

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**Mexico election registers crisis
for capitalist rulers, parties**
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 82/NO. 35 SEPTEMBER 24, 2018

‘Workers need independence from capitalist state, parties’

BY EMMA JOHNSON

“I like to see a working person running for office,” Christina Etapa told Dan Fein, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Illinois, when he knocked on her door in the

SWP SPEAKS WITH, FOR WORKING PEOPLE

Brighton Park neighborhood of Chicago Sept. 9. “All these politicians are into it for their own self-interest and other rich people like themselves.”

Fein is one of the members of the SWP and the Communist League in Canada standing as party candidates this fall (see full list on page 3). Taking the party’s politics to workers’ doorsteps in cities, towns and rural areas is the central activity of the party and of the Communist Leagues

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Decay of US rulers ‘world order’ opens room to fight

The U.S. capitalist rulers’ liberal imperialist world order, imposed following their emergence as the victor from the second imperialist world slaughter, is decaying and coming apart at an accelerated pace today.

EDITORIAL

And some of them recognize this.

The Donald Trump White House has ceased operating on the false premise, one that guided the last several Democratic and Republican administrations alike, that the U.S. rulers can dominate the world in the mistaken belief they won the Cold War. While Washington has great military superiority over all other world powers, it can no longer simply impose its will through bloody wars. This has been proven in Afghanistan, Iraq,

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Iraq protests demand gov’t provide services, end to Tehran interference



AP Photo/Nabil al-Jurani

Protesters in Basra demand jobs, electricity, water and end to Iranian intervention and meddling in Iraq. Thousands were killed fighting Islamic State, now survivors face deepening crisis.

BY TERRY EVANS

Thousands of working people continue to join protests in Basra and across southern Iraq against the government’s failure to provide basic necessities and the deadly consequences of the Iranian rulers’ military and political influence there.

The actions follow years of bloody sacrifice by working people to defeat the hated Islamic State, which had seized and imposed their reactionary rule over large parts of the oil-rich country. In 2014 the Iraqi army collapsed and fled in the face of IS

advances. The government of Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi turned to Washington and Peshmerga fighters from the Kurdish Regional Government, and to Shiite militias, including many led by Tehran, to help retake control of the country.

Thousands of young men from the south volunteered to join those militias, with an estimated 8,000 being killed in the three-year conflict. Those returning from the war confront a lack of jobs and the complete failure of the government to ensure crucial

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Demand US rulers sign peace treaty with NKorea

SWP: Washington’s troops, weapons out now!



EPA/How Hwee Young

Sept. 9 Pyongyang parade on 70th anniversary of Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, focused on economic development, reunification of Korea, with no display of nuclear missiles.

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Socialist Workers Party offers “unconditional solidarity with the Korean people’s struggle for withdrawal of all US troops and weaponry from the peninsula’s soil, skies and waters,” Steve Clark said in a Sept. 7 message on behalf of the SWP National Committee to Kim Jong Un, leader of North Korea. The letter celebrates the 70th anniversary of the overturn of capitalism there and founding of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

Working people should “redouble demands that the US government take immediate measures to advance the talks opened in June in Singapore” between President Donald Trump and Kim, Clark said.

That would include Washington:

- “Signing a peace treaty ending the murderous and losing war it fought against the DPRK from 1950 to 1953;
- “Calling a halt to the joint US war games with Seoul, making permanent the suspension this summer of the so-

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Liberals’ frenzy against Trump falters in face of workers’ distaste

BY TERRY EVANS

The frantic efforts of liberal Democrats, their backers in media like CNN and the *New York Times*, the Never Trump wing of the Republican Party, and the middle-class left to overturn the 2016 election and remove Donald Trump from the presidency are faltering. Many of their actions have the opposite reaction of what they hoped,

bringing disgust from workers with their mud-slinging and without denting support for Trump.

Moves by the Democrats to disrupt the hearings for Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh weren’t popular. Neither was the so-called anonymous

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Chicago hotel workers fight for health care, higher wages

Miami airport workers rally, press for union contract

Join fight against prison censorship of ‘Militant’ in Florida, Illinois!

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The fight continues against censorship of the *Militant* by prison authorities in Florida and at the federal facility in Greenville, Illinois. The issues posed are important for defending political rights won in centuries of hard-

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Steelworkers authorize strikes at U.S. Steel amid contract talks

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Thousands of United Steelworkers members who work at U.S. Steel voted to authorize union officials to call a strike if a contract agreement isn't reached with bosses soon. The vote was unanimous at many sites, including Gary, Indiana; Fairfield, Alabama; Clairton, Pennsylvania; and Minntac, Minnesota.

The three-year contract covering 16,000 USW members in 24 union locals expired Sept. 1. The contract for 15,000 more steelworkers in 13 locals employed by ArcelorMittal ended the same day. The votes come after thousands rallied against steel bosses' concession demands at dozens of plants Aug. 30. Workers remain on the job as negotiations continue.

Workers' wages have been frozen for the past three years and both companies are demanding concessions in health care and retirement benefits.

"The company got what it wanted with the steel tariffs against Chinese-made steel," Mike Cheek, a member of USW Local 1010, told the *Militant* at the rally of some 250 members at the ArcelorMittal plant in East Chicago, Indiana. "It increases the company's profits. And now they want more concessions from us! No way!"

U.S. Steel's latest offer, announced Sept. 4, would boost workers' family health insurance premiums up to \$237 per month, with additional expenses piled on, adding up to as much as \$2,000 or \$4,000 more per year by the end of the contract, the union said. U.S. Steel proposes a one-time \$5,000 payment to make the "transition" to

workers paying thousands more in annual health care costs.

The proposal covers six years and includes a 4 percent raise the first year; 3 percent in the next two years; and 1 percent years four to six, with bosses promising possible bonuses, dependent on the company's profit level.

U.S. Steel bosses are also demanding new hires be paid only 80 percent of what steelworkers get now and be saddled with an even worse health plan, with deductibles of up to \$3,200. And everything would be worse for retirees.

"We will not leave our retirees behind or throw away the future of younger steelworker generations for money upfront in the form of bonuses that really amount to a wage decrease," Michael



USW Local 1066

United Steelworkers members rally in front of U.S. Steel's Gary Works in Indiana, Aug. 30.

Young, USW Local 6103 president at the Portage plant in Indiana, told the *Times of Northwest Indiana*.

The two steel companies' mills and iron ore mines are located in Alabama,

Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, West Virginia, and on the Iron Range in Minnesota.

Dan Fein contributed to this article.

Join fight against prison censorship of 'Militant'

Continued from front page

fought battles and the right of workers behind bars to be able to read, study and think about class-struggle developments worldwide and advance a working-class political perspective.

After authorities at a number of prisons in Florida have banned at least 18 issues of the paper over the past 16 months, the Florida Department of Corrections Literature Review Committee has overturned most of these rulings. But prison officials keep at it. Issues no. 25 and 29 remain impounded. On Aug. 21 *Militant* attorney David Goldstein of the prominent civil liberties law firm Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky and Lieberman filed an appeal, but as we go to press

a response from the Literature Review Committee is still pending.

Authorities at Florida State Prison impounded issue no. 25 without informing the *Militant*, a violation of Florida state law. The reason given by prison officials for banning the issue, and then the next one, was the paper's coverage of its fight against Florida prison censorship. But the impoundment of issue 26 was reversed while no. 25 was upheld, even though state officials declined to tell Goldstein what the difference was.

Similarly, issue no. 29 was impounded by Tomoka Correctional Institution officials. The reason given was "Page 1-3," which the warden claims "depicts, describes or encourages activities which may lead to the use of physical violence or group disruption."

