Join SWP in taking books, ‘Militant’ to workers doors

BY ROY LANDERSEN

At the heart of the political work of the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the U.K. is taking the Militant and books by lead-
ers of the SWP out to working people on their doorsteps in cities, towns — large and small — and rural areas. We introduce the party and its program, along with discussion of political de-

SWP SPEAKS IN INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE
developments worldwide important to the working class. A big boost to this will be the launching of the party’s 2019 election campaigns.

We offer five books on special — Malcolm X: Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power; The Clin-
tons’ Anti-Working-Class Record; and Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? all by Socialist Workers Party.

Continued on page 3

New Year’s greetings to our readers behind bars!

Over the last year working people along with our brothers and sisters behind prison walls have won some important victories against the prop-

EDITORIAL

rights and make us pay for the deep-
ening economic, political and moral crisis of capitalism.

In November, Florida’s Amendment 4 passed overwhelmingly, restoring voting rights to well over a million former prisoners who have completed their parole. Workers in Kentucky, Iowa and other states where the laws restrict prisoners’ right to vote are or-

ganizing to build on this victory.

Opposition to death penalty ex-

cceptions in the U.S. — which is the epitome of “cruel and unusual punish-
ment” — continues to grow, and the number of executions to decline.

We celebrate the release of for-

Continued on page 9

Yellow vest’ protests force govt’ concessions

Actions show need for unity of workers, rural poor

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

FORAGE-LES-EAUX, Normandy, France — “Yellow vest” demonstra-
tions across France were smaller on Saturday, Dec. 15 after further gov-

erment concessions. President Em-

manuel Macron is hoping this, com-

bined with massive police deploy-

ments, will put an end to the nation-
wide protests by workers and small traders that erupted in mid-November.

But in this department of Seine-

Maritime, typical of the smaller towns and rural areas in France’s suburbs and countryside, which have been the heart of the protests, the round-the-clock roadblock actions are continuing.

Protesters ignored government de-

mands that they call off their actions after a terrorist shooting in a public market in Strasbourg earlier in the week. “France needs calm, order and a return to normal,” said Macron, who the protesters call the “president of the rich.”

Continued on page 4

We are human beings, not robots!

Amazon workers protest conditions

BY HELEN MEYERS

SHAKOPEE, Minn. — Chant-
ing “We’re humans, not robots!” and “Amazon: Hear our voice!” some 300 Amazon workers and their supporters protested Dec. 14 outside the recently built Amazon warehouse here. Be-

tween 30 to 45 percent of the 2,500 workers at the plant are East African, mostly from Somalia, and they made up a large number of the protesters.

The demonstration was called in response to the company imposing intense speedup and the workers’ de-

mand that they be treated with dig-

nity. The rally was sponsored by the Awood Center, a community organi-

zation that advocates for East African workers in Minnesota. Awood is the Somali word for ‘power.’

Over 70,000 Somalis live in the state. Awood estimates 60 percent of Amazon’s 3,000 workers in the area.

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Yellow vest protest in Lyons, France, part of nationwide actions. “I never thought we’d be doing this,” bus driver Sylvie Orquin told Militant at traffic circle protest in Normandy.

Militant/David Rosenfeld

Inside

Hungary protests oppose law letting bosses force overtime

Workers donate ‘blood money’ bribes to build SWP

UK out of EU is best terrain for workers’ struggles

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United flight attendants protest crew size cuts, grueling schedules

Walmart worker quits, hits bosses’ abuses over intercom

Rail bosses push crew cuts, longer

trains, risk lives in drive for profit

BY JOE SWANSON

Dog-eat-dog competition for higher profits are driving rail bosses to risk the lives of rail workers and people who live in communities near the tracks, and to foul the air, soil and wa-

ter used by millions.

At least 22 rail workers have died

Continued on page 4

Turkish rulers threaten to attack Kurds seeking autonomy in Syria

BY TERRY EVANS

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has spent the last few weeks repeatedly threatening to unleash a military assault on Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG) that control a swath of eastern Syria. These forces have won a measure of autonomous rule over much of the Kurdish cantons in Syria, an advance for the Kurds who suffer national oppression in Syria, Turkey, Iraq and Iran. For this reason they’ve gained the undying en-

mity of Turkey’s capitalist rulers who call them terrorists.

President Donald Trump urged Erdogan not to carry through on his threats, while the Turkish president
By Terry Evans

Up to 15,000 people took to the streets of Budapest, Hungary, Dec. 16, capping four days of protests against recent anti-working-class governing measures. The protests targeted a law passed a few days earlier that authorizes bosses to force more overtime from workers. The protest was organized by trade unions, students and some opposition parties. Similar actions took place in seven other cities around the country.

