

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Today's fighters can learn from
Algeria's 1962-65 revolution
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 83/NO. 17 APRIL 29, 2019

Protesters in Sudan say: 'The regime must fall!'

BY TERRY EVANS

Massive crowds continue to sit in and protest at the presidential palace in Sudan's capital, Khartoum, determined to eradicate all remnants of military rule after the army brass ousted and arrested President Omar al-Bashir. The powerful breadth of the mobilizations led the army officer corps to conclude Bashir had become a liability to them and removed him April 11, hoping to quell the growing unrest.

Four months of anti-government protests were fueled by the tripling of bread prices, the impact of years of war and ethnic division imposed on working people, and a long record of throttling democratic rights.

Demonstrators defied a nightly curfew and remained in the streets. Some chanted "Fall again," adapting an earlier anti-Bashir slogan "Just fall, that's all," after Defense Minister Awad Ibn Auf announced he would head a two

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Legislators in Texas push to make every abortion illegal

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The Texas state legislative Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence Committee held unprecedented public hearings April 8-9 on a proposed bill to authorize criminal prosecution of all women who have an abortion and of the doctors who perform them. All

DEFEND A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE!

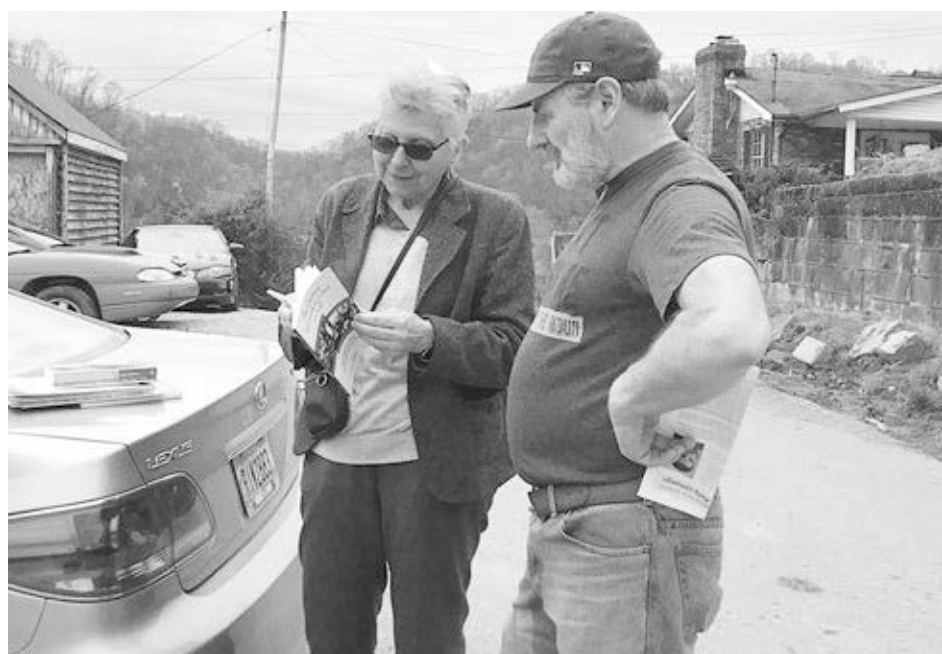
— SWP statement page 9

abortions would be outlawed, including for rape, incest and the health of the woman.

While the bill failed to make it to the floor of the House, the publicity given to it was hailed as making it a legitimate part of the "debate" over abortion by anti-woman forces. It is the latest in a series of attacks by capitalist politicians in a growing number

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SWP campaign builds May 1 actions, demands amnesty for all immigrants



Militant/Rachele Fruit

John Hall, who works as a cook in Combs, Kentucky, told Maggie Trowe, left, and other SWP campaigners that 2016 election was "the first time in my life I didn't vote. I hated them both."

BY TERRY EVANS

"They deported a friend of mine two days ago. ICE has been stepping up its activities here," laborer Ryan Null told Socialist Workers Party member Deborah Liatos when she knocked on his door in Valley Acres, a small town in southern California April 6. Many of Null's co-workers are immigrants.

"We should fight for an amnesty for all undocumented immigrants in the country," Liatos said. "This demand is central to the fight to unify and strengthen the entire working class

and labor movement."

Null picked up a copy of the *Militant* and asked Liatos to keep in touch about the party's campaigns.

Immigrants without what the U.S. government considers "proper papers" are treated like criminals, with most states denying them access to driver's licenses. As they campaign around the country to expand the reach of the party, SWP members are encouraging workers and young people to join protests May 1 to demand driver's licenses for all and for

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New England Stop & Shop workers strike against cuts 'Don't stop, don't shop at Stop and Shop!'



Militant/Ted Leonard

Striking Stop & Shop workers picket in Boston April 12. Widespread solidarity is needed.

BY TED LEONARD

BOSTON — Some 31,000 workers on strike at over 240 Stop & Shop grocery stores in Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island are calling on working people to support their fight.

The unionists, members of five United Food and Commercial Workers locals, went on strike April 11 after working without a contract since Feb. 23. The walkout began after negotiations with the company broke down because of the bosses' intransigence on concessions demanded on pensions, Sunday overtime pay and health care benefits.

"We walked out in an orderly and

disciplined way," Donald Moore, an 18-year veteran and shop steward at Freeport Street Stop & Shop in Dorchester, said when this worker-correspondent joined him on the picket line April 12.

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Cuban Revolution 'put workers in the best position to take on racism'

BY NAOMI CRAINE

CHICAGO — The advances made by the Cuban Revolution in combating racial discrimination inherited from a legacy of slavery, colonialism and capitalism there; and the continuing challenges to meet and overcome remaining racial prejudice and inequality were discussed and debated at a meeting organized by the Chica-

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Fight against ban on Washington prisoners getting used books wins

BY EDWIN FRUIT

SEATTLE — After a public outcry, the Washington state Department of Corrections reversed severe restrictions they had adopted that blocked prisoners from receiving almost all used books.

The ban, quietly posted on the department's website, said that effective March 25 prisoners could only receive used books through the Washington State Library or, in the case of prisoners who had been accepted into correspondence courses, books that came through the correspondence schools' official bookstores.

Corrections Department officials claimed there were 17 instances

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'Battalions of working-class fighters in formation in China' 8

—On the picket line, p. 5—

Toronto teachers, students protest education cuts

Autoworkers in Russia start 'work to rule' against layoffs

Quebec protests hit gov’t ban on wearing religious symbols on job

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

MONTREAL — Chanting, “One, two, three, cancel this law,” several thousand people marched here April 7 to protest Bill 21 in an action organized by the Canadian Collective Against Islamophobia. The bill, introduced in the Quebec National Assembly March 28 by Quebec Minister of Immigration, Diversity and Inclusiveness Simon Jolin-Barrette, would ban many public-sector workers from wearing any religious symbols on the job. It’s entitled, “Act Respecting the Secularism of the State.”

Quebec Premier Francois Legault, whose Coalition for the Future of Quebec party runs the government, announced after his election last October that he would introduce such a law.

The reactionary legislation would prohibit public servants in “positions of authority” from wearing religious symbols, including elementary and secondary teachers and municipal employees, as well as police officers, Crown prosecutors and prison guards.

In response to widespread opposition to this attack on the freedom to practice your religion, the draft law has a “grandfather clause” that would allow workers already employed who wear religious symbols to keep their positions, but bar them from changing jobs. The law would ban all new workers from wearing hijabs or any other religious clothing or symbols.

But these concessions failed to quell widespread outrage at the attack on a basic democratic right. Muslims — many of them women wearing hijabs, who are a primary target of the law —

made up the majority at the protest, but they were joined by a substantial numbers of Sikhs wearing turbans, and Jews wearing kippas. Many others with no outwardly apparent religious affiliation also turned out.