But the articles on these pages simply presented a working-class perspective on issues in U.S. and world politics. Headlines included: "New Openings for Working Class as Imperialist 'World Order' Unravels," "Woman's Right to Abortion Is Debated in Northern Ireland" and "Protesters Demand 'Release Video!' in Cop Shooting of Chicago Barber."

"The impoundment violates the First Amendment and is unconstitutionally

arbitrary," Goldstein wrote.

At the federal prison in Greenville, Illinois, the warden banned all issues of the *Militant* on the grounds that it's "associated with the Socialist Workers Party." While the subscriber there scored a victory by getting released in mid-August, the fight against this censorship continues and is having an impact.

Sara Revell, Federal Bureau of Prisons' director of its North Central Regional Office, responded to those who wrote urging the ban be lifted, saying she has asked the Greenville warden to reconsider.

She quoted from federal regulations on publications, which say a warden can't reject something because of its political or social views and "may not establish an excluded list of publications." Specific reasons for barring each and every issue are required, she said.

"Keep the pressure on," said *Militant* editor John Studer. "We're asking our readers and defenders of political rights to keep sending letters urging this pattern of censorship in Florida and ban in the Illinois federal prison be reversed."

The *Militant's* ongoing fight against censorship has won support from Amnesty International USA, PEN America,

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THE MILITANT

Support veterans' fight for disability benefits!

The government is placing all kinds of obstacles in the way of veterans getting medical care and benefits. A majority are denied needed disability pay and nearly 300,000 appeals are caught up in the system. One in 14 dies before getting a ruling on their claims.

AP Photo/Gerald Herbert
Veterans in line for physical therapy at army medical center in San Antonio, Texas, 2007.

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SWP speaks with, for workers

Continued from front page

in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, week in and week out all year round.

They discuss the developments in politics, as the “world order” the U.S. capitalist rulers imposed after they emerged the winner from the second imperialist world war is increasingly coming apart. They stress the need for workers to chart a political course independent of the capitalist rulers, their party and their state, to join with the SWP in building our own party. They find interest in discussing a way forward for the working class and the labor movement.

Fein and Etapa talked about the need for working people to unite across all the divisions bosses try to impose on us — native-born vs. immigrant, employed vs. unemployed, Black vs. Caucasian, etc. — and build a movement that can challenge the capitalist rulers and overturn their system of exploitation, war and oppression.

“I walked the picket line with hotel workers two days ago,” Fein said. Members of UNITE HERE Local 1 are on strike at 25 Chicago downtown hotels. “My party urges workers to join their struggle for year-round health care. Workers deserve government-financed health care, regardless of their situation. Their strike strengthens the labor movement.” (See article on page 5.)

“My dad helped get the union into the factory where he worked 36 years in the maintenance department,” Etapa said. “After they got the union, the owners closed the doors and put them on the

street and eliminated his pension. He was able to get on at the Chicago Transit Authority but had to then work until he was 70 to get a pension. He retired and a year later he died.”

Fein works at Walmart where there is no union. He said this is the most important thing for workers there, how to figure out a way forward to organize at the biggest private company in the country.

“Workers without unions need to realize that they’re affected by what the unions have won,” Etapa said. “And that they can organize and build unions.”

She signed up for the *Militant* and picked up three books on special with the subscription — *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* and *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record: Why Washington Fears Working People*, both by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, and *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters.

The party speaks out as a tribune of the people against all the capitalist rulers’ assaults — against attacks on jobs, wages and working conditions, on women’s right to choose abortion, for amnesty for immigrant workers in the U.S., against the debt slavery forced on working farm families and against police brutality.

Fein and other party members joined the Sept. 5 demonstration outside the courthouse where Chicago cop Jason Van Dyke is on trial for shooting and killing 17-year-old African-American teen Laquan McDonald (See article on page 4).

Wars endemic to capitalist system

Laurie McClarty picked up a subscription and *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* from Communist League member Lynda Little, who knocked on doors in McClarty’s neighborhood in Surrey in the lower mainland of Vancouver, British Columbia, in mid-August.

She invited Little to come back and on Aug. 29 they got together at McClarty’s house, joined by Katy LeRougetel, Communist League candidate for mayor of Vancouver in upcoming October elections. They discussed the world capitalist economic crisis, where it comes from and what it takes for work-



Militant/Lynda Little

Militant subscriber Laurie McClarty, left, invited Communist League members over Aug. 29 to discuss capitalism’s wars. Right, Katy LeRougetel, CL candidate for Vancouver mayor.

ers to fight against the effects on our class and to change the image the rulers impose on us that we are not capable of taking power and running society.

“Wars are hugely profitable for the military-industrial complex,” McClarty said, “and they have a disproportionately large amount of influence over politicians.”

“Wars are built into the capitalist system, they are the continuation of politics by other means,” LeRougetel said. “It’s the ultimate weapon in the competition and rivalry between the capitalist classes in different countries and their way to protect their rule and their system.”

“There is no ‘we,’ every country is class divided,” Little added. “The working class is the social force that can lead the fight to overturn capitalism and take the power to make wars out of the hands of the warmakers.”

She said that fighting to bring the working class together, speaking out for the needs of all the oppressed and exploited is key.

They talked about how experiences in the class struggle can transform working people and give us confidence in our own capacities.

McClarty’s said she saw that when she worked a season on railway track maintenance, which changed both her and her co-workers. She was the only woman on a 16-person crew and at first she was the butt of jokes and threats.

“My kids learned to cook that summer, when I would come home so tired I couldn’t move,” she said. “But at the end of the season when we were finished, every single guy shook my hand and said I’d earned my place. People do change when they get to know you.”

McClarty decided to get another book, *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record*, and hopes to place that and other Pathfinder titles on revolutionary, working-class politics in the local library. She said she looks forward to learn more about the Communist League.

To join with the party in door-to-door discussions with fellow workers, or learn more about our program and activities, contact the SWP or Communist League nearest you, listed on page 8.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

GEORGIA

Atlanta

New Openings for Working Class as Imperialist ‘World Order’ Unravels. Capitalist Crisis Highlights Coming Apart of U.N., NATO, EU. Fri., Sept. 21, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 777 Cleveland Ave. SW, Suite 103. Tel.: (678) 528-7828.

CANADA

Montreal

Why the Liberal ‘Resistance’ Campaign to Unseat President Trump Is a Dangerous Diversion for Working People. Speaker: Annette Kouri, Communist League. Sat., Sept. 22, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 7107 St. Denis, Room 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

UNITED KINGDOM

Manchester

Opposing Jew-Hatred Is a Life-and-Death Question for the Working Class. Speaker: Peter Clifford, Communist League. Fri., Sept. 21, 7 p.m. Donation: £2.50. Unit 9, Progress Centre, Charlton Place M13 6HS. Tel.: (0161) 258 2569.

Prison censorship

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Florida Civil Liberties Union, National Lawyers Guild, and others.

Letters protesting Florida prison censorship should be emailed to Allen.Peterson@fdc.myflorida.com.

Letters protesting censorship at Greenville should be sent to Sara Revell, North Central Regional Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Gateway Complex Tower II, 8th Floor, 400 State Ave., Kansas City, KS 66101-2492.

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Gangs, drugs and violence are built into capitalist rule

BY DAN FEIN

CHICAGO — As of Sept. 7, some 2,074 people have been shot here this year, and 381 of those died. The impact, especially in largely African-American neighborhoods on the South and West sides, has been devastating.

And there have been surges, like the Aug. 4-5 weekend, when 74 people were shot, mostly over gang-related disputes and control of the drug trade. Twelve of them died.

The ongoing bloodshed has provoked a debate over its causes and how it should be confronted. This is a serious question on the mind of many workers.