The measures adopted by the government of Prime Minister Viktor Orban give bosses the power to increase the number of mandatory overtime hours from 250 to 400 a year, and companies will have up to three years to pay workers for these hours. Bosses thereby confront a labor shortage, with a government that refuses to allow increased immigration. Facing lower wages and worse working conditions, some 600,000 of the country’s 9.8 million people have left to seek work abroad.

To counter pressure on workers to work overtime, the Hungarian Trade Union Confederation is demanding a double-digit increase in the minimum wage. The federation organized a protest days before the new law was adopted, with its members wearing yellow vests, emulating protesters across France who forced President Emmanuel Macron to raise the minimum wage for some and retreat on proposed fuel tax hikes.

Among the beneficiaries of the new forced overtime laws will be bosses at auto plants in Hungary, which account for nearly a third of all industrial output. To take advantage of conditions that yield higher profits, German car manufacturers Audi and Daimler have set up factories in Hungary. BMW announced it would build a new plant there in July. “We work for German automobile companies for low pay, and they sell their cars for the same price [as elsewhere in Europe],” a retired factory worker Antonia Raday told Al Jazeera. “Either they should pay us more or lower their prices.”

Some 2,000 protesters rallied outside the state media’s headquarters during the Dec. 16 action in Budapest, chanting “factory of lies!” They were dispersed by cops firing tear gas. Some demonstrators also voiced opposition to a new court “justice” system to be controlled by the government’s justice minister. He will oversee newly created courts to rule over the legality of strikes and protests, and to regulate the cops and electoral laws.

The new overtime laws come in the wake of other government assaults on working people. Orban in October “abolished” homelessness — by banning people from sleeping on the streets. Within days of the law’s passage, cops began arresting some of the country’s estimated 30,000 homeless people.

Orban govt built on anti-EU anger

Orban was re-elected prime minister in April, campaigning against EU pressures by the richer capitalist rulers in Berlin and Paris against smaller, weaker countries like Hungary. Protests have grown as he’s used his power to strengthen the bosses’ advantage over working people.

Orban continues to clash with capitalist rivals in Europe. He campaigned against refugee quotas proposed by the European Union, winning the support of anti-immigrant governments in the Czech Republic, Romania and Slovakia.

EU bureaucrats do little to hide their scorn for Orban. The EU parliament launched a disciplinary probe against Orban’s administration in September. It adopted a report by Dutch Green Member of the European Parliament Judith Sargentini indicting the Hungarian government for the “crime” of a “breach of the values of our union.”

Workers donate ‘blood money’ bribes to build SWP

“Enclosed are four checks totaling $906.06 from bonuses retail workers recently received,” wrote Mily Townsend from Albany, New York. “It’s a pleasure for all of us to turn this ‘blood money’ to good use building the Socialist Workers Party!”

“The bosses give us these bribes to discourage us from fighting for a union, higher wages, and safe working conditions. They try to make us think the owners ‘share’ with the workers,” she said. “The fact is the bosses make enormous profits exploiting us and paying us low wages.”

The Socialist Workers Party uses the term “blood money” to describe production, attendance, safety and other so-called bonuses the bosses give workers in an effort to keep us quiet about problems on the job and to push us to work harder.

By giving this money to the Socialist Workers Party’s Capital Fund, class-conscious workers turn those bribes into the opposite — funds to build the labor movement and strengthen the party’s long-term work.

Joel Britton and Andrea Morell sent in $86.73, their ‘cut’ from a class action suit filed several years ago on behalf of Walmart workers in California over inaccuracies on wage statements on their paychecks there. “We’re sure this blood money will be put to good use by our party,” Britton said.

In the midst of the holiday season, when many bosses try to get workers to acquiesce to another year of exploitation with a paltry bribe, we urge readers to contribute similar Christmas or other such “bribes” to the SWP. Contact the party branch nearest you listed in the directory on page 8.

——— BRIAN WILLIAMS

Hungary protests oppose law letting bosses force overtime

Protesters march on Szabadsag Bridge in Budapest, Hungary, Dec. 14 against government’s anti-labor measures, including authorizing bosses to force more forced overtime on workers.

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New Zealand and the Pacific Islands: Send NZ$50 for one year to P.O. Box 13857, Auckland 1643, New Zealand.

Australia: Send A$75 for one year to Suite 22, 10 Bridge St., Granville NSW 2142, Australia.

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

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the Militant’s views. These are expressed in editorials.
Clinton had described as “deplorables” in France and was pleased to hear they not enough to live on,” she said. After ends meet,” Lobman said. even in a ‘recovery’ workers can’t make deep and has gone on for so long that cause rents to soar even higher. planned new offices in New York will and Google to draw tens of thousands the decisions of tech bosses at Amazon neighborhood of New York City Dec. ed that she and Paul Mailhot knocked emulate today.

within the US Working Class.

agery of the US ‘Justice’ System”: The and 

cialist Revolution in the US Possible?

