Puerto Rico: One year after Hurricane Maria
Social disaster is result of capitalism, colonial rule

BY SETH GALINSKY
One year after Hurricane Maria made landfall in the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico last Sept. 20, the U.S. and local governments continue to display their class disregard for the lives of working people there.

Most, but still not all, of the country has electricity and drinking water — most of the time. But 60,000 homes still have only blue tarps as roofs and tens of thousands more were destroyed or severely damaged. Many roads and bridges have not been repaired. Under dog-eat-dog capitalist rule, all
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Liberals assault rights workers
need over Supreme Court pick

BY TERRY EVANS
On Sept. 27 the Senate Judiciary Committee will hold an unusual second hearing on President Donald Trump’s nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Supreme Court. He has been loudly accused of sexual abuse in two instances — neither with any corroborating evidence — that took place over 30 years ago when he was a teenager.

The hearing is the result of the workings of the determined “resistance” by Democrats, liberal media outlets and the middle-class left to Trump’s presidency, and, more importantly, against the workers who either voted for him or
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Russian, Turkish rulers truce in Idlib, Syria, holds for now
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Kentucky UFCW workers end strike, push back two-tier plan
Typhoon hits Philippines, adds to social crisis facing workers

BY RON POULSEN

MANILA, Philippines — Typhoon Mangkhut, named Ompong here, slammed into northern Luzon, the largest island in the north of the archipelago, Sept. 15. With torrential rains and sustained winds of 105 mph gusting up to 160 mph, the Category 5 equivalent storm caused disastrous flooding, high storm surges and deadly landslides. It also destroyed houses and fields, while disrupting power supplies and transport in the country’s main agricultural zone.

The destruction was worsened by earlier saturating monsoon rains. But the social calamity from the tropical storm is directly attributable to the workings of capitalism and underdevelopment perpetrated by imperialist exploitation. This has left working people in the coastal countryside and mountain areas most vulnerable to the many tropical cyclones that strike the country.

Over 130,000 people were evacuated from low-lying areas to more than 1,000 emergency centers. Almost 1 million were directly struck by the superstorm as it crossed the island, with 10 million people exposed to extreme weather. Indigenous people dependent on subsistence farming or fishing were hit hard.

As of Sept. 23 the death toll had risen to 95, with many still missing. The largest single calamity occurred in Ilogon, Benguet, where dozens of “pocket” gold miners and family members were buried alive when a giant landslide covered a bungalow-cum-chapel where they were sheltering.

The hillside had been undermined by previous large-scale mining now abandoned, while authorities turned a blind eye to the perilous illegal mining operations that continued across the honey-combed mountainside. Like other areas where landslides occurred, it had been denuded of trees by mining and timber companies.

Police had told the workers to evacuate as the typhoon approached but they were reluctant to leave the site, their sole source of livelihood.

Filipino Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu demanded cops enforce a ban on pocket mining. This would affect the livelihood of tens of thousands who he claimed were guilty of “mining without permit or theft of minerals.” At the same time he reassured capitalist-mining interests this order “does not cover big-scale mining.”

In addition to the human toll, the typhoon has added to another social disaster — soaring prices on basic food as the typhoon “wiped out grown in the north, has shot up,” Linette Cua, a Filipino Chinese-English translator, told the Militant a week after the storm. This began with the heavy “monsoon” rains, which have historically profited capitalist rivals blame him for causing the inflation and typhoon-caused social calamities. Duterte in turn blames “over-mining” and “food supply shocks.” All deny the real source of the man-made disasters the inevitable workings of the capitalist system.

Imperialist powers in the Pacific from the United States to Australia, which have historically profited from mining and other super-exploitation of land and labor in the semicolonial country, have promised token emergency supplies in the wake of the typhoon.

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Continued from front page

“Maybe if you start fighting now,” Franklin said, “even if you start small, we will see what it can be in 10 years.”

He got Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power and The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record, both by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, and a subscription to the Militant. (See ad below for all the titles on special.)

Meeting working people on their doorsteps in cities, towns and rural areas to discuss political developments and the way forward for the working class and the labor movement is the central weekly activity of the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

Party members speak out for all those targeted by the capitalist rulers’ attacks. These discussions offer the best opportunity to share experiences and discuss a way forward in response to historic political developments. The “world order” the U.S. rulers imposed after they emerged victorious from the second imperialist world war is fraying and coming apart.