Some Democratic Party politicians and liberal meritocrats claim that high

AS I SEE IT

crime levels and gang warfare are the result of poverty and racism. But does being poor or the victim of racism turn you into a criminal?

Some seek to blame workers in these communities for their own problems, saying there is a breakdown of “moral values” and the family. But that also begs the question.

The main “solutions” proposed are no better — ranging from bigger government and more welfare programs to more cops and gun control. But the “explanations” and “solutions” from all wings of the bourgeois political spectrum obscure what is at stake for the working class.

Democratic Party Mayor Rahm Emanuel recently flooded 600 more cops into the West and South sides. Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson said he ordered the cops to break up “large, unsanctioned street parties” to keep people from getting shot.

An Aug. 2 “redistribute the pain” march shut down Lake Shore Drive on the mostly Caucasian North Side before marching to Wrigley Field where the Chicago Cubs baseball team was playing. March organizers called for the resignation of Emanuel and Johnson, as if a better Democrat, or a Republican, would make a difference.

Drugs are a capitalist business

The drug trade — and the gangs and crimes associated with it — are an integral part of the capitalist system. They bring higher profits than Walmart or McDonald’s because all investments bring bigger returns if they entail higher risks. In at least one of Chicago’s gangs — the Black Gangster Disciple Nation — the guys at the top call themselves the “board of directors.” And the foot soldiers at the bottom, who run the greatest risk, don’t end up making much more than minimum wage.

Are more cops and more aggressive policing the answer? It’s true, a swarm of cops on the streets can lower crime, but at what price? Many Black workers feel conflicted over policies like “stop and frisk” and “broken windows” policing. They worry about drive-by shootings, about seeing their kids getting caught in the crossfire. But they know those policing policies bring more harassment, violations of constitutional rights, police shootings and frame-ups, and this hits Black youth the hardest.

Historically the creation of the cops was part of the growth of the capitalist

system. The first police force was set up in New York in the 1840s to protect the factories and property of the capitalist ruling families. The slogan of the Chicago cops is “We Serve and Protect.” They serve the capitalist class and are in business to protect their wealth, all created by our labor. That includes the drug kings, who pay them off.

“The purpose of the cops is to *punish*, not patrol,” notes Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes in *Capitalism’s World Disorder*. “The purpose of the cops is to keep workers in line, to make an example of you if you come from the wrong class — and more so if you also happen to be the wrong color or the wrong nationality” in their eyes.

Workers in Chicago who have learned about the torture and frame-up machine run by cop Jon Burge and his notorious “midnight crew” on the South Side know all about this.

This will become even clearer as the class struggle heats up. We will face police attacks on our strike picket lines and attempts to break up our protests. And the cops will of course continue to look the other way at the crimes of the bosses, who in their disregard for safety and single-minded drive for profits maim or kill thousands of workers every year.

What is the road forward?

Members of the Socialist Workers Party discuss these questions with fellow workers as we knock on their doors in cities and rural areas across the country. When SWP member Leroy Watkins and I knocked on the door of Linda Harris Aug. 14, she invited us in to talk and look at the *Militant* and other literature we brought. Harris, a recently retired factory worker, was born and raised on the South Side.

“The gangs in our neighborhoods are behind most of the shootings. They

‘Convict Chicago cop who killed Laquan McDonald’

BY JOHN HAWKINS

CHICAGO — Some 300 people rallied outside the Leighton Criminal Court Building here Sept. 5 on the opening day of the trial of cop Jason Van Dyke, who gunned down 17-year-old Laquan McDonald in October 2014. Van Dyke is charged with first degree murder.

“We’re here to press for the conviction of Jason Van Dyke, and for the conviction of every killer cop,” Maria Hernandez of Black Lives Matter Chicago told the crowd.

Relatives of more than a dozen other victims of cop killings addressed the rally. “We’re going to help ensure that this is the first conviction and make sure it won’t be the last,” Hernandez said.

The protest was called by Black Lives Matter Chicago, Assata’s Daughters, the Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, the Arab American Action Network and others, including Rev. Otis Moss III, pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ.

Also addressing the protest were relatives of those framed by Chicago cops Jon Burge and Reynaldo Guevara, many of whom are serving long prison terms based on false confessions elicited through torture.

Armanda Shackelford, mother of



AP photo

Civil rights fighter Gloria Richardson pushes aside National Guardsman’s bayonet at July 21, 1964, Cambridge, Maryland, protest. Crime rate dropped 75 percent after start of Black rights protests there. Working-class solidarity counters dog-eat-dog morality of capitalism.

fight among themselves for the money to be made off the drug trade,” she said. “They are modern day Al Capones. And some cops get kickbacks. It’s about young people’s mindset.”

Some young people and others are so alienated under capitalist society that they prey on fellow workers, a sign of the success of the capitalist ruling class in keeping us divided. Capitalist morality is every man for himself, dog-eat-dog; me, my family, my gang first.

But this will change when we have something to live and fight for, I said.

The crime rate in Cambridge, Maryland, dropped by 75 percent in 1962 and 1963 compared to the 1961 rate, at the same time as the mass Black rights movement rose there.

“All levels of the Negro community were affected by the movement,” the Jan. 15, 1965, *Baltimore Sun* reported. “Even Negroes who took no active part in the protests were deterred from crime by a spirit of unity and common concern for the movement.”

Gerald Reed, one of those tortured and framed by Burge and his “midnight crew,” announced her son would get a new trial beginning Oct. 28. “We’re not just fighting for justice for Black folks, but for all who are victims of injustice, because an injustice to one is an injustice to all,” she said. “What happened to Laquan McDonald, what happened to my son, what happened to so many others, shouldn’t have happened in the first place.”

After more than a year of protests, the cops released the damning and gruesome police dashcam video, which shows McDonald, who was African-American, walking away when Van Dyke shot him 16 times, 14 when he was lying on the ground.

Van Dyke was dispatched to the scene after cops reported McDonald was carrying a knife and had a “strange gaze about him.” After the shooting, the video showed, cops made no effort to check his condition or render medical aid. The video’s release sparked another round of weeks of protests at which “16 shots and a cover-up” became a popular chant.

When Cook County Judge Vincent Gaughan began jury selection Sept. 5, Daniel Herbert, the cop’s attorney, called for all the prospective jurors to

The militant struggle fought to bring down segregation, for construction of low-rent public housing and other demands to improve workers’ lives and their dignity. “The most important single fact is that [the Cambridge movement] was conducted almost entirely by lower class Negroes,” the *Sun* said.

A revolutionary, fighting social and labor movement — including fights for jobs, amnesty for immigrants, against police brutality — that opens the road to uniting working people in our millions to take political power from the capitalist class will have a powerful impact. It will draw in those who today carry out anti-social activity and involve them in forging solidarity with other workers in struggle. Workers don’t need to wake up to their oppression, Malcolm X said, but to their own worth. The struggle will transform them.

It’s the only way to begin to overcome the distortions of human potential and character that are rooted in capitalist society.

be dismissed, saying they couldn’t be impartial because they’d seen the protest outside the courtroom.

Van Dyke’s family members and friends were given the two front rows, while McDonald’s family and supporters were given only one in the back. The small amount of space meant only eight of the 23 McDonald family members who came could get a seat.

“We feel betrayed,” Rev. Marvin Hunter, McDonald’s great-uncle, told the press. He said he had given the names in advance of all the family members planning to attend to prosecutors.

The killing, and the fact that Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, prosecutors and the cops had suppressed the videocam footage for 13 months, claiming its release would damage the investigation, have had significant political repercussions. The city awarded McDonald’s family a \$5 million settlement in April 2015 before they had even filed legal action.