Continued from front page

Take politics to workers’ doors

getting a copy of Are They Rich because They’re Smart? “These were useful discussions,” Lobman told The Militant. “But with a little more work, we could have made even better use of the books in explaining what young workers face if they want to raise a family today.”

She pointed to the section in The Clinton’s Advice-Working-Class Record that describes how working-class families were devastated after the Clinton ad- ministration axed “welfare as we know it” in 1996. “Clinton’s 1996 act was the first time that an entire group of work- ing people — single mothers and their children — has been eliminated from the kinds of protections Social Security is supposed to offer retirees, children, workers injured or thrown out of a job, and others vulnerable to the instabilities and devastations inherent in capitalism, both in good times and in bad,” Barnes writes. Today 25 percent of families are headed by single women.

SWP campaigns in 2019

Early in 2019, the SWP will be launch- ing campaigns for state and municipal offices across the country. Party candi- dates will speak out as tribunes of the people, raising the disasters, large and small, that are the product of the crisis in capitalism today. Party candidates will be outspoken supporters of the struggles of the oppressed and exploited all around the world.

They will point to the inspiring exam- ple of the yellow vest upsurge in France covered in the Militant.

The party will also be building the April 21 to May 5 international May Day brigade. It provides a unique op- portunity for workers and young people to see the Cuban Revolution for them- selves in its 60th anniversary year.

This column covers discussions among party members and workers we meet campaigning door to door every week. We welcome reports from readers on how fellow working people describe what they face today as well as chang- es that lead to expanding the reach of the party’s paper and books.

To join us in campaigning, con- tact the SWP or Communist League branch nearest you. (See directory on page 8.)

Celebrate Nan Bailey’s five decades building SWP

BY NORTON SANDLER

LOS ANGELES — Nan Bailey, 66, a leader and cadre of the Socialist Worker- ers Party for 50 years, died here Dec. 12 after a 15-year battle with chronic lung disease. A meeting to celebrate her con- tributions to building the SWP will be held in Los Angeles Dec. 30.

Bailey helped to begin the party’s work in the industrial trade unions, in the strugg- le for Black liberation, and in building party branches in a number of cities.

She served 18 years on the SWP’s Na- tional Committee, the leading body of the party.

In the early 1980s Bailey helped lead the party’s participation in the National Black Independent Political Party. NBIPP was launched in Philadelphia in November 1980 at a convention attend- ed by 1,500 people, with the goal of es- tablishing a political party independent of the Democrats and Republicans, the capitalist rulers’ two main parties.

“The convention offered a glimpse of the extent to which the capitalist system has exposed itself in the eyes of millions of Black people. Many pointed to capitalism as the root of millions of Black people. Many pointed to capitalism as the root of the problems they face today as well as exchang- es that lead to expanding the reach of the party’s paper and books.

To join us in campaigning, con- tact the SWP or Communist League branch nearest you. (See directory on page 8.)

Celebrate the life of Nan Bailey

Five decades of building the Socialist Workers Party

Sunday, December 30

Reception: 1:00 p.m. Program: 2:00 p.m.

Japanese American Cultural Center

244 South San Pedro St., Los Angeles

Hosted by the Socialist Workers Party

For more Information: (323) 643-4968

Email: swpla@att.net

The Militant January 7, 2019
Continued from front page
Government spokesperson Benjamin Griveaux told protesters they should leave, “We are in the streets, in our homes, saying the cops and other security forces were under “strain” trying to deal with the protests as well as the usual train strike,” he said. The CGT union federation joined in calling for the protests to end. While the government considered banning the protests, it ultimately decided not to.

Working people here have faced years of accumulated carnage imposed on them by the propertied rulers’ efforts to make them pay for the crisis of French capitalism. They’ve seen jobs, industries and government services dry up, small businesses crushed by giant retailers, while government taxes and fees pile up.

A team of Communist League members from the U.K. went to Normandy Dec. 10-11 to meet with yellow vest politicians there to express solidarity with their fight and cover the protests for the Militant.

The yellow vests get their name from the high visibility jackets the French government forces all motorists to keep in their car.

“We’re not looking for mealy-mouthed promises from Macron, if he really wants his resignation,” Nadia Lemercier told us. Lemercier and fellow school bus drivers Sylvie Loueruelle and Sylvie Ogulin were on a yellow vest roundabout — traffic circle — protest in this town of 4,000, surrounded by farmland.

