From the Editors

written by Editors | August 7, 2024

For months now we, like many people around the world, have been horrified and infuriated by Israel's genocidal war on Gaza and the U.S. government's support for it. Many in American society have condemned the Biden administration for its refusal to cut off support for Israel. At the same time, we welcome the fact that Washington—for its own imperial reasons—has continued to supply arms to Ukraine as its people defend their national sovereignty from Russian imperialist aggression, even though the situation for Ukraine remains grim. The contradiction between Biden's support for one people fighting for its freedom and his contribution to the oppression of another could cost him the election.

Unless Biden leaves the race in light of his disastrous performance in the June 27, 2024, debate with Trump, that election will pit Joe Biden against Donald Trump. The former is the embodiment of the Democratic political establishment, and the latter is an authoritarian populist now completely dominating the Republican Party. The GOP has embraced Trump's far-right, quasi-fascist agenda, and his plans to revamp the government in ways that aim to destroy such democracy as we have, and to harm working people, women, immigrants, and racial, sexual, and ethnic minorities. The left candidates—Jill Stein of the Greens and Cornel West of the Justice for All Party—have put forward traditional left platforms; however, concerning international matters, Stein claims Washington and NATO "provoked" Putin's brutal invasion of Ukraine, and both Stein and West call on Ukraine to stop fighting Russian occupation. A third left candidate, Claudia De la Cruz, represents the Party for Socialism and Liberation, a group we consider sectarian. The PSL's version of "socialism" is that of the former USSR and China.

This is a year of many significant elections across the world—in France, the UK, India, Iran, Puerto Rico, Mexico, and South Africa, to name a few. Facing a decaying neoliberalism and the far-right menace, a left alternative is struggling to gain traction anywhere. The situation in France looked particularly dicey after Macron suddenly dissolved parliament and called a snap election. But the New Popular Front—with a platform of redistribution and international solidarity—roused and unified the left, won the most seats, beat Macron, and pushed the far right into third place.

Many issues are being contested in the electoral arena, in the courts, and in the streets. We have been buoyed by the recent strikes and organizing campaigns of the United Auto Workers. There have been more strikes than at any time since 2000, with 458,000 workers walking off the job for a better contract from auto plants to Hollywood studios; from colleges and schools to hospitals and clinics. The 2022 Supreme Court ruling overturning Roe v. Wade, ending federal protection for abortion, revitalized the reproductive rights movement, both on the ground and in polling places in both red and blue states. And in the face of an intransigent political system, all across the country students have stood up for a ceasefire and the end of complicity with Israel's brutal war on

Palestinians.

Thus, in this issue we feature a section on the movement supporting Palestine, with emphasis on student activists. Aristotle Wu offers an organizer's perspective on the campus encampments and Mathew Foresta provides reportage from the front lines. Ariella Aïsha Azoulay offers a critique of how universities are implicated in Zionism, and Udi Raz discusses the misuse of antisemitism accusations in Germany.

Our domestic coverage begins with a symposium on the election. Rebecca Gordon and Natalia Tylim take contending positions, and several New Politics editors offer their personal views on how the Left ought to relate to this presidential election.

The loss of Roe v. Wade has by no means meant the end of the struggle for reproductive rights, and Marian Jones addresses the many grassroots efforts that are being pursued. Justin Akers Chacón and John Washington present two views on the question of immigration and borders, a topic again being used to manipulate electoral outcomes. These issues along with LGBTQ rights are part of a larger concern with cultural issues, taken up in an essay by Daniel Johnson.

Our analysis of international issues showcases a symposium on labor struggles in China. The contributions were online panels organized by Chinese activists and American socialists. After an introduction on the needed solidarity with labor struggles in China from the vantage point of principled socialist internationalism, the texts look at the general conditions of Chinese workers—how they are organized, repressed, and how they fight back; the particular situation of women workers; a case study of the relation between the Taiwanese-owned giant Foxconn and the U.S. labor movement; an examination of the relationship between China's surveillance state and Israel's repression of Palestinians; and finally a conversation between labor activists on how solidarity can be realized between the U.S. and Chinese labor movements.

Two other articles focus on international topics. John Feffer writes "In Defense of Ukraine's Right to Self-Defense," addressing some of the most common talking points of Ukraine's opponents. And Dan La Botz analyzes the recent Mexican election, exploring the implications of the victory of Claudia Sheinbaum.

Two important issues of left theory are taken up in this issue. Dan Davison looks at how socialists have related to elections and Michael Löwy explores the relation between Marxism and the climate crisis. Three review essays also address theoretical issues. William Keach analyzes Mark Steven's, Class War: A Literary History. Lilia D. Monzó and Cristal B. Flores examine Peter Hudis's new edition of Marx's Critique of the Gotha Program. Tom Wetzel asks us to contemplate "A Planned Economy with No Central Planning Authority," in a review of Robin Hahnel's Democratic Economic Planning.

Two other reviews take up timely topics. David Renton discusses Ben Burley and Shene Lorber's guide to fighting antisemitism. And Wayne Price looks at Rachel Maddow's Prequel, a history of American fascism.

We end with a poem by Sam Friedman on Moral Rot, a fitting description of our current reality.

We live in very fraught times. Whatever happens in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, Lebanon, Argentina, Haiti, the Congo, and Myanmar, and in the U.S. election in November, we must continue to stand up for the victims of atrocity and aggression. We must continue to defend and build organizations with a vision opposed to exploitation and oppression and for freedom and justice. This includes efforts to support the development of a political party for the exploited, the oppressed, and all those who

struggle for an anti-capitalist future.