In response to mounting pressure, Emanuel fired Police Superintendent Garry McCarthy Dec. 1, 2014, just days after the video’s release. Fallout from the McDonald killing continues to dog Emanuel. The day before Van Dyke’s trial began, the mayor announced he wouldn’t run for a third term.

—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.

Chicago hotel workers fight for health care, higher wages

CHICAGO — Beginning at 5:30 a.m. Sept. 7, thousands of hotel workers, members of UNITE HERE Local 1, went on strike here to demand year-round health care and wage increases. Their union contract expired Sept. 1. Housekeepers, doormen, bellhops, cooks, waitresses, repair persons and others are walking 24-hour picket lines at 25 downtown hotels.

Rafaela Sandoval has worked as a waitress for five years at the Wyndham Hotel Grand. “During the slow period in winter our hours get cut or we get laid off. Then in spring we lose our medical benefits,” she told the *Militant*. “We need health insurance no matter what our hours were the previous months.”

“Pay raises are needed for some of the lower paid workers, like the bellhops, who get by from what they get in tips,” said Jose Solis, a repair person at Wyndham. “But fewer people carry cash these days.”

One of the biggest picket lines, with hundreds participating, is at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, which has 2,000 rooms. “The hotel has hired scabs through a temp agency and management is also being organized to do our jobs,” said Demechio Brown, who has worked 12 years as a bar porter. “The Hyatt is a billion-dollar hotel and can easily afford better wages — for bellhops and doormen especially.”

The picket line at the Hyatt includes workers originally from China, Cambodia, India and Mexico, as well as African-Americans and Caucasians born in the U.S.

— Dan Fein

Miami airport workers rally, press for union contract

MIAMI — Some 60 airport workers and supporters rallied at Miami International Airport Aug. 30 to back Envoy Air customer service agents

fighting to win their first union contract. Envoy is a subsidiary of American Airlines.

Envoy workers do the same work as American Airlines service agents, but for less pay. In 2015 they voted to join the Communications Workers of America to press for better conditions. Since then, Envoy has stalled on negotiations over their first contract.

The CWA represents 14,000 passenger service agents at American Airlines and some 9,000 at its subsidiaries, Piedmont Airlines and Envoy, which are both in contract negotiations. These companies show the American Eagle logo.

Envoy gate agent Salma Kabbaj told the *Militant* she has worked for the company for four years, but makes



Militant/Dan Fein

Hotel workers on strike in Chicago picket Hyatt Regency Sept. 7. “We need health insurance no matter what our hours were the previous months,” waitress Rafaela Sandoval told the *Militant*.

only \$10.50 an hour. Starting pay at Envoy is \$9.48 an hour, only 48 cents more than new agents got 11 years ago. At Piedmont, new employees get less, starting at \$8.50.

Attending the rally were mem-

bers of the CWA, Transport Workers Union, UNITE HERE and Service Employees International Union. A couple of Walmart workers also participated to show support.

— Cynthia Jaquith

Workers at Whole Foods, Target take steps to organize

BY SETH GALINSKY

Talk of the need for a union among retail workers is in the air. Workers are getting fed up with low wages, speedup, threats of layoffs and abusive work schedules. And the expansion in the capitalist economy means workers are feeling more confident in seeking changes in pay and conditions.

Despite Whole Foods being on *Fortune* magazine’s “Best Employers to Work for” list for 20 years in a row, workers at the company — bought by Amazon a year ago — are among those looking to get a union.

Whole Foods has more than 89,000 employees at 470 U.S. stores in 42 states, as well as 20 stores in Canada and the United Kingdom.

A group of workers calling themselves Team WFM’s Cross Regional Committee sent out an email letter to co-workers around the country Sept. 6 asking them to join in organizing “to force Amazon to meet our demands.”

“Accomplishing this as individual

stores is extremely difficult,” the letter says. “If we organize our efforts on a national scale it will be impossible for Amazon and WFM executives to ignore.” Their effort is being backed by the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union.

The letter says that Amazon has been combining jobs at Whole Foods stores to cut labor costs, something that will sound familiar to workers at Walmart and other retail giants. Among the workers’ demands are “a \$15 minimum wage, 401(k) matching, paid maternity leave, lower health insurance deductibles” and “equal profit sharing.”

Amazon issued a statement saying Whole Foods workers should “bring their comments, questions and concerns directly to their management team” instead of joining a union.

Other bosses’ are paying close attention. Seattle-based Amazon, is the second-largest private company in the U.S., after Walmart, with 575,000 workers. Many work in Amazon’s

warehouses, where they are continuously timed and monitored to push them to work faster and faster. Articles on the organizing initiative appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*, *Fortune*, and the Supermarketnews.com website.

Amazon’s top boss, Jeff Bezos, is currently the richest person in the world, sitting on \$112 billion, according to *Forbes* magazine, which keeps track of such things. And, *Forbes* says, if you add together the loot owned by Jim, Robert and Alice Walton, the scions of the Walmart empire, you have a few bucks over \$138 billion.

Some 200 workers at Target in Huntington Station in Long Island, New York, voted Sept. 7-8 on joining United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1500.

“They called us. This is not a case when we sent union organizers,” Local 1500 President Tony Speelman told *New York Newsday*.

Target Corp. employs 350,000 people in 1,839 stores, but none have a union. The company tried to block the vote, but failed.

The Dayton family, whose ancestors founded the company, can’t hold a candle to Bezos and the Waltons. *Forbes* says they’re worth a measly \$1.6 billion.

After a union-organizing drive forced a vote at its store in nearby Valley Stream in 2011, Target bosses shut down the store for “renovations” and dispersed workers to other stores, even though the company won the vote.

Target bosses say workers at Huntington Station voted 118-39 against joining Local 1500, but the fight for a union won’t go away.

Meanwhile, Walmart workers won a victory earlier in the year, forcing the company to recognize their right to wear pro-union insignia on their clothes at work.

The May agreement, signed by Walmart, OUR Walmart and the National Labor Relations Board, stems from the retail giant’s anti-union actions after workers went on strike at its Richmond, California, store in 2012. The company also agreed to stop threatening to fire workers who support strikes or union-organizing efforts.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



September 27, 1993

COLUMBIANA, Alabama — Two striking steelworkers were killed September 7 as they staffed the picket line in front of the National-Standard plant here. A rally has been called for September 26 to show solidarity with the steelworkers. Keith Cain, 23, and Walter Fleming, 55, were killed when they were run over by a tractor trailer. The union, United Steelworkers of America Local 15015, has been on strike against proposed wage and benefit cuts of \$7.42 per hour since June 1.

When the murder occurred, Fleming was standing on the shoulder of the road leading out of the plant talking to Cain, who was seated in a chair. Eyewitnesses said the truck came flying out of the plant and swerved off the road to hit the strikers. The driver, Larry Gray Jr., didn’t stop until he was arrested several miles from the plant.



September 27, 1968

SAN FRANCISCO — The Air force suffered a defeat here earlier this week in its attempt to stop the Oct. 12 GI March for Peace. It was forced to revoke its orders to transfer Airmen First Class Michael Locks and John Bright to Utah for 45 days of temporary duty.

Locks and Bright, who have been active in organizing the antiwar march, received orders removing them from the Bay Area Sept. 13. The following day they held a press conference making public this attempt to prevent them from exercising their constitutional rights.

They were accompanied by a panel of ministers, doctors, lawyers and teachers who support the right of GIs to protest the war. Telegrams of support came from the New York Veterans for Peace and the national office of the Student Mobilization Committee. The Air Force revoked the transfer orders Sept. 16.



