ “Israel’s Gaza Flotilla Massacre: Bloody War Provocation,” *The Internationalist* No. 31, Summer 2010.



Tens of thousands of protesters took to the streets of Torino, Italy in strike against Gaza genocide, September 22.



Global Samud Flotilla after it set off from Genova, Italy on September 1.

weapons and ammunition to the Israeli army, to cut diplomatic and commercial relations with a state that acts barbarically against all international rules” (*Contropiano*, 23 September). Call on Italy’s far-right fascist-led government to enforce “international rules”?!

The “rules-based” world “order” that has held sway since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the USSR and the Soviet bloc bureaucratically deformed workers states obeys the dictates of Washington. It included Italian expeditionary forces in the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, as well as 50,000 Italian troops and 150,000 German troops in the 20-year U.S. imperialist occupation of Afghanistan. These “forever wars” killed more than 1 million in the Middle East, far surpassing the Zionist butchers’ grisly toll in Gaza. Now these “democratic” imperialists want to put together yet another “coalition of the willing” to provide “security guarantees” for the imperialist puppet government of Ukraine and its fascist-infested military. In reality, such “peacekeepers” would only serve as a tripwire to set off World War III.

The millions who fervently want to put a stop to the monstrous genocide against the Palestinian people cannot look to the imperialist warmongers with their treacherous talk of “ceasefires.” *It is up to the workers and oppressed to break the logistical chains, to take down the air and sea bridges supplying the Israeli war machine. Class-conscious workers must seek to use their proletarian power to drive the Zionist occupiers out of Gaza and the West Bank. We call on unions to stop arms shipments* and, at the present time, as the war on Gaza escalates sharply yet again, to *cut off all transport and cargo to and from Israel*. At the same time there should be *mass strikes* against the imperialist rulers to *shut down production* demanding to *stop the genocidal war on Gaza*.

Port Workers Action Against Arms to Israel

The Zionists are worried. The Israeli website Shomrim produced an “exposé,” also published by the *Times of Israel* (19 August) and (in Hebrew) *N12 Magazine*, titled “Dockworkers across Europe Work Together to Halt Israeli Arms Shipments.” It warned:

“These worker-led protests, along with arms embargoes from some countries and the risk of Houthi attacks disrupting Asian transport routes, are putting heavy pressure on Israel’s already strained supply chain – a complex system vital to Israel’s access to arms. Despite the country’s push toward self-reliance in manufacturing military supplies, any disruption to the delivery of even small parts can lead to prolonged delays, potentially carrying strategic consequences.”

The article added, “The Foreign Ministry responded to Shomrim with a statement: ‘The issue is known and is being addressed with the relevant countries.’” In other words, Israel’s European patrons are expected to take measures against solidarity actions. So much for EU and NATO leaders’ hypocritical “concern” over genocide.

Israeli rulers’ worries are justified. Initially, there was little response by unions worldwide to Palestinian workers’ appeals to

stop war cargo to Israel, and even statements by Barcelona dockworkers and Belgian transport workers were mostly on paper, as the PGFTU complained in a May Day 2024 appeal.⁸ But as the horrific reality of the Gaza genocide has sunk in, some unions have begun to take action. In December 2024, two-thirds of the members of the Swedish dockworkers union, Svenska Hamnarbetarförbundet, voted for a six-day boycott of military shipments to Israel. But although the union’s vice-chairman, Erik Helgeson, said it would “mainly be a symbolic thing,” as Swedish military exports to Israel were very low, on the first day of the boycott he was fired for supposedly violating “national security.”⁹

Then on April 14, the Union of Port Workers in Morocco called on workers at the port of Casablanca to refuse to unload or service the *Nexoe Maersk*, scheduled to dock a few days later and take on a cargo (brought from Houston, Texas by the *Maersk Detroit*) of parts for the F-35 jets used to bomb Gaza. In Casablanca, demonstrators broke through one police line but were stopped by a second, and some workers boycotted the ship. It was delayed 40 hours. In the port of Tangier, 1,500 people protested against the docking of the ship on April 20 and were attacked by the riot police of this pro-Israel Arab monarchy.¹⁰ According to the *Drop Site* news outlet, 18 out of 20 crane controllers on the first shift and 27 of 30 workers on the second shift refused to service the ship, delaying it for a day and a half.

On June 4 and 5, dockworkers of the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) at the port of Fos-sur-Mer near Marseille refused to load military equipment (19 pallets of ammunition belt links and French-made gun barrels they had learned were in the cargo) onto the Liberia-flagged *Contship Era* bound for Haifa, Israel. The ammo belt links were removed, but unsure if they could locate the crates with gun barrels in time, the dockers contacted port workers in Genova, its next destination.¹¹ Later, on July 11, it was announced that a shipment of 122 tons of military grade steel from

⁸ See “May Day 2024: For International Workers Action Against the Genocidal U.S./Israel War on Gaza,” *The Internationalist* No. 72, January-May 2024.

⁹ See “Interview with Erik Helgeson of The Swedish Dock Workers Union,” *Växjös Gnista*, 12 June. On February 4, a court ruled that the union’s action was legal.

¹⁰ Moroccan workers and students have held repeated protests over the government’s collaboration with the Zionist state. The regime’s ties to Israel are so close that in May, Moroccan army units held joint “tunnel-warfare training” with the forces from Israel’s elite Golani Brigade as part of the African Lion 2025 exercises (*Israel Hayom*, 25 May).

¹¹ *La Provence*, 5 June.

Barcelona to Israel Military Industries was canceled due to a strike threat by the left-wing Basque LAB union.

Shortly after, on July 14, the Japanese-owned, Panama-flagged *Ever Golden* docked at Piraeus, the largest port in Greece, to transfer a cargo of Indian military-grade steel to the Saudi-owned *Folk Dammam*. Destination: the Israeli port of Haifa. Dockworkers organized in the ENEDEP union refused to touch it, declaring: “We will not unload a single gram of this cargo of death.” ENEDEP is affiliated with PAME (the All Workers Militant Front), the labor federation associated with the Greek Communist Party (KKE). Already in October 2024, the Piraeus dockers blocked a container with 21 tons of ammunition from being loaded aboard the ship *Marla Bull*, bound for Haifa, and in November KKE protesters blocked a convoy of trucks carrying ammunition and rockets to the Zelensky puppet regime in Ukraine.¹²

On August 7, again in Genova, longshoremen boarded the Saudi ship *Bahri Yanbu* coming from the U.S. port of Baltimore to inspect it. They found it loaded with weapons, ammunition, and armored vehicles. The next day, the CALP blocked two port entrances to prevent loading of military equipment produced by the Italian arms firm Leonardo, including a canon from the OTO works in La Spezia. This time the CGIL transport workers union (FILT) also complained to the port authority about shipments of military cargo to the Middle East. This is the very same ship that the CALP, in collaboration with French dockers unions, had stopped in 2019 when it was filled with weapons for Saudi Arabia’s war against Yemen.¹³

And now on September 22, up to a million protesters throughout Italy responded to the call from the Unione Sindacale di Base (USB), the Confederazione Unitaria di Base (CUB) and other “rank-and-file” unions to strike and take the streets for Gaza. SI Cobas, one of the largest, said it would adhere to the strike. In the last two years, these unions have called three one-day “general strikes” (in February 2024, February 2025 and June 2025) in solidarity with the Palestinians, and organizers reiterated their call for international strike action if the Sumud Flotilla is stopped. To amplify this on a European scale, the USB has called a meeting of European

¹² See “Greek Workers Block Arms to Israel and Ukraine,” *The Internationalist* No. 75 (January-May 2025).

¹³ “In Fance and Italy: Port Workers Boycott Saudi Military Cargo Bound for War in Yemen,” *The Internationalist* No. 56, May-June 2019.



Pro-Palestinian demonstrators block the rails in Torino, Italy, on September 22. Rail workers unions shut down all service on Trenitalia, Italo and Trenord lines in strike against genocide in Gaza.

port workers for September 26 and 27 under the slogan, “Dockers Do Not Work for War.” Hopefully this could spur workers action against the Gaza genocide worldwide.

Responding to the spreading workers actions to stop war cargo, on September 15 Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, head of the far-right coalition government including outright fascist ministers, made a speech saying that “We may find ourselves in a situation where our arms industries are blocked.” Given the country’s increasing isolation, he said, it may have to adopt an “autarkic” economy, producing everything in the Zionist fortress. In an insane fascist rant, taking a cue from Donald Trump, he blamed “limitless migration” for imposing an “Islamist agenda” on West Europe. As Israel’s Merkava tanks were revving their engines to move into Gaza in force the next day, he said Israel would have to become a “super-Sparta,” recalling the militaristic state of ancient Greece.¹⁴

His delirious vision horrified many Israelis. The Tel Aviv stock market fell, the largest business forum declared “We are not Sparta.” “Historians also pointed out that Sparta lost its wars and was destroyed” (*Irish Times*, 19 September). Even right-wingers declared they didn’t want to live in a state in perpetual war with its neighbors. While liberal critics hold Netanyahu uniquely responsible for Zionist crimes and Israeli autarchy is a fantasy, he has certainly expressed the final logic of Zionism in all its forms – a reactionary “Spartan” state which would be hell for the Palestinians and, as Leon Trotsky warned in 1940, a death trap for Jewish people. But to escape from this dystopian nightmare, Hebrew-speaking workers would have to break with Zionism and fight for *an Arab/Hebrew Palestinian workers state*, joining in particular with the powerful Egyptian and Turkish proletariats in a *socialist federation of the Middle East*.

Class Independence from the Capitalist State

Revolutionary Marxists know full well that to look to bourgeois government to stop weapons shipments to Israel is a program for defeat. The United States, of course, both under Democrat Joe Biden and Republican Trump, maintains its “ironclad” support to the Zionist genocide. Trump explicitly calls for removing the entire Palestinian population from Gaza. The European imperialists, however, under popular pressure, are resorting to

¹⁴ “Netanyahu admits Israel economically isolated, says will need to become ‘super-Sparta,’” *Times of Israel*, 15 June.



International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10 during May Day 2025 march in Oakland, California, calls for workers action to stop deportations and no military cargo for Israel's genocidal war.

various face-saving declarations and schemes. The French and British governments now call for recognition of a “Palestinian state” (which does not exist). What they mean is suppressing Hamas, which continues to have support for fighting against Israel, and turning the ruins of Gaza over to the puppet Palestinian Authority¹⁵ or some reactionary Arab regime.

German imperialism (the second largest supplier to the Israeli military after the U.S.) under Christian Democrat Friedrich Merz (and Social Democrat “defense” minister Boris Pistorius) on August 8 announced a halt on military exports to Israel “that could be used in the Gaza Strip.” Yet, in addition to upholding the Zionist state’s supposed “right to self-defense,” on August 13, Germany approved the delivery of a sixth Dolphin-class submarine to Israel, a key platform of the Zionist nuclear arsenal.¹⁶ While Berlin seeks to pump up its military industry (with solid support of the bureaucrats of the metal workers union, IG Metall) for full-on war against Russia, its police not only viciously repress pro-Palestinian demonstrations, on September 1 they kettled and brutally assaulted a traditional pacifist march in Cologne.

The same shell game is pursued by other NATO regimes. After the Labour Party came into office in Britain in 2024, it claimed to prohibit “arms export licenses to Israel for use in military operations in Gaza.” Yet since then, it authorized the export of over 8,600 items which the Israeli government classified as “munitions of war.”¹⁷ And as Labour prime minister Keir Starmer talks of recognizing a Palestinian state, London police arrested almost 900 people in a 300,000-strong pro-Palestinian demo on September 7. Meanwhile, the Spanish and Irish governments posture as critics of Israel, yet the former has awarded contracts to Israeli military industry of over 1 billion euros since the start of the war on Gaza, and the latter supplies drone parts to an Israeli arms company as U.S. weapons to Israel transit via Ireland’s airports.

The Turkish regime of Tayyip Recep

¹⁵ The Palestinian Authority is financed by tax receipts collected by Israel in the West Bank, and handouts from Washington. In 2024, the PA received \$16 million from the U.S., which has **increased** budgeted aid to \$45 million in 2025. PA “security” forces act as an Israeli adjunct, arresting and killing Palestinian militants.

¹⁶ The deal for the submarines, which were sold by the German arms giant ThyssenKrupp to both Israel and Egypt, was pushed through by Netanyahu and his gang against U.S. and other imperialist competitors.

¹⁷ “Revealed: Britain’s Labour Government Sent 8,000 “Munitions of War” to Israel After Saying It Had Stopped,” *Drop Site*, 7 May.

Erdoğan is a prime example of these maneuvers. In August, the Ankara government claimed to close Turkish ports and airspace to Israeli vessels and aircraft. But foreign-flagged ships still sail from Turkish ports to Israel. In May 2024 Turkey already claimed to have halted all direct trade with Israel, yet goods such as steel were simply rerouted through the Palestinian Authority. As the Lebanon-based news site *The Cradle* (28 August) noted: “This means that nearly two years into a genocide that Erdoğan denounces almost daily, oil still flows from Azerbaijan to Israel via Türkiye, Israel still gets critical minerals from Türkiye, and the Incirlik air base in Türkiye is still used by the US to deliver weapons to Israel and monitor the region’s skies to defend Israel and aid its aggression.”

Revolutionary Program Key to Break the Bureaucratic Stranglehold

Even more than the “pro-peace” posturing by the various capitalist governments, the biggest obstacle to using workers power to put a stop to the Gaza genocide is the treachery of the union bureaucracies, the “labor lieutenants of capital.” In Britain, where union militants have participated in protests against the Israeli weapons and surveillance company Elbit, the union tops have done nothing and the fanatically pro-Zionist Labour government has witch-hunted and banned Palestine Action¹⁸ on the grotesque charge of “terrorism.” (Mass arrests of opponents of the ban are expected at the Labour Party conference this weekend.) On July 14, Unite, Britain’s largest trade union, which includes transport workers, finally voted to “support” members who refuse to build, handle or transport weapons for Israel. But not, of course, to organize anything itself.

In the United States, the May Day 2024 resolution by the San Francisco Bay Area Local 10 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union “to refuse to handle military cargo to Israel” and to “honor picket lines protesting the war on Gaza” reflected widespread revulsion among working people against the annihilation of the Palestinian people in Gaza. Local 10’s history of respecting pro-Palestinian port pickets is such that the Israeli ZIM line no longer calls at the port. The Local took action against the South African ship *Nedlloyd Kimberley* in 1984, and on May Day 2008 the ILWU shut down every West Coast port against the imperialist war and occupation of

¹⁸ Palestine Action is a direct action group “committed to ending global participation in Israel’s genocidal and apartheid regime,” using disruptive tactics against “corporate enablers” such as arms manufacturers supplying Israel.

Afghanistan and Iraq. Yet the ILWU tops sank Local 10’s powerful resolution at the union’s convention in June 2024.

The East Coast International Longshoremen’s Association is worse. Pro-Trump ILA president Harold Dagget ostentatiously exempted military cargo from the union’s three-day strike in October 2024. Moreover, as the ILA hosted a meeting in June of the International Dockworkers Council, led by Dagget’s son Dennis, in Charleston, South Carolina, along with a commemoration of the “Charleston Five” struggle against the repression of ILA members in their historic 2000 strike,¹⁹ Dagget Sr. put out a vile statement *hailing* Trump’s bombing of Iran. This made some IDCers in attendance uncomfortable, but their response was to issue a mealy-mouthed pacifist statement with not a word against Israel. Now the Daggets and IDC are organizing a conference in Lisbon, Portugal in November on resisting automation on the docks. Typically, rather than calling for workers action, they look to the U.S. president and the pope in Rome.

Meanwhile, the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF), the very pinnacle of the labor bureaucracy and a flagrantly corrupt outfit, is – unsurprisingly – missing in action. While its Africa division called in 2024 to stop arms to Israel, the ITF leaders are at war with the staff at its London headquarters, which they want to downsize by a quarter; strikes by these workers are on-going.²⁰ The failure or outright refusal by “mainstream” labor throughout the world to act against the genocide in Gaza, against the Zionist war on much of the Middle East and the U.S./NATO imperialist war drive against Russia and China means that the fight for class-struggle workers action must be part of a broader battle for revolutionary opposition to the pro-imperialist labor bureaucracy and its growing integration into the capitalist state.