“We need strong unions to fight for safety and against wage and job cuts,” warehouse worker Vanessa Goral told Communist League member Catharina Tirsén when she knocked on her door in Newbury Park in east London Sept. 22. Goral said that she had been working for a corporation for a year until “being released” recently. The company uses agency workers they can “flexibly hire and fire,” she said. But even though she was a regular company employee, “it made no difference,” she said, because the bosses eliminated her job too.

“We need to build a working-class-led movement of millions to remove the property owners from power and establish a government run by workers and farmers,” said Tirsén. “To do that we have to overcome the divisions the rulers impose on us and forge unity in struggle. Unions that start from the interests of the workers, not from ‘understanding the problems faced by the employers’ is what we need,” she said.

Fight against Jew-hatred

Taking up what is one of the biggest discussions among working people here — anti-Semitism being rule in the opposition Labour Party — Tirsén said, “We have to fight against Jew-hatred and other forms of scapegoating. Blames are inverted for the working class.”

Goral responded that she knew very well from personal and family experience what Tirsén was talking about. “I was born here, but I come from a Polish Roma family. My family language is Gypsy,” she said. “Scapegoating of Roma people can be very strong.”

“I have two friends on strike at the downtown hotels who will be happy to learn about your campaign for governor,” Dina Pickett, a teacher’s aide, told Dan Fein, SWP candidate for Illinois governor, Sept. 23 at her doorstep in Bellwood, just west of Chicago.

“I am glad you came to my house today.”

Thousands of hotel workers in the Chicago area have been on strike demanding hotel owners provide year-long health care, with some bosses having been forced to concede. (See article on page 5.)

“My own experience is that the school boards have plenty of money for super-intendents’ salaries and bonuses,” said Pickett, “and little for the employees and the students.”

“The capitalist system is based on profits. It’s in crisis today and the rulers’ solution is to make the working class pay,” said Fein. “We need to break from the Democrats and Republicans and fight for independent working-class political action, for our own party, to fight to replace the capitalist rulers with a workers and farmers’ government.”

Pickett got a subscription to the Militant to follow the activities of the SWP. Campaigning door to door in the Albany area, Margaret Trowe, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in New York, got into discussions about how nurses at the Albany Medical Center had won representation by the New York State Nurses Association.

“I’m not in a union but I’m glad those Albany Med nurses voted for the union,” Sandra Jones, 55, a Guyanese-born home health care worker, told Trowe. “We need unions, so we don’t have to deal with the bosses one by one.”

Albany party member Samantha Hamlin knocked on a door, where she and two brothers, Michael and Timothy Johnson, both grocery workers, got into a discussion about what workers face today.

“Capitalism is the problem” Timothy Johnson said he thought that capitalism “in its original form” was not intended to turn out the way it is today, and that “inequality needs to be lessened.”

“Capitalism has, from its beginning, been drenched in the blood and sweat of workers,” Hamlin said. “To make a profit and be able to compete, capitalists must exploit labor and cut costs at our expense. Over time we have made some advances, but only through mass struggles, like the Teamsters organizing drives in the 1930s and the battle to end Jim Crow segregation.” Both brothers bought copies of the Militant to learn more. To join with the party in doorstep discussions with fellow workers, or learn more about our program and activities, contact the SWP or Communist League nearest you, listed on page 8.

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Communist League member Catharina Tirsén, right, speaks with Vanessa Goral on her doorstep in Newbury Park in east London Sept. 22. In discussing fight against Jew-hatred, Goral said, “I come from a Polish Roma family. Scapegoating of Roma people can be very strong.”

Helen Meyers, US Senate
Jacob Perasso, Attorney General
Henry Dennison, US Congress, 9th CD
Beverly Bernardo, Montreal Viau constituency for Quebec National Assembly

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Korea talks on nuclear arms

United States is prepared to engage in meaningful talks with North Korea talks on nuclear arms. The special envoy to North Korea talks on nuclear arms, Stephen Biegun, met with his North Korean counterpart last week. Biegun said the United States is open to discussions on denuclearization and a possible peace treaty to end the Korean War, which ended in a truce in 1953. However, North Korea has rejected past offers for talks and has continued to develop its nuclear program.

North Korea has conducted multiple nuclear tests and has threatened to launch more. The United States has imposed sanctions on North Korea in an attempt to prevent further nuclear development. The North Korean government has also threatened to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The United States and North Korea are currently engaged in a diplomatic dialogue aimed at resolving the nuclear standoff. The two sides are set to meet again later this month.