September 25, 1943

The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in St. Louis delivered a blow to labor’s rights and civil liberties in its Sept. 20 decision upholding the conviction under the Smith “Gag” Act of 18 members of the Socialist Workers Party and of Minneapolis Motor Transport Workers Local 544-CIO. The defendants immediately announced that the Circuit Court’s decision will be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Minneapolis trial was the first conducted under the 1940 Smith “Gag” Act, which makes mere advocacy of ideas a felony.

Both Washington and its servile supporters in the trade union bureaucracies knew that the existence of a militant, independent political and union leadership constituted an obstacle to the war program, which requires a housebroken labor movement.

Korea: Demand US sign peace

Continued from front page called Ulchi Freedom Guardian exercises; and

- “Reaching agreement with the DPRK on a Korea free of nuclear weapons, of any origin, and all practical steps to that end.”

Ever since U.S. imperialism’s brutal partition of the peninsula into North and South in 1945, Clark noted, the Socialist Workers Party has championed the Korean people’s efforts to reunify their country.

Since the Singapore summit, the North Korean government has held talks with the government in the South and taken a number of steps that promote reunification. This includes holding a reunion for families in the North and South who had not seen each other since the country was divided, and advancing joint plans to build modern rail and road links between the South and North all the way to the Chinese and Russian borders.

North Korea celebrated the 70th anniversary of the founding of the DPRK Sept. 9 with a large military parade. Pyongyang “notably did not show off the intercontinental ballistic missiles that are thought to be capable of reaching the United States,” the *Washington Post* reported, as did most of the U.S. press, unlike a military parade there in April 2017.

Instead, the *Post* noted, the parade “was dedicated to civilian efforts to boost the economy” as well as “reunification of the Korean Peninsula.”

“This is a big and positive statement from North Korea. Thank you

to Chairman Kim,” President Trump said in a tweet. “There is nothing like good dialogue from two people that like each other!”

Kim and Trump exchange messages

Kim and South Korean President Moon Jae-in are set to meet in Pyongyang Sept. 18-20 for their third summit this year. Moon’s National Security Adviser Chung Eui-yong met with Kim Sept. 4 to prepare for the summit and delivered a message from Trump to the DPRK.

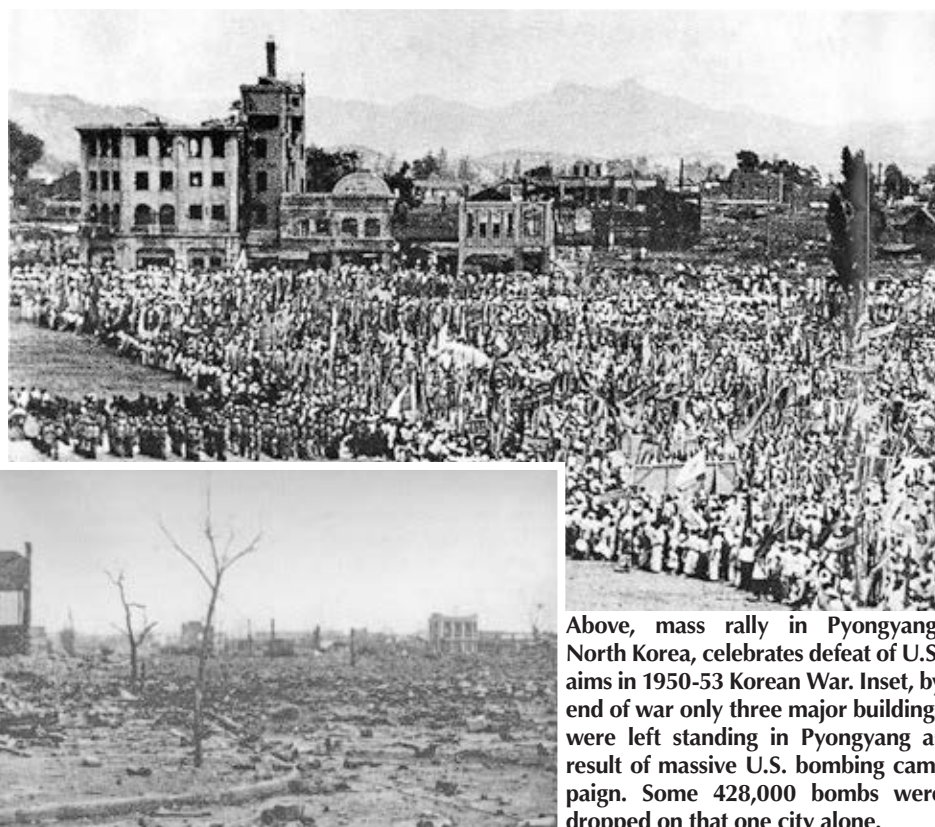
Kim told Chung that he wants to “fulfill denuclearization” of the Korean Peninsula by the end of Trump’s first term in office. Kim sent a letter to Trump two days later.

Last month Secretary of State Mike Pompeo named former Ford Motor Co. executive Stephen Biegun his special representative for North Korea. The State Department announced Sept. 6 that Biegun will travel to Asia Sept. 10-15 to meet with government officials in Seoul, Tokyo and Beijing.

U.S. Maj. Gen. Michael Minihan, chief of staff for the United Nations Command and U.S. Forces Korea, met with North Korean Lt. Gen. An Ik San Sept. 7 to organize further steps to work together to locate and repatriate the remains of U.S. soldiers missing in action since the Korean War.

U.S. imperialist division of Korea

Korea was ripped in half against the will of the Korean people at the end of World War II, part of a deal between



Above, mass rally in Pyongyang, North Korea, celebrates defeat of U.S. aims in 1950-53 Korean War. Inset, by end of war only three major buildings were left standing in Pyongyang as result of massive U.S. bombing campaign. Some 428,000 bombs were dropped on that one city alone.

Washington and Moscow. U.S. troops landed in the South in 1945, taking over the role that the hated Japanese imperialist occupation had played for four decades.

Washington installed the dictatorship of Syngman Rhee in the South, and put Korean working people there down in blood as they tried to take advantage of Tokyo’s defeat to advance their fight for national independence and dignity, for land reform, labor rights, women’s suffrage and working people’s control of factories and land.

By July 1950, before the start of the Korean War, more than 100,000 workers, peasants and youth had already been killed by the landlord-cap-

italist regime and the U.S. occupation army in the South.

The U.S. rulers waged a brutal three-year war against the people of North Korea, dropping 635,000 tons of bombs and over 32,000 tons of napalm and leveling virtually every city there. Then President Harry Truman told the press in November 1950 that Washington was considering invading China and giving “active consideration” to using the atomic bomb.

But they couldn’t break the will of the Korean people. In the first ever military defeat for U.S. imperialism, Korean fighters, with aid from Chinese volunteers, fought the U.S.-led forces to a stalemate. In 1953 the U.S. government agreed to an armistice, ending the fighting, but to this day has refused to sign a peace treaty.

Today the “institutions of the liberal imperialist order imposed by Washington in the aftermath of its victory in World War II” are decaying, Clark pointed out in his message for the SWP National Committee. “That exploitative setup is being pulled apart by the current US administration and by its rival ruling classes across Europe, Russia, China and the Middle East and Asia. The weakening of the US rulers’ seven-decades-long effort to keep its boot on the Korean people’s neck is a welcome aspect of this decay.”

The SWP joins with others around the world, Clark says, to demand, “A nuclear-free Korean Peninsula! End all economic sanctions against the Korean people! Sign a peace treaty with the DPRK now!

“Korea is one!”

