



## Liberals Make Trump Great Again

# Vote Working Class— Vote PSL!

The repeat showdown for the White House between two decrepit old white men who can barely string two sentences together would seem like a Netflix comedy series if it weren't true. The livelihoods of working people are not a joke. While the population is faced with this political charade, everybody knows there are real issues at stake that neither candidate gives a damn about. There is massive anxiety over what the future will bring. Many can see that the U.S. empire is a sinking ship that wants to bring us all down with it. The economy sucks. People are riddled with debt. The war in Ukraine is unpopular. There is mass outrage over U.S. support to genocide in Gaza. Everybody knows Trump hates immigrants and black people, but they know Jim Crow Joe does, too.

The Democrats are in a panic because it looks likely that Biden will lose to Trump, and their dirty tricks aren't proving as effective as they used to be. They have tried to revive January 6 with cries about defending democracy against Trump and the Republicans. Workers are sick of this song and dance. Calls to "save democracy" fall flat when money is being thrown at war and genocide while the population's basic needs are not being met. Despite fear of another Trump administration, growing sectors of the multiracial working class are being taken in by Trump's "stick it to the establishment" rhetoric out of anger over getting screwed by the Biden government.

Both the Democrats and the Republicans agree on the fundamental question of maintaining the rule of the wealthy elite; they differ only over tactical questions, such as the most effective way to squeeze workers and enforce racial segregation. As the elections heat up, both capitalist parties will continue to stoke racial and other divisions, pitting black workers against white workers, black people and



**CLAUDIA 2024 KARINA**

Party for Socialism and Liberation candidates Claudia (right) and Karina at pro-Palestinian demo in D.C., January 13. Their campaign provides working-class alternative to Democrats and Republicans.

Latinos against migrants, you name it. Recall in 2020: If you love women, immigrants and black people, vote Biden; and if you don't vote Biden, you must be a racist. All this, in turn, emboldened Trump, who welcomed with open arms all those sickened by this liberal tripe. The capitalist rulers want you to think that the main division in this society is Democrat vs. Republican or "people of color" vs. white Trump supporters, all to distract from the fact that in the fight to survive, it's class vs. class.

Voting Biden is not a way forward for workers. Voting Trump is not a way forward either. There is another way! The SL/U.S. is giving critical support to the Party for Socialism and Liberation's

Claudia De la Cruz/Karina Garcia 2024 presidential campaign because it draws a class line against the reactionary candidates Trump and Biden. In particular, Claudia & Karina are clear that there is no "lesser evil": "Voting for Biden does nothing to defeat the enemies of democracy, shifts the entire political spectrum further rightwards, and in most cases won't even result in different policies than if Trump were in office!"

What sets the PSL candidates apart from others on the ballot (RFK, Cornel West, Jill Stein) is their combination of opposition to Biden/Trump with opposition to capitalism. Their platform titled "End Capitalism Before It Ends Us"—which calls to "seize the biggest

100 corporations" and "end the war on Black America" among other things—has a simplicity and appeal that anybody who wants real change for working people in this country would find attractive. Since the campaign provides a working-class alternative to the Democrats and Republicans, *all workers should vote for PSL!*

### Democrats Only Make Trump Stronger

There is an urgent need for the strongest possible working-class opposition to the new administration, whether that be Trump or Biden. To have a fighting chance, this movement must wage struggle from outside and against the Democratic Party of economic ruin and Palestinian genocide—and the PSL campaign serves as a rallying point for just that. In order for the PSL campaign to achieve its full potential, it is necessary to understand the reason why Trump is on top in the polls.

The anti-Trump resistance that exploded on the scene in 2016 was organically tied to the Democratic Party from the outset. It fused around the unsuccessful Democratic presidential candidacy of Bernie Sanders.

From this position, the resistance was never going to be able to advance the struggles of the workers and oppressed, whose interests run straight up against those of the ruling class. Improving conditions for the working class, making inroads against segregation and women's oppression requires direct confrontation with capitalist interests. But that's not possible while simultaneously extending a hand to the forces defending those interests.

Those who claim to be socialist and stand for "class independence" but embraced the anti-Trump resistance as a step in the right direction only helped pave the way for the current situation. The PSL did just that at the time and

*continued on page 11*

## Down With U.S. Support to Israel

# Defend Palestine! Defend Iran!

APRIL 15—As we go to press, the conflict between Israel and Iran is rapidly escalating. On April 1, Israel flattened part of the Iranian embassy in Damas-

cus, killing two Iranian generals. Iran retaliated by launching 300 drones and missiles toward Israel, most of which were shot down with the help of the U.S., France and Britain.

At the moment, it is not clear where all this will lead. What is clear is that the situation was provoked by Israel to further rope the U.S. and its other imperialist allies into the genocide in Gaza. A war right now between Israel and Iran would be an extension

of Israel's national war of oppression against the Palestinians. Liberal cries for "de-escalation" and respect of international law are pacifist dead ends. It is urgent for the working class in the U.S. and beyond to oppose all imperialist maneuvers and block military aid to Israel. *Defend Palestine and Iran against the imperialist-backed Zionist onslaught!*

It is also a dead end to look to Hamas and the Islamic Republic of Iran to de-

feat Israel and the imperialists. Hamas's strategy of provoking the Israeli slaughter to compel the Arab regimes to do something on behalf of the Palestinians has led to the utter devastation of Gaza. As for the Iranian regime, it is balancing between superficial support to Palestine and conciliation of the U.S.-dominated world order. Only a revolutionary working-class strategy can lead to the liberation of Palestine and to the final defeat of imperialism.



# Protest Austrian State Repression of Pro-Palestinian Socialists!

While Israeli bombs continue to rain down on Gaza, Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, faces trial in Vienna on May 2 for defending the Palestinians and opposing the Zionist state. Charged with “incitement to commit terrorist offenses and approval of terrorist offenses,” Michael could serve up to two years in jail if found guilty. This would set a prece-

dent for governments throughout West Europe to criminalize all those who stand in defense of Palestine. Other activists, including two supporters of the International Marxist Tendency, Sonja Kopf and Alex Rauter, have also been questioned by the Austrian state under the witchhunt Law 282.

The International Communist League and its fraternal defense organizations call on the left, the Palestinian move-

ment and all fighters for civil liberties to protest Michael’s prosecution. *Join the PDC and SL/U.S. in organizing a demonstration in NYC and Los Angeles outside the Austrian consulate in the days leading up to his May 2 trial.*

- Drop the charges against Michael Pröbsting!
- Hands off all pro-Palestinian activists!

Endorsed by the RCIT

For more information and to sign the petition

“No to the Criminal Complaint against Pro-Palestine Activist Michael Pröbsting!”



thecommunists.net/rcit/petition-no-to-criminal-complaint-against-pro-palestine-activist-michael-proebsting

Contact the Partisan Defense Committee to endorse and for more details: [partisandefense@earthlink.net](mailto:partisandefense@earthlink.net), (212) 406-4252, X@PartisanDefense

## Demonstrate at the Austrian Consulate!

**New York City**

April 25, 4 p.m.  
31 East 69th St.

**Los Angeles**

April 29, 3 p.m.  
11859 Wilshire Blvd.

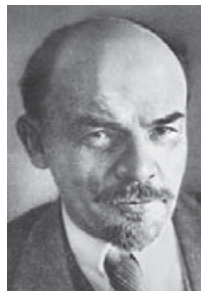
## Letter

### Socialists Must Intervene in All Political Arenas

*Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin made clear that the working class could never take power through bourgeois elections. But he politically fought against ultraleftists who rejected participation in parliament and bourgeois elections. He insisted that it was necessary for revolutionaries to participate in these arenas in order to dispel workers’ illusions in bourgeois democracy and guide them toward the conclusion that the working*



TROTSKY



LENIN

*class needs its own organs of class rule. Today, we are giving critical electoral support to the Party for Socialism and Liberation’s presidential campaign because it expresses a working-class alternative to the twin capitalist parties of oppression and exploitation.*

We must *not* regard what is obsolete *to us* as something obsolete *to a class, to the masses*. Here again we find that the “Lefts” do not know how to reason, do not know how to act as the party of a *class*, as the party of the *masses*. You must not sink to the level of the masses, to the level of the backward strata of the class. That is incontestable. You must tell them the bitter truth. You are in duty bound to call their bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices what they are—prejudices. But at the same time you must *soberly* follow the *actual* state of the class-consciousness and preparedness of the entire class (not only of its communist vanguard), and of all the *working people* (not only of their advanced elements)....

Whilst you lack the strength to do away with bourgeois parliaments and every other type of reactionary institution, you *must* work within them because *it is there* that you will still find workers who are duped by the priests and stultified by the conditions of rural life; otherwise you risk turning into nothing but windbags.

Third, the “Left” Communists have a great deal to say in praise of us Bolsheviks. One sometimes feels like telling them to praise us less and to try to get a better knowledge of the Bolsheviks’ tactics....

Without a revolutionary mood among the masses, and without conditions facilitating the growth of this mood, revolutionary tactics will never develop into action. In Russia, however, lengthy, painful and sanguinary experience has taught us the truth that revolutionary tactics cannot be built on a revolutionary mood alone. Tactics must be based on a sober and strictly objective appraisal of *all* the class forces in a particular state (and of the states that surround it, and of all states the world over) as well as of the experience of revolutionary movements. It is very easy to show one’s “revolutionary” temper merely by hurling abuse at parliamentary opportunism, or merely by repudiating participation in parliaments; its very ease, however, cannot turn this into a solution of a difficult, a very difficult, problem.

—V.I. Lenin, “Left-Wing” Communism—An Infantile Disorder (1920)

## For Labor Action to Stop U.S./Israeli Genocide in Gaza

12 April 2024

Dear *Workers Vanguard*,

This is the April 5 flyer I put out to get my union, ILWU Local 10, to call a May Day stop-work protest in the Oakland port to demand an end to the genocide in Gaza. Unfortunately, I got only two other votes in the executive board for my motion. The Local 10 leadership refuses to sponsor a port protest. Instead, they are having a business union meeting in the morning, leaving members free to support Bay Area pro-Palestinian solidarity rallies in the afternoon. But scattered street protests won’t stop the slaughter—we *need to mobilize labor’s power to threaten the ruling class’ interests here at home!* An official labor protest in the Oakland port would have pointed the way. Many labor leaders support the demand for a Gaza ceasefire, but none will break with the Democratic Party of genocide to do what would actually make a difference: use labor’s power to stop the flow of bombs and other war material to Israel. I urge others to fight in their unions for official union action to stop the genocide.

Emily Turnbull  
Member of Executive Board,  
ILWU Local 10

\* \* \*

Millions around the world have come out to protest the U.S.-backed Israeli war against Gaza. But these protests haven’t stopped the genocide. Our rulers continue to send billions of dollars in arms and other military equipment to Israel. They won’t stop backing their Zionist ally *unless* they fear that their interests here at home are threatened. That is why it is desperately necessary for the working class to act *now* to stop the genocide and free Palestine—including by blocking the flow of arms to Israel.

Workers in this country have every interest in backing the struggle for Palestinian freedom. The American ruling

class has deindustrialized this country, destroyed infrastructure and ruined public education, putting the squeeze on all of us. On the world stage they spend billions to prop up their outposts like Israel and to defend their investments abroad. It’s time we fought back! The ILWU International leadership is in Genocide Joe’s pocket. Local 10 leaders boast of their support to the Palestinians. The situation demands we act *now!* We have already scheduled a stop work meeting for May 1. No business as usual! Let’s use our stop work to call a protest in the Oakland port and rally the rest of the ILWU and other Bay Area unions behind us.

I intend to fight for the following motion at the April 9 executive board meeting and ask other ILWU members to come and back me up:

Local 10 will honor May Day by having our stop work meeting in the Oakland port, to rally the working class in solidarity with the besieged Palestinian people, in opposition to the genocidal Israel/U.S. war on Gaza. We will demand:

- Stop the Genocide in Gaza!
- Stop All U.S. Aid to Israel!
- Free Palestine!

We will contact other Bay Area trade unions to join us in the port for this rally.

To show unity on the Coast and in our union, we appeal to all other ILWU locals to join us in their own May Day rallies calling for a stop to the genocide.

We also urge dock workers internationally to join together in May Day solidarity actions, and urge the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) and International Dockworkers Council (IDC) to participate.

## WORKERS VANGUARD



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# Join the Campaign!



It has been four years since the massive George Floyd protests shook the country, bringing millions into the streets to demand justice for black people. But today there are no mass protests and no major struggle. Does that mean police brutality has ended? Obviously not. It has not even slowed. Last year had the highest number of cop killings in decades, and 2024 has already seen over 300.

The need for a new movement against police brutality is clear. We propose to rebuild this movement around the demand to open all the police archives (OPA). Crucial to that task is mobilizing the power of labor behind this fight. We have taken some initial steps in that direction by getting unions to sign on to the campaign.

Recently, OPA activists met with Belkis Terán, mother of 26-year-old Manuel Terán (Tortuguita), who was gunned down in a hail of 57 bullets by Georgia State Troopers during an attack on a Stop Cop City protest encampment in January 2023. “They went to kill him,” she said, “as they used to do with slaves. They would hang them and let them be seen by others to set an example.” Georgia officials have absolved the cops while refusing to turn over even a shred of evidence to the family. *Down with Cop City! Hands off the protesters! Open the State Patrol archives!*

Last month, PDC counsel visited Mumia Abu-Jamal, who endorsed the OPA campaign. If any case shows the need to open the archives, it is Mumia’s. A former Black Panther Party member and MOVE supporter, he has spent 42 years behind bars after being framed up for his political beliefs on false charges of killing a Philly cop. There is a mountain of evidence proving Mumia’s innocence, which the courts have tried to bury, and still more is coming out. *These files must be opened now! Join us in Philly demanding Mumia’s freedom on his birthday, April 24!*

We also just completed a tour in Florida and Louisiana, where we met with victims of cop atrocities and affected families. These cases and many more scream out for a fight back, for the archives to be opened to expose the crimes of the capitalist state to all:

- In 2022, Antwan Glover was brutally assaulted by cops at a traffic stop in Polk County, Florida. In retaliation for surviving the assault, Glover was then falsely charged with resisting arrest and battery of a first responder. The full footage of



**Bartow, Florida, April 2: Rally in defense of Antwan Glover outside Polk County Courthouse (above). NYC, April 10: Rally outside City Hall (below) calls to fire cops who killed Kawaski Trawick. NYPD refused to discipline them.**



the night still has not been released. His next court hearing is May 21. *All out for Antwan! Drop all the charges! Release the full video!*

- In 2019, Ronald Greene was killed at a traffic stop in Monroe, Louisiana. The cops initially claimed Greene died from a car crash. But after state officials finally released the footage that they’ve been sitting on for two years, it shows the cops beating him to death. There will be a protest in Farmersville, Louisiana, on May 10, the fifth anniversary of Greene’s death. *Join us and his family to demand justice!*

- On 27 March 2019, while sitting in their car in an IHOP parking lot in Gretna, Louisiana, Davari “Bebop” Robertson and Chris Joseph were blockaded by the cops and killed. IHOP video footage still hasn’t been released, and the killer cops were granted “qualified immunity,” i.e., the right to gun down black people at their volition. *Down with “qualified immunity”! Open all the archives on the case!*

- Glenn Foster Jr., a former New Orleans Saints defensive end was beaten, tortured and killed by cops in Pickens County,

Alabama in 2021. His family was lied to about his death, and the cops tried to cover up the whole thing. *We must fight for the police files to be opened now!*

- Le’Keian Woods was brutally beaten at a traffic stop in Jacksonville, Florida last September and is now facing bogus charges. A cellphone video of the beating went viral, but how many more victims of the Jacksonville Sheriff’s department is the state keeping under wraps? *Open the archives now! Drop the charges!*

Obviously, racist cop atrocities aren’t limited to the South. In 2019, the NYPD broke into Kawaski Trawick’s Bronx apartment, shot him while he was cooking in the kitchen and then left him to bleed to death. Last week, after five years of cover-up, the police commissioner cleared the cops of any wrongdoing. *We must expose the police crimes by opening the police files!*

During our travels in the South, we encountered groups that have been organizing around these cases, such as the Tampa Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression and the Jacksonville Com-

munity Action Committee, both affiliated with Freedom Road Socialist Organization (FRSO). It is good they want to fight for the victims of cop terror, but there is a massive contradiction between what they want to achieve and the strategy they put forward. Their main demand is for “community control” of the police, pitched as a way to make the police “accountable” and get them to work for the community. But in reality, community control would only make black and working people responsible for administering the very racist state apparatus that is responsible for repressing them.

