

# THE MILITANT

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**Sankara's revolutionary legacy**  
**discussed at NY forum**  
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE VOL. 83/NO. 20 MAY 20, 2019

## Latest fighting shows need for recognition of Israel, Palestine

BY SETH GALINSKY

A new tenuous cease-fire agreement between the Israeli government and Gaza-based Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad does nothing to eliminate the unending cycle of violence by groups in the Gaza Strip committed to the destruction of Israel and Israel's capitalist rulers. The repeated military battles there are a deadly obstacle to uniting working people, whatever their religion or nationality, to advance their interests against the capitalist governments and ruling classes on both sides of the border.

At the heart of the repeated fighting is the refusal of Hamas, the reactionary Islamist group that runs the Gaza Strip, and Islamic Jihad to recognize the existence of Israel. And the refusal of the Israeli government to agree to the formation of an independent Palestinian state, a contiguous, sovereign homeland that includes Gaza and the West Bank.

The May 6 truce ended two days  
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## Uber, Lyft drivers strike across US for pay, dignity



Uber, Lyft strikers rally in Seattle May 8. App, taxi drivers need one union to fight bosses. In New York, some Yellow Cab and limousine drivers joined Uber, Lyft workers at protest.

BY JENNY KING

NEW YORK — Uber, Lyft and other app-based drivers joined strikes and protests in at least 10 U.S. cities and some abroad May 8 to demand better and more “transparent” pay, dignity and an end to retaliatory deactivations.

“I’m here to get the word out,” Lyft

driver Steve Gregg told the press at the San Francisco protest. “To show drivers we can make a difference.”

In New York more than 200 drivers gathered outside Uber offices in Long Island City for a morning protest sponsored by the Independent Drivers Guild and an afternoon one by the Taxi Workers Alliance, where they were joined by Yellow Cab and limousine drivers. “Uber deactivated me permanently after working for them for six years,” said one driver who declined to give his name. “No one would tell me why.”

Next week’s *Militant* will carry broader coverage.

## ‘Working people have nothing to gain from the US rulers’ wars’

BY TERRY EVANS

“U.S. troops wouldn’t help people in Venezuela,” temp worker Patricia Flores told socialist campaigner Dean Hazlewood when he showed her the call to action in the *Militant* — “US Hands Off Venezuela! US Hands Off Cuba!” They met when he knocked on Flores’ door in Blue Island, Illinois, May 4.

“The U.S. military is an imperialist army that goes into other countries to pave the way for U.S. bosses to exploit and oppress, not for freedom and democracy as the government claims,” Hazlewood said, agreeing with Flores. “Working people here have nothing to gain from Washington’s wars in Afghanistan and Syria, nor its threats against Venezuela and Cuba.”

“And look at the way veterans are treated when they return from ser-  
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## Demand US hands off Venezuela and Cuba!

BY TERRY EVANS

“The Socialist Workers Party urges working people and youth to join in speaking out against Washington’s threats against Venezuela and Cuba,” said John Studer, a member of the SWP Political Committee and editor of the *Militant*, at a special Militant Labor Forum here May 4. It was organized as a call to action to mobilize opposition to the U.S. rulers’ intervention.

Studer urged forum participants to initiate and build protests demanding an immediate and unconditional halt to the U.S. government’s violations of Venezuelan sovereignty and its threats against Cuba. The forum was entitled, “US hands off Venezuela! US hands off Cuba!”

In the course of discussions with friends, neighbors, coworkers and in unions, churches and other organizations, Washington’s lie that it speaks  
**Continued on page 7**

## Moves by UK gov’t to scuttle leaving EU deepens crisis, angers workers

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — “Angry!” was how Rosina Jones described her reaction to yet another postponement by the British government of the break from the European Union that workers had voted for. Prime Minister Theresa May had just secured agreement at an EU summit to delay the deadline for leaving the EU until Oct. 31.

Jones, her daughter Trudi and grandson Duane were speaking with Communist League member Anne  
**Continued on page 9**

## One of 3 Florida prison bans on ‘Militant’ overturned, two to go



Woodfox shines light on prison abuse, solitary confinement  
Albert Woodfox, one of the Angola 3, on speaking tour after nearly 44 years in solitary

BY SETH GALINSKY  
One of three Florida prison officials’ bans against the *Militant* has been overturned. The statewide Literature Review Committee reversed

## FIGHT FLA. PRISON BAN OF ‘MILITANT’

— See editorial page 9

the ban of the *Militant*’s March 25 issue and says it will deliver it to the paper’s 53 subscribers in 25 Florida prisons. But the committee upheld the

unconstitutional ban on two other issues — even before the *Militant* had been given the opportunity to appeal. The *Militant* is filing appeals to both bans.

The March 25 issue had been impounded because Florida officials objected to the front-page article, “Protests Continue in Fight Against Police Killing of Stephon Clark.” That article reported about the Sacramento District Attorney’s decision not to charge the cop who shot Clark eight times, all but one from the back.  
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the ban of the *Militant*’s March 25 issue and says it will deliver it to the paper’s 53 subscribers in 25 Florida prisons. But the committee upheld the

# Recognize Israel, Palestine state

Continued from front page of rocket and missile barrages that left four dead in Israel and 25 dead in Gaza, mostly civilians, in the heaviest fighting since 2014. Hamas and Islamic Jihad, both of which receive funds from the counterrevolutionary regime in Tehran, fired 690 rockets from Gaza into Israel, of which just 240 were intercepted by Israel's anti-missile defense. The Israeli armed forces hit 320 targets in Gaza.

This latest bloodshed comes on top of similar exchanges of fire over the last year, as well as Hamas-led provocative actions on the border with Israel met by deadly fire from Israeli army troops. Numerous cease-fires and agreements saying that Hamas would rein in provocative attacks on Israel and that the Israeli government would ease its economic embargo on the territory have repeatedly come apart.

## An endless cycle

During the latest fighting both sides were careful to avoid actions that could escalate into an all-out war, as happened in 2008-09, 2012 and 2014. Several thousand Gaza residents and some 100 Israelis were killed in the course of those wars.

The fighting began May 3 when snipers in Gaza from Islamic Jihad wounded two Israeli soldiers and the Israeli government retaliated.

The Israeli government ruled the Gaza Strip for 38 years, after capturing it, along with the West Bank and the Golan Heights, in the 1967 war. In September 2005, under the impact of the five-year-long uprising by Palestinians in the West Bank

and Gaza, Tel Aviv evacuated some 8,000 Israeli settlers and returned Gaza to Palestinian rule. The Israeli government retained control over the territory's airspace, ports and border crossings.

In March 2006 Hamas won control of the Gaza government and began stepping up armed provocations against Israel. In June 2007 Hamas defeated militias allied with the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority, which rules the West Bank, in bloody street fighting.

As Hamas extended its rule and reactionary course, Israeli authorities closed the border, prohibiting thousands of Gaza residents, who had previously worked in Israel, from entering the country. The Israeli rulers imposed strict restrictions on agricultural products that used to cross freely to be sold in Israel and set limits on fishing.

This had a devastating impact on workers in Gaza. Today 80% of Gaza's 1.9 million people are dependent on United Nations and other international aid. Unemployment is above 50%.

Hamas leaders defend targeting civilians, homes and factories in Israel. This makes future combat with Israel inevitable and closes down political space there for working people to debate the road forward.

Hamas seeks to use Israel's retaliation, and the ensuing Palestinian misery, to appeal to capitalist rulers abroad to ostracize Israel.

Meanwhile, Islamic Jihad presents itself as even more aggressive than Hamas in calling for the destruction of Israel.