Sankara books welcomed at NY Burkina Faso festival

BY PETER THIERJUNG

NEW YORK — The fourth annual Festival Ouaga New York, a two-day cultural event, attracted hundreds of participants, most of them immigrants from Burkina Faso now living in New York, other East Coast cities and abroad. Well-known musicians and artists from that West African country were featured at a Sept. 1 evening gala in the Bronx and the next day at an outdoor concert in Harlem.

In 1983 Thomas Sankara led a popu-

lar revolution in Burkina Faso that initiated a deep-going transformation of the country involving the efforts of millions of working people. Sankara’s integrity, anti-imperialist actions, confidence in the Burkinabè toilers, support for Cuba’s socialist revolution and communist political course are known by millions to this day.

Sankara was assassinated and the revolutionary government overthrown in 1987. The legacy of the revolution and Sankara’s example remain topics

of discussion and debate not just among people from Burkina Faso, but across the African continent and the African diaspora.

A table at the festival featuring books by Sankara and other titles by revolutionary working-class leaders was welcomed by many participants. Fifty-eight picked up *Thomas Sankara Speaks: The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87*, in English or French. Several copies each of *Women’s Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* and *We Are Heirs of the World’s Revolutions*, also by Sankara, were purchased.

Other books on revolutionary politics attracted interest. These included sales of three titles by Socialist Workers Party leader Jack Barnes — *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, 31 copies; *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* 10 copies; and *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record*, two copies; as well as *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* by Mary-Alice Waters, three copies; and others, from the *Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels to speeches of Malcolm X and Che Guevara. In all, 116 books were sold. Three people got subscriptions to the *Militant*, and several signed up to receive by email a weekly *Militant* article in French translation.



Militant photos by Peter Thierjung

Above, participants in Festival Ouaga New York cultural event in the Bronx Sept. 1 enjoyed musicians and artists from Burkina Faso. Inset, table featuring books by Thomas Sankara and other titles by revolutionary working-class leaders attracted interest.



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Mexico election registers crisis for capitalist rulers, parties

BY RÓGER CALERO

The government of Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who will be sworn in as the new president of Mexico Dec. 1, has already reached a trade pact with Washington, replacing the North American Free Trade Agreement. The deal was announced Aug. 27.

López Obrador, known by his initials AMLO, ran as an outsider, railing against the swamp of the traditional party establishments. For this reason, some bourgeois pundits called him the Donald Trump of Mexico. He promised to “root out” corruption; bring down pervasive crime, where 175,000 people have been killed in the last 10 years; and to put “the fatherland first.” He presented himself as an “agent of change” who will govern “for the benefit of everyone” while “the poor comes first.”

He won 53 percent of the vote, more than double that of his closest rival.

López Obrador ran on the Movement for National Regeneration (Morena) ticket, a party he formed in 2012, defeating the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and the National Action Party (PAN). Morena also won majorities in the legislature.

The Morena-led coalition government includes the small Labor Party, the conservative Social Encounter Party, and a throng of former high officials who had left the PRI and PAN.

Mexico’s rulers preside over one of the largest capitalist economies south of the Rio Grande. It has far and away the highest level of both exports and imports — \$406 billion and \$417 billion respectively — higher than Spain, Australia, Russia, Sweden, as well as far more than the second-place country in Latin America, Brazil.

Some of López Obrador’s opponents charge he will usher in a regime like Hugo Chavez’s in Venezuela, portraying him as an “enemy of the private sector and of the wealthy.” But when he was mayor of Mexico City from 2000 to 2005 he worked in partnership with capitalist ruling families there.

To win the trust of foreign capitalists and Mexico’s ruling families, he dropped calls he made earlier to repeal 2013 reforms that for the first time since 1938 allowed foreign firms to invest in the nationalized oil and gas industry.

Working-class discontent

López Obrador’s victory was a reflection of widespread discontent among working people and many in the middle class, and their disgust with business as usual. “This is going to be a peaceful, orderly change, but at the same time, it will be radical,” he claimed during the campaign.

The administration of outgoing President Enrique Peña Nieto — Mexican law allows the president just one six-year term — was mired in a series of corrup-



Photos by Cuarto Oscuro
Above, Sept. 26, 2015, protest in Guadalajara on one-year anniversary of “disappearance” by cops of 43 students from Ayotzinapa. Crime, drugs are at crisis level for workers. Left, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, Mexico’s president-elect.

tion scandals. It was also marked by the disappearance and murder of 43 teaching students from Ayotzinapa in 2014 by police in collusion with drug gangs, which provoked widespread protests. López Obrador promised a new investigation, with a “truth commission.”

One bane of life for Mexican workers is the power and competition between capitalist cartels for control of the lucrative drug trade with the U.S. López Obrador told an Aug. 7 post-election meeting, “We cannot solve these violence problems with an iron fist and with more prisons.” But his campaign slogans of “hugs, not gunshots,” and “you can’t fight fire with fire,” provide no answer.

López Obrador’s promises to increase government spending on retirement, disability pensions and youth programs, to invest in infrastructure, and to provide financial support to small farmers, has

gained support among working people.

One program, “Youth Building the Future,” which he announced July 4, would allocate \$5 billion to pay wages for 2.6 million youth who will work as apprentices, a sweet deal for the bosses.

Support promised for capitalist rule

“The challenge for this administration is that we give it all our trust to turn Mexico into a paradise for investment,” López Obrador’s cabinet chief Alfonso Romo, a wealthy businessman, said Aug. 22.

Mexican multibillionaire telecom magnate Carlos Slim agreed, saying there are “no risks for his business” from the new presidency and praised plans for infrastructure and oil industry investments. Slim said López Obrador’s proposals to cut government spending were positive, “sober and austere.”

Kentucky UFCW workers strike at Four Roses plants

BY AMY HUSK

COX’S CREEK, Ky. — Following a 100 percent solid vote authorizing a strike, 53 members of United Food and Commercial Workers locals 10-D and 23-D walked out Sept. 7 at two Kentucky Four Roses bourbon facilities. Spirited picket lines went up at both the Lawrenceburg distillery and the bottling plant and warehouse here. The region is a center for production of bourbon.

The company demands that union members accept a divisive two-tier system and concessions in sick leave, seniority rights and vacation, as well as reduced payments for workmen’s compensation.

“We walked off the job at the end of our shift yesterday,” Patrick Rogers, who has worked for close to 10 years in the warehouse, told the *Militant*. “We’re picketing round-the-clock.”

“We have been negotiating since July,” said Blake Newton, another ware-

house worker. “The company gave us their ‘last, best and final offer’ on Thursday. There was nothing in it but demands for more concessions. We had to go on strike.”

“We’re not so concerned about what they’ve offered us, but what they want us to give up for the next generation,” Jeff Royalty, president of Local 10-D, told Lawrenceburg TV station WDRB. “A two-tiered system is like a cancer. In the short term, first year or two, you don’t see much change. Five, six, seven years down the road, it eats away. It eats away between the camaraderie of people that work together.”

Four Roses just completed a \$55 million expansion expected to create 30 new jobs and double production capacity.

A steady stream of cars and trucks drove by honking their horns to show support, including workers on their way to the large Jim Beam distillery up the street.

“We have a lot of support,” Newton said,



Militant/Jacque Henderson

Unionists picket Four Roses plant in Cox’s Creek Sept. 8.

waving to the honking drivers. “Even some construction workers who were building onto the warehouse saw our picket and turned around and left. They said they would respect our picket line and not cross.”

Other area workers joined the picket line, bringing their own signs and cheers of support. Amy Anglin-Coulter came with other members of United Steelworkers Local 1241 who work at Barton’s distillery in nearby Bardstown.

“This is what it’s all about,” said Anglin-Coulter, “The union is about brotherhood and sisterhood, so here we are.”