No amount of “civilian oversight” can cause the cops to change what they are: the guard dogs of the capitalist class. They brutalize and kill black people and the oppressed not because the wrong people are in charge but because they are doing the bidding of their capitalist masters. In fact, community control is part of the same liberal program that led to the failure of the BLM protests in the first place.

By organizing against police brutality under the slogan to open all the police archives, we seek not only to build a movement of the broadest possible forces, but also to put the liberal politicians who claim to stand on the side of black people on the spot: Do you protect the dirty crimes of the cops or do you stand on the side of black people and all the oppressed? The struggle to open the archives will make it clear what side they are on. We hope through joint work with FRSO and other groups to debate what strategy is the way forward for the black struggle—and to demonstrate it in action. ■



**Mumia Abu-Jamal with PDC counsel Jonathan Piper and Valerie West, March 7.**

## Endorsers as of 16 April 2024:

**Mumia Abu-Jamal**, PhD Student, “Life” Row,\* Frackville, PA  
**AFT Chicago Black Caucus**, Chicago, IL  
**Shannon Bland**, Cousin of Kawaski Trawick, Brooklyn, NY  
**Chicago Area UAW Civil & Human Rights Council**, Chicago, IL  
**Committee For a Fighting TWU**, New York, NY  
**Kim Ford**, President/CEO, **Community Recallers**, New Orleans, LA  
**Antwan Glover, Building Bridges Florida**, Lakeland, FL  
**Tarik J. Haskins**, Rank and File, Black Panther,\* Bronx, NY  
**International Longshore and**

**Warehouse Union, Local 10**, San Francisco, CA  
**International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Local 34**, San Francisco, CA  
**International Longshoremen’s Association, Local 2078**, Tampa, FL  
**Cedric Johnson**, Professor, Black Studies and Political Science, University of Illinois at Chicago,\* Chicago, IL  
**Robin D.G. Kelley**, Distinguished Professor and Gary B. Nash Endowed

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## Open All Police Archives!

Chair in U.S. History, University of California Los Angeles,\* Los Angeles, CA  
**Jefferson McCain**, Chairman, NLG University of Wisconsin,\* Madison, WI  
**Edward Perez**, President, NYC & Vicinity Latino Carpenters of America,\* New York, NY  
**Marlena Ruprecht**, Organizer, United Campus Workers AZ,\* Frontera Aid Collective,\* Tucson, AZ  
**Rev. Belkis Terán, Tortuguita Healing Center**, Republic of Panama

**Andy Thayer**, Co-founder, Gay Liberation Network,\* Chicago, IL  
**Francisco Torres Sr.**, San Francisco 8,\* Woodbridge, NJ  
**Roosevelt Williams**, President, UAW Local 3212,\* Chicago, IL  
**Natassia Woods**, Mother of Le’Keian Woods, Jacksonville, FL  
**Paul Zulkowitz**, The Art & Politics of Justice & Joy,\* New York, NY  
**Jacob Zumoff**, Associate Professor, Department of History, New Jersey City University,\* Jersey City, NJ

\*Organizational affiliation listed for identification purposes only. Initiated by the Spartacist League/U.S. and the Partisan Defense Committee.



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## Ed Poindexter 1944–2023

Former Black Panther and class-war prisoner Ed Poindexter died in the Nebraska State Penitentiary at age 79 on 7 December 2023. Ed was a leader of the Omaha National Committee to Combat Fascism (NCCF), an organization affiliated with the Black Panther Party. Imprisoned on bogus charges, Ed spent more than 53 years behind bars for a crime that he transparently did not commit.

While in prison, Ed earned both bachelor's and master's degrees, wrote movie scripts and was recognized as a caring mentor of his fellow prisoners. He remained an unbroken fighter against racial oppression until the end, despite years of racist malign neglect. In his final years, he suffered from severe visual impairment and was confined to a wheelchair.

Ed and his former co-defendant, Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa (David Rice), who died in prison in 2016, were victims of the FBI's deadly COINTELPRO operation, under which 28 Black Panther Party members were killed and hundreds more imprisoned on frame-up charges. The NCCF rejected the "turn the other cheek" pacifism of Martin Luther King

Jr., advocating armed self-defense in the face of racist cop terror.

The 2018 book by Michael Richardson, *Framed: J. Edgar Hoover, COINTELPRO & the Omaha Two Story*, exposes the racist conspiracy by the FBI and Omaha, Nebraska, police to frame up Ed and Mondo as part of their vendetta. Without a shred of evidence and based on the perjured testimony at their trial, Ed and Mondo were railroaded to prison and sentenced to life for a 1970 explosion that killed an Omaha cop. Nebraska courts repeatedly denied Ed a new trial despite the fact that crucial evidence long suppressed by the FBI, including J. Edgar Hoover himself, proved that Ed and Mondo were innocent men.

Beginning in 1986, Ed was one of the first recipients of the Partisan Defense Committee's class-war prisoner stipend program. Class-war prisoners are representatives of the most courageous and advanced section of the oppressed. Their freedom is in the interest of the entire working class. Workers and all opponents of racial injustice must never forget Ed Poindexter.

## Free Umar Khalid!



Anshuman Poyrekar/Hindustan Times

January 2020, Mumbai: Khalid leads JNU campus protest against anti-Muslim Citizenship Amendment Act.

For nearly four years, Umar Khalid, an outspoken opponent of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's increasingly repressive regime, has been locked up in Tihar prison complex. Khalid, a leftist Muslim champion of democratic rights for national and religious minorities in India's prison house of peoples, was arrested in September 2020 for his prominent role in protesting against passage of the anti-Muslim Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). Charged with sedition and violation of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), he has been denied bail and faces lengthy incarceration if ultimately convicted. The Partisan Defense Committee has written the Indian Embassy demanding the immediate release of Khalid and the many other anti-Modi protesters and the dropping of all charges.

Khalid has been in the gunsights of Modi's Hindu-chauvinist BJP regime since emerging as a leftist student organizer at the prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), a stronghold of the left. On 9 February 2016, Khalid joined other students for a campus demonstration on the third anniversary of the execution of Kashmiri nationalist Afzal Guru. Following the meeting, the BJP's student organization filed a complaint with the Delhi police alleging that demonstrators chanted "anti-national" slogans. Video footage of the event was splashed on national television, some of it blatantly doctored to portray the organizers and speakers as terrorist sympathizers and Pakistani agents. Police charged Khalid and four others with sedition. He was

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## Defend Pro-Palestinian Campus Protesters!

APRIL 15—A nationwide wave of campus repression against pro-Palestinian activists has dramatically escalated in recent weeks. Students and staff are being met with slander, suspensions, expulsions, even arrests. Their "crimes" all boil down to the same thing: They dared oppose the U.S.-backed Israeli genocide of the Palestinians.

The Pomona College administration provoked protests by dismantling a mock apartheid wall built to illustrate life for Palestinians in the West Bank. On April 5, students from colleges in the Los Angeles area staged a sit-in at the president's office. The administration called the cops, who stormed the building dressed in riot gear. The demonstrators were arrested and charged with trespassing. President Gabrielle Starr immediately issued "interim" suspensions against the students, evicting them from their dorms and banning them from campus.

Another flash point is Columbia University, where the administration suspended the campus chapters of Students for Justice in Palestine and Jewish Voice for Peace last fall. On January 19, two pro-Zionist students who were IDF soldiers sprayed "skunk" (a dangerous chemical agent) at Columbia protesters. At least eight students required hospitalization. These thugs continue to walk the campus with impunity.

Recently, the administration launched an inquest into a March 24 teach-in on Palestine featuring Palestinian activist Khaled Barakat. Columbia even hired private investigators to intimidate students, demanding that they turn over their private

texts. On April 3, the school suspended six students for organizing the event, later lifting two of the suspensions while proceeding to evict the other four from their dorms. Columbia Professor Abdul Kayum Ahmed was notified on April 9 that he would likely lose his post at the Mailman School of Public Health scarcely a month after the *Wall Street Journal* accused him of pro-Palestinian "political indoctrination" in his class.

Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, blocked a student vote to divest student government funds from companies that do business in Israel. For protesting in the hallway outside the chancellor's office on March 26, some 27 students faced suspension. The school later expelled three, suspended another and the remainder face disciplinary probation.

As the PDC wrote last October, such repression is "all part of a vile campaign to brand those showing solidarity with the oppressed Palestinian people as being anti-Semitic or even terrorists. These acts of repression represent a threat to anyone opposing the Israeli massacre of Palestinians, which is backed to the hilt by the U.S. and other imperialist powers" (WV No. 1180, 22 December 2023). The attacks on pro-Palestinian students are being carried out at the behest of the capitalist rulers who continue to arm the Zionists to the teeth and must be opposed.

- **Lift the suspensions with full reinstatement!**
- **No reprisals!**
- **Drop all the charges! ■**

## Free Georges Ibrahim Abdallah!

The Partisan Defense Committee has added Georges Ibrahim Abdallah, Lebanese fighter for Palestinian rights and determined opponent of imperialism, to our class-war prisoner stipend program. In his 40th year in prison, Abdallah has spent more time behind bars than any other class-war prisoner in France and most likely all Europe. We demand his immediate release.

The context for the witchhunt against Abdallah was the 1982 U.S./France-backed invasion and occupation of Lebanon by Israel. Some 20,000 Lebanese and Palestinians were killed in that invasion. Abdallah, a leading member of the Lebanese Revolutionary Armed Factions (LRAF), was arrested in Lyon in October 1984 and charged with carrying a fake Algerian passport, even though the document had been legally issued by the authorities. A year later while Abdallah was awaiting trial, the French state claimed to have discovered an arsenal of weapons in a Paris apartment rented in his name, which included a gun purportedly used to kill an American CIA agent



Armel Brucelle/Syigma

and an Israeli Mossad agent. The cops also said they had found a card in Abdallah's handwriting bearing the address of the American consul.

The state added weapons possession to the charges. His 1986 conviction drew

*continued on page 14*

# DSA Left Must Choose: Biden & Democrats OR Working Class

From the crippling cost of living to the genocide in Gaza, broad layers of the population—workers, black people, Latinos, youth—are fed up with Biden and his party. Many Democrats can hardly show their faces without running into pro-Palestinian protesters. This widespread discontent should be a wake-up call to the DSA left, which for years has talked of cutting the ties that bind the organization to the Democrats but never actually called the question: There is *no middle ground and no time for delay*. The longer the DSA maintains its link to the party of economic ruin and Palestinian genocide, the more it debases the name of socialism. The choice is simple: maintain unity with the pro-imperialist politicians or break from them to the side of the working class.

In many DSA chapters, the leadership is pushing to “save the Squad” in order to defeat Trump as the elections approach because most members cannot stomach the thought of voting for Genocide Joe. But we have already seen this movie. The last time around, in 2019-20, the Squad was at the center of the anti-Trump resistance. AOC and her cohorts made themselves the main conduit between the struggles in the streets and the Democratic Party, which they pushed as a supposedly progressive alternative to the reactionary Trump. What happened? Biden captured the White House and those struggles hit an impasse, unable to challenge capitalist interests in any real way because they were hitched to a wing of the ruling class. While Trump lost the election, workers and the oppressed did *not win*. Rather, they were saddled with another reactionary administration, which has only made Trump stronger. The Squad’s liberal denunciations of the backwardness of Trump supporters have not helped either, propelling white workers toward him.

Trump can and must be defeated. But everything the DSA has done so far is to corral anti-Trump activists into the Democratic camp, whether boosting the efforts of the electeds or the Sanders candidacy in 2016 and 2020. That won’t do. The only way to bring Trump to his knees is to build a movement that fights for the needs of workers and the oppressed independently of and in opposition to *all* Democrats. Today, the DSA left can help lay the groundwork for an anti-Trump resistance that gives the working class a fighting chance, but only if it fights to *dump the Squad* and immediately effect a clean break with the Democratic Party!

Many of the electeds are today rather discredited, having crushed the potential rail workers strike, funded Israel’s Iron Dome and committed a host of other betrayals. AOC’s star has fallen considerably as she stumps for the doddering president. But if Biden retains the White House, he will have one fellow Democrat to thank above all others: Rashida Tlaib. She has done more than any other Democrat to tidy up the party’s image, especially by keeping alive false hope that it can be a vehicle to come to the rescue of the Palestinians.

Take her campaign, backed by many in the DSA left, to vote “uncommitted” in the primaries in order to pressure Biden into brokering a cease-fire and make him a more viable candidate. AOC, who is very



**Jabalia Refugee Camp, March 22: U.S.-supplied munitions destroy Gaza. Most DSA members are outraged by slaughter, but DSA association with Democrats is support to party of genocide.**

committed to Biden, recently spelled out its upside: “They’re using this process to be seen, and it’s best that we do that now than for folks to stay home in November.” Thus far, some one in ten of those voting have done so. But far from a rejection of the Democrats, this campaign, like Tlaib’s anti-Zionist statements more generally, provides them an essential service. Voting “uncommitted” (or blank) keeps those outraged by Israel’s slaughter in the clutches of the very party enabling that slaughter, breathing life into the illusion that the

Democrats may be allies in the struggle for Palestinian freedom or otherwise act in the interests of the oppressed. This is a lie.

The Democrats, every bit as much as the Republicans, are a party of U.S. imperialism and guided by its strategic interests, which are bound up with the maintenance of Israel as a bulwark in the Middle East. The White House will *never* be an “impartial arbiter” of Israel’s national oppression of the Palestinians, no matter how much the liberal-led cease-fire movement contends otherwise.

Millions have joined protests to demand a cease-fire, but the situation of the Palestinians grows more dire by the day. What could actually turn things around is the working class taking the fight to Israel’s imperialist backers. But that will never happen if the movement is kept in check by Democratic Party handlers. One obvious conclusion presents itself: To stop the genocide and free Palestine, Tlaib and all other Democrats must go.

## You Must Be Independent to Build an Independent Workers Party

Nowadays, it is rather fashionable in the DSA to proclaim the need for an independent workers party. Hell, even the National Political Committee correctly observes: “Relying on the Democratic Party to lead the fight against the Republican Party and the right isn’t working. An independent path, rooted in the working-class majority and building towards an independent workers’ political party, is necessary.” But talk is one thing, and actually doing something concrete about it is another matter entirely. Any socialist worthy of the name wants to change reality to the benefit of the working class. An independent workers party does not emerge of its own accord but must be painstakingly forged through active intervention against all obstacles that block the way.

Right now, the ground is fertile to cohere a working-class opposition to both the Democrats and Republicans given the unpopularity of the two reactionary presidential candidates. The Party for Socialism and Liberation’s presidential campaign, which provides a working-class alternative to Trump and Biden, is currently the best situated jumping-off point for such an opposition, and the entire left would do well to pour itself into building support for the PSL candidates for that very reason. It is from these seeds that socialists can bring forth an independent workers party, as long as they push back against each and every attempt to link it to the liberal class enemy. For the DSA left to be a progressive factor in this process, it must take the plunge and commit to its own independence from the Democrats.

The DSA left caucuses, though, have yet to step up to the plate. In an April 13 statement, Red Labor concludes: “Every moment spent in the Democratic Party and on the Democratic ballot line is a moment that could be spent developing an independent workers’ party.” Very good, *continued on page 12*

## Protest Expulsion of JBA Caucus Member!

WV supporters are part of the DSA’s Just Break Already (JBA) caucus, which advocates an immediate clean break with all Democratic electeds, a vote for PSL, anti-imperialist struggle to free Palestine and a fight for black liberation. Unable to respond politically to the JBA program, the DSA-L.A. Steering Committee has expelled a JBA member for purportedly violating the “dem-cent” (democratic-centralist) ban, which is an anti-communist club used by the right against the left and should be junked in the interest of workers democracy. The same L.A. leadership that upheld pro-Zionist elected Nithya Raman’s DSA membership against calls by the left to expel her has now expelled a DSA member who defends Palestinian freedom.