International Atomic Energy inspectors have confirmed that North Korea has not resumed its nuclear weapons program and has maintained its freeze on nuclear tests and missile launches.

The United States and South Korea have agreed to resume joint military exercises, which North Korea has repeatedly called a provocation.

A report by the International Crisis Group noted that a comprehensive resolution to the Korean nuclear crisis would require a combination of diplomatic, economic, and military measures. The report recommended that the United States and South Korea work with other countries and international organizations to create a comprehensive strategy to resolve the crisis.

Get statements of support and prison supplies.

Fight Florida prison ban on another ‘Militant!’

U.S. airstrike levels most of North Korea and much of the South during 1950-53 war, including Seoul, above. Despite destruction, Koreans fought U.S. imperialism to a stalemate, its first ever military defeat. War ended 65 years ago, but Washington refuses to sign a peace treaty. games it has carried out with Seoul,” Roger Calero, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of New York, said the same day. “Reaching an agreement with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea on a Korea free of nuclear weapons is in the interest of all working people, there and around the world.”

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Continued from front page to justify the impoundment of no. 34: “California Protest Demands ‘End Solitary Confinement’” and “Free Ukraine Demands ‘End Hunger Strike from Siberia Jail!’” They falsely assert the articles describe or encourage “activities which may lead to the use of physical violence or imprisonment and that they are ‘dangerously inflammatory’ and advocate or encourage ‘riot, insurrection, disruption of the institution, violation of department or institution rules.’”

The Militant, like other newspapers across the country — including the New York Times, Miami Herald, Los Angeles Times and many others — has run articles highlighting opposition to solitary confinement. The Militant prominently covered the dramatic hunger strike that united thousands of Californians seeking an end to that barbaric system. They were successful, and U.S. courts ordered the California Department of Corrections to end it in virtually all cases in 2015.

In fact, the article used to impound the issue was a report on a court-ordered meeting between prison officials that strike and prison authorities to address areas where the prisons had attempted to evade the court decision. Issues that reported on that hunger strike were either banned or impoundments of them were overturned.

Previous issues of the Militant have also reported on the hunger strike by Oleg Sentsov, a Ukrainian for whom imprisoned by the Vladimir Putin regime in Russia, without the paper being impounded. Sentsov has the support of hundreds of movie directors, actors, screenwriters, artists and others worldwide.

Over the past several years the Militant has received support for its fight against censorship from a wide range of groups and individuals, including the Florida Civil Liberties Union, the National Lawyers Guild, Amnesty International, PEN America, the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, the Riverside Church Prison Ministry, the American Friends Service Committee, Justice League NYC, Heather Ann Thornton, author of Blood in the Water, and many more.

Individual subscribers of the Militant have also written letters protesting these flagrant violations of the Bill of Rights.

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Part 1: How Korean workers and farmers began resistance to U.S. occupation forces and partition authority

US out of Korea! An unknown history

History of Washington’s intervention in Korea

BY STEVE CLARK
The Militant is published weekly by the Committee for a Free Korea, in cooperation with the Committee for a Free China. The Militant is published by the Committee for a Free China, in cooperation with the Committee for a Free Korea. The Militant is published by the Committee for a Free Korea, in cooperation with the Committee for a Free China.

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Continued from front page

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

Send a check to the Militant, 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018, earmarked “Prisoners Rights Fight.”
Kentucky UFCW workers end strike, push back two-tier plan

COX’S CREEK, Ky. — Workers at the Four Roses distillery and bottling plant pushed back the bosses’ attempt to extract concessions Sept. 21 when the company agreed to a contract that backed off divisive two-tier provisions workers were determined to defeat. Over 50 workers, members of two United Food and Commercial Workers locals and the National Conference of Firemen and Oilers, SEIU went on strike Sept. 7. The company was owned by the Japanese beverage conglomerate Kirin Holdings.

Over 100 workers joined the picket line Sept. 14, including members of the United Steelworkers union Local 15015 who were members of the United Steel Workers union locked out by National Grid in Braintree Sept. 22. Employers refused to volunteer to help.

The Militant

The locked-out National Grid workers have been volunteering in Lawrence, Buonopane told the media, handing out water and setting up cots. But, he said, they are frustrated they can’t use their expertise to help with the recovery.