In Italy, the epicenter of militant labor-led opposition to the barbaric slaughter by the Zionists and imperialists, the explosive mass strike of September 22 ran up against the far-right coalition government of Giorgia Meloni and her fascist Fratelli d’Italia (Brothers of Italy) party. While reformists sought vainly to pressure the government, Meloni vituperated against “so-called ‘pro-pal,’ so-called ‘antifa,’ so-called ‘pacifist’” “pseudo-demonstrators” and declared her support for the police against “these hooligans.” Fascist Senate president Ignazio La Russa denounced “urban guerrillas” and transport minister Matteo Salvini of the Lega declared ominously that the government would have to “think about the right to strike” and in the future demonstration organizers would have to pay a deposit for damages.

In fact, the September 22 mass strike and mobilization was a test of the government’s draconian security law which bans just about everything protesters did: strike pickets, blocking traffic, occupying train stations, cutting off highways. It was a vivid illustration of the class nature of the state, and that “the law” reflects the balance of class forces. “‘So much for the security decree,’ noted an older militant of the rank-and-file unions. ‘If we have 300,000 we will take the beltway, and let them charge us!’” (*Il Manifesto*, 23 September). What this ultimately poses is the struggle for state power, for which a revolutionary leadership is indispensable.

Today, as in decades past, the different Italian unions and labor federations, rather than

¹⁹ The ILA in fact sabotaged that struggle, refusing to defend the Charleston Five for over a year.

²⁰ See “Rolex-Wearing Union Leader Faces Allegations of Union-Busting,” *Novara Media*, 6 August.

carrying out powerful united-front action, each do their own thing, holding partial “general strikes” on different days. The strikes and occupations were intended as tactics to pressure the fascist-led regime that resorts to police-state measures. The Nucleo Internazionalista d’Italia, section of the League for the Fourth International, has called “For a Real General Strike to Stop the ‘Security Decree’ and Arms Build-Up!” (*The Internationalist* No. 75, January-May 2025). And while CGIL leader Maurizio Landini declared in Catania on September 22 that Israel should be sanctioned just like Russia, we Trotskyists call to defeat the drive by the U.S. and NATO imperialists to dismember Russia, and ultimately to reconquer China and destroy its revolutionary gains, which the Stalinist bureaucracy is busily undercutting.

The fight to block weapons (or any other shipments) to the Zionist state must be an integral part of a struggle to smash the imperialist war drive. That struggle is undercut by widespread anti-Marxist misconceptions among leftists who equate Russia, an intermediate capitalist country, and China, a bureaucratically deformed workers state, with imperialism, including second-rate Italian imperialism, which sucks superprofits from the exploitation of semi-colonial and oppressed peoples and nations. Some currents which trace their lineage back to Amadeo Bordiga even refused to take sides in the war between Zionist Israel and the Palestinians, or Iran. Genuine Leninists and Trotskyists, in contrast, stand on the same side of the barricades militarily as those fighting imperialism and Zionism, while giving no political support to the Stalinist, Islamist or other non-proletarian forces.

Currently, in various parts of Europe, class struggles are breaking out. In France, populists and trade-unionists are fighting, in separate mobilizations, against vicious austerity policies as the self-proclaimed “Jupiterian” president Emmanuel Macron cycles through one prime minister after another. In Germany, the fascist Alternative für Deutschland feeds off discontent caused by the economic recession that is a direct result of NATO/EU sanctions on Russia. In Britain, outright fascists are leading mass marches against immigrants. On the other side of the Atlantic, the ultra-rightist administration of Donald Trump is entering the first stages of a police-state regime, with masked paramilitary forces marauding through cities picking up immigrants (and citizens) in its drive for mass deportations.

All of this, and the outbreak of wars around the world, is a reflection of the advanced decay of the imperialist system which, as was dramatically shown in the COVID pandemic with its horrific death toll (notably in Italy), can no longer meet the basic needs of the population. Neoliberal “globalization” has run its course, having destroyed whole swaths of industry in the advanced capitalist countries. The welfare state capitalism of the post-World War II period is moribund. The situation is rapidly spiraling in the direction of a thermonuclear World War III, which only international socialist revolution can prevent. The task that the League for the Fourth International has assumed is to cohere the nucleus of the revolutionary vanguard on the Bolshevik program of Lenin and Trotsky to wage that struggle.

As Trotsky wrote in the 1938 Transitional Program, “The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership.” And as Rosa Luxemburg wrote amid the horrors of the first imperialist world war, the choice facing humanity is *socialism or barbarism*. If you want to know what barbarism looks like, just look at the genocide in Gaza today. ■

CLASS STRUGGLE EDUCATION WORKERS

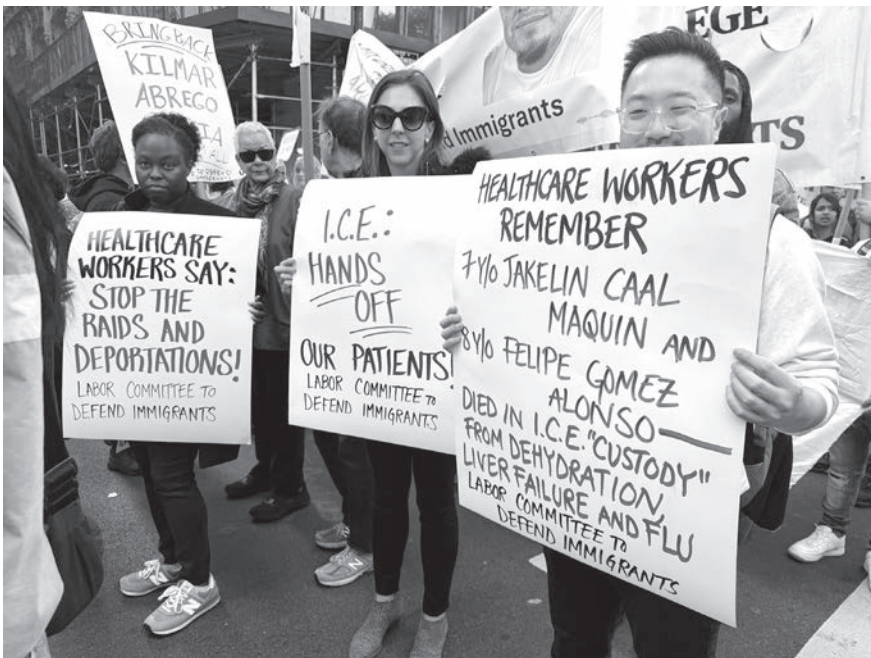
Teachers, Health Care Workers, Teamsters Say: For Workers Action to Stop Deportations

ICE Out Now!

The following article is reprinted from Marxism & Education No. 7, September 2025.

As Donald J. Trump prepared to take office as president of the United States, he made it clear that he would rule by decree. The U.S. Supreme Court had already approved the doctrine of a “unitary executive,” a blueprint for authoritarian rule, in which neither courts nor Congress could stop the “official actions” of the president (like trying to officially overturn an election). So in the first hours and days of his second administration, the would-be strongman unleashed an avalanche of executive orders that set the stage for a wholesale assault on programs and whole departments of the federal government, constitutional guarantees and democratic rights in general. Having been elected on a program for “mass deportations now,” Trump has focused on immigrants in his drive to a Bonapartist “strong state” regime. And we are well on the way.

Among the first actions by the new administration was to rescind the memo in-



Health workers in LCDI contingent at NYC May Day 2025.

structing agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to generally steer clear of schools, hospitals and religious sites. At the same time, the acting director of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) moved to eliminate undocumented immigrants’ right to due process (under the 14th Amendment to the Constitution) by expanding the use of “expedited removal” throughout the country instead of only in border areas. In addition, Trump decreed an end to birthright citizenship, also secured in the 14th Amendment establishing

the citizenship of former slaves. Children of any non-citizen immigrant could now have their citizenship canceled.

Millions of immigrants were thrown into terror. Soon ICE agents were knocking on doors in pre-dawn raids, immigrants were being bundled onto planes to the U.S. base in Guantánamo (stolen from Cuba) and when that didn’t stop courts from challenging this blatantly illegal move, they were transferred to a notorious “anti-terrorist” prison in El Salvador. In late May, seeing deportation numbers falling short

of his goal of a million per year, Trump ordered ICE to grab anyone it could. Days later an army of federal agents was dispatched to Los Angeles to carry out militarized workplace raids. Faced with protests, Trump federalized several thousand California National Guardsmen and sent in the Marines. Now masked federal police in unmarked cars are snatching people off the street. In New York, immigrants are being seized as they leave courts.

Soon after Trump’s election, supporters of Class Struggle Education Workers and its

fraternal allies of the Internationalist Group in New York City called a Labor Conference to Defend Immigrants for early December on a program for independent workers action to stop deportations. At the same time, a Committee to Defend Immigrants was launched by the Internationalist Club at Hunter College, while CSEW supporters in NYC public schools initiated school-based immigrant defense committees and a resolution was prepared for the United Federation of Teachers Delegate Assembly calling for forming such committees elsewhere. On the West Coast, Class Struggle Workers – Portland put forward a “Resolution to Defend Immigrants Against Mass Deportations and Racist Violence” that was passed by six local unions.

There are now Labor Committees to Defend Immigrants both in New York and Portland, which have held “Know Your Rights” sessions for union members, distributed KYR cards and other information to students, made presentations to parents groups and demonstrated in the streets. The New York LCDI has published a 75-page Immigrant Rights Defense Packet. In NYC, the Committee to Defend Immigrants initiated by the UFT chapter at Franklin Delano Roosevelt High School in South Brooklyn held a demonstration on March 6 to underline that faculty and staff “firmly stand by our students” and are organizing to keep ICE “out of our school and our communities.” On May 1, a contingent of 50 supporters of the LCDI and the Hunter Committee to Defend Immigrants marched in the NYC May Day demonstration.

Then on June 12 the UFT Delegate Assembly finally passed, by an overwhelming 93%, the “Resolution for Union-Led Defense of Immigrant Students, Families and Staff” after attempts to get it on the agenda at monthly meetings since December (see below). The resolution notes that “we cannot look to the

Resolution for Union-Led Defense of Immigrant Students, Families and Staff

On June 12 [2025], the Delegate Assembly of the United Federation of Teachers in New York City overwhelmingly approved by a 93% vote (837 in favor, 65 against) the following resolution presented by Yari Milo Michel, a delegate from Franklin Delano Roosevelt High School in Brooklyn and a supporter of Class Struggle Education Workers.

WHEREAS, on January 20, the Trump administration, building on actions of the previous administration, declared a “national emergency” to carry out its threatened deportations of millions of undocumented immigrants, as well as those in Temporary Protected Status, humanitarian parole, refugees applying for asylum and other statuses, while those in DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) status are at risk; and

WHEREAS, on January 21, the Acting Secretary of Homeland Security (DHS) issued a directive rescinding prior guidelines limiting ac-

tions by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in or near “sensitive” areas, including schools, hospitals and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, on the same date another DHS directive expanded categories for “expedited removal” to any who have been in the U.S. for less than two years, which includes many new immigrant students; and

WHEREAS, this threat of mass deportations has caused widespread fear and anxiety among immigrant families and communities, and harmed our students’ education; and

WHEREAS, students whose parents are immigrants targeted by these plans face the prospect of separation from their families, or being forced to leave the country even if they are citizens; and

WHEREAS, President Trump issued an executive order to nullify the citizenship of children of undocumented parents, blatantly violating the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, so that even children born in the United States of immigrant parents fear they

could be deported; and

WHEREAS, New York City local “sanctuary” laws 228 (2017) and 486-A/487-A (2014) restricting NYC employees’ communication with federal immigration authorities are already being undercut by the mayor, who last week issued a memorandum that would effectively allow ICE to enter city facilities even without a warrant signed by a federal judge or magistrate; and

WHEREAS, many of the 146,000 homeless students in NYC public schools reside in city shelters; and

WHEREAS, 40 percent of the population of New York City and nearly half (45 percent) of its workforce were born in another country, while a majority of the more than half a million undocumented immigrants in NYC have lived here for over a decade and are a vital part of our community; and

WHEREAS, under the NY state constitution, all children here have a right to a public education; and

WHEREAS, it is our duty as educators to stand by and advocate for our students and their families; and

WHEREAS, it is the duty of the unions to defend our fellow workers including school staff; and

WHEREAS, “an injury to one is an injury to all” is a basic principle of the labor movement; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Delegate Assembly of the United Federation of Teachers encourages local chapters to initiate school-based committees to defend immigrants, which may include and work with other unions, students, parents and community members; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Assembly rejects the vile attacks on immigrants, and calls on all of labor to initiate such defense committees and mobilize its power in defense of immigrants; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that these are our students, our fellow workers, our neighbors, and we will act to support them in this, their hour of need, and always. We will not let them take our students.

February 11, 2025

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September 2025

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- **Teachers Unions Must Fight Neo-McCarthyite Censorship**
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government, the courts, the police or politicians of either Democratic or Republican parties to protect immigrants from deportation or bigoted attacks," it encourages UFT local chapters to initiate school-based committees to defend immigrants and calls on "all of labor to initiate such defense committees and mobilize its power in defense of immigrants." It concludes: "these are our students, our fellow workers, our neighbors, and we will act to support them in this, their hour of need, and always. We will not let them take our students."

The school-based committees in New York have prepared resource kits for educators, made bulletin boards, held "red card" making sessions and held distributions of KYR materials in English, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Russian, Ukrainian and Bengali at subway and bus stops in Brooklyn and the Bronx. Many unions including AFSCME, SEIU, UFCW, UAW, AFT, NEA and the AFL-CIO have prepared immigration information kits. In New York, supporters and officials of six Teamsters locals are participating in the LCDI, and Joint Council 16 reaffirmed a 2017 resolution declaring itself a "sanctuary union." The LCDI seeks to cohere a core of worker activists so that when the time comes, they can help spark a labor-led outpouring to make workplaces and immigrant communities "no go" areas for ICE.

At the Labor Conferences to Defend Immigrants, reference was made to the response in the North to the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, when cities rose up to stop the slave catchers. In Boston in 1854, the federal government brought in troops, making it an occupied city. Now Trump has brought troops into Los Angeles. Today what is needed is a working-class mobilization, independent of the capitalist parties, to uphold the call for full citizenship rights for all immigrants, and to ensure that all those who have made it to the U.S. can stay here. Those fleeing the devastation caused by U.S. imperialism must be defended as working people mobilize against the criminal government that would expel them. ■

For more information, write to laborconference@gmail.com, cs_edworkers@hotmail.com or cswp@cswp-pdx.org.

Police State...

continued from page 1

and up to 21,000 National Guard troops (NBC News, 4 June).

L.A. – D.C. – Chicago: Feds Charge, People Resist, Democrats Bluster

The kickoff came on June 6 with raids on a day laborers site near a Home Depot and at a garment wholesaler in downtown L.A. Soon after federal agents in camouflage arrived at the second stop, community organizers and protesters alerted by rapid response networks gathered, allegedly blocking ICE vehicles. Agents singled out and pushed union leader David Huerta of SEIU-United Service Workers West to the ground, injuring his head. That evening several hundred demonstrators protested outside the federal detention center demanding the immigrants be freed. The next day, President Trump issued an executive order federalizing 2,000 National Guard troops and deploying 700 Marines to Los Angeles. The order was written to apply wherever protests against ICE operations "are occurring, or are likely to occur."¹ So, anywhere.

In the following days, there were large protests in L.A. against the Guard and federal agents outside the detention center, including activists of the Internationalist Group and Revolutionary Internationalist Youth. Meanwhile, the feds were rampaging around Latino neighborhoods like Boyle Heights and East L.A., and in once predominantly black cities like Compton, which is now two-thirds Latino. June is graduation month. At one local high school, the principal advised families to arrive an hour earlier than the scheduled time and had immigrant rights advocates posted outside as lookouts. Several schools closed out the school year by returning to remote learning so immigrant students would not have to risk being detained on their way to school, and the children of immigrants would not have to fear returning home to find their parents gone.

