

THE MILITANT

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Dallas film spotlights 1973 cop killing of Santos Rodriguez
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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‘Militant’ sets fight against ban in Illinois federal prison

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In a broadside attack on freedom of the press and political rights, the Federal Bureau of Prisons has banned the *Militant*, saying it has stopped delivering the paper to a subscriber in the federal lockup in Greenville, Illinois. If this ruling is allowed to stand it could set a dangerous precedent for impounding the *Militant* — and then other publications — from the entire federal prison system.

The warden wrote that banning the *Militant* was “requested by the S.I.S. on the grounds it is a news-weekly journal associated with the Socialist Workers Party and encourages change by protesting and striking. Such publication can encourage inmates to protest and conduct work strikes which become a institution security matter.”

S.I.S. is the Special Investigative Support staff, which works with the FBI, Joint Terrorism Task Force and other federal spy agencies, according to the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

“We’re asking people and groups to

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US capitalist rulers face deepening political crisis

BY TERRY EVANS

As the Democrats and Republicans — the twin parties of capitalist rule — gear up for the 2018 elections, both continue to be wracked by political crises that have accelerated following the election of Donald Trump as president. What lies beneath these conflicts is their inability to prevent working people from looking for ways to stand up to the assaults that flow from the capitalist rulers’ economic, social and moral crisis.

The liberal media pundits, Democrats of all stripes and some Republicans, are lathered up in a furious “resistance” to the Trump presidency, and try to counter his every move with renewed efforts to bring him down. The real aim of their wrath is the working class, who they increasingly fear.

In the introduction to *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record; Why Washington Fears Working People*, Socialist Workers Party leader Steve Clark explains that these meritocratic liberals “recognize that more and

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SWP: Workers need to take political power



Dan Fein, left, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Illinois governor, talks with factory worker Jesse Bridges at his door while campaigning in Kankakee neighborhood July 29.

SWP takes party, program to workers on doorsteps

BY EMMA JOHNSON

As they campaign on workers’ doorsteps in big and small cities and rural areas across the country, Socialist Workers Party candidates and their supporters discuss why a class-struggle road forward is necessary in face of the attacks today from the crisis-ridden capitalist system.

Campaigning like this — on the porches and doorsteps of workers and farmers — is the foundation of the SWP’s work. This is where party

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Join the Socialist Workers Party 2018 campaign!

The following statement is from John Studer, chairman of the Socialist Workers Party National Campaign Committee.

SWP STATEMENT

Efforts by the Donald Trump administration to open negotiations with the governments of North Korea, Russia, Iran, China and the Taliban in Afghanistan are aimed at advancing the

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Dairy farmers: ‘Instead of making a living, we’re just making debt’



From left, Barb Troester, Brenda Cochran and Donna Hall from Farm Women United, which sponsored hearing in Lairdsville, Pennsylvania, July 24 to discuss crisis facing dairy farmers.

BY JOHN STAGGS

LAIRDSVILLE, Pa. — “Dairy farming just doesn’t work anymore,” Ben McCarty, a dairy farmer from Lycoming County, told an all-day “Dairy Farm Family Crisis Hearing” here July 24. “Instead of making a living you just make debt.”

Dairy farmers spoke out at the gathering, sponsored by Farm Women

United, testifying to the depth of the crisis they face. The event was held at the volunteer firehouse, with farmers coming from New York, New Jersey, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Organizers opened the session explaining the crisis is caused by the low prices dairy farmers get for their milk. Since 2015, the average price

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‘Nation-state’ law sets back fight for recognition of Israel, Palestinian state

BY SETH GALINSKY

The passage by a sharply divided Knesset of the “nation-state of the Jewish people” law July 19 is a setback for working people of all nationalities in Israel and to the fight for recognition of Israel and for an independent Palestinian state. It passed only by a 62-55 vote.

The new law, promoted by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, asserts, “The right to exercise national self-determination in the State of Israel is unique to the Jewish people.” Opponents charge this contradicts Israel’s other basic laws, which function as a constitution there, and the 1948 Declaration of Independence, which states that Israel “will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex.”

Hundreds of thousands of Arabs were driven from their land as part of the creation of Israel after the end of the second imperialist world war.

Israel was established after the Nazi Holocaust that killed 6 million Jews. The slaughter was facilitated by the capitalist rulers of the U.S. and Britain, who both before and after the war

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Georgia school bus drivers fight for reinstatement after sickout

EU leaders, Greek gov’t keep squeeze on workers

BY TERRY EVANS

The editors of the *New York Times* and other liberal meritocrats view the capitalist leaders of the European Union as “cultured” and “brights” like they consider themselves. They see the EU as a model of what they call the “rules-based international order.” But the reality of capitalist rule in the countries of Europe — like that in the U.S. — is dog-eat-dog competition and attacks on the conditions of life for working people.

The EU is run by the propertied owners in Germany, and, to a lesser degree, of France. Their domination rests on relentless exploitation of the weaker capitalist nations in southern Europe, which has been especially ruinous for workers and farmers in Greece.

EU coming apart at seams

Liberals shrieked when President Donald Trump called the EU a “trade foe” of the U.S. ruling class. What are the facts? The EU and its predecessors were formed as a protectionist trading bloc to counter U.S. imperialism after it won ascendancy through its victory in World War II. They said it would become an ever closer political union, something that was always a fake. Competition among the rival capitalist rulers in Europe’s nation-states is tearing the EU apart at the seams.

On Aug. 21 Athens is due to complete the onerous “austerity” terms of a third and “final bailout” imposed since 2010 by the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund after the Greek government went bankrupt that year. The

bankruptcy was the result of the sharp contraction of capitalist production and trade worldwide in 2008, on top of years of disadvantageous relations between southern EU countries and Berlin. The Greek rulers had gone deeper in debt to Berlin and other capitalist creditors, constantly forced to borrow to pay for needed imports.

“The Greek crisis ends here,” claimed Pierre Moscovici, European Economic Affairs Commissioner June 22, commenting on the latest deal that gave Athens some more time to pay off its debts.

But for working people in Greece there is no letup by the capitalist class in making them bear the brunt of the crisis. Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras’ Syriza government plans further cuts to pensions and more tax hikes in 2019. A deal struck with eurozone finance ministers last month imposes restrictions on government spending for 40 more years, the *Financial Times* reported.

In 2015 the Panhellenic Socialist Movement and New Democracy party, which had governed since 1981 were pushed aside by Syriza, the acronym for the Coalition of the Radical Left. It pledged to reverse the crisis, create jobs and boost wages. But that would have taken mobilizing working people, leading a fight and organizing independently of the bosses, a course at odds with Syriza’s perspective of subordinating the interests of workers to the needs of the capitalist rulers.

They blustered and threatened to pull out of the eurozone rather than kowtow to demands for deeper attacks, but ended up carrying them out



AP/Thanassis Stavrakis

Mati resident Giannis Kardiakos, right, confronts Greek Defense Minister Panos Kammenos July 26, after forest fire killed 91. Government organized no evacuation, blamed area residents.

to defend capitalist rule.

The official unemployment rate has remained above 20 percent for the last six years, in contrast to 7 percent before the 2008 crash, intensifying competition among working people. Youth unemployment is a whopping 43 percent. An estimated 52 percent of households rely on state payments to retirees to get by.