Workers win strike over health care at several Chicago hotels

CHICAGO — “Nine down and 17 to go,” Beatriz Cervantes, a striker walking the picket line at the Palmer House here, told the Militant Sept. 23. Originally from Mexico, she has 15 years seniority as a steward on night shift at this hotel. “The company sent us boxers at the expanded picket line. They had seen news coverage of the strike and decided to take the week off to come offer support.”

“I just thought it was the right thing to do,” Cervantes said. “If we can’t fight for them who’s going to fight for us?”

The strike at Four Roses was being closely watched by area workers and by bosses at other distilleries. “The union’s rejection of the company’s offer,” the Sept. 14 Louisville Courier-Journal reported, “is being closely watched in a standoff where union leaders are framing the dispute as a battle for future workers and the survival of their bottling plant in coming decades.”

“Just looking at Stanley for me all these years and now I’m doing the same,” Jeff Green, a distillery control room operator and member of UFCW Local 1400, told the unionists when he returned to the plant April at 40 years, told us.

The final contract that was negotiated gives both new hires and current workers a choice on which sick leave/disability plan they want. The bosses are offering what is called a “grandfather clause” to let workers retain personal sick leave. Current workers have the option of retaining their current plan or switching to a new one. The new plan provides less time for long-term illnesses but more for short-term illnesses.

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United Food and Commercial Workers members picket at Four Roses distillery Sept. 14. During two-week strike unionists won solidarity, pushed back company’s divisive two-tier plan.

Bosss refuse help from locked-out unionists in gas blasts

Columbiana, Alabama — “We are strong, we are united, and we are not going to evacuate.” That was the spirit of Cain, cousin of slain striker Keith Cain, summed up her determination to keep on fighting as more than 2,000 unionists were targeted by the bosses. The Cain family has a long history of organizing. “We would like to immediately offer our assistance to help in this very serious, life-threatening situation. Our local, veterans natural gas workers, are ready now to offer our experience and technical expertise during this crisis and to help safely restore service.”

“Workers at Sun-Maid 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.

The Militant October 9, 1943

BUFFALO — Over 2,000 delegates jammed the main floor of the Memorial Auditorium as the United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers, CIO, the largest union in the nation with more than a million members, convened its annual convention.

Before the convention will come resolutions dealing with the most controversial issues confronting the labor movement, including demands to revoke the no-strike pledge, withdraw the labor members from the War Labor Board, oppose any form of incentive pay and establish a independent labor party.

While there is a lack of organized leadership to direct the fight for militant union policies, there is little doubt that there exists tremendous dissatisfaction in the ranks, which will spill over into open and bitter protest against the present policy of surrender and retreat.
Lenin discusses Tolstoy’s writing and coming Russian Revolution

Below is the Nov. 29, 1910, article by V.I. Lenin, the central leader of the 1917 Bolshevik proletarian revolution in Russia. It’s entitled “An Appraisal of Leo Tolstoy,” one of the greatest Russian novelists in the 19th century.

**A peasant bourgeois revolution**

One of the principal distinguishing traits of our revolution lies in the fact that it was a peasant bourgeois revolution taking place during the epoch of a very high development of capitalism in the entire world, and of a comparatively high degree of development in Russia.

It was a bourgeois revolution because it had as its immediate task the overthrow of the Czarist autocracy, the Czarist monarchy, and the destruction of feudal ownership of land and not the overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie. The peasantry, in particular, did not grasp this last task, failing to understand therefore it differed from the more intimate and immediate tasks of the struggle.

It was a peasant bourgeois revolution because the objective conditions pushed to the fore the question of changing the root conditions of peasant life, scrapping the ancient and mediaeval system of land ownership, and the whole system of feudalism for capitalism; the objective conditions propelled the peasant masses into the arena of a greater and lesser independent historic activity.

Tolstoy’s books reflect both the strength and the weakness, both the sweep and the limitation of precisely a peasant mass movement. Tolstoy’s flaming, passionate and often ruthlessly sharp protest against the government and the police-Crown Church, transmits the mood of the primitive peasant democracy that had and had not been heaped up by centuries of serfdom, of despotism and loot, of Jesuitism, fraud and legal murder, of “non-resistance to evil,” and led to the execution of the landowners — a new society. Above, peasants before 1917 revolution.

