

Free Palestine!

Stop U.S. aid to apartheid Israel!



Tony Savino / Socialist Action

By JEFF MACKLER

The U.S.-backed racist, colonialist, apartheid Zionist entity known as Israel has once again saturation bombed the Palestinian people, destroying the infrastructure of the world's largest open air prison—the Gaza Strip—a slip of land roughly 26 miles long by 5.5 miles wide.

Gaza's 1.82 million Palestinian residents, many driven by force and violence from their land and homes throughout historic Palestine over the past 66 years, are compelled to live in one of the most densely populated areas in the world. Unemployment stands at 80 percent.

For the third time since Israel's 2008-9 three-week air bombardment and ground occupation that slaughtered 1400 Palestinians (14 Israelis died), the beleaguered masses have been subjected to a murderous invasion of 50,000 Israeli "Defense" Force (IDF) troops, accompanied by tanks, and supported by massive air strikes, cross-border mortar and artillery bombardments, and unending offshore naval shelling from Israeli gunboats.

Israel employs one of the world's most sophisticat-

ed and powerful military apparatuses, replete with advanced fighter jets, helicopter gun ships, a naval armada, and well-equipped land forces. In turn, the Zionist state confronts a comparatively unarmed people. Even Israeli officials have mocked Gaza's rocket-making capabilities as little more than the efforts of a cottage industry, which they contemptuously refer to as "high tech."

Most of the rockets used by Hamas, the ruling party in Gaza, are homemade devices filled with fertilizer, ammonium compounds, and related explosive materials. Although some rockets, designed to emulate relatively sophisticated Syrian and Iranian models, have a range allowing them to reach most of Israel's cities, they are notoriously inaccurate.

As a cease-fire went into effect in early August, the number of Palestinian deaths stood at over 1800. According to UN on-the-scene staffers, almost 80 percent of the Palestinian deaths were civilians—including many children. In contrast, three people in Israel died from rockets or mortar fire across the border. Almost half a million Gazans have been displaced from their homes (270,000 are crammed into UN shelters).

The last week of July saw Israeli warplanes destroy-

ing Gaza's only power plant, further exacerbating the already near total devastation of Gaza's infrastructure. "We need at least one year to repair the power plant, the turbines, the fuel tanks and the control room," Fathi Sheik Khalil of the Gaza energy authority told the British *Guardian*. "Everything was burned."

Israeli tanks shelled the UN school in Beit Hanoun on July 24, killing 16 people and wounding over 100. During the next few days, Israeli aircraft and artillery hit UN refugee centers at least five times more, killing five UN staff members. Twenty died in an attack on a school in Jabaliya on July 30, and 10 died in an attack on a school in Rafah on Aug. 3.

UN High Commissioner of Human Rights Navi Pillay, based in Geneva, has indicated that Israel is likely guilty of war crimes. Many civilians were in the UN-run schools and clinics at the time they were hit, seeking safety after being driven from their homes by bombing. UN officials informed *The New York Times* that they had given the IDF specific GPS (Global Positioning System) coordinates of every building under their control, to no avail. The UN has warned that

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Boycott Coca Cola, say workers in Spain

Barry Weisleder / Socialist Action



By BARRY WEISLEDER

Hundreds of Coca Cola workers sporting red T-shirts shouted, sang, and marched into Madrid's historic central square on July 18 to demand the return of their jobs. I was among dozens of Canadian, American, and Australian tourists who encountered this instance of class struggle following our tour farewell dinner in the square.

I spoke to Comisiones Obreras (CCOO) union organizer Daniel Andres Sobrino about the issues in dispute with the soft drink giant. He told me that Spain's national labour court had overturned Coca Cola's dismissal of 1190 workers in that country. The decision was a big boost for the union-led campaign against four factory closures in that de-

pressed economy. The Audiencia Nacional also called for the workers' reinstatement and payment of lost wages.

The court found that Coca-Cola Iberian Partners, a new Spanish subsidiary of the U.S. multinational formed from the merger of eight bottling plants, had shown "a complete and manifest breach of the obligations" to provide information, and to consult and negotiate procedures. The court also agreed with the applicant unions that the company had unlawfully tried to break the strike at the Fuenlabrada plant in a bid to undermine the workers' "constitutional rights." The company is appealing the decision to the Supreme Court.

In February, the CCOO, UGT, and CSIF unions launched a legal challenge after the company de-

ecided to push ahead with its plans to shut down plants in order to cut costs. The workers urge a boycott of Coca Cola products until their issues are resolved. CCOO blames the dispute on the Spanish government's 2012 labour law reform, which made it easier to fire workers.

A deep downturn, aggravated by austerity policies over the past five years, has pushed Spain's official unemployment rate up to 26 percent.

The workers' campaign has resulted in many consumers' boycotting the popular beverage. According to *El Economista*, in central Spain, including Madrid, sales diminished by 48.6 percent between Feb. 28, 2013 and Feb. 28, 2014. The company has tried to minimize the effect of the boycott campaign, arguing that in February 2014 alone sales fell only by 2.3 percent. According to the unions, the biggest drop occurred in the second half of January, when the redundancy plan was announced.

The bottler claimed that its re-organization was necessary because some plants were only operating at half their capacity, due to over-expansion and weak demand in Spain's struggling economy. However, its plans floundered when the court ruled that Coca-Cola Iberian Partners had failed to present the union negotiating committee with a detailed account of its re-organization.

The court declared void the plan to make 1190 workers redundant, of whom 821 had actually been laid off, and to close the plant at Fuenlabrada (Madrid), as well as in Majorca, Alicante, and Asturias. It ordered the company to reinstate hundreds of workers and to issue back pay. At its headquarters in Atlanta, Coca-Cola said it was disappointed with the ruling, adding that its bottling partner intended to appeal. Coca-Cola's 2013 fourth-quarter profits totalled \$1.7 billion euros.

Please send messages of solidarity to Spain's cola workers at: danso77@hotmail.com. ■

Socialist Action: Where we stand

Socialist Action is a national organization of activists committed to the emancipation of workers and the oppressed. We strive to revitalize the antiwar, environmental, labor, anti-racist, feminist, student, and other social movements with a mass-action perspective. In the process we hope to bring activists together from different backgrounds into a revolutionary workers' party that can successfully challenge the wealthy elite—whose profit-driven system is driving down living standards and threatens all life on this planet.

Our ultimate goal is a truly democratic, environmentally sustainable, and egalitarian society organized to satisfy human needs rather than corporate greed. We invite you to join us in the struggle to make the world a better place!

We are active partisans of the working class and believe in the need for independent working-class politics—not alliances with the bosses' parties. That is why we call for workers in the U.S. to break from the Democratic and Republican parties to build a Labor Party based on the trade unions.

We support the struggles of those who are specially oppressed under capitalism—women,

queers, national minorities, etc. We support the right of self-determination for oppressed nationalities, including Blacks, Chicanos, and Puerto Ricans. We are internationalists, and hold that workers of one country have more in common with workers of another than with their own nation's capitalist class. We seek to link struggles across national boundaries, and to build an international revolutionary movement that will facilitate the sharing of experiences and political lessons. That is why we maintain fraternal relations with the Fourth International

Recognizing the divisions that exist on the left and within the workers' movement, we seek to form united front type organizations around specific issues where various groups have agreement. In this way we seek to maximize our impact and demonstrate the power and effectiveness of mass action.

Socialist Action believes that the capitalist state and its institutions are instruments of the ruling class, and that therefore they cannot be used as tools of the working class but have to be smashed. That is why we fight for revolution, instead of seeking to merely reform or work within the system. When we fight for specific reforms, we do so with the understanding that in the final analysis real social change can only come about with the overthrow of capitalism, the establishment of a workers' government, and the fight for socialism.

SOCIALIST ACTION Closing news date: Aug. 6, 2014
Editor: Michael Schreiber Canada Editor: Barry Weisleder

Socialist Action (ISSN 0747-4237) is published monthly by Socialist Action Publishing Association, P.O. Box 10328, Oakland, CA 94610. Postmaster: Send address changes to: Socialist Action, P.O. Box 10328, Oakland, CA 94610. RATES: For one year (12 issues, 1st-class mail): U.S., Canada, Mexico — \$20. All other countries — \$30. Money orders and checks should be in U.S. dollars.

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of Socialist Action. These are expressed in editorials. Socialist Action is edited, designed, and laid out entirely by volunteer labor.



For info about Socialist Action and how to join: Socialist Action National Office, P.O. Box 10328, Oakland, CA 94610, (510) 268-9429, socialistaction@lmi.net

Socialist Action newspaper editorial offices: socialistactionnews@yahoo.com
Website: www.socialistaction.org

WHERE TO FIND US

- ASHLAND, Ore.: damonjure@earthlink.net
- CHICAGO: P.O. Box 578428 Chicago, IL 60657, chisocialistaction@yahoo.com
- CONNECTICUT: (860) 478-5300
- DULUTH, MINN.: adamritscher@yahoo.com. www.thenorthernworker.blogspot.com
- KANSAS CITY: kcsa@workernet.org (816) 221-3638
- LOUISVILLE, KY: redlotus51@yahoo.com, (502) 451-2193
- MADISON, Wis.: Northlandiguana@gmail.com
- MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL: (612) 802-1482, socialistaction@visi.com
- NEW YORK CITY: (212) 781-5157
- PHILADELPHIA: philly.socialistaction@gmail.com

- PORTLAND, ORE.: (503) 233-1629 gary1917@aol.com
- PROVIDENCE: ADGAGNERI@GMAIL.COM (401) 592-5385
- SALEM, ORE.: ANNMONTAGUE@COMCAST.NET
- SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA: P.O. Box 10328, OAKLAND, CA 94610 (510) 268-9429, sfsocialistaction@gmail.com
- WASHINGTON, DC: christopher.towne@gmail.com, (202) 286-5493

SOCIALIST ACTION CANADA

NATIONAL OFFICE
526 Roxton Road, Toronto, Ont. M6G 3R4, (416) 535-8779
<http://socialistaction.ca/>

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Children trapped at the border: A tragedy made in the USA

By LISA LUINENBURG

Since October 2013, about 57,000 unaccompanied children from Central America have been apprehended crossing the border into the United States. This number jumped 159% between 2011 and 2013, and the total number of children caught crossing the U.S.-Mexico border this year is expected to reach 74,000.

Most of these children come from Central America, especially from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. On their way to the United States, these children travel thousands of miles through Mexico, facing untold dangers including rape, kidnapping, drug violence, robbery, and mutilation as they ride the infamous freight train La Bestia.

Many of these children are fleeing even more dangerous situations at home. A recent report from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees stated that 58% of youth interviewed by the agency "had suffered, been threatened, or feared serious harm" that would likely merit international protection. In Los Angeles, the school district's mental-health director found that 94% of these children reported at least three traumatic events and that 65% had clinical symptoms of PTSD and depression.

But why are these kids being forced to flee their families and their homes? Much of the reason lies in the history of U.S. intervention in Central America, which the corporate media has conveniently glossed over in the recent surge of reporting on the "child migrant crisis."

