

The ‘Militant’ helps workers ‘know what’s going on’

BY MARY MARTIN

“People need to know what’s going on politically,” Kulwinder Singh told Communist League members Felicity Coggan and Mike Tucker when they went to his home in Mt. Wellington, New Zealand, Oct. 11. Singh had been

SWP FALL ‘MILITANT,’ BOOK, FUND DRIVE

a *Militant* subscriber in the past, but fell out of touch with the League. “It’s not their fault they don’t, it’s the fault of the system that tells them to just shut their mouth and do their job.”

He was glad to be back in touch, and got a six-month subscription and a copy of *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes. He said he would like to join members of the League in taking the paper and books to workers.

The Communist League in New Zealand, as well as the SWP in the U.S. and Communist Leagues in

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Fall campaign to sell Militant subscriptions and books
Sept. 16 - Nov 21 (Week 4)

| Country | Sub quota | Subs sold | Books quota | Books sold |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| UNITED STATES | | | | |
| Albany | 95 | 32 | 95 | 35 |
| Atlanta | 85 | 42 | 85 | 31 |
| Chicago | 115 | 47 | 115 | 39 |
| Colorado | 30 | 5 | 30 | 5 |
| Lincoln | 30 | 11 | 30 | 12 |
| Los Angeles | 135 | 52 | 135 | 36 |
| Miami | 45 | 19 | 45 | 11 |
| New York | 180 | 81 | 180 | 65 |
| Oakland | 125 | 78 | 135 | 66 |
| Philadelphia | 70 | 39 | 70 | 28 |
| Seattle | 105 | 51 | 105 | 30 |
| Twin Cities | 75 | 28 | 75 | 40 |
| Washington | 80 | 41 | 80 | 28 |
| Total U.S. | 1,170 | 526 | 1,180 | 426 |
| Prisoners | 20 | 8 | | |
| UNITED KINGDOM | | | | |
| London | 65 | 41 | 65 | 27 |
| Manchester | 60 | 28 | 60 | 20 |
| Total U.K. | 125 | 69 | 125 | 47 |
| CANADA | | | | |
| Montreal | 60 | 27 | 60 | 29 |
| Vancouver | 45 | 22 | 45 | 19 |
| Total Canada | 105 | 49 | 105 | 48 |
| NEW ZEALAND | | | | |
| New Zealand | 50 | 23 | 50 | 18 |
| AUSTRALIA | | | | |
| Australia | 45 | 19 | 45 | 17 |
| Total | 1,515 | 694 | 1,505 | 556 |
| SHOULD BE | 1,500 | 667 | 1,500 | 667 |

Workers face carnage amid capitalist ‘recovery’

BY TERRY EVANS

The broad social and economic assaults battering working people are not fading away. These attacks led millions of workers not to vote in 2016, or to vote for Donald Trump for president, seeking to “drain the swamp” of Washington politicians of both parties who do nothing to stop the disaster they face.

And the Democrats, the liberal media, some Republicans and the middle-class left, still furious about the election of Donald Trump, continue to try to drive him from office.

Eight years into an official economic “recovery,” millions continue to face declining incomes and a lack of full-time or decent-paying jobs, especially in smaller cities and rural areas. The metropolitan area that includes Steubenville, Ohio, and Weirton, West Virginia, is one of the so-called “rust belt” regions, where workers switched from supporting Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012 — seeking change and not getting it — to voting for Trump in 2016.

“There are thousands fewer jobs in

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Deaths, damage from California fires heightened by capitalism

BY BETSEY STONE

SANTA ROSA, Calif. — The first time Rose Ruiz suspected something was wrong was around midnight when she saw news of the fires on Facebook, she told members of the Socialist Workers Party who came here to show solidarity. When she went outside to check, she saw flames rising nearby. She and her husband grabbed the children, jumped in the car and fled.

Under the impact of strong winds, some in excess of 50 mph, the fires quickly swept through Sonoma, Napa and nearby counties. Some fires advanced more than a football field every three seconds. Santa Rosa was one of the hardest hit places.

The area is home to hundreds of wineries, with grape vineyards lining the hillsides and valleys.

And the situation of workers affected by the disaster is made worse by the workings of the dog-eat-dog capitalist system, which puts profits

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Protest the assault against Kurdistan!



Reuters

Iraqi government forces seized Kirkuk, and entered nearby oilfields, above, Oct. 16. Joined by Tehran-backed militia, they also seized airport, military bases, other cities. Washington gave Baghdad green light to attack Kurds, aimed at blocking an independent Kurdistan.

With US complicity, Baghdad seizes Kurdish city of Kirkuk

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

With Washington’s support and weaponry, the Iraqi army and the Tehran-backed Shiite militia Hashd al-Shaabi seized the city of Kirkuk Oct. 16, as well as the oil fields, military base and airport in the area. The moves come three weeks after an overwhelming vote — 93 percent — by Kurds and others in the Kurdistan region, including Kirkuk, for independence. Backed by Washington, Berlin and the European Union, the capitalist rulers in Baghdad, Ankara, Damascus and Tehran demanded the referendum be nullified, or the Kurds would face the consequences.

Thousands of Kurds fled Kirkuk, heading towards the capital Erbil and

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US out of Mideast! Accept Kurds referendum vote!

The following statement was released Oct. 18 by Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

The Socialist Workers Party says: End the assaults against Kurdistan now! Recognize the overwhelming results of the Kurdish independence referendum! U.S. out of the Middle East!

We urge working people to support the centurylong fight of the Kurdish people for independence. Through every step they’ve taken along this road

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Florida prison officials step up censorship against ‘Militant’

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Florida Department of Corrections has stepped up its censorship of the *Militant* over the last several months. On Sept. 19 the prison system’s Literature Review Committee upheld the impoundment of the July 17 issue. Prison authorities claimed that an article reporting on the fight against censorship of two previous issues — which the committee itself had reversed — was a “threat to the security, good order, or discipline” of the prison.

That same day the *Militant* received notice that the Sept. 11 issue had been barred. The reason this time? A front-page article on a San Francisco protest

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Fall campaign set to expand orders for Pathfinder books

BY JIM ALTENBERG

Volunteers for Pathfinder Press are launching an ambitious fall effort to win 95 new orders from bookstores and libraries across North America for books by Socialist Workers Party leaders and speeches and writings by other working-class revolutionaries. These books speak directly to where the crisis facing working people comes from and the revolutionary program needed to take it on.

Fall sales will build on the success of the spring/summer effort, where volunteers in 16 cities in North America brought in 99 new orders. A buyer for the largest bookstore chain in Canada told a volunteer in Toronto that Pathfinder titles had sold at a higher rate than average for titles on history and politics. He

is considering expanding the number of stores that carry Pathfinder books.

Two long-standing Pathfinder customers in San Francisco re-ordered titles on fascism, the Russian and Cuban revolutions, and the fight against racism in the U.S.

The buyer at a bookstore in a British Columbia island town placed an order that included Pathfinder's new, popular titles — *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* and *The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record*, both by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, and *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters. Volunteers have set a goal of getting 36 orders for these three titles as well as 28 for *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, also by Barnes.

A highlight of the summer effort to expand the reach of Pathfinder's revolutionary arsenal was participation in the 2017 conference of the American Library Association in Chicago. A large, attractive booth with a broad array of titles drew hundreds of librarians, who looked through the books, purchased copies and joined political discussions with Pathfinder volunteers. Many got copies of the three new titles, knowing their readers would be interested.