One of the most significant expositors of this new society was Lenin, who had been working for its realization as a member of the Bolshevik Party. The Bolsheviks are the true inheritors of the ideas of the Russian proletarian intelligentsia. Their programme is the programme of the Russian proletariat.

Lenin dedicates his book to the working classes and peasants of Russia — a class that has given proof of its unwavering devotion to the cause of the emancipation of the working classes and estates in Russian society during the reformist but pre-revolutionary epoch.

For this reason a correct estimation of the role of Tolstoy in the government newspapers. They shed crocodile tears, take oath upon oath of their respect to the “great writer,” and, at the same time they defend the “Holiest Synod.”

The Holiest Fathers have just this moment perpetrated a trick, sneaking priests to the bedside of the dying man in order to deprive the people and the world of this great work.

Art and Revolution

by Leon Trotsky

Includes: ‘Tolstoy: Poet and Rebel’ and ‘On Tolstoy’s Death’

“Tolstoy did not consider himself a revolutionary and was not one. But he passionately sought the truth and, having found it, was not afraid to proclaim it. Everything he said was a call for rebellion, a call to break the fetters of rule by the czar, about the criminality of military service, about the dishonesty of landownership, about the lies of the church — in thousands of ways all this he said to the heads of the laboring masses.” — Leon Trotsky

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**Tolstoy, right, in his writings against oppression of the state and official church expressed strongness of peasant movement, wrote Lenin. “The heritage which he has left, belongs to the future. This heritage is a new Russian proletariat,” Lenin said, to overthrow capitalism and create a new society.” Above, peasants before 1917 revolution.

**Appraisal of liberal press**

Observe the appraisal of Tolstoy in the government newspapers. They seek to brazen out with those hollow Crown-liberal, hackneyed professional phrases about the “voice of civilized humanity,” the “unanimous response of the world,” “the ideas of Truth, Good, etc.” for which Tolstoy lashed — and justly so — bourgeois liberalism; because Tolstoy’s fearlessness, his incessant indignation, full of profoundest and most impassioned feeling, his exposure of capitalism transmuted so full the force of the patriarchal peasant who senses a new, unseen and incomprehensible enemy advancing against him, tooming somewhere from the mountainous masses, destroying all the “props” of village life, bearing unheard of ruin, poverty, famine, bestiality, prostitution and syphilis — all the evil of the modern world — was availed of.

The “Art of Revolution,” aggravated one hundred fold by the transplantation to the Russian soil of the most modern methods of rapine devised by Sir Dividend. The Holiest Synod has just this moment perpetrated a trick, sneaking priests to the bedside of the dying one in order to deprive the people — and the world — of this great work.

The Holiest Fathers have just this moment perpetrated a trick, sneaking priests to the bedside of the dying man in order to deprive the people and the world of this great work.
Puerto Rico: Social disaster result of capitalism, colonial rule

Continued from front page serious natural disasters turn into social catastrophes for working people. But Puerto Rico’s colonial status made the catastrophe worse.

After insisting for nearly a year that only 64 people died as a result of the storm, Gov. Ricardo Roselló finally admitted that at least 2,975 had perished.

“The government makes promises and more promises, but the people are still suffering,” retired teacher Mildred Laboy, a leader of Arecma, a community group in Humacao, said by phone Sept. 22. And few believe the government is better prepared for when the next hurricane hits. When tropical storm Isaac passed south of the island earlier in September, with winds at 35 mph, electricity went out.

Faced with government inaction, Arecma set up a community center where area workers organized daily meals and other help after the storm.

The U.S. imperialist rulers have plundered Puerto Rico’s resources and labor since they seized the island in 1898. Colonial exploitation has decimated the population and agriculture. The “isle of enchantment,” which at the beginning of last century produced most of its own food, now imports 85 percent from the U.S.

With the onset of the worldwide capitalist economic and financial crisis in 2007, the colonial government stepped up its anti-working-class measures. The electric company cut back on maintenance and didn’t replace antiquated equipment and systems. Maria’s winds decimated the grid.

Much of the rebuilt system is just as bad. The government admits that 20 percent of the repaired network needs to be torn out and redone. U.S. contractors were brought in, and big profit-makers while workers for the state electrical company often couldn’t get needed supplies.

Despite layoffs of tens of thousands of workers, jacked-up sales taxes and cuts in pensions, the government’s debt to profita-hungry bondholders by the time Maria struck was estimated at $74 billion.