In addition to a sea of printed signs with a red X through Bill 21, there were many homemade placards, including “Free us from pot holes, not women in veils” and “No to false secularism. My religion, my freedom.” Many of the signs were in French on one side and English on the other.

“I’m here to preserve a fundamental right. It’s not up to the legislature to tell us what we wear, or what we remove,” Yous Mohamed, an electrical engineer at a nonunion aircraft plant, told Communist League members who joined the action. “This doesn’t make sense. I do my work like everyone else,” said Radia Rahmani, a laboratory technician in a hospital. “I don’t see how my veil bothers anyone.”

Debate among working people

Some 200 teachers, students and community members organized another protest April 3 against the proposed law. A human chain was formed outside the doors to Westmount High, forcing the administration to delay the start of the school day for almost an hour. “No Quebecer should have to choose between their career and their faith!!!” one of the prominent signs there said.

At least two Montreal school boards have said they will refuse to enforce the law, and the municipal



Militant/Jim Upton

Sign reads, “Muslims, Jews, atheists or Christians. All citizens!” Thousands protest in Montreal April 7 against bill banning public sector workers from wearing religious symbols at work.

association that covers 14 suburbs of Montreal is demanding that the legislation not apply to their workers. Other opponents of the bill include the Quebec Federation of Women, the Montreal Labor Council of the Quebec Federation of Labor and Montreal Mayor Valerie Plante.

Premier Legault claims Bill 21 reflects what “the vast majority of Quebecers want.” The Coalition for the Future of Quebec uses arguments about “Quebec’s distinctness” to justify the law, with its undertones of targeting the growing number of Muslims and other immigrants in the province’s working class. This apes the earlier reactionary campaign mounted by the Parti Quebecois when it was in power promoting an anti-immigrant “Charter of Quebec Values.” This was one of the reasons the PQ was turned out in the 2014 elections.

Communist League members have been taking the need to fight the reactionary measure to workers across the province as they knock on doors to introduce the League and its activities. Opinion among working people is divided.

Retired truck driver Michel Plouffe told this worker correspondent in Farnham April 10 that he thought the proposed law was needed to keep the state and religion separate. “Prac-

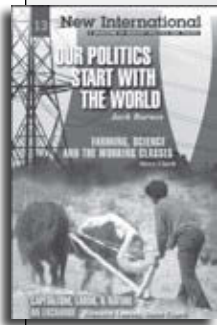
tice your religion at home, not in the streets,” he said.

Primary school teacher Elisabeth Lenormand in Trois Rivieres, an hour and a half northeast of Montreal, didn’t agree. The law would “penalize women who have gained a degree of autonomy through working, and it penalizes immigrants,” she told the *Militant* March 30.

Katy LeRougetel and Marie-Claire David contributed to this article.

Our Politics Start with the World

by Jack Barnes



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THE MILITANT

Amnesty for all immigrant workers in the US!

The government immigration raid April 3 in Texas was aimed at scapegoating “unauthorized” immigrants and dividing the working class. The ‘Militant’ backs the fight to demand “No more raids,” “End the deportations,” “Amnesty for all without papers living in the U.S.!”



Kera News/Anthony Cave

Protesters in Allen, Texas, April 3 during immigration raid. Cops detained 284 workers.

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SWP campaign builds May 1

Continued from front page
amnesty. It's an issue for the entire working class.

Supporters of SWP candidates Amy Husk and Samir Hazboun, running for Kentucky governor and lieutenant governor, fanned out across the state and southern Indiana April 12-15 to discuss a working-class road forward. They joined in advancing the international drive to expand the readership of revolutionary books and the *Militant*, to increase the number of people working with the party, and to raise \$115,000 for the Militant Fighting Fund.

"I'm surprised you came to Combs," Shelly Hall, 60, a disabled retail worker told SWP campaigners Rachele Fruit and Maggie Trowe when they knocked on her door in eastern Kentucky. "This is known as a bad area. There are only two people on our street who have jobs. But we look out for each other. Sometimes there's not enough food. If someone has a sack of potatoes, we share them."

The two SWP members explained that the fight for working-class solidarity is advanced by building a movement to take power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers, as working people did in Cuba. Hall got a subscription to the *Militant*.

"Jobs are high on my priority list," Paul Couch, a retired construction contractor and church pastor in Typo, Kentucky, told them. "People just can't find work around here. I'm working with other churches and talking to anyone who will listen to try to get some companies to invest in our community and put people to work."

"The SWP candidates urge a fight for a massive government-sponsored public works program to put millions to work at union-scale wages to repair the roads and bridges, build schools

and hospitals and other things workers need," Trowe replied.

Health care, not health insurance

"Have a seat," Brandon Morris, a disabled factory worker and former coal miner from Austin, Indiana, told Jacquie Henderson and Jim Horne after they introduced the SWP's Kentucky campaign. "I like what you say about working people needing to stand together. We work all our lives and end up with nothing." Morris has black lung disease and lung cancer.

"I'm a lucky one," he said. "They found it and removed part of my lung. My wife couldn't get doctors to even take her condition seriously until it was too late. There's no such thing as health care in this country."

All the plans to reform health insurance presented by Democrats and Republicans, including "Medicare for all" touted by liberal Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination, would in fact boost the profits of the pharmaceutical companies and hospital bosses. In contrast, the SWP demands universal government-guaranteed health care for working people and explains why a fight is necessary to expropriate the for-profit drug, hospital and medical equipment companies and place them under the control of the workers who work there.

The socialist campaigners from Louisville, Kentucky; Atlanta; and Chicago sold 15 books, 10 subscriptions and received three contributions to the Militant Fighting Fund in Kentucky and Indiana.

When SWP campaigners Alex Huinil, Jacob Perasso and Beverly Hoggs visited the picket line of striking workers at Stop & Shop in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, they met striker Melissa Taylor. She told them she had tried to organize a union at the Price

Chopper store she used to work at. "They called me 'rebel girl' and cut me off the schedule. I came here three months ago for more hours and a union," she said. She subscribed to the *Militant* and bought five books the SWP campaigners showed her that are on special offer.

SWP members are offering all of Pathfinder's books at 20% off. The books contain writings of SWP leaders on working-class politics today, of revolutionaries like Fidel Castro, Thomas Sankara and Malcolm X, and on the lessons of past working-class struggles.

Fund off to strong start

Over the first week of the seven-week drive, readers across the country and the world have sent in \$12,553 to the Militant Fighting Fund. Another \$1,780 is in the mail, getting the second week off to a good start. Keep the contributions coming! Readers efforts like this can ensure the fund drive will bring home the \$115,000 goal by May 28.

'Why do workers face so many problems today?'



Militant/Abby Tilsner

PITTSBURGH — "Thanks for coming to my door," Rebecca Krawczak, right, a full-time student who also works full time at a donut shop told Malcolm Jarrett, left, Socialist Workers Party candidate for City Council here, and campaign supporter Arrin Hawkins when they knocked on her door April 14 on the city's north side. Krawczak and Jarrett learned they both had joined recent protests after East Pittsburgh cop Michael Rosfeld was acquitted in the killing of African American teenager Antwon Rose.

"I'm trying to understand why people, especially workers, face so many problems," said Krawczak. Jarrett said the source of the problems working people face is the dog-eat-dog capitalist system.

Krawczak bought a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and a subscription to the *Militant*. After they left, she ran to catch up with them to give a \$5 contribution. She said she wants to organize a meeting for Jarrett to speak on her campus.

More than a dozen supporters helped campaign throughout Pittsburgh and the region April 11-15 to introduce workers, farmers, small proprietors and young people to the Socialist Workers Party, collect signatures to get Jarrett on the ballot and promote the *Militant* and books by revolutionary leaders.

— ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

Contributions from working people who value the *Militant's* coverage of working-class struggles and its presentation of a way forward independent of the bosses and their parties are the backbone of the fund.