The EU’s finance ministers and the IMF have made their loans dependent on slashing workers’ living standards. To secure a 5 billion euro loan in January Syriza agreed to proposals demanded by creditors that included a reduction of benefits and adopting measures to make it harder for unions to call strikes.

The government also decided to find a way around protests at courthouses that on occasion have prevented judges from carrying through foreclosures and evicting people. Now the courts will conduct repossession proceedings online.

Under previous “bailouts,” Greek rulers have imposed massive layoffs of government employees, a 22 percent cut to the minimum wage and a raft of tax increases against workers and farmers. These have included a sales tax on food going from 9 percent in 2009 to 24 percent on many items today, including rice and flour, and steep increases on income taxes for workers and the self-employed.

“No-one was bailed out here,” bus driver Stavros Manikas told *Al Jazeera* June 22, referring to the working-class neighborhood where he lives.

Loans made to the Greek government by the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the IMF have been largely used to pay off profit-hungry bondholders. The main beneficiaries are German and French capitalists.

Union misleadership

Workers and farmers have sought ways to protest and strike against the impact of the assaults. But with Stalinist and social democratic misleaders heading the trade unions, working people have no leadership willing to chart a political course independent of the capitalist class. Nor have union officials anywhere in Europe fought for a halt to the attacks on working people in Greece.

The response of the Tsipras government to deadly fires raging near Athens has thrown into sharp relief its contempt for the lives of working people. Some 91 people died in a blaze that began July 23, 25 more are missing. Authorities organized no evacuation.

Defense Minister Panos Kammenos was shouted down when he visited fire-hit Mati. He tried to deflect government responsibility by blaming the residents themselves for the deaths, claiming they built their homes defying government regulations.

The experiences of Greek workers and farmers graphically expose the bloodthirsty policies of the capitalist ruling classes in Berlin and Paris that dominate the EU.

THE MILITANT

Nicaragua protests in making for over a decade

Years of countless abuses of authority, indignities and the impact of economic crisis fueled widespread discontent and anti-government protests in April that continue today. ‘Militant’ reporting team interviewed workers about the attacks they face from the government there.

Protest march May 30 honoring those killed in Nicaragua by government thugs.

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SWP campaigns on doorsteps

Continued from front page

members and supporters can engage and contest the political issues and battles facing workers today. From this position, the party can best respond to developments in the class struggle, on the job and in social protest actions.

The SWP explains that to defend the working class the labor movement needs to chart a course to unify millions of toilers in independent political action. And party members explain that taking part in that struggle will change workers, as they gain confidence and deepening class consciousness that they are capable of taking political power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers.

"I view lack of medical care as one of the biggest problems we face, it's all about the money," Jesse Bridges, a worker in a paper-cutting factory in Kankakee, south of Chicago, told Dan Fein July 29.

"We don't have health care, we have capitalist for-profit health insurance," said Fein, the SWP candidate for governor of Illinois. "And many of us don't even have that. We need to fight for government-funded health care for all."

Rising premiums and deductibles coupled with limits to what insurance covers leave a growing number of workers in deadly fear of getting sick, be-

cause they simply cannot afford it.

Bridges signed up for a subscription to the party's paper, the *Militant*, and decided to get *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, one of the books campaigners promote.

Four workers in Kankakee got subscriptions and 10 picked up single copies, two got *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* and one purchased *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters, another of the campaign books. (See ad below.)

"There are big and accelerating changes taking place, as the capitalists' 'world order' is coming apart, from Korea to the Middle East to Russia," Fein said. "In workers' apartments and homes we have the time to discuss these shifts, and how they are moving in a direction that is good for the working class."

In recent months Fein built support for Teamster delivery drivers on strike at the American Bottling Company in Northlake, Illinois. He raised the need for solidarity as he knocked on doors throughout the area, urging workers to join him in going out to the picket line.

Building the labor movement, he explained, is key to advancing workers' ability to defend themselves. After 40 days on strike workers ratified a contract July 1, winning a raise of \$3.40 an hour over four years.

"The new contract keeps our health insurance plan the same," driver Mike Gnagni told Fein. "The company wanted higher premium payments and less coverage, but we blocked that."

The working class needs government-funded health care for everyone, Fein said. If we all try to get by on our own, based on a deal with our one boss, it's a trap. And it leaves out the tens of millions that don't have a union. Health care, like retirement, is a social right.

A powerful working-class-led social struggle can win government-funded health care and also help forge the class solidarity and unity working people need to fight the competition among workers fostered by the capitalist system.

Steve Warshell, SWP can-



Militant/Janice Lynn

Rachele Fruit, SWP candidate for governor of Georgia, signs up warehouse worker Ashton Tuck for subscription while campaigning in Lithia Springs July 28.



Militant/Sergio Zambrana

"My campaign supports the Albany Medical Center nurses fighting for their first contract and union miners and Teamsters protesting pension cuts," Margaret Trowe, standing, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from New York, told Christine Buckhanon, center, a retired state worker, and her neighbor in Albany July 28. Trowe said workers need to build the labor movement.

didate for U.S. Senate from Florida, kicked off his campaign going door to door in Homestead July 21 to talk about how the fight for amnesty for all 11 million workers in the U.S. without what the government considers "proper documentation" fits in to strengthening the working class as a whole. A detention center for immigrant children there has been in the public spotlight recently.

'Amnesty for immigrants in U.S.!'

"The SWP calls for amnesty," Warshell said. "This is essential to unite the working class against boss attempts to divide us and drive down wages and working conditions for all. We face sustained attacks from them and their government because their capitalist system is in crisis."

SWP member Cindy Jaquith, who campaigned with Warshell, reports that his call for the labor movement to come together and fight for amnesty got mixed reactions.

"A worker from the Virgin Islands said he sympathized with some aspects of the government's immigration policy. But he liked the idea of a worker running for office. He said he works for an anti-union company, Frito-Lay."

An auto mechanic Warshell talked to embraced the idea of fighting for amnesty. He said he has several friends who don't have papers.

"More and more workers are open to fight for amnesty," Warshell said. "The longer we live and work side by side, and face attacks by the bosses side by

side, barriers break down. There is less anti-immigrant prejudice today."

Both workers got copies of *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?*

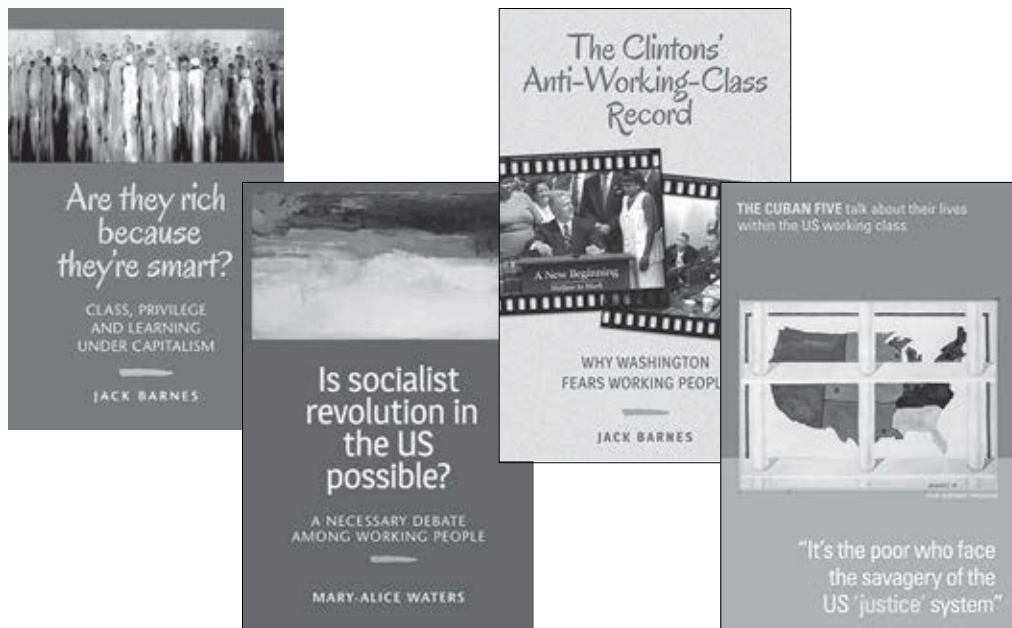
Rachele Fruit, SWP candidate for governor of Georgia, campaigned door to door in Lithia Springs July 28. She met warehouse workers and friends Ashton Tuck and Fred Cooper, who both decided to get a *Militant* subscription to follow the socialist campaign. When Fruit showed them *The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record: Why Washington Fears Working People* by Barnes, they were attracted to a cartoon depicting two lawn signs in the 2016 election, one saying "She's worse" and the other "He's worse."

