Liberals hail FBI witch hunt against Trump White House

BY TERRY EVANS

Liberals are singing the praises of the U.S. political police after former FBI boss Robert Mueller indicted 13 Russian individuals and three Russian organizations for conspiracy to “degrade the United States” by interfering in politics here.

The Feb. 16 indictments accuse the 13 Russians of participating in a so-called troll operation on the internet beginning in 2014, inventing U.S. identities, promoting a variety of political views to foil viewers and staging rallies related to the 2016 campaign. They make no allegation that Donald Trump’s campaign was involved in any way, and they say there is no evidence this operation affected the election outcome. Those charged worked for a company with close ties to the Kremlin, Mueller claims.

The evidence marshaled is similar to previous press reports, including a 2015 New York Times magazine piece to previous press reports, including a 2015 New York Times magazine piece called “The Agency.”

“Our FBI, CIA, NSA [National Security Agency], working with the special counsel [Mueller], have done us

Continued on page 4

Demand amnesty for immigrant workers!

Propertied rulers debate who to let in, keep out

‘The Cuban people made a real revolution, it changed everything’

BY SHEILA LAWRENCE

NEW YORK — “In a real revolution, everything changes. In 1959 in Cuba there was a real revolution and everything and everyone changed,” Griselda Aguilera told students at City College of New York Feb. 8.

Sept. 10 Omaha, Nebraska, protest. Socialist Workers Party says Amnesty for all immigrants!

BY TERRY EVANS

New York City and New Jersey, one leg of a tour on the East Coast.

Aguilera was the youngest of tens of thousands of volunteers who joined the effort that wiped out illiteracy in Cuba in 1961. Some 700,000 workers and peasants learned to read and write during what the Cubans called the “Year

Continued on page 9

Capitalist rulers in South Africa see new government as road to profits

BY SETH GALINSKY

The propertied rulers in South Africa are hoping the ouster of President Jacob Zuma and his replacement with wealthy businessman Cyril Ramaphosa, who recently replaced Zuma as president of the African National Congress as well, signals a more favorable environment for stability and capitalist development.

Production and trade never recovered in South Africa, the most industrialized nation in Africa, after the economy was ravaged by the 2008 worldwide capitalist economic crisis. Mining, which once comprised close to 20 percent of the country’s gross domestic product, generated just 7.3 percent by 2016. International rating

Continued on page 8

Criminal ‘justice’ parole system pushes workers back into prison

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

There is a debate today among the capitalist rulers and those they’ve tasked with running their criminal “justice” system — whether it’s in their best interests to reduce the number of workers behind bars and those

Continued on page 10

Conflicts heat up in Syria as US, rivals push interests

BY TERRY EVANS

The multifront conflicts in Syria being fought by rival capitalist powers in the region — alongside intervention from Moscow and the imperialist rulers in Washington — continue to take a horrific toll on working people there. As each of these powers seeks to assert its own military and political interests, conflicts among them have sharpened.

Officials of the opposing sides clashed at the Feb. 16-18 Munich Security Conference.

Holding a piece of an Iranian drone Israeli forces shot down after it flew into Israel from Syria, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told the gathering that Tel Aviv would do whatever it takes to prevent Tehran from having a permanent military presence in Syria and would continue to directly target Iranian Revolutionary Guard and Tehran-backed militias based there.

In response, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif taunted Netenyahu about how Syrian gunners brought down an Israeli jet that retaliated.

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Agreement ends final case against Quebec rail worker

IG Metall, Germany’s biggest union, makes a deal

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 82/NO. 9 MARCH 5, 2018

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

South African revolution: Historic victory for working people

— PAGE 8

Liberals are s
Protesters demand Aboriginal rights, hit racist ‘Australia Day’

BY RON POULSEN

SYDNEY — Tens of thousands of people, overwhelmingly young, protested around the country Jan. 26 in the largest demonstrations in support of Aboriginal rights in decades. The actions were called to counter the rulers’ patriotic Australia Day holiday.

Aboriginal people view the anniversary of the founding of the original British penal settlement at Sydney Cove in 1788 as Invasion Day, making it a focal point for anger over oppressive social conditions indigenous people continue to face. This undermines the moral legitimacy and so-called “national cohesion” the capitalist rulers crave as they face a deepening political and moral crisis.

Aboriginal youth and elders here led off a march of up to 20,000 from The Block — a traditional inner-city Aboriginal district — to the nearby Yabun concert celebrating indigenous culture and music. Another Aboriginal rights rally here drew 1,000. Backed by Labor Party and union officials, some Aboriginal leaders called for a treaty between the government and Australia’s First Peoples, similar to those reached between government and Australia’s First Peoples and other colonial-settlers, some Aboriginal elders denounced federal government intervention in the affairs of remote Northern Territory Aboriginal communities.

Protesters demand Aboriginal payment to addresses listed in business information box)

The marches were awash with red, black and yellow, the colors of the Aboriginal flag. Chanting “No pride in genocide!” and “Always was, always will be, Aboriginal land!” protesters pointed to the decimation of the indigenous population by massacres, disease and being driven off their ancestral tribal lands.

Largest such protests since 1970s

Thousands in other cities around the country joined similar protests. By far the biggest was in Melbourne, where some 60,000 took to the streets. “I haven’t seen a crowd like this since the 1970s, the heyday of the Aboriginal political movement,” Gary Foley, a longtime Black activist and now a history professor, told the rally.

The Australian rulers’ celebration “is essentially about colonization, death, murder, and rape,” Aboriginal activist Adrian Burragubba told the Sydney rally. Burragubba is the leader of a campaign by traditional Aboriginal landowners to block the huge Adani coal mine development in Queensland.

Ken Canning from Fighting in Resistance Equally, who chaired the Sydney rally, drew attention to Black deaths in detention. “We have the highest deaths in custody rates in the world per head of population, the highest imprisonment rates,” he said.

“Too many cops, never any justice!” marchers chanted as they kicked off the demonstration here. Other banners denounced federal government police intervention in the affairs of remote Northern Territory Aboriginal communities.

The protest was to highlight the “fight for the right to our land, our culture, our language, our people, our laws,” Sue-Ellen Tighe, founder of Grandmothers Against Removals, told the Sydney rally. “In 2018 we should not be the marginalized race in the nation. We are the First Peoples.”

Some placards called for the Australian government to “change the date” of Australia Day, reflecting a growing debate in politics and the media here. Some Greens, Labor and Black representatives to Parliament seek to deflect Aboriginal protests by moving the nationalist celebration to some other, “less divisive” holiday.