Teacher's assistant and student Erica Smith kicked in \$5 to the fund and got a copy of *In Defense of the US Working Class* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters, when Rebecca Wilson and Jeanne Fitzmaurice talked with her April 6 at her doorstep in Tenino, Washington.

Readers who want to join the effort can contact party branches listed on page 8 or contribute online at the paper's website, www.themilitant.com.

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

The fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. Send a check or money order payable to the 'Militant' and earmarked "Prisoners' Fund" to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Or donate online at www.themilitant.com

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Campaign to expand reach of 'Militant,' books, fund						
April 6 - May 28 (week one)						
Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	received
UNITED STATES						
Albany	65	10	65	20	\$5,600	\$200
Atlanta	70	17	70	14	\$9,750	\$2,250
Chicago	85	25	110	25	\$11,400	\$1,904
Dallas	40	12	40	10	\$2,500	\$0
Lincoln	10	4	12	6	\$220	\$75
Los Angeles	85	28	185	137	10,800	\$170
Louisville	50	16	50	12	2,000	\$250
Miami	25	4	25	1	\$3,500	\$275
N. New Jersey	40	8	50	17	\$3,500	\$760
New York	80	4	80	9	\$14,000	\$2,370
Oakland	70	15	70	27	\$13,000	\$2,050
Philadelphia	25	1	25	3	\$3,000	\$0
Pittsburgh	15	3	15	0	\$1,200	\$0
Seattle	70	11	70	28	\$10,000	\$738
Twin Cities	35	4	35	6	\$4,750	\$10
Wash., DC	40	1	40	8	\$5,000	\$920
Total U.S.	805	163	942	323	\$100,220	\$11,972
Prisoners	25	9	0	0	0	0
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	50	15	80	61	\$2,500	\$25
Manchester	35	11	45	20	\$1,300	\$0
Total U.K.	95	26	125	81	\$3,800	\$25
CANADA	70	8	80	19	\$8,200	\$20
NEW ZEALAND	20	2	20	4	\$3,400	\$536
AUSTRALIA	20	9	30	20	\$500	0
Total	1,035	217	1,197	447	\$116,120	\$12,553
SHOULD BE	1,050	148	1,050	171	\$115,000	\$16,429

Quebec taxi, Uber drivers need union to fight boss, gov't attacks

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL — For weeks now, taxi drivers throughout the province have mounted protests in their thousands against the push by the Quebec government to deregulate the taxi industry. This would abolish the permit system, which restricts the number of cabs on the street and requires cab owners to purchase expensive permits. And it would permanently allow Uber and other app services to operate, setting the stage to pit the two sets of drivers against each other.

This sharply poses the need for all drivers here — Uber and taxi — to unite and fight together to build a joint union to defend themselves against the bosses and their government.

The conservative Coalition for the Future of Quebec (CAQ) government placed Bill 17 before the Quebec National Assembly March 20. The bill would establish a single set of regulations for both taxi and app company drivers, requiring only a standard driver's license and minimal training.

Many taxi drivers are demanding that Bill 17 be scrapped. But if the permit system is ended, the drivers' demand that the government compensate them in full for the value of their permits because they would become worthless. Most of them had been bought at sky-high prices.

Uber began operating in Quebec under the table in 2014. Starting in 2016, first the Liberal and then the CAQ governments allowed it to continue under a "pilot program." They have pitted taxi and Uber drivers against each other as part of the government's campaign to "modernize" the taxi industry.

Taxi driver Gerard Vancol told the *Militant* how he sees it is that "the government has chosen Uber over taxis." While sitting in his cab at a bus terminal April 4 Vancol described what he faces. "I paid \$200,000 for my permit and I still owe close to \$100,000. The government is offering us \$45,000," he said. "The bank won't care that I've lost my job and I still have to pay."

"I agree the Uber drivers are victims too," another taxi driver said to Communist League members when we

talked at the beginning of their protest April 5 and told them about the California Uber drivers' March 25 one-day strike against the bosses' 25% cut in their mileage pay.

We also talked to Uber drivers in Montreal, giving them a copy of the *Militant* article reporting on the Uber strike, and raising the need for all drivers to form a common union to defend their interests against the bosses and the state.

"I work 60-70 hours a week and after Uber takes its 28% and all the other expenses I have, I don't even make minimum wage," one driver waiting at the CellParc at Trudeau airport told us. "The taxi drivers aren't my enemy, but the taxi industry is. I don't think it's possible to ever get a union for Uber and taxi drivers."

Under Quebec law both sets of drivers are deemed self-employed and barred from forming a union.

But without the fighting unity such a union would provide, drivers will founder against ongoing efforts by the bosses to pit them against each other to keep them all down.

The April 5 action paralyzed traffic in parts of Montreal and shut down the street when hundreds of drivers converged on the office of Transports Quebec. The protest was the first after a several-day pause in protest actions when taxi driver Martin LeBlond slashed one of his wrists on live TV March 29. "I don't have anything to lose," said LeBlond. He was taken to the hospital with injuries that were not life-threatening.



Militant/John Steele

Montreal taxi drivers protest government deregulation bill April 5. Placard says, "22,000 families in bankruptcy." Uber, taxi drivers need union to fight moves to pit them against each other.

There are 7,600 taxi permits in Quebec and around 20,000 taxi drivers. Most drivers here rent cabs from the many big and small taxi company bosses who own the permits. There are some 10,000 Uber drivers in Quebec, including 5,000 in Montreal.

Taxi and Uber drivers need a union

The decadeslong quota permit system was never set up for the benefit of the taxi drivers. Limiting the number of permit holders kept the supply of cabs down and ensured higher profits for the bigger taxi company bosses.

Capitalism's market forces transformed the permits — initially given out free — into expensive commodities and turned drivers into debt slaves by forcing them to mortgage their lives to the banks to buy the permits whose average cost in 2018 was \$98,000. Before Uber came on the scene the per-

mits were "worth" \$200,000.

Some drivers bought permits as investments, hoping they could sell them later at a higher price, or at least without a loss, when they retired. They say that the \$500 million promised by the government to compensate them all wouldn't even come close.

The televised attempted suicide of LeBlond and reports in the media about the hardships facing taxi drivers has won a lot of sympathy among working people for their demand for full compensation for their permits. Solidarity with this fight by Uber drivers — and vice versa — is essential. And other workers and their unions need to help build the kind of taxi-Uber driver solidarity to strengthen the groundwork for their united fight for a union.

Katy LeRougetel and Michel Prairie contributed to this article.

Protesters in Sudan say, 'The regime must fall!'

Continued from front page

year "transition" period of military rule, and extended the state of emergency from one to three years.

Ibn Auf was appointed head of the military council April 11. Deeply involved in Bashir's brutal war on the peoples of Darfur, in western Sudan, he is widely hated. Within 24 hours he was gone, replaced by Lt. Gen. Abdel Fattah al-Burhan.

One of the hallmarks of the youthful protests has been insistence that the rulers could no long succeed in using racial, national or religious differences to divide them. "We are all Darfur" became a popular slogan.

Bashir fell days after hundreds of thousands gathered outside the presidential palace and the army headquarters in Khartoum April 6, the largest protest since the uprising began. Demonstrations were organized across the country. The elite troops of the widely despised National Intelligence and Security Services attempted to break up the action in the capital, but some soldiers fired warning shots to force the NISS to back off.

The middle-class Sudanese Professionals Association — which has led the protests — said that replacing Bashir with a military council just "reproduced the same faces and institutions that our courageous people have revolted against."

Hundreds of thousands took to the streets of Khartoum April 12 after the professionals association called for ongoing protests until a civilian government is appointed. Many brought food

and water to sustain those camped outside the presidential palace. This led the military council to agree to negotiations with opposition forces and protest organizers April 13.