Utterly incapable of justifying their allegiance to the Democrats, others on the DSA right whipped up a moralistic frenzy on social media against WV for our opposition to “age of consent” laws. In response, our supporter made an unexceptional statement that the Republicans push campaigns against trans people and gay and intergenerational sex and that we object to state intrusion into consensual sex and determining who can sleep with whom. Such laws deny the bodily

autonomy of youth in the same way that laws against abortion deny women’s bodily autonomy.

This caused further hysteria and revealed the fragility of the DSA. The L.A. Steering Committee has resorted to the lie that defense of those who engage in consensual intergenerational sex is defense of abuse. They did so to mask their refusal to break with the same Democratic Party overseeing the slaughter of thousands of children in Gaza.

So far, the DSA left has refused to

take up the JBA member’s defense, abetting the right. The moral codes of the ruling class are always used to stir up reaction against the workers movement and the oppressed. Remember the Scottsboro Boys, nine black youth framed up for rapes that never happened in the 1930s. Or black former NFL player Marcus Dixon, imprisoned in 2003 as a teenager for having consensual sex with a 15-year-old white classmate. Any concession to this reaction divides and weakens the workers movement. This is seen in how the orchestrated backlash against our supporter undercut the momentum building in the DSA for a break with the Democrats. Instead of fueling this backlash, the DSA left should fight against it—it’s a danger to us all.

### Just Break Already!

- For a clean break with the Democrats now—Throw out the electeds!
- Workers need their own candidate—No support to Biden! Vote Party for Socialism and Liberation!
- For anti-imperialist struggle to free Palestine!
- Fight for black liberation!



✕@cleanbreaknow • @dsa\_justbreakalready

NYC

# Transit Workers Shouldn't Have to Kill Themselves Just to Do Their Jobs!

We reprint below a March statement issued by the Committee For a Fighting TWU.

\* \* \*

- We will not do unsafe work!
- We will not do work others have refused on safety grounds!
- We will defend anyone who invokes safety against management attacks!

If there is a lesson to be learned from the COVID era, it is the understanding that letting management run our safety is suicidal. We must do things differently!

In RTO, the phrase “that’s you to go” is often used by supervisors when they want us at our tools and on the job no matter what. It’s code words for abuse, and it perfectly captures what the MTA is all about: service over safety. The bosses say no lunch, no problem...*that’s you to go!* Trains derailed, but *that’s you to go!* Plenty of union members died

from COVID, but *that’s you to go!* A track worker gets struck by a train, but hey *that’s you to go!* The crew office ensures you don’t get enough rest. The barns are poorly ventilated. The MAC is always ready to put you out of service. The facilities for women are completely inadequate and on and on, add to this a city falling apart, astronomical rent and crime-plagued streets. That the New York City subway has existed for well over a century and things haven’t been “figured out” *proves* that this is all by design. *The MTA wants it this way* because it wants us so broken down, noses constantly to the grind. Otherwise, we might realize that we have the power to change things.

Everything is designed to divide us: separate division meetings, racial oppression and horrible conditions. The MTA pushes false divisions and the leadership of the union accepts them. By keeping us divided, they prevent us from uniting to



Marc A. Hermann/MTA

January 4 subway derailment injured 26 workers and passengers, disrupted service for three days. Capitalist neglect renders subways a deathtrap.

take control of safety. The MTA bosses are masters of divide-and-rule. Some would like to deny it, but this company does not exist in a bubble...*this is America.* Racism is pervasive and is used as a tool to maintain substandard pay and conditions at NYC Transit and to keep us divided from Metro North and LIRR. This divide only serves the bosses and is used to bring down working conditions for us all. It is precisely this setup that explains the horror of NYC Transit. *Transit workers acting together to enforce safety would be a real step toward the collective action needed to bring up working conditions and pay to the highest levels for all!*

TWU workers should defend anyone’s use of the Safety Dispute Resolution Form, but the form starts a process that keeps safety in the hands of the bosses who create the dangerous conditions to begin with. It places the fight for safety on individual workers. There are around 40,000 members of our union, yet this setup leaves you isolated and alone against management. At the end of the day, this form is merely a piece of paper. What really matters is having each other’s backs as a union when it comes to protecting our basic right to safety.

This situation in transit can and must end. The place to start is to take safety into our own hands! ■

## End Tier Segregation in the ILWU!

The following was originally printed as a Workers Vanguard supplement dated February 10.

The ILWU leadership likes to boast that the union’s wages and benefits are among the highest a worker in this country can get. They are. Getting them is the problem. Many years must be spent as a casual, scrambling to get any work at all, at lower wages and with no health benefits. And then more years as a B-man, mainly working lower-paid, backbreaking tractor jobs. Casuals and B’s are not even allowed to be union members. Those who survive get their A-book; but even as A-men, longshore workers pay a heavy price. Many destroy their bodies working skilled heavy equipment or double and triple shifts to make up for the years they were on the bottom rungs. To regularly work the most highly paid crane and mechanic jobs takes another negative trade-off: being directly hired by the terminal owners as a steady man. This takes jobs away from the union hiring hall and leaves the steadies dependent on the good will of the bosses.

These divisions in the workforce pit different tiers against each other in a struggle to survive, eating away at the very fabric of the union and its capacity to fight for the interests of the workforce as a whole. Safety, in what is a deadly dangerous industry, goes by the boards as everyone works harder and faster to get—or stay—ahead. The ILWU leadership, which works with the PMA to enforce the tier system, says that the lower tiers are a necessary “apprenticeship.” But what kind of apprenticeship program provides little work and minimal company-paid training? Even many A-men don’t have access to the highest-paid mechanic jobs, which mainly go to those who got their training outside the industry.

Why should A-men literally work themselves to death, with many not even living long enough to collect their pensions, while the casuals struggle to get one or two shifts a month? Many casu-

als are the children or other relatives of A-men. Everyone wants their kids to get ahead, not to have to work multiple jobs to try to survive. ILWU Local 10 now has 1,000 casuals, almost as many as the number of A-men. Either the union fights to end the tier system by bringing up the casuals, B’s and A’s alike or the PMA will try to use the casuals, desperate for work, as a battering ram against the union.

all longshore workers would be better off. Today’s casuals would get jobs at full union wages and benefits. Those who are now A’s and B’s would be saved wear and tear on their bodies and have more time for themselves and their families.

The PMA bosses, and *they alone*, should have to shoulder the cost of eliminating tier divisions. They rake in billions of dollars just from denying casuals health

Today, as the Democrats increasingly fan fears of the openly racist Trump returning to the White House, the union tops’ commitment is firmer than ever to heading off any struggle that might cause trouble for Biden and the capitalist rulers as a whole.

Dividing the workers and pitting them against each other is how both the Democratic and Republican wings of the ruling class maintain their profits and power. Their most prized “divide and rule” weapon is the segregation of black people at the bottom of society. This treatment of black people as second-class citizens is mirrored in the tier divisions in the ILWU. At most West Coast ports, there are more black workers on the bottom rungs than at the top. Some ILWU locals make B’s and casuals enter through the back door of the union hall. At union local meetings, B’s and casuals who attend have to sit in segregated areas and are denied a vote. Even in Local 10, whose membership is majority black, the higher up the skill level you go the whiter it gets, while manning scales and working conditions are worse than at other West Coast ports. The tier divisions themselves stand in the way of the union mobilizing in collective action to break down racial disparities and establish equal—and better—conditions up and down the coast.

The ILWU leadership’s line that bringing up the lower tiers will cost the A-men echoes the bosses who instill white workers with the fear that good jobs, wages and benefits for black people will only come at the expense of white workers. This club is used to pound down conditions for all workers, while keeping black people segregated at the bottom. Just as white workers will advance their interests only if they take up the fight for black equality, black workers will make steps toward their freedom only if they unite with white workers against this country’s rulers. ILWU members need to understand that either they fight together to abolish tier segregation or the PMA will continue to use these

Wilmington, California, September 2017: Casuals protest outside ILWU hall. Leadership enforces tier system, which pits sections of workforce against each other, undermines union.



Thomas R. Cordova/Daily Breeze

The Local 10 leadership in the Bay Area claims that B status is necessary to “educate” these workers in the principles of the union. But what kind of union denies co-workers membership rights for years? The fight to abolish the tiers would be a powerful teacher of *genuine* union principles.

The ILWU leadership argues that the tier divisions are the only way to ensure that there’s enough work for the A’s. But that’s only if you accept the PMA’s “right” to call the shots on the hours of work and the number of jobs that are available. There is another way. A union fight to spread the work among all those who want it at no loss in pay would ensure

care benefits. For the union to get its hands on that money will take a head-on confrontation with the shipping bosses, disrupting the supply chain crucial to the U.S. economy. But that’s not going to happen under a union leadership whose whole strategy is based on tying the fate of the workers to the fortunes of America’s rulers. When its contract was up last year, the ILWU was in a strong position to fight for workers’ needs and open a broader labor counteroffensive against the bosses. Instead, the ILWU leadership pledged in advance not to strike and then surrendered to the PMA’s contract bribe, lending a hand to the ailing Biden administration at the expense of the workers.

# Lessons of the Audi Strike

Printed below is a translation of a March 16 supplement of *El Antiimperialista*, publication of the *Grupo Espartaquista de México*, the ICL's Mexican section.

The January-February Audi strike has been the most important workers struggle in Mexico in recent years. The main lesson of this strike is that victory was possible, but to win it needed a different leadership, armed with an anti-imperialist strategy counterposed to that of the union bureaucracy and the populists who *refuse* to challenge the imperialists. The Audi workers confronted one of the most powerful imperialist monopolies in the world: Volkswagen Group. This German conglomerate profits from the super-exploitation of the cheap skilled labor of Mexican workers, rooted in the subjugation of Mexico at the hands of the imperialists. Therefore, the Audi strike had to be conceived and organized as a battle attacking the source of the exploitation of the auto workers, i.e., imperialist oppression, which squeezes not only them but also the entire country. The strike showed that to advance the class interests of the proletariat as a whole requires a program that links the struggle for national emancipation with the fight for workers power.

A victorious strike would have advanced the interests of the workers as well as the struggle for the national liberation of Mexico. This strike sharply posed the need to confront the horrible working conditions that exist in Mexico, particularly all throughout the imperialist-owned auto industry. It constituted a golden opportunity to transform an economic struggle in an isolated plant into a battle against the imperialist plunder of the country, to establish the basis for building an industrial union, to challenge Mexican president AMLO's (López Obrador) "social peace" and to punch the imperialists in the gut. This is the criteria to determine whether the outcome of the strike was victorious. In the aftermath, it is impossible to observe even a modest step in this direction.

López Obrador declared that the strike was successfully negotiated for the workers, since they achieved a 7 percent direct wage increase and a 3.2 percent increase in benefits, higher than the company's first offer but lower than what the union originally demanded. Similarly, part of the left is hailing the result as a victory. The triumphalist assessments of the populists and the left conceal the fact that the union leadership undermined the strike *at every step*. It is true that the workers wrested from the bosses a little more than the paltry initial offer and that the bosses did not manage to inflict on them a decisive defeat. Nevertheless, the results of the strike are contradictory. It is the responsibility of communists to draw the lessons of this struggle and bring them to workers across the country to prepare for the battles ahead.

What was it that led a workforce that was highly motivated at the beginning of the strike—and which two weeks later voted massively against the bosses' offer—to accept an agreement that fell

divisions to cut through the union. The bosses have imposed tier divisions in one industry after another. By putting black liberation at the center of the fight against tiers the ILWU and other unions can draw in the black community and broader layers of the multiracial working class, creating a powerful force to make real inroads against segregation and improve the situation for all workers.

In opposition to the union bureaucracy's losing strategy, longshore workers who

## Anti-Imperialist Struggle Is Key



Puebla, Mexico, January 24: SITAUDI union members on strike against Audi. Auto workers were shackled by union leaders and populists, who refused to challenge U.S. and German imperialists.

short of their initial demands a few weeks later? The main reason for this turnaround was that the workers feared that they would be crushed and get nothing if they continued their strike. This fear was justified. The perspective of the bureaucracy—which is based on affecting the imperialists as little as possible and not confronting the government led by the Morena party—is a strategy for defeat. With the state and the imperialists brandishing the threat that the strike would be declared illegal, and pressured by the bureaucracy to accept their sellout agreement, the rank and file ended up demoralized. Emboldened by the outcome of the strike, the bosses have laid off workers and postponed the date for the next contract review. The union's position relative to the imperialists, López Obrador and his government has been weakened.

The same conditions that weakened the strike remain today. For example, the bosses mobilized the temporary workers as a counterweight to the permanent workers who wanted to continue the strike, offering to extend the temps' contract for 12 months if they voted in favor of the company's proposal. The bureaucracy facilitated this division by ignoring the legitimate demands of the temporary workers. The result is that the temps now feel less represented by the union, while the rank-and-file workers resent and blame the temps for taking the side of the bosses. This division can only be in the interest of the imperialists.

Our intervention in the strike was a real, if modest, attempt to offer a program of action to the Audi workers *to win*, exposing how the entire strategy of their leadership did not have this purpose. The way the union bureaucracy organized the strike—with porous picket lines, without transportation for workers to man them, without a strike fund, without a struggle to organize the unorganized, without any attempt to extend the strike to the VW plant or to mobilize the combative peas-

want a fighting ILWU need to begin now to convince and mobilize others to abolish the tier system. This is crucial to build working-class unity and prepare the union for the battles ahead—whether in its own defense or the defense of black people or the besieged Palestinians facing U.S.-sponsored genocide. To move forward, the fight against tiers needs to be organized as a challenge to the "right" of the bosses to run the ports and society at large. **End tier segregation in the ILWU!** ■

ants and students in Puebla, etc.—aligns with AMLO's populist-nationalist program. From the beginning, the strike was planned to reach an agreement that would "benefit" both sides: the imperialists and the workers. This attempt to reconcile *irreconcilable* interests is at the heart of the populist program, which seeks not to scare off foreign investment, but to take advantage of it to develop the country, advance the interests of the national bourgeoisie and at the same time extract a few benefits for the workers and the oppressed, whom it counts on for support. On the ground, this means workers give up on their own aspirations and submit to the wishes of the imperialists and their local agents.

To organize a successful strike and a broader anti-imperialist struggle requires challenging AMLO and his government. This is essential given the widespread illusions among the workers, promoted by the union bureaucracy, that the government of López Obrador was the instrument through which they would win their demands. The facts showed the true role of the populists, who claim to represent the interests of the Mexican people with their 4T (AMLO's Fourth Transformation, a populist program to develop the country) but betray and sabotage their struggles at every turn. In reality, AMLO pressured the Audi workers to restrict their demands by making them acceptable to the imperialists. López Obrador represents the interests of a propertied class and is conscious that an independent mobilization of the proletariat could threaten them. To protect these interests, he relies on the imperialists, to whom he is tied by thousands of threads. The task of the communists during the struggle is to systematically demonstrate how the current leaders of the proletariat inevitably waver and conciliate the imperialists, thus showing the need to forge genuine revolutionary leadership.

But this is not what the left did. Their intervention during the strike, including their speeches at the February 10 Caravan—in which organizations like the Grupo Internacionalista (Internationalist Group, IG) and the Movimiento de los Trabajadores Socialistas (Socialist Workers Movement, MTS, sister organization of Left Voice) were prominent—did nothing to challenge the political dominance of the current union leaderships and the populists. While the IG and MTS did raise all kinds of criticisms of the SITAUDI union bureaucracy, they never exposed it for its main crime: its conciliation of

imperialism and its lackeys, the national bourgeoisie. The calls of these groups to extend the strike, for a sliding scale of wages, for strike committees, etc.—correct in themselves—did not seek to forge a pole counterposed to the union bureaucrats but merely put forward combativity and solidarity. Thus, they ended up being a left-wing pressure on these treacherous leaders. This is the result of the inability of the left to offer an anti-imperialist strategy that fuses together the struggle for national and social emancipation.