Cement factory in Ashkelon, southern Israel, struck by missiles May 5. Three Israelis were killed in the attack, including a Bedouin worker at the factory. Deadly barrage launched by Tehran-backed Hamas and Islamic Jihad and brutal retaliation from Tel Aviv highlight necessity of immediate talks to recognize both Israel and an independent Palestinian state.

## The working-class road forward

In face of the latest round of fighting, the Socialist Workers Party statement "For Recognition of a Palestinian State and of Israel" is more useful than ever in pointing a way forward. It points to the "political necessity for the Israeli and Arab governments and leaderships of Palestinian organizations to begin immediate talks to recognize both Israel and an independent Palestinian state."

"Negotiations to reach such an agreement must recognize the right of Jews everywhere to take refuge in Israel in face of the global rise of Jew-hatred and anti-Semitic violence, as well as the unconditional right of the dispossessed Palestinian people to a contiguous, sovereign homeland or territory."

It points to the history of imperialist domination and capitalist exploitation in the region, including "ruthless colonial and national oppression across the Arab and Muslim countries, as well as the genocidal crimes of the Holocaust, the murderous pogroms preceding it across Eastern and Central Europe and Russia, and the enduring reality of Jew-hatred in today's crisis-ridden capitalist world."

The Socialist Workers Party statement explains that the starting point has to be "the class interests and

solidarity of workers and toiling farmers across the Middle East — be they Palestinian, Jewish, Arab, Kurdish, Turkish, Persian or otherwise, and whatever their religious or other beliefs — as well as working people in the United States and around the world."

It concludes, "We are for whatever helps working people organize and act together to advance our demands and struggles against the capitalist governments and ruling classes that exploit and oppress us."

"We are for whatever renews our class solidarity and self-confidence, advancing us along a revolutionary course toward a united struggle for workers power."

## For recognition of a Palestinian state and of Israel

- For repeal of U.S. Jerusalem Embassy Act
- For workers' solidarity in Israel, Palestine, the world over

### Socialist Workers Party statement

at [www.themilitant.com](http://www.themilitant.com)

# THE MILITANT

'Militant' says 'No worker has to die on job!'

Under the lash of competition, bosses from construction to agribusiness are pushing for workers to work longer, harder under increasingly dangerous conditions. The 'Militant' campaigns for using union power to win workers control over production and safety on the job.



Militant/Brian Williams  
April 25 New York memorial for 16 construction workers killed on the job last year.

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant's* views. These are expressed in editorials.

# 'Nothing for us in US wars'

Continued from front page

vice," Flores said. Hazlewood invited her to join a picket line May 6 at the Federal Building in downtown Chicago to protest the U.S. rulers' war threats.

"I'll try to make it," she said, signing up for a subscription to the paper.

Socialist Workers Party candidates across the country explain why the crisis and cutthroat competition built into the workings of the capitalist system will inevitably mean more wars until working people can unite to overturn the dictatorship of capital that confronts us and take power into our own hands.

The SWP, alongside sister Communist Leagues in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the U.K., is on a seven-week drive to expand the readership of the *Militant* and revolutionary books and win contributions to the \$115,000 Militant Fighting Fund. The drive is aimed at meeting people who get attracted to the party's program and ongoing political work together.

"Our party opposed the U.S. rulers' entry into the Second World War," Socialist Workers Party member Róger Calero said when he spoke with a World War II veteran named Ed at his home in Mineola, New York, April 28. The party explains that the slaughter was above all a fight between the dominant imperialist powers for the redivision of the colonial world and its plunder. The rulers used working-class youth as cannon fodder to defend their interests, Calero said.

Ed, a veteran of the Normandy invasion and the Pacific war, said he had written a small book about his experiences as a worker and a sailor on a U.S. Navy ship and gave a copy of it to Calero, who said he would read it and call him back for further discussion.

"In his book, Ed describes how he and other sailors who supported the rights of

Blacks in the U.S. got into ongoing debate about the outcome of the Civil War with others who defended the position of the slave owners," Calero told the *Militant*. "Once deployed they put this aside to work to ensure their common survival in combat."

A few days later, Ed mailed in \$5 for a subscription to the *Militant*.

## Militant Fighting Fund

The Militant Fighting Fund total now stands at \$56,985 sent in. Over the past week some \$13,000 has been collected, with a further \$3,482 in the mail. To be on course we should have raised \$65,550. Further contributions this week can help put the paper in a strong position to make the \$115,000 goal by May 28.

The call to action in last week's issue urging pickets and other events to oppose Washington's attacks on the sovereignty of Venezuela and Cuba has been well received and a number of protests have been organized. You can help fund the *Militant* — a voice of uncompromising opposition to Washington's wars — by making a contribution online at [www.themilitant.com](http://www.themilitant.com). The *Militant's* only source of funds is its working-class readership.

Donkinna Hightower, a skycap at the Atlanta airport, told socialist campaigner Janice Lynn that in the 16 years he had worked at the airport for different companies his wages and benefits had steadily declined. Lynn spoke to him at his home in a trailer park in Jonesboro, Georgia.

Lynn described the recent 11-day strike by some 31,000 Stop & Shop workers in New England against the bosses' moves to cut monthly pension payments, increase workers' costs for health care and stop overtime pay for Sunday work.

"We need to depend on ourselves and to build a movement independent of the capitalists' two parties," Lynn said.

"The politicians of both Democratic and Republican parties are corrupt," Hightower said. Socialist campaigners hear comments like this often as they campaign in cities, towns and rural areas. Millions are convinced that the U.S. government is immoral and the bosses' twin parties are self-serving. A road forward to end the source of these problems — the rule of the capitalist class and the crisis for workers their system of exploitation breeds — is what they can find in the books by revolutionary leaders and the *Militant* that SWP members have to offer.

"I'd like to find out more about your party," Hightower told Lynn as he subscribed to the *Militant*.

The SWP urges others to join the party's campaigns and to fight for the steps along that course that are possible today. To join the party campaigning, or to get books or a subscription, contact the party branch near you listed on page 8.



Militant photos: Top, Rachele Fruit; bottom, Dan Fein

Top, Donkinna Hightower, a skycap at Atlanta airport, speaks with SWP member Janice Lynn as she went door to door with *Militant* and revolutionary books in Jonesboro, Georgia. Bottom, Dean Hazlewood with Patricia Flores May 4 in Blue Island, Illinois. Hazlewood agreed with Flores when she said, "U.S. troops wouldn't help people in Venezuela."

## Campaign with the Socialist Workers Party candidates!

### California

Dennis Richter, Los Angeles City Council  
Laura Garza, Los Angeles School Board  
Joel Britton, Mayor of San Francisco

### Florida

Anthony Dutrow, Miami City Commission

### Kentucky

Amy Husk, Governor  
Samir Hazboun, Lieutenant Governor

### Minnesota

David Rosenfeld, St. Paul City Council

### Nebraska

Joe Swanson, Mayor of Lincoln

### New Jersey

Lea Sherman, State Assembly  
Candace Wagner, State Assembly

### New York

Seth Galinsky, New York City Public Advocate  
Samantha Hamlin, Mayor of Troy  
Lawrence Quinn, Troy City Council

### Pennsylvania

Osborne Hart, Mayor of Philadelphia  
John Staggs, Philadelphia City Council  
Malcolm Jarrett, Pittsburgh City Council

### Texas

Alyson Kennedy, Mayor of Dallas

### Washington

Henry Clay Dennison, Seattle City Council

See directory on page 8 to contact party campaign office nearest you.