In recent years, the rulers have used the celebration to talk about Australia’s growing “multiculturalism,” trying to reinforce the myth that “we are one.” From there is no “we” in Australia’s class-divided society,” I said, speaking for the Communist League, at a Militant Labor Forum here Feb. 17. “This is what we explained to people on the march.

“The billionaire ruling families exploit and oppress the real “us” — the working class and its allies, whether Aborigine or Caucasian, immigrant or native-born,” I said. “The Communist League points to the example of the socialist revolution in Cuba, where workers and farmers organized to take political power and uproot discrimination and oppression.”

New International magazine #13 Our Politics Start With the World

“All the questions posed by the ongoing crises and breakdowns of international capitalism can only be understood clearly, and answered in practice, if we begin to gather the facts and gain wider insight and breakthroughs of international capitalism,” I said.

“The Militant/Ron Poulsen

The Militant
Vol. 82/No. 9
Closing date: February 21, 2018
Editor: John Studer

The Irish government’s decision to hold a referendum on repeal of a constitutional ban on abortion is part of a broader shift in support for social rights. The referendum, and increasing support for its passage, comes in response to a growing campaign for abortion rights.

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Communist League in UK says workers need to fight for power

BY ÓLÓLF ANDRA PROPPÉ

LONDON — Pamela Holmes, the Communist League candidate for mayor of the borough of Tower Hamlets, East London, took her communist campaign to an area where residents are demanding the borough council improve the safety of their homes. Their efforts follow the deaths of 71 people at a fire at Grenfell Tower in West London last June where authorities failed to take measures that could have prevented the rapid spread of the inferno.

The fire was fed by cladding on the building’s exterior that the council knew was a hazard, but did nothing about, creating a death trap. Tens of thousands of other workers around the country continue to live in similar housing. Tower Hamlets residents have presented petitions calling on the council to inspect the cladding on the blocks where they live and immediately install sprinklers.

Joined by campaign supporters, Holmes knocked on doors Feb. 10 to talk to workers in Tower Hamlets.

“Neither Conservative nor Labour parties have an answer to the political and moral crisis of the capitalist rulers,” Holmes told construction worker Segree Hall when he answered the door. “That’s why the Communist League explains what workers need to organize independently of them and build a movement of millions that can take power from the U.K.’s capitalist rulers.”

“There are plenty of construction workers around here who could do all the work that’s needed but the jobs go to workers at the big companies,” Hall said. With some 1.4 million people out of work according to government figures, workers are forced to compete with each other to try to make a living.

“Working people need to find ways to overcome the competition for jobs as we fight to meet the need for safe homes,” Holmes said. “The Communist League fight is a public program to put millions back to work at union-scale wages to make the repairs and build the houses, hospitals and other facilities workers need.” Hall set an appointment for Holmes to come back to talk further and to take a look at the CL’s literature.

Supporters of the campaign also introduced the party’s revolutionary course as they joined thousands demonstrating here Feb. 3 against declining health care from the National Health Service. The campaign table displayed placards, including two that read: “It’s not who you’re against it’s what you’re for! Workers must take political power!” and “Organize all workers — agency and permanent, native born and foreign born! Amnesty for undocu-

For lack of sufficient government funding thousands of people have had “nonurgent” surgeries canceled this winter, and there has been a shortage of beds with many patients kept wait-

ing in ambulances outside hospitals.

In January Accident and Emergency doctors wrote to Prime Minister Theresa May complaining that patients were dying in corridors while waiting for treatment.

The demonstration was called by the People’s Assembly and Health Campaigns Together under the banner: “NHS in crisis: Fix it now.” The People’s Assembly says the answer is to throw out the ruling Conservative Party and replace it with Labour.

“I travel a lot,” Angus Ford, a film location worker attending the protest, told Holmes. “And every time I come back there are new stories about how the NHS has got worse. Might it not be better with a Labour Party government?”

“No, Labour promises to protect the NHS and make capitalism ‘fairer’. But it’s not just a matter of putting more funds into health care,” Holmes replied. “Under capitalism health care, like everything else, is a commod-

ity that’s bought and sold for profit. In these conditions there will always be a class-divided crisis of health care for working people.

“Workers here must look to our own capacities like the toilers in Cuba who overthrew capitalist rule, ending its dog-eat-dog social relations, and set out to build a society based on human solidarity and the needs of the toiling majority,” Holmes said.

The Communist League is also running Hugo Wils for Tameside Council and Catharina Tirsén for Manchester City Council.

Gov’t moves to reopen frame-up case against Bundys

BY SETH GALINSKY

U.S. prosecutors have not given up their witch hunt against the Bundy cat-

tle-ranching family in Nevada, even af-

fter the feds’ frame-up charges against them and their supporters have either been thrown out of court or led to acquittal at trial.

The Nevada U.S. Attorney’s Office asked U.S. District Judge Gloria Navarro Feb. 7 to “reimstate the entire indictment” against Livada’s husband, political figures Ammon and Ryan Bundy, and supporter Ryan Payne, or to allow them to prosecute on at least some of the charges.

At the same time the prosecutors moved that charges against four other defendants in a parallel case be dismissed, since, they admitted, there is little chance a conviction can be won.

When the frame-up began to unravel, Navarro decreed the govern-

tment’s “outrageous” and “flagrant mis-

conduct” Jan. 8, and dismissed all the charges against the Bundys and Payne “with prejudice” — meaning they cannot be filed again. This is what govern-

ment prosecutors are trying to get the judge to reverse.

The judge noted not only did the prosecution withhold evidence from the defendants, it made “several mis-

representations to the defense, and to the Court.” Among the “misrepresenta-

tions” — legalese for lies — were deni-

als that the government deployed snipers and surveillance cameras around the Bundy ranch, as well as hiding the existence of government reports containing information that contradicted the prosecutions’ case against them.

The frame-up charges — from conspiracy to “impede and injure a federal officer” to “obstruction of justice” — stem from the refusal of Cliven Bundy to allow the Bureau of Land Manage-

ment to confiscate hundreds of his cattle in April 2014. When the family called for help and hundreds of support-

ers showed up, federal agents backed down and the cattle were released.

The four defendants had been held in prison for some two years waiting for trial.

The BLM claimed that the restric-

tions on cattle grazing on federal land the Bundys had used for decades — restrictions that drove every other rancher in Clark County out of business — were necessary to pro-

tect the “threatened” desert tortoise.

Yet in 2013 the U.S. Fish and Wild-

life Service reported so many thou-

sand of the pet tortoises had been abandoned at a wildlife center that it couldn’t take any more.

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Amnesty for immigrants!

Continued from front page
dent Barack Obama by executive or- der. Trump said he wants to hang on the dreamers too, but it has to be done by Congress.