“They’ve set up a stall here, with a protest shack and highly visible signs. Cars and trucks passing by hoot their horns in support. But the women were speaking the day after an address in Forges, “we’ve never been before on any political protest. Even a few months ago, I never imagined we’d be doing this,” Orqun told the Militant. “But we’ll probably be spending Christmas here.”

The women were speaking the day after an address in Forges, in which Macron announced a rise in the national minimum wage and other concessions to the protesters. A week before the government had called for planned fuel tax rises — which triggered the rebellion — would be cancelled.

The administration has combined these concessions with slanderous violence-baiting attacks on the yellow vests, charging them with “smashing our businesses,” “our heritage” and “our republic.”

“The minimum wage is indexed, so there would have been a rise in January anyway,” said Arnold Lesort-Pajot told the Militant in a Dec. 16 phone interview. “And what Macron announced is not even a rise in the minimum wage. He’s announced that workers on the minimum wage can apply for state benefits that amount to €100 a month ($113) — but only if there’s only one wage earner in the household and only if they’re working a full 35-hour week. Moreover, the application process for such state benefits, including a working tax credit, is so oppressive that many simply don’t apply.”

After it became public that these measures would only help a tiny 30-cent of low-paid workers, Macron announced further concessions which the media says will boost this figure to 55 percent.

Popular support for yellow vests
Lesort-Pajot, 27, was among the hundreds of thousands who joined the rebellion from its outset. He arranged for our visit to Normandy, introducing us to fellow yellow vest protestors, to small farmers, and jobs we know are known workers are in the area. From these experiences it’s clear there is widespread support for the protests. And broad opposition both to the massive police use of tear gas, water cannons and other assaults against protesters, as well as to “black bloc” anti-fascist and ultra-left outfits that have burned cars and carried out other acts of vandalism during recent demonstrations in Paris. These actions play into the hands of the government.

In the coastal town of Dieppe yellow vests maintain round-the-clock protests at three roundabouts at the entry to retail and industrial parks. They allow cars and buses to pass, but block the key exit roads to commercial trucks and “divert” them on what for many becomes a wild goose chase. Many truck drivers support the yellow vests and are quite content to return to base having found it “impossible” to deliver their cargo.

The broad anger at Macron and his disdain for working people was palpable. Like Hillary Clinton, who dismissed workers in the U.S. who didn’t back her as “deplorables,” Macron spoke in June about so-called populists being a case of “leprosy.”

“Macron thinks those who labor are dumb,” said protester Nathalie Girard. “But the opposite is the case. The work we do — that’s intelligence, that’s creativity.”

On arrival at one Dieppe roundabout, we were greeted by van driver Claude Hermay, cook Delphine Freburger and bricklayer Davide Leidile, along with Caroline Mason, who is unemployed. When we apologized for our poor French, they replied, “The language of solidarity is international! These roadblock gatherings are a hive of discussion. A prominent topic is what appears to be a universal hatred of the European Union, of which Macron is a fervent supporter. Philippe Martinez, head of the CGT, the main trade union federation, has been at pains to distance the unions from the yellow vests. While it’s good that they’ve taken up some of the unions’ demands, he says, the yellow vests include forces of the extreme right and small businesspeople who are enemies of the unions. Many yellow vests welcome participation from trade unionists, and many unionists have been won to the protests.

Like in the U.S., the percentage of workers in France who are in unions has shrunk, both because of boss attacks and the class-collaborationism of the union officialdom.

We explained that the road forward is for the working class and the unions to join the protests and reach out to the rural poor in a common struggle against the impositions of capitalist rule. If we don’t succeed in this, then the road is open, as conditions worsen, for pro-capitalist ultracist elements to try and move in.

Yellow vests we talked to were glad to discuss with us and for support from the Communist League.

Rail bosses threaten lives with crew cuts, longer trains
Continued from front page
on the job so far this year in North America. Eight have died in Canada since April 2017 when three workers were killed after an Englewood Rail- way forestry train derailed and rolled into the work equipment vehicles they were on. The most recent death was 33-year-old Pierre-Luc Levesque, a trainee working for Canadian National who was killed Dec. 4 in Edmonton, Alberta.

The deaths represent a sharp increase over recent years in Canada. Rail workers there carried out a strike against Canadian Pacific in May, protesting long and exhausting work schedules that compromise safety.

“In recent years, the railroads are running more trains, up to 250 rail cars plus seven to eight locomotives, and this is a huge safety issue,” Lance Anton, a 41-year-old conductor and trainee working for Canadian National, told the Militant. “Rail bosses do this to cut crews, but the union should fight such work conditions in the interest of all workers and the people who live near the rail.”

Bosses have succeeded in imposing one-person train operation over the road in some places and on some yard jobs. One effort to impose the one-person crew by the BNSF Railway in 2014 was defeated. SMART union members campaigned against a draft contract that would have allowed it and voted it down.