The army "killed many people" when the struggle to oust Bashir began, A Alsayad, a London shopkeeper originally from Sudan, told *Militant* reporters at an April 13 solidarity action outside the Sudanese Embassy in the U.K. "A new person is in power, but we don't trust these people," he added. "It's why people keep protesting."

Toilers faced divisions, repression

Months before the protests began workers and farmers faced shortages of food, medicine and fuel and an unemployment rate of 27%.

They have also borne the brunt of a series of wars waged by Bashir and his predecessors. All the country's rulers since Sudan's independence from British colonial rule in 1956 have wielded divisions cultivated by the British colonists among the Sudanese people, based on tribe, national origin and religion.

"They tried to divide us, Arabs against blacks," Taz Ahmed, a Sudanese student in London, told *Militant* reporters at the April 13 London protest.

A decadeslong civil war, in which 2 million died, ended in 2005. South Sudan seceded six years later. This meant the Sudanese capitalist rulers lost control of most of the country's oil resources and revenue. From 2003 Bashir unleashed a thug militia against the toilers in Darfur, where armed

groups were fighting to end discrimination against non-Arabic peoples there. Over a million have been driven from their homes in these conflicts.

Over time, these intolerable conditions imposed on working people in Sudan led to widespread discontent that has exploded. Similar economic crisis, wars and repression led to sustained revolts and toppled hated governments in Tunisia and Egypt in the Arab Spring in 2011. Like in Sudan, these uprisings opened political space for working people to discuss and debate a way forward.

But no leadership emerged from these battles that drew on the lessons of previous revolutionary struggles, like the Cuban Revolution and popular revolutionary governments like that led by Thomas Sankara in Burkina Faso. This is what is needed for working people to chart a course independent of the capitalist rulers, as well as Washington and other imperialist powers, to mobilize the oppressed and exploited in a fight to take political power into their own hands in Sudan and elsewhere.

Andrés Mendoza and Dag Tirsén in London contributed to this article.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

Oakland

March May 1 for Amnesty and Driver's Licenses for Immigrants! Stop the Raids and Deportations! Speaker: Eric Simpson, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 26, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Tel: (510) 686-1351.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

The Stewardship of Nature Also Falls to the Working Class: In Defense of Land and Labor. Speaker: Lisa Potash, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 26, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 777 Cleveland Ave. SW, Suite 103. Tel: (678) 528-7828.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Why the Ongoing Trade Rivalry Between U.S. and Chinese Rulers Is Worldwide. Speaker: John Naubert, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 26, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 5418 Rainier Ave. S. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

—CALENDAR—

NEW YORK

New York

Thomas Sankara's Revolutionary Legacy. Sun., May 5, 4:30 p.m. *The People's Forum*, 320 West 37th St. Tel: (917) 743-5637.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Are you involved in a union organizing drive or strike? Brought solidarity to fellow workers on the picket line? Let us know! Send articles, photos and letters to themilitant@mac.com or through our website, or mail them to 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Toronto teachers, students protest education cuts

TORONTO — Thousands of teachers, students and supporters rallied at the Ontario Legislative Assembly here April 6 to protest education funding cuts proposed by the Progressive Conservative Party-led provincial government.

Five unions representing education workers mobilized members from around Ontario, arriving in some 170 buses. Many wore “Red for Ed” T-shirts in solidarity with U.S. teacher strikes.

A few days before, some 100,000 students at more than 600 schools around the province walked out of class to protest the proposed increase in caps on class size from fourth grade through high school.

In previous weeks, walkouts of tens of thousands of university, college, and vocational school students in Quebec and Ontario protested unpaid internships and attacks on post-secondary education funding.

The government proposes to cut 851 million Canadian dollars (\$638 million) from the budget and eliminate 3,475 teaching jobs over the next four years. They also plan to require students to take more online courses.

— Richard Gaetano
and David Olson

Autoworkers in Russia start ‘work to rule’ against layoffs

The autoworkers union at the Ford Sollers plant in Vsevolozhsk, Russia, in the Leningrad region, launched a “work to rule” job action April 8. Some 900 workers are protesting their coming layoff and are demanding a two-year severance package after Ford closes the plant. Ford Sollers bosses have offered a severance of five-and-a-half to 12 months to workers who agree to a “voluntary leave program” by April 22.

“If at least half the factory’s employees begin ‘playing by the rules,’ it will be very painful for the factory’s man-

agement,” Mikahil Sergeev, the local’s chairman, told the *Moscow Times*. He said the union was prepared to mount pickets and demonstrations. Other union activists said they were ready to call a “proper strike” if they have too.

“We will be using every possible method to knock the ground from under the feet of the factory’s management so they understand that their time is over and their conditions are unacceptable,” Sergeev said.

Management announced that by July, three of Ford Sollers’s four Russian plants will be shut down — the Vsevolozhsk assembly plant, which makes the Ford Focus and Mondeo; the Naberezhnye Chelny assembly plant in Tatarstan; and an engine factory in Yelabuga in Tatarstan. Ford says these plants are losing money. The assembly plant for light commercial vehicles in Yelabuga will remain open. The four plants employ 3,700 workers.

Detroit-based Ford and Russian-based Sollers began a 50-50 joint ven-

Support New England Stop & Shop workers on strike

Continued from front page

At most locations the pharmacy and banking services, which aren’t union organized, are open. Other stores are completely shut down. In some locations the bosses are using employees from Stop & Shop corporate headquarters in Quincy to ring cash registers and stock shelves. The company has also been putting in more self-checkout stations. But few people are crossing the picket lines.

I also visited picket lines April 12 at the store at South Bay Center here, which was open, and at the one on Freeport Street, which was closed.

“They want to cut our vacation time, increase our costs for health insurance, eliminate pensions for new hires, and give us a bonus instead of a wage increase,” said Moore. A key disputed point is the company’s demand to



Militant/David Olson

Teachers rally outside Ontario Legislative Assembly to protest education cuts by provincial government that eliminate 3,475 teaching jobs and require students to take more courses online.

ture in 2011 after taking out a \$593 million Russian bank loan. But “Ford is incurring heavy losses from its operations in Russia,” Reuters reported March 5.

In fact Ford’s international divisions are all losing money. “After running up four-quarter losses in all regions outside North America, Ford

is making cuts in Europe, closing down vehicle lines in South America and laying off thousands of workers in China,” Reuters said. Ford bosses announced they will cease production at its plants in Bordeaux, France, and Saarlouis, Germany.

— Janet Post

eliminate Sunday time and a half for part-time workers, a bid to sow division among full- and part-timers.

“They have one person doing the job of two or three in there,” Jeff Jean-Louis, one of 40 workers picketing at Freeport Street, told the *Militant*.

“I’m supporting the strike,” Steve Rosen, a regular customer at the East New Haven, Connecticut, store told the press when he came by the picket line. “I live with those folks, they live with me in the same town. We share common goals. I’d love to see them get ahead.”

The company claimed in a statement that its final offer “is better than most recent UFCW contract settlements and responsive to heavy non-union competition, the unions proposed a contract that would increase the company’s costs. This would make our company less competitive in the mostly non-union

New England food retail marketplace.”

Picketing at the Pittsfield, Massachusetts, store, overnight stocker Steve Jackson said, “The owners say they can’t compete with nonunion stores. I say why not organize all the grocery store workers into the union? The unions have to be willing to break into those other grocery store chains.”

While *Militant* correspondents were on the picket line there, Papa Gino’s workers came by with four pizzas to give the strikers. And a family came by with donuts and coffee as passing drivers honked their horns in solidarity.

“Stop & Shop’s demands came as a shock to us because the company has been so profitable,” striker Tina Koska at the picket line in Windsor, Connecticut, told the *Militant*. “We’re not asking for more. We just don’t want what we have taken away.”