Six bills were introduced but none was able to get the 60 votes needed under the Senate rules to be approved. The bill backed by Trump would grant the deferred status to some 1.8 million youth, far more than the 800,000 appli-cants approved under Obama's program.

The bill coupled the reprieve for the dreamers with new restrictions on im-migration. It would limit family-based visas to parents and nonadult children; end the immigration lottery, which pro- vides a road to the U.S. for tens of thou-sands; and authorize billions of dollars to extend the already existing wall on the Mexican border.

A bipartisan Senate bill that also failed would have increased those eligi-ble to be dreamers to some 3.2 million, and without restrictive measures Trump demanded. Backers of this bill knew it didn't have a chance of passing, much less overcome a presidential veto. Their goal was to score points against Trump, with an eye to the 2018 elections.

Two recent federal court rulings have temporarily ended the DACA program by March 15, giving more time for a possible compromise.

Absent from the feigned concern for the dreamers and the rulers’ debate are the rest of the 11 million undocumented workers in the U.S.

Boobs depend on immigrant labor

The purported rulers have never been out to halt the flow of immigrants, only to regulate it based on their needs. By maintaining a partial layer of work- ers who have “proper” papers or with “guest” papers that give them almost no rights — the bosses get cheaper labor, divide the working class and keep wages for everyone down. This is essential for U.S. capital to bolster its competitive drive against rivals abroad.

The liberal press and middle-class left deny that the Trump administration has engineered a huge crackdown on immigrants. And, they claim, Trump’s election represents a growing racist and anti-immigrant wave that fewer workers were trying to cross.

In January 2017, Obama’s last month in office, 42,460 without papers were detained trying to get into the country. By April, under Trump, that number had fallen to 15,766, a reflection that fewer workers were trying to cross. But even the last eight months, the number has begun to grow again — a result of the uptick in the capitalist econ- omy. More than 40,000 people were ar-rested in December.

Immigration and Customs Enforce- ment agents arrested nearly 106,000 so-called criminal immigrants in 2017 and 38,000 “noncriminals.” This is higher than similar arrests in Obama’s last year in office, but half the number arrested each year during Obama’s first term.

In 2008 the government stopped con- ducting immigration factory raids, due to their unpopularity among workers, immigrant and native-born alike. In their place ICE stepped up workplace audits, which lead to the firings of thou-sands of workers without papers. Under Obama, the audits skyrocketed from 503 in 2008 to more than 3,000 in 2013 and 2014. In 2017, after Trump took of- fice, ICE carried out 1,360 audits.

‘Merit-based’ immigration?

A Feb. 6 Wall Street Journal column by liberal William Galston, a former adviser to Bill Clinton, was titled “The Case for Merit-Based Immigration,” ar- guing for restricting legal entry of “un- skilled” immigrants.

“President Trump has proposed mov- ing toward a [merit-based] system,” he says. “This idea is worth discussing.”

But there is no “us.”

The propertied rulers have never been for the dreamers, but their captains have not kept talking about the need to bring everyone out of the shadows, not just the dreamers.

Liberals hail FBI witch hunt against White House

Continued from front page

amazingly proud,” columnists Thomas Friedman gushes in the Times Feb. 18. But the times are changing.

The spy agencies he applauds serve the purported rulers against the working class. The FBI is tasked by the bosses to spy on the working class, to turn up on class militants, Black rights and Puerto Rican independence fighters, and oppo-nents of Washington’s wars. Examples include framing up leaders of the So- cialist Workers Party and the Teamsters union in Minneapolis for speaking out against the rulers’ drive to enter the sec- ond imperialist world war to decades of underpaying and protecting on the party and other political groups.

Like all the rulers’ frame-up grand juries and special prosecutors, Mueller’s probe against the Trump presidency starts with a target and then roots around for evidence. The charge that those in- dicted comprised to “defend the U.S.” is so broad it could mean anything. It is used to target almost anyone for anything. Such laws are writ- ten that way to make it easy for the cops and spy agencies to use them to go after working-class neighborhoods.

The liberals and middle-class left are determined to criminalize their political differences with Trump to drive him out of the White House and whatever’s left of the right to govern in a form they can control.

The liberals and middle-class left say the rulers need to be “learned” on what to do by meritorials like himself. The alleged activities of the Inter-net Research Agency and its manager, Yevgeny Prigozhin, itemized in the in- dictment, are a litany of internet misin- formation on a wide variety of political issues.

But the scale of the meddling in the 2016 elections by Moscow pales in com- parison to that engineered over decades by the U.S. rulers. They have utilized their spy agencies — that liberals are falling over themselves to swear to plaudits — to not only “afflict” elections, but to brutally overturn governments.

Continue the “Congressional” coup that overthrew the Iranian govern- ment of Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh and replaced him with the Shah in 1953, establishing a key prop in world capitalism. That coup was followed by the CIA coup that overthrew the Iranian govern- ment of Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh and replaced him with the Shah in 1953, establishing a key prop in world capitalism. That coup was followed by the CIA coup that overthrew the Iraqi government of Saddam Hussein and replaced him with the U.S.-backed regime of Paul Breznev, which the U.S. rulers were able to turn into a friendly firing squad.

More than 200 residents of Aguas Buenas and nearby towns marched out- side Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority’s central offices in San Juan Feb. 12. They sang, “We come from Aguas Buenas to let you know, if the light doesn’t come on, we’ll be here (outside your office) forever.”

Five months and counting since hurricanes Irma and Maria hit the island at least 700,000 people are still without light, and many don’t have running water.

“At a meeting at the House of Christ the Savior Catholic Church, community mem- bers decided to organize ourselves regardless of political affiliation or reli- gion and protest,” Father Hipólito Vicens, who helped organize the action, told the Wall Street Journal Feb. 16. The Feb. 12 protest was the largest of dozens of similar actions that have been taking place across the U.S. colony.

“There’s some work being done on the outskirts of the town, but it’s ex- tremely slow,” Vicens said. “And 10 or 11 trucks from a U.S. company park here every day, but they don’t do any work.”

How did company bosses respond? “The power company removed all the bridges that were actually doing any work,” he said. “Now the only ones that come are the ones from the U.S. that park their trucks and don’t do anything.”

“We are going to hold another assembly Feb. 26 to discuss what’s next,” Vici- ens said. “Our dream is to include people from the rural and mountainous areas across the central part of the island. These are the poorer, less developed zones that have been left totally untouched.”

A bankruptcy court Feb. 19 approved a $300 million loan to the Power Au- thority, less than a third of what it says it needs to buy enough fuel to keep run- ning. To help pay the Puerto Rican government’s $74 billion debt, Gov. Ricardo Rossello plans to sell off the power company to the highest bidder.