The raids have been carried out with wanton violence. One L.A. video shows un-

¹ See "Labor Must Act: Drive ICE Out of L.A.!" on page 8 of this issue.

marked vehicles ramming a car, with masked agents pulling the driver out and throwing him to the ground. Another shows masked men breaking the windows of a truck in a Home Depot parking lot when the driver refuses to open the door. A third shows *la migra* (immigration cops) swarming a street vendor. *The attackers look like terrorists because they are:* the aim of all this harassment and violence is to terrorize immigrants and others. Like the U.S. bombing of Iraq in the 2003 invasion, it is supposed to produce "shock and awe," but on the domestic terrain. The same on July 7 when a line of agents on horseback trotted around a near-empty MacArthur Park, camera crew in tow: the point was to intimidate, and to assert that the feds can go wherever they want.

Likewise with the July 10-11 raids by 400-500 federal agents on two cannabis farms near L.A., where feds teargassed protesters and detained all the workers, arresting 361, while one died in the chaos. These massive shows of force, random detentions and gratuitous violence are all highly illegal, racist and unconstitutional, violating the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution, against "unreasonable searches and seizures," as well as the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments against depriving anyone of liberty "without due process of law." But although a California federal judge prohibited these random abductions, on September 8 the U.S. Supreme Court, in an emergency ruling, okayed stops on the basis of looking Latino, speaking Spanish and/or being engaged in manual labor or a low-wage job. It's blatant racial and class profiling.

Overall in the Los Angeles area, around 5,000 immigrants were rounded up by feds since the militarized June raids. In August, Trump moved on to Washington, D.C., federalizing the entire local National Guard and bringing in hundreds more troops while flooding the streets with federal agents. Supposedly intended to fight crime, this "surge" by the feds sent immigration detentions in D.C. up to 1,400. But while prosecutors were instructed to bring maximum charges against protesters, Washington grand juries rejected at least eight felony indictments, an unheard-of number, and in cases that went to trial on lesser charges, several resulted in acquittals or hung juries. So while the feds are pushing hard to reach the Trump administration quota, the population in targeted cities is pushing back.

This was shown most dramatically in Chicago, where 3,000+ immigrants have been abducted since "Operation Midway" began in early September. In neighborhood after neighborhood, hundreds of residents have come into the streets to protest the marauding ICE and Border Patrol agents, in a number of cases chasing off snatch squads trying to seize their neighbors. The Democratic mayor (Brandon Johnson) and governor (JB Pritzker) have talked tough against Trump, who has threatened to arrest them. They have also taken some steps siding with protesters, such as providing official signs and whistles to alert against *la migra*. But Illinois state police and Chicago cops have acted as a shield for the feds. The Democrats argue that the National Guard isn't needed because their cops are doing just fine in protecting the federal immigrant hunters.

Similarly in Los Angeles, Mayor Karen Bass grabbed headlines over the MacArthur Park provocation, telling Border Patrol regional commander Gregory Bovino that ICE "needs to leave ... right now!" But ICE did not leave, and although city

officials insist that their "sanctuary" policies haven't changed, LAPD cops are ever-present when there are protests against the feds, to "ensure public safety," i.e., to beat up the protesters. California governor Gavin Newsom slammed Trump's deployment of the National Guard, but had state highway patrol officers keep protesters away from the marijuana farm raid. In D.C., Mayor Muriel Bowser ordered Metro Police to work alongside the federal agents and National Guard.² In other words, Democratic elected officials order their cops to ride shotgun for the immigrant snatchers.

While they may mouth off, the Democrats have done nothing to stop the mass deportations of potentially millions of immigrants. They hold flag-waving "No Kings" protests, but have done nothing against Trump's 217 executive orders (so far) in his second presidency, including patently illegal and unconstitutional measures, beyond having attorneys general of "blue" (Democratic) states file court suits. Once those suits get past the appeals courts, they will be shot down by the Supreme Court, which Trump owns. The dead-end "strategy" of looking to the state apparatus reflects the fact that the Democrats, too, have governed by executive orders, have unleashed racist police repression, have built up the deportation machine, expelling far more immigrants than Trump has, and have helped lay the basis for the police state now coming into being.

In doing so, as a partner party of Wall Street and the Pentagon, waging endless imperialist wars from the Middle East to Ukraine while destroying workers' jobs "at home" with "free trade" pacts, the Democrats led to the election – twice – of Trump, the would-be strongman who is seeking unlimited, dictatorial powers. This underscores the urgent need to **mobilize the power of the working class to stop the deportation of immigrants** and to **stop the drive toward police-state rule**. It drives home the call to **break with Democrats, Republicans and all parties and politicians representing capital** and to **build a revolutionary workers party** as a champion of all the oppressed, which is key to defending the fundamental rights of all now under attack.

War on Immigrants, War on the Left

The Democrats may say "stop ICE" or "stop the raids" – and many don't even say that – but they are *not* calling to stop the deportations. They are essentially saying, "we can do deportations better," without federal troops and without so much *Sturm und Drang* (storm and stress). But for Trump, the troops, the masks, the unmarked cars, the beatings, the violation of laws and longstanding legal precedent, the legal fictions and outright lies, are all *integral to his mass deportations program as the vehicle to impose unbridled police rule*. Such rule is what Marxists call *Bonapartism*, a "strong state" regime which, while preserving (some of) the trappings of parliamentary "democracy" is based on asserting *unlimited*

² An in-depth report in the *New York Times* (1 October), "How Washington Became a Testing Ground for ICE," states: "The agency sharply increased its arrests in the city by working alongside the local police and other federal agencies to identify immigrants during stops for minor traffic violations..." ICE made 85 arrests in D.C. from January 20 through the end of July. "But from early August until mid-September, ICE made around 1,200 arrests, according to officials with knowledge of the data. One key to the strategy: ICE's close partnership with both the Metropolitan Police Department and the U.S. Park Police," the article notes.

executive power through the *military/police apparatus of repression*, of which the courts are an integral component.³

Many liberal Democrats and reformist leftists call Trump a “fascist.” No, as we have explained, he’s a would-be dictator, but the U.S. president is not the head of a mass fascist movement that serves as a battering ram to smash the workers movement. The bourgeois rulers do not presently need that instrument because their class rule is not now threatened by a radicalized proletariat. Yes, real fascists exist and are a real danger. But what significant capitalist sectors see the need for today is a beefed-up repressive regime to deal with inevitable unrest resulting from the decay of U.S. imperialism. Donald Trump fills the bill. He certainly traffics in fascist rhetoric, and significant parts of his MAGA (Make America Great Again) movement – including several in his administration – have a fascistic, or fascist-like, character. His target is the Democrats and radical leftists, which he ridiculously lumps together.

A good example of how the mass deportation drive fits into this was when Kristi Noem, the sociopathic DHS secretary, went to Los Angeles on June 12, after the initial militarized workplace raids and proclaimed: “We are staying here to liberate this city from the socialist and burdensome leadership that this Governor Newsom and this mayor placed on this country.” Newsom and Bowers are certainly no “socialists.” (Newsom called to roll back Medi-Cal health insurance for undocumented immigrants and had a chummy podcast with Charlie Kirk.) But Noem’s “liberation” army is the hundreds of federal agents, particularly ICE and the Border Patrol, part of the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) division of the DHS, acting as a private paramilitary force to “disappear” immigrants and sow terror in the population.

In this context of a federal government itching to unleash heavy-duty repression against what it sees as the left, on September 10, Kirk, the leader of the fascistic Christian-nationalist Turning Point USA national student/youth organization, was assassinated on a Utah campus. This had the impact of a bolt of lightning, delivering a huge electrical jolt to the drive toward a police state. In a message from the White House that night, President Trump blamed the shooting on “radical left political violence.” While little is publicly known about the views of the alleged shooter, who has been kept under wraps by prosecutors, he was certainly no leftist and reportedly was an avid devotee of militaristic video games. Yet the next day, when Trump was asked if he had a message for his followers, he replied that “we have to beat the hell” out of “radical left lunatics.”

Some fascistic MAGA loudmouths such as Steve Bannon and Alex Jones declared that Kirk’s killing means “war,” while Elon Musk declared “The Left is the party of murder.” As the deafening drumbeat of right-wing praise for Kirk kept up, so did calls for reprisals against any criticism of this purveyor of

racist, homophobic, transphobic and antisemitic bigotry. This is government-sponsored witch-hunting. Broadcasting the *Charlie Kirk Show* from the White House, Vice President JD Vance called to report to their employers anyone who made negative remarks about the slain MAGA icon. Trump’s attorney general Pam Bondi said that the Department of Justice would “target” Kirk critics for “hate speech.” Suspensions and firings of teachers were reported in at least 24 states, while in Texas some 200 teachers were investigated.

In this orgy of witch-hunting, a web site, Charlie’s Murderers, was set up that gathered the names of “thousands,” publishing many with details about the targeted individuals’ employers, location and social media accounts. And Trump’s words about brutally beating leftists were not just bluster, they were *marching orders for the actual fascists*. Recall how in the 2020 election campaign he told the Proud Boys to “stand back, and stand by” – which they did. And when Trump called for all to come to Washington on 6 January 2021, where “it will be wild,” the Proud Boys, III Percenters and other fascist action groups responded, bringing an arsenal and leading the racist lynch mob storming of Congress. But this time the calls to avenge the potential future top leader of a mass fascist movement are backed up by the full force of the federal government.

One racist right-wing commentator called the slaying of Kirk “the American Reichstag fire” and called for “a complete crackdown on the left” (*New York Times*, 11 September). The writer clearly understood, and wanted to emulate, how the 1933 burning of the German parliament was falsely blamed by Nazis on leftists, and then used by the month-old Hitler regime as the pretext for mass arrests of Communists. And at the September 21 memorial for Kirk, Trump deputy Miller eulogized the Turning Point USA leader saying that “we (the MAGA movement) are the storm.” That eerily echoed the words of Nazi leader Josef Goebbels at the funeral of Horst Wessel, a local leader of the paramilitary SA (*Sturmabteilung*) goon squads, killed by two Communists in 1930. The Nazi propaganda chief turned the street thug into a martyr and threatened, “get ready for the storm.” The *Horst-Wessel-Lied* became the Nazi SA Brownshirts’ marching song.

So yes, in the United States today there are strong echoes of Nazism and other mass fascist movements of the past. This underscores that we must use every opportunity to organize mass struggle bringing out the enormous potential power of the multinational working class. And that is, above all, a question of leadership.

Trump’s Big Lie: NSPM-7 Targets the Left as “Terrorists”

Trump understood that Kirk’s killing was an opportunity to step up the drive for a police state. On September 22 he issued an executive order designating “antifa” (for antifascist) a “domestic terrorist organization.” And on September 25, he signed National Security Presidential Memorandum 7 (NSPM-7), a Stephen Miller special, supposedly for “Countering Domestic Terrorism and Organized Political Violence.” If last year’s go-to technique for witch-hunters was to equate anti-Zionist opposition to the U.S./Israel genocide in Gaza with antisemitism, this year’s weaponized label of choice is to brand leftists as “terrorists,” and liberal donors as funders who “aid and abet” “criminal conduct.” Hours before, it was reported that U.S. attorneys around the country

were instructed to open investigations into George Soros’ Open Society foundation.

Anyone with the least knowledge of the radical and not-so-radical left in the United States knows that “antifa” is not a single organization but a loose movement to counter fascists with “direct action.” By labeling active opposition to fascist provocations as “terrorist,” the would-be dictator in the White House wants to target the entire left. NSPM-7 lists as “indicia” (signs) of “terrorism” such things as “self-described ‘anti-fascism’” and opposition to “foundational American principles” such as “support for law enforcement and border control.” Other “indicia” are “anti-Americanism, anti-capitalism, and anti-Christianity; support for the overthrow of the United States Government; extremism on migration, race, and gender; and hostility towards those who hold traditional American views on family, religion, and morality.”

So with those indicators, Trump’s Memorandum calls for “a national strategy to investigate and disrupt networks, entities, and organizations” so that “law enforcement can intervene ... before they result in violent political acts,” as well as to investigate “acts of recruiting or radicalizing persons.” NSPM-7 is an all-in-one combo of Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) chief J. Edgar Hoover’s 1960s COINTELPRO program of disruption and murderous repression of leftist and black militant groups with Senator Joe McCarthy’s 1950s anti-communist witch-hunting. Equating anti-fascism and anti-capitalism with “terrorism” is blatantly false – but when has that ever bothered Trump, a past master of the Hitlerian Big Lie? It might not suffice to convict any group or person, but it is quite sufficient as an excuse to “investigate,” “disrupt” and worse.

The Memorandum authorizes Joint Terrorism Task Forces (of which there are some 200 across the U.S.) to “investigate, prosecute, and disrupt” not only groups or individuals labeled “terrorist” but also any engaged in “intimidation designed to suppress lawful political activity” (which is what the feds call protests against fascist or fascistic outfits) or to “obstruct the rule of law” (how they label resisting ICE). NSPM-7 refers to protests against immigration raids in Los Angeles and Portland as “riots” and “attacks” on ICE and CBP, and defines “rioting,” “looting,” “trespass,” “destruction of property” and “civil disorder” as “terrorist acts.” The Justice Department is tasked with drawing up a watch list of “domestic terrorist organizations” for Trump ... via “Homeland Security Advisor” Stephen Miller.

Again, all this is done by decree – executive orders and presidential memoranda which have the force of law. But in this case, Trump has no need for new legislation. The “legal” basis for much of this was laid under the USA PATRIOT Act rammed through Congress in the wake of the 11 September 2001 bombing of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, with the bipartisan vote of the overwhelming majority of Republicans and Democrats. Throw in the all-purpose RICO (Racketeer-Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) conspiracy laws, COINTELPRO and decades of police spying on leftists, and the feds are good to go.

We’ve seen this before. Our predecessor organization, the Spartacist League (SL) when it was the voice of revolutionary Trotskyism, sued the FBI and U.S. attorney general in 1983 over the Reagan administration’s “Domestic Security/Terrorism Guidelines” and investigations of the SL under those witch-hunting criteria. Like the Trump administration’s new Memorandum, those “guide-

lines” similarly went after left groups exercising their constitutionally protected rights of speech and advocacy, smearing them with the “terrorism” label. After a year, the government agreed to withdraw its slanderous “definition” of the SL, in a stipulation signed by one Rudy Giuliani as U.S. attorney (see “FBI Admits: Marxists Are Not Terrorists,” *Workers Vanguard* No. 368, 7 December 1984).⁴

Repurposing the Military for Internal War

Shortly after the issuing of the “little-known” NSPM-7, and simultaneous with the military-style deportation raid on a south Chicago apartment building,⁵ the Trump administration summoned all 800+ of the military’s general and flag officers, the entire top brass of the U.S. armed forces, to a command performance on September 30 at the Marine Corps base at Quantico, Virginia outside Washington. There they would hear Pete Hegseth, secretary of what Trump has rebaptized the War Department, and the U.S. president on the “warrior ethos.” Such a meeting has not occurred before in living memory and one retired senior officer wondered on social media if it might be a replay of a surprise assembly of German generals in 1935 where they were “required to swear a personal oath to the Führer.” Hegseth replied, “Cool story, general.”

What was actually said at the meeting was, first, that the military must become more “lethal,” and second, that the main war is against “the enemy within,” an ominous phrase harking back to the heyday of McCarthyism. Hegseth said he was out to get rid of “woke garbage” that “made us less lethal and less capable.” He would “untie the hands of our war fighters to intimidate, demoralize, hunt and kill the enemies of our country. No more politically correct and overbearing rules of engagement,” just “maximum lethality.”

Then came Trump, saying that “our inner cities” are “a big part of war now,” because “we’re under invasion from within.” As for which cities, he said:

“The Democrats run most of the cities that are in bad shape ... the ones that are run by the radical left Democrats. What they’ve done to San Francisco, Chicago, New York, Los Angeles – they’re very unsafe places. And we’re going to straighten them out one by one. And this is going to be a major part for some of the people in this room. That’s a war too. It’s a war from within.”