Fruit was one of 74 participants from the U.S. in this year's 300-strong International May Day Brigade to Cuba. Brigade members spent two weeks talking to workers, farmers and youth, doing voluntary agricultural work, and joining the massive May Day march celebrating Cuba's socialist revolution.

The Cuban Revolution is an example for working people in the U.S., she explains. It showed that workers and farmers are capable of coming together against seemingly impossible odds, and, with leadership like the Cubans got from Fidel Castro, defeating the U.S.-backed dictatorship there and taking political power into their own hands. "That's what we need to do here," she said. To get involved in the campaign, contact the SWP branch nearest you, listed on page 8.

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‘Nation-state’ law is a setback

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refused to admit Jews trying to flee to their shores.

Those Arabs who remained within the borders of the new state have been able to use these guarantees and the independence declaration to combat discrimination in jobs, housing and government services, and to fight for political and democratic rights.

Today some 21 percent of Israel’s nearly 9 million people are Arabs, including Palestinian citizens of Israel, Bedouins and Druze.

The new law also demotes Arabic — which for 70 years has been one of Israel’s official languages — to a “special status,” while claiming that this “does not harm” its use.

It says that the government will “encourage and promote” what it calls “the development of Jewish settlement.” This is viewed as a green light to ban Arab and other non-Jewish citizens of Israel from buying land or renting apartments in Jewish towns.

The law reaffirms the “whole and united” Jerusalem as Israel’s capital.

Despite Netanyahu’s claim that the law is needed to guarantee Israel’s existence as a Jewish homeland, Israel from the beginning has been a place of refuge for Jews everywhere who face discrimination and victimization, and this is already codified in law.

“Did we really need a law that states the obvious but also further erodes any sense of Israel’s minorities of belonging to the country?” asked the *Jerusalem Post* in a July 25 editorial.

New law ‘divides us’

The law has been met with protests. Thousands of Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel marched in Tel Aviv July 14 under a banner saying, “This is home for all of us.” The 20 sponsoring organizations issued a statement saying, “The law incites, confuses, and divides citizens of the State of Israel from one another.”

Members of Netanyahu’s ruling coalition, including Finance Minister Moshe Kahlon, opposed the law. Benny Begin, a prominent member of Netanyahu’s ruling Likud Party, abstained.

“We have no problem with the Jewish people and we have no problem that the State of Israel is the home of the Jewish people, but what about us?” asked Knesset member Akram Hasson, who is Druze and whose Kulanu Party is part of the ruling coalition. The law undermines “hope of an equal starting line for my children and Jewish children.”

While brushing off other critics of the law, Netanyahu is worried about the Druze opposition. Although they make up only 2 percent of Israel’s population, the Arabic-speaking Druze have been an important component of the Israeli army since its founding.

Many Druze, who believe their role in the army entitles them to special

consideration, are outraged. The law uncovers the reality that Druze, like Palestinians and Bedouin, are viewed as second-class citizens.

“When we’re in uniform they treat us well,” army veteran Hisham Asad told *Haaretz*. “After we’re released we’re dirty Arabs.”

Netanyahu met with leaders of the Druze community after the vote to hear their objections and to “give expression to our special partnership,” he said. But so far he refuses to consider amending the law.

Eight former Israel Police commissioners and 70 retired deputy commissioners sent a letter to the cabinet demanding they amend the law to include the Druze. Three former chiefs of staff and dozens of retired senior officers in the Israel Defense Forces signed a similar letter.

Thousands gathered to speak out against the law in Tel Aviv’s Habima Square July 30. “Personally, I feel you can’t have a democratic nation-state that doesn’t treat minorities as fully equal,” Chai Margolis, 16, who came with a group of friends from central Israel, told *Haaretz*.

U.S. government pushes ‘peace’ plan

A few weeks before the Knesset vote, Jared Kushner traveled to Jordan, Egypt, Qatar, Israel and Saudi Arabia seeking to get those governments to pressure Palestinian officials to consider President Donald Trump’s initia-



Active Stills/Oren Ziv

“You can’t have a democratic nation-state that doesn’t treat minorities as fully equal,” 16-year-old Chai Margolis said at July 30 protest in Tel Aviv against new law passed by Israel’s Knesset.

tives to negotiate peace in the region. In a June 24 interview with the Palestinian newspaper *Al-Quds* Kushner said that Trump’s so-far unpublished plan could include East Jerusalem as the capital of a Palestinian state.

Kushner continued the White House diplomatic offensive with an opinion column he co-authored in the July 19 *Washington Post*, focusing on the plight of the Gaza Strip, which is ruled by the reactionary Islamist group Hamas. Hamas leaders have been carrying out provocations on the West Bank border with Israel, that have been met with bloody reprisal by Tel Aviv.

“Seventy years after the founding of Israel,” Kushner wrote, “it would be wise for Hamas to acknowledge that the existence of Israel is a permanent reality.”

The White House was sending a message to the West Bank’s Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas as well. “Don’t let your leadership reject a plan they haven’t even seen,” Kushner told *Al-Quds*. Kushner said that if an agreement between Israeli and Palestinian officials is reached, it would open the door to large-scale “public and private” investment that would benefit the residents of the Palestinian territories.

US gov’t meets with Taliban to seek end to Afghan war

BY SETH GALINSKY

State Department official Alice Wells met with Taliban representatives in Doha, Qatar, in mid-July to pave the way for one-on-one Washington-Taliban talks aimed at ending the 17-year-long Afghanistan war.

The administration of Donald Trump would like to wind down the war — which has been expensive for U.S. imperialism to the tune of some \$45 billion a year — to achieve a measure of stability for U.S. capitalist interests in the region.

This is another move by the administration — like in Korea, the Middle East and with Moscow — to cut down tensions and conflict. To the extent that these moves succeed in doing so, they open political space, which is needed for workers to debate a road forward and find ways to *act* in their own interests.

Like it did toward North Korea, the White House started by tightening the screws on the Taliban. It stepped up U.S. drone and other attacks on Taliban bases in Afghanistan and Pakistan, assassinated its leaders and cut off \$2 billion in U.S. military aid to Pakistan to get Islamabad to join in reining in the group. Its goal is to convince the Taliban leaders that it’s in their interest to sit down and negotiate.