Then Pathfinder volunteers began a systematic campaign to contact all 160 people who signed up at the conference for more information. A call to a university librarian in Utah brought an immediate order for 35 books, mainly titles on the Russian Revolution, with more to come. Calls to ALA participants in the Chicago area have led to a number of follow-up visits. One asked for sug-

Paris: Books by SWP leaders sell at protests, book fair



Militant/Claude Bleton

PARIS — Supporters of Pathfinder books in France sold 175 books by leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and other revolutionaries at the annual Fete de l'Humanité, organized by the French Communist Party newspaper Sept. 15-17. They also sold 53 books at demonstrations of tens of thousands of workers here Sept. 12 and 23 protesting anti-worker changes to the Labor Code by the government of President Emmanuel Macron.

Altogether, the best-sellers were three Pathfinder French editions — 37 copies of *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* 31 of *The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record*, both by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes, and 30 of *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters. In addition, 22 copies of *Socialism and Man in Cuba* by Che Guevara and 16 of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Barnes were sold, as well as 22 *Militants* and 3 *Militant* subscriptions.

"I don't know if I'm on the right or the left. I bought the books in order to better understand what is happening today," Patrick, a bus driver who got the three-book package of new titles, told us. "The unions today are too dependent on the government, we need new kinds of unions." The sales were the strongest in nearly a decade, close to doubling results from 2016.

— DEREK JEFFERS

Capitalism's World Disorder

by Jack Barnes

"A new pattern is being woven in struggle today as working people emerge from a period of retreat. The emerging pattern is taking shape, defined by the

actions of a vanguard whose ranks increase with every single worker or farmer who reaches out to others with the hand of solidarity and offers to fight together."

pathfinderpress.com

THE MILITANT

Fight frame-up of rail workers in Quebec

The bosses' profit drive and disregard for safety led to 47 people losing their lives in the 2013 rail disaster in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec. Two rail workers are standing trial, charged with having caused their deaths. All working people have a stake in fighting against this frame-up.



Militant/John Steele

Jean Paradis, survivor of rail disaster, speaks outside trial supporting framed-up workers.

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306 W. 37TH ST., 13TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018.

The Militant

Vol. 81/No. 40

Closing news date: October 18, 2017

Editor: John Studer

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Emma Johnson, Jacob Perasso, Maggie Trowe, Brian Williams.

Published weekly except for one week in January, one week in June, one week in July, one week in September, one week in December.

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Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: For one year send \$35 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: For one year send

\$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Africa, Asia, and the Middle East: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

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Submissions to the *Militant* may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant's* views. These are expressed in editorials.

‘Need to know what’s going on’

Continued from front page
Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom, is on a nine-week drive to expand the reach of the *Militant* and books by SWP leaders. At the heart of the effort is knocking on workers’ doors in cities large and small, discussing the communist movement and its perspectives for fighting the disastrous effects of the capitalist rulers’ wars and economic crisis. Often this leads to meeting their families and friends, deepening the discussions.

In the past week members in New Zealand sold 10 more books toward their goal of 50, including five on workers’ doorsteps and two to co-workers.

We are on schedule for the subscriptions at the halfway mark of the campaign, which runs through Nov. 21. But we need to pick up the pace for the books. Party members report real interest in discussions about the struggle of the Kurdish people fighting for independence in the Middle East, the colonial status of Puerto Rico, and the deepening crisis of the two-party system in the U.S.

Joan Porter writes from Philadelphia that a *Militant* subscriber who works with her at Walmart joined her at a recent Militant Labor Forum there featuring Osborne Hart, SWP candidate for mayor of New York. The co-worker said she really enjoyed the presentation and meeting other workers. She bought *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible? ‘It’s the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US ‘Justice’ System,’* and made a contribution to the SWP’s \$100,000 fall fund drive, which runs concurrently with the *Militant* and book efforts.

The books Porter mentions, along with *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record* are five books offered at a special discount with a *Militant* subscription. They are written by Barnes and SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters. *‘It’s the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US ‘Justice’ System’* is by the Cuban Five, five Cuban revolutionaries who were framed up and imprisoned in the U.S. for up to 16 years for defending their revolution.

Pamela Holmes in London reports that Communist League members and supporters there met Keith Woods, a pharmaceutical plant worker and union member. He told them that the company has been replacing full-time workers with temporary agency staff, increasing the divisions in the workforce. Woods

was attracted to the front-page article in last week’s *Militant*, “To Unite the Working Class Would Be Tremendous.” And he laughed when he saw the book title *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* “They try to make out that we’re stupid and backward,” he said, getting a copy.

Beverly Bernardo writes from Montreal that when she and Michel Prairie knocked on Zahra Yahiaoui’s door Oct. 12, she was pleased to hear about the Communist League’s campaign of Philippe Tessier for mayor. She responded enthusiastically when asked if she wanted to see some of the books in French and got *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* She signed up to receive *Militant* articles translated into French and to get emails about CL activities, “so I can keep in touch,” she said.

From Chicago Isabella Graham writes that a co-worker who is a new subscriber also got *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. He and his wife joined Graham after work to look at the books. They bought *Puerto Rico — Independence Is a Necessity* by Rafael Cancel Miranda, *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* and *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?*



Militant/Katy LeRougetel
Members of Communist League in Canada campaign in Lower Mainland, Vancouver. Michel Dugré, left, met Tim Daley, bus driver, and Tara Hallam. Hallam got *Militant* subscription and campaign book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*.

“I asked them if they know anyone else they thought would be interested,” Graham said. “And the next day he brought me \$15 for *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* in Spanish for his cousin.”

Graham also got a pledge for \$10 to the party fund from another subscriber.

In Oakland, California, Carrie Larson reports that a co-worker who got a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy

of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* also got a copy of a SWP statement calling for amnesty for immigrant workers. She told Larson she took a photo of it and sent it to her list of relatives and friends.

If you would like to help get *Militant* subscriptions and campaign books out, or make a donation to the party fund, contact the Socialist Workers Party office nearest you listed on page 8.

DC meeting discusses revolutionary legacy of Sankara



BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

WASHINGTON — Over 100 people, many from Africa, came together here Oct. 14 to discuss the political legacy of Thomas Sankara, the central leader of the 1983-87 revolution in Burkina Faso. This is the 30th anniversary of his assassination.

The next issue of the *Militant* will carry a full report on the meeting. Present at the event were Sankara’s brothers Pascal, with microphone, and Paul, second row left; and from left, sisters, Collette, Florence and Pauline.

“Thomas Sankara is important for the Africa of today,” said Gnaka Lagoke,

founder of the Revival of Panafricanism Forum, welcoming participants.

Under the political leadership of Sankara, workers and peasants in the West African country began to fight hunger, disease, illiteracy and economic backwardness imposed by imperialism in the former French colony. The revolutionary government carried out campaigns to draw women into social and political life.

Acting on the interests of the enemies of the revolution, the propertied classes of Africa, and the world’s capitalist powers — above all imperialist France — Blaise Compaoré led a military coup and organized Sankara’s assassination on Oct. 15, 1987.

“Some in Burkina Faso talk about ‘truth’ and ‘justice’ for Thomas Sankara. We are here to continue his fight,” Pascal Sankara told the media. “We demand to know exactly what happened Oct 15, 1987.”

| Socialist Workers Party Fund Drive | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Sept. 16 - Nov. 21- Week 4 | | | |
| Area | Quota | Collected | % |
| Albany | \$5,000 | \$2,174 | 43% |
| Atlanta | \$11,200 | \$4,025 | 36% |
| Chicago | \$12,000 | \$4,645 | 39% |
| Colorado | \$700 | \$200 | 29% |
| Lincoln | \$300 | \$106 | 35% |
| Los Angeles | \$9,400 | \$4,175 | 44% |
| Miami | \$3,500 | \$830 | 24% |
| New York | \$17,000 | \$3,451 | 20% |
| Oakland | \$14,500 | \$5,374 | 37% |
| Philadelphia | \$4,200 | \$550 | 13% |
| Seattle | \$8,200 | \$3,787 | 46% |
| Twin Cities | \$4,800 | \$400 | 8% |
| Washington, DC | \$7,250 | \$1,396 | 19% |
| Other | \$1,200 | \$500 | 42% |
| Total | \$99,250 | \$31,613 | 32% |
| Should Be | \$100,000 | \$44,444 | 44% |

MILITANT SUBSCRIPTION & BOOK SPECIALS

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power
by Jack Barnes
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These books just \$5 each with a Militant subscription (trial offer for new readers: 12 weeks \$5)

Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?
Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism
by Jack Barnes

The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record
Why Washington Fears Working People
by Jack Barnes

Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?
A Necessary Debate Among Working People
by Mary-Alice Waters

‘It’s the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US ‘Justice’ System’
The Cuban Five Talk About Their Lives Within the US Working Class.