One boss demand that makes strikers angry and determined is to nearly double the money workers would have to pay for their health insurance. By March 2021, workers would have to shell out \$38 a week for family coverage.

Netherlands-based Ahold Delhaize, which owns Stop & Shop as well as the Hannaford and Food Lion chains, reported \$2.1 billion in profits in 2018.

“While Stop & Shop continues to propose drastically cutting workers’ benefits,” UFCW Local 1445 said in a statement, “Ahold shareholders voted on April 10 to give themselves an 11.1 percent raise in dividends over last year. The expected payout will be on April 25 for around \$880 million.”

Jacob Perasso in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and Tim and Leslie Craine in Windsor, Connecticut, contributed to this article.

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25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 2, 1994

DES MOINES, Iowa — More than 100 farmers and their supporters protested at the capital building here April 11 as the legislature discussed contract hog farming. This issue has come to the fore as an increasing number of contract and corporate farms have opened in Iowa, Missouri, North Carolina, Kansas and other states.

Opposition to contract farms has become increasingly visible as public meetings have drawn hundreds of farmers to discuss the issue. Verle Lenz, a retired farmer, explained that more than 100 contract hog facilities exist in Iowa.

The packing bosses would like to bypass the small farmers who bring to market hogs. Large confinement operations use factory techniques to genetically engineer and systematically control the weight and leanness of the hog. This insures the packinghouse a more profitable product.



May 2, 1969

Pvt. Joe Miles, one of the initiators of GIs United Against the War in Vietnam, visited New York and addressed the Militant Labor Forum. “We decided to get together and do something about the war in Vietnam, about the racism in the Army and the racism out here in the outside world too. We decided that the best way we could get the maximum amount of people involved was to organize around ending the war in Vietnam.

“We recognized our role as a dual one, as Blacks and as GIs. As a GI, no matter what color you are, you catch hell in the Army. If you’re Black, you catch hell first and catch more of it.

“A majority of GIs don’t feel that it’s worth our lives going 10,000 miles away to fight for so-called freedom, so-called democracy, when we don’t have it back home. So we decided to organize and exercise our constitutional rights to voice our opposition to the war.”



April 29, 1944

“Liberal” Democratic and Republican Senators have folded up like wet rags before the Southern Democratic poll-tax bloc and are conspiring to stall the Anti-Poll Tax Bill debate scheduled to begin several weeks ago. Meanwhile, the political guardians of “white supremacy” are demonstrating through their savage resistance to the Supreme Court’s recent ruling against “white” primaries that they are prepared to wage a ruthless fight to preserve the poll tax system safeguarding their domination and exploitation of the Southern masses.

The Southern Bourbons of today leave no doubt that they are no less intent on maintaining their power and privileges than were the slave-holders of yesterday. Their words are not mere bluster; they carry the weight of an armed, organized and vicious minority, which has never balked at any means for enforcing its rule.

66-year South Korean ban on abortion ruled unconstitutional

BY JANET POST

Cheers erupted from hundreds of demonstrators chanting “New world! Right now!” outside South Korea’s Constitutional Court in Seoul April 11 when the justices ruled 7-2 that a 66-year-old law banning abortion was unconstitutional. The court majority said the anti-abortion law “violates a pregnant woman’s right to choose.”

“The ruling is an achievement for women who have fought for their rights on the streets,” Na-young, who has helped lead groups fighting for women’s rights, told the rally. “It is a chance to change history.”

The anti-woman law, instituted in 1953 on the heels of the Korean War, denies abortion except in cases of rape, incest or if the mother’s health is at risk. And those exceptions apply only for married women, who still need their husband’s or partner’s permission.

The verdict came after years of demonstrations and protests in South Korea by working people and women’s rights organizations in support of women’s right to choose. A challenge to the law in 2012 was rejected by the court. But over the last decade there has been a marked shift in views on legalization of abortion.

According to a recent poll, the proportion of South Korean men and women favoring legal abortion rose to 58% in 2019 from 34% at the start of the decade. And among women, support now polls at 75%.

“Now a woman can be respected for her own decision about her body,” Lee Yu-rim from the Sexual and Reproductive Rights Forum told the rally. Lee said the decision sets an “historical milestone” that “calls an end to threats and reprisals that women faced” when choosing to have an abortion.

The court stopped short of immediately terminating the law, keeping it in place until lawmakers pass new legislation reflecting their ruling by the end of 2020. The judges said this would allow for a law that took into account different stages of pregnancy.

Under the law, a woman could be fined heavily or jailed for a year for having an abortion, and doctors performing the procedure can face up to two years in prison. But despite its illegality, hundreds of thousands of South Korean women have had an abortion and the ban has gone largely unenforced.

In 2017 over 49,000 abortions took place in South Korea, nearly 94% illegally. That year 25 cases involving abor-

tions went to trial, with four convictions. “Everyone has one or two in their family — your mother, sister, sister-in-law,” Nam Sung-ah, a counselor at a sexual violence victims’ support center, told the *Los Angeles Times* at the rally. “Everyone was forced to be hush-hush about it.”

“When you live in a rural area and you are underage, it’s hard for you to find a doctor that is willing to perform the operation,” Ryu Min-hee, a lawyer in the case, told the *GlobalPost*. Fees in the countryside can be higher.

“Advocates say the ban makes women seeking abortions vulnerable to reprisals; boyfriends, former boyfriends, husbands and in-laws have reported women to the police,” the *New York Times* reported.

Rulers pushed to control family size

Historically, abortions have been encouraged or discouraged by the South Korean government based on the capitalist rulers’ needs for population growth. “In the 1960s and ’70s, the national government ran numerous ‘family planning’ campaigns in hopes that reducing the population would address post-war poverty,” *GlobalPost* wrote. This effort contin-

Texas legislators push to make all abortions illegal

Continued from front page
of state legislatures against family planning, including a woman’s right to choose abortion.

The bill, called the Abolition of Abortion in Texas Act, would also strike down an exception for abortion from the Texas penal code for homicide. That would mean women and physicians could be prosecuted for murder and subject to the death penalty.

The bill says state and local government officials should enforce the legislation “regardless of any contrary federal law, executive order, or court decision.”

Hundreds of people testified at the hearings over the course of the two days, both opponents of women’s rights and those backing a woman’s right to choose. “It was the first time in the state’s history,” the *Washington Post* noted, “that public testimony had been heard on a measure holding women criminally liable for their abortions.”

Republican state Rep. Tony Tinderholt, who sponsored the bill, told the media that it would make people “consider the repercussions” of having sex.

Tinderholt had introduced the same legislation in 2017 but it had been unceremoniously set aside without a hearing.

Even some who oppose women’s access to abortion expressed misgivings over the criminal penalties that the bill would impose on women. Texas state Rep. Jeff Leach, who allowed the hearing before the judiciary committee to take place, said in a statement that while he’s “pro-life,” this legislation was a step in the “wrong direction.” The anti-abortion group Texans



Rally in Seoul April 11 celebrates South Korea’s high court ruling that country’s ban on abortion is unconstitutional. Signs say, “Abortion law should be abolished” and “is unconstitutional.”

ued in the 1970s and ’80s, when the government promoted slogans like, “It’s too crowded in Korea” and “Even two is too much.”

But by 2016, when the population growth fell from 6.1 children per woman in the 1960s to 1.12, the government shifted position. It announced a “comprehensive plan” to raise the birthrate, including a crackdown on abortions.

This past February a coalition of women’s groups campaigning for abortion rights issued a statement reading in part, “When there were too many

people, they told us ‘not to produce babies’ in the name of family planning, and when they thought there were not enough people, they then told us ‘to produce babies’ or face punishment.”

Women need legal access to medical facilities that offer family planning, including the ability to have a safe and secure abortion. The right of women to control their own bodies — to choose whether to bear children, when and how many — is a precondition for women’s emancipation.