The Financial Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico — tasked with squeezing Puerto Rican workers to pay as much back to bondholders as possible — is now demanding the colonial regime strike down laws that are preventing firms from firing workers without cause.

— SETH GALINSKY

York told MSNBC he thought Mos- saddegh was a “madman” and should “be taken care of.”

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"Madness of American Crowds," New York Times columnist Roger Co- kcnh claimed that working people are “dumb” and “can be led by the nose into the gutter,” and were “easily manipu-

lated” to elect Trump.

In reality millions of workers, includ-

ing many who had voted for Barack Obama in previous elections, were angry over the blows inflicted on them from capitalism's political and moral crisis, and looking for a change. They voted for Trump hoping he would do something and “drain the swamp” in Washington. But Trump, like his predecessors from both parties, governs to defend the inter-

ests of the property owners.

SWP members campaigning in work-

ing-class neighborhoods found widespread interest in discussing how the rulers foist the costs of today's wars and social crises onto the backs of work-

ers and what was done up in a frenzy to claim Mueller had found the “smok-

ing gun” against him. It went so far that

Democrat Rep. Jerry Nadler from New
The agreement, which runs for 27 months, stipulates a 4.3 percent wage raise starting in April. Individual workers won the option to work 28 hours a week if they fancy to work in unions ranks, dren or aging relatives, but they would face a cut in pay. The standard work-week for IG Metall members is 35 hours. And union officials agreed to a trade-off if bosses find themselves short of workers, they can sign 40-hours-a-week contracts with workers. Bosses told the press the deal has some “painful elements,” but most thought it would work well for them.

"Employees have more opportunities to reduce their hours of work,” said Stefan Wolf, chief negotiator for Südwestmetall, “while companies get more options to increase the volume of work hours.”

Last year the German economy grew at its fastest rate since 2011 and official unemployment is at its lowest since 1990.

— Emma Johnson

Faculty union calls first strike ever at University of Quebec in Outaouais

SAINT-JEROME, Quebec — Some 250 professors at the University of Quebec in Outaouais went on the first faculty strike in the campus’ 44-year history Jan. 17. The University of Quebec is a system of 10 public universities in the province. The 10-hour strike occurred in Gatineau and Saint-Jerome, where the main campuses in Quebec are located. Members of the Professors Union have been without a contract since May 1, 2015. The union is demanding wage parity with the system’s other similar-sized universities, more funds for research, equitable working conditions among campuses, and the representation of union members in the committees that decide policy for the university.

“**Agreement ends final case against Quebec rail worker**

By JOHN STEELE

On Jan. 19, locomotive engineer Tom Harding and train traffic controller Richard Labrie, members of United Transportation Workers Local 1976, won acquittal by a jury on frame-up charges of criminal negligence for the deaths of 47 people in July 2013 Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, oil train derailment and explosion. The Quebec prosecutor’s office announced Feb. 16 it will not appeal the verdict.

Facing some lesser noncriminal charges, the two were each fined a maximum of $50,000, house arrest, plus 240 hours of community service. The five company officials and the defunct railroad, which has no assets, was fined $1 million.

Lac-Mégantic resident Jean Claude Morin, whose daughter died in the disaster, attended the hearing, as he had most of the earlier trials. Like most people in Lac-Mégantic, he said justice was done when Harding and Labrie were acquitted. He told the press that Edward Burkhardt, owner of Montreal, Maine and Atlantic, and other top officials should have been charged for the deaths.

When this hearing brought all the legal proceedings to a close, he told the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, “I don’t think we will ever see any money from the MMA.”

Under pressure from trial revelations about Transport Canada’s collusion with Montreal, Maine and Atlantic officials to allow unsafe conditions on the railroad, Ottawa announced it would help fund the construction of a rail bypass around Lac-Mégantic, a demand residents there have been fighting for. The widespread support for Harding among working people in the area was reflected when Yvon Deshaies, mayor of nearby Louiseville, officially invited Harding to carry out his community service there.

He said that he had spent much of his time at ceremonies, meetings and media events that have been held there. He said the success of restaurants, motels and other business there had offered to pay for Harding’s food, lodging and expenses.

“**The Militant**

March 5, 2018

5

“**In the last 30 months, professors have tried to come to an understanding with an employer bent on maintaining a kind of immobility, in addition to confusing the issues surrounding the aims pursued by the administration,”** Louise Briand, the union president, told the press. “We have repeatedly tried to reason with the employer regarding the importance of offering work conditions that are necessary for the university’s development.”

— David Lefrançais, member of the Professors Union

Seattle Education Association members picket Feb. 7 in support of Teamsters school bus drivers who struck First Student bosses. Nine-day strike led to gains in health care coverage, pensions.

Seattle school bus drivers win new contract

SEATTLE — Seattle School District bus drivers who are members of Teamsters Local 714 overwhelmingly ratified a contract with First Student bosses Feb. 10 after a nine-day strike here. Teamster leaders say advances were made in getting health care coverage workers can afford, and drivers will become part of the Teamsters pension plan.

“We have a specific job to make sure services get to and from school safely,” Miguel Angel Camargo, a five-year veteran driver for First Student, told Socialist Workers Party members when we joined their picket line. “We need healthy and safe children and entitled to decent health care coverage.”

Drivers said backing from the community and the teachers union helped to win the contract. On Feb. 7, Seattle Education Association members fanned out across the city to tell people about the strike. They lined school corners near their campuses and chanted support for the strikers’ demands.

“The Teamsters supported us in our strike a few years ago,” said Emma Klee, a bus driver at George Hill Elementary School, explaining that they had stood at a busy intersection in West Seattle. “We have common goals and we want to make sure the drivers have a living wage, health care and pensions.”

In recent weeks drivers employed by First Student also fought for new contracts in Southern California, Montreal, and Manchester, England.

“I see the rise of militant union struggles, if the workers refuse to be intimidated,” weighted Tom Harding, who struck First Student bosses. “This nine-day strike was a callout to confound the apparatus of employer propaganda.”

The reasons for this campaign are:

1. To intimidate the workers into disarming their struggles, if the workers refuse to be intimidated.

2. Toכםיתריה, the workers into disarming their struggles, if the workers refuse to be intimidated.

3. For guiding the workers.”

“**ON THE PICKET LINE**

— Edwin Fruit

IG Metall, Germany’s biggest union, makes a deal

After a month of brief walkouts and a series of 24-hour protest strikes, IG Metall, Germany’s biggest union, has signed a contract covering 900,000 workers in the state of Baden-Wurttemberg. The same deal is likely to be rolled out for the union’s members nationwide — some 3.9 million metal and electrical workers at thousands of companies, including manufacturing giants like Volkswagen, Bosch, Siemens, Mercedes-Benz and Airbus.

