



# Speak Out Now

December 9, 2023

[mail@speakoutsocialists.org](mailto:mail@speakoutsocialists.org)

[speakoutsocialists.org](https://speakoutsocialists.org)

(510) 343-9105

## 2024: New Year, New Possibilities

2023 was a hurricane of issues. We have good reason to feel like the whole world is going to hell in a hand basket.

Globally, wars are increasing. The genocide in Gaza has horrified millions around the world. The war in Ukraine rages on, and regional conflicts elsewhere are escalating. This year the world hit 110 million people displaced from their homes, and an additional 280 million live permanently outside their birth countries—often due to economic necessity.

The global climate crisis is worsening, with 2023 breaking all sorts of records, from global temperatures to the number and degree of devastating storms.

In the U.S., most of us have taken a wage cut due to inflation. The average U.S. worker will spend an extra \$8,500 per year because of inflation, and that doesn't even include the increasing costs of housing! And housing costs are certainly going up, while landlords evict more people now than prior to the pandemic. All sorts of costs are going up; more people have taken on second jobs, and are working more just to get by. Meanwhile, millions have been cut from medicaid and medical insurance costs have continued to increase.

The increasing costs for us have gone directly into the pockets of the wealthy. Many corporations have made record profits in the last two years, continuing from pandemic highs.

The politicians have facilitated these attacks on our lives, and we know the future they hold out for us: one where all our basic needs—housing, healthcare, food, water, electricity—are all for profit.

None of this represents what the majority of U.S. residents want. The vast majority of us (85%) believe that it should be a “top national priority” to guarantee safe, decent, and affordable housing for all. 61% of us believe abortion should be legal in all or most cases. 57% believe the government should ensure health coverage for all. 61% believe there should be a permanent ceasefire in Gaza.

While the majority of us know that things have to change for our lives to improve, how to take action to get there is often not clear. And yet, as 2023 comes to an end, we should acknowledge the hard organizing that people have done over the past year.

By October of this year, there had been 354 strikes involving roughly 492,000 workers. This is eight times the number of workers as in the same period in 2021! These strikes included some against some of the largest and most powerful corporations: the Big Three auto companies, Kaiser Permanente, and Hollywood's conglomerates.

These struggles were overwhelmingly supported by the U.S. population with 74% responding favorably for unions and strikes in polls. Some union officials took on militant language against corporate greed and for a real class struggle. Screen writers took up a struggle against artificial intelligence, and the auto workers set the scene to organize in the face of big shifts towards electric vehicle manufacturing.

This year, we organized the largest demonstrations for climate action since 2019. Quickly following the genocidal attacks on Gaza, we have seen the largest demonstrations for Palestine ever in the United States, including actions by record numbers of Jewish people.

The problems remain, but we should celebrate the actions we have taken! The difference we can make in 2024 rests in the efforts we make to organize ourselves. As we get together with friends and colleagues for holiday parties and gatherings, let's take time to consider what type of world we need to fight for in the coming year. How can we take actions, however small, to come together?

What's more, we can enter the new year reminding ourselves and others that it is working people who do all of the work to make society run. Why shouldn't we make the decisions that impact our lives? We can toast to a year where we take action with that knowledge, and organize for a world that serves working people around the world.

## Taking Healthcare Away From Children

Since April, states have taken away Medicaid health insurance from at least 2 million children as the poverty rate for children doubled. Ordinary people are bearing the consequences: children cannot access expensive life-saving medications and families must cancel medical appointments.

Young people's health is jeopardized by the U.S.'s private, for-profit healthcare system and decisions of the minority in power. Politicians responsible for funding Medicaid don't see impoverished people's well-being as a priority. After the pandemic policy that guaranteed Medicaid coverage ended, states quickly repealed people's eligibility. In the process, nearly 9 million people have lost Medicaid.

In countries with similar economies and some form of universal healthcare, workers' struggles won those much better systems. To guarantee healthcare for all, we must fight to replace the system run by the few with one run by the millions.

## Democrats' Hypocrisy on Palestine

Israel's genocidal war on the Palestinian people has pushed many younger people to have sympathy for Palestinians. Many are furious that Biden and the Democratic Party support Israel without condition.

The majority of Democratic voters under 35 are likely to sympathize with Palestinians, and many don't think the U.S. should supply Israel with military aid. Young Palestinian-Americans feel the Democratic Party has let them down and is actively supporting the oppressor of their people.

Thousands are seeing through the thin façade of the Democratic Party. The Biden administration and Congressional Democrats' public statements advising Israel do everything to avoid civilian casualties are ridiculous! The U.S. government holds the power to stop Israel from killing civilians. They could stop their billions of dollars in military support for Israel. But they won't.

We live in the wealthiest country in the world, and it is our labor that has created all of this wealth. But we aren't the ones who benefit from this. The super rich – the bosses of the big corporations and banks – keep the wealth and make all the decisions. But working people do the work that makes society run, and we can organize to unite our forces. And when we do, we have enormous power to change things and make a better world.

**Get in touch with us if you want  
to fight for a better world!**

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## Working Overtime to Afford the Holidays

It's that time of year when many working people face the dilemma of paying our bills while also scraping up the money to buy presents for our children and loved ones.

This struggle has worsened with sky-high prices outpacing wages. 61% of Americans living paycheck to paycheck.

Even when we spend the year breaking our backs working long hours, in the end we struggle to get by. This is absurd, this country is overflowing with the money, resources, and ability to give everyone a holiday they deserve, but it is the bosses who prioritize lining their pockets at our expense off the work we do.

## Oil Prevails at Climate Conference

The so-called world leaders ended their annual conference to supposedly address the climate crisis. The 28<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties (COP28) was in fact the most blatant convention for oil profiteers yet. The conference was hosted in the 7th largest oil-producing country in the world – and run by Sultan Al Jaber, the CEO of the state-owned oil company.

World leaders could not be more clear: they are still increasing global extraction of fossil fuels. They have absolutely no intention of ending this madness. Rather, they are driving us towards our own extinction! It is up to us, not world powers, to save the future of our planet!

