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USA

“Against Trump we have to defend our neighbors, defend our democratic rights and our labor rights”



- Features -

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Raphaël Alberto: Hello Janette. Thanks for being with us today. So we wanted to talk to you about what happened in Minneapolis and about the metro surge, the operation by ICE in the US. So what was Metro Surge? Why did it happen in Minneapolis and what were the consequences for the people over there?

Janette Zahia Corcelius: Operation Metro Surge started on 1 December 2025 but back in June of that year ICE and other federal agents staged a raid on Lake and Bloomington to see how we would react. They also were conducting raids and abductions and deportations prior to that as well. But the height of it was in November. And from January to February and ways that we resisted were plentiful.

We had mutual aid networks. We had frontline protests and direct action. We had general strikes. And we also utilized this rapid response, what we called commuting network which harkens back to the 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters Truckers strike where the strikers used flying pickets to go after scabs. So in this case we used our cars to not go after scabs but to go after federal agents who were abducting our neighbors.

Organizing in Minneapolis

How did this movement start and how was it organized? From the beginning? And maybe who was involved in this movement?

So labor unions, nonprofit organizations, grassroots led organizations, socialist organizations all of them in concert in a united front were preparing for this because there were people who were close to the workers in the community who felt that a second Trump term was inevitable.

So one of the things the labor movement did to prepare was conduct a series of anti authoritarianism training prior to Trump's election and after. And what we talked about and discussed and prepared for was how we would react during his second term. We were well aware that he could continue disintegrating our labor rights and our unions through cutting positions.

We also knew that he was going to ramp up deportations and attack our electoral system in terms of elections and the voting that would occur at the midterm elections as well as the next presidential election.

One of the things we discussed was utilizing the general strike which is a part of our history in the United States and also more specifically in Minnesota. The Minneapolis Teamsters Truckers strike in 1934 was a pivotal moment in the US labor movement. It happened the same year as two other strikes and that strike was led by Trotskyists, members of the Fourth International, and that strike along with the Toledo auto strike in Ohio with the UAW and Longshoreman strike in San Francisco were galvanizing events for the Franklin Delano Roosevelt presidency and Labor Secretary Frances Perkins to create the National Labor Relations Act and the board, because workers were being killed by the police and self-deputized Citizens Alliance and the bosses. The workers wanted to have collective bargaining rights and the right to strike but also the bosses wanted labor peace.

We realized that Trump is most likely going to get rid of the National Labor Relations Act and the board and he's also going to continue this techno fascist feudalistic manifesto that the artificial intelligence executives are pushing.

We also knew that he was going to betray his base who were for America first. So we knew that we could get a broad movement of workers, whether they were unionized or not, to take action. So on 23 January we had a one-day strike. No work, no school, no shopping : where one out of four Minnesotans participated. That means around 2 million

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people were not working. And we had a march in downtown Minneapolis of 100 000 people in -20 degree Fahrenheit (-29°C) weather. It was so powerful and beautiful. And we're getting ready for the May Day International Workers Day general strike happening on 1 May where we will also be doing another day of no work, no school, no shopping.

But this is nationwide and this comes on the heels of this Operation Metro Surge that's still occurring. But it also comes from Shawn Fein, president of the United Auto Workers, who called for a general strike for May Day 2028. Obviously, that's too far away. We need to be having a series of strikes leading up to the midterms and the presidential election.

And we also need to protect our neighbors. We need to protect our democracy and our labor rights. And we also need to show the bosses that they can't continue to hurt us economically. The cost of living in the United States is skyrocketing. So this is something that has broad support and we're excited to see what it's going to look like when we return on Friday.

Maybe before talking about how it changed the way Trump is seen now, how do you organize such a broad movement? We've seen like the protests you've had in the cold and the like with priests with people like who are not unionized. How do you organize such a broad and diverse movement in Minneapolis and elsewhere. ?

So socialist organizations in the Twin Cities doorknocked small businesses, specifically ones that were owned by immigrants, the impacted community. And we also canvassed and flyer in public spaces. We held a series of trainings, there were legal observer trainings that were occurring almost every day for months to teach people about their rights.

In those trainings where we're teaching people about their rights we also taught them about their rights in the workplace, in their home, on the street, you name it. And we also would keep lists. We would list buildings so that we could contact them about other trainings and events.