An example of this history is the 1954 coup d'état in Guatemala, which was really a covert operation carried out by the United States CIA. Since the 1930s, the United States had backed the brutal dictatorship of General Jorge Ubico, who in return gave hundreds of thousands of hectares of land to the American-owned United Fruit Company and allowed the U.S. to establish military bases in the country. When Ubico was overthrown in 1944, democratically elected Juan Jose Arevalo, and later President Jacobo Arbenz implemented many popular reforms, including minimum wage laws, near universal suffrage, and land reform.

The United Fruit Company lobbied the U.S. government to overthrow Arbenz, who was replaced in 1954 by the military dictator Carlos Castillo Armas. Following the coup, Guatemala was ruled by a series of U.S.-backed military regimes until 1996. From 1960 until 1996, the Guatemalan civil war raged, during which the military regime committed untold atrocities against the leftist movement and the civilian population, including tens of thousands of murders and disappearances, and a genocidal campaign against the indigenous Mayan population.

U.S. military interventions similar to the one that happened in Guatemala have taken place in many countries in Central and South America over the past decades. These interventions have created the waves of violence and political instability that have plagued the region. Many countries in Central America have also repeatedly been subject to interventions from U.S. corporations, and have struggled under the recent surge in the international drug war.

Honduras, which suffered a military coup in 2009, has the world's highest murder rate, followed by El Salvador (2nd) and Guatemala (5th). In Guatemala, the cost of tortillas has recently doubled due to increased U.S. ethanol production and the conversion of farmland traditionally used to grow corn to the production of sugarcane and palm oil for biofuel.

"This is really a forced migration. This is not kids choosing voluntarily to leave," said Wendy Young, executive director of Kids in Need of Defense (KIND). Under existing law, children from countries other than Mexico who are caught crossing the U.S. border are considered refugees, and are placed in shelters or with family members while their cases await hearing in immigration courts.

Because of the recent increase in the number of unaccompanied children crossing the border, the government has been pouring money into building more of these shelters, and has allocated millions of dollars to set up emergency shelters. Baptist Child and Family Services, a faith-based, non-profit organization, received \$280 million in grants from the U.S.



(Above) Immigrant children released by ICE at Phoenix, Ariz., bus station, May 28.

government this year, and operates two of the largest emergency shelters, as well as six permanent shelters around the country. CEO Kevin Dinnin received \$450,000 in compensation in 2012 alone.

In January of 2014, the National Immigrant Justice Center issued a policy brief that was based on hundreds of interviews with unaccompanied immigrant children in the Chicago area. These children reported grim conditions while they were in the custody of the Department of Homeland Security, before being transferred to the contractor-run shelters. About 56% of these children said they had been placed in three-point shackles (bound at the wrists, waist, and ankles), and over 70% reported being held in unheated cells during the winter.

Even now, these temporary shelters are being run very secretly, with almost no journalists or immigration advocates being allowed to enter. One woman who was allowed to study these shelters before they were closed to outsiders reported that the children were never allowed to be alone, while others noted that the temporary centers were set up like emergency hurricane shelters.

Following reports of a recent decline in the number of unaccompanied children crossing the border, the U.S. government recently announced that it will soon close three of the emergency shelters that it has established on U.S. military bases. One of these is the shelter set up at the Department of Defense's Joint Base Lackland in San Antonio, which currently houses 700 migrant children. The other bases are in Oklahoma at Fort Sill, and the Naval Base Ventura County-Port Hueneme in California. The shelters could re-open if numbers of children crossing the border increase in coming weeks.

Obama recently requested an additional \$3.7 billion from Congress in order to remove many of the existing protections for these children and speed up their deportation process. Many of these migrant children, who range in age from about five years old to teenagers, already lack access to legal representation, and are forced to represent themselves as they face their deportation hearings.

Congress recessed in August without addressing the issue. This has prompted President Obama to explore options for taking executive actions to deal with the migration crisis, prompting some politicians to shout for his impeachment on the grounds that he is overstepping his executive authority.

In the meantime, as politicians and the president continue to fight over the issue, the lives of thousands of child migrants from Central America hang in the balance. ■

Running Orders

By LENA KHALAF TUFFAHA

They call us now.
Before they drop the bombs.
The phone rings
and someone who knows my first name
calls and says in perfect Arabic
"This is David."
And in my stupor of sonic booms and glass shattering symphonies
still smashing around in my head
I think "Do I know any Davids in Gaza?"
They call us now to say
Run.
You have 58 seconds from the end of this message.
Your house is next.
They think of it as some kind of
war time courtesy.
It doesn't matter that
there is nowhere to run to.
It means nothing that the borders are closed
and your papers are worthless
and mark you only for a life sentence
in this prison by the sea
and the alleyways are narrow
and there are more human lives
packed one against the other
more than any other place on earth
Just run.
We aren't trying to kill you.
It doesn't matter that
you can't call us back to tell us
the people we claim to want aren't in your house
that there's no one here
except you and your children
who were cheering for Argentina
sharing the last loaf of bread for this week
counting candles left in case the power goes out.
It doesn't matter that you have children.
You live in the wrong place
and now is your chance to run
to nowhere.
It doesn't matter
that 58 seconds isn't long enough
to find your wedding album
or your son's favorite blanket
or your daughter's almost completed college
application
or your shoes
or to gather everyone in the house.
It doesn't matter what you had planned.
It doesn't matter who you are
Prove you're human.
Prove you stand on two legs.
Run.



(Left) March to 120th precinct police station in New York demands justice for Eric Garner.

'It stops today' — NYPD victim Eric Garner

By CLAY WADENA

"Every time you see me you want to mess with me. I'm tired of it. It stops today! I'm minding my business, please just leave me alone."

— Eric Garner, *Rest In Power*, killed by New York City police on July 17, 2014.

Eric Garner's last words ring with righteous anger, disgust, desperation, and fatigue. Garner spoke for generations of Black and Brown people who have been subjected to America's constant surveillance, intimidation, harassment, and brutality.

Ramsey Orta, explaining why he recorded the video of Garner's death at the hands of the NYPD, said at a recent rally: "I watched that man [Garner] get harassed by police for four years and I had to do something." Now, a New York coroner has validated what any honest individual saw when they viewed the video: Garner was killed by a chokehold (an illegal technique for police to use since 1993 in New York). The Staten Island man, a father of six children, had been targeted by cops for allegedly selling untaxed single cigarettes on the street.

Garner's family is understandably calling for charges to be filed against the officer who murdered him,

Daniel Pantaleo, an officer with a history of abuse that includes strip-searching and assaulting people during illegal car stops in broad daylight (which led the city to settle out of court for \$30,000).

Perhaps to make America's judicial system seem just, mainstream headlines all prominently noted that Officer Pantaleo had his gun and badge "stripped" from him over his murder of Garner, as if that would be enough, or as if Pantaleo isn't on paid administrative "desk duty" (he is).

In a further indictment of the horrible conditions faced by so many, it was revealed that emergency response personnel did not help Garner when they arrived. Instead, they stood by with police as he died. This has resulted in the suspension of four emergency response workers without pay (note that their punishment is worse than what Officer Pantaleo received).

In typical fashion, some articles attempted a smear job, noting Garner's arrest history, or the criminal charges faced by Ramsey Orta. This is a common tactic of the mass incarceration era—to designate someone a criminal and then deny them their human rights.

Mayor Bill de Blasio jumped into damage control quickly, trying to back up his campaigning as a friend and ally of those harassed and brutalized by police. De Blasio postponed his Italy vacation for a day, is-

sued statements that angered the police union, and in general was not such an openly rabid supporter of police brutality as former New York mayors Giuliani or Bloomberg.

Even the notorious chief of police, William Bratton, got into the act and stated that he anticipates that the entire 35,000-member police force will be retrained, and that when it is complete, New York City will have "state of the art" training. Problem solved, right?

Don't be fooled. These hacks believe in a robust police and surveillance presence; they just prefer for it to appear a tad friendlier. When de Blasio appointed William Bratton as police chief, it was a clear indication that de Blasio had no intention of really changing the NYPD. Among other things, Bratton is fully committed to the "Broken Windows" style of policing, which focuses on small quality-of-life offenses to reduce crime overall.

"My neighborhood is like it's under martial law," said Angel Garcia, 34, of East Harlem (quoted in the *New York Daily News*, Aug. 4, 2014). Whatever the policing style is called—stop-and-frisk, Broken Windows, quality of life offenses—it all boils down to Garcia's eloquent appraisal of the lived experience: "martial law." It means constant harassment, assault, and even murder at the hands of NYPD, no matter what it's called.

When the de Blasio administration was confronted by recent analysis by the *Daily News* that showed the racist nature of Broken Windows policing (81% of the 7.1 million people hit with petty infractions were African American or Latino), the mayor showed he has no intention of backing away. His spokesman, Phil Walzak, responded that "Mayor de Blasio believes a number of the policing innovations created by the NYPD over the past two decades, including ... a focus on quality-of-life offenses, have contributed to New York City becoming the safest big city in the nation."

He added that de Blasio is "committed to employing strategies and making adjustments that build a spirit of cooperation and trust between the police and the communities they serve." While ending Broken Windows policing, which de Blasio and Bratton are so committed to, would be a victory, it is highly likely that the policy would reappear in another form without a strong mass movement to enforce accountability.

On that note, a protest march has been announced by Garner's family and the Rev. Al Sharpton for Aug. 23 across the Verrazano Bridge (as of press time, the details are not yet published). Any public expression of resistance to police brutality is worth attending, as it will take a broad mass movement in the streets to truly begin to change the debate and force meaningful change around police and the prison system.

We fight for important reforms in policing and prisons, while acknowledging that the tendency of current American capitalism, with its large number of surplus workers, will be towards brutal policing and mass incarceration. End police brutality! End mass incarceration! No justice, no peace! ■

U.S. is the villain in contemporary spy drama

By GAETANA CALDWELL-SMITH

"A Most Wanted Man," a film directed by Anton Corbijn, based on the novel by John le Carré.

Director Corbijn set "A Most Wanted Man" in the port city of Hamburg, site of Mohammad Atta's planning for the al-Qaeda jet-plane attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Only now, it's a decade later. Since 2001, American and European governments have stepped up the clandestine anti-terrorist divisions of their secret service organizations. Things have heightened so much since 9/11 that no governments dare tell the truth anymore.

Corbijn's film, although a fictional account, realistically depicts elements of what we are learning from the Edward Snowden leaks about U.S. government spying. The film shows that in relations between U.S. and European spy agencies, the U.S. is really in control.

A puffy, overweight Hoffman, in one of his best roles, his last before his tragic death from a drug overdose a year ago, plays Günther Bachman, a weary, soft-spoken German intelligence operative. He gets word that a possible terrorist suspect has arrived in the city. This sets

the wheels in motion: Who is this guy; who are his connections in Hamburg; where did he come from and how?