The lack of the most elementary preparations by U.S. and local officials to prepare for the storm and their disregard for working people afterwards has deepened workers’ distrust in all the bourgeois parties on the island and created greater awareness of colonial oppression among the Puerto Rican people.

“Advance in consciousness”

“Now everyone is aware that Puerto Rico is a colony,” Wency Bonilla, an occupational therapist, told the Militant by phone from Caguas Sept. 22. “Even the pro-statehood people, for whom ‘colony’ was almost an obscenity, now say it.”

Bonilla recently graduated from the University of Puerto Rico in Humacao. While her family struggled to make it through the region’s hardest hit by the hurricane. After the storm thousands of working people joined protests against the slow pace of restoring electricity and the closing of schools.

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Continued from page 6
eral (and liberal-populist) journalism. … Tolstoy is dead: gone into the past is his reasoning mind? that in him which pertains to the past and not to the future? that which has not receded into the past but belongs to the future. The Russian proletariat receives this legacy, and la- bors on it. The proletariat will make clear to the masses of toilers and the exploited the significance of the Tol- stoyan critique of the state, the Church and of private land ownership not in order that the masses confine themselves to a saintly life but in order that they uplift themselves to deal a new blow to the Czarist monarchy and the feu- dal land ownership, which in 1905 were only slightly cracked and which must be destroyed. The proletariat will make clear to the masses the Tolstoyan critique of capitalism — not in order that the masses confine themselves to cursing capital and the power of mon- ey, but in order that they learn to base themselves, in every step of their life and struggle, upon the technical and social conquest of capitalism, in order that they learn to fuse together into a single many-millioned army of social- ists who will overthrow capital- ism and create a new society without poverty for the people, without exploita- tion of man by man.

1Novoye Vremya, founded in 1868 as a lib- era1l and liberal-populist journal. ... 1917.

Residents of Caguas protest in San Juan, Jan. 15, demanding return of power four months after Hurricane Maria. In face of pace restorations in favor of class domination, as against closing of schools. “Many had never joined a protest before,” said Wency Bonilla.

Vieques: ‘Colony of a colony’

On the island of Vieques off Puerto Rico’s eastern coast conditions are harsher. Because of the worldwide capitalist economic crisis, many U.S.-owned factories shut down. But U.S. capitalists depend on the relatively cheap labor in Puerto Rico to make billions of dollars in superprofits.

There are some 50 pharmaceutical factories in Puerto Rico, a key part of the U.S. and global drug companies, including Amgen’s largest facility in the world, with 2,700 workers in Juncos. Johnson & Johnson has 3,700 workers in Puerto Rican plants that are doing fine, but not the local businesses. As many as 8,000 of the island’s 44,000 small businesses have shut down since the storm. Like everything under capitalism, he said, “it’s just a business. They take advantage of our tragedy.”

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New International #13

“Here’s the bottom line,” Brian Mooney, of the Carolina Environmental Justice Foundation, told the Militant as he surveyed the damage Sept. 22 at the top of the 20 medicines sold worldwide, manufactured in Puerto Rico. Amgen is investing $40 million to build its own cogeneration plant to provide heat and power no matter what storms bring in the future.

New International   October 8, 2018            7
Russian, Turkish rulers truce in Idlib, Syria, holds - for now

BY TERRY EVANS

The capitalist rulers in Russia and Turkey signed a new “demilitarized zone” agreement Sept. 17. For the first time, the bombardment against rebel forces and civilians in Idlib province in Syria is over. Government troops and Turkish-backed militia had been pummeling a ground assault.

Idlib, home to some 3 million people had been pounded since Sept. 8, forcing thousands to flee with only their possessions. It is the last remaining area held by anti-Assad opposition groups, which includes pro-government Turkish forces and some former rebels.

In 2011 working people across Syria rose up in a wave of powerful street protests against the brutal dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad. Their uprising was crushed in blood, with thousands arrested, tortured and disappeared. Foes of the regime organized a variety of rebel units that pushed Assad’s forces out of large and larger parts of the country, including most major cities. This was done without any significant aid from Washington or capitalist rulers in the region who professed to support the opposition forces.

Assad’s Arab Baath Socialist Party had postured for decades as a defender of capitalism families, largely from Syria’s Alawite minority, who defended their class interests against the largely Sunni working people and the oppressed Kurdish nationality.