Also, it's important to note that the 23 January General strike had the backing of the faith community. There's a strong Lutheran community in Minnesota, and also there's a large Muslim population because the largest Somali community outside of Somalia is in Minnesota. So, we build those relationships in our churches or mosques or synagogues. And we also were able to connect with parents through our public schools and the educators union. With this we had people from all sectors of the economy in Minnesota, all kinds of people, from all backgrounds: racial, ethnic, religious and political.

So, that's how we were able to do this. We also had to talk to our neighbors. There's already a history of this in Minnesota. It's so cold, your survival relies on the kindness of strangers and your neighbors. You could get stuck in the snow or in a deep freeze where someone might have to get you out of your car, shovel you out or push your car. So that's a part of the reason why Minnesota is the way it is.

Also, during the George Floyd uprising in 2020 so many mutual aid networks were built and because of the Covid 19 pandemic, the crisis that was created by that, and the crisis of police brutality and anti-Blackness and white supremacy in our society, people were fed up. They had enough and they rioted to ensure that there was justice.

So there's a long history of resistance. It even goes back farther with the Dakota peoples whose land it is that we live on Minnesota, Minnesota Makoche. The Dakota peoples have been resisting for hundreds of years against the U.S. government and they're still resisting. So are the Anishinaabe and the Ojibwe peoples. There's a very strong movement called the American Indian Movement that started in south Minneapolis in the 60s and 70s that was also fighting against police brutality. So these networks and these relationships have been in existence for a long time.

And do you have the feeling that's maybe one of the reasons why Trump targeted Minnesota and Minneapolis?

There's a few different reasons why. Definitely the history of resistance from the Native American indigenous First Nations people, the black community who are descendants of slavery as well as the strong labor movement, militant trade unionists who have been organizing for the last century or more. Also Minnesota has been a blue state for presidential elections for over 50 years even when the rest of the country went red to the Republicans.

For example, when Ronald Reagan had his presidential win, Minnesota was the only Democratic state where all the other states went Republican. So Trump knows that the state, this is a mostly white state, actually a lot of the settlers are Germans who came from the 1848 revolution, a lot of Scandinavians who were also involved in socialist and communist movements in Europe settled here.

These are more progressive socialist communist leaning white people with a strong labor background. But he is not smart enough to know that. He just thinks he can use racism to divide and conquer. And it's important to note that there are only 130 000 undocumented immigrants in Minnesota compared to red states like Texas. There are millions of undocumented immigrants. This is not about immigration. It's about fear, retaliation and ethnic cleansing. We know that it's political and we know it's about the uprising that happened in 2020 because George Floyd was murdered. We know that because that happened during his first term and how malicious he is.

He's so narcissistic that he takes anything as a slight and he will retaliate. We also have a governor who ran for vice president during the last election. Governor Tim Walz was a vice presidential candidate while Kamala Harris was the presidential candidate. So there is also tension there. And I would be remiss not to say this as well.

What led up to Operation Metro Surge was the hatred against Somali peoples. Congresswoman Ilhan Omar is one of the strongest voices in our federal government. She has been resisting Trump unabashedly and in an unwavering manner. So he wanted to attack our Somali community because they're black, they're immigrant. So there's anti-Blackness, and because they're Muslim there's Islamophobia. And it's important to know that Immigration Customs Enforcement started after 9/11 as a measure to root out terrorism that they felt was happening in the Muslim community. So the right have long memories and they have a long term plan. It's important we know our history and that we are proactive and we have a plan.

So there are multiple reasons why Trump is targeting Minnesota. But I need people to understand it's not about immigration.

How do you see the future in Minnesota and the US and do you have the feeling that this powerful movements in Minnesota changed the way Trump and his racist and anti immigration laws are perceived in the population?

It's important to note that Operation Surge is not over. There are 3000 agents who came to Minnesota, specifically the seven-county metro of the Twin Cities. And 500 agents remain which is the same amount of agents that were in Chicago and Chicago's a huge city. It's a major city in the United States.

They essentially got rid of Greg Bovino who was the border czar because he was so flashy and fascistic. His style was very remnants reminiscent of Nazis and Naziism. And so they realized okay we need to do things differently. We're going to go back to how things were done in the Obama years because Obama did deport more immigrants than anybody.