\$7 EACH WITHOUT SUBSCRIPTION

To subscribe or purchase books at these prices, contact Socialist Workers Party or Communist League branches listed on page 8.

Madrid steps up threats, attacks against Catalan national rights

BY EMMA JOHNSON

The Spanish government is ratcheting up pressure against the elected government and independence forces in Catalonia with new threats to curtail national and democratic rights for the people there.

On Oct. 16, the Spanish National Court imprisoned Jordi Cuixart and Jordi Sánchez, who organized some of the massive pro-referendum demonstrations, while they await trial on charges of sedition. More than 100,000 immediately took to the streets in Barcelona to demand their release. Further protests are planned this weekend.

That same day Madrid issued an ultimatum to Catalan President Carles Puigdemont, giving him a deadline of Oct. 19 to declare clearly that he won't seek independence. The alternative is for Madrid to revoke major aspects of Catalonia's self-rule.

Puigdemont had declared independence in a speech to Catalonia's parliament Oct. 10 only to suspend it a moment later, saying he wants a dialogue with Madrid before enforcing it.

Facing Madrid's attacks, and with the main capitalist rulers in Europe and the EU bureaucrats backing the Spanish government, major capitalist banks and corporations in Catalonia are relocating their headquarters elsewhere to avoid losing access to markets both in Spain and across the continent.

On Oct. 1 Madrid sent thousands of Civil Guard and National Police to attempt to halt the independence referendum with violence, but failed to stop it. The vote resulted in a sizable majority for independence, but the turnout was cut to some 40 percent. This is consistent both with previous referendums and poll results, showing less than half the population favors splitting away from Spain.

Madrid has said that it will enter talks with Catalonia's government only after Puigdemont acknowledges that both the referendum and the independence declaration violated the Spanish Constitution.

Xavier García Albiol, leader in Catalonia for Spain's ruling People's Party, has called for banning parties that advocate independence from running in coming elections. This would apply to the three main independence groups, which represent a majority in the Catalan parliament.

The Spanish rulers banned the Basque Batasuna party in 2003, because it called for Basque independence.

In addition to jailing the two pro-independence leaders, Madrid has also put the chief of Catalonia's police force on trial for failing to stop the referendum.

Bourgeois and middle-class advo-

cates of independence had illusions that they would get support from the EU bureaucracy and European governments. But the capitalist rulers have no interest in more divisions in an already splintering union.

"I wouldn't like a European Union in 15 years that consists of some 98 states," Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission, said in an Oct. 13 speech at Luxembourg University. "It's already relatively difficult with 28 and with 27 [after Brexit] not easier, but with 98 it would simply be impossible." The EU bureaucracy in Brussels considers the bloc has 98 major regions.

Both German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron have personally asserted their support for "Spain's unity" to Spanish Prime Minister

With US complicity, Baghdad invades Kurdistan

Continued from front page

Sulaymaniyah in the eastern Kurdistan region. Within 48 hours Iraqi forces also took over Kurdish-controlled areas near Mosul, Sinjar and Khanaqin.

Peshmerga, the Kurdistan Regional Government's army, had deployed some 9,000 troops to Kirkuk together with civilian volunteers, vowing to defend the city. Divisions emerged within the KRG leadership. Patriotic Union of Kurdistan officials "betrayed Kurdistan" by "abandoning key fronts," said a peshmerga statement. The PUK along with the Kurdish Democratic Party is part of the Kurdistan Regional Government coalition.

Facing this situation, the remaining peshmerga retreated to avoid a bloody clash with high casualties, possible conflict with other Kurdish forces, and to concentrate their forces to defend the autonomous Kurdish region and its fight for independence.

"The durable nation of Kurdistan, the loyal people and volunteers, brave peshmerga, the honorable families of martyrs," said an Oct. 17 statement issued by KRG President Masoud Barzani, "the blood your sons gave and continue to give on the freedom path of Kurdistan, the loud voices you raised for the independence of Kurdistan that you sent to all nations and world countries will not be wasted now or ever.

"The Kurdistan nation with the power of the brave ones, sooner or later, will eventually reach its right and sacred objectives," the statement said. "And now we advocate for the protection of the unity and resilience of the Kurdistan nation and the political parties."

The 30 million Kurds living in Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey — the largest nation worldwide without its own state — were inspired by Kurdistan's independence referendum victory, which also aroused solidarity from workers throughout the Mideast and worldwide.

Qassem Soleimani, the commander of Iran's Quds Force, was in Kirkuk leading the assault. He was designated "military adviser" to Hashd al-Shaabi by the Iraqi government.



AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti

Massive protest in Barcelona Oct. 17 demanding release of leaders of two of Catalonia's main pro-independence organizations imprisoned by Spanish National Court on charges of sedition.

Mariano Rajoy.

The present showdown in Spain and Catalonia come out of two developments. The first is the effects of the global capitalist crisis of production,

trade and employment on working people. The steep 2007-2008 downturn increased the economic and class divisions throughout the imperialist

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"In the beginning the Peshmerga put up a fierce defense," reported the Kurdish news agency Rudaw. "But the Hashd al-Shaabi widened their advance, at which point many Peshmerga were wounded and killed." Some were beheaded.

'Assault with American weapons'

"We're not taking sides," President Donald Trump told the media Oct. 16. But Washington opposed the referendum and insists the Kurds submit to maintaining the territorial integrity of Iraq. "Not taking sides" really meant they backed the Iraqi government and its Tehran-backed allies.

This assault was "launched by American weapons, armored vehicles, tanks and other coalition weapons," said an Oct. 15 statement from Peshmerga General Command. These were given to the Iraqi forces "under the name of the war on ISIS [Islamic State]" while "Peshmerga, also in the fight against ISIS, were not given necessary weapons to defend themselves."

"The Kurds are amazing, and have been through a lot, but we need to get over our sentimentality," Michael O'Hanlon, senior fellow at Brookings Institution and former advisor to the CIA, told the *Wall Street Journal* Oct. 18. "Their ambitions inside Iraq are not compatible with a stable internal situation for that country."

Leading up to the military attack, the capitalist rulers throughout the region had launched a blockade and other attacks against the Kurds. The Iraqi regime halted international flights to the Kurdistan region. Ankara announced it is closing Turkey's airspace to flights in and out of Kurdistan and planned to close its border crossings. Both Ankara and Tehran carried out military maneuvers with Iraqi forces on the Kurdish border.

Ankara threatened to join the assault on Kirkuk, claiming falsely that the peshmerga had invited fighters from the Turkish Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) to join them there.

Kirkuk, historically Kurdish, has been claimed by Baghdad since an Arabization policy was carried out in the area by former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. Baghdad refused to

hold an agreed-upon 2007 referendum on Kirkuk's status, fearing a majority would vote for inclusion in the KRG. Peshmerga forces stepped in when the Iraqi army collapsed and fled in the face of attacks by Islamic State in 2014, preventing the region's oil fields from falling under IS control.

Taking advantage of the assault on Kirkuk, Islamic State seized two villages north of the city, Makha and Twelay, which had been under peshmerga protection.