## Campaign to expand reach of 'Militant,' books, fund

April 6 - May 28 (week four)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	Received
UNITED STATES						
Albany	65	30	65	40	\$5,600	\$2,680
Atlanta	70	42	70	52	\$9,750	\$4,460
Chicago	85	58	110	80	\$11,400	\$6,644
Dallas	40	20	40	19	\$2,500	\$655
Lincoln	14	9	16	12	\$250	\$197
Los Angeles	85	49	185	155	\$10,800	\$2,660
Louisville	50	19	50	13	\$2,800	\$2,656
Miami	25	8	25	10	\$3,500	\$1,500
N. New Jersey	40	28	50	56	\$3,500	\$1,835
New York	80	40	80	82	\$14,000	\$5,903
Oakland	70	50	70	74	\$13,000	\$9,029
Philadelphia	25	12	25	15	\$3,000	\$650
Pittsburgh	15	4	15	0	\$1,200	\$300
Seattle	70	39	95	80	\$10,000	\$5,683
Twin Cities	35	17	35	23	\$4,750	\$2,460
Washington	40	23	40	38	\$5,000	\$2,702
Other					\$1,200	\$1,200
Total U.S.	809	448	971	749	102250	51214
Prisoners	25	22	0	0	0	\$0
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	50	31	90	86	\$2,500	\$950
Manchester	35	21	45	36	\$1,300	\$161
Total U.K.	85	52	135	122	\$3,800	\$1,111
CANADA						
	70	33	80	58	\$8,200	\$2,585
NEW ZEALAND						
	20	9	20	8	\$3,400	\$1,765
AUSTRALIA						
	25	20	35	30	\$500	\$310
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,034</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>1,241</b>	<b>967</b>	<b>\$118,150</b>	<b>\$56,985</b>
<b>SHOULD BE</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>\$115,000</b>	<b>\$65,550</b>

Below: \$7 each, \$5 with subscription. Normally \$10.

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MARY-ALICE WATERS

# Thousands demand licenses, amnesty at May Day rallies

BY JANET POST

Tens of thousands of workers in small towns, large cities and rural areas across the U.S. took to the streets for International Workers Day May 1 as the capitalist bosses and their government bear down on workers' living and working conditions — immigrant and native-born. The main focus of many of the protests was the rights of undocumented workers, and that they have access to a driver's license.

"Immigrant workers need driver's licenses for the same reason as everyone else," factory worker Santos Ramos told the *Militant* at a May Day rally of 4,000 in Madison, Wisconsin, "to get to work and to do the shopping. Demonstrations like today will help win them." The immigrant rights organization Cosecha sponsored this protest and many of the other rallies.

In Wisconsin, immigrants had been able to get driver's licenses regardless of their legal status until 2007, when a law requiring a Social Security number to get a license went into effect. "I want to be able to drive without fear. Sometimes the police stop us just for being Hispanic, even if there's no infraction," said Gonzalo Hernández, a Mexican-born restaurant worker who came to the protest from Milwaukee. "And I'm also here because we need amnesty."

## Uniting the whole working class

"Amnesty now!" for the 11 million undocumented workers in the U.S. — a demand in the interests of all working people — is a necessary step toward uniting the whole working class. "It's in the interests of working people to fight for amnesty for all undocumented immigrants in the U.S.," said a campaign flyer distributed by Seth Galinsky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York City public advocate. He joined a May 1 rally in Perth Amboy, New Jersey.

"The capitalists depend on this pool of superexploited workers to better compete against their rivals around the world," Galinsky said. "They try to pit us against each other, to bring down the wages and working conditions of all."

The Perth Amboy demonstration of 250 included construction, restaurant and factory workers and small-business owners. In New Jersey the maximum fine for driving without a license is \$500. But as in other states that deny

licenses to immigrants without "proper papers," those that do drive run the risk the cops will turn them over to immigration authorities.

In Elkhart, Indiana, 70 people rallied in the parking lot of Cuernamaro Supermarket and marched downtown chanting "Licencia, sí! Promesas, no!" (Licenses, yes. Promises, no.) There were 900 documented stops by cops of drivers without licenses in Elkhart County in 2018 and 361 people, mostly Hispanic, were arrested and jailed.

Marchers talked to the *Militant* about a victory there last year preventing the building of an immigration detention center. "A detention center didn't open last year because people in the town of Elkhart did not want to see people incarcerated," said Jesus Huizar, a 25-year-old factory worker participating in his first May Day demonstration. "Really, it's not a 'detention,' it's incarceration, another prison."

In Detroit, 250 workers, majority Latino, assembled downtown to march to southwest Detroit behind a banner saying "El grito por licencias" (the cry for driver's licenses.) By the time the march arrived in Clark Park, there were more than 800 people.

## 'We are here, we will not leave'

At an event sponsored by Immigrant Dignity in Athens, Georgia, 60 people marched and rallied, chanting "Aquí estamos, no nos vamos." (We are here, we will not leave.)

Organizer Beto Hernandez told marchers that on April 13, the Clark County government there promised to stop arresting undocumented workers who are unable to get driver's licenses. "We will continue to organize to make



Militant/Dan Fein

"Immigrant workers need driver's licenses, like everyone else," Santos Ramos told *Militant* at May Day protest of 4,000 in Madison, Wisconsin. Demand is in interest of entire working class.

sure that this promise is carried out," he said.

Construction workers, domestic workers and day laborers, many originally from Central America, were among the 40 protesters in Mineola, New York, who marched to Hempstead for an evening forum. Speakers called on state legislators to pass a bill providing driver's license for all. The protest also demanded legal residence for all undocumented workers. Sponsors included the National Day Laborer Organizing Network and Workplace Project.

Similar actions took place across the country.

There were also International Workers Day rallies in North and South Carolina attended by thousands of teachers and other school workers demanding their state governments provide more money for schools.

From San Juan, Puerto Rico — where some 2,000 people marched

against government austerity measures and called for the speedup of hurricane recovery efforts — to Manila, Philippines, where workers demanded a raise in the minimum wage, protests were organized worldwide. In Seoul, South Korea, workers demanded equal pay for temporary workers; in Dhaka, Bangladesh, demands included reinstatement of fired workers and paid maternity leave for garment workers. Thousands of protesters marched to the national palace in Jakarta, Indonesia, to demand higher wages.

Riot police attacked workers' marches in Turkey, Italy, Russia and in France, where the yellow vests have been protesting for months.

Laura Anderson and Naomi Craine from Chicago; Rachele Fruit from Atlanta; Robert Kissinger from Detroit; Martin Koppel from New York; and Ron Richards from Puerto Rico contributed to this article.

## Political censorship by Facebook threat to working class

BY ROY LANDERSEN

In the latest moves by liberals and the middle-class left to curb free speech in the name of "political correctness," Facebook bosses announced May 2 they are permanently banning "dangerous individuals and organizations" from their social media sites, including Instagram. This came after mounting pressure demanding greater censorship of internet platforms, as capitalist publishers and editors do for the rulers in other bourgeois media.

While Facebook claimed their censorship isn't political, those targeted were all on the political right, ranging from Alex Jones, a talk show host who peddles conspiracy hoaxes on his website Infowars; to Louis Farrakhan, the head of the Nation of Islam, known for his anti-Semitic diatribes; and numerous others.

Previously, on April 18, the posts of a series of British ultranationalist organizations and leaders were blocked. Facebook banned any "praise, support and representation" of anything it deem to be "white supremacism."

Mark Zuckerberg, both chairman and CEO of Facebook with a reported net worth of over \$70 billion, and a liberal himself, says he's devoting 2019 to "making progress on the major social issues." He's trying to recover from two years of criticism for violating the privacy of Facebook's

users by letting the social media operation be used by fake websites that supposedly cost Hillary Clinton the 2016 election.