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And Trump wants to outdo that. Obama's border czar was Tom Homan. So they brought in Tom Homan to bring things back into the dark and do things in a more competent way. So now ICE agents are wearing plain clothes, they're infiltrating spaces, they're pretending to be activists. Now they're in major U.S. city airports.

Regardless of their change of tactic, Trump is deeply unpopular right now and there are many ways people in the United States are getting activated. No Kings is one way and No Kings is a part of the coalition, a strong coalition that's getting ready for May Day: no work no school no shopping. I also think that people should know that the genocide of Palestinian people and the war in Iran is deeply unpopular not just on the left but now on the right, especially these rightwing talking heads and social media influencers who have a lot of power and notoriety in the party.

They're talking and going against Trump because Trump promised to be America first and he's not. And people in the United States are, as they are in most places I think, self-interested. So once that hurts your pocketbook that's when people who are apolitical or even on the right are going to wake up. So this is a good moment for the left to get serious, get organized and to convince people of our program.

I am worried that the Democratic Party will mess it up. They're already capitulating to the Israeli lobby. AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) knows that they're deeply unpopular. That and that people are researching which candidates are supported by them. So, they're using new names and new PACs to support Democrats and Republicans. What I believe is that we need more socialists in office.

But I also believe that the socialists in office that we have often capitulate to Zionism and that can't stand at this moment. It won't work. It won't work for the left and it won't work for the right, and it won't even work for people in the middle. So it remains to be seen what will happen at the midterms in the presidential election.

But I know people here in France and all over Europe are wondering will a third party emerge? It's very difficult to make that happen but we'll see. The sky is the limit.

So thank you very much.

30 April 2026

Labor Notes

Penelope Duggan So, Janette, you're going to be going to the [Labor Notes](#) conference, which starts next week. So can you tell us what is Labor Notes and what's the importance of this conference? [2]

Janette Zahia Corcelius: Yes. Labor Notes is an organization and a publication that helps labor unionists who are militants and radicals who want to start a reform movement, a caucus within their union to transform and to democratize their unions. This organization has helped thousands of workers around the United States and around the world to make their union more radical, militant, democratic and more strike ready. It has helped even workers in new unions try to find their footing and figure out what it is they're trying to make happen within their union.

But that's not the main focus of Labor Notes. And of course, members of different unions sometimes write articles for Labor Notes, but they have their own staff that's very small, that reports on the labor movement, mostly in the United

States.

PD: And how long has Labor Notes existed? Can you tell us about its history?

JC: I believe since the seventies. But I know that Teamsters for Democratic Union (TDU) was one of the first, if not the first reform caucuses within our labor movement here in the United States. Pete Cammarata was one of the founding members, and TDU has made considerable gains within the Teamsters. [3] But there's a lot left to be desired because the president, Sean O'Brien, has aligned himself with Trump and other fascist elements of United States politics. But TDU is still an important caucus and organization. I have a lot of friends and comrades that are a part of it, and they've done really important work there. And since the formation of their caucus, they've faced violence and different kinds of political threats within their union. And it just shows how important it is to change your union even when faced with violence and intimidation and retaliation.

Antoine Larrache: And what are the relationships between Labor Notes and the left?

JC: So there's a very important relationship, although I think there could be a stronger, more defined relationship. Labor Notes is very broad. They don't explicitly espouse anti-capitalist beliefs, though it's implicit. I understand that when they first started the organization, they felt that they had to be careful about how they aligned themselves politically with different parts of the left.

But I think in this moment, when we are faced with the threat of fascism and more and more working class people are looking for an alternative away from capitalism, we could be more explicit about our politics. I will say that Labor Notes is one of the organizations that has helped me and other comrades find their way as anti-capitalists, as revolutionary socialists, communists. But I think there could be more of an explicit relationship.