Pressure on Kurdish leaders

The squeeze on Kurdistan and assault on Kirkuk opened up public disagreements within the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, which along with the Kurdish Democratic Party, make up the majority KRG. Bafel Talabani, the son of late former Iraqi President and PUK leader Jalal Talabani, called Oct. 12 for dissolving the Kurdish-led Kirkuk Provincial Council and acceding to Baghdad's demands that negotiations must be based on rejecting the referendum results.

But the KDP and many PUK leaders rejected these demands.

After Kirkuk fell, Kosrat Rasul Ali, vice president of Kurdistan and deputy leader of the PUK, said "Some apostates abandoned the PUK's doctrine without returning to our party's leadership and became the invaders' assistant to obtain some personal, temporary gains."

Kurdish fighters have been the most effective fighting force against the reactionary Islamic State in both Iraq and Syria. Raqqa, the terror group's former capital, fell to Kurdish-led forces Oct. 17.

With the recent defeats of IS, new conflicts have come to the fore, as Washington, Moscow and the capitalist rulers in the region look to assert their conflicting political and economic interests. All oppose the Kurds' struggle for independence.

The Kurds in Syria are likely to face attack by the Basher al-Assad dictatorship there. And, the *Wall Street Journal* writes, "It's unclear whether the U.S., which proclaimed neutrality in Iraq's dispute with that nation's Kurds, will do anything to protect its Syrian Kurdish allies if that happens."

— CALENDAR —

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Reportback From 'In the Footsteps of Che' Brigade to Cuba. Fri., Oct. 27, 6 p.m. *Trinity Episcopal Church, 125 E. 26th St. Tel.: (312) 952-2618. Sponsored by Chicago Cuba Coalition.*

Deaths, damage in wildfires

Continued from front page

first and always before human needs.

Ruiz and her mother, Jerri Seden, were among the volunteers gathered in front of a market in Santa Rosa Oct. 15, near an area of the city the fire swept through. They were giving away toothbrushes, diapers, clothes and other items donated by people in the area to those who lost homes or had evacuated.

“They didn’t send out an alert, like the Amber Alerts,” Ruiz told us. Her mother added, “Everyone was on their own. We got no help in getting out.”

Many residents learned of the danger only when the fire approached their doorsteps, some dodging flames and flying embers as they rushed to their cars. The death toll of those unable to flee in time is up to 40, with dozens still reported missing.

A week after the fires began, heavy smoke with particulates dangerous to health hung over the whole area. And although the fires were more contained, some were still burning.

Smoke and particles darkened the sky in the Bay Area and forced cancellation of high school football games and other outdoor events.

Some 5,700 houses and other structures have been burned to the ground, with many others severely damaged. Areas with large homes were hit as well as working-class neighborhoods. But it’s working people who face the biggest challenges.

Blanca Tucker, a factory worker, who fled her home in the middle of the night, told us she was appreciative of the volunteers distributing clothes, towels and toiletries. Neither she nor her children had been able to change clothes for a week, she said.

A worker selling masks at Home Depot for protection from the heavy smoke said that farmworkers who had no other place to stay were staying near the store at night and in the nearby Walmart parking lot.

Ninety percent of the grape harvest is already in, but some farmworkers have been working without protective masks in unharvested fields drenched in ashes and smoke.

In addition to those made homeless, many workers have lost jobs due to the destruction of stores, hotels and other businesses. In an area already noted for skyrocketing rents and high prices for homes, affordable housing will be hard to find.

Although this was the biggest fire to hit northern California since the 1930s, it was far from unexpected. Fall fires at the end of the dry season, exacerbated by winds, are a yearly event in this state.

This season the danger was increased because of years of drought along with an increase in burnable vegetation that grew up during last winter’s rains.

Nevertheless, state and county officials failed to make adequate preparations that could save lives, livelihoods



Militant/Betsey Stone

Trena Casey, wearing mask for protection against smoke, arranges articles collected by volunteers for people who lost homes or were under evacuation orders in Santa Rosa, California.

and homes.

A prime suspect in the search for the causes of many of the fires is PG&E, the privately owned electrical company. The night the fires began, emergency fire crews in Sonoma County were sent out to at least 10 different locations to deal with exploding transformers, sparking wires and other problems with the electrical system amid the high winds.

PG&E cuts back maintenance

PG&E has a long history of hefty fines for cutting back on maintenance, including keeping trees and vegetation away from power lines and transformers. In April the state Public Utilities Commission fined PG&E \$8.3 million for failing to maintain a power line that sparked the Butte Fire in Amador County in 2015. That fire burned for 22 days, killing two and incinerating over 70,000 acres.

Company spokespeople always say the fires weren’t their fault, because the winds were out of control. But in the 1994 Rough and Ready fire, PG&E bosses were found guilty of 739 counts of negligence. It was determined they diverted nearly \$80 million from their tree-cutting program, turning it into profits.

God forbid the utility bosses should consider burying the power lines underground in this wildfire-prone region.

Added to this has been the rapid expansion of housing developments into

wooded and rural areas here, with little attention paid to the danger of building in areas prone to fires.

These areas are in what are called “wildland-urban interface areas,” where the houses are literally surrounded by potential tinder. Because of this, insurance costs soar and many residents aren’t made aware of the danger.

After the disaster, residents will face challenges trying to collect insurance — if they have any. Only 40 percent of home renters have insurance and some 60 percent of all people with insurance don’t have enough.

Michael Mallory, a firefighter at the beginning of a 48-hour shift, was one of those gathered in front of the market in Santa Rosa, where his wife organized distribution of clothes and other necessities. Human solidarity by working people has been key in reducing harm and loss, from hurricanes in Texas, Florida and the Caribbean to the wildfires.

Mallory told us about the crucial role hundreds of prisoners play who are trained to fight the fires that break out every year at the end of the dry season.

“Without these groups what is needed to fight these fires would never get done,” he said. The media has given very little credit to the contribution of these fellow workers — or the fact they’re only paid \$1 an hour.

Norton Sandler contributed to this article.

Attacks on Catalan national rights

Continued from page 4

world, but more so in Spain, including Catalonia, than in many other countries.

Unemployment reached 25 percent, and more than 50 percent among youth. Temporary jobs became the norm and some workers had their wages cut in half. Public health care and other social services were cut drastically.

In the midst of this the Spanish Constitutional Court in 2010 revoked major aspects of Catalan autonomy, including parts of a 2006 Autonomy Charter that recognized “Catalonia as a nation” and the Catalan government’s powers over the judiciary. It also ruled unconstitutional preferential use of the Catalan language.

The responses to the crisis conditions reflect social class. Catalonia is one of the most economically developed and industrialized regions in Spain with relatively higher living standards. Substantial sections of urban professionals and middle-class layers, university students and many farmers press for independence with the anti-working-class argument that Catalonia shouldn’t be saddled with having to “subsidize” the central government budget and preferential treatment for regions in Spain where workers face lower wages and worse working and social conditions, and would fare better on their own. They form the social base of the pro-independence organizations.

Support for independence is lower in the working class. A July poll by the regional survey agency put it at 28 percent. Over many decades, workers have moved to Catalonia both from the rest of Spain and other countries in search of jobs and improved living

conditions. Some don’t speak Catalan, and see unemployment, wages, health care, pensions and other social protections as more pressing needs than splitting from Spain.

The Socialist Workers Party unconditionally supports the right of the Catalan people to national self-determination, but it takes no position on whether they should separate. A common fight with working people across Spain to defend jobs, wages and social protections against the assaults of the capitalist rulers is the best framework for the toilers in Catalonia to find the best way to effectively defend their national rights and win support.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



October 30, 1992

“You’re fired!” That’s what British Coal plans to tell 30,000 mine workers in the next few months. And not only miners will be affected when the government-owned coal industry closes 31 pits by March 1993. Many thousands of mine-machinery manufacturing workers and rail workers will be hit hard. Mining communities across Britain will be devastated.