The victory in South Korea is a step forward.

for Life also said it was against the bill.

The intent of legislators promoting it, and many other bills being adopted that impose increasingly far-reaching restrictions on women’s right to abortion, is to force a court fight to reach the U.S. Supreme Court to attempt to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 ruling that legalized abortion.

In Mississippi, for example, Gov. Phil Bryant signed a bill last month that bans abortions once a fetal heartbeat is detected, often just six weeks into pregnancy — when many women aren’t even aware they’re pregnant. The Ohio Legislature approved a similar bill April 10. Similar laws are being considered by legislators in Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, West Virginia and Florida.

In Alabama, legislation was recently introduced to criminalize performing all abortions, with the only exception being a threat to the woman’s life.

These attacks have been made easier by the character of the *Roe v. Wade* ruling. It “was based not on a woman’s

right ‘to equal protection of the laws’ guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, but on medical criteria instead,” Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, wrote in *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record: Why Washington Fears Working People*.

“During the first three months (‘trimester’), the court ruled, the decision to terminate a pregnancy ‘must be left to the medical judgment of a pregnant woman’s attending physician’ (not to the woman herself, but to a doctor!).”

“At the same time, the court allowed state governments to ban most abortions after ‘viability,’ ... something that medical advances inevitably make earlier and earlier in pregnancy.”

The SWP supports a woman’s right to choose whether and when to have a child, free from state interference, and calls for working people to mobilize to defend clinics that offer women family planning, including the right to safe and secure abortions.

Join May Day Marches for Driver’s Licenses for Immigrants



For details of actions in your area contact SWP branches listed on page 8

Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women

by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, Mary-Alice Waters

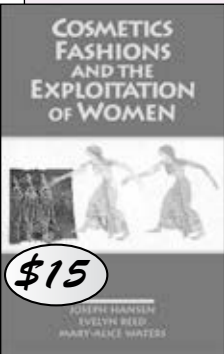
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Today's fighters can learn from Algeria's 1962-65 revolution

Lessons on Jewish question; convergence of Malcolm X, SWP discussed at NY Militant Labor Forum

BY ROY LANDERSEN

NEW YORK — For weeks mass protests have shaken Algeria, forcing the resignation of longtime president Abdelaziz Bouteflika April 2. Tens of thousands have continued to take to the streets rejecting the new interim president and other figures associated with the regime.

These developments and the background to them were the topic of a Militant Labor Forum held here April 13. The speaker was Martín Koppel, a member of the Socialist Workers Party in New York.

Koppel described the depth of the popular struggle in Algeria, led by the National Liberation Front (FLN), that defeated French colonial rule in 1962. In Algeria, unlike other independence struggles in the region, the deepening of the revolution led to the establishment of a workers and farmers government — “a government independent of the capitalist class,” he noted.

From the beginning, the Socialist Workers Party and its co-thinkers internationally embraced the Algerian Revolution as their own, Koppel said. They promoted international working-class solidarity through the *Militant* and other publications such as *World Outlook*, edited by SWP leader Joseph Hansen. Algeria's workers and farmers government, as well as its overthrow in 1965, have important lessons for working people everywhere.

Workers and farmers government

The revolutionary government, whose central leader was Ahmed Ben Bella, mobilized hundreds of thousands of working people and began to encroach on the prerogatives of the capitalists and landlords, both foreign and domestic, Koppel said.

Peasants mobilized to back a deep-going land reform in which the most productive capitalist landholdings were nationalized. Several hundred enterprises were nationalized, although not the oil industry, banks, or other key sections of the economy.

The Ben Bella leadership collaborat-



Algerian revolutionary leader Ahmed Ben Bella, left, meets with Che Guevara, center, and Fidel Castro during his visit to Cuba in 1962. Workers and farmers government led by Ben Bella did not follow course of Cuban Revolution to lead working people to overthrow capitalism. His government was overthrown by counterrevolutionary coup in 1965.

ed with Ernesto Che Guevara and other Cuban revolutionary leaders in supporting anti-imperialist struggles throughout Africa and elsewhere.

But the revolutionary leadership began to hesitate and make unnecessary concessions to procapitalist forces. When a second, deeper stage of the land reform was postponed, this discouraged and demobilized peasants.

“The biggest single challenge in the Algerian Revolution was the lack of a working-class party with a communist leadership,” Koppel said. Such a leadership was needed for workers and peasants in Algeria, in face of opposition by the capitalists and landlords, to overturn capitalist property relations and establish a workers state. That was the lesson of the successful socialist revolutions in Russia in 1917 and Cuba in 1959.

“One thing that politically weakened the revolution,” he noted, “was the 1963 law that effectively excluded non-Muslims from Algerian citizenship,” including 1.4 million Algerian-born French, known as *Pieds-Noirs*, as well as 130,000 Algerian Jews. Although a majority of these layers had opposed the independence struggle, the FLN leadership “missed the opportunity to win over as many as possible” to contribute to the building of a new Algeria. This was not a small question given that, after a century of colonial underdevelopment, Algeria faced a shortage of skilled technical personnel.

The exclusion of non-Muslims was an obstacle to the development of class consciousness and the barring of citizenship for Jews reinforced anti-Semitic prejudice.

Koppel noted that Algeria's citizenship restrictions were even more drastic than those adopted in Israel after its establishment in 1948. There, he said, citizenship was granted to all Jews based on descent and to a substantial minority of Arabs based on residence — which was bitterly opposed by the right-wing Zionist faction of the Israeli leadership, who thought they were “giving the farm away” by allowing Arab citizenship at all.

Koppel told the forum that in 1963 Cuban revolutionary leader Fidel Castro had planned to visit Algeria. But after the Cuban government, which main-

tained diplomatic relations with Israel, declared three days of mourning following the death of Israeli President Itzhak Ben Zvi, Bella publicly declared, “Whoever respects a dead Israeli in that way has no right to come to an Arab land.” The Cuban leader canceled his visit.

In June 1965 the workers and farmers government was overthrown in a coup led by Col. Houari Boumediene, backed by then-Foreign Minister Bouteflika.

Need for communist leadership today

Koppel noted the mass protests unfolding across the region today, from Sudan to Mali, in response to conditions bred by the world capitalist economic crisis. In face of this crisis “all these regimes have historically exhausted their capacity to provide any semblance of progress,” he said.

This is explained in an article in issue no. 12 of the Marxist magazine *New International*, Koppel said. It points to “the exhaustion of the bourgeois-nationalist leaderships that, over the span of some eighty years, came to power on the shoulders of anti-imperialist struggles involving hundreds of millions of workers, peasants, and youth across Asia, Africa, and the Americas.”

“That's what we saw with the Arab Spring” in 2011, Koppel said, where revolts took place “against regimes that claimed to represent the interests of the majority against imperialism but were responsible for increasingly intolerable conditions.

“Turmoil and war will continue, including in countries where jihadist forces have filled the vacuum,” until a proletarian leadership can be forged through the struggles and experiences of working people, he said.

Malcolm X and SWP

Koppel also focused on the impact the Algerian Revolution had on revolutionary-minded working people and youth worldwide, including those

joining the Socialist Workers Party at that time. It had a particular impact on revolutionary leader Malcolm X, who often referred to the Algerian and Cuban revolutions as examples of what needed to be done here.

Malcolm explained how his thinking was changed by his exchanges with revolutionary leaders in Africa in a 1965 *Young Socialist* interview with Jack Barnes, now SWP national secretary. It's reprinted in the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*.

Malcolm described his 1964 discussion with the Algerian ambassador in Ghana, “a revolutionary in the true sense of the word.”