But there are some problems within the Reform caucus movement, specifically with what happened with the United Auto Workers (UAW) and TDU. There was a caucus called Unite All Workers for democracy in the UAW, which was a very crucial caucus that helped Shawn Fain become president and help lead the stand up strike that happened a few years ago. And it is true, both the UAW and the Teamsters had severe issues with democracy. Democracy is the foundation of a union. And if you don't even have that, then you don't really have anything. But they're some of my comrades on the left. Well, so they've won democracy, or gotten closer to a democratic model. They want more than that. They want social justice, unionism, class struggle, unionism that reflects the politics of militants, such as ending the genocide of the Palestinian people, protecting queer and transgender peoples in the workplace and outside of the workplace, fighting against police brutality that Black Americans face and protecting workers against ICE, Customs and Border Protection, the Department of Homeland Security and other types of immigration enforcement. So there's they they want to go outside of that. And I think that's okay but I know that there are some parts of the left who just want to focus only on democracy.

AL: Would you say that the unions in the United States are clear on the point of the ICE and immigration and so on?

JC: I don't think that our labor movement is clear enough on its stance against ICE. I think that it'll be interesting to see next week what happens at the American Federation of Labor, Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) convention, which I will be at, I'll be working there. And every so often, the AFL-CIO convention and Labor Notes happen to be right next to each other, one after the other.

There's a big, big difference between the two. So even though there are critiques on the left about Labor Notes, they pale in comparison to the problems we have at the AFL-CIO, so it'll be interesting to see what what what is the

AFL-CIO's stance going to be on ICE, or is it going to be unequivocally against this fascist regime, or is it going to waffle, depending on the construction unions and their stances? And also the police, law enforcement unions as well. It's important to note that ICE is represented by a union, The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE). The ICE agents who shot and killed, who murdered Alex Pretty were members of the same union as Alex. So we need to contend with this. We need to discuss this, and I hope it is discussed at the AfL-CIO. We also need to discuss at the AfL-CIO convention labor's complicity in terms of the genocide of Palestinian people. So I have a feeling that not much will be determined at this event. And I might end up being disappointed, but I remain hopeful.

Minneapolis is going to be hosting the AfL-CIO convention. They're very proud of all the work that we've done in Minnesota, specifically the January 23 one day general strike. They want to learn from us, and they want to continue that resistance throughout the country right now against ICE. In Newark, New Jersey, at Delaney Hall, it's getting very violent. There's a lot of repression against the protesters. [4] And so it's going to be a very interesting summer.

PD: Which happens first, AFL-CIO or Labor Notes.

JC: AFL-CIO. And usually that's what happens. That one's first, then Labor Notes.

PD: Labor Notes conference itself, how many people are you expecting and how is it organized? Do people meet on the basis of belonging to the same union, or is it cross-sectoral? What actually happens in during the conference? It's three days, I think.

JC: Yes, it's three days. it's always been or it's been in Chicago for a very long time. It usually has 4000 workers who attend and it's sold out. It's been sold out, I think, the last few times. And that is a, that's a good thing because it shows that our labor movement is on the upswing. It's it's vibrant, it's exciting, it's invigorating.

And it shows that it really shows what is happening in our United States political movement is that seventy per cent of workers want a labor union. They want to be represented by a union.

And Labor Notes has many different tracks that you can take. They have meetings that are specific to sectors of work and types of work. When I was a rank and file public school music educator, I went to the educators meet up and that was specifically for educators who are rank and file, who are not elected leadership and not staff. I'm currently a staffer, so I'll be at the staff meeting. Union staff meet up. I know that they have other meet ups for nurses for the logistical sector, people who are doing new organizing, It's really hard to say every single thing that's happening because there's a lot of different thing, but I'm really excited to see that our comrades from the N PA-A like Ariel N who's a nurse is going to be speaking on a panel with one of the members of the Minneapolis Federation of Educators who was on the bargaining team, Mary Manner. I'm very glad that they'll be sitting together speaking on a panel.

I wanted to also mention that one of the big hosts and organizers of the conference is the Chicago Teachers Union Caucus, the caucus of Rank and File educators has always been an inspiration to me. Jackson Potter specifically has been a great mentor ever since I was a rank and file teacher. [5] So I think that their model of unionism is one to follow because they were able to lead supermajority strikes several within the span of a decade. And now they have one of their own educators who is the mayor of Chicago, and he's doing really great work, despite all of the hate that is thrown at him, especially at the federal level.