At every step of the strike, the central task at hand was to forge a leadership capable of taking the union's struggle outside the bounds established by the bureaucrats and populists. Now, after the end of the strike, the task of forging a revolutionary leadership remains urgent. It is necessary for the workers to start forging union caucuses *now* with a correct understanding of what happened during the strike, with the purpose of *throwing out* the bureaucrats and *taking over* the leadership. The platform of these caucuses must guide union militants to strengthen their organiza-

tion and prepare for the struggles to come. We propose the following basic points:

- **Reinstate the workers fired after the strike!**
- **Union control of hiring and training workers! Organize the unorganized!** Temporary workers must be given permanent contracts.
- **Union control of health and safety!** The union must decide about the conditions and tempo needed to work safely.
- **For a national union of the auto industry!** The existence of two unions at the Audi plant, in addition to a different union at VW, undermines their struggles, making them compete against each other, negotiating separate contracts, etc.
- **Build strike funds!** The lack of funds deeply affected the workers' confidence and was used by the bosses to blackmail and starve them into submission.
- **Mexico out of USMCA! Repudiate the foreign debt!**
- **For a revolutionary workers party!** AMLO and Morena have shown themselves to be a dead end. The workers of the countryside and the city must take the reins of this society into their own hands. ■



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# The Breakdown of U.S. Hegemony & the Struggle for Workers Power

The article below is an abridged version of a forum by SL/U.S. Central Committee member Skye Williams that was first presented in New York City in November 2023.

Hi, comrades. Welcome to this forum of the Spartacist League/U.S., U.S. section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

I think it's clear to everyone that the world is at a major turning point. The 30-odd years since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the restoration of capitalism to East Europe have been marked by the hegemony of U.S. imperialism over the world's economy and international politics. That whole period has been one of relative stability when measured on the scale of world history. But we can see that the world is now undergoing profound changes. U.S. hegemony has been breaking down, and that circumstance is the underlying cause of the growing economic and political instability in the world. The crisis caused by the imperialists' response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the Near East are clear indicators of this shift.

As working people internationally are faced with the disastrous consequences of imperialist rule, their situation cries out for revolutionary leadership. But the working class is disarmed and disoriented. Everywhere it is led by bureaucrats and traitors who have brought about defeat after defeat. The program we adopted at our Eighth International Conference responds to the main problems that have confronted the left and workers movement in the post-Soviet period. It provides a Marxist analysis of that period and charts a revolutionary path for working-class struggles today.

The triumph of U.S. imperialism in the Cold War against the Soviet Union signaled a shift in the world situation, and correspondingly liberalism became the dominant ideology. What I want to show in this presentation is that it is the capitulation of the leaders of the workers movement and the left groups to this liberal world order that has resulted in the disarmed, weakened state in which the workers movement finds itself today.

For anyone who wants to fight for the cause of the working class today, it is absolutely necessary to assimilate the lessons of the post-Soviet period, to reject the failed politics that have characterized the left in this period and to effect a complete split with liberal politics.

### The Liberal World Order

The feverish liberal triumphalism that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union was expressed by political scientist Francis Fukuyama, for whom it represented the "end of history." For the imperialists, there was no question: With U.S. victory

in the Cold War, liberal democracy had demonstrated once and for all its superiority over "communist totalitarianism."

How to explain in a *Marxist* way the exceptional stability that followed the counterrevolution? The answer is to be found in the overwhelming dominance of U.S. imperialism as well as the opening up of vast new markets to penetration by finance capital. Rather than fight each other for the new markets, the imperialist powers—the U.S., Britain, France, Germany and Japan—worked together to jointly exploit the new opportunities. The former workers states in East Europe provided rich pickings. The most important of the previously untapped markets, however, was China, which opened up to imperialist capital investment while main-



Allison Bailey/NurPhoto

**Biden and Trump, poster boys for decrepit U.S. imperialism.**

taining the foundations of a collectivized economy. This process—the expansion of finance capital into every part of the world—is what became known as globalization. It is what gave a new lease on life to imperialism.

U.S. hegemony and the collapse of the Soviet Union meant that liberalism—the dominant ideology of the parasitic American ruling class—became the dominant ideology worldwide. Communism was dead, so liberal democracy was the model to which all countries should aspire. The role of liberalism therefore was to provide a justification for U.S. imperialist hegemony and the untrammelled spread of finance capital. The domination of U.S. finance capital and the weakened position of the working class are what give the post-Soviet period its reactionary character.

In the U.S., Bill Clinton represented a sharp shift in the Democratic Party. The "New Democrats" consciously severed any association with the earlier "New Deal" posture, distancing themselves from the unions, the left and black people. In his 1992 campaign, Clinton made this clear by

supporting the death penalty, denouncing rapper Sister Souljah in the aftermath of the Rodney King uprising and pushing the end of welfare. From NAFTA to investment in China to the massive expansion of the tech industry, the Clinton administration was the face of unfettered neoliberalism.

Concomitantly, AFL-CIO chief John Sweeney personified a shift in labor and its support for neoliberalism. He endorsed liberal values and appealed to women and blacks, but rejected old-school trade-union struggle: strikes continued to decline and trade unions shrank under his reign. He protested in Seattle in 1999 for human-rights imperialism. In tandem with the unions being thrown back, black rights were thrown back, and segregation increased. But it was contradictory. Black



Jeff Dean/AP

household income markedly increased throughout the 1990s, while the situation for younger, non-college educated blacks became much worse.

The consequences of globalization impelled social protest movements around the world. There were movements against austerity, against racism, against war. All of those problems are the product of imperialism in today's world and they *do* have to be fought. But to be successful, a fight against them has to be a fight against the imperialist system itself. The leaders of the protest movements that emerged refused to do that—they were against austerity and inequality, but hailed the European Union; they fought racism in partnership with Nike and Adidas; they fought war while supporting Democratic war-makers. Liberal opposition to austerity, racism and war is not only impotent but reactionary in that it deflects struggle away from the only means of combating those ills: mobilizing the working class to fight in its own interests with complete political independence from the liberals.

As for the supposedly Marxist left, they

hailed all of these liberal movements, seeking to push them more to the left while giving them a Marxoid cover. In the end, the liberals did *not* become Marxists but the so-called Marxists became liberals. By protesting war and racism without a program to overthrow imperialism, these opportunists were essentially just demanding that the liberals adhere more consistently to their own liberal principles.

Furthermore, the bulk of the left had cheered on counterrevolution in the Soviet bloc, thus sharing responsibility for the very event that enabled the globalization they were now protesting. The ICL opposed these counterrevolutions, unlike the now-defunct International Socialist Organization, which was a part of every liberal protest movement from the anti-globalization protests to the "Anybody But Bush" protests against the Iraq War. Their parent group notoriously proclaimed concerning the Soviet Union: "Communism has collapsed.... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing." They rallied behind Obama in 2008 before liquidating into the DSA in 2019, taking their liquidation into liberalism to its logical conclusion.

The task of communists in the post-Soviet world was to *intervene* into these various mass struggles and push them forward by fighting for a *break* with the liberal leaders and program. Fighting for a break was—and still is—the only way to cohere a Marxist pole and guide the class struggle in a revolutionary direction against imperialism.

### Globalization

Globalization was a *reactionary* development in world history because what drove it was the interests of the U.S. ruling class. But the offshoring of jobs to other countries, where a higher rate of profit can be extracted, has led to the gutting of U.S. industry—the source of U.S. power. Deindustrialization, crumbling infrastructure, explosion of housing prices, all show the parasitical character of capitalism.

The industrialization of neocolonial countries resulted in increased competition with U.S. industries, while creating a powerful proletariat in those countries. But it also reinforced the dependence of neocolonial countries on the financial whims of the imperialist powers. And now, the very conditions created by globalization are undermining U.S. hegemony. For example, the explosive development of China led to enormous profits for the U.S. and other imperialists, but it's precisely China's rise that today presents the U.S. with the challenge of a powerful rival. This was the subject of the entire recent Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in San Francisco.

The central myth of globalization—that the liberal world order leads to gradual social and economic progress—was exploded with a vengeance with the 2008 financial crisis. Working people, especially black and Latino people, went bankrupt, having purchased houses whose value plummeted by taking out loans they couldn't pay off. The economic "recovery" was achieved on the backs of the working people, many of whom eventually found employment in the non-union "gig" economy. Meanwhile the cost of education, health care and housing became increasingly unaffordable—personal debt skyrocketed. 2008 is a taste of what the liberal order has in store for the future, as the next financial disaster is being prepared.

U.S. imperialism is a wounded beast. It remains the hegemonic power in the world and will seek to make everyone else pay for the consequences of its own decline. It will certainly fight to restore its position—by further squeezing the population at home and the neocolonies abroad—and will do so either by doubling down on its liberal course or through some right-wing reactionary response.

The imperialists have sought to compensate for economic decline through speculation and printing money. But as the dollar bill claims, "In God We Trust," the only thing holding up your bill is God and the U.S. Army. All the stocks and shares and bonds—the wealth that exists on paper—bear little relation to the actual



productive capacities of the world economy. This is a ticking time bomb that presages enormous economic collapse. The only way out is for the working class to take hold of the political and economic reins of society and reorganize the economy in a rational way.

Globalization is reactionary because, driven by the parasitic U.S. finance capitalists, it is a fetter on the further development of the productive forces and a brake on human progress. But all the various movements that arose in opposition to globalization were bankrupt—they attacked only the worst features of imperialism while remaining within the framework of the very system that produces those excrescences. Once again, we see that to go forward requires a complete break with the liberal ideology of the bourgeoisie.

### Liberal Movements, Offshoring and the Union Tops

We've seen that an anti-globalization movement grew up in opposition to the consequences of the new liberal order. There was a great deal of anger among workers in the imperialist centers against "offshoring"—that is, capitalists transferring production on a large scale from one country to another, where the rate of profit is more favorable. This led to the slashing of jobs in one place and production at a higher rate of exploitation in another. Workers' anger, correctly channeled, could have been the starting point to push back against the offensive of finance capital, unifying workers across borders in a common struggle against the imperialist ruling class. But what was the response of the leaders of the workers movement?

Both heads of the AFL-CIO in the 1990s, Lane Kirkland and John Sweeney, deplored the offshoring of jobs while embracing U.S. imperialism, but there were slight differences. Kirkland, a long-time Cold Warrior, was an old-school trade unionist fervently opposed to NAFTA on a chauvinist basis. He directly clashed with Clinton about it. Sweeney, on the other hand, worked closely with Bill Clinton and was on the advisory commission that endorsed Clinton's free-trade initiatives for the WTO that were protested in Seattle in 1999.

Sweeney himself ended up at the Seattle protests, protesting China's admission into the WTO without "labor standards," saying: "It's disgustingly hypocritical of the Clinton administration to pledge to put a human face on the global economy while prostrating itself in pursuit of a trade deal with a rogue nation." That is, he is criticizing Clinton for not being sufficiently neoliberal and not sufficiently supporting human-rights imperialism. Sweeney's posture reflected the liberal shift in the labor movement in that period, while being qualitatively similar to Kirkland's. Both supported U.S. imperialism and scapegoated workers in those countries where U.S. jobs were being moved, but they went about it differently. In each case, they deflected workers' anger away from those *really* responsible—the U.S.



Win McNamee/Reuters

**1998: Then AFL-CIO President John Sweeney (left), advising President Clinton, upheld liberal values and supported imperialist "free trade."**



Sergei Supinsky/AFP

**U.S. missiles being loaded in Kiev, February 2022. War in Ukraine is major indicator of breakdown of U.S. hegemony, as Russia openly competes with U.S. imperialism over who will enslave Ukraine.**

ruling class.

From the ICL to the ISO and Workers World, the left denounced the protectionist chauvinism spouted by the AFL-CIO. But the left did not provide a program to defend jobs and working conditions. This meant being a left echo of the Bushes and the Clintons, who were also denouncing protectionism and nativism to justify U.S. foreign expansion. At bottom, the response of the left to offshoring was a liberal one, accepting the idea that fighting job losses in the imperialist countries necessarily comes at the expense of workers in the Third World. The exact opposite is true.

A real fight for jobs and conditions in the U.S. would have been an objective blow against the imperialists, strengthening workers in the Third World and in the imperialist heartlands, furthering the common struggle against imperialism. The impotence of the union leaders and the left to confront globalization was precisely the expression of their support to the liberal world order. This is what pushes millions of workers toward populist demagogues, such as Trump.

The task of socialists is to chart a path of struggle to advance the interests of the working class as a whole, a fight that necessitates a split with all the opportunist misleaders. A fight in defense of jobs and for jobs for all was critical. Against layoffs, it was necessary to wage defensive struggles, including strikes, plant occupations, organizing the unorganized into the trade unions and cross-border struggles with workers in the affected countries.

### Decline of the New World Order, Rise of Anti-Establishment Opposition

The 2007 credit bubble was the high point of the liberal world order. The subsequent economic crisis marked a major turning point, as the dynamics contributing to stability and economic growth—that is, increased world trade, growth in productivity, political and geopolitical consensus—broke down and reversed. The 2008 crisis did not end the post-Soviet era, but it accelerated the trends undermining it. Millions of job losses and evictions, followed by a wave of austerity, created deep political discontent. For the first time since the 1990s, major political movements emerged that attacked key pillars of the post-Soviet consensus.

In the U.S., the 2008 economic crisis was a disaster for working people. Millions were disappointed by Obama and the Democrats, who did little beyond bail out the banks while working people confronted disaster. Trump's chauvinism and populism appealed to a layer of workers and the petty bourgeoisie who were fed up with the liberals. His racist bombast offered a scapegoat for their economic anxieties. His vulgarity toward his political opponents found resonance with those who were devastated by the Democrats and were sick of the Washington Establishment. Trump cussed them out, and it was easy to identify with that.

The liberals blame racism and the rise of right-wing reaction on the Trump movement, but this obscures how liberalism itself is at the root of the problem. What has given rise to right-wing reaction was

years of neoliberal attacks, reinforced by the 2008 crisis. The social decay inherent in the imperialist epoch can only be overcome by a class-independent fight against *both* wings of the imperialist bourgeoisie, which is responsible for the degraded conditions of black people and workers. For workers, making a political bloc with the liberal wing of capitalism only assures that there will be no actual fight against Trump or against racial oppression. What was necessary in 2016 was to build a *com-*



John G. Mabanglo/AFP

**Seattle, Washington, December 1999: Anti-WTO protesters try to fight effects of globalization with dead end of liberalism, which is unable to challenge U.S. imperialism.**

*munist* movement against Trump.

Post-Obama social conditions also gave rise to a polarization within the Democratic Party between its "progressive" and "Establishment" wings. In the 2016 election, Hillary Clinton didn't even pretend to offer crumbs to the masses, who had been crushed under years of her party's rule. The program of the "progressive" Democrats like Bernie Sanders and the DSA's Squad was to make a better electoral case for the Democratic Party to "fight Trump."

To see this, let's look at the left wing of the DSA. Many claim to be for communism and revolution. But their way to achieve it is to have a mass social-democratic party to pass reforms in Con-

gress. To be an electoral force, they think it is necessary to be in a bloc with the right wing of the DSA, which wants to stay in the Democratic Party, in order to use the Democratic ticket to reach more of a mass audience. So, the DSA left, even though many of them don't want to support the Democrats, do support them by maintaining their unity with the DSA right.

Just like Sanders abandoning "Medicare for All," the DSA's reformism leads it to sacrifice radical demands in order to maintain unity with the liberal wing of the ruling class under the pretext of "fighting the right." The only way to achieve any real reforms is to fight *against* the interests of the entire imperialist ruling class. This requires a break with liberal gradualism and a fight for an *independent* workers party, a revolutionary party, built in total opposition to both liberals and conservatives.

Reforms like free, quality health care and education, affordable housing and decent jobs will require a fight to end black oppression. The question of black oppression touches on every aspect in this society. It is the main way the U.S. imperialists prop up their rule—by keeping black people forcibly segregated at the bottom of society and polarizing the proletariat along racial lines. The struggle of the *entire* working class for its emancipation from capitalist wage slavery is *impossible* without fighting against the racial segrega-

tion and special oppression of black people and for their integration into society on an equal basis.