All capitalist media make side profits by selling their subscribers' information to greedy advertisers while all social media sites additionally use their algorithms to help target users, pushing them endlessly to buy, buy, buy.

Zuckerberg faces relentless pressure by groups who don't consider him sufficiently "politically correct." Groups like Color of Change say he has too much power, and the fact that he controls 57% of the votes on the board "is a threat to the civil rights of its Black users and to the financial interests of its shareholders."

## Censorship is their answer

Zuckerberg and Facebook's other owners said May 2 they would target all persons and groups that their algorithmic software pinpoints as promoting or engaging in "violence and hate, regardless of ideology."

This puts them squarely in the camp of the Democratic Party "resistance" to the presidency of Donald Trump. All these forces believe the central problem is the "deplorable" working class who either voted for Trump or simply refused to vote for Clinton. They're all for whatever can be done to restrict their right to vote and other political rights.

In December 2015, it was only revealed 10 months later, debate erupted inside Facebook as liberal supporters of the Clinton campaign tried to have posts by her rival, Donald Trump, deleted as "hate speech." Zuckerberg said no, it was too big a step to block a presidential candidate's posts.

Such social media restrictions are part of what's happening in current bourgeois politics — to bring in laws, not against criminal actions, but against ideas labeled as "hate speech."

This mirrors the widespread campaign by middle-class liberals and radicals to demand colleges, high schools and other academic institutions ban speakers whose ideas they don't like. Or to use their own thugish methods to shout down, or physically shut down, any ideas they feel are "offensive."

Facebook's censorship today meets with approval and cries for more from the left. But steps like these always end up being used against the working class and the communist movement.

The rulers are only too happy to shut down the space working people need for political discussions as we fight to find an independent working-class political road forward. Only in this way can we advance along the road of building a mighty proletarian movement capable of transforming society — and ourselves.

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### ILLINOIS

#### Chicago

**The Mideast and the Jewish Question: Acting on the Communist Program Today. U.S. Imperialism Did Lose the Cold War.** Speaker: Steve Clark, Socialist Workers Party National Committee. Sat., May 18. Dinners, 6:30 p.m.; program 7:30 p.m. 1858 W. Cermak Rd., 2nd floor. (312) 455-0111.

### NEW YORK

#### New York

**Why Uber, Lyft, Taxi and Other Drivers Need One Union for All Drivers.** Speaker: Peter Thierjung, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., May 19, 5 p.m. Donation: \$5. 307 W. 36th St., 13th floor. Tel: (646) 434-8117.

# Canada: Deadly rail disaster is result of bosses' drive for profits

BY JANET POST

On April 28 the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference commemorated Workers Memorial Day by honoring eight rail workers who had been killed on the job in Canada since November 2017. The day is an annual remembrance by labor organizations in North America and beyond of workers who have been killed or injured at work.

Three rail workers — Canadian Pacific engineer Andrew Dockrell, conductor Dylan Paradis and trainee Daniel Waldenberger-Bulmer — were killed Feb. 4 when their train rolled down one of the steepest grades in North America without adequate air brakes, in the Rocky Mountains in British Columbia near the Alberta boundary. The train had three engines pulling 112 loaded grain hoppers, weighing over 11,000 tons. It was over 5,500 feet long.

This slope has been the site of numerous runaway trains and derailments over the last century, including one just a month before this deadly crash.

The crew had just relieved an earlier crew when the train, which had been parked on the grade with its air brakes on for almost three hours, started to roll. The workers were unable to get the train under control and it derailed on a curve ahead of a bridge over the Kicking Horse River. The crew in the lead locomotive was killed when the engine hit the ground and went into the river in sub-zero temperatures. Only 13 cars and the tail-end locomotive remained on the tracks. Investigators from the Canadian Transportation Safety Board indicated April 19 that it was shoddy inspection and maintenance by rail bosses that was responsible.

The safety board investigators reported the previous crew had parked the train after it began to speed up and applying the brakes didn't control it. They put the locomotive into emergency, stopping it on the 2.2% grade and left the air brakes applied. But the brakes slowly lost their grip on the train.

The relief crew was only on the train for 10 minutes when it started to roll. The Transportation Safety Board took

the 13 grain cars left on the tracks and tested their brakes in conditions similar to those the night of the disaster. "The air brake system on these cars would not provide adequate braking effectiveness to ensure the safe operation of a loaded unit grain train," safety board officials reported.

They urged government regulators to review the rules covering air brake maintenance and inspections, especially for railroads like Canadian Pacific that operate over mountainous terrain. "A properly functioning air brake system is of the utmost importance in mountain territory," the safety board wrote.

After the derailment, the Canadian transportation minister ordered hand-brakes be applied on trains stopped on steep mountain slopes, a measure supported by the rail union. But Canadian Pacific and the Canadian National Railway are appealing the ruling, which would slow down train operations and cut into their profits.

## Bosses attack safety conditions

With longer and heavier trains, smaller crews, cuts in train and track maintenance, schedules that dictate constant fatigue, and refusal by bosses to implement union-supported safety measures, rail workers are put in increasingly dangerous conditions as bosses seek to maximize their profits. With layoffs and speedup over the last couple of years, 3,000 engineers and conductors now do the work previously done by 4,300 workers at Canadian Pacific. The bosses are pushing to cut crews down to one, and some even to none, run by remote control operation from miles away. The Teamsters says the training for new engineers has been cut in half to just three months.

Canadian Pacific bosses, for their part, crowed that April was a record-setting month, hauling 2.64 million metric tons of grain and grain products. And, they had the nerve to brag, it was the best April in their history, with train length averaging 7,576 feet and train weight 9,356 tons.

These longer, heavier trains are a



Rail bosses' shoddy inspection and maintenance was responsible for air brakes failing on Canadian Pacific train that derailed in British Columbia Feb. 4, killing three rail workers.

deadly danger to both rail workers and those who live in communities along the tracks.

At least 24 rail workers died on the job across North America in 2018. Carman Allen Lowe, 46, a union rail worker for 25 years, was killed at the CSX Wauhatchie Rail Yard in Chattanooga, Tennessee, April 13 when he was struck by a locomotive. His death is being investigated.

"We need to educate, organize, and mobilize the union, to explain that there is no solution for a safe workplace except what I was taught on the job by fel-

low rail workers in 1960 — to use union power and fight for workers control," Joe Swanson, who worked on the railroad for 31 years and is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Lincoln, Nebraska, told the *Militant*.

"We should fight for no trains over 50 cars in length, with four-person crews, including two engineers in the locomotive and two workers on a caboose or engine in the rear. The increase in crew size and increase in trains will provide much needed jobs for thousands in hard-hit working-class communities across North America," he said.

## School workers in Carolinas rally for pay raise, better conditions

BY SAM MANUEL

RALEIGH, N.C. — Thousands of public school teachers and their supporters — among them school bus drivers, cafeteria workers, teachers' aides, students and parents — marched here May 1 for the second year in a row to demand increased funding for schools. Thousands more marched and rallied the same day in Columbia, South Carolina.

"We came with three busloads from Guilford County," Miss J, as she is

popularly known to her students and parents, told the *Militant*. A school bus driver, her workday begins at 5:30 a.m. and doesn't end until all her 75 to 80 students have been safely dropped off, sometimes as late as 6 p.m.

Because of low pay and long hours, several school districts across the state face a shortage of bus drivers.

"The teachers deserve more money and we need more funding in general," she said. "The buses need better maintenance, the children need after-school programs — and that's why I am here. They should be the priority."

"We were able to come because school bus drivers took the day off," and they had to close the schools, said Kathryn Jackson, a teacher's aide in Alamance-Burlington school district. "Teachers' aides play an important part in the classrooms. In some there are too many students for the teachers and that's where we come in." Pointing to the rally, she said, "Just as we're together in the classroom, we have to be together in this fight."