So I think that that Labor Notes is a very important place for militants all across the world who were passionate and focused in the labour movement. Those who can't attend this year, they should look towards 2028. And hopefully by then in the United States, we will have led the May Day 2028 General Strike. That will be a huge flash point in our

movement, thanks to Shawn Fain, who's president of the UAW.

PD: Because Labor Notes is every two years. Is there any moment where everybody gets together? Are there plenary sessions?

JC: There are plenary sessions and then there's going to be a dinner where the workers of the Twin Cities will be receiving an award for their resistance against ICE. They always have an award they give out every time.

I wanted to mention for those who can't attend the conference I think they record some of the sessions or there's a live stream, but also they have events that are virtual throughout the year. And there's a book coming out by Ellen David Friedman. [\[6\]](#) She has been a great mentor to myself and other comrades in the movement. So I'm really excited to pick up her book and read it and glean some lessons from it. I think that her and Barbara Maddaloni are mentors in the movement who are elders in the movement Their leadership in Labor Notes has been crucial. They've done so much great work, especially in the educator sector to help us fight against privatization measures. The charter school movement has really destroyed our political movements because less people are educated.

PD: Explain about Charter schools?

JC: So charter schools are a private and public partnership where they take public Taxpayer dollars, but they also take foundation money from the wealthy, the elite who put their money in these charities to not pay taxes and to also shape their politics. Charter schools are not held to the same standards as public schools through local, state and federal laws and standards. And they also are not held accountable by elected school boards. They are governed by appointed nonprofit boards. And they are a union busting tactic as well. And it's also a way to further segregate our society racially and socio-economically, and it has been disastrous for our students and our society because people are becoming less and less prepared for the future and disconnected from the realities that we face in the United States.

PD: So at Labor Notes, there are plenary sessions, there are all these meet ups by sector and so on. Does the conference take any decisions? Does it make any sort of statements

JC: No, it's a place to learn and to network and to grow. It's not a political conference There isn't no one's elected to be there. Pretty much anyone can go unless they've been banned. And if they were banned, it's because they're the caucus that they used to be affiliated with banned them. But at the Afl-CIO convention, they should be making statements and voting on resolutions and budgets and things like that.

PD: So, so Labor Notes has no sort of editorial. I mean, the journal or the website has no sort of editorial line. It never. All its material is simply reporting on struggles. I mean, it publishes books.

JC: They publish books and they report. I think they probably do have a mission statement. But we don't make decisions at Labor Notes. I just know that.

PD: No concluding statement or anything.

JC: They do have a closing plenary and where they have people speak but we don't vote. It's very different than different conventions. At union conventions you're elected to go. I went to the NEA convention when I was a member. You're elected to go to make decisions on behalf of your union, and you have to submit them in advance and people work on them. And there's quite a lot of deliberation and debate. There is debate that does take place at Labor

Notes, don't get me wrong. But but, um, there are it's, it is a rather safe place for different viewpoints. Um, but nothing is.

AL: How does Labor Notes and this conference help the struggles.

JC: The way that Labor Notes helps with the struggle for unionization in the United States. I think it's important to note that only nine percent of workers in the U.S. are unionized. and that number is dwindling more and more as Trump and AI and the billionaire destroy federal jobs. We've lost one point one million jobs within the last year or so.

So Labor Notes, they do trainings, they meet with workers who form caucuses, and they also meet with workers who are in the middle or in the midst of strikes or are getting ready to go on strike. They also report on different labor struggles and give a voice that would otherwise not exist even in the bourgeoisie press, the capitalist press. They do report on labor, but it's not as intensive as Labor Notes. And they don't always give a fair perspective. But Labor Notes really, truly does give the workers perspective. They share the good, bad and the ugly. They share the struggles and give honest assessments, but they are also careful and deliberate when making decisions about what they report on. Because sometimes workers are wanting to trash their union in the press and that's not always helpful. You need to organize to take over your union to fix it. Because sometimes when workers want to trash their union leadership, it gives credence to anti-union, sentiment, which is already prevalent in United States media and has been prevalent for a very long time.

So unions are only as good as what we make them. And it's all about democracy. And it's important that we teach rank and file members to take ownership over their union. And we teach rank and file members how to actually organize, how to have structured one on one organizing conversations, how to run a campaign, how to do research and Labor Notes, does all sorts of these things.