The purpose of our campaign to "open the police archives" is to point a way forward for the struggle against police brutality and black oppression and rebuild the black movement that ran aground under BLM's failed liberal program. The left has abdicated leadership to the liberals by refusing to put forward a counterposed road right now to get out of the impasse and expose the bankruptcy of BLM liberalism. Opening the police archives is something that could be done by any politician who is really on the

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# Forum...

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side of black people, but the liberal politicians will not cross the red line of state secrecy. This campaign is thus intended to drive a wedge between black militants and their current leadership by showing that a break with liberalism is needed to advance the black struggle (see page 3).

## War in Ukraine and U.S. Imperialism

As the U.S.-dominated world order cracks, liberals and the bulk of the left in the West rally to its defense as the staunchest supporters of Ukraine and Zelensky, ready to fight to the last drop of Ukrainian blood. Russia's invasion of Ukraine in direct defiance of the U.S. is by far the biggest military challenge yet to U.S. hegemony. The stakes are very high for the balance of power in Europe and internationally, with the U.S. adamant about remaining on top.

The war, provoked by the expansion of NATO and the EU to the very borders of Russia, is fundamentally about who gets to plunder Ukraine. A win for the Zelensky government will not liberate the Ukrainian people but will further enslave them to NATO and the EU and increase the oppression of the Russian minority there. For Marxists, the only progres-

sive outcome to this war between two equally reactionary capitalist regimes is for Russian and Ukrainian workers and soldiers to fraternize and turn it into civil wars against the capitalist rulers in both countries. That's the meaning of our slogan "turn the guns around"—which was the slogan of the Bolsheviks in the inter-imperialist slaughter of World War I.

Many of those who claim to be socialist, though, shamelessly tail the liberals and support Ukraine in some way. For instance, Left Voice echoes the pacifists, calling for "Russian troops out of Ukraine, as well as demanding NATO out of Eastern Europe" (19 March). The pacifists who demand the withdrawal of the Russian army align themselves with NATO, while empty appeals to "stop the war" simply amount to calling on the very imperialists who provoked the conflict to broker a cease-fire. This, in turn, will only sow the seeds of a new war.

What's needed is a program of class struggle against U.S. imperialism as part of a broader strategy to *win the class war*. But the fake left and the union bureaucracy, in tailing liberalism, are also tailing the most pro-Ukraine, most strongly pro-"imperialist status quo" force on earth: the Democrats. As living conditions here continue to deteriorate, the U.S. population is coming to resent more and more the massive amount of money being thrown at Ukraine. But rather than



Yin Bogu/Xinhua

**Beijing, June 2023: CPC leader Xi Jinping pushes cooperation with U.S. billionaires like Bill Gates, representative of same class that oppresses the world, seeks to dominate China.**

giving leadership to this sentiment and building a communist antiwar movement, the left abandons the terrain to the right: The only major force opposing funding for Ukraine is the Republicans.

## China

Another major challenge to U.S. hegemony is the rise of China. Because the Chinese state is based on a revolution that expropriated the capitalists and its economy is no longer in their hands, the imperialists hate it. Any independent working-class policy toward China has to begin from the understanding that it is in the direct interest of our class to defend China against imperialism and internal counter-revolution. Those leftists who refuse to defend China are taking a side with their own imperialist rulers and betraying the interests of the world working class.

The defense of China is also undermined—and the workers state itself deformed—by the rule of a bureaucratic caste, the leadership of the Communist Party (CPC). It suppresses the proletariat, fosters inequalities and rejects international revolution, fueling social, economic and military threats to the workers state.

Having encouraged the growth of a powerful domestic capitalist class on the mainland, the CPC proclaims that this class has a role in building "socialism with Chinese characteristics." But this class, which rests on the exploitation of the Chinese proletariat, cannot be anything but a deadly enemy of workers state power.

The Trotskyist defense of the workers state is therefore based not on supporting the CPC's policies but on the struggle for proletarian political revolution led by an authentically Leninist party to overthrow this anti-socialist ruling clique and institute the rule of workers councils.

Some on the left promote the CPC as a progressive force. But China's impressive development is built on a foundation of sand: "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. Its big contradiction is that the stronger it gets, the more it undermines the very condition that facilitated its

rise—globalization under U.S. hegemony. A showdown with U.S. imperialism is inevitable. But instead of rallying the international proletariat for that struggle, the CPC leadership pushes notions of "economic interdependence," "multilateralism" and "win-win" cooperation as a means of averting conflict. For more than a decade, the U.S. imperialists have been ramping up the pressure on China economically and militarily and that has increased tensions, including over Taiwan.

Only world revolution can defeat imperialism, and that requires doing everything to strengthen the position of the international working class at the expense of the imperialists. But the entire strategy of the Chinese Stalinists is based on conciliating imperialism! From being a key pillar in the U.S.-dominated world order to propping up bourgeois regimes throughout the Third World and imposing debt on developing countries, the Chinese Stalinists represent a mighty obstacle to world revolution. And the reason for that is that the bureaucracy fears revolution like the plague: A workers uprising would sweep away the corrupt, venal Chinese leadership along with the capitalist regimes of the region. Those who preach reliance on the CPC to push back imperialism are promoting a treacherous program, which ultimately aids the imperialists.

## The Fight for Revolutionary Leadership—Reforge the Fourth International!

Faced with colossal challenges, the working class everywhere is disoriented and politically enfeebled by a treacherous, opportunist leadership that is fundamentally committed to the defense of the capitalist status quo. This is the product of more than three decades of accommodation of and capitulation to the liberal world order following counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. I have sought to show how liberalism is a reactionary ideology used to justify the "peaceful" subjugation of the toilers of the whole planet by U.S. finance capital and how Marxism provides the only road to working-class emancipation. The inescapable conclusion is that the main task of revolutionaries right now is to fight to bring about a complete *break* with liberalism.

The ICL is dedicated to doing just that as central to the reforging of the Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution. We have made a political reckoning with our failures of the past three decades. This reckoning is codified in our International Conference documents in the current issue of *Spartacist*. Our task now is to implement the lessons, to go forward to building the party that the working class so desperately needs.

I urge you to study the lessons we have laid out and hope that you will play a part in the struggle to forge a revolutionary party. The tasks are enormous—there's no room and no time for opportunism or sectarianism. We are determined to succeed. *Forward to the reforging of the Fourth International!* ■

**2016: Role of Sanders and his "political revolution" was to rope discontented youth, workers into Democratic Party of billionaires. Criminally, groups like DSA, Socialist Alternative pimped for him.**



Socialist Alternative

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# Vote PSL...

(continued from page 1)

continues to push liberal movements today, which is a major reason that we give their campaign *critical* support.

Trump is justifiably hated by many who view him as a threat to their existence. He must be fought. But it cannot be on the basis of the losing strategy of the resistance, whose chief objective was to get Trump out by getting Biden in and, in the process, give more black people and other minorities a seat at the slave master's table. So, Biden got in. He got Kamala Harris in, a black and Indian woman reviled for incarcerating thousands of black and Latino youth while giving a pass to racist killer cops. However, liberal politicians brand anyone who criticizes her a racist or male chauvinist! That is the sum total of what Democratic Party identity politics gets you. Kamala Harris has more in common with the white supremacist in the White House than she does with black, immigrant or women workers.

Every movement during the original Trump years, from the Women's Marches and immigrant rights protests to BLM, is a testament to the fact that any and all alliances with the "lesser evil" are a dead end. Massive numbers of people were mobilized in the streets, but at the end of the day there was nothing to show for it in terms of concrete progress for workers, black people, immigrants, women. In fact, the only perceptible result was the Biden presidency—which has made everything worse and fueled renewed support for Trump.

Today, Biden's attempts to coax the working class with promises to tax the rich, enact the PRO Act, restore abortion rights and protect the environment are nothing but hot air to those who remember: Rail strike, squashed. Build Back



Times Square, March 30: Spartacist contingent at Palestine Land Day protest intervenes with anti-imperialist strategy counterposed to liberal pacifism.

requires a fight *against* the system responsible for racist reaction, wage slavery and war. It requires a fight *outside* and *against* the Democratic Party.

## 2023 Strike Wave Bribery

Last year saw a lot of combativity in the working class and an appetite to fight back against inflation and the attacks on wages, pensions and unions. The UAW strike was the most significant class battle. There is widespread recognition that the working-class vote will be decisive to the outcome of the election—thus, the photo ops of Biden and Trump with auto workers last fall during the strike.

The UAW strike had the potential to land a crushing blow to the Biden government and turn the tide for workers

just got a 60 percent pay raise off the blood and sweat of auto workers, and Fain is the biggest foot soldier for Biden's re-election.

Through Fain and its other agents in the trade-union bureaucracy, the Biden administration has been able to temporarily stabilize things and get over the hump by bribing sections of the working class. However, it is not on firmer footing, and the capitalist rulers are well aware that what they are offering doesn't cut it. In auto, longshore, transit and every other industry, making a living increasingly means being worked to death. Workers need and want a fundamental change in their economic and social conditions, which poses a threat to the interests and existence of the entire capitalist class.

It is clear that, despite the setbacks and defeats, workers have not been broken. Right now, the masses are giving a big FU to Biden, and it intersects angst over where the country is headed. But if this sentiment is not put on an independent working-class path to push back against the capitalist offensive, it will continue to be channeled in one or another reactionary direction: the Democrats or the Republicans. This is why it is important to support a working-class alternative in the elections by voting PSL.

## U.S. Imperialism: On Thin Ice

Working-class fears over the state of the country are not unwarranted. There is a fair bit of anxiety within the ruling class as well because it can't manage more than one crisis at a time. This is obvious to everyone. The U.S. rulers are losing out to Russia in Ukraine, overextended in the Middle East and scrambling to contain China.

Biden says that the U.S. commitment to the war in Ukraine will never waver, but it is. In particular, the Republicans see it as a pit of lost resources that could be used to fight on other fronts, like China. Support for the war within the population has also waned, especially given its economic impact. Genocide Joe's lavish spending on Ukraine has allowed Trump to absurdly posture as an antiwar candidate and made his appeal that much stronger.

While the Democrats and the Republicans may bicker over policy toward Russia, they stand as one when it comes to maintaining an imperialist outpost in Israel and

targeting China. Biden, echoing Trump, has increasingly taken a more protectionist stance. Both talk about putting American workers first and promise economic prosperity. But for who? You can rest assured that it is Wall Street and the banks.

The U.S. empire is in decline, and both parties are hell-bent on saving it by tightening the screws on the working class. The "Bidenomics" plan to rescue the economy and bring back large-scale manufacturing is a pipe dream. Reindustrializing the U.S. requires going up against the system of private ownership that is a brake on productivity and responsible for the demise of industry in the first place.

A fight to expand industry to the benefit of the working class and provide everyone a good job with good pay would also strengthen the position of workers internationally who have a common enemy in U.S. imperialism. To throw off the grip of the U.S. empire, which is squeezing the life out of workers here and in the neocolonies, requires a complete break with the Democratic Party. By keeping the workers movement chained to the liberal wing of the ruling class, the trade-union bureaucracy has held back the anti-imperialist struggle and prevented the unity of the working class around the globe in struggle against U.S. domination.

## To Free Palestine, No Vote to Genocide Joe

Currently, the loudest opposition to the Biden administration's foreign policy is over its support to Israel's slaughter of the Palestinians. Activists and workers are putting Biden in a tight spot over Gaza. In response, Democratic Party liberals and union bureaucrats have sought to pressure Biden for a cease-fire in order to pacify the outrage and prevent the kind of class war needed to stop the genocide and liberate Palestine. This is yet another way that activists and workers are being conned into staying within the Democratic Party fold.

What would that class war look like? For starters, anti-imperialist actions like workers here refusing to produce weapons for Israel or to transport them there. The biggest obstacle to these kinds of actions are the misleaders in the workers movement who support the Democratic Party "progressives." The defense of Palestine is completely undermined by unity with the Democrats. You cannot defend Gaza, let alone fight for the national liberation of Palestine, and at the same time support the party overseeing the genocide in Gaza.

As the elections draw nearer and nearer, the "progressives" will become more and more openly supportive of the Biden White House. Once again, the argument will be "anybody but Trump." Cornel West recoiled under this pressure and shot his own campaign in the foot after he was denounced as irresponsible by Sanders and other "progressives" for dividing the movement to defeat Trump. This is the entire role of the "progressives": to keep discontent within the confines of the Democratic Party. The "uncommitted" campaign spearheaded by Rashida Tlaib is an example of just that. The PSL lauds this campaign as a way to send a powerful message to Biden. But what is the message to workers, students and all those outraged by the genocide? It is to channel anger into the Democratic Party, not toward socialism—especially when refusing to call out Tlaib and the

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Rebecca Cook/Reuters

29 September 2023: UAW pickets at General Motors Lansing Delta plant in Michigan. Workers were willing to fight, but Fain's strategy was to get only a "fair share" for workers without causing Biden too much trouble.

Better, a dead letter. Abortion, overturned. Eviction moratoriums, gone. Poison water, still there. Four years ago, all the Congressional Democrats uttered, "black lives matter." Today, there's not even a pretense to stand for anything black. The reason that neither Biden nor any of the "progressive" Democrats like Sanders or AOC ever make good on their campaign promises is that they are compelled to defend the interests of *their* class—they are part of the very forces responsible for exploitation and oppression.

Any politician can get up and say that they stand for the rights of women, black people and workers, but these are just empty words when their entire role is to preserve capitalist class rule. The Squad works for the party of the bosses, not the people. This is why they don't do jack in Congress except pass your enemy off as your friend. In order to maintain their privilege, the ruling-class oppressors thrive on these kinds of traitors to keep the workers movement down.

Your "progressive" and Uncle Tom black Democrats and your union bureaucrats all want you to think that you can fight the system from within the box of capitalism. You may as well lock yourself in a tent with a starving tiger. For workers and the oppressed to make any step forward

everywhere. We intervened to show auto workers that in order to win the demands that Fain set out to achieve, the struggle had to be broadened because the underlying problem is capitalism itself. To draw in Detroit's black population and really deliver a hard punch to the bosses who run this country, it was necessary to organize a general strike in the city to end tiers, reindustrialize and fight for black liberation. Here was a prime example of how workers struggle and black struggle go forward together or fall back separately.

In the end, Shawn Fain sold the strike short, and the tide was *not* turned. Why? Because Fain sought simply to rebalance the scales and *not* to rock the boat and cause trouble for Biden. His strategy meant he would not wage a real battle against the bosses and their racist divide-and-rule. Fain pushed the strike only far enough that workers gained some concessions without the bosses having to dig too deep into their pockets.

What has happened since the pickets were taken down? The strike gains immediately came under attack, while workers faced either layoffs or the same grueling daily grind to make ends meet. Nothing has changed for black people or working-class Detroit, which is still as segregated as ever. Meanwhile, the Stellantis CEO



Liberal BLM leaders channeled mass anger against racist police terror into votes for Biden 2020.

# Vote PSL...

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other Democrats behind the campaign.

The PSL also builds illusions that the passage of the latest UN Security Council cease-fire resolution is a “major victory for the Palestine solidarity movement.” This resolution was only a cover for Israel to continue the slaughter. It also is a cover for the Democrats to continue to support Israel while appearing to be doing something about the genocide in order to boost Biden’s electoral chances. Just *a few days after* the U.S. allowed the resolution to pass, the Biden administration sent billions of dollars of additional military aid to Israel. The PSL has a big contradiction. They want to end capitalism before it ends us, yet subordinate the movement to bourgeois forces, which are guaranteed to bury struggle against capitalism in defeat.

On the one hand, PSL cheerleads Arab nationalism and Hamas, which is a dead-end road for Palestinian liberation. They do this in accordance with specious liberal appeals that “only Palestinians can lead the struggle,” which can only serve to divide the movement on false lines. On the other hand, PSL stumps for the pacifist cease-fire movement. This movement, a bloc headed by “progressive” Democrats to persuade Biden to “do the right thing” by the Palestinians, has done nothing to stop or even slow the genocide.