Trump went on:

“We should use some of these dangerous cities as training grounds for our military – National Guard, but military. Because we’re going into Chicago very soon. That’s a big city with an incompetent governor, stupid governor, stupid.... “How about Portland? Portland, Oregon where it looks like a war zone. And I get a call from the liberal governor, ‘Sir, please don’t come in. We don’t need you.’ I said, well, unless they’re playing false tapes, this look like World War II. Your place is burning down.”

⁴ While underlining the importance of this “modest but genuine blow against the new McCarthyism,” the article added, “We have no illusions that the government’s secret police have stopped or will stop their harassment, infiltration and disruption of Marxist political organizations and other perceived political opponents of the government. We do know that the secret police have not changed since Karl Marx was harassed by secret agents of Prussia, that as long as the capitalists hold state power, their police agents will continue their dirty work against any real or perceived challenges to their class rule.”

⁵ See “Chicago Under Siege: Thousands Demand Stop Deportation Raids,” on page 1 of this issue.

And, of course, Fox media was replaying tapes from the 2020 mass protests against federal forces in Portland. Not that this glaring discrepancy mattered.

Trump highlighted that in August he signed an executive order to set up a “quick reaction force” to “quell civil disturbances.” According to the *Washington Post* (12 August) those plans call for a force of 600 National Guard troops, stationed at two bases, one in Arizona and the other in Alabama, to be on call at all times and ready to deploy within one hour to any city in the U.S. In addition, according to Trump’s August 25 order, by 1 January 2026, each state will be required to have units of at least 500 troops each to serve as part of a rapid-reaction force. Under the order, those troops would be “deputized” to enforce federal law. Trump is trying to get around the 1878 Posse Comitatus Act prohibitions against using the military for domestic repression by turning federalized Guard units into a de facto standing military force.

Retired Major General Randy Manner, a former acting vice chief of the National Guard Bureau, said that the order was “100% political”: “The administration is trying to desensitize the American people to get used to American armed soldiers in combat vehicles patrolling the streets of America.” He added that the “purpose is to, quite frankly, dominate and police the American people.” When you add Hegseth’s orders about “maximum lethality” and Trump’s talk of a “war from within” in “Democrat cities,” what the administration is building up to is shooting down protesters in the U.S. This is shades of Operation Garden Plot, the code name of Richard Nixon’s infamous “civil disturbance” plan drafted in the late 1960s, using the Watts, Newark and Detroit upheavals as a pretext, that included locking up thousands of U.S. antiwar protesters on military bases.

In the Oval Office September 25 event when NSPM-7 was signed, the ubiquitous Stephen Miller declared that “This is the first time in American history that there is an ‘all-of-government’ effort to dismantle left-wing terrorism,” which he portrayed as a giant, well-funded enterprise going back to the Black Lives Matter “riots.” Evidently, this Big Lie operation to smear and repress the left also includes the military. Donald Trump is declaring his intent to do what Nixon and Reagan did not achieve. For that he needs the machinery of a Bonapartist “strong state” based on unrestricted military/police power. This is a clear and present danger not only to immigrants and radical leftists (both real and imagined) but to many other sectors of the U.S. populace and to all defenders of democratic rights. The issue is how to fight and defeat it.

“Deep State” or Trump State, It’s the Capitalist State

In response to Trump’s rapid-fire assault on a host of government agencies and the civil service which for years he has labeled the “Deep State,” the Democrats and their various front groups (Moveon.org, 50501, Indivisible, Mobilize.org, etc.) have organized several nationwide marches which have been very large, and very impotent. At the liberals’ “No Kings” marches in mid-June and mid-October, many of the speakers accused Trump of hijacking “our democracy.” But for working people and oppressed social sectors, it is not “our democracy” but *their pseudo-democracy*, in which both parties represent capital and trample on the interests of the workers, immigrants, black people, women, lesbian, gay and transgender people.

Both parties have ruled by decree



Stephen Miller, White House mastermind of war on immigrants and war on left.

(through executive orders) in recent years, in good part because the U.S. is so sharply and narrowly divided. Trump won with 49.8% of the popular vote in the 2024 elections, against 48.3% for the Democrats’ Kamala Harris, a 1.5% spread. Yet the MAGA Republicans claim a mandate to ram through their reactionary agenda. The Democrats, for their part, look in vain to the courts and the military – organs of repression of the capitalist state – to rein Trump in. The day that NSPM-7 was passed, the liberal media were focused on the indictment of former FBI director James Comey, who used some of the same conspiracy laws to go after leakers of government secrets like Edward Snowden that Trump would now use against the left. Biden used the courts as a political club against Trump, as Trump is now using them against Democrats.

Meanwhile, Trumpers are going all out to keep their grip on office. As the 2026 midterm elections draw near, in “red” states like Florida and Texas, Republicans are pushing for control of election boards and are gerrymandering like crazy, redrawing the election district lines to maximize their seats. In “blue” states like New York and California, Democrats are doing the same. Trump muses about a third term, which would be unconstitutional. But recall how in 2024 he told a Christian “Believers’ Summit” hosted by Turning Point that if they voted for him in November they “won’t have to vote anymore.” And don’t forget how Trump is seeking to abolish by executive order birthright citizenship, which was established by the 14th Amendment as a direct result of the Civil War.

At the same time as Trump is readying military forces to wage a war against the “enemy within,” the administration is moving with breakneck speed to integrate numerous government data bases (IRS, Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare and more) into a population registry far more extensive than what a national ID card would have, including individual residence, financial, medical, biometric and surveillance information. Billions of dollars in multiyear contracts have been awarded to the likes of Palantir and Amazon. Through “public-private partnerships,” so beloved of the Bill and Hillary Clinton Democrats, the Trump administration is cementing a genuine “surveillance state.”

This drive toward police-state rule is not unique to Trump or to the United States, but is an international phenomenon reflecting the rulers’ need for a fortified repressive apparatus to deal with the consequences of capitalist decay. In the United States, masked

paramilitary squads are hunting down immigrants on the streets and in their homes while investors are in a wild frenzy, throwing hundreds of billions of dollars into the artificial intelligence (AI) “boom.” Over \$350 billion in corporate investment is expected this year in AI companies (cloud computing, chips, data centers) that are burning through cash, many far from profitability. The resulting stock market “bubble” of share prices exceeding earnings is by far the largest in history, by one count 17 times bigger than the “dot.com” bubble of 2000-2001. When the bubble bursts, there could be bank runs and riots.

In Europe, social programs are gutted (Britain’s National Health Service) or dismantled (Italy’s “citizenship income”) as military expenditures soar. Reformists put forward “butter not guns” proposals, as if it is a matter of budget priorities, but it is far more than that. The whole edifice of “welfare state” capitalism, erected after World War II to stave off the threat of red revolution, is shaking. As former Communist and Socialist parties turn to the right or are dissolved and the unions are weakened, reactionary forces are strengthened. As in the U.S., economic discontent is being directed against immigrants, and in the absence of powerful opposition by a revitalized workers movement, fascist and outright fascist parties may take the reins of power in more European countries. And whether “center-left” or far right are in office, police repression will grow.

The ultimate purpose of erecting a “strong state” is to regiment and discipline the population for war. The League for the Fourth International and its U.S. section, the Internationalist Group, have called to mobilize the power of the workers movement to defeat the imperialists’ war drive, and their militarized repression. This issue is particularly acute in Italy, where the far-right government is led by the fascist Fratelli d’Italia (Brothers of Italy) of premier Giorgia Meloni, a booster of Trump and Musk. Last May, her government implemented a decree-law that would outlaw blocking railroads and highways, occupying ports and train stations, even picketing by striking workers. The Italian section of the LFI called in its newspaper, *L’internazionalista* (May 2025), “For a Real General Strike to Stop the ‘Security’ Decree and Arms Build-Up!”

But while Italy has a right-wing, NATO imperialist government, it also has a powerful and militant working class. In September and October, in response to calls for “general strikes” by militant “rank-and-file” unions (*sindacati di base*), particularly port workers, to shut down the country “for Gaza,” millions of protesters went into the streets and paralyzed the country, *twice*. On September 22, they were 1 million and on October 3, when they were joined by CGIL, the largest union federation, responding to the Israeli attack on the Global Sumud Flotilla, 2 million came out in 100 cities. Both times, they shut down the ports and rail lines, occupied train stations and highways, picketed arms manufacturers and filled the plazas. The power of the working class was mobilized, and with that they turned the “security law” into a dead letter, for now.⁶

Escalating internal repression is part

⁶ See “Mass Strike for Gaza Brings Italy to a Halt, For International Strike Action to Stop U.S./Israel Gaza Genocide!” on page 17 of this issue; and “European Port Workers Call for Strike Action to Stop Arms” on page 16.

of the home front of the war drive as the imperialists are careening toward a thermo-nuclear World War III aimed at counterrevolution in China and dismembering Russia. European rulers are pushing to militarize all of society, from readying railroads and highways, to preparing hospitals for mass casualties, bringing back conscription and introducing “patriotic education” in the schools, as Trump has demanded in the U.S. But they have a problem: the people. In different opinion polls, some 60% of Germans say they would not defend Germany if it is attacked, and among youth upwards of 75% don’t want to die for Deutschland.

Trump uses the Justice Department to wreak vengeance on his personal enemies, treats government coffers as a piggy bank to enrich friends and relatives, raises and lowers tariffs erratically and declares “national emergencies” (nine so far in 2025) to enable his rule by decree. All this makes a mockery of claims that U.S. “democracy” represents the “rule of law,” or what continental European legal theorists, following German philosopher Immanuel Kant, call a *Rechtsstaat* (state of law), as opposed to arbitrary rule. But the drive toward fortifying the state and sidelining or suppressing popular resistance – such as over racist police murder in the U.S. and against genocide in Gaza – is pushed forward by all the capitalist parties. This underscores the basic fact that, *whether it is the “Deep State” or a Trump state, it’s the capitalist state.*

Increasing *institutional Bonapartism* has been a fundamental characteristic of imperialist “democracies” since the start of the anti-Soviet Cold War following World War II. Previously liberals referred to it as a “national security state.” But to reverse the speeded-up push for an armor-plated “strong state,” to *abort Trump’s police state*, no band-aids like calls for court reforms, moves for impeachment (so that the fascist ideologue Vance could be president?) or appeals to non-existent “international law” will have any effect. It is necessary instead to *organize to bring down the capitalist system*, which in its death agony inevitably gives rise to police states and imperialist war. The fight for *international socialist revolution* is the only hope for humanity.

That capitalism is dying is hard to miss. Just look around you. Lots of shiny gadgets, AI chatbots spewing reactionary garbage, public education and public health under attack, food banks running out of food, racist cop terror in the streets ... for immigrants and everyone.

What is to be done? The crisis of humanity, as Leon Trotsky wrote in the *Transitional Program*, the founding program of the Fourth International, is reduced to the crisis of revolutionary leadership. The conditions for revolution are not only ripe but overripe. What’s posed is the struggle to *forge a genuinely socialist, revolutionary communist vanguard*, rooted in key sectors of the working class. The League for the Fourth International seeks to cohere the nucleus of that vanguard, forging revolutionary workers parties to lead the struggles of the working people and oppressed, to defend embattled democratic rights and to put a stop to the mad rush toward a world war and irradiated barbarism that threatens the survival of humanity. This is the task we must fulfill as millions around the world seek answers and a path forward in the face of capitalism’s stark decay. ■

Pax Americana Is Dead and Gone Dying Imperialism Lashing Out On the Road to World War III



Demonstrators outside staging area for National Guard in Los Angeles on June 8. Mobilize workers power to drive ICE out of L.A.!

By Jan Norden

We print below the excerpted translation of a presentation, edited for publication, at an educational meeting of the Grupo Internacionalista, Mexican section of the League for the Fourth International, in mid-August 2025. The full text is available at www.internationalist.org.

Since January 20, the day Donald Trump took office for his second term as president of the United States, the whole world has been in turmoil. Capitalist governments around the world have stepped up repression, threatening fundamental rights. Alliances between imperialist countries that have lasted for 80 years, since the end of World War II, are tottering. A one-sided economic war has been launched, imposing sky-high tariffs amid unprecedented chaos in world trade. This is already beginning to have its predictable effect: in the imperialist centers, inflation and stagnant production combined – so-called “stagflation” – and intensified exploitation in semicolonial countries, like Mexico. At the same time, the imperialists are up to their necks in their proxy war against Russia over Ukraine, in the genocide against the Palestinians in Gaza, and in the attack on Iran in June.

All these aspects of the global panorama are interlinked, and are further evidence of the fraying of the imperialist system in its advanced state of decay. They reflect the attempt, both by the prior Democratic administration of Joe Biden and by the Republican administration of Donald Trump, to prop up the crumbling imperialist hegemony of the United States. But these efforts are doomed to failure. On the economic level, the replacement of “free trade” treaties with arbitrary tariffs was supposed to reindustrialize the U.S. But although the wave of “globalization” of

- Drive for Bonapartist “Strong State” Governments
- Intensified Exploitation of Semicolonial Countries
- The Only Solution: *International Socialist Revolution!*

production appears to be coming to an end, there will be little resurgence of industry in the imperialist centers, which have already lost entire sectors of the economy. And militarily, we see that the imperialists have failed to win any of the wars they have waged this century, beginning with the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and their humiliating withdrawal in 2021. Behind these “forever wars” lies the military and economic weakening of the imperialists.

This remains the case today. The NATO imperialists are bogged down in their war for Ukraine, which Russia is clearly winning. The U.S. and Israeli attack on Iran in June did nothing whatsoever to slow down its nuclear program or bring about “regime change.” In fact, it made clear that Iran needs to exercise its right to develop a nuclear deterrent capability. The “made in the USA” genocide in Gaza, carried out by Zionist militarists with giant bombs supplied by the United States, dropped from U.S.-made warplanes,¹ has not only killed more than 100,000 Palestinians and destroyed almost the entire territory, but has also caused deep divisions in Israeli society, and even in the military apparatus. Nevertheless, it is the ultra-Zionists and the far-right government, with fascist ministers in the cabinet, who are calling the shots.

As we have stressed, this imperialist war drive is pointing to a Third World War with the goal of dismembering Russia and

¹ See “Gaza Genocide Made in USA,” *The Internationalist* No. 73, June-August 2024

provoking counterrevolution in China. Our League for the Fourth International calls for defense of the Palestinians and defeat of the U.S./Israel genocidal war against Gaza. We defend Russia, an intermediate capitalist state, against the NATO imperialist proxy war, and we fight for the defeat of the puppet government in Kiev and the Ukrainian army, infested with fascists. We defend the bureaucratically deformed workers state of China against the economic and military war of the imperialists, who still imagine themselves to be masters of the world. And we defend the right of Iran, a semi-colonial country, to have nuclear weapons to defend itself against the Zionist and imperialist nuclear powers.

In all these fields we fight with our own proletarian methods, campaigning for workers action – labor boycotts, rail and port work stoppages, and strikes – to block arms supplies to Ukraine and Israel. And we warn that only international socialist revolution can stop World War III.

All-Sided Repressive Crackdown Accompanies the War Drive

The war drive goes hand in hand with an escalation of repression and the regimentation of social and political life. In the imperialist countries, measures to suppress protests against the war of extermination in Gaza continue unabated. In Germany, countless pro-Palestinian events have been banned, and almost all those that are allowed are viciously attacked by the police.

In the United States, in April-May of last year, more than 3,000 pro-Palestinian demonstrators were arrested over the encampments on university campuses across the country. This persecution is ongoing – now they are expelling students and revoking their degrees for participating in occupations. Everywhere, repression is justified by the vile slander, coming from politicians of both the Democratic and Republican parties, that protests against the crimes of the Zionist state of Israel are antisemitic, i.e., express hatred of Jews, when the real antisemites are supporting Israel and many Jews are fiercely opposed to this vile slaughter.

Now Trump’s reactionary administration is using this outrageous amalgam to blackmail universities, demanding that they expel pro-Palestinian students and dismiss pro-Palestinian faculty; if they fail to do so, they will lose hundreds of millions of dollars in federal funding. One after another, the universities capitulate.² This assault on academic freedom and freedom of expression, as well as the mass arrests and bans on pro-Palestinian protests and events, are the home front of the Zionist and imperialist war in the Middle East. They are also demanding that the media cancel liberal programs, eliminate “progressive” commentators, and pay millions in compensation for editing interviews in a manner not to the liking of Trump and his cronies.