And I, I can say with full confidence, had I not known about Labor Notes, I would not be the union organizer that I am today. And I have told many, many a worker that Labor Notes is a great resource for them if they need help, no matter what their situation is. So I think that, um, people should subscribe to their newsletter, they should buy their books and they should go to their trainings and they should, connect with other union militants around the world.

Perspectives for the left

AL: How do you see the relationship between Labor Notes and the building of a Workers Party or DSA, or what are the relationship with that?

JC: That's a good question. I don't think Labor Notes is currently looking to create a Labor Party unless they decide to change that this year. I don't think that's their plan or I don't think it's ever been their game plan. But, um, right now this weekend is the Tony Mazzocchi centennial in New Brunswick, New Jersey. He wrote that famous book, The man who hated work but loved labor. He was one of the founders of the Labor Party in the U.S. and he was a militant unionist who faced a lot of repression. There's a big debate about whether or not we should have a Labour Party. There's a big debate on whether DSA should become an actual party. Right now, we can't make a decision within DSA about that because we don't have a conference, a convention coming up for another year or so. And that's where that would be deliberated again.

PD: You're a member of DSA?.

JC: And I'm also a member of Tempest Collective and half of us are in DSA. Half of us are not. So I think that unfortunately, as the midterms come closer and closer, DSA doesn't have an a current answer to that because there's so much internal turmoil about whether or not to be a party. I will say that we are doing an excellent job of taking over the Democratic Party and some of these contested primaries. For example, Chris Rabb won his primary against a centrist Democrat in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and he's DSA. And so I think that if we continue with the sort of politics that helped Mamdani win the mayoral seat, we will be victorious. But I think that we also need to be cognizant of some of the mistakes Mamdani is already making this early in office.

PD: So what mistakes are those?

JC: Keeping the police. The former police chief whose police force inflicted violence against the student encampments for Palestine at the universities and colleges in New York City. I think that was a big mistake. I think his apology for his wife's politics around Palestine is unhelpful. And there are even people in DSA who are already talking about him because he's not in line with our anti-Zionist resolution that we passed at the last convention. I also want to say, on another hand, He is governing in the one of the most important financial centers of the world, and he has a hard task at hand to manag his role, The membership in New York City DSA is frustrated with him that he hasn't crossed. Endorsed the DSA candidates. That is a big problem if you are in an organization like DSA and you're not endorsing your own people against centrist Democrats. So that those are some criticisms I have and others have in DSA. But I still am proud of the work that he has done and will continue to do.

PD: Can you cite therefore some positive things that you think he's done?

JC: Yeah. They're fixing the roads, they're going after slumlords. The child care initiatives. The budget that they passed was really great. Um, so I think that it's going to be really exciting to visit New York City in the future. Last time I went was in December. Um, it'll be exciting to see how different things are for comrades who live there. Um, but everything remains to be seen. It's. I know it's still too early to tell.

AL: What do you see as the, the role of Labor Notes and DSA to build an alternative

JC: There's certainly a lot of crossover with DSA and Labor Notes. I think that DSA is where the masses are, and where the masses can, can be. It's the largest socialist organization in the United States. We have over one hundred thousand members, which doesn't sound like a lot when you hear how much La France Insoumise has. But we have a lot of other supporters who vote for our politicians and agree with our politics. They might not just actually be a member. I would like to see every member of DSA become a serious organizer actively. recruiting people into our organization because the more and more we build up, the more likely we could become an actual party in terms of revolutionary activity.

Your average American, when you talk to them, whether in the workplace or on the street, they are very fed up with the way things are. But there's somewhat of a fatalism and a nihilism and also, a hopelessness and an uncertainty about what to do. So I think for us as DSA and other revolutionaries, we need to have honest and open conversations and be kind, caring, thoughtful and cultivate their inquisitive nature when it comes up. But even when the masses are downtrodden, we should also make sure that our movement is a joyous movement that they can be a part of. Because I think when I decided to join Tempest Collective and DSA, I felt cared for and nurtured by my comrades and it helped me find a venue and an avenue to push for change. And we've done a lot of great work in both organizations, especially in the labor movement. I think that DSA is doing a great job of working with different organizations around immigrant rights and resistance against ICE.