The reason is simple: The U.S. imperialists back the Zionist state—and therefore the genocidal oppression of Palestinians—due not to moral failing but rather to their strategic interests in the region. At a certain point, of course, the U.S. rulers may well move to broker a cease-fire—but this will come when they judge that the Israeli slaughter of Palestinians has sufficiently secured their interests. The bottom line is, by playing both sides of the same bankrupt coin, PSL only undermines the very working-class unity and opposition that their presidential campaign is attempting to build.

## How to Fight Back Against Reaction

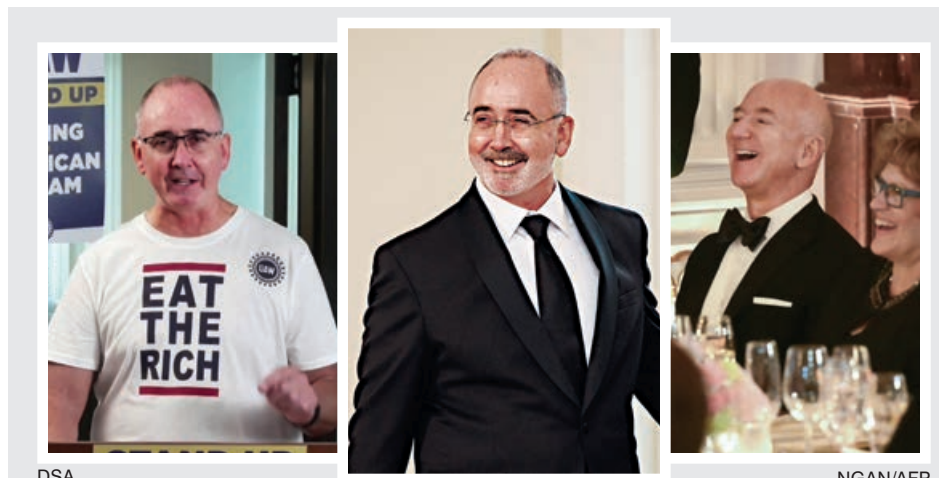
Democratic Party liberalism is deadly to the struggles of the entire multiracial working class. The Democrats and the media have dusted off Hillary Clinton’s 2016 playbook and are once again claiming that the biggest threat to American democracy is white rural rage, i.e., Trump’s “deplor-

ables.” This only fuels poisonous polarizations between black and white workers. The identity politics of the anti-Trump resistance, which alibis the racist Democratic Party by putting the blame for racial oppression on white workers, can only help to drive them into the arms of Trump.

These politics must be rejected to unite the working class across racial lines—which is both necessary and possible. White workers have a real interest in fighting against racial segregation, which is wielded by this country’s rulers to keep the whole working class down. They will not be able to get the things that they need—such as high wages and quality health care and housing—without fighting for black liberation. In turn, black people need white workers to liberate themselves, which requires joint struggle for the revolutionary transformation of society.

Fed up with the Democratic road to nowhere, an increasing number of black people and Latinos have come out for Trump. Many say it is because they are in a worse position under Biden and want to hold on to what they have. The Democratic Party politicians who yesterday claimed to be the biggest defenders of immigrant rights are today trying to outdo Trump and inflaming poisonous divisions between migrants, black people and workers.

There were more cop killings of black people in 2023 under Biden than there have been in decades. But the massive protests that existed four years ago have evaporated. The entire left talks about the need to rebuild the movement against police brutality. But they seek to do it



DSA

Ting Shen/UPI

NGAN/AFP

From “Eat the Rich” to eating with the rich: UAW president Fain (left, during last year’s strike) was among special invitees to White House state dinner on April 10, along with Amazon owner Jeff Bezos (right).

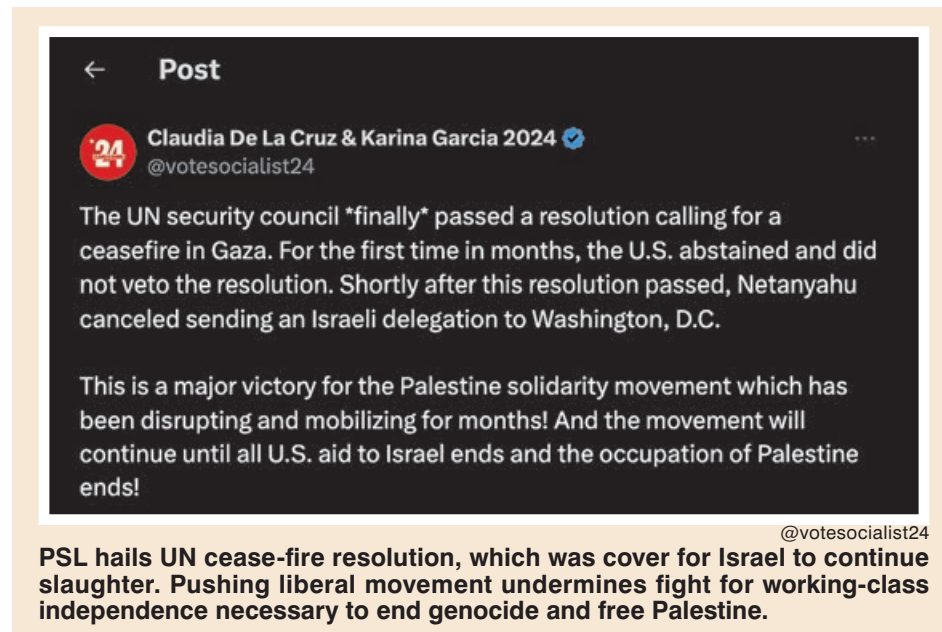
in a way that is entirely compatible with BLM’s identity politics, which only serve to drive a wedge into the necessary alliance of the multiracial proletariat. Leftist groups like PSL say that BLM went downhill because the Democrats took it over. What they need is a long look in the mirror and to ask themselves: Why was there no fight by the left to break the movement from its liberal leadership?

The truth is that the politics of BLM have led to demoralization and racist reaction. From the get-go, BLM was a movement organized on the basis of an empty slogan to rally black people, workers and angry youth around the Democrats. For decades, every movement against police brutality

has fallen down a rabbit hole. They have all pushed schemes to put more black faces in high places—to put black people in control of the police to become the overseers for the same capitalist government that enforces racial segregation and repression.

To reignite the movement against cop terror, the SL seeks to break it from the clutches of the liberals. Our goal is to advance the struggle by exposing the Democratic Party fakers who say they stand for black people but stab them in the back. We want to rebuild the movement in a way that explicitly goes beyond what is acceptable to these politicians. *We encourage all those who want to fight against police abuse and to end racial oppression to take up our united-front call to “open all police archives.”*

Many black people and minorities have heard time and again that the fight for voting rights has been too hard and too many have died for it to throw your vote away. Well, don’t throw it away! Don’t give the vote to the same capitalist system whose politicians are responsible for lynch rope terror and maintaining black inequality. A vote for PSL would be a blow against the class enemy responsible for racial oppression and segregation. It would help build the unity of the multiracial working class by organizing around a common cause to fight back against both Biden’s and Trump’s attacks. *The more successful the PSL campaign, the better will be the position of black people, workers and all the oppressed to fight back against the new administration, whether it’s Biden or Trump. Don’t let the Democrats go unchallenged! Vote PSL! ■*



# DSA...

(continued from page 5)

but socialists are measured by their actions, and Red Labor’s have been lacking. As any mechanic can attest, the only way to separate two objects adhered to one another is to break the bond at its *strongest* point. It is essential to dispel illusions in the most popular Democrats, like Tlaib today. But Red Labor has rather conspicuously limited itself to demanding the expulsion of low-hanging fruit like the open Zionist Nithya Raman in L.A.

Raman should be out without question, but so should be the anti-Zionist Democrats, including Tlaib. The push to expel Raman ran aground when Socialist Majority argued that it was necessary to keep Raman around in recognition of her good work on housing and to preserve the unity of the cease-fire movement. It is easy enough to poke holes in such arguments in the case of Raman. But to make a clean break requires setting forth why the bogus arguments used to justify clinging to Raman are just as wrong when used to justify clinging to Tlaib. In short, Tlaib’s “good work” is in the service of duping the masses into giving the Democrats another chance, and she stands in the way of the unity of the necessary *anti-imperialist* movement for Palestine. When it comes to Tlaib, Red Labor’s silence is deafening.

Others on the DSA left are rather more blatant in their capitulation to “lesser evil” pressures. In a March 22 editorial,

Reform and Revolution argues: “DSA should publicly announce that we will not endorse our class enemy, Joe Biden” and advocates instead an “independent working-class party.” They go on to note that the electeds have voted to fund the war in Ukraine and support NATO, but do not call to expel them. Even more criminally, they call for a “tactical vote” to Biden in swing states in order to help defeat Trump. Reform and Revolution would have the DSA go down in flames with the Democrats, while blocking a working-class fight against reaction.

As for the Communist Caucus, it claims to “oppose all institutions that block working class power,” including the Democratic Party and “union officials who seek an accommodation with capital.” But in a March 30 article in *Partisan* it denounces the Spartacist League for “a rigid belief that labor union leaders are the primary obstacle to building militant working class organization.” However, the unions will remain subordinated to the Democrats unless socialists fight to take leadership from the hands of the “union officials who seek an accommodation with capital.” The fight for a clean break is urgently posed now more than ever, but the Communist Caucus is more concerned with defending the pro-Democratic Party labor bureaucracy against the SL, which is actively fighting for a clean break.

The Marxist Unity Group-affiliated *Cosmonaut* magazine recently issued “A Call to All Socialists” (April 3) arguing “that we need a Mass Socialist Party, and

that we can and must build it *now*” (our emphasis). Its author bitterly complains that the DSA’s rank and file won’t split with the electeds and that the DSA is beholden to the right wing. But the duty of the left is to rally the greatest numbers possible to act in the interests of the working class and *make the split*. Let the right drop its socialist pretensions and stick with the Democrats. Whether or not the left carries a majority, it will be better off for having put the Democratic Party apparatus in the rear view. From the standpoint of actually building a mass socialist party, the worst thing that could happen is for the DSA left to put off a break with the Democrats in the name of unity with the right.

The *Cosmonaut* call, for all its correct insistence that we can and must build an independent workers party now, noticeably fails to provide any concrete course of action toward that end, whether pursuing a break between the DSA and the Democrats or a working-class alternative in the elections. Some in the DSA, like the Rhode Island chapter, oppose endorsing both Trump and Biden but stop short of putting forward any alternative in the elections. This does nothing to help advance the struggle for class independence either. The Spartacist League advocates a critical vote to PSL because, unlike the Greens and Cornel West, it argues against “lesser evilism” and puts forward an anti-capitalist program. Voting PSL builds the power of the working class in the lead-up to the elections and will put us in a better position to fight whichever capitalist candidate wins.

## For Revolutionary Leadership!

Some DSAers who claim to want a split with the Democrats argue that it’s too early to do so because the working class still has illusions in them. Such arguments say more about these DSAers than about the working class, which at the moment hates the Democratic Party. The DSA itself, the party’s liberal moralizing wing, does not rate very high either. The only illusion operating here is that the DSA’s embrace of the Democrats is good for the cause of socialism. Socialists who wait for all the stars to align are not really serious. The time will never be perfect, but it’s pretty damn good right now. The key is that socialists have to act like socialists and fight to advance the struggle for socialism, not make excuses for the status quo.

The formal organizational independence of the DSA from the Democrats would be a step forward for the class, but the DSA minus the Democrats would still not be a revolutionary organization in the absence of it having a program counterposed to liberal reformism. But a split would set the stage for further exposure of the bankruptcy of reformism, because its supporters inside the DSA would no longer have the Democrats to blame for its failures. The precondition to planting a revolutionary pole in the DSA is the fight for its split from the Democrats. If the activity of the DSA left is not oriented in this direction, then it is completely failing the working class and the fight for an independent workers party. ■

# New York Migrants...

(continued from page 16)

Why? They see nothing inherently wrong with imperialism and try to tinker with it, offering the oppressed masses wokeness and compassion because they are incapable of winning real gains at the expense of the imperialists and can only fuel anti-immigrant bigotry. To win quality housing, quality health care and immigrant rights will take a proletarian offensive against the very capitalist interests and private property that the liberals defend.

## NYC Democrats Make Life Hell for Migrants, Workers

At a demonstration a few months ago, New York City Democratic mayor Eric Adams chanted: “Immigrants are welcomed here!” Now he’s singing a completely different tune, saying that the migrant crisis “will destroy this city.” The Adams administration has served eviction notices to migrant families in city shelters. At the same time, Adams has gone after the city’s working people. His solutions to the migrant crisis have been deliberately provocative measures that pit the working masses against the migrants. He threatened to cut the budgets of libraries, schools and even health care in order to finance housing and other assistance for migrants, claiming that NYC doesn’t have enough money to go around.

This whipped up reaction in the working class because his budget cuts tell workers that helping migrants will come at their expense. It’s no wonder these workers—who have been crushed by the pandemic and forced to accept rotten union contracts (in the name of labor peace for Biden)—are repeating the call to close the border and the lie that migrants are getting free housing and health care. The daily lives of the city’s working masses are hell. Ghetto neighborhoods are riddled with dilapidated housing infested with rats, roaches and mold, while many other buildings have no heat or cooking gas for months at a time. Many have looked to other methods of keeping warm and cooking. The result has been an increased number of apartment fires, forcing hundreds of black and Hispanic families into overpopulated homeless shelters or to live on the street. This doesn’t include partial building collapses or landlords who purposely neglect apartments beyond the point of repair so that they end up condemned. Welcome to the slumlord capital of the world.

This situation, coupled with the mass layoffs at the time of the pandemic, created a homeless crisis. Every day, you see hordes of destitute people and makeshift tent camps scattered throughout Gotham. Its victims are mainly black, as they were the worst hit during COVID. The rest of the working class is priced out and has been pushed to the outskirts of the boroughs and into neighboring states in search of decent and “affordable” housing. Whatever money is saved in rent is lost to gas and transportation fees, as the working class needs to commute back into the city, where it toils for stagnant pay.

Liberal politicians have been playing their part. They say that New Yorkers need better housing options, but what options do they provide? They’ve brokered deals with real estate developers, giving them subsidies and tax breaks to construct high-end apartments as long as a small portion of the units are placed in the “lottery.” The smoke and mirrors quickly dissipate, as many of the city’s poor can’t even meet the income requirements of these supposed affordable housing projects.

The hot-button issue of housing has been made more explosive by the migrant crisis. In February, Adams faced backlash from Harlem residents when they found out that migrants were to be housed in one of these luxury buildings. The high-rise had been promised to the predominantly black community, but it has laid entirely vacant for a *decade* because the real estate developers defaulted on their loans. The angry reaction of the Harlem

residents caused Adams to backtrack on his plans, but the building still lays vacant, *indefinitely*.

This situation has caused resentment between the black population and migrants. And this isn’t the only instance in which the liberal Democrats have pushed such racial divisions. In January, the city temporarily moved migrants from an airfield and housed them in Brooklyn’s James Madison high school, shifting the minority students to remote learning. This infuriated parents, who voiced their concerns to the city. Mayor Adams responded, “We did the right thing,” adding “And those parents who are stating that we can’t inconvenience someone for one day because of other children—that’s not acceptable.”



Luis Acosta/AFP

**Darien Gap, Panama, September 2023: Hundreds of thousands trek north to escape U.S. imperialist devastation of their homelands. Anti-imperialist strategy is needed to unite workers in U.S., migrants and neocolonial peoples against common enemy.**

The Democrats’ condemnation of the working class and minorities for not being compassionate enough not only is meant to place the burden of this crisis on the shoulders of the working masses, but also is a tactic to deepen the divide between them and the migrants. This has caused a section of the working masses and other minorities, who are trying to hold on to whatever scraps they have left, to move toward anti-immigrant chauvinism. But there is no answer in anti-immigrant bigotry or right-wing politicians like Trump, who also push divisions. Both the Democrats and Republicans are looking to solve this crisis by making both the working class and migrants pay, leaving U.S. imperialism untouched.