The decision made by British Coal, without regard to the effects on miners, their families, and mining communities, is the same decision capitalist enterprises and the governments that represent them are making around the world. The capitalist system is in crisis and the only answer for the wealthy class that benefits from the exploitation of labor is to attack our living standards and lead us into war.



October 30, 1967

NEW YORK — Brooklyn College students at an outdoor rally of 3,000 Oct. 23 voted to reject proposals by the school administration to end their five-day-old strike. The students adopted a far-reaching series of demands which included the suspension of four administration officials suspected of calling police to break up a student antiwar demonstration.

The strike began when a protest at a Navy recruiting table in Boylan Hall was brutally assaulted by police Oct. 19. Sixty students and three professors were arrested and many were injured. Infuriated students demanded that charges be dropped against those arrested and declared the strike to enforce their demands. They put forward sweeping proposals for student control of the campus. The strike has been 80 percent effective.



October 31, 1942

A general strike of the workers of the textile city of Ahmedabad, where some 27 percent of India’s textile mills are concentrated, is still going on after ten weeks. The strike, a political one in protest against the arrest of the All-India Congress leaders, began on August 9, the day they were jailed by the British authorities.

This strike is a significant indication that India’s struggle for independence goes on unabated. An earlier *Herald-Tribune* dispatch gave the following details: “Thousands of spinners, weavers and other millhands on strike have left the city to return to their native villages.”

The workers with considerable experience of political and trade union struggle, on returning to the villages become leaders in arousing the peasants to refuse to pay rents and taxes.

Colonial rule turns storm damage into social disaster

BY SETH GALINSKY

The social and economic catastrophe for working people in Puerto Rico in the wake of Hurricane Maria is mirrored throughout the Caribbean. Working people in current and former colonies of U.S., British, French and Dutch imperialism there were hard hit by storms Irma and Maria, on top of decades of imperialist plunder of their labor and natural resources.

One of the biggest problems in the colonies is that they don't control the key decisions that affect their lives — these are in the hands of their colonial overseers. It's not much better in the former colonies, which remain economically dependent on the imperialist powers.

More than three weeks after Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico, some 83 percent of the U.S. colony's residents were still without electricity and nearly 30 percent had no drinking water.

The collapse of the electrical grid and much of the water system was guaranteed before the hurricane made landfall. Blackouts were increasingly common as the government and electrical utility's management cut back maintenance to free up funds to ensure payments on their \$74 billion debt to wealthy bondholders.

It's little different in the U.S. Virgin Islands and the British Virgin Islands, colonies that are still mostly without electricity and other crucial infrastructure after the storms.

Even before the hurricanes, working people in the U.S. Virgin Islands faced a deep social crisis. The colonial regime's debt of \$2 billion to bondholders is higher per capita than Puerto Rico's. Public hospitals were in such bad shape that plumbing had collapsed and doctors stopped implanting pacemakers and heart defibrillators because there wasn't enough money to pay for the devices.

U.S. Virgin Islands Gov. Kenneth Mapp announced Oct. 12 that he was ending government distribution of food and water and that residents would have to rely on themselves and private charity.

The social disaster working people face throughout the region stands in sharp contrast to what workers and farmers face in Cuba, also hit hard by Hurricane Maria.

Cuban Revolution sets example

Cuba's revolutionary government organized working people to prepare for the storm and minimize damage. They evacuated 1.8 million people to comfortable and provisioned housing. Within weeks electrical power was restored to nearly 100 percent of the island. Workers are getting help to rebuild their homes, including free building materials if needed. And at the same time they sent doctors, electricians and other volunteers to help wherever they were invited, from Barbuda to Dominica.

The Cuban government sent 12 volunteer electrical workers to former British colony Barbuda to restore the electrical system. Some 90 percent of the buildings were destroyed there by the

hurricanes along with its entire electrical system. With the aid of the Venezuelan government, the entire population of 1,800 was evacuated, and some have started to return.

There has been little other international aid, Chester Hughes, deputy general secretary of the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union, told the *Militant* by phone Oct. 13.

In contrast, the local capitalists, as well as the imperialist powers, see the storm as an opportunity to reap bigger profits. Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Gaston Browne said that now is the time to eliminate the centuries-old communal land system in Barbuda. He wants to turn the land into a commodity and sell residents plots of land to rebuild on. That would pave the way for mortgages, home insurance schemes, and similar instruments of capitalist exploitation. "Build an ownership class," Browne told the *Los Angeles Times*.

Barbudan hurricane victims evacuated to Antigua rallied to protest the plan. "If we're not careful, it's going to be uninhabitable for us, but habitable for somebody else," former member of Parliament Trevor Walker told the rally.

'Discontent' in Puerto Rico

Unlike in Dominica, a former British colony, where dozens of Cuban doctors are helping to provide medical care after the island was battered by Maria, the U.S. government has not accepted the offer of Cuba's revolutionary government to send a mobile hospital and 39 medical workers, as well as four brigades of electrical workers. The refusal "is criminal," Luis Rosa said by phone from Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, Oct. 16. "The government of Venezuela's offer to send aid has also been rejected."

Rosa served 19 years in jail in the U.S. for his activities in support of independence for Puerto Rico. He moved back to Aguadilla after his release in 1999.

"The presence of the government has been terrible," Rosa said. "Communities are organizing themselves.

Anti-imperialist Youth Festival opens in Sochi



Militant/Willie Cotton

SOCHI, Russia — Thousands of delegates from around the world marched through Olympic Park here Oct. 16 to celebrate the opening of the 19th World Festival of Youth and Students. They carried banners and flags representing dozens of delegations and organizations. The festival includes a multitude of panels and seminars on topics such as opposing Washington's attacks on the Cuban Revolution and intervention in Venezuela; supporting anti-colonial and national liberation struggles; debating how to combat unemployment, racism and women's oppression; and much more.

In addition to the political program, the Russian hosts have organized a broad range of cultural and sporting events and a science and technology exposition. Over 250 delegates arrived from Cuba, most elected from schools, unions, mass organizations and municipalities. Before leaving for Sochi, they attended meetings at the Medical Sciences Preparatory School in Casablanca to get ready for political presentations, discussion and workshops. "We will go to Russia to defend our revolution and denounce imperialism," delegate Maidolis Ojeda, from Matanzas, told *Granma*.

Cuban delegates are scheduled to lead some 20 different events to discuss the revolution and the political legacy of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, who are two of the three revolutionary leaders the festival is dedicated to. The Cuban youth will also meet with delegations from other countries, including Venezuela, Vietnam, Nicaragua and the United States.

More than 20,000 people are attending the festival, half of them from Russia and many hundreds from countries and regions that border Russia.

— JACOB PERASSO

They're the ones who have been cleaning and opening up the roads, machetes in hand to remove the fallen trees." And getting aid to individuals in the countryside the government has passed by.

The situation is worse in more remote areas. In Charco Abajo, where the hurricane took down the main bridge and no one from the government showed up to help, Carlos Ocasio and Pablo Perez Medina, a welder and retired handyman, crossed the Vivi River, walked

miles to a hardware store and returned with a cable and harness.

They built a pulley system and attached a shopping cart, and everyone in the town uses it to bring food, water and supplies across the river, the *New York Times* reported.

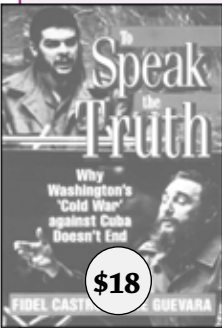
The two workers, both 60 years old, put up a sign to describe their territory, "Campamento de los Olvidados," Spanish for "Camp of the Forgotten."

"We're still without water and light," retired electrical worker Miguel Sánchez said by phone from La Florida in the western part of the island. "If you have a vehicle, you can go get water. If you don't, what do you do?"