“25, 50, and 75 YEARS AGO

**THE MILITANT**

March 5, 1939

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa

An historic International Solidarity Conference, called by the African National Congress here February 19-21 endorsed the ANC’s call for rapid elections to a Constituent Assembly to end racist apartheid rule once and for all.

“The world is present with a moment that capture the essence of life itself,” ANC president Nelson Mandela told the 900 participants from almost 70 countries around the world. “Two-and-a-half million South Africans are standing at a crossroads. It is a moment of great potential for us and for our continent. We are the hopeful generation. Our youth are the generation of the post-apartheid generation who stand at the threshold of a new world.

“Our task is to mobilize the world to support us. We must go to every country. We must go to every continent and let the world know that we are waiting for the international community.

“The world is ready to help us transform all of Africa. It is waiting for the ANC to come to office and transform itself into the national unity government that it was always meant to be.”

— Edwin Fruit

**THE MILITANT**

March 4, 1968

What started as seemingly routine negotiation of a new contract for New York City sanitationmen evolved into a strike struggle of national significance. The issues and events involved have far-reaching political implications. They throw new light on the growing militancy in the union ranks, on the consequent sharpening of the labor-capital conflict, and on the resulting crisis of union leadership.

The strike came after seven months of fruitless efforts to get a contract renewal for the 10,000-member Uniform Sanitationmen’s Association, a Teamster affiliate. Union demands centered on a $600 annual wage increase retroactive to July 1, 1967, when the old contract expired. Mayor Lindsay rejected the demands and refused to make any serious counter-offer. The strike began and was successful defeated the frame-up, that he accepted some of the blame for the tragedy. “I assume this responsibility and I will always assume it,” he said. “I do not find the words sufficient to express my sympathy to those whose loved ones were lost in this disaster.”

During the more than three-month-long criminal trial it became clear that the profit-driven railroad bosses, with complacency of the government’s Transport Canada agency, bore central responsibility for the disaster. To cut costs, they imposed a one-person crew on rail work. This was in direct contradiction to the safety of workers and those who lived by the tracks, and refused to allow engineers to engage an emergency braking system that would prevent runaway trains.

At the conclusion of the hearing Harding was sentenced to six months of house arrest, plus 240 hours of community service. The five company officials and the defunct railroad, which has no assets, was fined $1 million.

Lac-Mégantic resident Jean Claude Morin, whose daughter died in the disaster, attended the hearing, as he had most of the earlier trials. Like most people in Lac-Mégantic, he said justice was done when Harding and Labrie were acquitted. He told the press that Edward Burkhardt, owner of Montreal, Maine and Atlantic, and other top officials should have been charged for the deaths.

When this hearing brought all the legal proceedings to a close, he told the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, “I don’t think we will ever see any money from the MMA.”

Under pressure from trial revelations about Transport Canada’s collusion with Montreal, Maine and Atlantic officials to allow unsafe conditions on the railroad, Ottawa announced it would help fund the construction of a rail bypass around Lac-Mégantic, a demand residents there have been fighting for. The widespread support for Harding among working people in the area was reflected when Yvon Deshaies, mayor of nearby Louiseville, officially invited Harding to carry out his community service there.

He said that he had spent much of his time at ceremonies, meetings and media events that have been held there. He said the success of restaurants, motels and other business there had offered to pay for Harding’s food, lodging and expenses.
End US sanctions against North Korea! Korea is one!
Letter from Socialist Workers Party National Committee

Below is a Feb. 15 letter from Steve Clark, on behalf of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party, to the people of Korea on the occasion of their Feb. 16 national holiday.

The Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists send revolutionary greetings on the occasion of this February 16 national holiday of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We reaffirm our commitment to the Korean people's fight to reunify their country and to end the partition that Washington, Moscow with its complicity, imposed at the end of World War II and has maintained ever since at the cost of millions of Korean lives.

We welcome the DPRK's recent proposal for joint North-South Korean participation in the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, which was then followed by Washington's and Seoul's decision to postpone annual joint military maneuvers and war games. Those provocative and threatening "exercises" must now be ended once and for all. This must end with all troops and armaments from Korea's soil, skies, and waters, including the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile batteries and espionage station deployed by the Donald Trump and Barack Obama administrations.

In face of Washington's massive and deadly submarine, naval, air, and ground offensive, not only belligerent Korea, but also across Asia and the world, we renew our call for a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula and Pacific.

We demand that the US imperialist unconditionally sit down with the DPRK for talks and at long last, after almost sixty-five years, sign a peace treaty to end the war waged against the Korean people from 1950 to 1953. As Washington affirms today that its "maximum pressure campaign" is to "continue and intensify" to punish the people and government of the DPRK, we demand an end to ever-tightening financial, and political sanctions — all of them, now!

In the United States and across much of the world, the cold war is under way among tens of millions of working people whose lives have been devastated by the consequences of capitalism's deepening economic and political crisis — and by Washington's ongoing military operations and wars in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, and beyond. Vanguard workers are seeking to end the solidarity and control capitalism-fueled competition and divisions by defending and strengthening our trade unions, demanding amnesty for immigrant workers, combating racial discrimination and cop brutality, and demanding dignity and an end to second-class treatment for women.

As socialist workers and youth talk with fellow workers on their doorsteps and elsewhere across the United States, we explain that it is this resistance and openness to discuss a working-class course — not entrenchment in capitalist politics dominated by the Democratic and Republican parties (and its growing pornographication and rationalization of unleashing federal police power and prerogatives) — that offers a way forward for working people.

It is among workers and farmers such as these that growing support can be won for the demands the Socialist Workers Party — on this DPRK national holiday — is determined to fight for until they are won: End all economic and banking sanctions against the DPRK. US troops, ships, planes, and THAAD missiles and radar systems out of Korea. For a Korean Peninsula and Pacific Ocean free of nuclear weapons.

Korea is one!

BY EMMA JOHNSON

NEW YORK — On Feb. 15 State Supreme Court Judge Robert Neary acquitted Sgt. Hugh Barry of murder in the killing of Deborah Danner, a 66-year-old woman suffering from schizophrenia. Once again, the decision shows the difficulty in winning a case against the cops.

Like most cops, Barry opted to be tried by the judge rather than face a jury of working people. Barry shot Danner in her Bronx apartment Oct. 18, 2016. Neighbors had called for help when Danner began acting erratically. In the preceding two years cops had been there at least twice when she had problems. On both occasions they had broken down the door to get into the apartment.