Migrants don’t need to be placed in working-class neighborhoods. They can be placed in the countless vacant apartments hoarded away in various rich neighborhoods. But the bourgeoisie has no intention of sheltering migrants in the areas where the wealthy and better-off petty bourgeoisie live. So, they stick the migrants in the ghettos and poorer working-class areas, which creates tensions. It’s not only migrants who need quality housing but also native-born workers and minorities. The only way to bridge this divide is to make the capitalist bosses who created this situation pay. *Seize the luxury buildings and office spaces! For quality, integrated housing for both migrants and those born in this country!*

Why is there no fight for this when the problem could be solved overnight? For starters, there are more than 60,000 vacant rent-stabilized apartments alone in the five boroughs. Because to fight for housing for all means going up against capitalist interests and the bounds of private property, posing the expropriation of the real estate moguls, parasitic landlords and the Wall Street-backed health care and pharmaceutical industries. It means taking control of all the vacant apartments and office buildings in order to house the homeless, migrants and native-born working people. The current labor leaders do not want to wage a real struggle against capitalism and instead push illusions that a partnership with the Democrats is necessary. At no point can you address the conditions of working people while in alliance with

the very forces that contribute to the rotting conditions. What’s needed is to throw the labor traitors out and fight for a class-struggle union leadership that will defend both native-born workers and migrants.

Without such a leadership, the racial divisions will continue to eat up the city. Those divisions took a deadly turn in March. Dajuan Robinson boarded a train in Brooklyn and started an altercation with Younece Obuad, who he deemed to be a migrant. The incident was caught on video. Robinson says, “You think you’re gonna beat up cops? I’ll beat you up,” referring to a brawl between migrants and the police earlier in the year. Robinson then begins to punch Obuad, who defends himself. Robinson pulls out a

knife and a gun, which Obuad wrestles from Robinson and uses to shoot him in the head in the crowded train car. The NYPD arrested Obuad and then released him when a judge found that he had acted in self-defense. Nowhere in this scene do you hear a peep from the left while many bourgeois media sources have refused to call this incident an anti-migrant attack fueled by the divisions the Democrats and liberals have pushed.

## Full Citizenship Rights for Immigrants!

In the name of “getting migrants on their feet,” which means kicking them out of city shelters and relieving the government of any obligation to provide them decent food and health care, some Democratic Party politicians have pushed expediting work visas. Of course, we strongly support the right of migrants to work here. However, these visas leave migrants vulnerable, since they can be easily revoked. This ensures that the migrants can be exploited as a cheap workforce, which will only drive down the wages of all workers. These work visas, as well as the conditions of capitalist society, force many immi-

grants to take unsafe jobs. This was the case with the six workers, all immigrants from Latin America, killed in Baltimore’s Key bridge collapse.

There is a way to successfully counter the capitalist work visa schemes: *All immigrant workers must be admitted into the existing trade unions of U.S. workers. Organize the unorganized—including the “open shop” South!* Southern workers have been crushed by “right to work” laws, now extended to Northern states like Wisconsin. At the same time, the wages of migrant workers must be brought up to the same level as native-born workers. By waging such a fight, the working class would not only expose the capitalist politicians as enemies of migrants but also demonstrate clearly to migrant workers and the oppressed around the world that the U.S. proletariat is a force to fight against anti-immigrant prejudice. And it would help the working class move its own struggles against the bosses forward.

The capitalist politicians’ calls for stricter border control and an end to programs assisting migrants will only deepen the antagonisms between migrants and U.S.-born workers, fragmenting and weakening the workers movement. It is necessary for the working class to fight for the rights of all immigrants and foreign workers, whether or not they are here legally. The workers movement must demand: *All immigrants and foreign workers are entitled to immediate and full citizenship rights! Stop the deportations!*

These demands will also expose how the same imperialist masters who oppress people abroad screw over the working class at home. The U.S. rulers are responsible for the massive deindustrialization of one-time labor strongholds like Detroit. They are responsible for the horrific working conditions in the South imposed by their “right to work” laws. They inflame racial divisions between white workers and the black population in order to divide and rule. They kept the working class in a political straitjacket during the pandemic under the ruse of “we’re all in this together” national unity, all the while telling the proletariat that it would be responsible for countless deaths if it were to strike for its needs. The U.S. working class fighting back and winning would not only push forward its own cause here but also weaken the class enemy’s grip on the Third World, to the benefit of working people there. It’s also in the interest of the U.S. working class to champion the anti-imperialist struggles in other countries, as every setback for the U.S. ruling class abroad weakens its position at home.

Why are even the most militant-talking bureaucrats not waging such struggle? The introduction of migrants into the unions and the fight for equal pay and citizenship rights goes up against the limits of capitalist acceptability. Each and every one of these demands requires taking the fight to U.S. imperialism, a task that left-talking union tops like UAW president

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## SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S. Local Directory and Public Offices

icl-fi.org • vanguard@tiac.net • ✉@WorkersVanguard

**National Office:** Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116, (212) 732-7860

**Chicago** ..... Box 6441, Main PO, Chicago, IL 60680  
chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net  
**Public Office:** by appointment, call (312) 563-0441

**Los Angeles** ..... Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta., Los Angeles, CA 90029  
slsycla@sbcglobal.net  
**Public Office:** by appointment, call (213) 380-8239

**New York** ..... Box 3381, Church St. Sta., New York, NY 10008  
nysl@tiac.net  
**Public Office:** by appointment, call (212) 267-1025

**Oakland** ..... Box 29497, Oakland, CA 94604  
slbayarea@fastmail.net  
**Public Office:** by appointment, call (510) 839-0851

## TROTSKYIST LEAGUE IN QUEBEC AND CANADA

**Montréal** ..... CP 83 Succ. Place-d’Armes, Montréal, QC H2Y 3E9, (514) 728-7578  
trotskyste.montreal@gmail.com  
f République-ouvrière • ✉@Rep\_Ouvriere

**Toronto** ..... Box 7198, Station A, Toronto, ON M5W 1X8, (416) 593-4138  
trotskyist.toronto@gmail.com

# New York Migrants...

(continued from page 13)

Shawn Fain will not undertake because they do not want to make waves for the Democrats. Instead, they do everything they can to make sure there is no break between labor and the imperialist butchers of the Democratic Party.

Fain has said: "Right now, we have millions of people being told that the biggest threat to their livelihood is migrants coming over the border" and "The threat we face at the border isn't from the migrants. It's from the billionaires and the politicians getting working people to point the finger at one another." Fain was taking digs at talking points of Republican politicians. But he pushes the suicidal idea that Biden, who has the same anti-immigrant positions as the Republicans and wants working people to pay for the migrant crisis, can be some sort of ally. That is why he will never move to strike a real blow against anti-immigrant racism and the capitalist system that spawns it. As of January, Fain has come full circle and endorsed Biden.

## AOC: Fronting for U.S. Imperialism

Once the darling of the NYC immigrant population, DSA-er and Democratic Party representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez hails her own efforts at pressuring Biden to extend temporary protected status (TPS) to Venezuelans. Nearly 40 percent of migrants currently crossing the border are Venezuelan, escaping the sanctions imposed on their country. TPS is not a route to citizenship but rather an immigration policy that reflects the political appetites of U.S. imperialism. In this case, TPS is explicitly being used to undermine the Venezuelan government.

**NYC, September 2023: DSA's AOC voices hypocritical concern for immigrants, while supporting Biden and U.S. sanctions against Maduro regime in Venezuela.**

Barry Williams/NY Daily News



Coupled with the sanctions, the U.S. government is trying to bring about its collapse. AOC's support to extending TPS to Venezuelans is really a form of support to imperialism.

While endorsing Biden for re-election, AOC has sometimes criticized his immigration policies, saying: "Doing Trump impressions isn't how we beat Trump." She puts forward the need to "examine the root of this problem" because the U.S. is constantly "engaging in foreign policy that drives people to our southern border." While trying to place the blame solely on Republicans like Senator Marco Rubio and claiming to be "against broad-based sanctions," her idea of "re-examining" sanctions is to lift those that "directly harm everyday working people" but not those "that focus on the decision makers" in Venezuela.

What a service that liberals like AOC provide to U.S. imperialism! In the guise of standing up for the Venezuelan working people, AOC pushes for the replacement of one set of sanctions that have thus far not achieved their objective—the toppling of the Maduro regime in Caracas—by another that she deems better suited to

that purpose. In so doing, she legitimizes the imperialist assault on Venezuela. Such sanctions, whether "broad-based" or targeted to "hurt decision makers," are designed to make an entire country submit to the will of the hegemonic force looking to plunder its resources—in this case the oil reserves that U.S. imperialism wants to control without question.

Venezuela has felt the wrath of the U.S. ever since its oil industry was nationalized in the 1970s. Under the cloak of humanitarianism and democratic values, U.S. imperialism has sought to crush every Venezuelan regime that has resisted U.S. encroachment—like those of Chávez and Maduro. When staged coups and the forced introduction of puppet leaders didn't work, the U.S. and their cronies around the world implemented sanctions to starve the country and to overturn its government. With the imperialists having overextended themselves and the war in Ukraine putting pressure on global energy supplies, last November the U.S. was forced to ease some of its sanctions against Venezuela. At the same time, this creates more problems for Venezuelans as it fans national flames between them and Guyana over Essequibo.

## For a Revolutionary Movement to Defeat Imperialism!

It's not only the economy of Venezuela that has been entirely wrecked by the U.S. Migrants from Haiti have been fleeing civil unrest and gang warfare—a direct result of the U.S. "humanitarian aid" imposed after the 2010 earthquake. U.S. intervention destabilized Haiti and amped up racial and national tensions with the Dominican Republic. Refugees from Ukraine are rushing to the Polish border to escape the U.S.-provoked war. Millions of Arabs are running from devastation in Libya, Iraq, Yemen and Syria. Each and every one of these endeavors were pushed by the liberal bourgeoisie to strengthen U.S. domination of the region.

Latin America must be regarded as a colony of the U.S., not just its formal colonies, such as Puerto Rico. The Caribbean, South and Central America are under the control of the U.S. through economic penetration and military force. With U.S. imperialism on the decline, it has sought

to strengthen its position through the further exploitation and domination of Latin America. It is the duty of all who claim to be socialists, especially those living in the belly of the imperialist beast, to stand against their own bourgeoisie and put forward a program to unite the working class here with the oppressed peoples of Venezuela, Latin America and the Third World in a revolutionary movement to defeat U.S. imperialism. *All U.S. troops out of Latin America! Close all military bases! Cancel the debt! End all sanctions on Venezuela!*

The precondition to advancing the interests of migrants in the U.S., as well as the working class, is to break with AOC and all other Democrats, who represent the interests of U.S. imperialism and benefit from the plunder of Latin America. The DSA says: "New York City DSA and Socialists in Office have offered a bold plan to support homeless people, and people all across the country should stand in solidarity with migrants seeking a better life for themselves and their families in the United States—not turn them away or treat them with contempt."

However, you cannot advance the position of migrants while supporting liberal imperialist politicians like AOC. It is no accident that she has backed U.S. imperialist military adventures, like the war in Ukraine, and endorsed Genocide Joe in the upcoming elections. It is part of her political program as an agent of imperialism. This is yet another reason why it is necessary for revolutionaries in the DSA—which formally opposes U.S. imperialism in its platform—to fight for a clean break with the Democratic Party of Biden, AOC and the rest of the Squad. A DSA clean break would be an important step in forging a revolutionary workers party based on the complete class independence of the proletariat.

Some left groups recognize the role of the Democrats but are paralyzed on what to do. For example, Left Voice condemns the Democrats and Republicans for anti-migrant bigotry, denounces capitalism as the source of the migrant crisis and calls for a break with the Democrats. But they paint the main problem to simply be racism, saying: "The criminalization of homelessness and the criminalization of migration are tied together through racism." None of this does anything to win over black people, Latinos and workers being pitted against migrants in a race to the bottom. What Left Voice won't do is take head on the racial and ethnic divisions inflamed by the liberals' response to the crisis. Their inability to do this is a reflection of their view that the problem is backwardness, echoing the liberals, who blame the working class for racism and chauvinism. Black people and the working class here have legitimate concerns. Ignoring those concerns will do nothing to bridge the divide. To get rid of this division requires exposing liberal schemes in order to provide an independent path forward for migrants, black people and workers alike. This is the task of socialists. ■



Pedro Rey/AFP

**Caracas, March 2008: Oil workers celebrate defeat of Exxon Mobil's attempt to seize assets of Venezuela's nationalized oil company, PDVSA. To this day, U.S. strangles Venezuela with sanctions to force it to submit to imperialist control of oil fields.**

## Abdallah...

(continued from page 4)

a four-year sentence, which the French, American and Israeli governments ranted was too lenient. So, the next year Abdallah was retried in a "special assize court"—no jury, just specially selected magistrates. Based on the same evidence, he was convicted on charges of complicity in the two murders as well as the attempted murder of an American consul. He should have never spent a day in prison.

Abdallah has always denied any involvement in these killings. At his trial, he declared: "If the people have not entrusted me with the honor of participating in these anti-imperialist actions that you attribute to me, at least I have the honor of being accused of them by your court and of defending their legitimacy in the face of the criminal legitimacy of the executioners." Forty years later, Abdallah remains unbroken in his opposition

to imperialism and the genocidal Zionists.

Sentenced to life in prison, Abdallah has been eligible for parole since 1999. From 2004 to 2020, nine applications have been denied, largely under direct pressure from the U.S. State Department. A new application filed last June is pending. A number of liberal, left and human rights organizations have called for Abdallah's release. A recent documentary, *Fedayee, Georges Abdallah's Fight*, is now streaming on YouTube ([youtube.com/watch?v=3C9RHqx\\_B\\_UU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3C9RHqx_B_UU)).

The PDC's fraternal organization in France, the Comité de défense sociale, has been sending him donations as a gesture of solidarity. We add Abdallah to our monthly class-war prisoner stipend program as the Zionist mass murderers lay waste to Gaza with the avid support of the imperialists. The struggle for his freedom is an integral part of the broader struggle to free workers and the oppressed from the chains of misery and exploitation through socialist revolution. ■

## Khalid...

(continued from page 4)

released on bail a few weeks later and was never tried.

Following passage of the CAA in 2019, road blockages and other protests erupted across India. The law, which would make it nearly impossible for Muslim migrants to become Indian citizens, was accompanied by a nationwide campaign to force primarily Muslims living in India to prove their citizenship. Two million were struck off the citizenship rolls—many sent to detention camps in existing jails.

Stoking brutal cop repression and Hindu-chauvinist mob terror, Modi condemned the protests as a "conspiracy against the country." On 24 February 2020, BJP thugs, abetted by the cops, stormed a Delhi protest with guns, swords, spears and stones. The rampage, which lasted days, engulfed any Muslim in sight—petrol-bombing shops, destroying cars, homes, mosques

and madrasas. Some 53 people, two-thirds of them Muslim, were killed, and more than 500 injured. Over 2,600 protesters were arrested. Khalid and 16 other prominent activists were charged with conspiracy, sedition and murder, upgraded a month later to include offenses under UAPA.

In October 2022, a former Supreme Court judge, three retired high court judges, and a former federal home secretary examined the case against Khalid and found no evidence to support the charges. Nearly two years later, Khalid and many others remain behind bars without even a trial date set.

The state persecution of Khalid is not only directed against defenders of the besieged Muslims and other minorities but also intended to intimidate every worker, leftist and young person who aims to protest the autocratic Modi regime. It is in the interests of the workers movement internationally to champion the fight to free Khalid and all those arrested for protesting against the Modi government! ■

# Chicago Migrants...

(continued from page 16)

one another's throats to keep profits rolling in while the city goes to hell.

To advance *their* interests, workers must reject the reactionary polarization pushed by both sides in the bosses' Democratic Party and wage a class-independent campaign to *defend the migrants, combat racial segregation and fight for jobs and housing for all!* Only then will it be possible to break the isolation of the migrants and raise the living standards of the entire working class. The unions must fight now to *let the migrants stay and house them and the homeless in the vacant office buildings and apartments in the Loop and the Gold Coast!* This would undercut the hostility toward the migrants in black and Latino neighborhoods and actually do something about homelessness.