In February the Taliban issued a “Letter to the American People,” reiterating its willingness for “talk and dialogue” with Washington.

A few months later the regime in Kabul and the Taliban

agreed to a cease-fire June 15-17 for the Muslim Eid-al-Fitr holiday. Taliban combatants and government soldiers fraternized around the country then, including embracing each other and posing for selfies.

Despite their insistence that they would only talk with the U.S. government, calling the Afghan government a puppet of Washington, Taliban leaders had been in regular contact with Afghanistan’s head of intelligence and other government officials.

Barack Obama had campaigned for the presidency in 2008 arguing that Afghanistan was a “good” war, as opposed to the U.S. war in Iraq. Once in office he escalated troop levels to more than 100,000 by 2011, but was unable to defeat the Taliban. His administration switched gears, cutting troop levels to 8,400 by the end of his term.

In its first year in office the Trump administration authorized more troops and a new round of combat. Today there are some 15,000 U.S. troops fighting and “training” the Afghan army.

The Taliban have increased their control over some areas, but they

have been unable to hold a single major town they’ve taken for long, before being dislodged by the Afghan army and U.S. forces.

In testimony before Congress in February 2017, Gen. John Nicholson, top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, called the situation “a stalemate.” Today Kabul — one of the most corrupt regimes in the world — controls about 229 of Afghanistan’s 407 districts and the Taliban 59. The two forces battle back and forth in the remaining 119.

The Taliban leadership is mostly Pashtun, an ethnic group that makes up about 42 percent of the country’s more than 30 million people. Few of its leaders come from the more than seven other ethnic groups there.

But even among Pashtun, the Taliban’s actions — including suicide bombings, strict enforcement of its austere view of Islamic law, destruction of schools in areas under its control and the assassination of opponents — are not popular.

Taliban halts ‘martyrdom attacks’

In a move to garner support, the Taliban recently announced it was halting “martyrdom attacks” in the cities to avoid killing so many civilians.

Taliban officials also now say they will agree to allow girls to go to school — a practice they have prevented in areas under their control — as long as they are kept segregated from the boys. And they say they would agree to allow women to work in all levels of government, except the Supreme Court and the presidency.

Many wealthy landlords who are in Kabul’s government enhanced their riches by seizing land from the peas-

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For recognition of a Palestinian state and of Israel

• For repeal of U.S. Jerusalem Embassy Act

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Socialist Workers Party statement

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—ON THE PICKET LINE—

This column gives a voice to those engaged in labor battles and building solidarity today — from teachers and school workers across the country, to miners, rail and factory and retail workers looking to stand and fight. Send in articles, photos and letters on picket lines and other labor protests to themilitant@mac.com, post them directly on our website, or mail them to 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Georgia school bus drivers fight for reinstatement after sickout

STONE MOUNTAIN, Ga. — At a July 20 news conference, DeKalb County school bus driver Marion “Sergeant” Payne told reporters that a 2.5 percent wage increase recently approved by the board of education was “a good start, but if we didn’t have that sickout that never would have happened.”

More than 400 of some 900 county school bus drivers had called off sick April 19. Several hundred also did so April 22 and 23. They got sick over pay, working conditions, retirement benefits, safety and dignity on the job. They also face the lack of air conditioning on many buses, poor maintenance on brakes and the lack of a place to rest in between split shifts.

Seven school bus drivers, including Payne, were fired after board officials charged them with organizing and passing out fliers for the sickout.

These officials had long ignored the conditions drivers face, workers at the press conference said. The sickout took place at the same time that teachers, bus drivers, and other school workers organized walkouts and protests in West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Colorado, North Carolina and elsewhere.

Supporters of the fired bus drivers protested at news conferences and a downtown rally after the firings. At the May and June school board meetings, parents, workers from a DeKalb County Walmart, members of the community group Restore DeKalb and others demanded they rehire the drivers.

“For the record, several school board members have made it clear that the fired bus drivers would be rehired and made whole,” Joel Edwards of Restore DeKalb said at the July 20 news conference, held outside the pre-opening-of-school annual meeting for school bus drivers.

Superintendent R. Stephen Green,

however, had sent letters to the drivers a few days earlier saying any drivers who were rehired would have to serve a six-month probationary period.

Curtis Howard, international vice president of the Amalgamated Transit Union and a 24-year maintenance electrician at the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority, also attended the press conference. He pledged his union’s support for the bus drivers’ continuing fight to win reinstatement — and for all their demands.

— Janice Lynn and Susan LaMont



Marion Payne, fired DeKalb County, Georgia, school bus driver, speaks at July 20 press conference. Payne is one of several drivers fired after drivers got sick over pay and work conditions.

‘Militant’ fights against ban in Illinois federal prison

Continued from front page

send letters of protest to help get this ruling reversed,” said *Militant* editor John Studer.

The banning of the *Militant* “is an uncalled-for restriction on the freedom of the press and prisoners’ rights,” Karin Deutsch Karlekar, director of Free Expression at Risk Programs at PEN America, wrote to prison authorities Aug. 1. “The Federal Bureau of Prison’s claim that it would directly lead to rebellion has no basis and their decision to censor the *Militant* should be overturned.”

The subscriber behind bars had been receiving the paper for over a year. After being transferred to the Federal Correctional Institution in Greenville he received a few issues, but this was brought to a halt with the June 11 issue.

The *Militant* didn’t find out about this censorship until July 20 when the paper

received a notice it was now a “Rejected Publication.” The notice said, “A publication may be rejected if it is determined detrimental to the security, good order, or discipline of the institution or if it might facilitate criminal activity.”

Articles in the rejected issues of the *Militant* discuss political developments and point to important working-class struggles taking place in the U.S. and abroad, aspects of which are covered by many other newspapers and publications. Headlines in the impounded issues include, “3,000 Rail Workers Strike Against Canadian Pacific,” “Workers in Puerto Rico Respond to Social Disaster,” “Amnesty for All Immigrants in the US!” and “Join July 12th Protest Against Pension Cuts!”

“To ban the *Militant* because it’s ‘associated with the Socialist Workers Party’ is a ruling that the party is somehow beyond the protections of the Constitution,” said Studer. “The SWP fought against similar government attacks when it sued and campaigned against FBI spying and disruption in 1973 and won.”

“Workers behind bars have the right to read the political views they want and need, including about the

struggles of workers and farmers,” Studer said. “It helps them be part of the world and their class.”

Militant attorney David Goldstein of the prominent civil liberties law firm Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky and Lieberman, is preparing a challenge to the ruling.

The *Militant*, which is mailed to about 115 subscribers in some 60 prisons across the country, has faced a number of impoundments by prison authorities — nearly two dozen issues in state prisons in Florida over the past several years. All but a few were reversed on appeal. An impoundment of an issue by authorities at the federal supermax prison in Florence, Colorado, was overturned in 2014.

Earlier this year supporters of political rights succeeded in beating back newly imposed Federal Bureau of Prisons moves that severely restricted inmates in federal prisons from being able to get and read books. The Bureau imposed a policy that books could only be ordered through one prison-approved vendor, in a cumbersome procedure limited to their stock, and with prices marked up 30 percent. Shipments of books from friends and relatives were barred.

Among those who have spoken out against prison censorship of the *Militant* include the American Civil Liberties Union, National Lawyers Guild, Amnesty International, PEN America and prisoner rights, church and other organizations.