I am worried about the midterm elections because I am worried about the centrist Democrats and their attack on, uh,

DSA elected or DSA candidates. Well, maybe I didn't probably didn't really answer your last question. I don't think I did. I guess I don't know how soon we are towards a real revolutionary moment. That's the thing. I'm not quite sure we're really there yet.

AL: What are the main debates inside liberal nodes and also inside the revolutionary collectives that we know best: Bread and Roses, Tempest. Solidarity – and Labor Notes if its relevant. Can you explain what are the main issues?

JC: I think that all of us who support the Fourth International feel very strongly that the conditions that workers are in right now is the main priority and has always been the main priority. The workplace is the site of struggle. We spend so much time in the United States at work. Some of us see our colleagues more than we see our families. And we need to be organizing new unions constantly. And anytime we have a contract up, we need to be gearing up for a strike but doing it in a way that is democratic, strategic and one where you can really win as much as you can. And, and it's very important to note that especially in the private sector.

All of these bosses, the owners, the CEOs, they're aligned with Trump. They're aligned with fascism. And when we decide to have a fight against the boss, we're also having a fight, a struggle against the ultimate boss, which is the president of the United States. And I think that some on the left don't see workers or the workplace as a site of struggle. They think that workers are reactionary and we have to just forget about them. But the reality is the working class is filled with contradictions. And it's up to us to have some leadership, to guide them, to push them in the right direction so that when we can do this in the workplace, we can take it outside of the workplace. We can push for revolutionary activity outside of the workplace.

So I think we can't put the cart before the horse. A lot of the left, focus too much on the outside and not too much of what they can control. And I do think that Palestine, the liberation of Palestinian people is a huge and still a very important movement right now. I mean, I just saw last week Maryland divested sixty five million of public pensions out of Israel. More and more of the public sector unions are pushing for divestment. This is not a campaign that we can abandon. We have to see it all the way through. And then so once we divest our pensions, we can work towards ensuring that no more of our taxpayer dollars in the U.S. are going to Israel. And the hope is that once we get to the midterm and the presidential election, ultimately, hopefully, we would get to a place where Israel is not taking charge of the United States. The United States is taking charge of the United States that we are focusing on the issues that people are facing at home and with the homelessness and the unemployment crisis that we're facing and the economic. Other economic issues like affordability, crisis.

PD: A while ago, you mentioned May Day 2028 as being the big target for mobilization. So that's in two years time. That's because it's the year of the presidential election?

JC: Yes. That's why Shawn Fain chose it as a focal point, as a flashpoint, and especially as it would be six months before the presidential election; it could really turn the tide in the direction of where things go. We could see how different candidates react to that, who will align themselves with workers. And whoever aligns themselves with the workers should be the candidate that the working class would choose at the ballot box. That would be incredible.

I think that it could be unlikely that any of those candidates will relate to the strike in a positive way. Some might ignore or say terrible things, but either way, if it's done right, that strike could change the trajectory of what happens at the ballot box and really shine a light on workers issues when we're deciding at the ballot box. For example, when Kamala Harris was running and she said she wanted an opportunity economy - that did not resonate to the with the working class. And it was apparent by the way that she would talk. And unfortunately, because Trump - I would say he's no longer a populist, but he was a populist - resonates with the working class. The elements of the working class that voted for him. So I think if we can get back to, um, whether it's a populist like Bernie or someone like Mamdani,

“Against Trump we have to defend our neighbors, defend our democratic rights and our labor rights”

who has a clear affordability agenda that will be attractive to us, but we have to shape that as the working class. We can't wait for someone to do that for us, it has to come from below, not from above.

6 June 2026

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[1] Photo - screenshot from l'Anticapitaliste video.

[2] For a first report on this conference see Dan La Botz “[Four Thousand Worker Activists at Labor Notes Conference Plan to Fight](#)”.

[3] <https://preaprez.wordpress.com/2014/02/11/pete-camarata-best-known-teamster-rebel/>

[4] <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jul/14/misuse-crowd-control-weapons-ice-protesters-blindings-traumatic-brain-injuries-report>

[5] https://keywiki.org/Jackson_Potter

[6] <https://labornotes.org/store/keepgoing>