When they talked about Black nationalism, Malcolm said, the Algerian revolutionary responded, “Well, where did that leave him? Because he was white. ... He showed me where I was alienating people who were true revolutionaries dedicated to overturning the system of exploitation.” So, Malcolm told Barnes, “I had to do a lot of thinking and reappraising of my definition of Black nationalism.”

The Algerian Revolution and similar experiences led Malcolm to broaden and deepen his revolutionary internationalist outlook. They drew him to further political collaboration and convergence with the Socialist Workers Party, Koppel noted.

In Malcolm X, Barnes explains in that book, we can see the fact “that, in the imperialist epoch, revolutionary leadership of the highest level of political capacity, courage, and integrity converges with communism, not simply toward the communist movement.

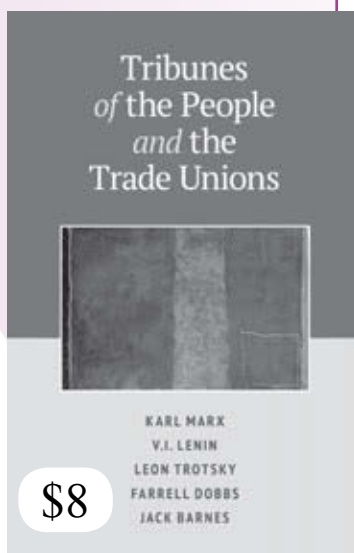
“That truth has even greater weight today as billions around the world, in city and countryside, from China to Nigeria to Brazil, are being hurled into the modern class struggle by the violent expansion of world capitalism.”

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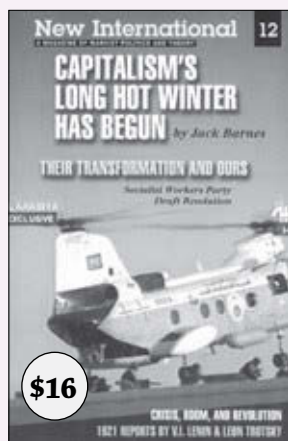
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In New International no. 12 Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun

by Jack Barnes



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New battalions of working-class fighters in formation in China

The Book of the Month this week is Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. The excerpt below, from "Youth and the Communist Movement," foresaw much of the way the vast urbanization and industrialization in China would unfold, as well as expanding international competition and potential workers' struggles this would unleash. This process was just beginning in 1992 when the talk was given. Copyright © 1999 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JACK BARNES

We should never underestimate how attractive the Chinese revolution remains to hundreds of millions of toilers, especially to peoples of color long oppressed and exploited by imperialism. Despite the crimes of its Stalinist misleadership, China stands as an example of a people — more than a billion strong, abused by both European and Asian imperialist powers for more than a century — who carried out a powerful revolution, swept aside the landlord and capitalist exploiters, and restored their national sovereignty and dignity.

Today, more and more toilers in China are being drawn out of the



Reuters/Carlos Barria

Workers block Hi-P company gates in Shanghai, 2011, after bosses announced layoffs. Rapid capitalist growth in China has created big industrial working class with great political potential.

countryside and into factories, mines, and mills owned by the state and increasingly also by foreign and domestic capital. As this process unfolds, the breakdown of Stalinist apparatuses that we have seen in Europe and the former USSR will inevitably shake the deformed Chinese workers state as well. It will take time, but class tensions and conflicts are already growing in China's cities and workplaces, as well as in the countryside. And when the day comes that a young and rapidly growing working class enters into combat in larger battalions, the Stalinists will find that their bloody suppression of the Tiananmen Square youth rebellion in 1989 cannot be endlessly repeated. The struggles that are coming, whatever their tempo and exact forms, will be larger and more explosive than anything in China since the revolution itself.

Hong Kong should be of special interest to us, as we meet here in the home base of the declining British Empire. With London's impending return of that territory to China in 1997, the Tories are coming under hypocritical criticism from other imperialist powers for denying the people of Hong Kong the opportunity for "democracy." But democracy had nothing to do with the scramble by European, U.S., and Japanese capitalists for more than a century to establish their domination over the enormous Chinese market and source of cheap labor and raw materials. The Crown simply held

on a little longer than its rivals to the little hunk of sovereign Chinese territory it stole more than 150 years ago. ...

What is really going on is not simply that the People's Republic of China is about to gobble up Hong Kong. What is happening instead is the "Hong Kongization" of southern China.

What is developing in China today is an accelerated expansion of capitalist methods and penetration by international finance capital — the growing sway of the law of value in southern China especially, as well as Shanghai and other coastal areas.

Many of you have probably read newspaper reports about the so-called Special Economic Zones in southern China, where much of the imperialist investment is concentrated.

These zones are located in huge, and growing, population centers. The Shenzhen and other Special Economic Zones in Guangdong [Canton] Province and the Pearl River Delta, around Hong Kong, are in an area with about 80 million people. ...

[T]hat is the goal of the dominant wing of the bourgeois-minded bureaucratic caste in China. Desperately poor peasants are being drawn from the countryside and into the cities, where to survive they are forced to work long hours, under extreme speedup, for minimal wages in both state- and capitalist-owned factories. In the medium term, these conditions will permit a relatively rapid economic expansion.

The Tories did not send Chris Patten, the former party chairman, to be the new governor of Hong Kong as a throwaway. The imperialists are already fighting over which of them will get the biggest shares of investment in China — and British capital is already losing out to its rivals in Tokyo and on Wall Street, and even to capitalists in Taiwan and Singapore. Hong Kong capital itself accounts for well over half of all foreign investment in China. ...

The Japanese, U.S., and other capitalists investing in China think they have died and gone to heaven. They have most of the rights of capitalists, but the state "handles" the workers for them. The state, including the Communist Party and its functionaries, makes sure the workers do not get out of line on the job, do not strike — do not do much except work very hard, for very long hours, for very little pay. It seems like a dream!

Of course, the dream will not last. As capitalist exploitation increases throughout China, so do strikes, peasant protests, and attacks on bosses. ...

Workers in China will conduct more fights like these, and they will eventually link up with dissatisfied peasants and also win support from young people attracted to the working class as the force that can revitalize society. *That will be the real bloc.* It will be forged through enormous class battles, and as that happens growing numbers of fighters will be open to the ideas of the communist movement.

In preparing for what is coming in Asia, we should remember that there is a big difference between the position of United States imperialism in that part of the world and its position in Europe. ...

In Asia ... Washington still has to bring its power to bear under conditions more comparable to the 1920s and 1930s. U.S. forces intervene militarily in the region, of course, and some 100,000 U.S. troops are stationed in Japan, Korea, and aboard warships afloat in the Pacific. But U.S. imperialism is not integrated as the dominant force in any Asian military alliance with other powers. That makes U.S. armed intervention in Asia less "legitimate" and thus more explosive, and the reactions to such aggression across the region will be explosive as well.

The United States ruling class is armed to the teeth and will not back off being the world's top cop.

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Defend a woman’s right to abortion!

The following statement was released April 17 by Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Dallas.

Supporters of women’s rights must condemn the attempt by Texas legislators to use the failed Abolition of Abortion in Texas Act to legitimize ever more severe restrictions on the right of women to control their own bodies. This bill sought to allow criminal prosecution of women who have an abortion and doctors who perform them and subject them to the death penalty.

The Texas House of Representatives did pass the “born alive” bill April 16, which criminalizes doctors who “fail to provide the appropriate medical treatment” to children born after an abortion attempt. Even the state government had to admit there has never been a case here since data began being kept in 2013. The bill’s point is to stigmatize abortion.

Defending the right to choose abortion is fundamental to a woman’s control of her own life and to winning full social, economic and political equality. This will strengthen the unity of the working class to fight against the unrelenting assaults of the employers and their government.

Since the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court’s Roe v Wade decision legalized abortion, opponents of women’s rights have chipped away at our access to abortion. Waiting periods, parental consent laws, unnecessary

requirements imposed on clinics, restrictive time limits and other arbitrary regulations have been put into place in state after state.