Send letters of support to demand reversal of banning the *Militant* at Greenville to Regional Director Sara M. Revell, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Gateway Complex Tower II, 8th floor, 400 State Avenue, Kansas City, KS 66101-2492.

‘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.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



August 9, 1993

PINCKNEYVILLE, Illinois — As the strike battle between the United Mine Workers of America and Bituminous Coal Operators Association expands, the miners are reaching out to win new support. There are now 16,000 miners striking in seven states — Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Five thousand camouflage-clad striking miners, their families, and supporters joined an “international labor rally” here July 15 to support the strike. Two thousand had participated in a similar rally in Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, a day earlier.

More than 100 locked-out members of the Allied Industrial Workers union from Decatur, Illinois, and 50 members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers locked out from Central Illinois Power Service plants joined the Pinckneyville action.



August 16, 1968

MEXICO CITY, Aug. 2 — More than 125,000 marched here yesterday in a protest demonstration against the government’s brutal police attacks on the students, beginning at Vocational School Five.

The repression is blind, incoherent and exhibits a virulence not seen in the 10 years since the army broke the railway workers’ strike.

The march took place despite considerable efforts by the papers to sabotage it. The demonstration was made up primarily of university students, as well as other sectors of the population.

The demonstration made a circuit of the city of more than seven miles. The march was not allowed to approach the center of the city.

To enforce this ban, the government deployed military forces with tanks and heavy equipment.



August 14, 1943

There was remarkable unanimity of opinion among the well-known Negro leaders and in the Negro press during and after the August 1-2 outbreak in Harlem. Practically every one of them — whether conservative, liberal, Stalinist or “radical” — joined in denouncing thousands of Harlemites as hoodlums, vandals, irresponsible elements, etc.

Virtually all the Negro papers hailed the behavior of the New York police — the same police whose brutality to Negroes was one of the chief causes of the outbreak. They seem highly elated and relieved that “only” six died, most of them at the hands of the police.

These Negro leaders and editorial writers knew, as most of them have since half-admitted, that the Harlem outbreak was a protest against the oppressive Jim Crow conditions to which Negro people are subjected in even the “most liberal city in the country.”

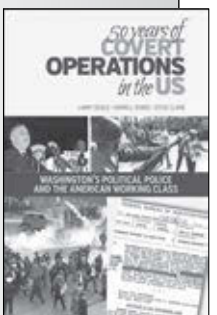
50 Years of Covert Operations in the US

by Larry Seigle, Farrell Dobbs, Steve Clark

The 13-year political campaign of the Socialist Workers Party to expose decades of spying and disruption by the FBI and other federal cop agencies targeting working-class organizations and other opponents of government policies.

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Dallas film spotlights 1973 cop murder of Santos Rodriguez

BY GEORGE CHALMERS

DALLAS — Over 500 people attended a widely publicized July 24 screening of the new film “Santos Vive,” which documents the murder of 12-year-old Santos Rodriguez at the hands of city police here on that day in 1973. The film, shown as part of the USA Film Festival, was introduced by director Byron Hunter.

Other events took place to commemorate his life, including a community gathering and fundraiser at Pike Park — where efforts are underway to dedicate a community center to Rodriguez — and a service at his gravesite. The cop murder of Rodriguez ignited a broad movement for justice, part of the rise of the Chicano movement in the U.S.

In the early morning of July 24, 1973, Dallas cop Darrell Cain came and took Santos and his brother David from their home. Cain told them he knew they were guilty of breaking in and stealing \$8 in coin from a soda machine in a local gas station. When the youth insisted they were innocent, the cop handcuffed them in the back of his patrol car and pulled out his .357 Magnum pistol, putting it Russian roulette-style to the side of Santos’ head.

He pulled the trigger, and the youth continued to insist he wasn’t guilty. Cain pulled the trigger again, and the shot killed Santos. His death provoked widespread protests. Cain was convicted of “murder with malice,” but served only half of a five-year sentence.

DNA tests after his murder confirmed Santos was innocent.

Hunter was asked to make the documentary by the Southern Methodist University’s human rights program and the Dallas Peace and Justice Center. He grew up in the city and was 9 years old when Rodriguez was killed.

“My remembrance of Santos Rodriguez is vivid,” the award-winning filmmaker told the *Dallas Morning News*. “My dad came to me to say, ‘Something bad happened, son.’”

Areeba Amer, a 17-year-old Pakistani-American who just graduated from Greenhill High School, is interviewed in the video. Her literature of human rights English class had been assigned to study Rodriguez’s murder — something she had never heard about before. She was moved to write an op-ed for the *Morning News* calling for a memorial to be built to commemorate Rodriguez.

“Many Americans are working to



Above, courtesy of Dallas Morning News

On July 24, 1973, Dallas cop Darrell Cain, played Russian roulette with his gun killing handcuffed 12-year-old Santos Rodriguez in back of patrol car. Cop had taken Santos and his brother David from their home, accusing them of stealing \$8 from soda machine. Murder sparked broad protests. Above, 1978 march for justice. Inset, Santos, right, and David in June 1973.



ensure that those who lost their lives in recent incidents of police brutality are not forgotten, such as Michael Brown, Walter Scott and Alton Sterling,” she wrote.

A fundraiser was held at the Pike Park recreation center, built in 1915 in an area that serves as an important landmark for the Latino community,

known as “Little Mexico.” Santos’ mother, Bessie Rodriguez, joined those at the event. The film describes how the neighborhood grew and now has declined. The place where Rodriguez was killed is now an office complex.

The barrio was established when Mexican workers settled permanently in Dallas to work on the area’s expanding railroad system. A letter to President Jimmy Carter from Bessie Rodriguez was read at the gathering. Carter came to Dallas in 1978 in response to protests around Santos’ killing. “You led us to believe you would prosecute the cops,” she said in the letter. “I do not think I will believe you again.”

The goals of the fund drive are to support an often-promised memorial to Santos at the center; to support his family, which has never received any substantial compensation; and to help ensure “Santos Vive” is completed and gets wide circulation.

Dallas Park Board member Jesse Moreno is one of those working to memorialize Santos Rodriguez at the community center in Pike Park. He says he’s under pressure to back off.

“The feedback I’m getting is, ‘Let’s soften it up, tone it down and not use words like murder,’ which is what happened,” Moreno told the *Dallas Observer* July 16.

Cops who killed Eric Garner ‘should be put in jail’

BY SARA LOBMAN

NEW YORK — Four years after New York police officer Daniel Pantaleo put a chokehold on Eric Garner and killed him outside a Staten Island beauty supply store, the city’s Civilian Complaint Review Board said it will hold disciplinary hearings to determine if Pantaleo is to face any sanction. Even though millions watched the killing on a video taken by a bystander that was posted on the internet, no charges were brought against Pantaleo or any other cop involved.



AP Photo/Mary Altaffer

Cops who killed my son “should have been indicted, convicted, be in jail,” Gwen Carr, speaking above at July 17 New York press conference, told *Militant*. Her son Eric Garner was killed four years ago by cop Daniel Pantaleo. NYPD said July 16 it will start disciplinary proceedings against him and his supervisor.

Complaint Review Board determined Pantaleo used a banned chokehold.

The protests were fueled by outrage over several other police killings that year — Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, in August; Akai Gurley in Brooklyn in November; and two days later that month 12-year-old Tamir Rice in Cleveland.