The guy, Issa Karpov (Grigoriy Dobrygin) is a Chechen Muslim—a victim of torture. Karpov is thin, wiry, haunted, with a long, scraggly beard—the stereotypical look of a Muslim terrorist. He wears a knitted cap over his unkempt hair, a hoodie, and jeans. His posture is that of a hunted man. Unfortunately, he simply looks "guilty"—even though he has not done anything but enter the country illegally to claim his dead father's money. His "handlers" in his home country have arranged for him to stay with a young Muslim family.

Rachel McAdams plays Annabel Richter, a human rights attorney, who wants to help him. But the German equivalent of the U.S. Homeland Security—Bachman's superiors—are on to him, which puts into jeopardy the lives of the people with whom he stayed. Part of the plot is for Richter to hide him until she can arrange a hearing with an official to hear his case. She brings him food, toiletries, blankets,



(Left) Rachel McAdams and Grigoriy Dobrygin in "A Most Wanted Man."

prove Richter and Bachman's access to the safe deposit box.

Things heat up when Martha Sullivan (Robin Wright, as silkily evil as she was on Netflix's "House of Cards"), a U.S. Homeland Security official, gets Bachman to let down his guard against the Americans, and to work with them in the hunt for Karpov.

After nail-biting suspense (in fact, throughout the film), we breathe a sigh of relief when all appears to go smoothly: Pa-

pers are finalized and asylum is granted for Karpov. Tragically, without Bachman and Richter's knowledge, Sullivan and her smarmy, sneaky U.S. and German cohorts—oily, older, grey-haired, expensively dressed men—have set up their own sting.

The ending is shockingly brutal and heartbreaking, as Martha Sullivan looks on in smug satisfaction. Bachman's rage is palpable as, alone in the parking lot, he rails at their blatant betrayal: "To make the world a safer place." ■

etc. She obviously has fallen for him.

It turns out that Issa Karpov's dead father left a ton of money in a bank deposit box. Issa decides to turn the money over to Dr. Abdullah (Homayoun Ershadi), a noted Islamic academic who donates to several Middle East charities and organizations. The government spy agencies suspect that one might be a front for al-Qaeda, but there is no evidence to prove it. A wonderfully cast Willem Dafoe plays Tommy Brue, the bank official who oversees large deposits and keeps records of secret account numbers. He must ap-

Minneapolis marks 1934 Teamsters strike

By DAVID JONES and BILL ONASCH

MINNEAPOLIS—The shots fired by Minneapolis police on Bloody Friday, July 20, 1934, still echo 80 years later for the descendants of Henry Ness. Nine members of the Ness family, including grandchildren, great grandchildren and at least one g-g grandchild, attended events organized this July to honor the sacrifices and celebrate the historic victory of the men and women of Teamsters Local 574.

At least 50 descendants of the strikers participated in one or more of five events last month commemorating the strikes of Minneapolis truckers, including a six-hour Saturday street rally and a family picnic the following day. Responding to an invitation from Teamsters Local 120, the successor to 1934's Local 574, the descendants joined the march of hundreds of members of the Teamsters Union on Saturday, July 19, through the Minneapolis Warehouse District to the site of Bloody Friday. That was where strikers Henry Ness and John Belor received fatal wounds from police bullets, and 60 others were wounded, some severely.

The march was led by the iconic Teamster semi-trailer truck seen at innumerable labor rallies in Minnesota, and the Mayday Community Brass Band, playing labor favorites such as "Union Maid," and "Which Side Are You On?" Inscribed on the side of the Teamster truck are the words of Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party governor Floyd B Olson, "The rights that labor has won, labor must fight to protect."

On arrival at the site of the police shootings, Teamsters carried an elaborate floral wreath from the truck to be placed on the precise location where Henry Ness fell. A moment of silence was called for and a bagpiper played "Amazing Grace." Even the most hardened hearts were moved by the emotion and solemnity of the occasion.

Henry Ness was shot in the back by a police .38 revolver while laying prone on his stomach, as documented by the report of his treating physician. The single bullet entered his lower back and traveled upward, lodging in the frontal part of his chest, near his heart. He died of severe internal injuries, despite desperate efforts to save his life by Dr Herman McCrimmon, who had volunteered his aid to the union.

It is a reasonable presumption that Ness was lying prone to escape police gunfire. Most probably, he had



(Above) Teamsters Local 120's truck joins the July 19 march through the Warehouse District.

crawled under a vehicle to seek protection from the bullets. Ness was shot about one block from the point where the union's picket truck had intercepted the police decoy truck. Given all the attendant circumstances, the conclusion is inescapable that he had been shot by a ranking police officer—they would have been the only ones to be carrying pistols—and that the intent was to carry out what was in effect an extrajudicial execution.

Among the events that stood out among those scheduled as a part of this year's commemoration:

- On Thursday evening, July 17, there was an SRO audience in a big meeting room at the Minneapolis Central Library for a panel discussion, "A Fresh Look at the Minneapolis Teamster Strikes After 80 Years." Moderated by Peter Rachleff, panelists included Minnesota historian Mary Wingerd, who wrote the introduction to a new reprinted edition of "American City"; William Millikan, author of "Union Against Unions," a history of the bosses' nefarious Citizens Alliance; David Thorstad, who became a close associate of Ray Dunne during his final years; and Canadian labor historian Bryan Palmer, author of "Revolutionary Teamsters—

the Minneapolis Truckers' Strike of 1934," published earlier this year by Haymarket Press. A lively discussion after the presentations was concluded only by the closing of the building.

- The Sunday Family Picnic Gathering, in a lovely setting in Minnehaha Park, appropriately began with a lunch—donated and served by the UFCW. The centerpiece of the program was "Respecting the Descendants."

There are no known living 1934 Teamsters strikers. But most of those 6000 strikers left behind some progeny. Most might not know of their family connection with this historic struggle, but patient work located dozens who did, and more than 50 were present at the picnic. Each one was introduced, and some made remarks. They were all given a framed design for a memorial marker to be placed at the site of Bloody Friday. No one in the audience could avoid being deeply moved with the honoring of these descendants who were proud of their connection. ■

French activists overcome ban on Palestine protests

INTERVIEW By CHRIS HUTCHINSON

Millions around the world are speaking out against Israel's brutal assault on the Gaza Strip. In London one march reported 100,000 participants. For decades, the Palestinian struggle has been a source of inspiration for liberation struggles.

On July 18, the French government banned Palestinian solidarity protests because they were deemed a "threat to public order." For years, the French government has marginalized immigrant communities from Arab countries. The result of the government's repression has included uprisings by Arab and Muslim youth.

On July 24, governmental authorities lifted the ban and granted permission for a mass protest march to be held in Paris. The protest was organized by the National Collective for a Just and Lasting Peace between Israelis and Palestinians, which groups together political parties of the left, unions, community organizations, and pro-Palestinian activists. But most of the protesters do not belong to any organization and are just working people and immigrants expressing their anger against the Israeli aggression and also against the blatant support that our "socialist" president [François Hollande] is offering to the criminal policies of Israel.

Below is a brief interview that Socialist Action reporter Chris Hutchinson obtained several days earlier with a member of the New Anti-Capitalist Party (NPA) named Stan. The NPA includes members of the Fourth International, with which Socialist Action is in fraternal solidarity.

SOCIALIST ACTION: Can you briefly describe the Palestinian solidarity movement in France? How many people have been out protesting in the streets?

STAN: Since the beginning of the air raids on Gaza, there have been many protests in Paris and all over the country, gathering tens of thousands of



people. The protests were called by the National Collective for a Just and Lasting Peace between Israelis and Palestinians, which groups together political parties of the left, unions, community organizations, and pro-Palestinian activists. But most of the protesters do not belong to any organization and are just working people and immigrants expressing their anger against the Israeli aggression and also against the blatant support that our "socialist" president [François Hollande] is offering to the criminal policies of Israel.

SA: In the U.S., we have seen that Palestinian solidarity marches bring out many from the Muslim and Arab communities. What has been the reaction from the Arab and Muslim communities in France? Why have the marches been banned?

STAN: A vast majority of the protesters come indeed from immigrant com-

munities. The government is trying to use this in order to portray the movement as a simple fight between Muslim and Jewish communities, which should not be imported to France but remain in the Middle East.

On Sunday [July 13], at the end of a 30,000-strong protest in Paris, a far-right Jewish group, the League for Jewish Defense, attacked the protest before fleeing into a synagogue and being escorted out later under strong police protection. Some protesters chased them, but even the rabbi himself testified on TV that no worshippers were injured and that there was no fighting within or in front of the synagogue.

The media pundits and politicians used this to say that the protests were anti-Semitic in nature and were troubling public order—and hence should be banned in Paris and in a few other cities.

Most of the traditional left tried to fight the ban, but none of them called to protest the ban in the street except the NPA (New Anti-Capitalist Party) and pro-Palestinian solidarity groups. The turnout was huge, several thousand people at least in Paris. The slogans were clear: "Israel murderer, [French President] Hollande accessory!"

SA: What were the circumstances in which the government responded with violence?

STAN: Last Saturday [July 19], maybe 5000 people or more were gathered at a cross street, and we [NPA] were the only organization with a sound system loaded unto a car and banners, so we tried to organize the protest. This was already a statement of the will of the protesters not to be silenced by the government.

Of course, the protest was quickly surrounded by heavily armed cops. We were trying to figure out a way to continue the protest—maybe cutting through the side streets—but suddenly tear gas canisters started raining down. An older comrade told me she had not seen so many since the 1970s! It was mayhem, some people had fits; also because it is the Ramadan and some people could not drink and it was extremely hot, everybody was crying and spitting, kids, old people.

Fortunately, we had a few dozen comrades on a strong security detail, maintaining a line with clenched arms and trying to resist the panic and organize a retreat properly. Many people thanked us during and after the protest, saying

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The Marxist analysis of women's oppression



Vesiel Marcelino / Reuters

(Left) At 2013 National Meeting of Rural Women in Brasilia, marchers protested violence against women.

By CHRISTINE MARIE

Review of Lise Vogel, *“Marxism and the Oppression of Women: Toward a Unitary Theory”* (Leiden: Brill Academic Books, 2013; Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2013).

In the late 1960s, more feminist theorists than not assumed that Marxism offered the main analytical tools necessary to understand women's oppression and, in turn, to chart the strategic course to its elimination.

At the center of their theoretical efforts was the “domestic labor debate.” This debate opened with the publication of a 1969 article by Margaret Benston, titled, “The Political Economy of Women's Liberation.” The work that women performed within the household became a subject of analysis; this work was understood as “productive,” necessary for the reproduction of capitalist society as a whole.

For the next 10 years, feminists who were socialists began studies to fully theorize domestic labor as an integral part of the capitalist mode of production. As Susan Ferguson and David McNally write in their introduction to the new publication of Lise Vogel's 1983 text, “Marxism and Oppression of Women,” in dozens of journals they “probed Marxist concepts of use value and exchange value, labour-power, and class for what these might reveal about the political-economic significance” of household work.