Unlike in West Virginia last year, where teachers and other school workers coupled rallies in the state Capitol with strike action that won broad support and forced gains from reluctant state governments, organizers of this march made lobbying state legislators and getting out the vote the central theme of the action.

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## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

**THE MILITANT**  
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

May 23, 1994

DES MOINES, Iowa — In an important victory for abortion rights, a Polk County jury took less than an hour on April 26 to acquit Dr. Herbert Remer of assault charges. David Shedlock, a local leader of the right-wing antiabortion outfit Operation Rescue, had falsely claimed that Remer attacked him on September 4.

Remer, a doctor who provides abortion services in central Iowa, was arrested and charged with "assault causing injury" for defending himself against Shedlock. The doctor was attempting to photograph Operation Rescue picketers outside his clinic when Shedlock hit him on the wrist with a sign. Remer then struck Shedlock back in self-defense.

Remer's victory was aided by a series of actions organized to protest his arrest and to mobilize support for safe, legal, and accessible abortion.

**THE MILITANT**  
PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE  
NEW YORK, N.Y., MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1992

May 23, 1969

Three sailors from the *USS Boston* held a press conference May 9 to report on the condition of the cruiser, which is scheduled to leave Boston Navy Yard soon for service in coast bombardment of Vietnam.

The sailors maintain that the ship is unfit to go to sea without causing unnecessary danger to the crew. The *Boston* was built early in World War II, and most of its equipment has not been replaced since. The most serious problems are a cracked rudder, an emergency diesel generator that leaks carbon monoxide, and fuel tanks which leak fuel.

The case of the *Boston* points out an aspect of the war that is sometimes forgotten: the complete disregard for the lives of even their own men shown by the military brass and the U.S. government while they continue their criminal invasion of Vietnam.

**THE MILITANT**  
Official Weekly Organ of the Socialist Workers Party

May 20, 1944

Sixty-five merchant and naval seamen lost their lives last week in the sudden and tragic breakup of the Liberty ship *S.S. John Straub* while in Alaska waters. This latest breakup follows by a few weeks a similar accident on the *S.S. Joseph Gaines* in which ten merchant seamen gave up their lives. These two cases are only the latest in a number of such accidents which have taken place since the Liberty ships were first launched.

A public hearing revealed that defective plates were furnished by the Carnegie Illinois Steel Corporation, that the ship design was faulty and the production methods questionable. Despite these revelations, the investigation was quietly dropped. Since then one Liberty ship after another has cracked open, with a number of them completely coming apart.

# Sankara's revolutionary legacy discussed at New York forum

## Example of 1983-87 Burkina Faso Revolution

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

NEW YORK — “No matter where we live, Europe, Africa, even here in the United States, we have the same common enemy — the imperialist system,” said Arouna Saniwidi, who chaired a panel sponsored by and held at the People’s Forum here May 5. The topic was “Thomas Sankara’s Revolutionary Legacy.” Sankara was the leader of the 1983-87 revolution in the West African country of Burkina Faso, a former French colony.

“Sankara was fighting for our dignity, for our people to be able to decide our future” amid the destruction wrought by colonialism, said Saniwidi, a leader in New York of the Burkinabe organization Le Balai Citoyen. “Sankara said we don’t need the help of the colonialists, who give us \$1 today to pick up \$2 tomorrow.”

Some 65 people attended, including Burkinabe living in New York, students, Uber drivers, members of workers organizations, and some hearing about Sankara for the first time. Volunteers translated the meeting into French.

Manolo de los Santos, executive director of the People’s Forum, welcomed everyone. “We’re here to talk about Sankara’s ‘relevancy for the 21st century,’” he said. “Sankara was a revolutionary, a communist, who provides an example for Africa and beyond.” De los Santos encouraged people to stop by a Pathfinder books table at the event. “It’s an honor to collaborate” with those who promote Pathfinder books by Sankara, Malcolm X, and Cuban revolutionaries, he said.

Panelist Asha Samad-Matias, a professor at City College of New York, described meeting Sankara when he addressed the United Nations and spoke at City College in October 1984. “He was a young leader they could not buy off. A leader who could just sit and talk to anyone,” she said.

The book *Women’s Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* containing Sankara’s March 1987 International Women’s Day speech is “remarkable,” Samad said. “Sankara said women have to demand, and mobilize with others, to get their needs. The democratic and popular revolution he

led helped create conditions for women to advance the fight for their rights.”

Peter Thierjung, a member of the Socialist Workers Party, said the African continent is in turmoil, from Algeria, where millions in the streets forced the president to resign, to Ethiopia, Sudan, and beyond. It’s a different continent than at Sankara’s time, he said, “but the fundamental problems remain.”

An example, Thierjung said, is Burkina Faso itself, where in 2014 massive protests succeeded in ousting its ruler, Blaise Compaore. In 1987, he organized the coup that destroyed the revolutionary government led by Thomas Sankara and assassinated him. Today Compaore is gone, “the face has changed, but not the regime.”

Sankara’s political leadership remains an example not just in Africa but in the U.S., where there is also turmoil due to unrelenting attacks on working people. These include assaults on workers — including immigrants from Burkina Faso, Mali, Bangladesh, Eastern Europe, and elsewhere, as well as U.S.-born workers — who are among the 100,000 taxi, Uber, Lyft and other drivers in New York City. In their competition for profits, he said, these companies pit drivers against each other.

### Sankara an example for the U.S.

“Just think about what could be done if these workers came together in one union that fought for all drivers,” Thierjung said. “That would be like Sankara’s course under conditions here in New York City.”

As a young man Sankara was sent for military training to Madagascar, where a 1972 uprising toppled an unpopular regime. That experience, Thierjung said, had a deep impact on Sankara. He met students there who had been part of the 1968 prerevolutionary upsurge in France. He was introduced to the writings of Karl Marx and V.I. Lenin.

Sankara did not reject Marxism as a set of “European ideas,” alien to the freedom struggle in Africa, but saw them as necessary to forging a road forward. “We wish to be the heirs of all the world’s revolutions,” he said, from the American and French revolutions of the late 1700s, to “the great [Rus-



Top, panel on revolutionary political legacy of Thomas Sankara at People’s Forum May 5 in New York. At podium, Manolo de los Santos, executive director of People’s Forum, welcomed everyone. From left, Arouna Saniwidi, leader of Burkinabe organization Le Balai Citoyen; Peter Thierjung, Socialist Workers Party; and Asha Samad-Matias, professor at City College of New York. Bottom, audience at the meeting.

sian] revolution of October 1917,” to more recent revolutions in Cuba, Grenada, and elsewhere.

What marked Sankara above all, Thierjung said, was his confidence in the capacities of ordinary people to transform themselves and all of society in the course of a revolutionary struggle.

In a country where more than 80 percent of the population are peasants, Sankara led the revolutionary government to implement a land reform and organized farmers to boost Burkina Faso’s food self-sufficiency. It launched a vaccination campaign to combat measles, yellow fever and meningitis that reached 2.5 million children within a matter of weeks, something the World Health Organization said was impossible.

Construction projects were launched to build irrigation dams, dig wells for drinking water, and build schools and housing. Workers were mobilized to build roads and a railway tying together toilers from one end of the country to the other. All this was done by the solidarity and voluntary labor of the Burkinabe people, Thierjung said.

“The most important thing for us,” Sankara said in a 1985 interview, “is the transformation of people’s attitudes... Never again will the wealth of our country belong to a minority. It belongs to the majority, a majority that speaks its mind.” Ending “the myth of getting rich through a dog-eat-dog struggle” is central to the revolution’s goals, he said in a speech on its fourth anniversary.