“It’s outrageous that Pantaleo and the other cops involved in killing my son are still being paid huge salaries. They should have been fired immediately. They should have been indicted. They should have been convicted. They should be in jail,” Garner’s mother, Gwen Carr, told the *Militant*. “The police are not prosecuted like the rest of us would be.”

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the police department said it held off on convening disciplinary hearings to allow the Justice Department to complete a civil rights probe. However, the *Journal* reported, there is no law

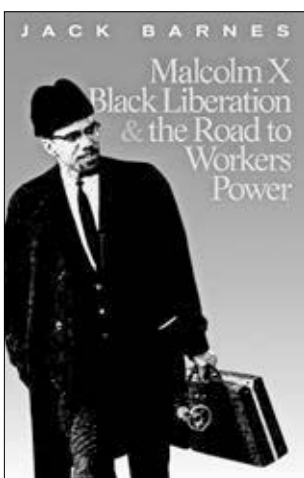
requiring the city to wait.

“It’s unacceptable that the NYPD is saying that only two officers will face discipline charges when many more were involved in murdering my son, trying to cover it up, and other related misconduct,” Carr said in a July 19 statement. “There were over 5 officers on video using force or failing to intervene as my son Eric pleaded, ‘I can’t breathe,’ 11 times.”

“It’s past time for [New York Mayor Bill] de Blasio and the NYPD to stop playing games with my son’s death and release the names of all the officers

responsible for his murder, [who] tried to cover it up and engaged in other related misconduct,” she said, “and bring disciplinary charges to fire all of them.”

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power



Drawing lessons from a century and a half of struggle, this book helps us understand why it is the revolutionary conquest of power by the working class that will make possible the final battle for Black freedom — and open the way to a world based not on exploitation, violence and racism, but human solidarity.

by Jack Barnes

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NY meeting celebrates, points to example of Cuban Revolution

BY TAMAR ROSENFELD

NEW YORK — Over 170 people gathered at the New York State Nurses Association hall here July 27 to celebrate the 65th anniversary of the assault on the Moncada Barracks, the opening of Cuba's revolutionary war.

"This action marked a historic, revolutionary milestone carried out by young people," Ana Silvia Rodríguez, deputy ambassador from Cuba to the United Nations, told the crowd, "whose main objective was to transform Cuba's political, economic and social regime and to eliminate foreign interference, misery, unemployment, and lack of health and education inflicted on our people." The gathering was one of the largest at a Cuba solidarity event here in recent years.

On July 26, 1953, some 160 revolutionaries under the command of Fidel Castro launched an insurrectionary attack on the Moncada army garrison in Santiago de Cuba, and on the garrison in Bayamo, opening the revolutionary



Militant photos by Arthur Hughes
Inset, Ana Silvia Rodríguez, Cuban deputy ambassador to U.N., speaks at July 27 meeting in New York celebrating assault on Moncada Barracks that began Cuban Revolution.

armed struggle against the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship.

The event featured solidarity messages from Venezuela and from U.S.-based activists hailing from Haiti, Puerto

Rico, Colombia and the U.S. Each speaker expressed solidarity with Cuba and the Cuban Revolution for its internationalism and for setting an example of what is possible for working people.

Berthony Dupont, editor of *Haiti Liberté*, said, "The victory in 1959 inspired revolutionary struggle throughout Latin America and the world."

Judy Sheridan-Gonzalez, president of the nurses association, welcomed everyone to their headquarters. The union sponsors trips to Cuba to learn about "Cuban health care, to raise consciousness, and then bring it back," she said. Estela Vázquez, executive vice president of the 1199SEIU union, and Gail Walker of Pastors for Peace also gave greetings.

Cuba conference

Interspersed in the program were firsthand reports from participants in recent activities in Cuba. Róger Calero described a panel at a conference in April sponsored by the Cuban Institute of History and the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), where he, Mary-Alice Waters of the Socialist Workers Party, and other socialist workers and a farmer spoke about their experiences in U.S. working-class struggles.

Waters highlighted the teachers' strikes in West Virginia, Kentucky, Arizona and other states — some of them in the most economically devastated regions in the country that Trump carried by a large margin in the 2016 election. Among these working people, there is greater openness today than at any time in our political lives to think about and discuss what a socialist revolution could achieve.

José Luis López, a representative of the FMLN of El Salvador, gave a report on the just-concluded Sao Paulo Forum meeting in Havana.

Along with a good spread of food, there were hip-hop performances, live jazz and dance music. Harry D'Agostino and Dean Mahoney, two of the jazz trio, went to Cuba as members of the 2018 International May Day Brigade.

"We will continue to defend peace, justice and solidarity," Deputy Ambassador Rodríguez said, "and we will do that with the same determination and firmness as the young people led by Fidel defended their convictions and ideals on July 26, 1953."

'Instead of making a living, we're just making debt'

Continued from front page

farmers receive has fallen below \$18 per hundred-weight — \$1.55 a gallon — while the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates the cost of production for medium-to-small dairy farms is from \$18 to \$21 hundredweight. Farmers pointed out they never actually get that "average" price.

Barb Troester, who runs a 700-cow dairy farm with her husband Leroy near Mifflinburg, some 40 miles away, spoke about the deductions the milk co-op takes out of her check. "I added it up and figured that every time the milk truck comes, which is every day, it costs us \$1,800 in deductions," she said. "Our average price comes to just \$14.37 per hundredweight. Dairy farmers work hard seven days a week, 365 days a year, yet I am not ashamed to tell you that the bank owns us, they really do."

Judy Oliver, another Pennsylvania dairy farmer, also held up her milk check, pointing out the long list of deductions the co-op took from her \$16.50 hundredweight price.

Demand for guaranteed price floor

The over 50 farmers and others at the hearing endorsed a proposal for an immediate \$20 hundredweight floor on the milk price for farmers. "This looks like it might be more than the cost of production, but remember all the deductions they will be taking off your \$20," Arden Tewksbury, director

of Progressive Agriculture Organization, told the farmers. "The Federal Milk Marketing Orders that sets the price won't give us cost of production, but they let the dairy companies and co-ops deduct a cost of production 'make allowance' of up to \$2 hundredweight — plus all the other deductions they make."

Tewksbury has been promoting this \$20 floor price demand to other farm and dairy farm groups for the last several months.

Dairy cooperatives handle most farmers' milk. Five of them handle 43 percent nationwide. They are farmer-owned and governed, in theory, but the big ones like Land O' Lakes and Dairy Farmers of America function like big-business monopolies.

Claudia and Jonathan Haar, dairy farmers from New York state, described the lawsuit they are part of that is challenging the way large co-op bosses ignore the ownership rights of dairy farmers. The basis for the challenge is that for the last three years co-op dairy farmer members' income has dropped, but the co-ops' profits have tripled.

Tewksbury reminded participants that the price is still set by Department of Agriculture Federal Milk Marketing Orders, which is supposed to take dairy farmers' costs into account. "They seem to listen to the big co-ops and dairies like Land O'Lakes, Dean

Foods and Walmart to set a price that pleases them," he said. "I urge you all to call your congressional representative and get them to put the \$20 floor in the 2018 Farm Bill. If it passes like it is now, our dairy crisis will get worse."

The event heard a number of reports covering different aspects of the crisis. Donna Hall, vice president of Farm Women United, explained ways big dairy companies manipulate imports of powdered milk to say there is a "glut of milk." They use this to drive down what they pay farmers.