“On one consequence of smaller crews is that new hires do not get to work as a brakeman or switchman for their first few years on the job before being required to work as conductors, with full responsibility for commanding train movement. ‘New hires get training of only 12 weeks. Though the union has some influence in the training, it is far from enough,’” said Anton, “It takes two to three years just to become knowledgeable of large rail yards.”

CSX Transportation bosses have reduced rail school for new hires from six to three weeks. They have also cut job training time in some cases. In the last six months bosses at both CSX and Norfolk Southern have implemented new rules that will require workers to ride oil tanker cars with only one vertical grab iron while making a stop, despite proven dangers of doing so.

Cost cutting measures that increase workload and expose crews to greater dangers helped CSX achieve larger returns for their stockholders. They have sought to win support from workers for these changes by making stock shares available at discounted rates and paying money bond bonuses to engineers if they help bosses meet their profit goals.

Runaway iron ore train in Australia
On Nov. 5 a fully loaded 268-car BHP freight train hauling iron ore in Western Australia’s Pilbara region rolled 57 miles with no one at the controls. The train reached speeds of 110 mph, after the lone crew member dismounted to inspect a car.

Operators some 800 miles away were able to remotely derail the train in a desert area. Mangled trucks and wrecked rail cars scattered among mounds of spilled iron ore halted rail operations there for at least a week.

Nevertheless, bosses are pressing ahead not only on one-person crews but on running driverless trains. At the end of November, three-quarters of the iron ore trains operated by Rio Tinto PLC in the Pilbara region were driverless. U.S. rail bosses are looking into launching crewless trains as well.
ON THE PICKET LINE

This column gives a voice to those engaged in labor battles and building solidarity today. Send in articles, photos and letters on picket lines and other labor-pro, to themilitant@mac.com, post them directly on our website, or mail them to 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Mental health clinicians strike across California

OAKLAND, Calif. — Mental health clinicians — members of the National Union of Healthcare Workers — plan a 3-day strike that began Dec. 13. The move is a response to increased workloads and understaffing at sites across the state.

National Union of Healthcare Workers members Grace Soghomonian wore a yellow safety vest at the picket line to show solidarity with her colleagues. She said, “I’m out here to back their fight.”

The protest was a response to increased workloads and understaffing at sites across the state. The union is demanding smaller class sizes, higher wages, and better working conditions.

United flight attendants protest crew size cuts, grueling schedules

CHICAGO — More than 200 United Airlines flight attendants and their supporters picketed at O’Hare airport here Dec. 13 demanding the company reverse planned job cuts and improve attendants’ grueling schedules. Pilots, airline catering workers and other unionists joined the picket in solidarity. It was part of a systemwide day of actions in 11 U.S. cities and London, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Singapore.

“Sick of getting Cored” was a popular chant. Attendees lined up for support and higher wages.

The 21-year-old Black combat veteran said he was fed up with the way the Walmart bosses treated workers. What attracted a lot of attention is how he went about making his opinions public.

In an interview with the Star Edmonton, Racicot said that he decided to quit Walmart because he was treated pretty bad at Walmart, so I can imagine how bad they would treat their employees.

Walmart worker hits bosses’ “riot control” order

On New Year’s Eve 18 leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and the Min - 25, 50, and 75 Years Ago

January 10, 1994

MORGANTOWN, West Virginia — Eight of the 17 high schools of America Local 5958 will stand trial January 24 in Charleston, West Virginia. The miners were framed up in the July 22 shooting death of nonunion contract worker Eddie York.

The frame-up stems from the recently concluded strike by 18,000 coal miners against selected companies of the Bituminous Coal Operators Association.

The mine owners and their hired guards carried out numerous violent provocations against miners on the picket lines, including at the Arch Min - 25, 50, and 75 Years Ago

January 10, 1969

CHICAGO — Rudolph Bell, one of the four New Mexico miners who are now fighting an attempt by the army to punish him further by illegally extending his period of service and very possibly sending him to prison.

The 21-year-old Black combat veteran told an story at his press conference here Dec. 27 by the GI-Civilian Antiwar Conference.

On Aug. 24, 1968, Spg.5 Bell joined some 300 other Black GIs at Ft. Hood, Texas, in a peaceful protest against their possible deployment to Chicago for “riot control” duty during the Demo - 25, 50, and 75 Years Ago

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The mine owners and their hired guards carried out numerous violent provocations against miners on the picket lines, including at the Arch Min - 25, 50, and 75 Years Ago

January 10, 1969

CHICAGO — Rudolph Bell, one of the four New Mexico miners who are now fighting an attempt by the army to punish him further by illegally extending his period of service and very possibly sending him to prison.