— CALENDAR —

PENNSYLVANIA Pittsburgh

On-the-Ground Perspectives of Cuba. Speakers: Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate, participated in May Day Brigade; Michele Reid-Vazquez, associate professor in Department of Africana Studies, University of Pittsburgh. Mon., Sept. 24, 5 p.m. 4130 Posvar Hall, University of Pittsburgh. Sponsored by Center for Latin American Studies. For more info: ket82@pitt.edu.

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‘First years of Communist Party heroic part of our continuity’

Below is an excerpt from James P. Cannon's The First Ten Years of American Communism, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September. Cannon was won to the example of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and became a leader of the Communist Party in the U.S. The book discusses the heroic and challenging early years of the party, Cannon's relations with Russian revolutionary leaders V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, and the CP's growing abandonment of revolutionary perspectives and Stalinization. Reprinted by permission of Pathfinder Press.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JAMES P. CANNON

[T]he young militants of the new generation ought to know about it [the founding of the Communist Party, their forebearers] and claim it for their own. It belongs to them. The first six years of American communism — 1918-1923 — represent a heroic period from which all future revolutionary movements in this country will be the lineal descendants. There is no getting away from that. The revolutionist who would deny it is simply renouncing his own ancestry. That's where he came from, and without it he would not be. ...

I received your letter stating that you are working on a history of the American communist movement. I am inter-



“What happened to the Communist Party would happen without fail to any other party,” James P. Cannon, a leader of CP in early years and later national secretary of the SWP, wrote about the CP's Stalinization, “if it should abandon its struggle for social revolution in this country as the realistic perspective of our epoch.” Above, delegates to party's first congress in 1919.

ested in your project and am willing to give you all the help I can.

Your task will not be easy, for you will be traveling in an undiscovered country where most of the visible road signs are painted upside down and point in the wrong directions. All the reports that I have come across, both from the renegades and from the official apologists, are slanted and falsified. The objective historian will have to keep up a double guard in searching for the truth among all the conflicting reports.

The Stalinists are not only the most systematic and dedicated liars that history has yet produced; they have also won the flattering compliment of imitation from the professional anti-communists. The history of American communism is one subject on which different liars, for different reasons in each case, have had a field day. ...

My writings on the early history of American communism are mainly designed to illustrate my basic thesis, which as far as I know, has not been expounded by anyone else. This thesis can be briefly stated as follows:

The Communist Party originally was a revolutionary organization. All the original leaders of the early Communist Party, who later split into three permanent factions within the party, began as American revolutionists with a perspective of revolution in this country. Otherwise, they wouldn't have been in the movement in the first place

and wouldn't have split with the reformist socialists to organize the Communist Party.

Even if it is maintained that some of these leaders were careerists — a contention their later evolution tends to support — it still remains to be explained why they sought careers in the communist movement and not in the business or professional worlds, or in bourgeois politics, or in the trade-union officialdom. Opportunities in these fields were open to at least some of them, and were deliberately cast aside at the time.

In my opinion, the course of the leaders of American communism in its pioneer days, a course which entailed deprivations, hazards and penalties, can be explained only by the assumption that they were revolutionists to begin with; and that even the careerists among them believed in the future of the workers' revolution in America and wished to ally themselves with this future.

It is needless to add that the rank and file of the party, who had no personal interests to serve, were animated by revolutionary convictions. By that I mean, they were believers in the perspective of revolution in this country, for I do not know any other kind of revolutionists.

The American Communist Party did not begin with Stalinism. The Stalinization of the party was rather the

end result of a process of degeneration which began during the long boom of the Twenties. The protracted prosperity of that period, which came to be taken for permanence by the great mass of American people of all classes, did not fail to affect the Communist Party itself. It softened up the leading cadres of that party, and undermined their original confidence in the perspectives of a revolution in this country. This prepared them, eventually, for an easy acceptance of the Stalinist theory of “socialism in one country.”...

The degeneration of the Communist Party began when it abandoned the perspective of revolution in this country, and converted itself into a pressure group and cheering squad for the Stalinist bureaucracy in Russia — which it mistakenly took to be the custodian of a revolution “in another country.”

I shouldn't neglect to add the final point of my thesis: The degeneration of the Communist Party is not to be explained by the summary conclusion that the leaders were a pack of scoundrels to begin with; although a considerable percentage of them — those who became Stalinists as well as those who became renegades — turned out eventually to be scoundrels of championship caliber; but by the circumstance that they fell victim to a false theory and a false perspective.

What happened to the Communist Party would happen without fail to any other party, including our own, if it should abandon its struggle for a social revolution in this country, as the realistic perspective of our epoch, and degrade itself to the role of sympathizer of revolutions in other countries.

I firmly believe that American revolutionists should indeed sympathize with revolutions in other lands, and try to help them in every way they can. But the best way to do that is to build a party with a confident perspective of a revolution in this country.

Without that perspective, a Communist or Socialist party belies its name. It ceases to be a help and becomes a hindrance to the revolutionary workers' cause in its own country. And its sympathy for other revolutions isn't worth much either.

That, in my opinion, is the true and correct explanation of the Rise and Fall of the American Communist Party.

September **BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS

The First Ten Years of American Communism
Report of a Participant
by James P. Cannon
Story of the early years of the effort to build a proletarian party in the United States modeled on the Bolshevik leadership of the Russian Revolution.
\$22. **Special price: \$16.50**

Che Guevara Speaks
\$15. **Special price: \$11.25**

America's Revolutionary Heritage
by George Novack
\$25. **Special price: \$18.75**

Maurice Bishop Speaks
The triumph of the 1979 Grenada Revolution had “importance for all struggles around the world,” said Maurice Bishop, its central leader. Collection contains invaluable lessons from that workers and farmers government.
\$25. **Special price: \$18.75**

Origins of Materialism
by George Novack
\$24. **Special price: \$18**

Haciendo historia
(Making History)
by José Ramón Fernández, Enrique Carreras, Harry Villegas, Néstor López Cuba, Mary-Alice Waters
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Decay of ‘world order’ opens room to fight

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 Syria and elsewhere.

In Korea, President Trump is negotiating with the government of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, where the U.S. rulers had up to now refused to even sign a peace treaty from a war that ended 65 years ago. If working people keep the pressure on Washington, the door is open for ratcheting down tensions, steps to total denuclearization of the region, opening economic cooperation between the North and South, and reunification of the country, long a desire of Koreans on both sides of today’s massively fortified Demilitarized Zone.

Washington has begun talks with the Taliban, which controls wide swaths of Afghanistan despite the U.S. rulers’ 17-year-long war there.

NATO, the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the European “Union,” the G-7 and more are decaying, less and less useful for the capitalist rulers.

And the actions of the Trump presidency are pushing this process forward. The rival capitalist ruling classes everywhere are scrambling for position.

“Trump may be one of those figures in history

who appears from time to time to mark the end of an era and to force it to give up its old pretenses,” former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger told the *Financial Times*.”

Ending the war in Afghanistan, signing a peace treaty with North Korea and similar moves in other parts of the world would be good for the working class everywhere, regardless of the intentions of the U.S. and other capitalist rulers. It opens needed political space for workers to discuss, debate and *act* in our own interests.

The current uptick in production and jobs around the world will not last. Capitalism is a system in decline. It offers nothing to humanity except more economic, social and moral crises. But it won’t fall of it’s own weight.

The Socialist Workers Party fights to build the labor movement, to discuss the road forward, to strengthen ties of solidarity with each other around the world, to build a party capable of leading the revolutionary mobilization of the working class and its allies to take power out of the hands of the capitalist class and open a new era for humanity.

Join us!

Iraq protests demand services, end Tehran meddling

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 energy and water supplies.