Gerald Carlin explained how the big cheese dairies use "milk protein concentrate" from left over milk fat after low-fat milk is produced to double the amount of cheese they get from every hundredweight of milk. "So with less milk being used to make even more cheese, they also say we've produced a 'glut,'" he said.

Other farmers explained how they were hit by changes in the Federal School Lunch Program made under the Barack Obama administration. They stopped offering whole milk in federal school lunch programs, only supporting 1 percent or nonfat milk. Now schools are cutting back on milk orders, Tewksbury and other dairy farmers said, because young people don't like the low-fat milk.

When all is said and done, farmer Barb Troester said, "We need a fair price."

Because farmers can't make a living, no matter how hard they try, there's an increase in farmer suicides today, Tina Carlin said. "If we just had a fair milk price we wouldn't need the suicide hotlines."

Carlin was one of the founders in January of Farm Women United, which now has chapters in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Minnesota, Tennessee and New York. Carlin and her husband Gerald had been dairy farmers all their lives, until low prices forced them to sell their dairy cows in order to survive.

Janet Post in Philadelphia contributed to this article.



Militant/Janet Post

Intensity marked Dairy Farm Family Crisis Hearing in Lairdsville, Pennsylvania, July 24.

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes

This is a book about the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary — it can be made. It's about the class struggle in the U.S., where the potential of workers and farmers are today

as utterly discounted by the ruling powers as were those of the Cuban toilers. And just as wrongly. \$10

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The fight to stop deportation of the ‘man who has no papers’

Below is an excerpt from an April 1954 speech by James P. Cannon, a founding member of the communist movement and National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. He wrote it for presentation to a class of students at the party's leadership school to honor Carl Skoglund on his 70th birthday. It is printed in *Speeches for Socialism*, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for August.

Skoglund was in his 20s when he came to the U.S. from Sweden and never had what the U.S. government considered proper documentation, living with the threat of deportation all his life. During the 1950s it came close when immigration cops hauled the revolutionary leader onto a ship in defiance of a court order. Ten minutes before being deported, protests forced the cops to comply with the judge's order and bring him back ashore. Copyright © 1969 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JAMES P. CANNON

This jubilant birthday celebration is testimony that Carl Skoglund has done pretty well for himself in this country, considering the fact that he got started off on the wrong foot and has been standing on it — so to speak — ever since. He picked Sweden for his birthplace, without realizing that Swedish



Above, Northwest Organizer; inset, Joseph Hansen
Above, Carl Skoglund, at head of table, in leadership meeting of Teamsters Local 544, November 1937. “Skogie” was communist, revolutionary fighter and labor militant all his life. Inset, Skoglund, left, with SWP leader James P. Cannon, 1949.

birth does not confer the right to live and breathe in this country.

Nobody told Skogie that he had made a mistake, and he didn't ask. He arrived on these shores in 1911 and, finding the gates open, just walked in. He has been traveling around the forty-eight states for forty-three years without proper identification papers. This sort of thing couldn't go on forever.

Thirteen years ago, the authorities picked him up and checked their files and made an alarming discovery, which has been troubling them ever since. They looked through a thick dossier marked “Skoglund, Carl” — and what did they see?

They saw that his doings and wanderings had been under observation for a long, long time; and none of the previous investigators, who had left their grimy thumbprints on the records, had had anything good to say about him. The record showed that he had always worked for a living, a very suspicious occupation for a red-blooded American. Nobody ever got rich and won the right to wave the flag by chopping down trees, fixing automobiles, driving trucks, heaving coal and working on the railroad to make the trains run on time. But that's what “Skoglund, Carl” had been up to in these United States.

The record shows further that he had been a labor agitator, strike leader, Socialist, Communist, and general troublemaker, kicking and complaining all the

time about the way things are run in this country. That was bad enough, for every right-thinking American knows that things couldn't be better. But while the official headshakers were shaking their heads over the long list of bad reports about the man under investigation, they accidentally stumbled over a still more suspicious dereliction.

In ransacking the voluminous files of the Immigration Department, the Department of Justice, the FBI and the local constable, they found plenty of incriminating reports. But there was one thing they couldn't find. That was any definite proof that the subject of their inquiry had any legal existence whatever. There was no birth certificate, no entry permit, no passport, no certificate of naturalization. Nothing at all.

By the absence of any proof to the contrary, they established the fact that “Skoglund, Carl,” who was standing right there before them, had no legal right to be there or anywhere else. Officially, he was not in this country and never had been. He stood before his inquisitors naked, without an identification paper to his name. Nevertheless, they had to tag him some way. So they just wrote down on the cover of the dossier, under the name of “Skoglund, Carl,” in bright red ink: “*Has no papers.*”

This was an absolutely intolerable situation, for how can this country stand if Skoglund's records are not in order? Something had to be done about it. The

first thing that entered their minds, naturally, was to throw him into jail. Then his friends posted bond for him; and that created another problem for the department in charge of putting people in the right place and making sure they don't pop up in the wrong place.

The man who had no papers had no right to be footloose in this country; but, since bond had been posted, they had no right to keep him in jail either. It was a hell of a mess, and it hasn't been straightened out yet. The whole ponderous machinery of the United States government has been working ever since to put the man who is here but shouldn't be, in some place where he should be, but isn't. But they have never yet been able to get the time and the place and Skoglund all together.

So it turns out that, while the mills of justice grind so slowly to a final decision in his case, we have him here with us on his seventieth birthday. ...

[Frederick] Engels said of the theory you are studying that it is not a dogma, but a guide to action. His reference was to the action of the masses in the class struggle; a warning that the revolutionists cannot substitute themselves for the masses, but can realize their theory only with the masses and through their action. Carl Skoglund, the socialist mass worker who carried the living theory of Marxism into the labor movement, is the example par excellence of Engels's words.

But Engels's maxim can apply also to the individual's application of the theory in his own life, his own action. It is not enough to know the Marxist formulas. Not a few scholastic bystanders know the theory of Marxism, as it is written in the books; but that does not make them Marxists. The real Marxist, that is to say, the revolutionist, is one who — to quote [Leon] Trotsky — assimilates the formulas into his flesh and blood; who not only knows the doctrine but lives by it and for it.

Here again, comrades of the Trotsky School, your guest of honor today is your best example. In Carl Skoglund you see a man who has lived a consistent socialist life under all circumstances, and has asked no other compensation than the satisfaction of serving the socialist cause. He has lived to see his life and his labor crowned by many achievements, which are lodged in the foundations of our great movement.

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Join Socialist Workers Party campaign!

Continued from front page

class interests of the U.S. capitalist families. Washington is also pressing Palestinian leaders and the government of Israel to join them in holding talks. The White House seeks to dial down conflicts and gain a greater measure of stability favorable for the U.S. propertied rulers.

The unintentional result of these moves, if successful, will be to create better conditions for the working class — if we organize to take advantage of them.

Every week Socialist Workers Party members seek out discussions with fellow workers on their doorsteps about what the changes unfolding in the world open up and the course forward the party presents.

SWP candidates and their supporters explain that Washington’s moves make it easier for workers to discuss and debate, organize and fight; to gain some combat experience against our own ruling classes; to forge the unity we need to counter the national, racial and religious divisions the rulers try to use to pit us against each other; to organize a course toward independent working-class political action.

The rulers face a growing political crisis worldwide, as the institutions they hammered together out of their victory in the second imperialist world war — NATO, the EU and others — are shattering.