In an article analyzing the November 2024 elections in the United States and the contours of the incoming administration, the Internationalist Group, U.S. section of the League for the Fourth International, published an article, “Trump 2: Gearing

² See “The Gleichschaltung of American Universities,” *The Internationalist* No. 75, January-May 2025.

Up for Rule by Decree” (*The Internationalist* No. 74, September-December 2024). He has done just that. Almost nothing on his agenda has been voted on by Congress: the budget, an immigration bill, and that’s about it. The rest – canceling birthright citizenship, carrying out mass deportations, imposing stratospheric tariffs, cutting funding for universities; sending National Guard troops and federal agents to Los Angeles, and now to Washington – all of this has been done by executive order. And many of these measures are blatantly illegal and unconstitutional.

Meanwhile, the federal government is ignoring or flatly refusing to comply with court orders pausing its actions. This behavior is the result of plans that have been in the works for decades. The truth is that the judicial system is not going to stop the administration either, given that last year, in a ruling on a lawsuit filed by Trump himself, the Supreme Court endorsed the so-called “unitary executive theory.” In defiance of the famous “separation of powers” of the French Enlightenment jurist and philosopher Montesquieu, which supposedly provides “checks and balances” against arbitrary government actions, this “theory,” promoted by conservative sectors of the bourgeoisie, maintains that neither the judiciary nor the legislature can limit or stop actions of the executive “in the performance of its official acts.”

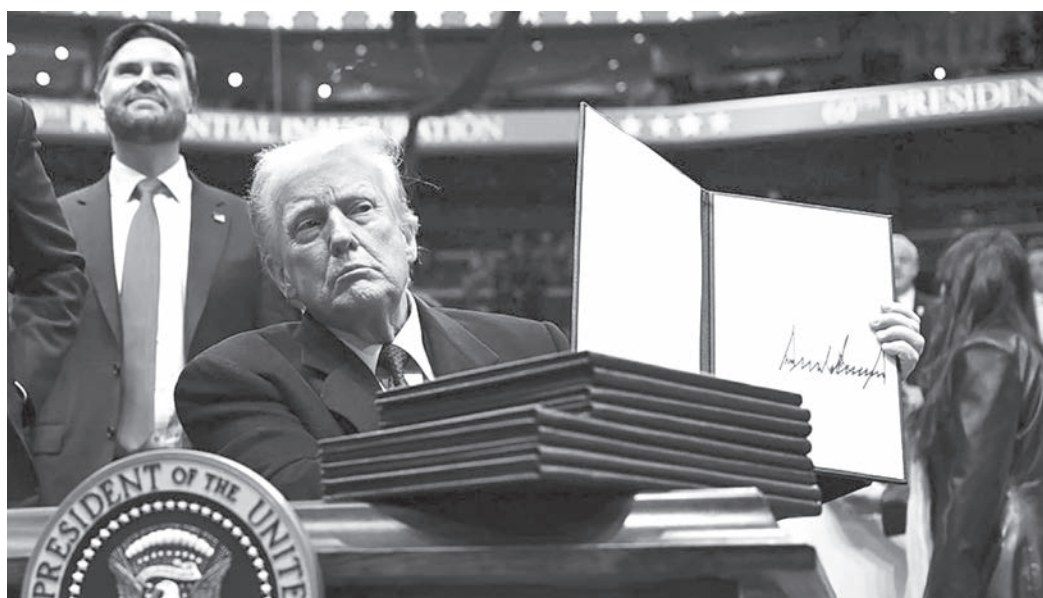
Although supporters of this doctrine cite Alexander Hamilton’s writings in the *Federalist Papers* of 1788, the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution of 1789, and the Supreme Court’s ruling in the *Marbury v. Madison* case of 1803, in reality all these learned elucubrations served as the basis for Trump’s assertion in 2019, during his first term, to an audience of young people at a “summit” of the fascist organization Turning Point USA, that “I have the right to do whatever I want as president.” He just repeated this in his commencement address to cadets at the West Point military academy, where future high-ranking officers of the U.S. armed forces are trained. And that is how he is acting.

This “legal” framework lends itself perfectly to a Bonapartist-style “strong state” government, which is precisely what is in the process of being established in the United States. Giant strides are being made toward a police state.

There has been much discussion about whether Donald Trump is a fascist, as claimed by many in the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, as well as some deluded leftists and General John Kelly, Trump’s former advisor, who recounted Trump’s admiration for Hitler. They use the term “fascist” simply as a derogatory term, or as a synonym for “very repressive.” So do the Stalinists, who labeled Pinochet’s Chilean military dictatorship fascist. We do not label Trump a fascist because he does not lead a mass movement of declassed petty-bourgeois elements that would serve as a battering ram to crush the workers movement, according to Leon Trotsky’s Marxist definition. Instead, Trump is an aspiring dictator.

In the United States, the bourgeoisie does not currently need a mass fascist movement, largely because there is no radicalized workers movement threatening bourgeois rule. Fascist groups are relatively small, numbering some thousands, but they are dangerous, and we fight for the working class to use its power to stop them. In 2017, our comrades in Portland, Oregon, in the Pacific Northwest, organized some 300 union members and supporters to stop a fascist provocation. What does exist is a fascist sector – that is, fascist-like – of the Republican Party. At the forefront is Vice President JD Vance, a fascist ideologue close to likeminded forces such as the Alternative für Deutschland in Germany, Nigel Farage’s Reform Party in England, and Giorgia Meloni’s fascist Fratelli d’Italia (Brothers of Italy).

Trump is a megalomaniac and without doubt an all-around reactionary, but he is not an ideologue. He wants to be a strongman in the style of Napoleon Bonaparte, although his more likely model would be Napoleon’s nephew, Emperor Louis Bonaparte, who invaded Mexico and installed an Austrian archduke, Maximilian, as emperor in 1864, and who sought to legitimize his mediocre reign with plebiscites. (As an aside, it would not be surprising if Trump attempted to implement the program of his MAGA movement through a similar mechanism of plebiscitary pseudo-democracy.) In the 1930s,



Ruling by decree. On inauguration day Donald Trump signed executive orders at rally in Capitol One Arena. In his first 100 days, he issued 143 orders, including to turbocharge deportations.

Trotsky labeled “pre-fascist” governments in France and Germany as Bonapartist, citing Karl Marx’s essay, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, which analyzed the French coup d’état of 1851. The 1930s governments preserved the forms of parliamentary democracy, but in reality rested exclusively on the police/military apparatus.

And that is what we are experiencing now in the United States. We have already talked about the federal intervention in Los Angeles. Here I will simply quote from the leaflet published by the Internationalist Group in June that portrayed the new situation:

“Pounding on doors in pre-dawn raids. Masked police looking like terrorists grabbing people on the street. Unmarked vans hauling them off to be sent to concentration camps. People arrested when they show up in court for routine hearings. High school students seized and held incommunicado as parents are unable to locate them. Sound like Chile or Argentina under military dictatorships in the 1970s? *This is what a police state looks like – and immigrants across the United States are living in it right now.*”

Los Angeles remains under the boot of masked police and federal agents prowling the streets, abducting people for the “crime” of looking Latino. The Democratic mayor described the city as something akin to a country on the brink of a coup d’état, or a city under siege.

Now Trump has imposed federal control over the municipal police of Washington, D.C., describing the city in apocalyptic terms: “Our capital city has been overtaken by violent gangs and bloodthirsty criminals, roving mobs of wild youth, drugged-out maniacs and homeless people.” That the reality is completely different does not matter. In the current climate, any accusation will do. To justify eliminating immigrants’ right to due process, guaranteed by the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, in order to deport them without judicial review, Trump invented the absurd claim that the United States is being invaded by a Venezuelan army of drug traffickers. The people of Washington are already reacting

with anger to this outrage. People in the streets are shouting at the federal agents, “Fascists, get out!” “Get off our streets!” and “Leave us alone.”

The government is responding to protests with harsh repression. In Washington, a man angered by the presence of immigration agents on street corners threw a Subway sandwich at a group of them. When he turned himself in at the police station, he was arrested on charges of “assaulting, resisting, opposing, impeding, intimidating, or interfering with a federal officer,” which could result in eight years in prison.³ Republicans in Congress have now introduced a bill, the ICE Act, which stipulates up to five years in prison for “impeding” immigration enforcement, which could be used against any protest. Democrats have not responded. Moreover, right-wing members of Congress are already requesting access to the financial documents of community and left-wing groups that have led protests against ICE.

In all this, it must be borne in mind that this escalation of repression is not limited to Republicans. It was Democratic city and state authorities that arrested the bulk of pro-Palestinian protesters last year. In the 2020 protests over the murder of George Floyd by racist cops, both Donald Trump and Joe Biden suggested shooting “rioters” in the legs. Democrats Barack Obama and Biden have also ruled by decree. And Obama deported 5.3 million immigrants during his two terms (2.9 million in his first term). Biden “removed” 4.4 million, while Trump “only” deported 1.5 million in his first term. The reality is that both capitalist parties are enemies of immigrants, and both want to strengthen the apparatus of police repression.

Nor are police-state measures limited to the U.S. Our Italian comrades, in their newspaper *L’internazionalista* of May 2025, have called for “A Real General Strike to Stop the ‘Security’ Decree and

³ Despite pressure from federal prosecutors, a grand jury refused to indict the sandwich thrower. In the United States, federal felony charges against a defendant require a vote by a grand jury composed of 16 or more members of the community. However, grand juries are almost always under the control of the prosecution. A New York judge once commented that a grand jury would indict a ham sandwich if the prosecutor ordered it to. However, in this case (in which the thrower tossed a salami sandwich), the grand jury in the U.S. capital refused to follow orders, as has happened in other cases. Perhaps Trump will now try to abolish grand juries, as part of his barrage of attacks on democratic rights.



Customs and Border Protection federal agents aim “less-lethal” weapons at journalists during Los Angeles protests against immigration raids, June 12.

Rearmament.” Unlike many opportunist left-wing groups, we in the League for the Fourth International do not call lightly for a general strike, which, if carried out, would be the deployment of the strength of the working class in a fierce battle against the capitalist state power (and not a 24-hour work stoppage with a parade, as is the reformist practice). We did so in this case because the decree-law imposed by the right-wing government headed by Giorgia Meloni’s fascist Fratelli d’Italia would prohibit even strike pickets and street demonstrations, with draconian penalties.

“The question of Italy’s evolution toward an authoritarian Bonapartist police state is posed point-blank,” we explained. Just to be clear, Italy today is not a dictatorship: the role of the fascist party at the head of the government – and we have analyzed its nature in detail in the article “Giorgia Meloni and Her Fascist Fratelli d’Italia” – is precisely to be the spearhead of the drive toward a “strong state” regime. And it is important to understand that this push is directly linked to the “remilitarization” of the imperialist NATO countries and their proxy war against Russia over Ukraine. They need a reinforced police apparatus to better repress anti-militarist protests. More generally, as we wrote in our article “Fascism, Bonapartism, and Donald Trump,” in *The Internationalist* (No. 75, January-May 2025):

“[I]t is crucial to understand *why* there is a drive toward ‘strong state’ rule, in the U.S. and internationally, which is fundamentally because capitalism in its advanced state of decay requires more repressive force and a forceful executive to counter opposition.”

This Bonapartist evolution is not limited to imperialist countries. In Latin America, there are clearly Bonapartist governments in Peru under Dina Boluarte, who came to power through a civil-military coup; in Argentina under Javier Milei; and previously the Bonapartist regime of Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, who, after failing in his reelection campaign, tried to carry out a coup in January 2023. If the racist riot that stormed the U.S. Capitol on 6 January 2021 in Trump’s name was a mock coup d’état, a comic-opera coup, the coup in Brazil was very real, with plans to assassinate the chief justice of the Supreme Court and president-elect Lula. It only failed because, though the navy was on board, the heads of the army and air force (under pressure from the Biden administration) did not consent.

Our comrades in the Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil called for a null vote in the 2022 elections, against the Bonapartist Bolsonaro and also against the “broad front” of Lula and the conservative Alckmin, and for class struggle in the streets by workers and the oppressed “to crush the coup and fascist danger.” Although Bolsonaro is currently on trial for his failed coup attempt, we must not forget that it is the same Federal Supreme Court that endorsed Lula’s imprisonment for almost two years when the bourgeoisie wanted to prevent his re-election. As the LQB called: “No to the dictatorship of the epaulettes or the robes, no to the deadly dictatorship of capital – For the liberating dictatorship of the proletariat that will put an end to imperialist domination.” Now *that* is a revolutionary Marxist policy against Bonapartism....

Imperialist War Drive Points to a Third World War

That brings me to my final point: that the current war drive pursued by U.S. and European imperialists, under Trump and Biden, points directly to a Third World War, this time with nuclear weapons. We just saw the summit between Trump and Vladimir Putin in Alaska. The cold warriors of the imperialist media, European leaders and Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky were all stunned and disappointed that the US president and the president of the Russian Federation had met, and especially that they met alone. But they were relieved that no agreement had been reached. They argue that Trump is attracted to Putin as one strongman to another. Whatever their personal chemistry, Trump’s purpose is to get the war in Ukraine off his plate so that he can concentrate on preparing for imperialist war against China.

And not for the distant future. If you read the strategic planning documents of the United States, the European Union, Britain and Germany, they all aim to be war-ready or *kriegs-stüchtig* – that is, fit for war – within two to five years, from 2027 to 2030. Their objective is very clear: their war aims are counterrevolution in China and the defeat and dismemberment of Russia. Naturally, they blame the Russians and the Chinese. In the case of the United States, the guiding statement for Trump’s 2025 National Defense Strategy prioritizes the defense of U.S. territory and “stopping China in the Indo-Pacific region.” An earlier Marine Corps document, *Force Design 2030*, emphasized the goal of being prepared “to operate in the Indo-Pacific against the pacemaker threat” (i.e., China) by that date.

European imperialists, on the other hand, repeatedly emphasize the goal of being prepared to confront Russia in the short term. The European Commission has a *Joint White Paper for Defense Preparations 2030* (March 2025). Britain has a *Strategic Defense Review 2025* (June 2025) that focuses on achieving warfighting readiness against “the immediate and pressing threat from Russia.” Not mincing words, Germany’s Kiel Institute for the World Economy titled a report, *Ready for War in 2030? The European Rearmament Effort Against Russia* (June 2025). The document cites NATO statements that the imperialist military alliance should be prepared to wage war with Russia even “before 2030.” And on the eve of the June 2025 NATO summit, the head of the Bundeswehr (the German army) declared that “we must be ready by 2029, or even earlier” (BBC, June 1).

All of this is based on the mythical danger of a Russian invasion of Europe, that if Russia wins the war in Ukraine – which it is in the process of doing – tomorrow it will march on Berlin and Paris, as French President Emmanuel Macron keeps saying. Utter nonsense. Russia, a mid-level capitalist country and regional power, is not and will not be in a position to invade the European imperialist countries. Since Napoleon’s 1812 invasion, Russia has always sought to ward off attack from the West. What *could* happen is provocation by NATO countries. Thus in July, the new commander of U.S. armed forces in Europe and Africa, General Christopher Donahue, highlighted that the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad is surrounded on all sides by NATO, and threatened that NATO could “take that down from the ground in a timeframe that is unheard of” (*Defense News*, 16 July). And the West accuses Putin of rattling nukes when he said, a couple of days later, that “Russia can defend

itself with every means at its disposal”!

When we say that the imperialist powers, led by the United States, are rushing headlong toward World War III, we emphasize that their detailed planning and military doctrines pointing in that direction would make a global conflagration almost inevitable, unless it is prevented by international socialist revolution. Look at what they are doing – and what they are not doing. So on the one hand, NATO countries have not substantially increased production of 155mm shells, which the puppet regime’s army in Ukraine is crying out for to feed its artillery. And on the other hand, in 2019, during Trump’s first term, the U.S. withdrew from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. Now Trump 2 is proceeding with the Biden administration plan to station intermediate-range Tomahawk cruise missiles and Dark Eagle hypersonic missiles, both with nuclear capability, in Germany starting in 2026.