At the same time, the dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad in Syria, backed by Moscow’s air power and ground troops from Iran’s Revolutionary Guard and its ally Hezbollah, have launched an offensive aimed at taking Idlib province, the last significant stronghold of opposition forces. Against mounting pressure from Washington and Israel, the propertied rulers in Iran are pressing to consolidate their influence in both Syria and Iraq.

Since sharply contested Iraqi elections in May, no party has been able to pull together a majority to rule. The largest vote getter was Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, long an outspoken critic of Washington’s intervention in Iraq, but today an ally of the U.S. rulers and Abadi. The opposition bloc is led by former Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and other factions with close ties to Iran, led by paramilitary leader Hadi al-Amiri.

As part of the effort to blunt Tehran’s influence, Washington is pushing both Sunni and Kurdish representatives to join Sadr and Abadi’s coalition, giving them a majority.

Since July 8, demonstrations in Iraq have targeted Tehran’s military and political intervention and the frequent electrical outages, unemployment, and the lack of safe drinking water in Basra, other southern provinces, and in Baghdad. The actions began after the Iranian government cut electrical supplies to Iraq. In addition, some 30,000 people have been hospitalized in Basra after drinking polluted water.

At least 10 people have been killed during protests in Basra since Sept. 3. “Security forces have been using tear gas and live ammunition to break us up, but that is making us more adamant to continue,” protester Nabil al-Assadi told Al Jazeera.

On Sept. 6 demonstrations shut down Umm Qasr, Iraq’s only large sea port, less than 40 miles south of Basra. The port handles the vast majority of Iraq’s imports, including much of its food supply. The Iranian consulate in Basra was attacked Sept. 7 by crowds chanting “Iran out, out, Basra remains free.”

The roots of the Iranian rulers’ intervention in Iraq lie in the counterrevolution they carried out to turn back the gains made by working people and the oppressed during the 1979 revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed shah of Iran.

The cleric-led capitalist regime sought to consolidate its counterrevolution at home by extending it

abroad, deploying its forces across the Mideast. It put together a substantial Hezbollah fighting force in Lebanon that has become part of the government there.

Tehran-backed militias are seeking to extend their sway inside Iraq. The Iranian government has provided them with short-range ballistic missiles and launchers. Their members have fought under the command of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard and Hezbollah in Syria, as part of the Iranian rulers’ efforts to bolster the al-Assad regime and extend their own reach.

And the Iranian military launched a precision missile attack into Iraq Sept. 8, targeting exile Iranian Kurdish fighters meeting in Koya.

Washington maintains 5,200 troops in Iraq, confirming in August they would remain indefinitely, as a counter to Tehran’s influence.

Moscow, Assad mount assault on Idlib

The Assad regime and its backers in Moscow and Tehran intensified their bombing offensive in Idlib Sept. 8. Moscow and Damascus carried out 68 airstrikes and dropped 19 barrel bombs — shells packed with explosives intended to kill and maim the maximum number of people. The strikes forced hundreds from their homes and hit one of the area’s hospitals. The densely populated province is home to some 3 million people. Nearly half of the population are recently arrived, driven from their homes under “de-escalation” agreements with Damascus and Moscow after brutal assaults.

Prior to the bombardment of Idlib, the governments of Russia and Iran rejected appeals by the Turkish government to hold off its attack. Some 40 percent of the province is held by a coalition of Islamist groups backed by Ankara. Other parts are run by a former al-Qaeda group.

The Turkish rulers fear mass flight toward the border that could add to the some 3.5 million Syrians already in the country.

Tens of thousands of Syrians in Aleppo, Hama and Idlib joined demonstrations against Assad and Moscow’s intervention on Sept. 7, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported. These were the largest public protest in Syria since the uprising against Assad’s rule in 2011 was drowned in blood by the dictatorship, opening a seven-year civil war.

The various Islamist and pro-Turkish government forces who control Idlib have erected gallows in town centers to terrorize anyone considering surrendering to coerce them into staying under the bombardment.

Washington, with over 2,000 troops in Syria, and significant air power in the region, admitted recently it planned to stay. Most of the U.S. rulers’ troops are deployed in areas controlled by the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, which occupies some 25 percent of the country including much of the oil supply.

Liberals’ frenzy falters

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administration member whose missive was run in the *Times*, or the unsourced “tell all” book by Democratic pundit Bob Woodward. Their stories were denounced by Gens. John Kelly and James Mattis, as well as Vice President Mike Pence, all administration members long rumored by Democrats to be disgruntled disadmirers of Trump.

Ex-FBI boss Robert Mueller’s special counsel probe may be coercing plea-bargain deals and convictions of a few Trump associates, but it hasn’t produced any evidence of Trump “colluding” with Moscow. The liberals’ dream of impeachment is increasingly unlikely.

Workers who voted for President Trump, seeking to “drain the swamp” in Washington of bourgeois disdain for their problems, and many more who in disgust didn’t vote for either Trump or Hillary Clinton, see some developments that are good for working people. They see more jobs as the capitalist economy is in an upswing. They see moves toward tamping down the seemingly endless wars the capitalist rulers have started, from Korea to Afghanistan and elsewhere. So the feverish “resistance” of some middle-class layers doesn’t get much foothold among working people.

Trump rules for capitalist class

The capitalist rulers themselves see progress in these developments, for their own reasons. Trump rules for the capitalist class, of which he is a member.

The country’s ruling class sees openings to intensify their exploitation of working people and advance their conflicts with rival capitalist powers. Trump’s tax cuts have boosted the bosses’ profit-making ability during the current expansion of capitalist production.

These opportunities to expand their exploitation of working people has led the bosses to step up hiring. Unemployment rates, declining before his election, continue to drop. As it becomes easier for workers to get and to change jobs, confidence grows to resist the intensification of work, the assault on wages and to fight against the bosses’ efforts to offload the social and economic crisis of capitalism onto our shoulders.

As hiring has grown the bosses haven’t raised wages significantly, and they won’t, until a rise in working-class struggles forces them to do so. Workers need to organize and rebuild the labor movement, to unite working people to defend their common interests. Rising indebtedness, sharpening competition and mounting production costs have squeezed farm income to a 12-year low, with ruinous impact on working farmers.

The administration has made moves to negotiate an end to the war in Afghanistan, as it has simultaneously reinforced U.S. troop deployment, stepped-up airstrikes and pushed the Pakistani government to stop providing a refuge for Taliban fighters. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced the appointment of a U.S. diplomat, Zalmay Khalilzad, to oversee talks the government is urging between the Taliban and Kabul.

The administration has conducted direct trade talks with rival governments, wielding the vast size of the U.S. economy and the threat of punitive tariffs to advance the U.S. rulers’ interests in competition with their rivals. After talks with the Mexican government to push through a deal that strengthens U.S. auto bosses against competitors, especially in Asia, Trump is seeking similar concessions from the Canadian rulers.

With these deals in place, as well as gains from a tentative pact with leaders of the European Union — a protectionist bloc of conflicting capitalist powers dominated by the German rulers — administration officials say Washington is better positioned to pursue its trade conflicts with its biggest competitor, Beijing.

The White House announced it has readied a third round of tariffs to impose on Chinese bosses. The president says that Washington’s trade offensive is bringing back “American jobs.”

“There is no such thing as an ‘American job.’ There are two Americas, one of the bosses and one of the working class. Our interests are antagonistic. They seek to exploit our labor, and to cow us with their cops, deportations, courts and prisons,” said Margaret Trowe, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from New York. “We are part of an international working class with common interests. Whether the U.S. bosses and their government push protection or free trade, we go to the wall either way. The way forward is the fight for class independence and a road to take political power into our own hands.”

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

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