Six cops and two emergency medical technicians responded this time. "She just wanted us to get out, to just leave," one of the cops testified in court. "She didn't like dealing with us."

When Barry arrived on the scene, he took command. He testified that Danner was just outside her bedroom door when he decided to charge in and grab her. He missed her and she retreated into the bedroom. "She was too fast," he said. He took command. Danner was disabled and 5 feet 6 inches. Barry was half her age and 6 feet tall.

He said he rushed after her and that she took out a baseball bat, got up on her feet and placed herself in a stance to swing. He said he feared for his life so he shot twice in the chest with the gun he already had in his hand. She died instantly. Barry had not been on the scene more than five minutes before Danner lay dead in her bedroom.

But the law says that a cop walks as long as he says he feared for his life. Barry acknowledged Danner never swung at him. He claimed he couldn't back off because the other five cops were blocking his way. He conceded he had not followed guidelines for dealing with mentally ill people and that he had never called for help.

Cop acquitted on all counts

Barry was indicted for murder, manslaughter and criminally negligent homicide, the first New York cop on duty to face charges like this since the killing of Amadou Diallo in 1999. He was acquitted on all counts. It took Judge Neary less than a day to reach the verdict.

"They always say that — they're afraid, the cops do not kill. They protect the system and put the less fortunate down," HaHa Bah, whose son Mohamed was killed by New York cops in 2012, told the Militant Feb. 16. "We need justice. This is not justice."

HaHa Bah dialed 911 for an ambulance when her son was suffering a mental breakdown. Instead of an ambulance, nine heavily armed cops arrived. They forced their way into the apartment and, claiming Mohamed Bah threatened them with a knife, shot and killed him. Then they "lost" evidence from the crime scene.

None of the cops were indicted, but HaHa Bah's lawyer was not even on a civil suit, and in November a federal jury ruled that the cops used excessive force in killing her son, awarding her $2.21 million.

Barry chose to be tried by the judge, who is part of the same criminal "justice" system as the cops, and much more likely to "understand" his actions. Roughly one-quarter of all people killed by cops are identified as suffering from mental illnesses. In her already agitated state, Danner certainly didn't need six heavily armed cops crowding her into her bedroom.

In a 2012 essay she wrote about living with schizophrenia she expressed concern at the police killing people with mental problems.

"We are all aware of the all too frequent news stories about mentally ill who come up against law enforcement instead of mental health professionals and end up dead," she wrote, referring to the 1984 police killing of Eleanor Bumpurs, another New York woman with mental issues. Bumpurs "was killed by police by shotgun because she was perceived as a "threat to the safety" of several grown men who were also police officers," Danner wrote.

The Patrolmen's Benevolent Association and other cop groups campaigned last year to take this page ad praising him and demanding his acquittal in the New York Daily News. Every day of the trial cops took up the front page.

"I wasn't surprised at the verdict," HaHa Bah said. "I've been there. They murdered my son and after four years they still don't have anything. They don't have evidence to indict. They don't want to indict. This goes on and on and on. They don't care about justice. We just have to keep fighting. Never give up.

Danner's relatives are pursuing a federal lawsuit to hold the city responsible for her killing.
Malcolm X: ‘It is impossible for capitalism to survive’

Below is an excerpt from an interview with Malcolm X published in the March-April, 1965 issue of the Young Socialist, conducted Jan. 18 of that year by Jack Barnes and Barry Sheppard of the Young Socialist Alliance. A month later, on Feb. 21, Malcolm was murdered while speaking at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem, New York. The interview appears in By Any Means Necessary, one of Pathfinder Books of the Month for February. Copyright © 1970, 1992 by Betty Shabazz and Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Question: Why did you break with the Black Muslims? Malcolm X: No kind of action in this country is ever going to bear fruit unless you have an organization that's neither political nor religious and doesn't take part in the civil rights struggle, and I don't think it has been. It was to take part in the political and economic facets of the Negro struggle. And the organization wouldn't do that because the stand it would have to take would have been too militant, uncompromising, and activist, and the hierarchy had gotten conservative. It was motivated mainly by protecting its own self interests. I might also point out that although the Black Muslim movement professed to be a religious group, the religion they had adopted — Islam — didn't recognize uncompromising, and activist, and the hierarchy had gotten conservative. It was motivated mainly by protecting its own self interests. I might also point out that although the Black Muslim movement professed to be a religious group, the religion they had adopted — Islam — didn't recognize

Malcolm X: ‘It is impossible for capitalism to survive’

It is impossible for capitalism to survive, primarily because the system of capitalism needs some blood to suck. Capitalism used to be like an eagle, but now it's more like a vulture. It used to be strong enough to go and suck anybody's blood whether they were strong or not. But now it’s more like a vulture, less to suck, and it becomes weaker and weaker. It’s only a matter of time in my opinion before it will collapse completely.
The Militant March 5, 2018

New government in South Africa

Continued from front page
agencies downgraded the government’s credit rating to junk status in November.

Zuma was forced to resign Feb. 14, after a bitter inside fight over the ANC, which has ruled South Africa since the overthrow of the apartheid system in in a mighty democratic revolution in the early 1990s. Ramaphosa defeated the Zuma-backed candidate for ANC president Dec. 18, leading to replacing Zuma as president of the country.

Ramaphosa was a leader of the struggle against apartheid, like Zuma, and in the Congress of South African Mineworkers. He became ANC general secretary after Nelson Mandela was freed in 1990 and helped write the nation’s new democratic constitution after apartheid was brought down. In 1996 Ramaphosa resigned his government posts, using his connections and ANC influence to help Black capitalists in Africa’s wealthiest businessmen, part of the new layer of Black capitalists.

Ramaphosa’s wealth is estimated at $450 million, with stakes in mining, finance, McDonald’s and Coca-Cola bottling plants.

He was a board member of the Lonmin mining company when 34 miners were cut down in cold blood by cops in 2012 during a strike for higher wages and better working conditions. The day before the miners’ rally was attacked, Ramaphosa called on police to act against what he called the “dastardly criminals.”

The capitalist class hopes that Ramaphosa still has enough authority from his days as an anti-apartheid and labor leader to push through what they call a “reset” in the economy.

Democratic revolution

Half the population in South Africa today is too young to have been part of the democratic revolution that overthrew white supremacist rule in South Africa, a revolution that inspired working people around the globe.

For decades the South African gov-
ernment controlled virtually every aspect of the lives of African peoples there. Every individual was assigned a race identity — White, Indian (many of them descendants of indentured ser-
vants brought to the country), Coloured (of mixed race), and Black.

It’s now been decades since the most basic rights: where to live, who they could live with, the right to change jobs, to own land, to farm, to vote, to protest. A notorious pass system was imposed to control the movement of Black.