In the main, the debate hung up on a few central questions: What kind of value does domestic labor produce? Is it the kind of value produced by workers in capitalist production, i.e. surplus value? If not, and if, according to Marxist theory, domestic labor is not central to the workings of capital in the same way that the work in an auto plant or steel mill is, does this mean that Marxism by its very nature is incapable of providing the central framework for understanding the oppression of women?

There were three main responses to this question. By far the most influential one was “yes.” The most famous articulation of that position in the United States was Heidi Hartmann's “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism,” which launched what became known as the dual systems approach, a thesis that posited that capitalism and patriarchy merely functioned alongside each other. Over time, patriarchy began to be treated primarily as the realm of ideology, creating space for non-materialist post-structuralist approaches to women's oppression.

Other debate participants like Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Sylvia James responded by questioning the weight that Marxist theory placed on surplus value and the strategic approach that flowed from this weight. Con-

Vogel easily dismisses facile misreadings of Marx and Engels but pinpoints moments when their writings on women were incomplete.

temporary autonomist Marxists who work within this general theoretical approach charted by Dalla Costa and James, such as Sylvia Federici, elevate the social power of unwaged labor and see it as central to the overthrow of capitalist society.

The third major grouping of responses was expressed by individual Marxist feminists who insisted on the strategic importance of waged labor, and remained optimistic about the possibility of Marxist theoretical advances that would more adequately explain women's oppression. These voices, however, were generally lost in the great void created by the waning of the mass feminist movement that nurtured previous such theoretical work, and a corresponding lack of attention from within the socialist movement.

One of those voices, that of Lise Vogel, has recently been given the attention she deserves. A new version of “Marxism and Women's Oppression,” updated with essays by Vogel from the 1990s, has recently been issued in hardback by the academic publishing house of Brill and in paperback by Haymarket Press.

The republication of Vogel's book is both reaction and stimulus. The current crisis of capitalism—characterized by the most extreme attacks on the social wage, an increasing awareness of the role of women in global capitalist production, and an ever more obvious shift in the way that the reproduction of labor is organized in the United States—has created a new sense of urgency regarding such theoretical work. The rediscovery of Vogel by sections of the socialist movement, in turn, has provided a basic foundation on which Marxist feminist theoretical work can more easily begin again.

Vogel's book is divided into four sections. Part One reviews the theoretical debates that took place during the second wave of feminism (ca. the 1970s) in a kind of chronological and thematic organization, summarizing critiques of Juliet Mitchell's iconic work “Women: The Longest Revolution,” Margaret Benston's “What Defines Women?,” Peggy Morton's “Women's Work is Never Done, or: The Production, Maintenance

and Reproduction of Labor Power,” Mariarosa Dalla Costa's “Women and the Subversion of the Community,” and the work of Nancy Holstrom and Maxine Molyneux.

She also notes the contributions and weaknesses of radical feminists such as Shulamith Firestone and Kate Millet. She argues that the work of this period did several important things. It firmly established the project of analyzing women's oppression as having a material, and not just political or ideological root. Secondly, they exposed how inadequate were economic determinist approaches by highlighting the psychological and ideological factors enacted in the family.

In the end, while most were certain that the concept of “reproduction” linked women's oppression to the Marxist analysis of production, a truly unitary theory that embedded women's oppression in Marxist theory of capitalist production remained undeveloped.

Part Two focuses on the views of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels over time and in their historical context. She easily dismisses facile or dishonest mis-readings of the two giants of socialist thought and

traces the development of their thought on this question but does not hesitate to pinpoint moments when the thoughts of Marx and Engels on the place of woman in class society is incomplete or contradictory.

Vogel reviews the theoretical importance of both Marx's “Capital” and Engels' “Origin of the Family Private Property and the State,” but devotes a considerable amount of space to some of the inconsistencies of the latter owing to Engels' rush to get out a materialist rebuttal to August Bebel's “Women and Socialism.” Marx's work in “Capital” on social reproduction, which becomes the anchor of her own theoretical work, she finds especially suggestive and useful for the coming effort construct unitary theory.

In Part Three, Vogel shows how the weaknesses of Bebel's 1879 work, stemming from his incorporation of some of the ideas of utopian socialist Charles Fourier and liberal individualism, led to great confusion in the era of the Second International. Then, as in the 1970s, the “woman question” and the class question were treated more often than not as parallel rather than intertwined phenomenon in capitalist society.

The Bolsheviks attempted to correct these reformist tendencies, as they did other errors of the German social democracy, but their theoretical work was shaped by the crisis and challenges of their specific historical moment.

Vogel concludes this section by stating, “In the long run, the experience of the Russian Revolution raised at least as many questions about the relation of women's oppression to socialist transformation as it answered. ... history had posed a specific woman-question, distinct from those thrust forward by capitalist relations of production.”

Unfortunately, Vogel suggests, the more advanced positions of Clara Zetkin and Lenin on the root of women's oppression failed to make a lasting impression on the Left as a whole, and the weak legacy of the Second International remained dominant.

The basis for continuing to advance Marxist theoretical work on women's oppression, Vogel argues, is stepping beyond the bounds of the domestic labor debate as it unfolded during the 1960s and 1970s.

To begin, she says, we first have to look at Marx's *Capital* and the notions of labor-power and the reproduction of labor power. From the theoretical point of view, the reproduction of labor power is not invariably associated with private kin-based households, as the old domestic labor debate assumed.

Child rearing and the private care of workers in families is only one way that capitalism organizes the reproduction of labor power. At certain moments,

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... Ukraine

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market, and several multistory apartment blocks, Luhansk city government said." hansk city government said."

Despite recent military successes by Kiev troops, however, reports have surfaced of increased desertions. This reflects the antiwar sentiment expressed by working-class people throughout Ukraine. Many protests have taken place by parents and relatives of young men who were drafted into the armed forces under Ukraine's July 22 conscription law. Women can be seen in photos and videos holding signs reading "Stop the Slaughter!"

In TV video taken of an angry anti-conscription protest in the village of Voloka (see slavyanograd.org), one man states, "We don't want war, we want peace. There is no need for our men to go fighting. For what?" A woman says, "We did not want war. Let those, who were protesting at Maidan go to fight. We did not seek for war. We all are one village, one big family, and we will let [the military] take neither my husband nor other's ones, neither sons nor fathers for war."

On July 27, over 40 Ukrainian army soldiers crossed into Russian territory after appealing for help to the local rebel militia. And on Aug. 3, another grouping—as many as 438 soldiers—crossed the Russian border. The army men "were tired of the war and wanted no further part in it," one of the Russian border guards told Reuters. The Ukrainian Security Council has said that it is keeping in touch with the men "through diplomatic channels" and that some would be repatriated; others, apparently, are seeking asylum in Russia.

With little doubt, the most "reliable" (and most ferocious) troops are found within the reconstituted National Guard and other armed units that are often associated with ultra-nationalist and fascist forces. This is consistent with the fact that the military operation in the east is overseen by Secretary of National Security and Defense Andriy Parubly, a founder of the fascist Svoboda party.

In particular, the top leaders and many of the ranks of the elite Azov Battalion have been identified as members of the Social-National Assembly, the Right Sector, and other far-right organizations. The Azov Battalion, estimated in June to have had over 600 fighters in its ranks, is allegedly financed by multi-millionaire oligarch Igor Kolomoisky.

In one of its on-line publications, the Social-National Assembly declares its aims to be the "liberation of the entire White Race from the domination of the internationalist speculative capital" and "to punish severely sexual perversions and any interracial contacts that lead to the extinction of the white man."

In late July, several media reporters were able to interview members of the Azov Battalion—including volunteers from foreign countries. The responses are quite typical of the racist rhetoric spewed out by fascist ideologues.

In a July 16 interview, BBC reporter Dina Newman spoke to Mikael Skillt, a man with seven year's experi-



(Above) A woman points to bomb damage on an apartment block in Slovansk in early July, before Kiev troops retook the city from the rebels.

ence in the Swedish Army and Home Guard. He said that he is currently serving as a sniper with the Azov Battalion, and that he is also called on to "clear out houses" in civilian neighborhoods.

"Mr Skillt, wrote Newman, "believes races should not mix. He says the Jews are not white and should not mix with white people. His next project is to go fight for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad because he believes Mr Assad is standing up to 'international Zionism.'"

In a July 24 article in *Al Jazeera America*, reporter Sabra Ayres spoke to Lemko, a volunteer of Ukrainian background who came from Canada. Lemko, she wrote, "said he was a national socialist—though he rejected the term neo-Nazi—and was a member of far-right groups in Canada."

Lemko, like other Azov members who were interviewed by reporters, indicated that although they were fighting on the side of the Kiev government, they strongly disagreed with the government's economic agreement with the European Union. Lemko told *Al Jazeera* that joining the EU would destroy Ukraine's national identity, just as it destroyed countries in the rest of Europe who admitted immigrants who had come for economic reasons.

"Ukraine should be for Ukrainians," Lemko said. "We don't need the European idea of multicultural extremism here. Ukraine must protect its cultural and ethnic integrity."

The Kiev government's dependency on the fascists was illustrated by the remarks of Vasyl Arbuzov, an aide to the Kiev-appointed governor of Donetsk province, Sergei Taruta. "The country is quite radicalized on both sides now," he told the *Al Jazeera* interviewer in reference to the Azov Battalion. "These aren't the kind of guys I hang out with on the weekend, but at the moment they are the kind of guys we need be-

cause they are willing to fight."

An additional factor is that the German media, including *Der Spiegel*, have published reports for several months that foreign mercenaries employed by Academi (formerly Xe Services, and Blackwater before that) are operating in eastern Ukraine. But whether or not undercover mercenaries are participating in the fighting, the Obama administration is doing its best to directly maintain Kiev's military forces in the field.

U.S. aid includes the appropriation of \$23 million for defense security, \$5 million for body armor and night-vision goggles, \$8 million for Ukraine's State Border Guard Service—plus radios, helmets, medical and food supplies, and other equipment. In June, Washington sent a squad of military advisors to Ukraine, which will now be augmented.

On Aug. 1, President Obama requested Congressional approval to send U.S. troops into Ukraine to train and equip its National Guard. The plan, as outlined by the Pentagon, would make use of soldiers stationed in Europe or members of the California National Guard to train and equip four companies and one tactical headquarters of the Ukrainian National Guard.

The deployment would be financed with \$19 million from the Global Security Fund, a source of money that is tapped jointly by the Defense and State departments in order to fight global "terrorism."

Antiwar and working-class activists must raise our demands ever more loudly: Stop the U.S.-supported slaughter in eastern Ukraine! No to the U.S.-backed, fascist-led coup! No to U.S./EU-imposed austerity in Ukraine! End all U.S. aid to the coup regime! ■

... France

(continued from page 5)

that if we weren't there things could have gone a lot worse.

Then the protest kind of got divided because of the chaos, and some protesters were beaten up and arrested. Last week, one guy took a plea bargain for resisting arrest and was given four

months in jail! Saturday night, almost 50 people were in custody.