"The aid is not being distributed equitably," he said. "Some areas get a bottle or two of water, others get a whole case. Those with a connection to the government, they're hooked up with water, air conditioning, supplies from FEMA. For the rest of the people, it's difficult.

"There is a generalized discontent," Sánchez said.

Example of Cuban Revolution for workers



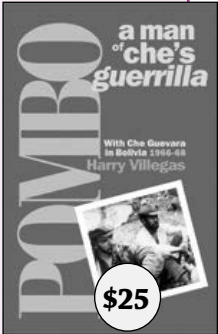
To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' Against Cuba Doesn't End

Fidel Castro, Che Guevara

In speeches before UN bodies, Castro and Guevara address the peoples of the world, explaining why Washington fears the example of the socialist revolution and why its effort to destroy it will fail.

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Fidel Castro: People ‘like Che exist by the million’

Slander against Cuban leaders aimed at revolution

BY TERRY EVANS

This year is the 50th anniversary of the death of Ernesto Che Guevara, who was killed Oct. 9, 1967, while leading a revolutionary struggle against the military dictatorship in Bolivia.

Even before Guevara went to Bolivia, opponents of the Cuban Revolution were working overtime to promote the myth that Fidel Castro and Guevara had a falling out amid “irreconcilable differences.” They said Fidel was disillusioned with Che’s adventurism, preferring “peaceful coexistence.” After Guevara’s death, they claimed Castro had sent him on a suicide mission to get him out of the way.

These slanders are still promoted to this day. Their purpose is to undermine the Cuban revolution he helped to lead and to foster cynicism. After all, if Fidel Castro, the central leader of the revolution, and Che were backstabbers and murderers, what’s the point of fighting to change the world and studying the lessons of the Cuban Revolution?

In 1955 the Argentine-born Guevara joined the July 26 Movement, led by Castro. He was part of the 1956 Granma expedition, where Castro and others returned to Cuba to launch the revolution.

Castro forged a cadre of revolutionists who were able to lead millions to topple the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in January 1959, establish a workers and farmers government and expropriate the U.S. and Cuban capitalists and landlords. In Fidel’s judgment, Che became a highly skilled strategist and fighter, the first Castro promoted to commander.

U.S. imperialism never forgave the revolutionary working people of Cuba for being a powerful example to millions worldwide.

For many liberals and Stalinist groups, the Cuban Revolution is an obstacle to their bureaucratic scorn for the working class, and their course of reforming capitalism.

Following Castro’s death in 2016, the *New York Daily News* repeated the well-worn slanders that Castro “left his old comrade stranded to die” in Bolivia.

When Guevara joined the Cuban

revolutionary forces he asked one thing, Castro told journalist Ignacio Ramonet in the book *My Life*, that Castro “not forbid me for reasons of state, from going to Argentina to make a revolution there.”

“‘Agreed,’ I said to him,” Castro says.

Guevara left Cuba in 1965, seeking to expand the revolution internationally, to help make “one, two three Vietnams,” a course he and Castro agreed on wholeheartedly. At the request of revolutionary fighters there, he went first to the Congo to aid the anti-imperialist struggle, and then to Bolivia.

Cuban leaders ‘shared Che’s views’

In 1965, after false rumors circulated in his absence about divisions in the Communist Party, Guevara sent a letter to Castro. “Other nations of the world summon my modest efforts of assistance. I can do that which is denied you due to your responsibility as the head of Cuba,” Guevara wrote.

When Castro learned about Guevara’s plans to go to Bolivia, “we suggested he needed more time, not to get impatient,” Castro told Ramonet. To wait until the new guerrilla movement there was more established.

But Guevara argued the pre-revolutionary situation in the Southern Cone called for timely action. Castro persuaded him to return to Cuba so they could work together to maximize the chances for success.

“We helped Che; we shared his views. At that moment, Che was right. At that moment the struggle could have been spread,” Castro told Ramonet. This assessment was born out in the years following Guevara’s death



Contrary to claims that Cuban revolutionary leader Fidel Castro, right, disagreed with Che Guevara and sent him to his death in Bolivia, the two worked together to advance revolutionary struggles and fight for socialism across Latin America and around the world.

when explosive working-class struggles broke out in Argentina in 1969 and Bolivia in 1970.

While in Cuba, Guevara — with Castro’s help — handpicked the veteran Cuban combatants he asked to volunteer for Bolivia.

After Guevara arrived in Bolivia and the guerrilla nucleus had begun its training, they were stabbed in the back by Mario Monje, head of the Stalinist Bolivian Communist Party. Monje said his party would stop supporting the guerrilla effort unless he was given personal command of the group. And the CP refused any further support.

“Fidel did everything he could for the fighters in Bolivia as he did for us in the Congo as he has done for Cuban internationalist fighters everywhere,” said Victor Dreke on a 2002 speaking tour in the U.S. Dreke served as second in command under Guevara in the combat mission in the Congo in 1965.

Dreke described Che as a “great leader” who led by personal example.

Decades of war in Somalia rooted in imperialist domination

BY TERRY EVANS

More than 300 people were killed in a brutal car-bombing in Mogadishu, Somalia, Oct. 14 by the Islamist terrorist al-Shabab. The group has links with al-Qaeda and imposes its brutal anti-working-class rule in substantial parts of the country.

The bombing comes after Washington stepped up airstrikes against al-Shabab-controlled parts of the country in June. This followed a Pentagon

decision to expand U.S. military targets in its air assassination campaign. Washington’s bombers, 400 troops, including special operations units, and 22,000 soldiers from an African Union “peacekeeping” mission, are attempting to prop up the Somali government. The African Union troops are due to start leaving next year.

The decadeslong wars are rooted in more than a century of imperialist domination in the Horn of Africa. The imperialists have no interest in developing industry or agriculture in the region, only in taking control of its strategic location near the Middle East. British, French and Italian colonists arbitrarily carved Somalia up into five colonial territories in the late 1800s.

A Somali national struggle grew as part of a wave of struggles for independence and self-determination after the second imperialist world war. In 1960 British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland united as independent Somalia. Kenya and Djibouti, neighboring countries with sizable Somali populations, won independence in following years.

Somalia today is an impoverished semicolonial country torn by clan rivalries.

For the past quarter of a century it has been wracked by war and imperialist interventions, without a central-

“He was one of the noblest ... most unselfish men I’ve ever known,” Castro told Ramonet, “which would be of no importance unless one believed that men like him exist by the million.”

That’s what makes fighting to make a revolution like Cuba’s in the U.S. today realistic.

“Che thought and acted as an internationalist,” Socialist Workers Party leader Mary-Alice Waters wrote in her introduction to Che’s *Bolivian Diary*. He knew that “only new revolutionary victories elsewhere, especially new socialist advances in the Americas, would change the relationship of class forces internationally and break the isolation that weighed so heavily on Cuba.”

That remains true today. And despite the slanders, which continue to circulate, in today’s crisis-ridden world growing numbers of workers and youth will be drawn to the Cuban Revolution, discussing how the example set by Castro and Guevara can be emulated.

ized government. Since the 1991 overthrow of the Mohamed Siad Barre regime, which had been backed and then dropped by the Stalinist rulers in the Soviet Union, rival clans have fought for control of the country.

Since then, Somalia has been ravaged by famine, civil war, U.S. invasion and a takeover by Islamist forces. Over time, and splits and fusions, these Islamist forces evolved into al-Shabab, based in southern Somalia and among Somali peoples in eastern Kenya.

Washington’s intervention coupled with al-Shabab’s murderous assaults visit disaster on working people. They also face the impact of the worldwide capitalist crisis, magnified by years of debt bondage. Earlier this year the International Monetary Fund refused to cancel parts of the country’s \$5.3 billion debt until it started to make some payments.