The 21-year-old Black combat veteran told an story at his press conference here Dec. 27 by the GI-Civilian Antiwar Conference.

On Aug. 24, 1968, Spg.5 Bell joined some 300 other Black GIs at Ft. Hood, Texas, in a peaceful protest against their possible deployment to Chicago for “riot control” duty during the Demo - 25, 50, and 75 Years Ago

January 8, 1944

On New Year’s Eve 18 leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and the Min - 25, 50, and 75 Years Ago

National Union of Healthcare Workers members picket Kaiser’s Los Angeles Medical Center Dec. 12 during 5-day statewide strike at 33 hospitals for increased hiring, better patient care.
UK out of EU is best terrain for workers’ struggles there

BY ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

MANCHESTER, England — The failed attempts by Prime Minister Theresa May’s Conservative government in the U.K. to strike a “withdrawal deal” with the European Union that can pass in the House of Commons has led to sharpening divisions and a deepening political crisis here.

Facing certain defeat, May canceled a Dec. 11 vote on a 585-page “deal” that would combine formally with the capitalist rulers that run the EU. That agreement would have kept the U.K. in the protectionist bloc for as long as possible, without any vote on its decisions. After she axed the vote, May then faced a “vote of confidence” by Conservative Members of Parliament, which she won, but at the cost of 117 votes — only after promising that she would step down from leading the party before the 2022 general election.

May later held a meeting in Brussels to ask for tweaks to the agreement, which might placate enough of her opponents to pass it, but she came back empty-handed.

May came into office following the resignation of her predecessor, David Cameron, who called a June 2016 referendum to decide whether the U.K. would withdraw. A majority voted for the U.K. to leave the European Union, reflecting the anger of millions of workers who used the vote to protest against years of attacks on living standards, lack of jobs, seemingly endless wars and contempt by Westminster politicians and EU bureaucracy alike.

“If you’re from an ordinary working-class family,” May said, “life is much harder than many people in Westminster realize.” While England as a whole voted to leave, as did Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland voted to remain.

Since then, she has defied the vote, instead seeking to reach a deal with the capitalist rulers that run the EU that would combine formally withdrawing with in fact staying in.

With the deal dead in the water, there is now a flurry of moves and counter-moves among politicians of all parties, including warring factions within her cabinet.

Those who from the start sought to overturn the majority vote — like former Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair — have stepped up their campaign for a second referendum, demagogically dubbed a “People’s Vote.” Some members of May’s own Conservative Party are backing the proposal.

Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the Labour Party, has resisted calls within his party to back another referendum, hoping the Conservatives will take the blame for what millions would see as a slap in the face for their vote to get out. Corbyn has also rebuffed calls by smaller opposition parties to propose a parliamentary vote to bring down the government. His stance is based on hopes of cobbling together a majority that could be frustrated pro-Brexit and pro-EU voters to put him in as prime minister.

What course for the working class?

“The weakness, heterogeneity, and loss of nerve and self-confidence in the British ruling class” is a consequence of the breakup of its colonial empire, disproportionate economic decline compared to its competitors, and the uneven development of the regions and countries that make up the not-so United Kingdom, Socialists’ Party of the U.K. leader Jack Barnes said in a 1993 talk printed in Capitalism’s World Disorder.

Twenty-five years later, that assessment holds truer than ever. Workers look on the hesitancy and infiltration in the ruling class with growing disgust. When Communist League members campaign knocking on doors in working-class areas to introduce the party and discuss politics, workers say things like, “They want us to vote over and over until we vote the way they want,” or, “Oh, just get in, that’s what they do.” Others are concerned about the effects on their jobs and lives if warnings from the Bank of England and other ruling-class figures that there will be price rises, shortages and a recession in case of a Brexit vote for independence in the Kurdish region of Iraq in September 2017, with the backing of Tehran and Ankara — demonstrated when the Iraqi government — despite being part of the U.S. military intervention in Syria and its crackdown on political rights at home, working people in Turkey face food prices that have risen 20 percent this year.

As the capitalist rulers in Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey seek to advance their conflicting interests, they remain determined to prevent the 30 million Kurds living within their borders from exercising national rights. For decades they’ve quelled Kurdish demands for sovereignty, banned their language, restricted land ownership and waged murderous assaults on Kurds who resist, often with Washington’s complicity. In addition to beating the brunt of Ankara’s military intervention in Syria and its crackdown on political rights at home, working people in Turkey face food prices that have risen 20 percent this year.

But the system’s Literature Review Committee continues to defend the frequent impoundments, while feeling heat and overturning most of them. Each impoundment, even if later rescinded, infringes on the constitutional rights of Defend behind bars. Join the fight!