SA: The French government and others have made accusations that anti-Semitic chants have been heard at recent demonstrations in Paris, and protesters have attacked synagogues and Jewish-owned shops. How does the NPA react to these charges?

STAN: First and foremost, while all left political organizations condemned the ban, the NPA was the only one calling

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for example, capitalism can choose to import immigrant labor, enslave them, house them in barracks, work them to death and import more, etc.

The system of using a kin-based unit to reproduce labor power is clearly advantageous as it has been normative at moments of capitalist stability. At the same time, the countervailing tendency of capitalism to reduce necessary labor in favor of surplus labor is always at play. In our own time, the reduction of domestic labor through techno-

logical means offers capitalists the hope that profit-making can increase.

If these theoretical assertions about capitalism provide at least some of the tools with which we begin to do concrete historical investigation and contemporary economic exploration, Vogel argues, we will be back on the route toward a unitary theory of Marxism and women's oppression.

All people who are striving for social change should take advantage of the road map created by this pioneer of Marxist feminist thought. ■

to protest it. There is nothing like an "unlawful" protest to put things more in perspective about how you choose to define yourself in regards to the state.

Also, I think our position derives from our general understanding of the situation: many protests in a period of economic crisis can take religious and nationalistic—if not sometimes racist—undertones, and it can be the case in pro-Palestinian protests as much as in any protests. Recently, there were fights against layoffs in Brittany in the meat-packing industry; not only were bosses taking part in the protests but one of the slogans was: "Keep foreigners from taking our jobs!"

Most of the left and unions boycotted it, but we went there and tried to challenge this nationalism. In this Palestine protest we tried not only to help the protest take place but also put forward our demands and effectively counter the reactionary slogans put forward by radical religious groups. It is not by deserting the protests that we will achieve anything.

(NOTE BY THE INTERVIEWER: In a recent statement the NPA had this to say in response: "The NPA condemns, as it has always done, all anti-Semitic acts and ideas. ... Neither the NPA nor

the movement in solidarity with the Palestinian people confuse the Jewish population, here or in Israel, believers and non-believers, with the defense of the colonial policy of the Israeli state. ... The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not a religious one, it's an entirely political one.")

SA: How can the Palestinian solidarity movement both in France and internationally help win freedom for the Palestinian people, especially those in Gaza? In your opinion, what is the way forward for the Palestinian movement in France and around the world?

STAN: The Palestinian solidarity movement both in France and internationally definitely needs to win momentum in order to put pressure on our governments, which are clearly supporting and collaborating with the Israeli criminal state. The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions campaign is another tool to raise awareness.

In a general framework, Palestine is not isolated from what is happening in the whole region. From Morocco to Bahrain, people are challenging their government and also standing in support of Palestine. However, Arab leaders give lip service to the Palestinian cause but do not really help. ■



... Free Palestine!

(continued from page 1)

Gaza's medical facilities are "on the verge of collapse," after a third of its hospitals, 14 clinics, and 29 ambulances were damaged.

Here's an on-the-scene account from Dr. Mona El-Farra in Gaza City, written in the early hours of July 19: "The Israeli tanks and air force are bombing continuously. They are targeting Al-Shajaiya neighborhood in the eastern part of Gaza City. The air force is flying planes very low and they are shelling houses. They are shelling everywhere, hitting many houses. People are dying. The Israeli occupation dehumanizes us by killing us while we are sleeping.

"The ambulances are trying to reach the dead and injured and transfer them to hospitals but many ambulances couldn't pass.

"Tens of wounded people, old and young, are stranded. The ambulances can't reach them to help. Tens of bodies are in the street or buried in the rubble. My friend Hani is a father in Al-Shajaiya and his wife is pregnant. He called me and told me that it's not possible for the ambulance to reach them. He is scared that they will die there before the ambulance reaches his family because there is bombing everywhere.

"The number of people killed is increasing every minute because medical teams can't reach the area and people are bleeding. People are running, terrified in the streets. Many families, many children are leaving the Al-Shajaiya neighborhood coming to Gaza's city center. Women, men, children are walking and running. I can see a woman carrying her baby and terrified children around her. They are running to escape the smell of death.

"The bombs and the shrapnel are falling like rain on us. They are made by your governments: England, USA, Australia, etc. It is better to use these funds for health and education.

"What kind of humanity is this? What kind of modern society is this? This is what the Israeli occupation is doing and all the while using propaganda to try to hide the truth. I call on everyone in this world; don't say that you didn't know. I am telling you right now and you can hear me. This occupation, this massacre, is protected by a silent world. Wake up. Don't remain silent."

What limited infrastructure existed in Gaza before this new Zionist war is today being systematically targeted, destroyed, or severed by Israel, including basic water supplies, sewage systems, and electricity generation. Even before the July 17 attack, 90 percent of Gaza's water supply, heavily salinated and saturated with poisonous chemicals stemming from ground water seepage of fertilizers, was deemed by world experts as unfit for human consumption, if not for basic agricultural irrigation. Today, most Gazans are largely without any regular supply of water—and now electricity!

The people of Gaza have been subjected for decades to an Israeli embargo/blockade wherein even basic foodstuffs are frequently denied entry, as are essential medical supplies. More than half the population has been dependent on UN relief agencies for elementary health care, education, and related social services. Today, 95 percent of the food available in Gaza is from UN relief agencies. No other source of support is available or permitted by Israel.

Directly addressing the plight of Gaza's people, Hamas spokesman Ismail Haniyeh listed 10 demands

as conditions for a ceasefire. "We'll never go back to the slow death," Haniyeh said. "Our demands are fair and they are humane. Our people have decided." The demands, all rejected by the Israeli government, are as follows:

- Withdrawal of Israeli tanks from the Gaza border.
- Freeing all the prisoners that were arrested after the killing of the three youths. (Some 800 were arrested by Israel police and IDF forces.)
- Lifting the siege and opening the border crossings to commerce and people.
- Establishing an international seaport and airport which would be under U.N. supervision.
- Increasing the permitted fishing zone to 10 kilometers.
- Internationalizing the Rafah Crossing and placing it under the supervision of the UN and some Arab nations.
- International forces on the borders.
- Easing conditions for permits to pray at the Al Aqsa Mosque.
- Prohibition on Israeli interference in the reconciliation agreement.
- Reestablishing an industrial zone and improvements in further economic development in the Gaza Strip.

Israeli officials and media, pre-prepared with a canned rationale aimed at blaming the victims for the Zionist terror, insist that their main targets are tunnels—some from Gaza into Israeli territory and others into Gaza from Egypt (which had brought in essential supplies). Yet, every report indicates that the real Israeli targets, in addition to Palestine's vital infrastructure, are anyone that moves, including Palestinian children sitting on rooftops and children playing on beaches, not to mention entire residential communities.

According to the July 18 *New York Times*, General Moti Almoz, the chief Israeli military spokesman, stated, "I will now, uncharacteristically, ask the residents of Gaza to move away from the areas our forces are operating in—they are operating with extreme force" [emphasis added]. The "generous" murderers sent robo-style phone calls to 100,000 Palestinian homes, informing them that they had minutes to evacuate before mass bombings commenced.

Israeli officials insist that while they take precautions to avoid civilian casualties, this is difficult because the pea-shooter rockets are often fired from residential neighborhoods. This rationale didn't fly well with the relatively conservative British-based Human Rights Watch, whose representative, Peter Brouchaert, responded, "We don't need statements of regret from Israel. We need investigation and an end to the killing."

Israel's ambassador to Washington, Michael Oren, speaking of a claimed tunnel from Gaza that supposedly led to an Israel border settlement, stated in a July 17 interview that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu showed great "restraint" and paid a high "political price" for not invading sooner. Oren added, "Essentially Hamas," the elected governing party of the Palestine Authority in Gaza, "invaded Israel first." (!)

A week later, it was revealed by Israeli sources that the saturation bombing of Gaza had been planned months earlier. Nathan Thrall of the International Crisis Group observed in *The New York Times* that "the current escalation is a direct result by Israel and the West to obstruct the implementation of the April 2014 Palestinian reconciliation agreement [between Hamas and Fatah]."

The "political price" paid by the "civilized" Netanyahu meant that he had to endure the mad calls from fanatical right-wing Israeli groups that demanded even more blood. Mobs have gathered in the streets of Israeli cities, chanting slogans like "Tomorrow there's no teaching in Gaza; they don't have any children left" and "Gaza is a graveyard."

Here's a July 15 article by Israel's Deputy Speaker of the Knesset (parliament) Moshe Feiglin, a member of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's ruling Likud Party (see Israeli news website Arutz Sheva): "Israel must attack Gaza even more mercilessly, expel the population and resettle the territory with Jews." And here's Feiglin's program on how it must be done:

"Ultimatum—One warning from the Prime Minister of Israel to the enemy population, in which he announces that Israel is about to attack military targets in their area and urges those who are not involved and do not wish to be harmed to leave immediately. Sinai is not far from Gaza and they can leave. This will be the limit of Israel's humanitarian efforts. Hamas may unconditionally surrender and prevent the attack.

"Attack—Attack the entire 'target bank' throughout Gaza with the IDF's maximum force (and not a tiny fraction of it) with all the conventional means at its disposal. All the military and infrastructural targets will be attacked with no consideration for 'human shields' or 'environmental damage.' It is enough that we are hitting exact targets and that we gave them advance warning.

"Siege—Parallel to the above, a total siege on Gaza. Nothing will enter the area. Israel, however, will allow exit from Gaza. (Civilians may go to Sinai, fighters may surrender to IDF forces).

"Defense—Any place from which Israel or Israel's forces were attacked will be immediately attacked with full force and no consideration for 'human shields' or 'environmental damage.'

"Conquer—After the IDF completes the 'softening' of the targets with its fire-power, the IDF will conquer the entire Gaza, using all the means necessary to minimize any harm to our soldiers, with no other considerations.

"Elimination—The GSS and IDF will thoroughly eliminate all armed enemies from Gaza. The enemy population that is innocent of wrong-doing and separated itself from the armed terrorists will be treated in accordance with international law and will be allowed to leave. Israel will generously aid those who wish to leave.

"Sovereignty—Gaza is part of our Land and we will remain there forever. Liberation of parts of our land forever is the only thing that justifies endangering our soldiers in battle to capture land. Subsequent to the elimination of terror from Gaza, it will become part of sovereign Israel and will be populated by Jews. This will also serve to ease the housing crisis in Israel. The coastal train line will be extended, as soon as possible, to reach the entire length of Gaza."

Feiglin's *final solution* concludes: "According to polls, most of the Arabs in Gaza wish to leave. Those who were not involved in anti-Israel activity will be offered a generous international emigration package. Those who choose to remain will receive permanent resident status. After a number of years of living in Israel and becoming accustomed to it, contingent on appropriate legislation in the Knesset and the authorization of the Minister of Interior, those who personally accept upon themselves Israel's rule, substance and way of life of the Jewish State in its Land, will be offered Israeli citizenship." In truth, Feiglin's proposal differs little, if at all, from Israel's official policy.