Just under a million people have fled drought conditions since last November, while 6 million Somalis — more than half the country’s population — require emergency food aid to survive.

Despite its expanded military intervention in the region, like in its never-ending war in Afghanistan, Washington is no closer to establishing stability in the region to pursue its imperialist interests.

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Maurice Bishop: 'No one has the right to tell us what to do'

In 1979 a popular revolution in the Caribbean island of Grenada overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Eric Gairy, bringing a workers and farmers government to power. Maurice Bishop was the central leader of the New Jewel Movement that led the revolution, and became the nation's prime minister. They used the government to deepen the mobilization, organization, education and class consciousness of the Grenadian people.

Below is an excerpt from Bishop's "In Nobody's Backyard," an address broadcast nationally over Radio Free Grenada on April 13, 1979, one month after seizing power. It is reprinted in Maurice Bishop Speaks, the Grenada Revolution and Its Overthrow 1979-83.

On Oct. 19, 1983, a Stalinist-inspired coup led by Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard murdered Bishop and overthrew the revolution. This betrayal opened the door to a U.S. military invasion, which installed a pro-U.S. regime. Copyright © 1983 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY MAURICE BISHOP

At the end of our discussion on Tuesday, the [U.S.] ambassador handed me a typed statement of his instructions from his government, to be given to us. The relevant section of that statement reads, and I quote: "Although my government recognizes your concerns over allegations of a possible counter-coup, it also believes that it would not be in Grenada's best interest to seek assistance from a country such as Cuba to forestall such an attack. We would view with displeasure any tendency on the part of Grenada to develop closer ties with Cuba."

It is well established internationally that all independent countries have a full, free, and unhampered right to conduct their own internal affairs. We do not therefore recognize any right of the United States of America to instruct us on who we may develop relations with and who we may not.

From day one of the revolution we have always striven to have and de-



"If the government of Cuba is willing to offer us assistance, we would be more than happy to receive it," Maurice Bishop, leader of 1979 Grenada Revolution, said after Washington demanded he not "develop closer ties with Cuba." Above, Bishop with Cuban President Fidel Castro at May 1 demonstration in Havana 1980. At left is Daniel Ortega, president of Nicaragua.

velop the closest and friendliest relations with the United States, as well as with Canada, Britain, and all our Caribbean neighbors — English, French, Dutch, and Spanish speaking, and we intend to continue to strive for these relations. But no one must misunderstand our friendliness as an excuse for rudeness and meddling in our affairs, and no one, no matter how mighty and powerful they are, will be permitted to dictate to the government and people of Grenada who we can have friendly relations with and what kind of relations we must have with other countries. We haven't gone through twenty-eight years of fighting Gairyism, and especially the last six years of terror, to gain our freedom, only to throw it away and become a slave or lackey to any other country, no matter how big and powerful.

Every day we fought Gairy we put our lives on the line. On the day of the revolution we started out with almost no arms, and in so doing we again put our lives on the line.

We have demonstrated beyond any doubt that we were prepared to die to win our freedom. We are even more prepared to die to maintain that freedom now that we have tasted it.

We feel that people of Grenada have the right to know precisely what steps we have taken in our attempts to establish relations at various levels with the

United States, and the response which we have so far received.

From the second day of our revolution, during our first meeting with American government representatives in Grenada, we were at pains to emphasize the deplorable and ravished state in which the Gairy dictatorship had left our economy and our country. We pointed out then that massive assistance, technical and financial, would be required in order to begin the process of rebuilding the economy. ...

And we reject *entirely* the argument of the American ambassador that we would only be entitled to call upon the Cubans to come to our assistance after mercenaries have landed and commenced the attack. Quite frankly, and with the greatest respect, a more ridiculous argument can hardly be imagined. It is like asking a man to wait until his house is burning down before he leaves to buy a fire extinguisher. No, we intend if possible to provide ourselves with the fire extinguisher before the fire starts! And if the government of Cuba is willing to offer us assistance, we would be more than happy to receive it.

Sisters and brothers, what we led was an *independent process*. Our revolution was definitely a popular revolution, not a coup d'état, and was and is in no way a minority movement. We intend to continue along an indepen-

dent and nonaligned path. We have stayed in the Commonwealth, we have stayed in the Organization of American States and in CARICOM [Caribbean Community]; despite pressures we have stayed in the Eastern Caribbean Common Market and in the expanded West Indies Associated States Organization. We have applied to join the Nonaligned Movement. We will be applying to join the International Labor Organization — the ILO.

We are a small country, we are a poor country, with a population of largely African descent, we are a part of the exploited Third World, and we definitely have a stake in seeking the creation of a new international economic order which would assist in ensuring economic justice for the oppressed and exploited peoples of the world, and in ensuring that the resources of the sea are used for the benefit of all the people of the world and not for a tiny minority of profiteers. Our aim, therefore, is to join all organizations and work with all countries that will help us to become more independent and more in control of our own resources. In this regard, nobody who understands present-day realities can seriously challenge our right to develop working relations with a variety of countries.

Grenada is a sovereign and independent country, although a tiny speck on the world map, and we expect all countries to strictly respect our independence just as we will respect theirs. No country has the right to tell us what to do or how to run our country or who to be friendly with. We certainly would not attempt to tell any other country what to do. We are not in anybody's backyard, and we are definitely not for sale. Anybody who thinks they can bully us or threaten us clearly has no understanding, idea, or clue as to what material we are made of. They clearly have no idea of the tremendous struggles which our people have fought over the past seven years. Though small and poor, we are proud and determined. We would sooner give up our lives before we compromise, sell out, or betray our sovereignty, our independence, our integrity, our manhood, and the right of our people to national self-determination and social progress.

Long live the revolution!

Long live free Grenada!

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Protest assault against Kurdistan!

Continued from front page

they've encountered obstruction and war from the imperialist powers and capitalist rulers in Iran, Turkey, Syria and Iraq, where the vast majority of the over 30 million Kurds live.

These regimes live in fear of Kurdish independence in the Middle East. The Kurdish struggle is in the interests of workers everywhere.

This fight is sharply posed today. Since the Sept.

25 referendum, where 93 percent of those in the Kurdistan region voted for forming their own state, Washington and its imperialist allies have called for the referendum to be tossed aside. Ankara, Tehran and Damascus have blockaded the Kurdistan Regional Government, seeking to isolate and strangle the Kurds until they back down and nullify the vote — something they have refused to do.

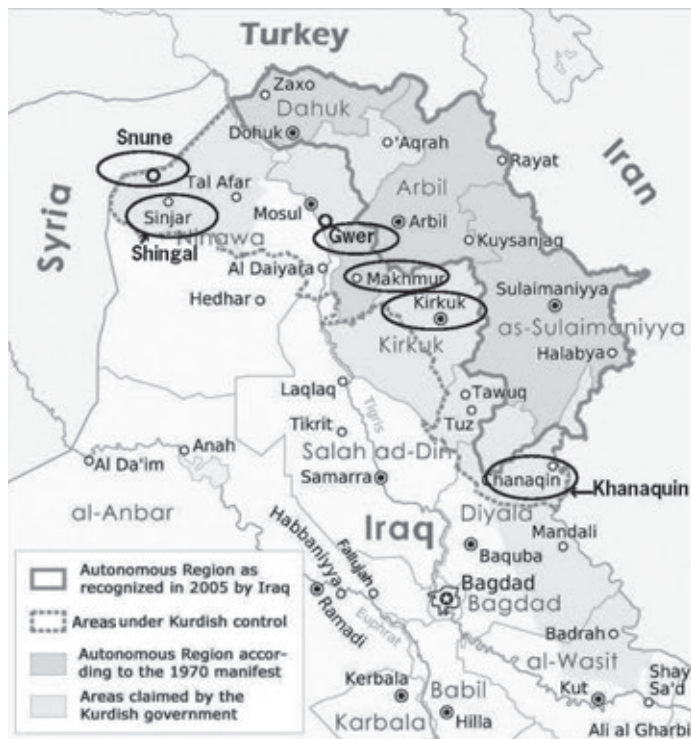
Washington, which has claimed to be an ally of the Kurds and relied on the Kurdish peshmerga army to counter Islamic State in Iraq, said it backs a “unified Iraq” and opposed the Kurdish referendum. It stood aside when Iraqi forces and Tehran-backed militias launched their assault and captured Kirkuk, a historic Kurdish city. The militias beheaded peshmerga fighters and ransacked the homes of Kurds in the city. This invasion opened the road to further attacks on Kurdish areas.