### Sankara’s final political fight

In the last months of his life, Thierjung said, Sankara began “a public political fight to keep the revolution on track” in face of forces in the National Council of the Revolution seeking to reverse its course. “He knew this could cost him his life. He was not naive.”

The revolution faced counterrevolutionary pressures of both French and U.S. imperialism. They stoked divisions within the leadership and ranks, some of whom were seeking to ad-

vance their own ambitions or advance self-serving political schemes.

The revolution is only worthwhile if it contributes to improving people’s lives and control over their destiny, Sankara said. Above all, revolutionaries are those who are loyal to the interests of working people — the most self-sacrificing and determined in advancing those interests.

Thierjung said that Sankara was adamant that the revolution could not be imposed on the masses. “The democratic and popular revolution needs a convinced people, not a conquered people — a convinced people, not a submissive people passively enduring their fate,” Sankara said in a 1987 speech.

He was determined to build a new political party to help guarantee the future of the revolution, Thierjung said. It wouldn’t be a vote catching, electoral machine, but an organization of vanguard fighters proving their capacities in practice to advance the revolution — those who were winning the confidence of ordinary people in struggle.

That remains the task today in Africa, in the U.S., and worldwide, Thierjung said. He encouraged everyone to read and study Sankara’s speeches, to learn the lessons of the 1983-87 revolution.

During the discussion, one participant said he hoped to see “more Sankaras in my lifetime,” and to be able to prevent them from being assassinated. Mary-Alice Waters, a Socialist Workers Party leader, said there is never any guarantee revolutionary leaders won’t be killed. “How many times did they try to kill Fidel Castro in the mountains during the revolutionary struggle in Cuba, to say nothing of the 600 times the CIA tried to assassinate him after the 1959 victory?” she said.

The key lesson, Waters said, is that “you have to be building the party beforehand,” to win the cadres needed to lead fellow working people when revolutionary openings occur. Sankara was working “to build a political party, to bring together the forces that

Continued on page 7

# Demand US hands off Venezuela! US hands off Cuba!

Continued from front page on behalf of “the Venezuelan people” can be refuted. Many will be won to joining actions aimed at staying the hands of the U.S. rulers.

On May 5, just days after the April 30 U.S.-backed coup attempt in Venezuela by pro-imperialist opposition figure Juan Guaidó failed, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo reiterated that Washington had “a set of options that would involve use of U.S. military” in Venezuela. Washington seeks ways to use the deepening political and social crisis facing working people there to oust the government of President Nicolás Maduro and impose a regime more pliant to the interests of the U.S. rulers.

But U.S. military intervention is opposed even by many in Venezuela who do not support Maduro, Studer noted.

He pointed to President Donald Trump’s threat to impose a “full and complete embargo” of Cuba, which would be an escalation of the U.S. rulers’ decadeslong efforts — carried out by both Democratic and Republican administrations — to overturn the socialist revolution made by Cuba’s workers and farmers.

“A full embargo could only be im-

posed with a naval blockade, which would be the equivalent of an act of war,” Studer said. “At the moment these are threats, but we have a responsibility to mobilize opposition to them becoming actions by Washington.”

Washington has already imposed a series of new sanctions against the Cuban Revolution, he said, and, for the first time, invoked Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which allows for U.S. individuals and corporations to sue companies worldwide that make use of properties nationalized in the revolution.

### Rulers’ extension of assaults at home

“Washington’s threat to the sovereignty of these two Latin American nations is an extension of the assaults U.S. bosses are carrying out against the wages, working conditions and political rights of working people at home,” Studer said.

“Every fight working people here carry out against U.S. imperialism’s violation of the sovereignty of other countries is a step towards us acting independently of the bosses and their political parties. It points to the rulers as the source of the problems we face and strengthens working-class unity.”

“No war or other intervention by the U.S. imperialists has ever advanced the interests of working people anywhere. Not in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Korea, Vietnam, not anywhere,” he added.

He pointed out that the SWP’s opposition to U.S. imperialist intervention in the colonial and semicolonial world is rooted in the continuity of the communist movement dating back 100 years. The Communist Party in



Militant photos: Above, Naomi Craine; inset, Mary Martin

Protests demand “U.S. hands off Venezuela! Hands off Cuba!” Above, picket at Federal Building in Chicago, organized by Chicago Cuba Coalition, ALBA Solidarity, May 6. Inset, Henry Dennison, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Seattle City Council, speaks to 30 people at protest at Henry Jackson Federal Building, Seattle, May 7.

the U.S. was launched in 1919, inspired by the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia led by V.I. Lenin, and the Bolshevik Party’s fight for a revolutionary working-class program against the degeneration and betrayal of the old Socialist International.

Those parties adapted to their own capitalist classes and supported the slaughter of millions in the rulers’ interests in the first imperialist World War.

The SWP “stands for the immediate and unhampered right of self-determination” for all the “territories, colonies, and dependencies of the U.S. and for the withdrawal of all troops from them,” Studer said, quoting the SWP’s 1938 Declaration of Principles.

A couple of meeting participants had just returned from joining hundreds of thousands of working people celebrating International Workers Day at demonstrations in Havana and other Cuban cities, May 1. They said that many Cubans at these actions took the opportunity to voice their opposition to Trump’s recent steps to tighten Washington’s punishing embargo of Cuba.

Today Washington demands the Cuban government withdraw the 20,000 Cubans currently in Venezuela. It falsely claims the internationalist volunteers there — who are overwhelmingly medical personnel, teachers, and sports and art instructors — are all soldiers.

There is unanimity among the U.S. ruling class on policy towards Venezuela and Cuba, Mary-Alice Waters, a leader of the SWP, told the meeting. “Democrats Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Bernie Sanders don’t want to touch this question. But among working people broad support can be won for opposing Washington’s intervention.”

One participant asked Studer about the impact of the widespread shortages of medicine and food in Venezuela.

Working people there need the time and space free of imperialist intervention “to build the leadership they require to advance their struggles, under the difficult conditions confronting them,” he explained. Fighting to keep Washington off the backs of the people of Venezuela “is the solidarity we offer to fellow working people there.”

## New Florida law restricts ex-felons voting rights victory

BY CINDY JAQUITH

MIAMI — In a blow to the rights of working people, the Florida legislature adopted a bill May 3 that would undermine the victory won last November when over 64% voted to grant most ex-felons the right to vote. Amendment 4 to the state constitu-

tion, adopted by referendum, restored voting rights to more than 1 million people who have completed their sentences, probation and parole.

The new bill that’s headed to the desk of Gov. Ron DeSantis seeks to restrict those rights. It says ex-felons must first pay off all court costs and restitution unless they can find a judge willing to waive these payments. Felons wouldn’t be able to vote even if they have a court-ordered agreement to pay off their debt month by month.

“That’s not what the people voted for,” Patrick Penn, who had been imprisoned for 15 years on robbery and burglary charges, told the *New York Times*. “Basically, they’re telling you, ‘If you have money, you can vote. If you don’t have money, you can’t.’”

Desmond Meade, president of the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition, says hundreds of thousands of ex-felons who’ve served their time will be denied the franchise if DeSantis signs the bill.

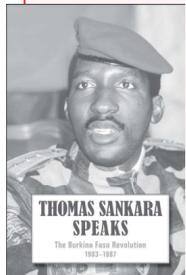
Over 90 percent of those who go to prison never have a trial. Instead they are pressured by threats of draconian

sentences by the cops and prosecutors to accept a plea “bargain.” When they emerge from prison they face pervasive job discrimination, making it more difficult to pay off fees, fines, or restitution.