Origins of the Israeli settler state

Israel did not exist before 1948, when the World War II imperialist victors, meeting at the United Nations, decreed that an Israeli state was to be carved out of historic Palestine, then a British "Mandate," a polite imperialist word for colony. The Zionist colonizers were granted 56 percent of the country.

Great Britain originally "acquired" Palestine following the World War I conflagration and worldwide slaughter that resulted in the victors' division of the vanquished Ottoman Empire. England and France, which in the 19th century had partaken in the colonial subjugation and division of Africa, set out to do the same in the Middle East. Pencils and pens in hand, a host of diplomats divided up the Ottoman Empire and assigned the sections outside Turkey itself to the French and British imperialists.

Previously, in 1917, the Zionist movement, promising to be Britain's colonial overseers in Palestine, had reached an accord with the British Empire, via the Balfour Declaration. Signed by the British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour and the British Zionist leader, Baron Walter Rothschild II, the agreement

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... Free Palestine!

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read in part: "His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

The latter portion of this declaration was included to portray the British Empire and its associated Zionist colonizer allies as merely living side by side with their Palestinian "neighbors." However, 90 percent of the population of Palestine at that time was made up of Palestinian Arabs.

Perhaps the leading ideological forerunner of "Revisionist Zionism" was Vladimir Jabotinsky, who authored the benchmark essay for the entire Zionist movement, "The Iron Wall." (The earlier form of Zionism, with pacifist and socialist tones, nevertheless contemplated establishing a Jewish homeland to be carved out of some conquered nation with the approval of its imperialist conqueror. South Africa and Uganda were among the nations that had been considered for this project.)

In 1923, Jabotinsky spelled out the Zionist credo without equivocation: "Whether through the Balfour Declaration or the [British] Mandate, external force is a necessity for establishing in the country [Palestine] conditions of rule and defense to which the local population, regardless of what it wishes, will be deprived of the possibility of impeding our colonization, administratively or physically. Force must play its role—with strength and without indulgence. In this, there are no meaningful differences between our militarists and our vegetarians. One prefers an Iron Wall of Jewish bayonets; the other an Iron Wall of English bayonets."

Jabotinsky continued: "To the hackneyed reproach that this point of view is unethical, I answer, 'absolutely untrue.' This is our ethic. There is no other ethic. As long as there is the faintest spark of hope for the Arabs to impede us, they will not sell these hopes—not for any sweet words, not for any tasty morsel, because this is not a rabble but a people, a living people. And no people makes such enormous concessions on such fateful questions, except when there is no hope left, until we have removed every opening visible in the Iron Wall." (For a comprehensive overview, see Socialist Action's pamphlet, "The Hidden History of Zionism" by Ralph Schoenman.)

European Jewish immigration to Palestine increased dramatically following Hitler's coming to power in 1933. Jewish land purchases and new Jewish settlements rapidly ensued. Palestinian resistance to British control and Zionist settlements climaxed with the massive Arab revolt of 1936-39, which Britain brutally suppressed with the help of Zionist militias.

Within days of the 1948 partition of Palestine, Zionism's terrorist armies, this time with British weapons in hand, declared war on the Palestinian people, inside and outside of the new Zionist state, as well as on all surrounding Arab nations that rejected the UN's imperialist partition. Three hundred eighty-five Palestinian villages were razed to the ground, renamed, and reconstituted as Israeli towns. In the course of this 1948-49 war and expansion of Israel, 726,000 Palestinians were driven from their land, with many moving to Gaza and the West Bank (of the Jordan Riv-

er) or dispersed to refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and elsewhere. With the destruction of their towns and villages, "vacated" Palestinian land was decreed Israeli state property under the 1950 "Absentee Property Law."

Until 1947, Jewish land ownership in Palestine was 6 percent. The rest belonged to the Palestinian people. Today that figure is essentially reversed. Palestinian lands have been systematically stolen by force. By 1949 Israel occupied 78 percent of Palestine. Following the 1967 Six-Day War, the percentage was increased to 100—that is, Israel occupied all of historic Palestine.

The so-called Occupied Territories of 1967 were and remain subject to the systematic construction of Israeli settlements, despite the vague 1995 "Oslo agreement," wherein Gaza and the West Bank would be under the jurisdiction of a Palestinian Authority, whose leaders were to be elected by Palestinians in that 22 percent of the original Palestine. But Israeli settlements in the West Bank continued without interruption, as they do to this day.

The three million Palestinian occupants of Gaza and the West Bank are essentially banned from leaving their new and now "legalized," and re-occupied, territory. These economically and socially unviable Bantustans are daily subject to Israel military control, including militarized checkpoints, walls, separate roads for Israelis, and other measures that render them little more than prisons regulated by Israeli troops, guards, and financial interests. With regard to Israel's relentless construction of settlements, UN resolutions and/or "international laws" that supposedly regulate relations between states and people and that prohibit such land seizures have been ignored with impunity—and always with total U.S. complicity.

Zionist vs. S. African apartheid

Zionist colonization differs significantly from the classical European form, in which the conquered indigenous population is subjected to near slave-like conditions aimed at providing a near-free labor force for European industry and agriculture. In contrast, the Israeli variant was and remains based on the physical exclusion of all Palestinian labor and its replacement with Jewish workers and settlers from all over the world. The latter are granted immediate citizenship based on their Jewish heritage, as opposed to Palestinians, whose rights are largely restricted regardless of how many generations their forbears lived in Palestine. Israel is formally a "Jewish state."

In this sense, South African apartheid also differed significantly from its Israeli variant. The South African colonists, less than 10 percent of the population, maintained the fiction that South Africa was "legally" for whites only. Blacks were relegated to non-citizen status and required pass cards to work in the "new" South Africa. Others were held in artificially created and isolated Bantustans ("Black homelands" or "Black states"), geographically separate and apart from South Africa, as with Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Ciskei.

No nation except the apartheid South African government recognized this "legal fiction." No one denied that these "homelands" operated merely to provide a reserve labor supply for South Africa's capitalist enterprises, especially its mining industries. South Africa's colonial settlers, with their ingrained racist/colonialist mentality, deemed these poverty-stricken



(Above) Destruction of buildings by Israeli bombs.

enclaves "independent nations."

In Israel, Palestinian labor barely exists, with the Zionist regime's needed labor force, not including Jews, largely consisting of immigrants from poor nations. Jabotinsky's conception is fully operative. The Palestinian identity is to be eradicated. Palestinians are to be driven out! Israel is for Jews only!

This is not to detract from the horrors created by European colonization. In Africa's Congo, for example, King Leopold II of Belgium murdered 12 million Congolese in the 19th century, the largest genocide in history. The French, British, Spanish, Italian, German, and Portuguese imperialists similarly murdered tens of millions while enslaving and exporting countless millions of others.

It is in this broad colonial context that the June 13 disappearance of three Israeli teenagers, which is still unexplained, must be evaluated. Without proof, the Zionist government immediately declared Hamas, the Islamic current that formally represents Palestinians in Gaza, guilty—despite Hamas denials.

A "revenge" campaign was immediately launched in the West Bank. Entire towns were sealed off by Israeli government forces. Palestinian homes were systematically broken into. Some 800 people were instantly arrested and charged with being supporters of Hamas. (In fact, Israel is continuing to hunt down alleged Hamas supporters in the West Bank and in Israel itself.) And yet, Hamas, declared by the U.S. to be a terrorist organization, is held responsible for starting yet another war with the "peace-loving" and "democratic" Zionist and colonialist Israel.

This government-created hysteria resulted in three far-right Israelis, including two teenagers, taking action. They kidnapped, clubbed, doused with gasoline, and burned alive the innocent Palestinian youth, Mohammed Abu Khdeir. These murderers were soon captured by Israeli authorities and charged with "terrorism." The same day, however, war was declared on the Gaza Strip, with death and destruction wrought on the innocent civilian population ever since.

One can only recall Hitler's rounding up hundreds of civilians in Nazi-occupied cities, and ordering one person shot each minute until someone stepped forward to reveal the names of the resistance fighters who had courageously challenged and killed a handful of Nazis soldiers.

In a similar vein, any Palestinian who resists Israeli oppression, occupation, and confiscation of their land and property, and the slaughter of their people is deemed a terrorist. Nelson Mandela and Kenya's Jomo Kenyatta, resistance fighters who became presidents of their nations, were similarly declared terrorists.

George Washington, who resisted British colonial occupation and oppression in the 18th century, and who used force and violence to win America's freedom, was also deemed a terrorist. Before Washington was able to form regular armies to resist British rule, he too employed guerrilla tactics and primitive weapons to challenge the British Empire's occupying armies.

Meanwhile, the Obama administration, like all other U.S. administrations before it, swears allegiance to Israeli state power, which it arms and finances to the tune of \$3.1 billion yearly, the largest sum gifted

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Northern Lights

News and views from SA Canada

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Picket Tory Minister to Defend Postal Services! All out Sept. 20!

By BARRY WEISLEDER

Momentum is growing towards a monster mass picket and rally to defend Canada's postal services. The protest, set for Saturday, Sept. 20, is against Canada Post Corporation plans to terminate home mail delivery. It will be held outside the Toronto constituency office of Conservative Federal Finance Minister Joe Oliver at 511 Lawrence Avenue West.

Organizations endorsing the Sept. 20 mass picket now include the Canadian Labour Congress, Ontario Federation of Labour, Canadian Union of Postal Workers, Ontario Public Service Employees' Union, Public Service Alliance of Canada-Ontario, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Brampton and Mississauga District Labour Council, CUPE Local 3903, Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, NDP Socialist Caucus, Communist Party of Canada, International Socialists, and Socialist Action / Ligue pour l'Action socialiste.

Socialist Action/LAS initiated this effort, on the heels of a successful picket it convened on a very cold March

15 at the same site. The Sept. 20 speakers list now includes CUPW National President Denis Leme lin, CLC V.P. Marie Clarke Walker, OFL President Sid Ryan, OPSEU President Smokey Thomas, a leader of PSAC-Ontario (t.b.a.), and representatives of other endorsing organizations.

The aim of the protest is to compel the Conservative federal government and Canada Post Corporation to reverse plans to end home mail delivery, to eliminate thousands of jobs in the postal service, and to raise the price of postage. The scheme to degrade postal services, to alienate the public towards them, serves the goal of gutting the federal public sector. Within that framework, the rulers strive to trash good jobs, slash postal workers' pensions, and break a progressive, democratic union. It is a road that leads to selling the most profitable parts of Canada Post to private sector vultures.

This brazenly broad assault must be stopped. It is a watershed moment for public services and for the workers' movement across the Canadian state. The need for public resistance is urgent. Protest activity is developing across

the country, with rallies, pickets, and town hall meetings. Many municipal governments, including Toronto's City Council, have voted to oppose the replacement of home mail delivery with collective mega-mail boxes.