The Kurds have lost Kirkuk, a swath of further territory where they had protected the population for years, and their oil resources. They still face a brutal blockade. Further military assaults cannot be ruled out if the Kurds don't renounce their fight for independence.

The Socialist Workers Party demands Baghdad withdraw from all of the Kurdish homeland. We demand that the rulers in Ankara, Tehran and Damascus end their blockade, which hits working people the hardest.

We urge working people in the U.S. and around the world to help initiate and join protests in defense of the Kurdish people's struggle.

We demand: End the war against Kurdistan now! U.S. out of the Middle East!



Map of Iraq showing extent of areas under Kurdish protection before Oct. 16 assault by Iraqi troops, Tehran-backed militias, and cities they seized, pushing Kurds back to borders imposed by Baghdad.

Florida prisons step up ‘Militant’ censorship

Continued from front page

against racism and one explaining why working people should defend the right to free speech. Both articles appeared under a banner headline reading, “Socialist Workers Party: Protest Racist Attacks!”

“This censorship is politically motivated and undemocratic,” said *Militant* editor John Studer. “As working people are facing more and more attacks from the bosses and their government, the rulers and their prison authorities are afraid there are protests to come. So they clamp down on constitutional rights.

“Prisoners have the right to read and consider a wide range of views, to think for themselves, to know what is going on in the world,” Studer said. “And the *Militant* has the right for our newspaper and our editorial views to be available to our readers within prison walls.”

In the *Militant*’s appeal of this latest impoundment, David Goldstein, the paper’s lawyer, states, “Certainly it is not possible that a newspaper can be banned for the words ‘protest racist attacks.’”

The first article, which had a subhead “Join Debate on How to Fight Effectively,” contained “no support or advocacy of violence or unlawful protests of any kind,” Goldstein said.

The second article — with the subhead “Liberals, ‘Antifa’ Combine to Deal Blows to Political Rights” — “also contains nothing that could justify the censorship,” Goldstein said. “It criticizes ‘Antifa thugs’ for attacking supporters of Trump and for intimidating or preventing the exercise of free speech rights.”

Since 2013 the Florida prison authorities have impounded more than a dozen issues of the *Militant*. Most were reversed — and the papers given to the workers behind bars who had subscribed — after the *Militant* filed appeals with the Literature Review Committee.

So far this year Florida prison authorities have impounded seven issues. The committee reversed three of the bans, upheld three, and are still considering the most recent appeal.

The fight against censorship of the *Militant* in Florida prisons is part of a broader fight for prisoners’ right to read political literature. Over the last year the *Militant* has fought prison censorship at Attica Correctional Facility in New York and Illinois River Correctional Center in Canton, Illinois. Other publications have also faced impoundment, including the *San Francisco Bay View*; *Workers World*, which has had multiple issues rejected by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections; and *Prison Legal News*, which has had to fight bans across the country.

In fact, on a number of occasions, Florida prison authorities have sent notices of impoundment of *Prison Legal News* mistakenly to the *Militant*.

Militant editor Studer sent a letter of solidarity to *Workers World*’s editor after learning of the impoundment of their Aug. 31 issue by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, the fourth time this year Pennsylvania prison officials have censored the paper.

“All those who support civil liberties, democratic rights, the rights of workers behind bars and the struggles of working people should back your fight against censorship,” Studer said.

The *Militant* has won broad support. Among the groups that have sent statements of support for the *Militant*’s fights against prison censorship in Florida and New York are: Amnesty International; Pen America; New York Civil Liberties Union; the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida; Riverside Church Prison Ministry; Heather Ann Thompson, author of *Blood in the Water: The Attica Prison Uprising of 1971 and Its Legacy*; National Lawyers Guild; and many more.

See the box on the left for how you can help join the fight against prison censorship.

Workers face carnage

Continued from front page

the metropolitan area,” Eduardo Porter wrote in the *New York Times* Oct. 11, “than there were at the onset of the Great Recession. Hourly wages are lower than they were a decade ago. The labor force has shrunk by 14 percent.”

Porter is one of those people who think workers have it rough because they’re just not smart enough to join today’s new world. “Built on coal and steel, Steubenville and Weirton were ill suited to survive the transformations brought about by globalization and the information economy,” he wrote.

Perhaps Porter thinks steel, coal, automobiles, washing machines, toasters and the rest of the products we use all come out of 3-D printers or when you push the print button on your computer, as opposed to being made by millions of workers worldwide.

He says the two working-class cities “may be too small to survive.”

Arguing that manufacturing is a thing of the past, he claims that “opportunity in the information era has clustered in dense urban enclaves where high-tech businesses can tap into rich pools of skilled and creative people.” So what’s the bottom line for the workers in Weirton? “Perhaps the best policy,” Porter opines, “would be to help them move to a big city nearby.”

He thinks all the “smart people” are moving to New York, San Francisco and the like. So the rest of the country is destined to empty out!

Those with this view think the working class is a danger to their world. They’re backward, bitter and angry, responsible for Trump’s presidency. However, if the overwhelming majority of the population is smart, hip, gig-economy folks in the big cities, how could they have lost the election?

The *Weirton Daily Times* reports that West Virginia’s fatality rate from the opioid epidemic in the working class is three times higher than the national average, the highest rate of fatal drug overdoses in the country. And the state has the highest rate of babies born dependent on opioids.

Legislators in Middletown, Ohio, are discussing a proposal to have cops there place a cap on use of the opioid antidote Narcan. If you OD, they’ll give you the antidote two times. After that, it’s “three strikes and you’re out.”

But in New York, the only difference is that the carnage is more and more sharply class divided.

Workers moving from rural areas to the cities will find others, like themselves, confronting worsening conditions. In New York the number of homeless public school students — let alone adults — hit 100,000 last year. That’s 10 percent of schoolchildren.

Sky-high housing costs, stagnant wages, a crumbling subway system, cop brutality — all these and more face workers in the Big Apple.

And opioid addiction and deaths are soaring, especially in the Bronx and Staten Island. Deaths per person are the highest in the Bronx. In Staten Island, the *New York Times* reports a “severe treatment gap” for addicts. The few available treatment centers are located precisely where drug use is the lowest, making it hard for people to get help. The soaring number of opioid deaths there has gotten media attention, the *Times* says, because it involves Caucasian workers.

Trump won’t solve the problems workers face, any more than Obama did. They’re both beholden to the capitalist rulers who seek to boost their sagging profit rates in the midst of a long-term crisis of production and trade, by taking it out on workers. And as millions continue to search for change, the Socialist Workers Party finds widespread openings to discuss the roots of the crisis with working people and growing interest in the party’s program and activity.

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

The Prisoners’ Fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. To donate, send a check or money order payable to the *Militant* and earmarked “Prisoners’ Fund” to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

Fight prison censorship

Get out the word. Distribute copies of *Militant* articles on this fight.

Get statements of support for the *Militant*’s appeal from unions, churches and defenders of workers rights and free speech. Send to: themilitant@mac.com

Send a check to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018, earmarked “Prisoners Rights Fight.”