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Send a check to the Militant, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018, earmarked “Prisoners Rights Fight.”
On the 60th anniversary of the triumph of the Cuban Revolution, the Militant is reprinting excerpts from The Second Declaration of Havana. This manifesto was presented by Fidel Castro, the central leader of the revolution, to over 1 million people gathered in Havana’s Plaza of the Revolution, Feb. 4, 1962. In the following days, hundreds of thousands more adopted the document at rallies as well as in workplaces, fields and schools around the island.

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Cuba affronts the imperialists in a special way. What is it that is hidden behind the Yankees’ hatred of the Cuban Revolution? What is it that rationally explains the conspiracy — uniting for the same aggressive ends the richest and most powerful imperialist power in the contemporary world and the oligarchies of an entire continent, which together are supposed to represent a population of 350 million human beings — against a small country of only 7 million inhabitants, economically underdeveloped, without financial or military means that could threaten the security or economy of any other country?

What unites them and incites them is fear. What explains it is fear. Not fear of the Cuban Revolution, but fear of the Latin American revolution. Not fear of the workers, peasants, students, in-" "telligence and the generals; the plunder of the pea-" "sants, and students; discrimination against the masses of workers, peasants, and students; discrimination against women, Blacks, Indians, mestizos, oppressed in their delirium that Cuba is an ex-" "ample of these achievements.

"What does Cuba teach? That revolution is possible."

Fidel Castro presents ‘Second Declaration of Havana’ to over a million people in the capital Feb. 4, 1962

People in Colón, Cuba, greet Fidel Castro, above left, Jan. 7, 1959, as “Liberty Caravan” went to Havana. Castro led Rebel Army, Cuban workers and farmers to victory, then led millions to carry out, defend socialist revolution.

From the Organization of American States by governments that have not realized for so long? ... How will they be able to deny that, according to their political conceptions, it is the policy of land, bread, work, health, liberty, equality, and culture; of accelerated development of the economy of national dignity, of full self-determination and sovereignty that is incompatible with the principles of the hemisphere?

The people think very differently. The peasants know that all the incompatible with the destiny of Latin America is misery, feudal exploitation, illiteracy, starvation wages, unemployment; the plundering of the masses of workers, peasants, and students; discrimination against women, Blacks, Indians, mestizos, oppressed in their delirium that Cuba is an example of these achievements.

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For more information, contact Socialist Workers Party or Communist League branches listed on page 8.

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by National Network on Cuba.
Workers take political power or face ‘Iron Heel’ of capitalist rule

The excerpt below is from Art and Revolution: Writings on Literature, Politics and Culture by Leon Trotsky. It is one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for January. Trotsky was one of the leaders of the Russian Revolution and of the early Communist International. After Lenin’s death, Trotsky continued Lenin’s fight for proletarian internationalism against a bloody political counter-revolution led by Joseph Stalin. The reply is by Leon Trotsky in exile in 1931. Jack London’s daughter, Joan London, sent Trotsky his book The Iron Heel that was published in 1908. London was a well-known novelist and propagandist for socialism. His daughter, Joan London, sent Trotsky a copy. This excerpt is from Trotsky’s reply, written in October 1937. Copyright © 1970 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

January Books of the Month

By Leon Trotsky

The book produced upon me a special impression — a deep impression. Not because of its artistic qualities: the form of the novel here bears the specific weight of the novel. At the time when the novel appeared, this apocalyptic novel produced an internationalism against rapidism. One must accentuate especially the impetus given by the first Russian revolution but also courageous enough to open their eyes and to see what is and what approaches. The artist is audaciously utilizing the methods of hyperbole. He is bringing the tendencies rooted in capitalism: of oppression, brutality, betrayal, to their extreme expression. He is operating with centuries in order to measure the extent of the book. At the time when the novel appeared, this apocalyptic novel produced an internationalism against rapidism. One must accentuate especially the impetus given by the first Russian revolution but also courageous enough to open their eyes and to see what is and what approaches. The artist is audaciously utilizing the methods of hyperbole. He is bringing the tendencies rooted in capitalism: of oppression, brutality, betrayal, to their extreme expression. He is operating with centuries in order to measure the extent of the book. At the time when the novel appeared, this apocalyptic novel produced an internationalism against rapidism. One must accentuate especially the impetus given by the first Russian revolution but also courageous enough to open their eyes and to see what is and what approaches. The artist is audaciously utilizing the methods of hyperbole. He is bringing the tendencies rooted in capitalism: of oppression, brutality, betrayal, to their extreme expression. He is operating with centuries in order to measure the extent of the book.