What do these facts tell us? First, that NATO has no intention of waging an extended ground war with Russia in Europe, especially after the experience in Ukraine. And second, that Washington intends to threaten Russia with nuclear blackmail, with missiles whose flight time from Germany to Moscow is about 6 minutes from launch to impact, and which the Russian General Staff would have to assume could have nuclear warheads. This is a deeply destabilizing and high-risk game of nuclear poker. But while the Dark Eagle has not yet been fully tested, Russia has already deployed its Oreshnik hypersonic missile, in an attack on Dnipro, Ukraine, in November 2024. NATO has nothing that can stop the Oreshnik. Thus, the Cold War nightmare scenario of “deterrence” through mutually assured destruction (MAD) has been revived.

This brings to mind the beginnings of the previous world wars, both preceded by preparatory wars: the Balkan Wars (1912-13) in the case of the First World War, Italy’s war against Ethiopia (1935-36) and the Spanish Civil War (1936-39) in the case of the Second World War. The Ukraine war plays the same role, to gear up the war machine. As Barbara Tuchman pointed out in her 1962 book *The Guns of August* on the beginnings of World War I, the outbreak was not simply a chain of events following an unforeseen occurrence (the assassination of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Archduke Ferdinand, by a Serbian nationalist in Sarajevo). It was the outcome of years of detailed war planning by all the belligerents. At bottom, it was driven by the fact that capitalism’s productive forces had surpassed national borders and all the powers were driven to conquest, as V.I. Lenin wrote in *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916).

Today, in the twilight of decaying imperialism, we see the interconnected drive toward global war and growing police-state repression. This is the result of the erosion of productive forces in the metropolises, where large capitalist conglomerates, suffering from falling profit rates, seek to save their dying system by conquering new markets through the destruction of the Chinese deformed workers state and the dismemberment of Russia.

This combination of external imperialist war and internal capitalist repression can be seen in military preparations. The most ambitious plan to expand NATO armies envisages increasing the number of brigades in the German, British, French and Polish armies from 83 to 133. To this end, the number of main battle tanks would increase from 1,627

(2024) to 2,920 (2030). But according to the same calculations, Russia, which will have some 235 brigades in 2030, already produces 1,776 tanks *per year*, while the maximum annual European production would be 216. So even with the maximum expansion of NATO armies, enlisting 300,000 new soldiers, they will not be in a position to defeat Russia, or even wage a prolonged war against it. Question: what then is the point of all this new equipment and new military personnel? Answer: They will serve above all to further militarize the imperialist countries in crisis.

It is for this scenario of capitalist *class war* against the working people that revolutionary Marxists must prepare ourselves, swimming against the tide of frenetic war preparations. However, the vast majority of the left in the imperialist countries is tailing after sectors of their own bourgeoisies. Some are dogpaddling in the wake of imperialist war, as is the case with some left-wing groups in Western Europe – the PCL in Italy,⁴ sectors of the Linkspartei, the Left Party in Germany, and some social democrats disguised as “Trotskyists” – who support Ukraine in NATO’s proxy war against Russia.⁵ Even those who appear to maintain a certain distance from the NATO warmongers capitulate to imperialist war propaganda. This is the case with centrists such as the Trotskyist Fraction, which proclaims “Neither Putin nor NATO!” while denouncing the Russian invasion and marching in pro-Ukrainian “anti-war” protests.⁶

In the case of the militant Italian “grass-roots unions,” such as SI Cobas, USB, etc., which have actually taken some action, such as boycotting shipments of weapons and military goods to Israel, they push a workerist brand of pacifism opposing all war under capitalism (“they’re all bosses”), even a war against the imperialists. Unlike opportunists of all stripes, the League for the Fourth International, without giving any political support to the bourgeois regime of the Russian Federation or the Stalinist leadership of the People’s Republic of China, fights for proletarian mobilization to *defeat the imperialist war leading to World War III, and to defend the targets of this war – Russia, China, and semicolonial countries such as Iran* – in the struggle for international socialist revolution. Specifically, we have campaigned for workers action to stop the shipment of imperialist arms to Ukraine and Israel.

Precisely because the drive toward imperialist world war and the push for a police state “at home” are expressions of the rotting capitalist system, they can only be fought with a revolutionary proletarian program. Different currents that claim to be communist and even Trotskyist judge that because this is a period of economic, social and political regression, with bourgeois reaction in full swing, it is necessary to adopt a defensive posture, seeking to preserve the achievements of the past and not un-

⁴ Partito Comunista dei Lavoratori (Communist Workers Party), recently fused with the International Socialist League (LIS), one of the several internationals that are heirs of the pseudo-Trotskyist current of Nahuel Moreno; its section in Argentina is Izquierda Socialista.

⁵ Most notable in this “social-imperialist” *pot-pourri*, or rotten bloc, are the impostors of the self-proclaimed International Secretariat of the Fourth International (I.S., formerly United Secretariat [“USec”]), which does not, by any stretch of the imagination, represent the revolutionary program of Trotsky’s Fourth International.

⁶ See “Behind the War: U.S./NATO War Drive Against Russia, China” (28 February 2022), in *The Internationalist* No. 66, January-April 2022.

Portland Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants Says: “All Out for **FEDS OUT!**”

Mark Graves / The Oregonian via TNS



Mark Graves/The Oregonian

Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants contingent at September 28 protest at ICE facility in Portland where driver tried to run into the crowd.

Portland, Oregon has been one of the focal points of Donald Trump’s ire, as he announced on September plans to bring in the National Guard to supposedly “protect” the local facility of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) division of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Calling Portland a “war-ravaged city,” he added that he was “authorizing Full Force, if necessary.” After city officials insisted that Portland is safe and a federal judge issued a temporary injunction against deploying 200 Oregon National Guard troops, within hours Trump sought to bring in federalized National Guardsmen from California. The federal judge then issued an injunction against that as well.

There have been protests outside the ICE facility fairly regularly since June, including for a time an encampment across the street, but with the standoff over bringing in troops in addition to the several dozen federal agents working there, tension increased significantly. While Trump and his DHS czarina Kristi Noem conjure up images of the 2020 protests against racist police murder, city officials, including the “Peacock Caucus” of “progressive” city councilors, several of them from the Democratic (Party) Socialists of America, have sought to counter the feds by making light of this ominous build-up, holding Sunday-morning “pastry and pajamas” protests, dressing up in inflatable frog and chicken suits, holding naked bike rides and the like.

The Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants (LCDI), initiated by Class Struggle Workers – Portland and other areas trade-unionists, has insisted instead that it is necessary to mobilize the power of the working class to stave off the threatened invasion by military force and put a stop to the abduction of Portlanders by the

feds. The LCDI has held “Know Your Rights” workshops and, on October 11, organized a session at the IUPAT (Painters) Local 10 union hall on setting up workplace safety plans which attracted several tens of workers from several construction trades unions as well as healthcare workers, teachers and education workers, and others.

Earlier, on September 28, the day after Trump’s initial announcement, the LCDI participated in a “No National Guard in Portland” demo called by Portland Contra las Redadas outside the ICE facility in the South Waterfront area which drew some 500 people. The LCDI contingent of 16 included members of the IBEW (electrical workers), IUPAT, IATSE (stage hands), SEIU and other unions. As the demonstration was exposed to traffic, they set up a moving picket line on the edge that functioned as a union defense for the protest. At one point an irate driver of a Tesla deliberately tried to ram the crowd, hitting an LCDI organizer with their fender. After a frank exchange, the driver understood the need to back out and left (see photos above).

As a showdown over federal troops approached, on November 7, the LCDI issued a leaflet calling to mobilize union and other defenders of immigrant rights under the watchword, “All Out for **FEDS OUT!**” The next day, Judge Karin Immergut, who was appointed by Trump himself, made her injunction permanent. The federal government has appealed the injunction to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, while ICE and other federal agents continue to snatch people in and around Portland, in many cases whisking them off to the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Washington, in order to get them out of town immediately. The courts will not stop Trump – what’s needed is to bring out the power of the workers movement to defend immigrants and stop the deportations.

The text of the LCDI leaflet follows:

All Out for **FEDS OUT!**

The threat is looming over all of Portland’s working people. Troops may be sent here any day now, as part of the assault on the basic rights of us all. Spearheaded by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement), the Border Patrol and other federal agencies kidnapping our immigrant fellow workers, the aim is to terrorize and silence the whole working class into submission. Donald Trump has declared war on Portland, but protests just seeking to mock the threat won’t stop it.

Right now, a flurry of judges’ rulings keeps everyone guessing. But one 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!**

The ICE building on SW Macadam Boulevard has seen busloads of detained immigrants arriving daily and stormtrooper-style units “guarding” the facility with rapid-fire pepper ball launchers and helicopter surveillance. We all know White House claims of “chaos in Portland” are a ridiculous pretext for turning the city into a “training ground” for U.S. military forces to trample the most fundamental rights. We’re already seeing that in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C. and Chicago.

Farce, frog suits and pajama parties outside the ICE jail won’t deter the sinister forces determined to intimidate us and destroy our communities. Against Trump’s power play, we need to organize in our unions, our workplaces, our schools, hospitals, working-class

and immigrant communities for the *mass mobilization of working-class power*. And we need to do this now.

Hundreds of National Guard troops were sent to Chicago, but have been blocked by a temporary restraining order from being active on the ground. But meanwhile, masked federal agents have stepped up their rampaging through communities, carrying out gestapo-style immigration raids, ripping up families and workplaces. But people are fighting back, as thousands have marched against the feds’ police-state repression and community members are standing up to the ICE and Border Patrol thugs trying to arrest their neighbors.

In New York last week, feds’ kidnap squads targeted African and Asian street vendors while carrying out blatant racial profiling of passers-by. Against this, we keep seeing the courage of everyday people who seek to defend those targeted by ICE. This is inspiring, and such efforts are very important.

The politicians are relying on the courts, but any temporary reprieves will likely soon be overturned by Trump’s pliant Supreme Court. The power to actually turn back the hideous deportation machine and the mounting attacks on our rights is that of the multiracial **working class** whose massive power comes from this simple fact: everything runs on our labor.

The time is now for the workers of Portland to organize and use our power, saying: **All out for FEDS OUT!**

For more information, contact the Portland Labor Committee to Defend Immigrants: lcdipdx@gmail.com; <https://lcdipdx.neocities.org>

dertaking risky “vanguardist adventures.” Here they rub shoulders with social-democratic reformists, the union bureaucracy and bourgeois liberals. On the contrary, it is precisely in times of harsh class struggle, when the edifice of welfare state capitalism is crumbling and lasting reforms are no longer possible, that we must fight on the basis of a program that aims at the seizure of power by the proletariat.

The Transitional Program, written by Leon Trotsky in 1938, was adopted as the founding program of the Fourth International. Its original title was *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International*. Its central thesis is expressed in the words: “The objective prerequisites for the proletarian revolution have not only ‘ripened’; they have begun to get somewhat rotten. Without a social-

ist revolution, in the next historical period at that, a catastrophe threatens the whole culture of mankind. The turn is now to the proletariat, i.e., chiefly to its revolutionary vanguard. The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership.” The vast majority of those who falsely claim to be Trotskyists hold that this thesis is outdated. For us, as we emphasized in the 1998 “Declaration of the

League for the Fourth International,” this proposition remains entirely valid today.

In its opening paragraphs, the program of the Fourth International summarizes its purpose:

“It is necessary to help the masses in the process of the daily struggle to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist program of the revolution. This bridge should include a system of

transitional demands, stemming from today's conditions and from today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class and unalterably leading to one final conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat."

Today, the struggle to save humanity from the impending catastrophe depends on cohering a proletarian vanguard based on this revolutionary program, tempering in the class struggle the core of a party like that of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks. This vanguard must not be limited to the economic struggle but act as a champion of all oppressed layers of capitalist society, enlisting them in concrete struggles against racism, the oppression of women and all forms of social oppression to lead them toward the only way out that promises a future of peace, emancipation and equality: the international socialist revolution. *Reforge a Fourth International that Trotsky would recognize as his own!* ■

ICE Out of L.A...

continued from page 8

That power lies with the working class, including its vital sector of immigrant workers, who in California make up more than one-third of the entire workforce. Almost 90% of the state's farm workers, who produce one-third of the nation's vegetables and two-thirds of its fruits, were born in Mexico. Over half are "unauthorized," yet without them the U.S. food supply would collapse. Some 44% of California's manufacturing workers and 40% of construction workers are immigrants. If foreign-born and U.S.-born workers act together, they pack a mighty wallop.

As workplace sweeps spread across Southland there will be student walkouts, like the Chicano Blowouts of 1968 or the 10,000+ high school students who walked out in the L.A. area to protest the anti-immigrant Prop 187 in 1994. In January, thousands of students walked out against Trump's threats. *Strike action by the United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA) to join them could galvanize the city.* As the United Federation of Teachers delegate assembly in NYC just voted, "these are our students, our fellow workers, our neighborhoods and communities, and we will act to support and protect them in this, their hour of need, and always."

The UTLA is a mainstay of the Los Angeles labor movement. The SEIU led by David Huerta is another. This is the same union, including many refugees from El Salvador, that braved the blows of the LAPD in Center City in 1990 to organize janitors. SEIU Local 399

also dared to march in 1992 under the guns of the National Guard to protest the acquittal of the racist cops who beat Rodney King. The *Los Angeles Federation of Labor should back SEIU in calling a countywide strike to demand that ICE, DHS, National Guard get out of L.A. And University of California and California State University unions should organize to strike statewide.*

Another, even more powerful, bastion of labor is the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU). On June 6, the ILWU fired off a statement denouncing the arrest of Huerta and demanding "an end to destructive ICE raids targeting hard-working members of our community." On June 9, it issued a second statement denouncing "the deployment of the National Guard in the streets of Los Angeles by the Trump Administration" as "a dangerous provocation by the federal government." These fine words should be turned into action to *shut down all West Coast ports against the deportations and militarized repression.*

As ILWU Local 10 called in its May Day 2025 banner: "For Workers Action to Stop Mass Deportations and Mass Firings! No Military Cargo for Israel's Genocidal War Against Palestinians! *Defend the Rights of ALL of Us!*" The ILWU shut down the Coast on Juneteenth 2020 to protest the police murder of George Floyd and systemic racism. The attack on Los Angeles immigrants and labor is even bigger. If the White House doesn't get the message after a one-day port shutdown, the ILWU, with the backing of all labor, should see that nothing moves on the waterfront until federal forces are withdrawn and the raids are stopped!

The targeting of activist, leftist and community groups such as Unión del Barrio and the Party for Socialism and Liberation, is yet another outrageous escalation that must be defeated by mass mobilization.

The more than 10 million undocumented immigrants residing in the United States, a majority of them for more than a decade (and a quarter for more than 20 years) without rights, are living in terror. The Democrats are not going to aid them. Even as Republican Trump has ratcheted up deportations to some 200,000 since taking office, this pace doesn't come close to Democrat Biden's total of 700,000 in 2024. Class conscious workers and all defenders of democratic rights must fight for *full citizenship rights for all immigrants!* What is urgently needed is to break with the parties of capitalist rule and imperialist domination and to build a *class struggle workers party* fighting for a *workers government* and *international socialist revolution.* ■

Port Workers...

continued from page 16

in 1984 and the May Day 2008 strike that shut down all West Coast ports against the U.S. imperialist wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. He also took on trade-union divisions, fostered by the pro-capitalist bureaucracies, that have stymied solidarity action by unions worldwide. In Italy, the militant "rank-and-file" unions (*sindacati di base*) organize separately from the bureaucratized labor federations (CGIL, UIL, CISL), each calling their own separate "general strikes." Yet while the federations are utterly subservient to Italy's antilabor laws, all appeals to the Italian (bourgeois) Constitution's "antiwar" clause (Article 11), and Law 185/1990 Article 1 § 6(a) against export of arms to war zones, are basically dead letters.