“The apartheid system had one cen-
tral and overriding purpose: to orga-
nize and perpetuate the superexploi-
tation of African workers. By capitalizing on this, Jack Barnes, national secretary for the Socialist Workers Party, in a 1985 ar-
ticle titled, “The Coming Revolution in South Africa.”

In 1954 the African National Con-
gress joined with the Indian Congress, the South African Coloured Peoples Or-

nership of the ANC and the government, the currency has surged and the South Africa Reserve Bank cranked up its growth forecasts.

It has pledged to “engage” with mine owners on new, pro-capitalist laws.

In his Feb. 16 State of the Nation speech, Ramaphosa promised to work to change what he admits is “a highly unequal society, in which poverty and the poverty gap are defined by race and gender.” He also called for mine bosses, union leaders and “commu-
nities” to work together, code words for speedup, deeper exploitation and higher profits.

On Feb. 20 Finance Minister Malusi Gigaba released the 2018 budget promo-

tes “tough measures,” including a higher sales tax that will hit working people hardest. Also on the table are proposals to overturn laws passed after the fall of apartheid that made it harder for bosses to fire workers.

Below is an excerpt from a speech given in 1985 by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, titled, “The Coming Revolution in South Africa.” It’s published in New Interna-
tional magazine no. 5. Copyright © 1985 by New International. Reprinted by permis-
sion.

By JACK BARNES

What is the historic character of the revolution in South Africa?

It is a revolution to overthrow the apartheid state and tear apart the apartheid system.

It is a revolution to open the door to forging, for the first time, a nonracial South African nation-state.

This new nation will incorporate the African people from various tribal backgrounds, the descendants of those who lived there and worked the land before the white colonizers arrived, and who are the vast majority of the popula-
tion of South Africa today. It will incor-
porate those the apartheid system classi-
fies as Coloureds and Indians, who, to-
gether with the Africans, constitute the oppressed Black population. And it will include those whites who will ac-
cept living and working as citizens with equal rights — no more, no less — in a democratic South Africa.

It is a revolution to conquer the right of the Black majority to own, work, and develop the land from which they have been expelled by the apartheid regime. To win the right of Africans to become bosses, union leaders and “commu-
nities” to work together, code words for speedup, deeper exploitation and higher profits.

It is a revolution aimed at replacing the rule of the white minority with a democratic republic based on one per-
son, one vote. Its goal — in the words used by the African National Congress — is a single, united, nonracial, and democratic South Africa.

It is a revolution in which the toilers are seeking to replace minority apart-
heid rule with rule by the working people, the great majority. They will then use that new revolutionary power to ensure that not a single brick of the apartheid system is left intact and that the democratic program of the revolu-
tion is put into practice.

From the historical standpoint, the South African revolution today is a bourgeois-democratic revolution for these goals. It is a democratic revolution, a national revolution. The working people are striving to lead it to victory and to create the first time a true South African nation-state.

The South African revolution today is not an anticapitalist revolution. It will open the road to the transition to an an-
ticapitalist revolution, but no one can predict how long, or short, that road will be. That will be determined by the relationship of class forces in South Af-
rica and internationally that will emerge from the revolutionary overthrow of the apartheid state.
‘Cuba made a real revolution’

Continued from front page

of Education.” The campaign came just two years after workers and peasants had overthrown the U.S.-supported dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. Fidel Castro and the revolutionary leadership knew “an ignorant and illiterate people can’t carry out the tasks the revolution needed,” Aguilera said.

The campaign effectively involved the whole country, she said. Schools were shut down that year so that “students could become teachers.” If you weren’t a brigadista or a student, she said, you were helping organize transport, setting up camps, gathering hammers and hammers for them, or taking up arms to defend your country against those trying to overthrow the first socialist revolution in the Americas.

“We began to eliminate racism. Women broke the taboos and notions of what they could do and who they could be. We broke down the barriers between different social classes,” she said. “Through this effort we became different people and a generation was forged that has sustained the Cuban Revolution through different times. It is not difficult today to say that the revolution is still here.”

At most of Aguilera’s events the documentary “Maestra” (Teacher) by Catherine Murphy was shown. The film features interviews with veterans of the literacy campaign, including Aguilera. It shows Washington’s efforts to overthrow the revolution, including footage of the April 1961 invasion at the Bay of Pigs by U.S.-sponsored mercenaries, who were defeated by Cuban troops and volunteers who had been forced to share a home.

“The Maestra also describes ongoing attacks on literacy workers and students by counterrevolutionary bands.”

Talks with construction workers

A highlight of Aguilera’s visit here was her talk at the monthly meeting of 100 Black Construction Workers, organized by the Laborers’ International Union of North America. Most of those in attendance came straight from work. Aguilera talked about her own experiences in the construction industry in Cuba to expand their education and advance enforcement of health and safety.

“During the film,” she said, “a construction worker talked about what it is like that someone was killed. As a result of the investigation, Aguilera explained the ways the literacy campaign helped deepen the fight the revolution waged against racism. She said that Cuba was a very race-divided country before the July 26 Movement led the 1959 overthrow of Batista. “Sometimes a peasant who was white would say things that are today taught by a black teacher,” she said. “Instead of giving in, we would patiently explain how ideas like that were a remnant of the same society that had kept them from owning the land and oppressed them.”

But the campaign also began breaking down racism among the young teachers from the cities, she said. “Before, blacks had been friends with blacks, whites with whites. But the brigades were integrated. We all worked together as equals through all these experiences. The same was true of men and women, boys and girls. When we returned to school, the old divisions didn’t exist anymore.”

In Cuba, we have plenty of “problems of life,” Aguilera told a meeting of Puerto Rican independence activists at a program at El Maestro, a boxing club and community center in the South Bronx. “We don’t have enough housing, too many generations of a family are still forced to share a home.”

But everyone in Cuba has a place to live, she said, contrasting this to the homeless she had seen sleeping on the streets of New York, and encouraged “X’s marking empty and condemned housing she saw in Albany. During the tour over a dozen people signed up to find out about the April 22-May 6 May Day Brigade to Cuba.

Aguilera also spoke at meetings of the People’s Organization for Progress and at Essex County College in Newark and to several classes of high school students in Plainfield, New Jersey; and at a Domestic Violence Shelter and at the office of Haití Liberte newspaper in Brooklyn. She gave greetings to 60 students at an event organized by Students for Justice in Palestine being held in the room next to her City College meeting.

Nancy Boyasko contributed to this article.