The liberals will use every excuse to *not* house migrants and the homeless in commercial and luxury properties. They'll say that it's too expensive to convert offices into housing. So what? Get the building trades to convert the space! There aren't enough skilled tradesmen? Hire more and spread the work around—there's plenty of unemployed and migrants who need jobs! They'll say there's no room for more migrants. *House them in Pritzker's mansion!* The unions should organize the migrants, fight to seize these properties and move the migrants and the homeless in. A fight for what's so obviously needed would also quickly expose Johnson and other liberals, who defend the migrants only insofar as they can be exploited as pawns against labor.

The current polarization serves no one but the bosses. On the one side, economic anxiety is manipulated to whip up anti-migrant hysteria. On the other, the liberals reinforce reaction by pushing "solutions" that are limited to what is acceptable to the bosses, while blaming the victims of their bankrupt half measures. Both sides present the crisis as flowing from whether or not the population cares too much or too little about the migrants, and each is lined up behind a wing of the ruling class that is actually to blame for everyone's misery.

In reality, the migrant crisis is caused by U.S. imperialism's domination and dispossession of the neocolonial world. It is only by fighting the common enemy of the migrants, working people and the neocolonial masses—the U.S. imperialist ruling class—that any progress can be made toward ending the special oppression of migrants, black people and Latinos and improving the living standards of the working class as a whole. And that requires struggling independently of, and against, liberal politicians like Johnson as well as his opponents on the city council.

## The Migrant Crisis: Made in the USA

Some 35,000 migrants have come to Chicago since August 2022, most from Venezuela. For the "crime" of nationalizing *their* oil, the U.S. imperialists have targeted successive Venezuelan governments for destruction and are strangling the country with sanctions. But Venezuelans aren't the only victims of U.S. imperialism in Chicago. The city is a third Latino—mostly Mexican-Americans whose families fled U.S. imperialist devastation of Mexico.

Over the past year or so, 30,000 Ukrainians fleeing the U.S.-provoked war with Russia have settled in the city. These asylum seekers have been received very differently than those from Latin America; they were largely granted legal status and work permits from the outset. As the U.S. ruling class, in defense of its strategic interests in East Europe, pushes Ukraine to fight to the last drop of Ukrainian blood, it figures that this minimal gesture will help further its designs. For their part, the trade-union bureaucrats cheer on campaigns against Venezuela, pledge support to the reactionary



Eileen T. Meslar/Chicago Tribune

**Left: Chicago alderman and DSA member Carlos Ramirez-Rosa (at mic) and Mayor Brandon Johnson pushed "mansion tax" ballot measure to fund homeless services. Right: February 14 rally of working people in support of tax proposal. Even this minimal but supportable measure provoked backlash from landlords, underscoring need to confront real estate interests to win affordable housing for all.**



Charles Rex Arbogast/AP

war in Ukraine and call for a vote to the Democratic politicians enabling genocide in Palestine. This activity reinforces divisions among U.S. working people here and between U.S. workers and the neocolonial masses, aiding the bosses in dividing and conquering both.

An *anti-imperialist* strategy is the only way to unite U.S. workers, migrants and the neocolonial masses and advance their shared interests against the common enemy. At every turn, the aim must be to weaken the U.S. imperialist ruling class that oppresses all of them. Inside the U.S., it is possible and necessary to strike concrete blows against the imperialist masters—whether through working-class action against U.S. military operations and economic sanctions or class battles to win more of what workers need and to push back against the oppression of

and making housing affordable, it still provoked a strong backlash from the real-estate barons, with Democrats like Paul Vallas spearheading the opposition. This underscores that homelessness and the migrant crisis can be tackled only through confrontation with entrenched capitalist interests and that doing so in alliance with Democrats, who uphold those interests, is futile. Revolutionaries in DSA must fight to effect an immediate break with the Democratic Party in order to defend the homeless and the migrants!

The Freedom Road Socialist Organization (FRSO) and the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) are outside the Democratic Party, but nevertheless tie workers to liberal Democrats like Johnson. The Stalinist FRSO helped put Johnson in office and leads coalitions like the Chicago Alliance Against Racist and

it must be combated to cohere the united working-class mass movement that is so desperately needed to resolve the migrant crisis in a progressive manner. Socialists must aim to mobilize the working class not to make Johnson fight, but to fight against Johnson.

Other declared socialists align themselves with Johnson by backing his main boosters in the trade-union bureaucracy, such as the Chicago Teachers Union's Stacy Davis Gates. But it's not just the "progressives" who march behind Johnson. Plenty of the construction union bureaucrats who supported his opponent last year salivated over the prospect of getting to erect tent cities for Johnson. What unites the "progressives" and the "business unionists" is their loyalty to U.S. imperialist domination and their utter refusal to challenge the capitalists' divide-and-rule. They're not organizing migrants into the unions or fighting for housing for all because they do not want to cross their supposed "allies" in the ruling class. The pro-imperialist bureaucrats of all stripes stand in the way of uniting the workers movement and waging the necessary battles against the bosses and must be shown the door.

## For Black Liberation and Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

Cutting through the false polarization between Johnson and his opponents requires fighting for black liberation because the degradation of black people in this society is used by the ruling class to degrade the entire working class, migrants included. Johnson talked a big game about defending black people on the campaign trail, but his election is one more example of how you can't begin to address any of the conditions of black oppression by supporting politicians who base themselves on the source of that oppression, capitalist rule. The working class, to advance its material interests and emancipate itself from wage slavery, must fight to fully integrate black people into American society, while black people, to achieve their freedom, must join forces with the proletariat.

Let's start the fight now! In addition to mobilizing to demand the immediate housing of the homeless and migrants in the Loop and the Gold Coast, union militants should fight for a *union-run, massive public works program to build low-cost, quality, integrated housing and state-of-the-art, integrated public schools.* Combined with a fight for a shorter workweek with no pay cut and union-run job training, this would create high-paying union jobs and undercut the bosses' divide-and-rule schemes by striking at the heart of black oppression.

In yet another case of dog-eat-dog, some Latino aldermen have demanded that Mexican migrants be given work permits instead of Venezuelans or Ukrainians. In the face of this competition and all the other anti-migrant attacks, what is posed is a fight for *full citizenship rights for all immigrants and for union control of hiring* to make sure nobody is forced to work under the table. By fighting for these demands, it will become completely clear whose side both Johnson and his city council opponents are actually on. ■



Alexandra Buxbaum/Sipa

**Chicago, October 2023: Protest against mayor's plan to set up migrant tent city in working-class neighborhood of Brighton Park. Liberal Democrats pit workers against migrants to divert anger away from the capitalists responsible for the crisis.**

migrants and black people. But to pursue this course will require a fundamental break from the existing liberal union leadership and the Democratic politicians.

## Break with Brandon!

Instead, so-called socialists line up behind Johnson. The six DSA aldermen on the city council form the backbone of Johnson's "progressive" coalition. Plenty in the DSA are no doubt appalled by Johnson's response to the migrant crisis, but their whole activity is defined by maintaining unity with these "socialist" aldermen. That includes the likes of the 20th ward's Jeanette Taylor, who openly opposes letting more migrants in. In September, she declared: "We need to say we can't take no more, why won't nobody say that out of their mouth, out of this administration? We can't keep taking buses."

Chicago DSA is doing real damage to the name of socialism—and hindering the migrant movement—by aligning itself with these aldermen and the mayor. This was graphically illustrated with the defeat last month of the Johnson coalition's Bring Chicago Home (BCH) referendum to raise real-estate taxes on high-end property sales to fund homeless services. The opponents of this supportable demand were able to get BCH evicted at the ballot box by playing up the connection to the hated Johnson.

While BCH would have made only the slightest dent in redressing homelessness

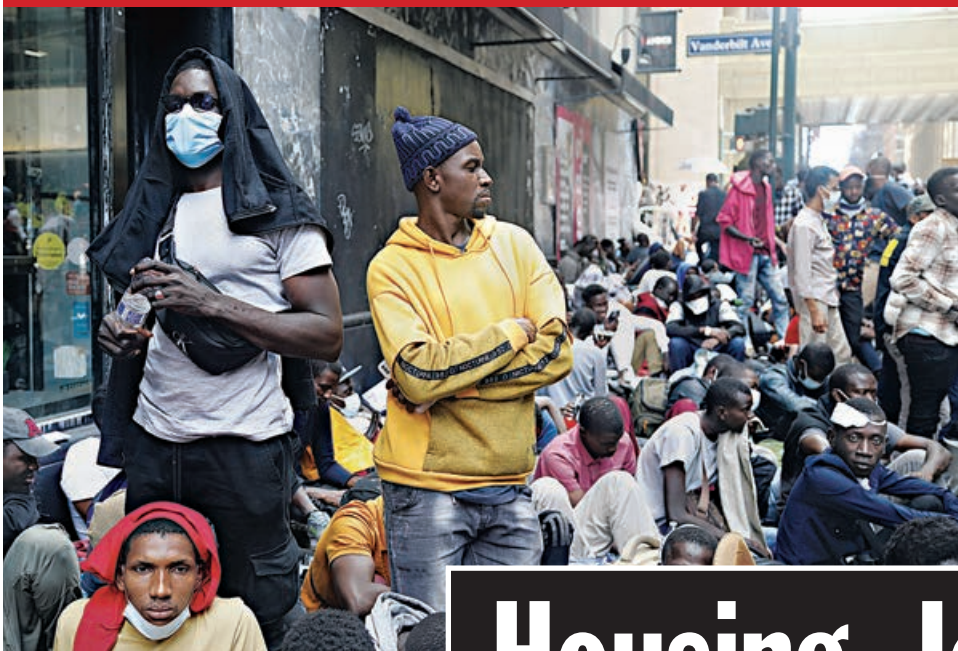
Political Oppression, whose statements hail his election as "unprecedented for our movement." While they recognize that "we must unite all who can be united against the monopoly capitalists of the U.S. and turn our movements into a tide that will sweep them away," their actions are utterly antithetical to waging such a fight. That requires working-class struggle in the U.S. *against the imperialists and their front men like Johnson!* You can't strike a blow against imperialism while pushing pro-imperialist politicians!

PSL sometimes sounds more radical by comparison, declaring: "This system is attempting to pit poor and working people in the Black and Latino community against each other, unnecessarily fighting over the crumbs of capitalism." In response, they propose "a united working-class movement" on the national level to "challenge the power of the capitalists' utter lack of compassion and humanity and win a just resolution for all of us." Presenting the problem as an "utter lack of compassion" is entirely consistent with the liberals, who in the name of caring for one oppressed sector of the population blame another. But black people, the longstanding Latino population and workers are getting screwed, too. Simply appealing for solidarity with migrants without concretely addressing the concerns of others on the bottom can only further inflame racial and ethnic divisions. Rather than conciliate liberalism,

# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Not Migrants vs. Workers

# Let Them Stay, Make Bosses Pay!



Chris Moore/IPX  
Asylum seekers, denied shelter, huddle on sidewalk outside Roosevelt Hotel, New York, August 2023.



Brendan McDermid/Reuters  
Protest against public schools being used to house migrants, Brooklyn, May 2023.

## Housing, Jobs for All!

### New York

New York City has been met with one crisis after another, from housing and unemployment to education and collapsing infrastructure. Now the city is being met with a surge of migrants, most of whom are being bused from the South into the ever-rotting Big Apple and other northern cities.

Last year, 2.4 million migrants came into the U.S., and more than 225,000 migrants crossed the southern border in just the first 27 days of December alone. The waves of desperate people seeking refuge is a searing indictment of the economic and social devastation of Latin America by U.S. imperialism.

During the height of the anti-Trump hysteria, the Democrats and other liberals posed as friends and even saviors of the dispossessed migrants in contrast to the backward, racist and anti-immigrant Trump and his base of bigots. The calls to “let them in” and “immigrants are welcomed here” swept through left organizations, as they instilled fear that a Trump presidency would mean more deportations and violence against vulnerable immigrants. While it is true that the country saw a spike in violence against immigrants during Trump’s presidency, the left and the liberals raised a panic in response, all to get Biden elected, which did absolutely nothing to improve the conditions of migrants.

Now with Biden in the White House, more people have been deported than under Trump’s administration, and imperialism has further tightened the screws on the oppressed around the world, forcing masses of people to leave their countries.

The most extreme examples are the sanctions on Venezuela and the U.S.-provoked war in Ukraine. The decline of U.S. hegemony has also had a massive effect on the working masses here, who face grinding inflation, homelessness, racist cop terror, devastation in the ghettos in the North and substandard conditions in the overwhelmingly non-union plants in the South. Now the Republicans and Democrats are trying to get the heat off themselves by pitting migrants against U.S. workers.

Many of those liberals who previously counterposed Trump’s bigotry toward migrants with wokeness and compassion have either fallen silent or flipped completely, calling for Biden to secure the border. Without a doubt, as the elections approach, both the capitalist presidential candidates will bare their teeth and compete over who will be more ruthless against the migrants and in the sealing of the border. All this shows that the differences between the two wings of the bourgeoisie are not fundamental; rather, they are tactical disagreements about how to best exploit the working class and plunder the neocolonies.

Driven from their homelands by the ravages of that plunder, many migrants don’t want to be here, but going back or being deported ensures extreme poverty and, for some, certain death. For the thousands banging at the door, we say: *Let them in!* Don’t house them in ghettos and poor border towns but in empty luxury apartments—like those of Tribeca, Long Island City and Billionaires Row. While the liberals called to “let them in” not so long ago, their aim was to gather votes for the Democrats. Once they were in office, the liberals hung immigrants out to dry.

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### Chicago

For months, tens of thousands of mostly Venezuelan migrants have poured into Chicago, and the Democratic city rulers are tearing their hair out over what to do about it. Initially, they dumped the migrants on sidewalks or threw them into police stations, “welcoming” them with curfews and police abuse. Then, as costs piled up, Mayor Brandon Johnson changed tack and proposed to house the migrants in the decrepit buildings of the ghettos and barrios. That provoked an anti-migrant backlash led by city aldermen, who denounced the mayor for taking resources away from black people and Latinos.

This reactionary cycle keeps repeating itself, as every one of Johnson’s “solutions” to the crisis has fueled divisions between working people and migrants while doing nothing to address the problem. When he tried to set up tent cities, the first one, slated for the Latino/Asian Brighton Park neighborhood, was met by a reactionary mobilization, and Governor J.B. Pritzker pulled the plug when the construction site was found to be toxic. Johnson has stashed migrants in dangerous warehouses and in hotels, again sparking anti-migrant protest. He’s fining bus companies for bringing in migrants and time-limiting shelter stays. To get the city off the hook and the story off the front page, he initially sought to expedite work permits only for recent arrivals, breeding resentment among the large immigrant population without papers that has lived in the city for decades.

Righteous anger with Johnson—who has screwed working people and betrayed

all of his campaign promises—is being channeled by his opponents on the city council into an anti-migrant campaign that solves nothing. It’s easy for them to present migrants as competitors for limited jobs, housing and education given the forcible segregation of black people at the bottom of society and the Latino population’s precarious position in the economy. The black aldermen opposing Johnson recently “discovered” the black homeless and falsely counterpose housing them to housing the migrants.

But these charlatans won’t do anything about black homelessness. Like Johnson, they approach every question from the standpoint that the property and power of the ruling class are to be preserved above all else. Racial segregation is a crucial prop for the bosses and drives black homelessness. Affordable, quality, integrated housing will only ever be achieved through a direct clash with fundamental capitalist interests—the very interests that Johnson and the aldermen each uphold in their own way.

Both Johnson’s liberal schemes and the aldermen’s demagogic attacks against migrants pit black people against migrants in the same way the bosses and their politicians pit white workers, Latinos and migrants against black people. These racial divisions undermine united struggle against the common enemy and drag down living standards and wages for all. The disagreements between Johnson and his city council opponents amount to tactical differences over how to best manage the crisis for the ruling class and dupe their constituencies. These politicians all represent the LaSalle Street bankers and bosses, who want working people and migrants at

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