“This bill is just another way the capitalist rulers are attempting to curtail the political rights of the working class,” Anthony Dutrow, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Miami City Commission, told the press May 6. “They hate the fact that the workers of this state voted last November to reject the dehumanization of our sisters and brothers caught up in the so-called capitalist criminal ‘justice’ system. We support the right of all present and former felons to vote.”

“The capitalist rulers increasingly fear that working people are fed up with the carnage the crisis of their capitalist system is inflicting on us, and will begin to fight back,” he said. “They are looking to restrict our right to vote and find other ways to weaken our political rights. We join in the fight to overturn this bill.”

### Further Reading from Pathfinder Books by Thomas Sankara



**Thomas Sankara Speaks**  
*The Burkina Faso Revolution, 1983-1987*

In English and French. \$24

**We Are Heirs of the World’s Revolutions**

In English, French, Spanish, Farsi. \$10

**Women’s Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle**

In English, French, Spanish, Farsi. \$8

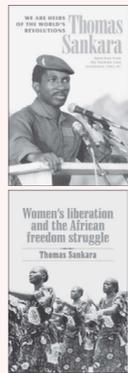
Also recommended:

**Capitalism and the Transformation of Africa**

by Mary-Alice Waters and Martin Koppel

In English, Spanish, Farsi. \$10

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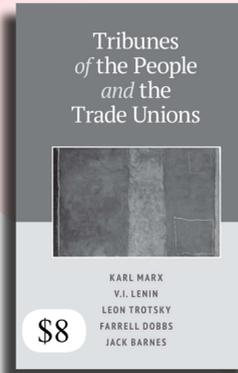


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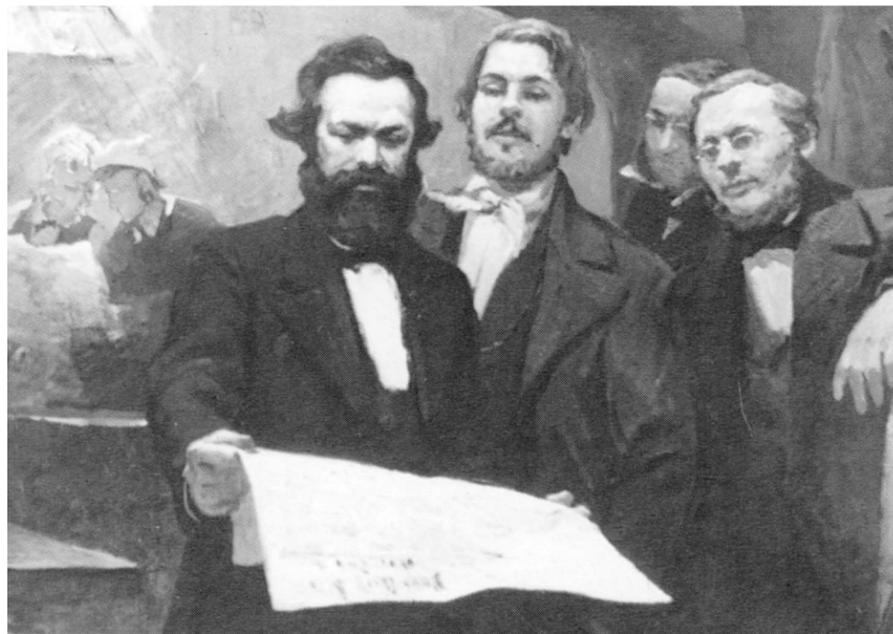
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# 'Proletarians have a world to win. Workers of all countries unite!'

The selection this week for Books of the Month is *The Communist Manifesto* in its Spanish edition. Written by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, this political pamphlet boldly announced to the world the founding of an international communist workers movement just before revolutions broke out across Europe in 1848. In these excerpts, they explain the relationship of communists to the working-class movement and its history. In his introduction to the new Pathfinder title, Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions, Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, draws on two of the central points in the piece below. Copyright © 1992 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Ye. Sapiro

Painting shows Karl Marx, left, and Frederick Engels, center, reviewing *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, the newspaper they edited during 1848 revolution in Germany, after it was printed.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY KARL MARX AND FREDERICK ENGELS

All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interests of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincum-

bent strata of official society being sprung into the air.

Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie. ...

The essential condition for the existence and for the sway of the bourgeois class, is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage labor. Wage labor rests exclusively on competition between the laborers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the laborers, due to competition, by their revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of modern industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, above all, is its own gravediggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable. ...

[Communists] have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole.

They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mold the proletarian movement. The communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only: (1) In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different

countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality. (2) In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.

The communists, therefore, are on the one hand, practically, the most advanced and resolute section of the working-class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement.

The immediate aim of the communists is the same as that of all the other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat.

The theoretical conclusions of the communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer.

They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes. The abolition of existing property relations is not at all a distinctive feature of communism.

All property relations in the past have continually been subject to historical change consequent upon the change in historical conditions.

The French Revolution, for example, abolished feudal property in favor of bourgeois property.

The distinguishing feature of communism is not the abolition of property generally, but the abolition of bourgeois property. But modern bourgeois private property is the final and most complete expression of the system of producing and appropriating products, that is based on class antagonisms, on the exploitation of the many by the few. ...

The communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of that movement. ...

The communists turn their attention chiefly to Germany, because that country is on the eve of a bourgeois revolution that is bound to be carried out under more advanced conditions of European civilization, and with a much more developed proletariat, than that of England was in the seventeenth and of France in the eighteenth century, and because the bourgeois revolution in Germany will be but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution.

In short, the communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things.

In all these movements they bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time.

Finally, they labor everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries.

The communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

*Workingmen of all countries, unite!*

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## Fight Fla. prison censorship of 'Militant'

Prisons in the United States are a brutal microcosm of capitalist society as a whole — with its ruthless exploitation of our labor, restrictions on our rights and armed cops and solitary confinement. These are all intended to undermine the confidence and sense of self-worth of working people who end up there.

"In the United States imprisonment is a way of dehumanizing a human being," explains Ramón Labañino, one of five Cuban revolutionaries who were imprisoned in the U.S. for some 15 years on frame-up charges. "You're up against a system."

All the talk about prisoners "paying their debt" to society, or claims that prisons are aimed at "rehabilitation" is a lie — to cover up their real purpose: to put working people in our place. They truly wish no one would ever be able to know the conditions they impose on human beings in prison.

It's why over 90% of those in prison got there by being pressured to sign "plea bargains" instead of exercising their constitutional right to a trial by a jury of their peers. It's why the state government in Florida is trying to undermine the victory won by working people in their vote to amend the state constitution to restore voting rights to ex-felons.

And it's what's behind Florida prison authorities all too frequent attempts to ban issues of the *Militant*.

The ban on the issue with an article on the tour of Albert Woodfox, who spent nearly 44 years in solitary confinement, is a good example. Absolutely nothing about his new book *Solitary*, his tour, or his call to end abusive conditions behind bars is a call to violence. To the contrary.

"I could have let the prison culture consume me," Woodfox said in an April 25 phone interview with the *Militant*. "Instead, I was determined to be a better human being. To fight with strength and determination for a better cause."

The prisoners who have filed appeals against the bans on the *Militant*, and those who have written us to make sure we know they have done so, are like Woodfox. They're acting to defend the rights and dignity of all workers behind bars.

The *Militant* does all it can to combat that dehumanization. That's why the officials censor us.

Prisoners are fellow workers behind bars and we bring to them the world. We defend the constitutional right of the *Militant* to have subscribers in prison, and prisoners' right to read material of their own choosing, to think — and act — for themselves.