See Cuba for yourself, sign up for May Day Brigade

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

You have a unique opportunity this spring to spend two weeks in Cuba to learn firsthand how workers and farmers there made a revolution in 1959, what it means to live in Cuba today and how it provides for us here and throughout the world.

Sign up now for the April 22-May 6 May Day Brigade to Cuba!

The brigade is organized by the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) and the National Network on Cuba is coordinating efforts to sign people up in the U.S.

Participants will join Cuban farmers in agricultural work, meet with representatives of Cuba’s student, trade union, women’s and other mass organizations; visit historic sites in the revolution; and have a chance to talk with veterans of those struggles. They will join with hundreds of thousands in the May Day march in Havana and participate in an international conference of solidarity with the socialist revolution the next day.

During her recent East Coast tour, Griselda Aguilera, a veteran of the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion and member of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba (FARC), spoke at a number of locations in New York, and encouraged people to join the brigade. More than a dozen of those who came to her meetings in New York and New Jersey Feb. 8-12 signed up for more information.

“I’ve been studying the legacy of the Cuban Revolution and want to experience it myself for the first time,” Jorge Cruz, a 21-year-old from New York, told the Militant Feb. 19. Meeting and hearing Aguilera, Cruz said, “solidified my desire to participate in the brigade.” Cruz said he’s working on convincing his professors to let him take his tests early so he can go.

A number of construction workers, members of Laborers’ International Union Local 79, organized a meeting at their hall to hear Aguilera, and some have signed up for the brigade.

The cost of the package, including meals and lodging in Cuba, is $675. Air travel, which costs extra, is being coordinated with the Marazul agency. Brigadistas will stay at the Julio Antonio Mella International Camp in Artemisa province, which can accommodate up to 220 people.

“If you want to go, don’t wait until the March 16 deadline to get your applications in,” Gail Walker, one of National Network on Cuba co-chairs and executive director of IFCO Pastors for Peace, said at an event Feb. 19. “Applications and the full schedule can be downloaded at www.NNOC.org. Email: ICANGoToCuba@nmoic.org.

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Our History Is Still Being Written

The Militant March 5, 2018 9
Amnesty now! No deportations!

The Socialist Workers Party says, “Stop the depor- tion of the ‘dreamers.’” We stand for this as part of the fight to organize all 11 million workers who don’t have papers recognized by the courts and the cops in the U.S.

The bosses need a layer of workers without “pro- perty” to work around. This is why they use terror, work harder, intimidate and use as scapegoats to boost profits and divide the working class. The capitalist does depend on this pool of superexploited labor. They cannot compete against other capitalists. They need to use less than 7 percent of workers in private companies belong to a union. It is only by rejecting the bosses’ dog-eat-dog divide-and-rule moves that we can organize the working class as a whole, rebuild the fight- ing union movement, take steps toward independent political action and transform our unions into instru- ments of class struggle.

When there is an economic downturn the fight for the political soul of the working class intensifies. The stakes are high.

Class-conscious workers fight to win the labor movement and the working class to demand: Stop the deportations! Amnesty now! Organize the un-organized!

Conflicts in Syria as US rivals push interests

Continued from front page

Continued from front page

The Assad government in Syria has been able to retake control of most of the country — outside areas run by the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces — with the intervention of Russian airpower and ground troops from Iran, Hezbollah and other Tehran-backed militias. Before this intervention, Assad had steadily lost ground in a civil war after he inherited power from his father, Hafez, who ruled from 1970 to 2000.

There is less anti-immigrant sentiment in the work- ing class today than ever before. U.S.- and foreign- born workers will side by side in the same factories; our children go to the same schools; we live in the same neighborhoods. Workers don’t want to see friends, neighbors and co-workers torn from their homes and thrown out of the country. That same anti-immigrant rhetoric from sections of the ruling class still gets a hearing. When capi- talist production and trade fall, competition for jobs grows in the working class. Workers need a perspec- tive that shows how to end these conditions.

The SWP campaigns for the labor movement to fight for a government-funded public works program to provide millions of jobs at union scale to build infr- astucture, public transportation, child care and other things working people need.

Workers in the United States wherever we were born, whatever language we speak, whatever our skin color, all have a common enemy. The Assad government, which has never been convicted of anything. And there are 4.7 million people on probation or parole — subject to ongoing restrictions, indignities and intrusion into their affairs by their minders.

The numbers of working people imprisoned has more than quadrupled since the 1980s — with the big- gest jump, nearly 60 percent, coming under the Bill Clinton administration in the 1990s. The number of people on parole and probation grew just as rapidly.

“Originally designed as alternatives to incarcer- ation, probation and parole are a deprivation of lib- erty in their own right and have become key drivers of mass incarceration by serving as a trip wire to reincarceration for many of those under supervi- sion,” said a report issued by Columbia University’s Justice Lab Jan. 29. The report was signed by 20 pa- role and probation administrators in New York, Los Angeles and elsewhere.

One in 53 adults in the U.S. is on probation or pa-role. For African-Americans it’s one in 12, and nearly 20 percent for Black youth.

“As someone currently on probation I feel as if I’m walking on glass on top of heated coal,” Vaidez Hernandez, organized in the capitalist labor movement and Justice, told the media. “It’s definitely mentally straining knowing that if you make even a small mistake, like showing up late to a meeting, then you could find yourself back in jail, maybe even losing your job or housing.”

The report urges that “probation and parole popu- lations be significantly reduced,” that “revocations to incarceration be sharply curbed;” and “probation and parole fines be curtailed.”

Over the past 18 years there has been a 31 percent reduction in the number of people in New York State prisons. The number of people on parole and probation in half, saying they too often puts them back in prison. Some prison administrators are calling to cut the number of people on parole and probation in half, saying they don’t have the money to keep up with necessary “supervision.”

U.S. rulers put the largest percentage of the popu- lation in prison of any country in the world. Some 1.5 million are in federal and state prisons; another 750,000 are in local jails. The number has more than quadrupled since the 1980s.

The numbers of working people imprisoned has more than quadrupled since the 1980s — with the big- gest jump, nearly 60 percent, coming under the Bill Clinton administration in the 1990s. The number of people on parole and probation grew just as rapidly.

“The Syrian Observatory reports that bombings Feb. 18-20 destroyed five hospitals, killed 250 civilians and wounded 1,200.

Correction

The article “What’s Behind Protests in Iran Against Dress Code for Women?” in the Feb. 26 Militant incorrectly said that women were “pho- tographing themselves taking off their chador” in public. It should have said hijab.

Parole system ‘justice’

Continued from front page

On the parole and probation merry-go-round that all too often puts people back in prison, some prison admin- istrators are calling to cut the number of people on parole and probation in half, saying they don’t have the money to keep up with necessary “supervision.”

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