The reactionary Islamic State took advantage of the situation to seize and oppress parts of the country. While U.S.-imperialist forces, in alliance with Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces on the ground pushed back IS, Assad was only able to retake territory from the rebels when Moscow intervened with its bombers. Syrian Arab rebels, like the Lebanese Hezbollah, also took a decisive part in the fighting.

The rebel forces, which got little help from Saudi, Turkish and U.S. rulers, were outgunned and gave way. Many were convinced to sign “de-escalation” agreements and were permitted to travel to Idlib, where they found themselves entrapped today.

The Assad regime still remains locked out of 25 percent of Syria east of the Euphrates River, held by the Syrian Democratic Forces. This is the one question that united Assad and the rulers in Moscow and Ankara — a desire to beat back the Kurds. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Sept. 21 that the U.S.-backed forces’ control over the eastern bank of the Euphrates was now “in the national interest.”

The Iranian rulers — like Washington — are especially concerned about the advance of Tehran’s military and political reach. Tel Aviv admits it has carried out over 200 military strikes against Iranian military convoys and other targets in Syria over the last year and a half. The most recent action was when Isr-

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Demand US rulers end Korea War!

The steps taken by the North and South Korean heads of state, with the backing of the White House, at the Sept. 19-20 meeting in New York to press forward efforts to reduce military tensions, increase links between the two countries and push forward talks on denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula are good for the working class of both countries and of North and South Korea, but in Japan, China and across the world.

The SWP has campaigned for decades for the U.S. rulers to get their troops, bombers and warships out of Korea and for the U.S. and other governments holding these weapons to ensure that justice prevails in this matter.

The party aims to cut through the lie that Washington’s foreign policy is “ours.” U.S. military might is used to serve the predatory interests of the ruling capitalist families, as they extend abroad the class war they carry out on workers and farmers at home and battle capitalist rivals for markets and influence.

Workers need our own party, a labor party, and our own foreign policy independent of the bosses that exploit us, one that starts from the common interests of workers worldwide.

“The weakening of the US rulers’ seven-decade-old war against North Korea is a welcome aspect” of the “decolonization of the imperialist world order,” Steve Clark wrote in a Sept. letter from the Socialist Workers Party National Committee to Kim Jong Un, leader of North Korea.

Standing in solidarity with fellow toilers, the labor movement should demand Washington unilaterally and immediately dismantle its nuclear weapons stockpile and that other governments holding these weapons do so too.

No one should have the right to produce nuclear weapons, much less the privileged right demanded by the superpowers to impose their hegemonic domination” on the world, explained Fidel Castro, the central leader of the Cuban Revolution. The Cuban people and their socialist revolution, he explained, “proved a mighty weapon against imperialist nuclear power. It is the immense justice for which we are struggling.”

 Castro started from the capacities of millions of Cuban working people to organize and fight. Through a two-pronged attack as powerful as much U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship and defend their socialist revolution since, Cuban workers and farmers transformed themselves. They have fought to advance the international working class exploited and oppressed worldwide over decades.

Washington should take immediate steps to move forward talks aimed at ridding the Korean Peninsula of all nuclear weapons. Such steps create better conditions for working people to advance our struggles against the capitalist rulers; and to overcome the division of the Korean Peninsula imposed in 1945 by Washington and Moscow, against the will of the Korean people.

The U.S. government devastated the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki when it dropped atomic bombs there, the first and only time nuclear weapons have been used in war. Workers and farmers in Japan would hail the elimination of nuclear weapons in the region as a historic victory.

The U.S. government should sign a peace treaty now, ending the Korean conflict and urgent the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea in the 1950s. It should make permanent the suspension of all its provocative war games with South Korea and Japanese military forces. And it should end the economic sanctions it imposes on the people of North Korea.

Liberals against rights workers need over Trump Supreme Court pick

Continued from front page

There are substantial stakes for the working class and oppressed in fighting this attack on rights won in struggle over decades — the right to the presumption of innocence, the right to counsel. The “bad guys” throw all this aside in their twin fury to depose Trump and to restrict the rights and franchise for the “deplorable” working class.

With court operations in Kavanaugh or anyone else the rulers put on their Supreme Court. They are all black-robed robbers for the ruling class, defending their rule to the bitter end.

And we do have an interest in zealously defending our rights and our ability to organize and win allies in struggle.