Heyman's remarks struck a chord with some in the meeting, as reported in the perceptive account by Pietro Barabino in *Il Fatto Quotidiano* (28 September), a left-populist daily:

"A US dockworker also took the floor, rubbing salt into the wound of union divisions: 'We may march separately,' he paraphrased Lenin, 'but in the end we must strike together.' He did not seem to be a novice and cited movements that could have stopped the wheels of war, had they not been bogged down in grotesque squabbles between unions in the United States and England. The reference prompted a response from a CGIL member, who took the floor in the 'USB house' to patch up his organization's controversial decision not to join last Monday's [September 22] general strike: 'Thanks to pressure from our own members, with the Flotilla we have reached an operational agreement with the rank-and-file unions for joint mobilization for the next general strike in case of a blockade of the humanitarian mission.'"

That is, in fact, what happened on October 3, for the first time in memory, if ever. The recent mass strikes and millions-strong mobilizations led by Italian workers – along with the actions of Greek, Moroccan and French dockworkers – as well as the Genova meeting of port workers seeking to stop arms shipments, especially to the Zionist genocidal war machine, can be a spark. As Internationalist demonstrators in the San Francisco Bay Area chanted at a Gaza solidarity demonstration on October 5, "Italian workers showed us how, workers arms embargo now!"

JACK HEYMAN SPEECH TO EUROPEAN PORT WORKERS MEETING

27 September 2025

Good afternoon comrades, my name is Jack Heyman. I'm here on behalf of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union from the West Coast of America. I'm here to bring solidarity greetings from the most militant port in the United States of America. In 1984 we struck against a ship from apartheid South Africa for eleven days. Nelson Mandela was in prison when we coordinated our strike in 1984. Six years later in 1990 he did a world tour. He stopped in Oakland, California and the first words out of his mouth were, "I commend the longshore union for striking against the ship from South Africa. Your action sparked the anti-apartheid movement in California." [applause]

In 2008 we conducted a historic strike

on the West Coast. We shut down every port in Canada and the United States to demand an end to the imperialist wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. [applause] That historic action happened because, in collaboration with the League for the Fourth International, I put forward a resolution in our local that passed unanimously to shut down every port on the West Coast. Following that was the *Mavi Marmara*¹ flotilla, the Freedom Flotilla, to Gaza, similar to the flotilla that's happening now. The Israeli IDF [military] attacked that flotilla and murdered nine of the humanitarian aides. Immediately after that attack, we organized a protest for the next Israeli ZIM line ship that came into our port. At five o'clock in the morning we had two thousand people in the port stopping work on the ZIM ship. [applause] I wanted to tell my comrades from the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions that ZIM line ships since 2014 do not come in to the port of Oakland and San Francisco – we stopped it. [applause]

Last year the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions put out a statement saying "Words are not enough to support our struggle. We need workers, particularly in the ports, to refuse to handle military cargo for Israel." There were many wonderful sounding statements from trade-union bureaucrats. But the workers in their trade unions were not called to action. This is hypocrisy on the part of trade-union bureaucrats. Particularly in a country like UK, but also in the United States, the main supplier of war materiel for the Zionist genocidal regime.

In every important struggle in the trade-union movement, it is always the union bureaucracy that holds back the ranks from taking action. I understand that there are several port worker unions in Italy, for various different reasons and with different viewpoints. But we must unify the port workers not only in Italy, but in Western European countries, the EU [European Union], and in the United States. We need to defy the union bureaucracies to take the action that's necessary to stop military cargo. We need to call it "*hot cargo*." You refuse to handle hot cargo to Israel. What we need to do is unify all port workers. And Lenin said it best: he said *march separately*, you have your own unions, but let's *strike together*. Let's strike together to stop Israel from maintaining its genocidal war against the Palestinian people. [applause]

Aside from fighting within the trade unions, there is a broader struggle politically. We need to replace the leaderships in all of the EU and in the United States, the imperialist countries that are supporting the Zionist machine in Israel. Let me conclude by saying: the only way to bring down these imperialist regimes is to have coordinated strikes, number one, and number two, we need to move toward building a revolutionary workers party in the industrialized countries. I'm a supporter of the newspaper *L'Internazionalista*,² where you can read what I have to say more extensively. But let me finish by saying: *All power to the international working class!* [applause]

¹ The name of the Turkish ship that was stormed by Israeli commandos who murdered nine of the activists, shooting them in cold blood, and wounded 57 others.

² Newspaper of the Nucleo Internazionalista d'Italia, section of the League for the Fourth International.



Transport workers and SEIU members protest arrest by federal forces of SEIU California president David Huerta and demand stop the ICE raids. Grand Park, Los Angeles, June 8.

Fight the Australian Labor Party's Union-Busting Attacks on the CFMEU

SYDNEY, Australia – On June 18 the High Court of Australia (the country's highest court) unanimously rejected a union challenge to legislation the Australian Labor Party (ALP) government imposed in August 2024 placing the construction division of the Construction, Forestry and Maritime Union (CFMEU) into administration to a government-appointed team. The legislation enabling this government takeover of what has come to be known as the most militant union in the Australian trade union movement was rushed through Parliament with the support of the conservative opposition Liberal/National Party coalition, which has long targeted the CFMEU for repressive legislation.

The charge against the CFMEU was "corruption" for which there were no indictments, no trials and no convictions. Nearly 300 union officials were immediately removed from their positions and government administrators will run all the construction division's affairs, including its offices, finances and bargaining for a minimum of three years and up to five years. Any members of the union who "undermine" the administration face up to two year's jail time.

The ALP attack on the CFMEU is the most severe assault on the Australian trade union movement since the 1998 lockout of maritime workers by the union-busting Patrick Corporation, with the full support and encouragement of the conservative government of then Prime Minister John Howard. Patrick attempted to replace locked-out workers with ex-military scabs while balaclava-clad security guards with attack dogs blocked workers from their jobs. Thousands of union supporters joined the maritime workers in mass pickets and this muscle forced a court decision reinstating the locked-out workers. While the bosses were unable to dislodge the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA), they secured many of their goals in subsequent bargaining, with the workforce virtually halving through voluntary redundancies (layoffs), casualisation and contracting-out of work. Working conditions were driven down while the pace of work intensified. A weakened MUA eventually sought refuge in a merger with the CFMEU in 2018.

Almost immediately after the announcement of the takeover of their union, tens of thousands of construction workers took to the streets of major Australian cities including Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, Cairns, Canberra and Perth, in "stop work" actions that brought building projects to a standstill for the day. There were further "stop work" actions in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. CFMEU members were joined in angry protest by members of the Building Industry Group (BIG) of blue-collar unions, including electricians, plumbers and manufacturing workers as well as activists from a wide range



Thousands of members of the Construction, Forestry and Maritime Union (CFMEU) took to the streets to protest government takeover of union division. Above: Brisbane, 27 August 2024.

of other unions. And there were large numbers of these unionists at May Day 2025 rallies and marches across the country, notably larger than in recent years.

Workers' anger was further inflamed when the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), the unions' peak body, treacherously threw its weight behind the ALP assault on the CFMEU. This backstabbing betrayal is further proof that the real loyalty of the upper levels of the union movement – the labour bureaucracy – and of the Labor Party is to capitalism and its state, not the interests of the workers they claim to represent.

The mass actions of CFMEU members together with their brothers and sisters in the BIG unions showed the willingness of many to use their own strength in fighting the government attack on their unions. But as the months wore by, with deposed CFMEU leaders counselling their members to await the High Court judgment, the workers' anger was dissipated. Following the announcement of the High Court decision, there was no national response from the CFMEU. Members in Brisbane walked off the job in protest and former CFMEU national president Jade Ingham addressed them saying "We know the entire system is against us. But ... they underestimate our resolve, they underestimate how prepared we are to take this fight on all the way until we win ... mark my words we will win this fight."¹ In spite of having months to prepare should the High Court appeal predictively fail, no call to action or strategy was announced. In the main CFMEU strongholds, Melbourne and Sydney, there was silence.

The decision of the High Court exposes the lie that the capitalist state is "neutral" in the struggle between labour and capital. So, also, with the false assertion that the Labor Party actually represents workers' interests. In the months prior to the federal elections in May 2025, there

were reports that some union leaders were considering standing working class candidates in direct opposition to the ALP and even talk of forming a workers party. Over 80 union leaders from nine different unions in the BIG alliance met at a "Trade Unions for Democracy" summit in Canberra on 9 December 2024, ostensibly to put pressure on the High Court which was scheduled to hear the union's appeal the following day. But union members waited in vain to hear any fighting strategy from their leaders.

The Demonisation of the CFMEU

This latest assault on the CFMEU was kicked off in July 2024 by a self-described "major investigation by *The Australian Financial Review*, *The Age*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and 60 Minutes"² into so-called corruption in the building industry. Most of the scandal-mongering charges in the "Building Bad" "expose" centred on the Victoria branch as being "militant" and "out of control" and especially singled out 12-year Branch Secretary John Setka for being as "tough and feared a union leader as this country has ever seen". Setka had previously announced his retirement for the end of this year but stepped down early, saying "These stories have been constant, and while I've been the target of many of them, enough is enough."

The chief allegations against Setka and the union are old and tired, centring on claims such as the union hiring bikies (members of motorcycle clubs) for "standover" (shakedown) tactics to enforce concessions from recalcitrant building companies. In fact, and as is well known throughout the building sector, massive under-the-table payoffs by builders to local government officials for lucrative building contracts and permits are the real source of bribery and fraud in this industry. As an

² *Australian Financial Review*, 25 July 2024, <https://www.afr.com/companies/infrastructure/building-bad-inside-the-cfmeu-investigation-20240724-p5jwab>

¹ *The Queenslander*, 19 June 2025, <https://theqldr.com.au/queensland-news/2025/06/19/cfmeu-51/>

opinion piece by journalist Guy Rundle in "alternative media" outlet *Crikey* headlined: "Time to stand with the CFMEU against a cooked-up scandal." He described infrastructure construction in the state of Victoria as "a predators ball," adding: "The CFMEU made sure workers got their share, against the violence of capital". Rundle continued: "The muscle appeared, from their side [major building companies], before the unions began to tool up to match it. 'Security firms' and then plain old bikies began appearing on sites on behalf of firms, precisely to keep union organisers off-site." Rundle's *Crikey* piece went on to say "the combination of the Fair Work Commission,³ anti-

strike laws, and the active complicity of the right-wing unions has turned Labor and the industrial system into a smooth machine for the suppression of wages, wage demands, improved on-site conditions, and the possibility of industrial action."⁴

Similar slander campaigns about "unions run by gangsters" were used against the CFMEU's two main predecessors, the Building Workers' Industrial Union (BWIU) and Builders Labourers Federation (BLF), unions that were "de-registered" (effectively banned from representing their members) by government action. In reality, they were targeted not for financial misconduct or consorting with criminals but to purge the influence of the Communist Party in their leadership and ranks.

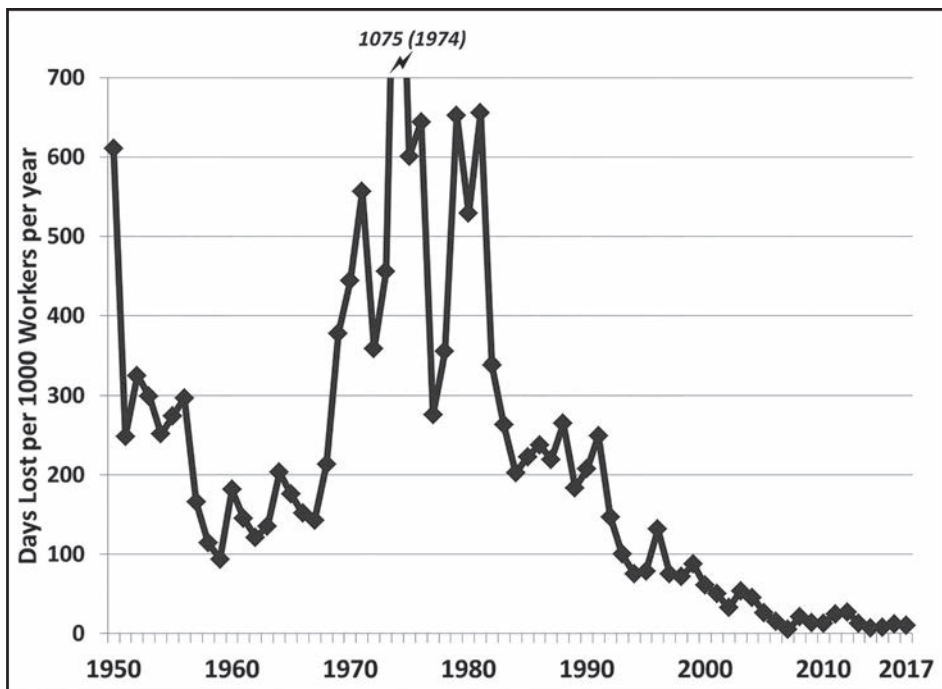
Whether malfeasance exists in the CFMEU or any other union is a matter for its members to resolve. A class line of bitter hostility separates the interests of the working class and the injustices imposed by the ruling class. It is clear from the history of government intervention in the unions that such action is always to stifle militancy and opposition to capitalist exploitation, not to improve conditions for the workers.

Strangulation of the Unions

CFMEU leaders have balked at calling full-on strike action or for solidarity strikes by other unions; such self-defence is illegal under Australian legislation governing unions, much of which was imposed by ALP governments. Compulsory arbitration has been a feature of Australian law since The Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904 established the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, with support from the first Labor government of Prime Minister Chris Watson.

³ The Fair Work Commission (FWC) was set up under a 2009 reform as a labor relations tribunal for the settling of union-management disputes, retrenchments (layoffs) and other workplace issues.

⁴ *Crikey*, 19 July 2024 <https://www.crikey.com.au/2024/07/19/cfmeu-scandal-guy-rundle>



Number and duration of strikes fell to near zero as a result of government regulations under 1983 “Accord” imposed by ALP prime minister Bob Hawke (below) .



ACTU head Bob Hawke became the ALP prime minister in 1983 and over the next decade the ALP instituted an entangling matrix of government regulations and bodies known as the “Accord.” Collective bargaining is tightly constrained, industry-wide bargaining has largely been replaced by enterprise bargaining (weakening union strength), strikes can be called only in the most extraordinary circumstances and then can be ended by government fiat. By 1993, the number of strikes had declined by over two-thirds.

The “neoliberal” austerity policies implemented in Reagan’s American and

Thatcher’s Britain were delivered in Australia by the Labor Party. Workforce unionisation declined from over 50% in the 1970s to just over 12% now, and a majority of those are in public sector jobs. Only about 8% of private sector employees are union members. These are the lowest rates of Australian unionisation in 120 years.

Sharply declining rates of unionisation were matched by the decline of strike action, which has declined by 97%

from the 1970s to 2018.⁵ Moreover, as a paper by a “progressive” think tank notes, “There is a close statistical relationship between the near-disappearance of strike activity and the deceleration of wage growth, which has also slowed to the lowest rates in the postwar era.... Across the national economy, work stoppages have become extremely rare – and the extraordinary discretionary ability of industrial authorities to restrict or prevent industrial action is an

⁵ Jim Stafford, “Historical Data on the Decline in Australian Industrial Disputes,” Australia Institute, January 2018



Australian prime minister Anthony Albanese and U.S. president Joe Biden seal AUKUS deal for nuclear submarines, San Diego, 13 March 2023.

important reason why.”⁶

The Labor Party’s 2009 “Fair Work Act” was touted as a complete replacement of most of the restrictions imposed on workers by the Conservative government of Prime Minister John Howard’s 2005 “WorkChoices” laws. In reality the ALP legislation continued the heavy-handed pattern of stringent curbs on union power. The Act bans industry-wide agreements (except in exceptional circumstances), bans pattern bargaining (whereby workers submit identical claims across multiple enterprises) and bans any group of workers taking action to support another (such as solidarity strikes). The Act also mandates the government to conduct union elections! It was this anti-union legislation that was amended (with support from the labour-hating Liberal/National coalition) to authorise the placing of the CFMEU into government control.