The world workers’ movement at the month before the war? Today it sounds incomparably more real and sharp than thirty years ago. But still more astonishing is the genuinely prophetic vision of the methods by which the Iron Heel will sustain its domination over crushed mankind. Londonmanifies the ominous perspective of the alliance between finance capital and labor aristocracy, of praetorian army, of an all-penetrating police, with the financial oligarchy at the top. In reading it one does not believe his own eyes; it is only a penetrating and farsighted one. The novel appeared, this apocalyptic novel produced an internationalism against rapidism. One must accentuate especially the impetus given by the first Russian revolution but also courageous enough to open their eyes and to see what is and what approaches. The artist is audaciously utilizing the methods of hyperbole. He is bringing the tendencies rooted in capitalism: of oppression, brutality, betrayal, to their extreme expression. He is operating with centuries in order to measure the extent of the book.

The last year of Malcolm X

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Continued from front page

Continued from page 6

UK out of EU best terrain for workers’ struggles

“no-deal Brexit” — propaganda widely described here as Project Fear. “It’s difficult to follow and I don’t think they know what they’re doing,” food factory worker Kieran told the Militant. “They said there would be more money for public services like health care, but that’s not happening.”

“Capitalist politicians try to confuse us,” I responded. “They all talk about the national interest, but they’re not talking about working people.”

“The EU is a bosses’ club,” Howie said. “Its purpose is to squeeze profits out of working people in the EU, to benefit the rulers in the stronger countries in Europe at the expense of the weaker ones, and to compete with their rivals around the world.”

“Getting completely out of the EU would put workers here in a better position to fight for our own interests,” I added, “in solidarity with fellow workers in Europe, like the yellow vest in France. Our main enemy is the capitalist rulers here at home. The answer is to chart a course to take political power out of their hands, which has to be done right here.”

EU coming apart at the seams

“IT’S a profound mistake for Europe to pull the British economy out of Europe’s single market, which is the biggest commercial market in the world, and pull British politics out of the political union, which is the most powerful political union in the world,” Blair had said, arguing for a second referendum. The European project, so staunchly defended by Blair, was never just about trade. The utopian aim of political integration has always been at the heart of it.

The idea of one big European state, better able to compete with Washington and other capitalist rivals, is a pipe dream. The EU is tearing apart at the seams, with the second-largest economy in Europe, France, led by the nationalist Marine Le Pen, the far-right National Rally, on the rise. AfD — the German equivalent of the British Nationalists — the far-right Alternative for Germany — are saddled with a debt that’s 1.3 times the annual budget. Their aim is to make an example of the French — who are not interested in making concessions to London. Their model is the EU — the German rulers, and to a lesser degree, the French — are not interested in making concessions to London. Their aim is to make an example of the French.

Workers who spoke raised the need for management to provide easier access to conduct prayers, for Somali managers and other proposals they thought would work out across all Amazon facilities. “People in our community are struggling and we’re here to give support,” high school student Nabira said.

Bosses disdain for workers’ needs

Khadra Kassim, who told the rally she has worked at the warehouse for a year and a half, said she almost had a miscarriage after lifting a heavy box and passing out. She went to the company health office for help, but was told that because she was new she wasn’t eligible for medical care. “Nobody called an ambulance, nobody even called my husband,” she said. “Thank God, my mother saved me.”

Workers who spoke raised the need for management to provide easier access to conduct prayers, for Somali managers and other proposals they thought would work out across all Amazon facilities. “People in our community are struggling and we’re here to give support,” high school student Nabira said.

One sign read, “Walmart workers support Amazon workers.” Four workers who came from a Walmart store in the Twin Cities area brought a solidarity card signed by 17 co-workers that was given to rally organizers. The Dar Al Farooq Islamic Center in nearby Bloomington brought a sign that said, “People in our community are struggling and we’re here to give support,”

Speakers included Ilhan Omar, just elected as the first Somali-American to Congress and Jaylani Hussein, executive director of the Minnesota chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations.

An information sheet distributed by Awsod said the workers have been speaking out and protesting against injustices for months. Because of this, Amazon management met twice with a delegation of workers from three facilities, as well as drivers and truckers, together with local religious and civil rights leaders.

“Although respectful, Amazon management responded to our concerns by working to solve small individual problems — and not change the big problems that impact us all,” the flyer said. “Some workers have been offered better jobs if they abandon their community — but they have refused.”

Amazon spokesperson told the Skakespeare Valley News the day of the rally that the workers wouldn’t suffer repercussions for walking out Friday. She also said that Amazon is looking to hire managers from the Twin Cities community of Minneapolis, where many Somali live.

At the end of the rally, protesters marched onto Amazon property. They chanted at the main entrance as workers inside the warehouse looked out and gathered in the second-floor cafeteria to watch. Local, county and state police appeared within minutes to block the door. As they left, the workers chanted, “We will be back.”