Sept. 20 is part of that resistance. The message to Eglington-Lawrence MP Joe Oliver, the Tory Minister of Finance, is that his Conservative federal budget, which aims to slash jobs and kill vital public services while pampering the corporate elite, is unacceptable.

Joe Oliver voted in Parliament against the New Democratic Party motion to maintain door-to-door mail delivery. Seniors and people with mobility problems strongly oppose being forced to collect their mail at a so-called "community mail box," blocks from home, under all kinds of weather conditions.

The resulting elimination of up to 8000 letter carrier jobs would be a serious blow to young people and to many others seeking decent-paying employment in a time of great economic stress.

Canada Post is not in debt. It made a profit in 18 of the past 19 years—the exception being 2011, when CPC locked out its employees. And it could be even more profitable as a public asset if it provided banking services at postal outlets across the country. Canada Post and the Tory government suppressed a study that shows how providing banking and other services is the way forward. To the consternation of the vast majority of Canadians, the Tories are stealing workers' pensions, while cutting vital jobs and services.

If this is the best that the Harper Conservatives have to offer, then they must go. If this is the best that capitalism has to offer, then it too must go. If Canada Post CEO Deepak Chopra and Prime Minister Stephen Harper cannot run a postal service to meet human needs, they should step aside. Let postal workers show how to run the service—under workers' control.

Take notice Deepak Chopra, Joe Oliver, and Stephen Harper: This fight has just begun. Across the country you are facing a rising torrent of opposition to the placement of mega-mail boxes in every city and town. We will not stop fighting your cuts until we reverse them. We will not stop until we remove you. ■

By BARRY WEISLEDER

Thousands demanded "Israel Out of Gaza," "Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions" against the Zionist state, and cried "Free, Free Palestine" on the streets of downtown Toronto on July 30.

A boisterous rally at Dundas Square heard Ontario Federation of Labour President Sid Ryan and other speakers denounce the Conservative federal government for complicity with the Israeli military onslaught in Gaza that has seen over 1800 Palestinians killed, chiefly by the bombardment of residential areas, including schools and health clinics.

Spokespersons for Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid, and some of the 40 other sponsors of the event, also sharply criticized Thomas Mulcair, New Democratic Party head and Leader of the Official Opposition in Ottawa, for his strident and uncritical support of the Zionist state.

The rally fed a massive march of about 4000 to the Israeli Consulate, across from the Royal Ontario Museum at Bloor and Avenue Road.

En route, protesters staged a "die-in" at the Bed Bath and Beyond store at Yonge and Gerrard, chanting: '1, 2, 3, 4, SodaStream Out the Door!' Soda Stream supplies products to make carbonated drinks. Its main production facility is on an illegal

Huge rallies for Palestine in Toronto



Israeli settlement, Ma'ale Adumim, in the occupied Palestinian West Bank.

CAIA urges a boycott of Israeli products and services, and those of international companies involved in Israel's human rights violations. The most common Israeli exports include fresh fruit and vegetables (such as Jaffa citrus fruits and Israeli Medjoul Dates), Ahava cosmetics, SodaStream drinks machines, Golan Heights Wineries and other Israeli wines.

The Socialist Action banner "Smash Zionist Apartheid—Free Palestine" was prominent in the midst of the surging crowd.

SA members, at display tables and on the march, sold newspapers, booklets and buttons - the most popular of which, 'End the Occupation, Support the Intifada', was in high demand.

On July 26 an even larger gathering was held in connection with the annual Al Quds (Jerusalem Day) Muslim celebration. Official spokespersons claimed, at the concluding rally held across from the U.S. Consulate on University Ave., that it was the largest pro-Palestine, anti-Zionist gathering in North America that day, with over 25,000 participating.

Despite the huge crowd, many of whom came by bus from Mississauga, north-west of the city, there was a scarcity of union banners and flags. However, people carried a wide variety of placards, both professionally produced and home-made. Organizers at the concluding rally released over a hundred balloons into the air, each representing a child killed by the Israeli military.

Rival gatherings contended for attention at Queen's Park on July 26. A Toronto Star article reported that "critics of Israel's military assaults, and defenders" of the Zionist state, stood opposed to each other, which is true.

But the article failed to mention that there were well over 20,000 in the pro-Palestinian rally, and its march down University Avenue, while less than 800 participated in the Zionist assembly. A posted video recording, taken from high above the crowds by a drone helicopter-mounted camera, as well as thousands of ground-level photographs, prove the point. The ratio was 20:1 in favor of the supporters of the beleaguered residents of Gaza.

Was omission of the facts concerning the huge disproportion between the two sides that gathered in front of the Ontario Legislature, merely an oversight? Or was it a reflection of editorial policy? ■

NDPers petition to remove Ontario Leader Horwath

More and more New Democratic Party activists are signing a petition initiated by the NDP Socialist Caucus to demand that Ontario NDP Leader Andrea Horwath resign.

Horwath waged the worst NDP campaign since Bob Rae attempted to defend his infamous Social Contract in 1995. She had no mandate to veer to the right of the Liberal Party in a vain attempt to appeal to Conservative supporters and the business class. She had no mandate to abandon the fight for social justice in favour of a crass appeal to consumerism.

The NDP platform emphasized "making life more affordable" by removing the HST from electricity bills, reducing car insurance rates by 15%, opening up a few

more child-care spaces, shortening hospital wait times, and offering a mere \$1 increase in the hourly minimum wage. At the same time, Horwath pledged to continue the practice of bribing big private corporations to create jobs—without demanding any public ownership or democratic control of state investment.

Horwath projected a small increase in corporate taxation, but no plan to conscript the hidden, un-taxed billions of dollars - what a former head of the Bank of Canada calls 'dead Capital'. That means the NDP proposed no way to fund a serious attack on poverty, on homelessness, or to end the deepening crises in public transit, education and health care.

Horwath and her strategists said nothing about phasing

out nuclear power plants, stopping Line 9, satisfying the just claims of indigenous peoples, curtailing state surveillance, and terminating police repression of the kind that was unleashed during the G-20 Summit in Toronto. There was not even a hint that the problems faced today by the vast majority of Ontarions are rooted in the decaying and increasingly destructive capitalist system.

The ONDP Leader campaigned on "integrity." But she ignored a party convention decision to be tougher on the Ontario Liberal budget of 2012/13. On her watch, party conventions provide less and less time for policy debate. And Horwath's Election Planning Committee undemocratically prevents leftists from being NDP candidates.

As big business pressure mounts on the Liberal gov-

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... Free Palestine!

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to any nation on earth. The vast portion of this “foreign aid,” it is worth noting, is spent on the purchase of military equipment from the largely monopolized U.S. military-industrial complex. That is, funds spent on arming Israel to the teeth are returned to the U.S. to beef up the coffers of U.S. war profiteers. Additional munitions were transferred to Israel after the present bombing campaign began to replenish the bombs and missiles just employed. Some of these arms, including mortar shells and grenades, come from an arsenal that the U.S. maintains within Israel for “emergency” use by the Zionists. The War Reserves Stockpile Allies-Israel is estimated to be worth nearly \$1 billion. And on top of that, Congress voted on Aug. 1 to grant Israel an additional \$225 million in order to restock its “Iron Dome” missile defense system.

Growing opposition to Israel

Since the formation of Israel in 1948, systematic war against the Palestinian people has been the rule, not the exception. In 1948, no Arab nation recognized the legitimacy of this colonial racist state, carved out of Palestinian land. Indeed, leading American philosophers and scientists opposed the formation of the Zionist state, including scientist Albert Einstein, who rejected an Israeli offer to become Israel’s first president. Einstein expressed grave concerns that the victims of the Nazis holocaust not become the colonial persecutors and overseers of the Palestinian people.

Today, some 66 years later, perhaps the world’s most well-known living scientist, particle physicist Stephen Hawking, refused to participate at a scientific gathering in Israel. In recent days and months, Hawking, now pilloried by the Zionist media, has been joined by a constant flow of leading U.S. academic and professional associations that have added their voices to the growing BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) movement protesting Israeli’s policies. The 1.5 million-member Presbyterian Church voted in early July to condemn Israeli’s murderous policies toward the Palestinians.

Perhaps the world’s leading general medical journal, *The Lancet*, published in England, presents a damning statement on Israel’s atrocities. Signed by 28 doctors and scientists who have worked in Gaza, the July 28 statement, entitled, “An open letter for the people of Gaza,” begins:

“We are doctors and scientists, who spend our lives developing means to care and protect health and lives. We are also informed people; we teach the ethics of our professions, together with the knowledge and practice of it. We all have worked in and known the situation of Gaza for years. On the basis of our ethics and practice, we are denouncing what we witness in the aggression of Gaza by Israel.

“We ask our colleagues, old and young professionals, to denounce this Israeli aggression. We challenge the perversity of a propaganda that justifies the creation of an emergency to masquerade a massacre, a so-called ‘defensive aggression.’ In reality it is a ruthless assault of unlimited duration, extent, and intensity. We wish to report the facts as we see them and their implications on the lives of the people.

“We are appalled by the military onslaught on civilians in Gaza under the guise of punishing terrorists. This is the third large-scale military assault on Gaza since 2008. Each time the death toll is borne mainly by innocent people in Gaza, especially women and children under the unacceptable pretext of Israel eradicating political parties and resistance to the occupation and siege they impose.” *The Lancet* statement continues with a detailed documentation of the horrors perpetrated by the Israeli government.

Meanwhile, the world is ablaze with unprecedented protests, exceeding any others in history, condemning the Zionist state and its policies. Hundred of thou-



sands have taken to the streets in England, France, and across Europe. In the U.S. almost daily mobilizations have been organized across the country, with thousands participating in actions in New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Minneapolis, Washington, D.C. and other cities. In almost all instances, these actions have been initiated by U.S.-based Palestinian and associated Arab organizations and supported by a myriad of antiwar and social justice organizations.

Indeed, the largest U.S. antiwar organization, the United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC), at its national conference two years ago of 800 activists from 30 states, nearly unanimously adopted the demand, “End all U.S. Aid to Israel—military, economic, and diplomatic.” This demand is today central to all protests in the U.S. and around the world.

For a democratic, secular Palestine

I will conclude this admittedly angry essay by stating that Socialist Action has never recognized the legitimacy of the Zionist entity called Israel. Nor have we done so with regard to the overseers of any colonized nation on earth, whether in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, Asia, Europe, or anywhere else. We have always stood on the side of and in solidarity with the oppressed masses of the world who challenge their colonial or neo-colonial subjugators.

We likewise reject imperialism’s originally imposed division of the Middle East into separate states, dependent on and ruled by imperial occupiers or their agents. These divisions—these lines on maps drawn by conquerors—artificially divided or incorporated peoples with diverse origins, histories, languages, and cultures. Today’s tragic unfolding events in Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon—and indeed, throughout the Middle East—are testimony to the deadly effects of imperialist divisions.