ALP Ulterior Motives

At the same time the anti-CFMEU media frenzy was running red hot last year, the fate of Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and his ALP government was looking shaky. Polls showed a steady decline for Albanese over two years, from the ALP election (after over a decade in opposition) in May 2022 and the media beat-up on the CFMEU in July 2024. The ALP was extraordinarily keen not to let any hint of scandal be associated with it, immediately suspending the union from any ALP activity and refusing to accept the union’s financial support, while it collaborated with the anti-union Liberal/National opposition coalition to rush through the Parliament the legislation establishing government administration of the union’s affairs.

In Australian politics, the Liberals have always been the most consistent union-bashers. The ALP wanted an issue that could counter any allegation of softness towards the unions and went into overdrive to be the most vociferous witch hunters.

As it turned out, the Labor Party won a crushing victory in the May 2025 federal elections: 94 seats for the ALP versus 43 for the Liberal/National Party coalition, the largest margin for a winning party in Australian history. To be sure, the Liberals’ party leader, Peter Dutton, ran such a terrible campaign that not only did his party haemorrhage seats but he lost his own and

⁶ *Ibid*

was dumped as party leader. Liberal/Nats proposals to scrap emission standards and build nuclear power plants never got any real traction. But what clearly tipped the entire election in the ALP’s favour was the “MAGA effect,” the revulsion against the “Make America Great Again” politics of Donald Trump. Just as the Liberal Party in Canada reversed its declining support when Trump declared he wanted to absorb the country as the 51st U.S. state, so the Liberals in Australia floundered over its MAGA-style rhetoric and ties to the U.S. President.

But while the ALP basks in its victory, the seeds of its own decay are apparent and growing. A Lowy annual poll published in June 2025 found that barely half of the population have any faith in Australia’s economic performance for the next five years. Only 36% of Australians have any level of trust in the U.S., the lowest in 20 years of polling. More than 81% disapprove of Trump’s use of tariffs to pressure other countries to comply with his administration’s objectives and over two-thirds are pessimistic about the next four years under the Trump presidency. More than a third are opposed to the AUKUS deal to provide Australia with nuclear-powered submarines; that opposition has been growing with every poll. And in every category, faith in the future is the lowest among young people under 30.

Above all, what is driving the ALP government is the mobilisation for war on China, with Australian imperialism playing a key role in its U.S. big brother’s strategy of encirclement of the Chinese mainland. As in Europe, Australian workers’ living standards are being cut as the country gears up for war on China, by far Australia’s biggest trading partner. (Two-thirds of Australian export revenue comes from mining, most of it iron ore sales to China.) This issue is by no means abstract. Not long ago it was reported that U.S. under secretary of defence Elbridge Colby (whose grandfather was head of the CIA) was “pressing Japan and Australia to make clear what role they would play if the U.S. and China went to war over Taiwan” (*Financial Times*, 13 July). And now Japan’s new right-wing government of Sanae Takaichi (who styles herself a modern day Margaret Thatcher), is jacking up military spending and has threatened Japanese military action should Chinese move on Taiwan (*The Independent*, 12 November).

To defend itself, the Australian working class and its allies must oppose the an-

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Mobilize labor's power to stop war cargo to Israel. Above: protest blocks loading of Israeli ZIM Line ship at port of Melbourne, 18 January 2024.

ti-China drive. An internationalist program must combine combat against increasing immiseration and imperialist militarisation. Australian workers have been through nearly two decades of stagnant wages; increased casualisation of the workforce, without benefits or job security; the inability of most young people to ever own their own home. Even big business interests admit that that real wages of Australian workers have fallen by more than 10% over the last five years, and are now at 2009 levels.⁷ To change this reality requires replacing the capitalist system that the ALP is committed to preserving.

What Is to Be Done?

The tens of thousands of workers who have rallied and marched in defence of their unions and their livelihoods show a willingness to fight and a readiness to take on the government. But most Australian workers have never been in a successful strike. The tangled web of legal and contractual constraints, implemented and enforced over decades with the cooperation of union leaders, blocks their way. As Leon Trotsky, co-leader of the Russian October Revolution of 1917 and founder of the Fourth International, wrote in *Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay* (1940), what's needed is to:

"mobilize the masses not only against the bourgeoisie but also against the totalitarian regime within the trade unions themselves and against the leaders enforcing this regime. The primary slogan for this struggle is: *complete and unconditional independence of the trade unions in relation to the capitalist state*. This means a struggle to turn the trade unions into the organs of the broad exploited masses and not the organs of a labor aristocracy. "The second slogan is: *trade union democracy*. This second slogan flows directly from the first and presupposes for its realization the complete freedom of the trade unions from the imperialist or colonial state.... The trade unions of our time can either serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of workers and for obstructing the revolution, or, on the contrary, the trade unions can become the instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat."

The stranglehold of the century-and-a-

quarter-old system of rigid state control of labor in Australia – both under right-wing and ALP governments – will only be broken by sharp class struggle, led by a vanguard of the working class and the oppressed armed with a transitional program that leads the fight for today's urgent needs forward to international socialist revolution.

The League for the Fourth International stands with the workers in the CFMEU, the BIG unions and all those who are under the hammer of the ALP government. We call for class struggle action to defeat the government which has hijacked the CFMEU.

- **No more secrets from the CFMEU membership! Elect strike committees to plan and implement the fight against government control of the union.**
- **Build a campaign throughout the Australian labour movement to defy the injunctions and threats that will come, to hit the government with strike action in solidarity with the embattled CFMEU. An injury to one is an injury to all!**
- **No support to the union-busting ALP. Build a revolutionary workers party to fight for a workers government!**

Venezuela...

sigue de la página 32

Estados Unidos durante más de una década. Su proyecto electoral fue financiado directamente por la National Endowment for Democracy (NED, la infame organización montada por la CIA para financiar sus provocaciones imperialistas) y el Departamento de Estado de Estados Unidos. El candidato que Machado presentó en las elecciones del año pasado, Edmundo González Urrutia, sirvió como recaudador de fondos y financiador de los escuadrones de la muerte salvadoreños y otros grupos paramilitares reaccionarios en Centroamérica cuando fungió como diplomático venezolano en El Salvador en la década de los 1980, como se reveló en cables filtrados de la CIA.

Al mismo tiempo que nos oponemos con uñas y dientes a la amenaza imperialista, los marxistas revolucionarios nos oponemos al actual intento de Maduro de reemplazar los sindicatos con un "nuevo movimiento de los trabajadores" controlado directamente por el estado. Nos opusimos también a un intento similar de Hugo Chávez en el año 2000 para supuestamente "acabar con la dictadura sindical". Pero lo hacemos luchando por una dirección prole-



El presidente venezolano Nicolás Maduro durante ceremonia militar, el 4 de agosto de 2018, en la que hubo un intento de asesinarlo con drones.

taria revolucionaria de los sindicatos y del movimiento obrero en su conjunto, contra todas las facciones de los gobernantes capitalistas e incluso contra algunos pseudoizquierdistas que se codean de tanto en cuanto con los agentes locales del imperialismo. Es necesario forjar un genuino partido comunista leninista-trotskista en Venezuela, para luchar por un gobierno obrero y campesino y una revolución socialista internacional.

El gobierno actual en Washington esta imponiendo con saña la Doctrina Monroe, estilo Marco Rubio, de irrestricta expoliación imperialista en toda América Latina. En México, los izquierdistas y trabajadores con conciencia de clase deben defender a Venezuela y exigir la expulsión de todos los elementos de las agencias del imperialismo yanqui (DEA, CIA, ICE, ejército, etc.). Esto cobra aún más importancia en vista de las amenazas de usar la fuerza militar de EE.UU. en la llamada "guerra contra las drogas", que en realidad es una guerra contra los pobres con el propósito de mantener el dominio semicolonial norteamericano en su "patio trasero".

En Estados Unidos, los trabajadores deben movilizarse para derrotar la guerra terrorista de Trump en contra de los pueblos de América Latina y de los propios trabajadores "en casa". Luchamos por forjar un partido obrero revolucionario contra todas las facciones de la clase dominante imperialista, en lucha contra los demócratas que han allanado repetidamente el camino a Trump con sus políticas antiobreras y su guerrerismo imperialista de la Guerra Fría, desde Ucrania hasta Gaza e Irán. Defendemos a Gaza contra el genocidio conjunto estadounidense-israelí, y llamamos al movimiento obrero a movilizar su fuerza para defender a los inmigrantes y derrotar las deportaciones masivas del régimen de Trump, que se utilizan como punta de lanza para la imposición del

régimen bonapartista de estado policíaco.

El régimen del "Gran Garrote" en Washington quiere convertir al Caribe en un "lago norteamericano" asesinando criminalmente en altamar y pisoteando a las naciones latinoamericanas, desde México hasta el Cono Sur, bajo la guisa de la lucha contra el "narcoterrorismo". El propósito último de la campaña de guerra imperialista, que desembocaría directamente en una Tercera Guerra Mundial, es la contrarrevolución en China y el desmembramiento de Rusia. ¡Defender a Venezuela del ataque imperialista y de sus agentes, los *escuálidos*! ¡Defender a Cuba contra el imperialismo, sus agentes *gusanos* y la contrarrevolución en cualquiera de sus formas! ¡Por la revolución socialista mundial! ■

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@yahoo.com.br

Internationalistische Gruppe/Deutschland

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

Nucleo Internazionale 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

⁷ See "Labor hides collapsing Australian living standards," *Macrobusiness*, 24 July. <https://www.macrobusiness.com.au/2023/07/labor-hides-collapsing-australian-living-standards/>

¡Movilización contra la amenaza del imperialismo yanqui a Venezuela!

13 de OCTUBRE – El 2 de septiembre, Donald Trump anunció que había ordenado personalmente un ataque militar estadounidense contra una lancha en el Caribe, matando a las 11 personas a bordo, supuestamente por ser “narcoterroristas”. A lo largo de las siguientes semanas, mientras EE.UU. movilizaba barcos y aviones de guerra hacia la región, tres lanchas adicionales han sido destruidas, duplicando así el número de personas asesinadas en altamar. Entretanto, el asesino en jefe del imperialismo norteamericano ofreció una recompensa de 50 millones de dólares por la cabeza del presidente venezolano Nicolás Maduro. El 1º de octubre, Trump notificó al Congreso que Estados Unidos se encuentra en un “conflicto armado” con los cárteles del narcotráfico. En realidad, los terroristas que acechan en las aguas del Caribe son la Marina de Guerra y la Fuerza Aérea de Estados Unidos, que son una amenaza para toda América Latina.

Incluso antes de que Donald Trump asumiera el cargo el 20 de enero, estaba claro que Venezuela estaría en la mira de la nueva administración, como lo ha estado también bajo los demócratas Biden y Obama. Esto no tiene absolutamente nada que ver con el pretexto de Trump, la absurda afirmación de que Estados Unidos supuestamente está bajo una invasión militar por parte de Venezuela a través de la pandilla el Tren de Aragua, que incluso el Consejo Nacional de Inteligencia de EE.UU. declaró no conectada con el gobierno venezolano (que, en cambio, la combate). Cuando esta ficción se vino abajo, Trump resucitó un mítico Cartel de los Soles, una invención de derecha usada para calificar como “narcotraficante” al ejército de Venezuela.

Durante décadas, el imperialismo norteamericano ha estado intentando derrocar al régimen nacionalista y populista venezolano



Adriana Loureiro Fernández / New York Times

Unidad de la Milicia Bolivariana, una fuerza militar auxiliar voluntaria, durante una movilización el 20 de septiembre en respuesta a las amenazas militares de EE.UU. Se deben formar brigadas de trabajadores para combatir cualquier intento de toma de poder en Venezuela por parte de los imperialistas y sus agentes.

para instalar en su lugar a títeres que serán lacayos incondicionales de quien esté al mando en Washington. Una razón, por supuesto, es que Venezuela tiene las mayores reservas probadas de petróleo del mundo; ya desde la primera Guerra del Golfo Pérsico en 1991, los gobernantes estadounidenses han ido repetidamente a la guerra para mantener el control del grifo del petróleo, incluso cuando, como en el caso de Irak, muy poco de ese petróleo se importara a los EE.UU. Quieren controlarlo para mantener a sus “aliados” imperialistas a raya.

Más importante aún, los gobernantes estadounidenses han querido atacar a Venezuela como parte de su campaña para destruir al estado obrero cubano, que, aunque burocráticamente deformado, es una piedra en el zapato de Washington. El imperialismo yanqui ha intentado (sin éxito) derribar la Revolución Cubana desde 1960. En julio de 2021, las protestas por el desabastecimiento en Cuba fueron instigadas, manipuladas y explotadas por agentes *gusanos* (contrarrevolucionarios cubanos exiliados) de Estados Unidos. La Liga por la IV Internacional llamó entonces, como lo hemos hecho desde nuestros inicios, a defender incondicionalmente a Cuba contra las amenazas, el chantaje y los ataques imperialistas, así como contra la contrarrevolución interna.

También llamamos a defender a Venezuela contra los ataques y amenazas imperialistas y contra la oposición interna patrocinada por Es-

tados Unidos. Lo hacemos sin brindar ningún apoyo político al gobierno de Nicolás Maduro y su predecesor, Hugo Chávez, ni a su régimen “bolivariano”. A pesar de su popularidad entre muchos en la izquierda y su ocasional retórica “socialista”, se trata de un gobierno nacionalista burgués. Venezuela es un estado capitalista, que ha engendrado una capa burguesa vinculada al gobierno, que muchos expartidarios de Chávez, decepcionados con Maduro, llaman la “boliburguesía”. Pero con el secretario de estado estadounidense *gusano*, Marco Rubio, a la cabeza, Washington parece resuelto a instalar un régimen títere semicolonial en Caracas.

Estados Unidos ha orquestado repetidos intentos de golpe de estado contra el régimen populista bolivariano en Venezuela desde 2002. El documental irlandés *La revolución no será televisada* (2003) lo muestra de manera impactante. Ahora, incluso el *New York Times*, el órgano de prensa oficioso del imperialismo yanqui, admite que el objetivo del actual despliegue militar en el Caribe es llevar a cabo un supuesto “cambio de régimen” en Venezuela, tal como hizo en Irak en 2003. No tiene nada que ver con la lucha contra el narcotráfico, como Trump afirma falsamente. Estados Unidos cuenta con una armada de cuatro destructores lanzamisiles guiados frente a las costas de Venezuela y diez aviones de combate *stealth* (furtivos, por ser de difícil detección mediante los radares) F-35

en Puerto Rico, el mismo tipo de aviones que Israel utilizó para bombardear Irán en junio. Además, los militares norteamericanos acaban de realizar un ejercicio de entrenamiento en las Islas Vírgenes norteamericanas en el que paracaidistas se adiestran en la toma de un aeropuerto.

Los equipos y entrenamientos militares de este tipo no sirven para atacar lanchas rápidas del narcotráfico. Tienen el propósito de atacar directamente a Venezuela. Es necesario en este momento que los trabajadores se preparen para repeler cualquier ataque imperialista o provocación de sus títeres locales. Organizar una pequeña protesta izquierdista en Venezuela para distanciarse verbalmente de Trump y Cia. no es suficiente. Los sindicatos y toda organización obrera deben prepararse para defender militarmente a Venezuela o, con razón, serán considerados traidores a la causa del proletariado. No puede haber neutralidad alguna ante un ataque imperialista. Debería hacerse un llamado a formar brigadas obreras y armarlas para repeler cualquier intento de golpe de estado, invasión o “levantamiento” respaldado por Estados Unidos.

Debe quedar claro que la supuesta “oposición democrática” en Venezuela no es más que una marioneta de los imperialistas. María Corina Machado, quien acaba de recibir el Premio Nobel de la Paz, ha estado en la nómina de *sigue en la página 31*

Grupo Internacionalista
invita al

Foro Debate:

**¡Movilizar el poder
proletario contra la
amenaza del
imperialismo yanqui
contra Venezuela!**

¡Defender a Cuba contra el imperialismo,
sus agentes gusanos y la contrarrevolución
en cualquiera de sus formas!

miércoles
5 de noviembre
UNAM



Cartel para foro debate del GI sobre la amenaza del imperialismo yanqui a Venezuela.