Tens of millions of working people in the U.S. have been imprisoned or know people who have been. They know the savagery of the U.S. "justice" system.

We have successfully overturned many of the jailers' attempts to censor the *Militant* across the country, and backed efforts by other publications to do likewise. Doing so takes the solidarity and support of all those who defend the democratic and political rights of workers behind bars.

It's in the interests of the whole working class!

You can help. Get your co-workers to sign a letter to Florida officials calling them to reverse the bans. Get statements from your union, church group, community organization, tenant association and others who can be won to this fight.

## UK moves to scuttle EU break angers workers

Continued from front page

Howie on their doorstep in Llandeilo in rural South Wales. "They should have left the day after the referendum vote three years ago," Trudi said. "What's there to discuss? I wonder if Brexit will ever happen."

Working people in Llandeilo have been hit by the same crisis of capitalism coming down on millions across the U.K. Many see breaking out of the EU as one step toward easing their burden.

"It's the same in Tumble where I live," said driver Michael Jones as he was picking up workers at the Dunbia meat plant in nearby Cross Hands. "My father worked for Corus, the steel manufacturer. The steel industry has been devastated. Gone are the wages, conditions and pension packages he got. People are working at minimum wage. Most of the workers are from Poland. Credit to them for looking for work. I've nothing against them — it's the conditions I'm against."

Anger among working people led to an electoral drubbing for both the Conservative and Labour parties in local elections across England May 2.

The Conservatives lost 1,300 council seats. With a hemorrhaging of the party's former working-class support, the Labour Party lost 80 seats.

These losses deepen the government crisis, with daily calls for May's resignation.

The Conservative Party, and to a lesser degree Labour, face continuing humiliation in elections for the European parliament that's now set for May 23.

The two largest rulers' parties are in negotiations over Brexit. Leaders of both favor staying in the EU and are engaged in talks over "Brexit-in-name-only" — formally leaving the EU while maintaining membership in most of its trade and other relationships — a deal they hope could win a parliamentary vote.

The ongoing political crisis is spawning new parties. Nigel Farage, formerly the leader of the UK Independence Party, left it because of the more right-wing, anti-Muslim axis of its new leader, Gerard Batten. Farage is now leader of the recently launched Brexit Party. He is seeking to win frustrated former Labour and Conservative voters and his party is now expected to get the biggest vote May 23.

On the flip side of the debate is Change UK, a party launched by the so-called Independent Group, a new formation of resigned Members of Parliament from both Labour and the Conservatives. It says it is "the center ground of British politics." Change UK, along

with the Liberal Democrats and sections of the Labour Party, promotes a "Peoples Vote," a new referendum to force working people to keep voting on Brexit until they vote to remain in.

"The Conservative, Labour, Brexit and other parties all advance what they consider best for 'Britain' — by which they mean the British capitalist class," Andrés Mendoza, Communist League candidate for the East of England constituency in the European parliamentary elections, said May 4. "The CL program starts and finishes with what's in the interest of the working class in the U.K. and internationally. We stand for 'Out Now!' from the EU bloc as a way to focus and strengthen the struggles of the working classes against the British bosses, their state and parties. The propertied rulers in the U.K. are workers' central adversary."

**Crisis fuels centrifugal forces in U.K.**

Continued support for getting out of the EU among working people is fueling pressure in Scotland for a second independence referendum. The Brexit vote in Scotland saw a two-thirds majority in favor of remaining in the EU. Scottish National Party leader Nicola Sturgeon has spoken in support of a new Scottish independence vote if the U.K. quits the EU. But this would require the agreement of the government in London. Separation was defeated in 2014 by 55-45%.

Theresa May and Ireland Prime Minister Leo Varadkar took advantage of the April 18 killing in Derry of journalist Lyra McKee by the "New IRA" to announce talks. London and Dublin seek to avoid a "hard border" between North and South. This is what would happen if the U.K. — which includes the North — formally left the EU, while the South remains a member.

They hope to reconstitute the "devolved" Northern Ireland government, which was formed in 1999 after London transferred control over local affairs to it. This government hasn't met for two years due to sharp frictions between the two central parties there, Sinn Fein and the Democratic Unionist Party.

Britain's rulers are determined to maintain a *United Kingdom*, a vestige of their previous dominance, to offset their declining world role. The threat to the Union from Ireland's growing economic interconnection, North and South, and with rival EU capitalist interests feeds these governments' refusal to cut London any slack over Brexit.

## Prison bans 'Militant'

Continued from front page

For all three issues, prison officials claimed that articles in the paper could encourage "physical violence or group disruption" or otherwise present a "threat to the security, good order, or discipline" of the correctional system.

The *Militant* is asking supporters of free speech, freedom of the press and the political rights of inmates to send letters to the Literature Review Committee urging them to overturn all the impoundments.

The April 15 issue was censored because of a feature article on Albert Woodfox, who spent nearly 44 years in solitary confinement on frame-up charges in the notorious Angola, Louisiana, penitentiary. Woodfox is on a speaking tour, introducing his new book *Solitary: Unbroken by Four Decades in Solitary Confinement* and campaigning against prison abuse.

Several prisoners wrote the *Militant* to make sure the paper knew about the bans. "They think it's OK to beat and mistreat us," one prisoner wrote, "but it's not OK for us to read about it."

The *Militant* May 7 filed its appeal against the ban on the April 15 issue and is preparing its challenge to the censorship of the April 29 issue.

Benjamin Stevenson from the American Civil Liberties Union in Florida sent a letter May 6 calling on Florida officials to overturn the ban.

**Ban 'violates the First Amendment'**

In his appeal of the ban of the April 15 issue, the *Militant's* attorney, David Goldstein, notes that Woodfox and his new book have received wide coverage in "prominent mainstream media," including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, National Geographic Television and *Time* magazine.

The ban on the paper "violates the First Amendment," Goldstein said, adding that the Department of Corrections cannot "ban the *Militant* because some officials disagree with the viewpoints expressed in these articles." He adds that "nothing in the article so much as hints at any current prisoner taking any action whatsoever that could rationally be deemed as violent or presenting a threat to prison security, good order, discipline, or the safety of any person in any manner."

It's not clear what article in the April 29 paper perturbed prison officials. The reason given for the impoundment only refers to "Pages 1, 5," not any specific article, saying the pages "Displicts[sic] protest continue in fight," and on page 9, "racism."

The front page includes articles on protests in Sudan, the debate over abortion rights in Texas, a strike by 31,000 workers at Stop & Shop in New England, the Cuban Revolution and the fight against racism, the demand for amnesty for immigrants and an article on a successful fight against a Washington state ban on prisoners getting used books.

The *Militant* has been getting to readers behind bars for decades and currently has 131 readers in 69 prisons in 22 states. The number is growing, as 22 prisoners have subscribed during the paper's efforts to boost its readership this spring.

The *Militant* offers lower-price or complimentary subscriptions to those in prison who request them.

"We are fighting not just for the rights of the *Militant*," the socialist newsweekly's editor John Studer said May 7. "But for the rights of all those in prison to read material of their choosing, to broaden their horizons, to think for themselves, to be part of the discussions and activities of the working class worldwide."

"We need the help of our readers and all those who stand against the attempts by prison authorities to break the spirit of our brothers and sisters behind bars," Studer said.

### Join fight against prison censorship!

**Get out the word:** Print and distribute *Militant* articles on this fight.

**Get support statements** from co-workers, unions, churches and defenders of political rights. Email to: Dean Peterson, Literature Review Committee, Allen.Peterson@fdc.myflorida.com. Send copy to themilitant@mac.com

**Send checks** to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018, for "Prisoners Rights Fight." **Or contribute online at themilitant.com**