Democrats and their promoters in the liberal press have seized on an unverified allegation by Christine Blasey Ford that Kavanaugh sexually assaulted her 36 years ago. Sen. Dianne Feinstein had received an anonymous letter with Ford’s allegations in July. She sat on it until it became clear that Kavanaugh was set to be confirmed. Then she released it and Trump-hating media and politicians went to work. Judge Kavanaugh categorically denies Ford’s claim.

The #MeToo movement has nothing to do with fighting sexual assault, nor advancing the struggle. It is used to serve the predatory interests of the ruling capitalist class.

Ford needs “to be believed.” When asked if Kavanaugh deserves the presumption of innocence, Hirono said, “I put his denial in the context of everything that I know about him in terms of how he approaches cases.” In simple English, if I don’t like his politics, his right to that presumption of innocence is on the line.

Turning basic rights of due process on their head, Ross Douthat argues in the New York Times that the burden of proof doesn’t lie with Ford, the accuser, but with Kavanaugh. This is no longer possible to ascertain the facts. Any action that promotes attacks on due process.

Fearing that Ford’s uncorroborated accusations may not be enough, the New Yorker magazine rushed to print a second claim, by Deborah Ramirez.

Ramirez says Kavanaugh exposed his genitals at Yale University social with she was intoxicated 35 years ago. The Times, desperate to dig up dirt to tarnish the nomination, fervently but unsuccessfully scrambled to find anyone to corroborate the claim. It admitted that even Ramirez herself “could not be certain Mr. Kavanaugh was the one.”

The left piles in

The International Socialist Organization, a group that says it speaks for workers and the oppressed, has jumped on the anti-Trump, anti-Kavanaugh bandwagon. “This is a golden opportunity to not only stop a reactionary judge, but galvanize opposition to the whole Trump regime,” the group’s paper editorialized Sept. 24. “Nothing could be more important” than stopping Kavanaugh, they argue.

To do so, they agree critical political rights must be tossed aside. They cry in horror that Kavanaugh the accusatory — might have the chance to confront his accuser. They say, “She speaks for us” and everyone must “believe” Ford, regardless of evidence. And they glorify the #MeToo “uprising” that emerged out of accusations of sexual abuse by Hollywood ac-

Workers need presumption of innocence

Workers know the right to the presumption of innocence is under attack. When Rasmussen Reports did a poll this week, 41 percent said they believed it’s more likely the media will paint a public figure as guilty until proven innocent.

The “resistance” by the liberals and the left is dangerous for workers. The #MeToo movement and those who would use it to take aim at the courts and cops do not do justice to the movement.

They spy and frame up workers, run us through their plea-bargain criminal “justice” system, disproportionately hitting those who are Black, as well as targeting those involved in working-class struggles.

Anyone facing allegations by the bosses at work or legal charges by the cops needs the right to confront their accuser. The statute of limitations is a basic pro-

towers that promote attacks on due process.

Dallas cop who killed Botham Jean is fired

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

DALLAS — Since Dallas cop Amber Guyger shot and killed Botham Jean in his apartment here Sept. 6 there has been a steady stream of protests. In response, Dallas Police Chief U. Renee Hall announced Sept. 24 that she had fired Guyger, who was arrested for murder.

The firing came following a town hall meeting at Paul Quinn College where Hall had claimed that federal and state laws prevented her from fir-

ing Guyger. All day on Sept. 24 a news release said Hall fired Guyger for “adverse conduct when she was arrest-

ed for manslaughter.”

A statement released by the attorneys for Jean’s family supports the firing. “We are confident that all the facts are known, and we are committed to seeing through the next steps of the process of a proper murder indictment, convinc-

ing and appropriate sentencing,” they said.

There was an outpouring of people in St. Lu-

cia where he was born to pay tribute to Jean at his funeral the day Guyger was fired. An article and photos featured the service in the Sept. 25 Morning News. “We demand justice for Botham. Botham’s life matters,” his uncle Ignatius Jean, Botham’s uncle, said in his eulogy.

Sammie Berry, the minister from the West Dal-

las Church of Christ where Jean was a member, led everyone in chanting, “Stand up for Botham” as they raised their fists in the air.

“We wish to make it clear that our small size or perceived ranking in global affairs should not lead to false assumptions or conclusions about the strength of our resolve and determination in the fight for justice,” said a press statement by St. Lu-

cia Prime Minister Dr. Ralph E. Gonsalves. “We call upon the people of Trinidad and Tobago and the entire state of the United States in America to work to ensure that justice prevails in this matter.”

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