As a result, there has been a dramatic drop in the number of abortion providers in Texas. Some 900,000 women of reproductive age now live over 150 miles from any clinic that provides abortions. And in 2017, Texas banned insurers from including coverage for abortion in comprehensive health insurance plans.

The assault on this right has been aided by the failure of women’s rights organizations and the labor movement to mobilize women and men to defend the right to choose abortion. There is majority support for this right in the U.S. But these groups tell us not to “rock the boat” and to just vote for Democrats, who will look out for us.

The fight for the right of women to family planning, including the right to safe birth control and abortion, is essential to women’s emancipation. And it is a key question for the working class. If women can’t fight shoulder to shoulder with their male co-workers, the labor movement is hobbled.

This is an international question for working people. The large outpourings of women in South Korea, Ireland, Argentina and elsewhere show it can be won. We can only win these and other demands through the independent organization and mobilization of working people.

Cuban Revolution advanced fight against racism

Continued from front page
go Cuba Coalition here April 7.

About 35 people came to hear Gisela Arandia and Tomás Fernández Robaina. Arandia is the head of the Cuban chapter of ARAC, an organization of Afro-descendants of Latin America and the Caribbean. Fernández is a researcher at the José Martí National Library and professor at the University of Havana. Both belong to the Union of Artists and Writers of Cuba (UNEAC). The event was held at the hall of Service Employees International Union Healthcare Illinois.

“Racial ideas and divisions are not natural,” Arandia said in her opening remarks. “You can’t talk about race discrimination without discussing colonialism, and especially Africa, where people were forced into slavery in the most brutal conditions. When we analyze the roots of racial discrimination, colonialism and capitalism shaped it in Cuba.”

African slaves and their descendants were an integral part of the Cuban workers and peasants wars for independence from Spain, which unfolded between 1868 and 1898. “When the *mambí* army was on the point of winning independence, the United States showed up to ‘help,’” Arandia said with sarcasm. “The regime they imposed was prejudicial, especially towards the 60% of the soldiers and officers of the independence war who were Afro-descendants.” Racist laws, traditions from the U.S. Jim Crow system and capitalist superexploitation of Afro-Cubans were translated onto Cuban soil.

By 1959, when Cuban workers and farmers led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement succeeded in overthrowing the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, “there were segregated parks, beaches, everything,” said Fernández.

One of the first steps of the revolutionary government was to outlaw racial discrimination. Mobilizations such as the 1961 literacy campaign, in which 100,000 young people taught others to read and write across the country, especially benefited those who were most oppressed, including blacks and women.

“You started to have blacks working in places like banks, where they had been excluded before,” said Fernández. “But prejudice doesn’t just go away.” When he and others started to talk about the challenges that remain, “some people said that’s counterrevolutionary. But no, you have to be honest. We need to use the revolution in order to better our society.”

In response to a question about the police in Cuba, Fernández said, “Cuban society is very complex. Often police will ask only black people for

their ID. I applaud the rappers. They began singing about this, making people more conscious of their rights as Cuban citizens.”

One Afro-Cuban man in the audience rose to challenge the speakers’ support for the revolution. “Cuba is a multiracial country, but all the decisions are made by white Cubans,” he said. “That’s the main reason I came here many years ago. The situation of black Cubans is almost the same as in slavery.”

“There’s no way you can say things aren’t different than before. That’s nonsense,” Arandia responded. “For example, there’s large numbers of black women in science — developing vaccines, working as doctors. That doesn’t exist anywhere else in the world.”

The Cuban Revolution put the fight for Afro-Cuban rights on its agenda from the start and made solidarity with Africa — from aid to revolutionary battles from Algeria to Angola and apartheid South Africa to medical volunteers across the continent — a cornerstone of its internationalist work.

“African blood flows freely through our veins,” Fidel Castro told a rally of more than a million in Havana in 1975. “Many of our ancestors came as slaves from Africa to this land. As slaves they struggled a great deal. They fought as members of the Liberating Army of Cuba. We’re brothers and sisters of the people of Africa and we’re ready to fight on their behalf!”

‘In Cuba, there are efforts to confront this’

“It’s true there have been errors, many blacks live in poorer conditions, and the revolution should do more. But tell me in what country in the world is there no racism?” Arandia said. “Colonialism was good at creating divisions. Why else did the Spanish create the concept of ‘mulattos?’” — dividing people based on gradations of skin color.

“If it’s just a problem with socialism, how come this is not resolved in the United States? In Cuba there’s an effort politically, socially and economically to confront this.”

Arandia and Fernández also took part in an informal discussion at the Kusanya Cafe in the Englewood neighborhood in Chicago. There Arandia spoke with pride about the internationalist missions Cubans have carried out in Africa — from the hundreds of thousands of soldiers who dealt a decisive blow to the racist South African army in Angola in 1975-88, to the doctors and nurses “who volunteered to go when Ebola was a threat, not knowing if they would contract the disease themselves.”

She pointed out how Fidel had stressed, “We have a debt to Africa.”

Prison books victory

Continued from front page

where “contraband,” including drugs, was found hidden inside books. But after the *Seattle Times* investigated, the department had to admit that the allegations weren’t true.

The imposition of Washington state’s restrictions are part of a national push by state prison officials taking steps to curtail the right of workers behind bars to read books, magazines and newspapers. Many have been beaten back when they became public.

Books to Prisoners, which donates thousands of books to prisoners in Washington and across the country, only found out about the policy there after books it had sent were suddenly being rejected by prison officials. They began checking to find out why.

In his memo overturning the ban, Rob Herzog, Washington assistant secretary of prisons, had to say, “The data does not support continuing restriction on donated used books.” In other words, the charge that drugs and other items were being smuggled into the prisons through used books is not true.

“Effective immediately all prisons will allow books to be donated to the facility” if they come from one of the four organizations on the Corrections Department’s approved list, which includes both Books to Prisoners and Books Through Bars.

“The fight against book bans in prisons and jails across the country is a frustratingly chronic issue,” Michelle Dillon, a board member for Books to Prisoners, told the *Militant* April 14.

In Pennsylvania, prison officials, like Washington state officials, used the pretext of drug smuggling attempts to require prisoners to get approval for every book and periodical they wanted to order — new or used. Officials were forced to relent, but books and magazines still have to be sent to be “processed” at a special facility before being sent on to prisoners, meaning delays.

Similar bans on books have been beaten back in New York, Maryland, New Jersey and in federal prisons. The *Militant* has successfully challenged attempts to ban the paper at prisons in Florida, Washington state, New York and other places.

PEN America and the National Coalition Against Censorship joined Books for Prisoners and other groups in calling for the Washington ban to be overturned.

“Even before this issue with the Washington Department of Corrections was resolved, we became aware of a new ban at the jail in Chatham County, Georgia,” Dillon told the *Militant*.

Sheriff John Wilcher instituted a new policy there that says inmates at the county jail in Savannah can no longer receive books or magazines from outside the prison. They are only allowed to select reading materials from book carts managed by jail staff.

“We have never before encountered a policy that so completely restricts detained persons’ access to books and publications,” said a letter urging the sheriff to rescind the ban, signed by David Fathi, director of the American Civil Liberties Union National Prison Project, and attorneys from the ACLU of Georgia.

“Prisoners need to have the right to read books, newspapers and other material of their own choosing, to think for themselves, to be part of the world,” John Studer, editor of the *Militant*, said April 15. “They are part of the working class and its efforts to transform ourselves and fight against attacks from the bosses and their government.

“We know that the attempts by government officials to censor what prisoners read will continue,” Studer said. “But the key thing the victory in Washington state shows, is that when those who defend the rights of prisoners speak out, we can push back those attempts. Let’s use that victory to join together to push back the censors in Chatham County.”

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