The steps the White House is taking around the world stem from this crisis, and from the fact that the U.S. rulers’ power is declining today at the same time that it remains the dominant imperialist power. This is underscored by their inability for decades to

win any of the wars they’ve started.

For decades their profit rates have been declining, and they’ve responded by trying to squeeze more and more out of workers and farmers. But today growing numbers of workers are looking for ways to fight back effectively.

As party members talk about these developments with fellow workers on their doorsteps, we discuss how what we face is grounded in the immoral capitalist system, which exists by expropriating the wealth we produce. We debate what we can do about it. The SWP finds greater interest in the course we advance — building the labor movement; fighting for government-funded health care and retirement pay for all; amnesty for all 11 million immigrants in the U.S. to build working-class unity; prosecuting and jailing cops who brutalize and kill workers; and defending women’s right to choose whether to have an abortion.

We explain this requires building a revolutionary working-class party that can lead millions in the fight to overthrow capitalist exploitation and oppression and build a workers and farmers government.

Party members debate the issues posed for the working class that arise from the political crisis that is tearing apart both the Democratic and Republican parties. This involves fighting efforts to restrict political rights advanced by liberals as they try to drive the president from office — attempts whose real target is the working class, who they increasingly fear.

If this perspective sounds good to you, join the SWP campaign!

US meets with Taliban

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ants. The Taliban is demanding that special courts be established to review thousands of these cases to see that land taken illegally from small farmers is returned.

One key sticking point that is not mentioned in the bourgeois press is control of the opium trade. Both sides in the conflict benefit from the profits in the illegal drug trade, which has remained one of the few profitable arenas for Afghan farmers and has mushroomed ever since the U.S. intervention began in 2001.

The 17-year war has been costly for working people in Afghanistan, and for U.S. workers pressed into combat. More than 31,000 Afghan civilians; 30,000 Afghan soldiers and police; 42,000 Taliban combatants; 2,400 U.S. soldiers and 1,150 NATO troops; and more 4,000 other workers have been killed since Washington launched the war.

Workers and farmers in Afghanistan have faced almost 40 years of unending war. In 1979 Soviet forces invaded to back up a pro-Moscow regime and were met with a U.S.-backed and financed mujahedeen rebellion. Over nine years of combat, 1 million civilians, 90,000 native and foreign-born mujahedeen, 18,000 Afghan troops and 14,500 Soviet soldiers were killed. Out of this U.S.-backed rebellion, al-Qaeda was born.

When the Soviets left in defeat, civil war opened between Afghan government forces and the Taliban, a war the Taliban won in 1996. Their brutal regime invited al-Qaeda to center operations and training there. After its terror attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001, the U.S. invaded.

Any agreement that ends the war would be welcomed by working people in Afghanistan, in the U.S. and around the world.

US rulers face deepening political crisis

Continued from front page

more working people are beginning to see that the bosses and their political parties have no ‘solutions’ that don’t further load the costs — monetary and human — of the crisis of *their* system on *us*.”

This “anti-Trumper” bloc has been taking aim at his administration’s foreign policy. Following Trump’s July meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, former CIA Director John Brennan claimed the president’s conduct was “nothing short of treasonous.”

Washington seeks to lessen tensions

The foreign policy of the White House takes place amid the coming apart of almost all the institutions the U.S. rulers put in place in the late 1940s, out of their victory in the second imperialist World War, to defend their “world order.” From sharpening disputes within NATO to growing conflicts among the capitalist rulers in the EU, this world order is shattering.

This process has been accelerated by Washington’s course since the implosion of the Soviet Union in 1991. The U.S. rulers thought — incorrectly — that this meant they had “won” the Cold War, and could move on Russia’s borders and make war wherever they thought it would advance their interests with impunity. The result has been growing tensions with Moscow and decades of wars Washington can’t ever seem to win in the Middle East, Afghanistan and elsewhere.

Faced with this world, and the start of Washington’s decline in relation to Beijing, Trump is trying to strengthen the U.S. government’s military machine to maintain its dominance. At the same time, he is moving to pull back from relying on bloody wars to impose Washington’s will around the world, as previous administrations did with devastating consequences for workers.

The Trump White House seeks to advance the U.S. rulers’ interests through pressure, then moves for talks with Moscow, the North Korean government and the Taliban in Afghanistan, in an effort to reduce conflicts and win some stability for U.S. interests. He is pressing for negotiations between the Israeli rulers and Palestinian leaders. For working people in the Mideast and elsewhere — and for workers in the U.S. who are used as cannon fodder in Washington’s wars — these political developments are followed with great interest.

In fact, much of what Trump is doing along these

lines — with the motivation of stabilizing the interests of the U.S. capitalist rulers, of which he is one — unintentionally opens more room for workers to talk, discuss and *act* in their own class interests.

For liberals determined to put a minus wherever Trump puts a plus, they’re driven to see more wars in the cards. Former U.S. Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of the Congo Dan Simpson, a long-standing critic of Trump, elaborates on this.

Writing in the July 25 *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Simpson says, “The rising tide of the Mueller investigation, personal scandals and the general wreckage of U.S. foreign policy” wrought by Trump are leading him to start a war with Iran, which will break out pretty soon. “Trump could use a war right now, in hopes of rallying Americans around the flag — and him.”

But on July 30 Trump announced he was ready to meet with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani without any preconditions. The administration’s course towards Tehran — bring pressure to get talks and a “better deal” for Washington — isn’t aimed at starting a war.

The fact is, many workers sense that wars are less likely under this administration than its predecessors. This, along with the upturn in the capitalist business cycle and its impact on jobs, means Trump is likely to be re-elected, bar some sharp shift in the objective situation.

Rulers’ political crisis deepens

The Republican Party is deeply divided. Trump has his own politics and team. His administration has little to do with traditional party shibboleths — like small government. From former Tea Party stalwarts to the *Wall Street Journal* editorial board, Trump isn’t their guy. They aren’t sure what to do to retain their party’s future.

The so-called “progressive” Clinton wing of the Democrats are depressed about 2018 because the seats in play are “not dominated by well-educated, suburban districts that voted for Hillary Clinton,” Nate



173rd U.S. Airborne Combat Brigade Team
U.S. soldier in Afghanistan in 2010. Washington is moving to negotiate ways to pull back from bloody wars it has failed to win there and in Mideast.

Cohn wrote in the *New York Times* July 30. They are instead, he bemoans, “working-class and rural districts that voted for Donald J. Trump.”

For liberals like Cohn the outcome of Clinton’s 2016 defeat at the hands of “uneducated” workers was a disaster they can’t accept. The Bernie Sanders wing of the splintered Democrats has used the primary win by Democratic Socialists of America member Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in New York’s 14th Congressional District to advance their reform program and seek to take over the party. Of course, she didn’t actually win by turning out the masses. Over 80 percent of eligible voters stayed home.

Ocasio-Cortez — like Sanders, who she used to work for — focuses on attempts to make capitalism “nicer” and “fairer,” obscuring the reality that what workers face is the product of the irreconcilable interests of the class that holds power — the propertied owners. More than anything else, her aim is to staunch the desertion of workers increasingly disillusioned with the capitalist parties and get them back into the Democratic Party.

When members of the Socialist Workers Party campaign door to door in working-class neighborhoods, they find widespread discussion and debate about the roots of the rulers’ crises and wars, and interest in a party that advances a working-class road forward.