Zionist Israel is nothing less than an imperialist creation that is administrated, tragically, by Jewish people—whose forebears were subjected to the monstrous Hitlerian holocaust. Today, Palestinians constitute the largest refugee population in the world. At more than four million, expelled from their land and homes, tortured, murdered and denied basic human rights, they are a beleaguered people struggling for their freedom and dignity.

Socialists do not demand “negotiations” or a “cease-fire” or a “just solution” to the “Palestinian problem”—all code words or expressions that are premised on extending legitimacy to the Zionist state, including its historic and continuing expulsion of the Palestinian people from their homeland. Only the Palestinian people can legitimately participate in the decision of which concessions they might be forced to give up to Israeli force and terror.

From our vantage point in the United States, socialists and antiwar activists have but one immediate and

central demand—for the immediate, total, and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from Gaza, including the immediate end to the bombing and a condemnation of the horrors committed by the racist Zionist state.

The 72-hour “ceasefire,” reportedly negotiated on Aug. 1 by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and the UN’s Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, with the assistance of Qatar and Turkey, was premised on a supposed agreement that the Israeli IDF forces would continue to search out and destroy all tunnels in Gaza—the prime route for food and necessities utilized by the Palestinian population, other than UN largesse—all other foodstuffs and essentials of life being essentially banned from entrance by the longstanding Israeli blockade. Within hours, the “ceasefire” disintegrated, as the IDF, free to continue their annihilation campaign, murdered another 70 Palestinian fighters and civilians.

The Obama administration and the UN tops were quick to place the blame for the breakdown on Hamas, failing to mention that the destruction of the tunnel network and the continuation of the Israeli war would in essence totally cut off an already starving people from any outside resources. The mere thought of Israeli troops rampaging through Gaza during a “cease-fire,” armed to the teeth and firing at will, chills the soul and cuts deeply into the conscience of all who cherish freedom as opposed to the Zionist massacre.

Socialist Action supports the 1973 historic demand of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) for a “Democratic Secular Palestine” with the right of return to all dispossessed Palestinians should they choose to exercise it. Achieving this demand would entail the rejection of the Israeli settler state and the re-establishment of historic Palestine with democratic rights for all—Palestinians, Jews, and Christians.

“Free, Free Palestine!”—the demand increasingly shouted out by antiwar activists and supporters of Palestinian freedom around the world—likewise strongly implies the abolition of the Zionist and racist settler state of Israel.

At the same time, we understand that Palestinians can never achieve true self-determination in the context of capitalism. We simultaneously advocate and struggle for a socialist Palestine, as we do for a united socialist confederation of the Middle East as opposed to today’s neo-colonial states in this region—essentially subordinate to and exploited by the various world imperial powers. The revolutionary mobilization of the vast majority is a prerequisite for this outcome. Anything less can only mean continued subjugation to the imperialist ruling rich and their appointed, supported, and armed dictators and monarchs.

These are not revolutionary abstractions. They are based on our rejection of the colonialist and neo-colonial occupations and wars that are the rule today in that region. Revolutionary socialists support the right of all oppressed and colonized people to self-determination—free from colonial rule.

Today, the central imperial power in the Middle East is the United States. Free from U.S. intervention in its myriad forms, the people of the Middle East would have long ago ridden themselves of local would-be tyrants. These tyrants, as with the Nouri al-Maliki government in Iraq, exist only at the behest of the U.S., which finances, arms, and directs its brutal puppet dictators in order to facilitate the exploitation of each nation’s resources and peoples. “Regime change” is imperialism’s current code word for replacing one dictator with another, provided only that the new appointees protect U.S. interests.

In the United States, we demand, “End all aid to Israel!” We call on the world’s working masses everywhere to take to the streets to demand, “Stop the Israeli massacre in Gaza!” and “End the Israeli blockade!” For a democratic secular Palestine! ■

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ernment of Kathleen Wynne to reduce the provincial deficit by cutting public services and jobs, the NDP is hamstrung by its regressive election platform, epitomized by its gravely wounded Leader. The clear choice now is for New Democrats, labour unionists, feminists, LGBTQ folks, environmentalists, socialists and social justice advocates to take the NDP away from the latter-day Blairites, and re-direct the party to lead the battle against capitalist austerity, and for socialist solutions to the mounting problems we face.

That course starts with the demand that Ontario NDP Leader Andrea Horwath resign immediately. It is time for a full review of the party’s leadership and political direction, leading up to its Nov. 14-16 con-

vention in Toronto.

But how do we make that happen? It’s simple. A full review is triggered by a vote of non-confidence in the leader. A confidence vote occurs at every party convention. If even 35% of the delegates vote for a leadership review (that is, if less than 65% vote to support the current leader), a leadership race will begin. It is clear that such a vote would open up a period of intense discussion about the future of the NDP.

So, what should socialists and labour activists do? This is where bold initiative is needed—to galvanize the widespread discontent in the party and its voter base by posing a concrete course of action:

Demand that Andrea resign, and insist that a full review of the political direction of the party take place, starting now. —B.W.

U.S. aids brutal attack on eastern Ukrainian cities



(Left) A rally in the besieged city of Donetsk in early August.

By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

Civilian casualties are quickly mounting as U.S.-supported Ukrainian troops redouble their offensive to capture the country's rebellious eastern provinces. United Nations officials put the death toll in the region since mid-June at over 1500 civilians and combatants, with 3500 wounded. More than 285,000 people have been displaced from their homes in the most recent fighting. The Russian Red Cross has urged the evacuation of children from the war zone, observing that the region faces a severe humanitarian catastrophe.

The pro-Western government in Kiev is escalating the war effort after having barely averted a severe parliamentary crisis at the end of July. The dispute in the Rada (parliament) was sparked in part by unease over the harsh terms of Ukraine's austerity agreement with the European Union.

Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenuk offered to resign after two parties—the fascist Svoboda and the Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reform—had withdrawn from the ruling coalition during a debate over Yatsenuk's budget bills. One of the bills called for a 1.5 percent income tax hike in order to finance the war effort. The vote on July 31 was 16 for accepting Yatsenuk's resignation, 109 against, and 325 who decided to stay home or not vote. The sitting parliament then voted to approve the bills—including fulfillment of the country's obligations under the dictates of the EU's bail-out agreement.

The agreement with the EU will hit working people hard with major cutbacks and layoffs. Of course, those were precisely the terms according to which the U.S. and the EU helped to shoehorn the Kiev government into power by means of a coup last February. In the long run, the Western powers view Ukraine as becoming a complete vassal to imperialism, both economically and politically.

As part of their game plan, the U.S. and its allies have joined Kiev in blaming the discontent in eastern Ukraine on alleged intervention by Vladimir Putin's regime. This has been the prime excuse for a series of U.S.-initiated economic sanctions against Russia, which Japan and the major European countries have largely signed onto. The latest U.S. sanctions target Russian banks and the oil and defense industries.

In his comments to *The Economist* magazine on Aug.

Obama wants to send troops into Ukraine to train and equip its National Guard. A \$19 million 'anti-terrorism' fund would cover the costs.

2, Obama motivated his increasingly onerous sanctions against Russia, although he used some exaggeration in disparaging his opponents: "Russia doesn't make anything. Immigrants aren't rushing to Moscow in search of opportunity. The life expectancy of the Russian male is around 60 years old. The population is shrinking. And so we have to respond with resolve in what are effectively regional challenges that Russia presents."

Western European countries, for their part, have been slightly more cautious than the U.S. in their implementation of economic sanctions against Russia. Germany, for example, imports virtually all of its gas from Russia. There is great fear that the Russian government will retaliate with its own sanctions against the West; Putin has already banned agricultural products from countries participating in the sanctions, and more measures are threatened.

Nevertheless, the imperialists seem to agree that the risks of pushing Russia too hard are outweighed by the vast potential economic rewards. They intend to have a major role in the heightened exploitation of Ukraine's oil, gas, and other resources—while cutting out Russia from gaining a significant piece of the pie.

The U.S. and its allies gained the opportunity to ramp up their accusations against Russia after a Malaysian airliner crashed in rebel-held territory southeast of Donetsk on July 17. The Obama administration claims that the plane was downed by a Russian-supplied SA-11 (BUK) missile that had been launched by Ukrainian rebels.

However, as we go to press, three weeks after the disaster, the scenario is still unclear. The Russian government has released data showing that a Ukrainian fighter jet flew within striking distance of the airliner at the time. And preliminary photos made available to

the public do not conclusively demonstrate that the damage to the plane is consistent with what would be typically inflicted by a BUK missile.

Likewise, no evidence has been presented to back up the Obama administration's assertion that Russia fomented the rebellion in eastern Ukraine and that it resolutely continues to arm the rebels. Leaders of the rebel groupings have repeatedly called upon Russia to come to their aid, but their trust in the Putin regime has not been reciprocated to any great extent by Russia.

The facts show that the rebellion against the Kiev government grew out of real fears of political repression. Soon after the February coup, resentment rose in the country's largely Russian-speaking eastern provinces when the newly installed Ukrainian parliament passed legislation limiting Russian language rights. Although the law was rescinded after protests, attacks by Ukrainian ultra-nationalist and fascist forces—most notably the May 2 massacre of at least 42 anti-government protesters in Odessa—greatly enflamed the outrage felt by Russian speakers, and helped to fuel the armed rebellion.

As we go to press, Kiev authorities have promised to "storm" Donetsk, a city of close to 1 million. Heavily populated civilian neighborhoods have come under attack by artillery and airplanes. And Kiev ground forces—bolstered by ultra-right and fascist volunteers as well as by freshly called-up reservists and draftees—have almost surrounded the city, which has been in the hands of rebel fighters for many months.

On Aug. 5, Agence France-Presse reporter Anna Malpas filed an article in which she described the streets of central Donetsk as being almost deserted. Booms from artillery and mortars were constantly heard. Most shops, cafes, and libraries were closed; their windows were taped to minimize the glass shattering from bomb shrapnel. The only place where she found crowds of people was in the ornate Stalin-era railway station; many had gathered there to flee the city by train.

"They are bombing—that's why we are getting far away from here," a woman named Lyubov, who had fled from a nearby town, told the AFP reporter. "Our house burnt down and our neighbor's too," said Yuri, from the town of Shakhtarsk. "The whole street was bombed. We are going to Moscow, to my daughter's place."

"The situation is worse every day," said Olga, a travel agent, one of the few people out on the streets. She said her family had fled their home near Donetsk airport to stay with friends in the city center after three weeks of heavy bombardment. "I ran with the kids under a hail of bullets," she said, as she watched her two-year-old son play nearby. "It's like in a film. It's scary of course."

As they slowly advance, Ukrainian government troops have largely cut off Donetsk from land travel to Luhansk—with 400,000 people, the second largest city in the east. Artillery fire and airstrikes have halted water, telephone, and electricity service in Luhansk. An AP report from Aug. 4 stated, "Store shelves are emptying fast, and those who haven't managed to flee must drink untreated tap water. With little medicine left, doctors are sending patients home."

"Shelling is a daily occurrence and the targets apparently quite random. On Saturday, eight buildings were damaged by rockets. These included a school, a super-

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