

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Ethiopian Israelis fight police brutality, racism

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Almost half of all US workers live ‘paycheck to paycheck’

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

According to government figures, the U.S. economy has been expanding for over a decade, the longest uptick in U.S. history, with the stock market at record levels and official unemployment at a 50-year low. But under the class realities of capitalism, most working people haven’t seen many real gains.

Four in 10 U.S. workers struggle to pay their bills, a recent UBS bank survey showed, and would confront a crisis if faced with a \$400 emergency expense. One quarter of U.S. residents skipped necessary medical care in 2018 because they couldn’t afford the cost.

“I keep hearing this is one of the best economies we’ve ever had and unemployment is down especially among African Americans, which I am,” Sommer Johnson, who lives in Douglasville, Georgia, told the *Washington Post*. “I’m looking around going, ‘Where is this boom?’ From where I sit, this doesn’t look like

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## 2020 election debates show crisis of bosses twin parties

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The televised debates unfolding between the two dozen Democrats jostling to become the party’s presidential candidate take place amid a yearslong political crisis unfolding among the parties of the U.S. capitalist ruling families. They fear that sooner or later their grinding assaults on working people will lead to far-reaching struggles. This is mirrored in their frenzied response to the 2016 election of Donald Trump. They blame the “deplorable” working class for this.

All wings of the Democratic Party — from Joe Biden to Elizabeth Warren to Democrats who are socialists like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez — are united by their furor against the incumbent president. They seek to convince us their brand of capitalist politics is essential to replace him as the chief executive officer for the U.S. imperialist rulers.

Millions of working people distrust both capitalist parties and want

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## US hands off Iran! End sanctions now!

London seizes Iranian tanker as US sanctions bite



Above, David Parody; left, UK Ministry of Defense

Top, British warship (in back) and Royal Marine patrol vessel stand guard over Iranian oil tanker seized off coast of Spain July 4. Right, Royal Marines storm ship, reportedly at U.S. request, as U.S. sanctions inflict growing hardship on workers and youth in Iran.



BY TERRY EVANS

British Royal Marines stormed and seized a tanker July 4 sailing near Gibraltar, a British colony jutting off the coast of Spain. The ship was carrying oil produced by Tehran bound for its ally, the Bashar al-Assad dictatorship in Syria. The capture of the tanker aided Washington’s squeeze on Iran and added to military tensions

in the Middle East. The U.S. government praised the act of piracy as it is enforcing biting sanctions on Iran that inflict growing hardship on working people there.

The U.K. government claimed the vessel was violating EU sanctions imposed on oil exports to Syria. The Spanish government said the seizure

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## ‘Working people need to break with Democrats, Republicans’



John Studer, Socialist Workers Party national campaign director, and Lea Sherman, SWP candidate for New Jersey General Assembly, speak at Militant Labor Forum in Union City July 6.

BY NANCY BOYASKO

UNION CITY, N.J. — “The 2020 presidential election campaign has been launched by the Republicans and Democrats. Over the next 16 months the Socialist Workers Party candidates and their supporters will present the need to break with the capitalist two-party system, in discussions with workers on their door-

steps in cities, towns, and rural areas and at labor and social protests,” John Studer, SWP national campaign director, told 28 people attending the inaugural Militant Labor Forum at the new forum hall and campaign headquarters in Union City, northern New Jersey, July 6.

The party is running a national

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## US rulers step up economic war against Cuba and Venezuela

BY JANET POST

The U.S. Treasury Department added Cuba’s state-owned Cubametales, which handles all Cuba’s imports of fuels and oil, including from Venezuela, to its growing blacklist July 3. It’s the latest move by Washington to tighten its decadeslong em-

bargo against Cuba, part of its efforts to topple the government of Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela.

The Associated Press noted that “while the new sanctions will likely have little direct impact on the state-run Cuban company,” given the already strict U.S. sanctions on Cuba, they tighten the pressure on workers and farmers there by intimidating shippers and other firms “from buying and selling oil from Cubametales

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## ‘Militant’ fights censorship by Florida, Kansas prison officials

BY SETH GALINSKY

The *Militant* is challenging the blanket ban on the socialist newsweekly imposed in Kansas state prisons. The *Militant* learned last month it is one of more than 7,000 books and publications banned by state prison officials there.

*Militant* attorney David Goldstein wrote Department of Corrections officials July 2 that the paper is appealing all issues that have been banned.

Fighting the unconstitutional ban on books and periodicals in Kansas

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—On the picket line, p. 5—

Airport, catering workers say, ‘One job should be enough’

Ramp workers protest working conditions at Miami airport



# Protests mark 2 years since Grenfell fire disaster in UK

BY PAMELA HOLMES

LONDON — A Silent Walk and other events June 14 were joined by thousands, marking the second anniversary of the Grenfell Tower fire here that killed 72 people. The deadly inferno was the result of the contempt of government officials and the building’s managers and owners towards its working-class residents. The 24-story tower was wrapped in highly flammable cladding, which went up in a fast-spreading fire, in a building with broken fire alarms and no sprinkler system.

Fourteen of the families who survived the blaze still haven’t been rehoused.

Actions were held across the country. In London, Newcastle and Salford large lighted messages were projected across the walls of tower blocks by Grenfell United. “2 years after Grenfell and the fire doors in this building still aren’t fit for purpose,” read the message projected on the 25-story Cruddas Park House in Newcastle.

“I heard how the residents were raising concerns but being ignored,” Karim Mussilhy, vice-chair of Grenfell United, told the media when he visited Cruddas Park. “That’s what happened to residents in Grenfell before the fire.”

Natasha Elcock, chair of Grenfell United, said: “It’s been two years, and people are still going to bed at night worried that a fire like Grenfell could happen to them.”

Days earlier a fire ripped through an apartment block in Barking, in east London — a stark reminder of the devastating consequences for working people of the substandard safety measures tens of

thousands still face. In this case wooden frames and balconies and faulty sprinklers and fire alarms were at fault. Luckily this time no one was killed.

The London Fire Brigade’s union says that just 32 out of 837 council tower buildings over 30 meters tall (98 feet) have sprinklers. The BBC reports that Grenfell-type cladding remains on high rise council properties in 62 places across England. The government has admitted that cladding had been removed from just 56 of the 158 social sector buildings, and 13 out of 146 private high-rises.

A 20-story block adjacent to the burned-out remains of Grenfell Tower still has no sprinklers.

Last month the government announced a £200 (\$250) million fund to remove combustible cladding from the private towers — but it only covers buildings with aluminum composite material, and not the other forms of flammable cladding used to coat some 1,700 additional buildings.

### More pressure needed

“Many people are still living in dangerous buildings” not covered by the removal fund, the Manchester Cladiators group told *Architects’ Journal*, “and facing the bills for correction, life-changing bills of up to £80k each.”

Under the pressure of the outcry and protests after the Grenfell disaster, the government set up an inquiry into the fire, the first phase of which concluded at the end of 2018. A second phase is set to begin next year. No report has been published. The Metropolitan Police have



Grenfell United

Projections beamed onto Frinstead House in west London, left, and Cruddas Park House in Newcastle, two years after Grenfell Tower inferno killed 72 people. Thousands joined protests on second anniversary of disaster against government indifference to dangers workers face.

announced that they will not consider whether to lodge any criminal charges before 2021.

“Have you got anything about Grenfell Tower?” Shaun France asked members of the Communist League when he visited their busy literature stand at the Grenada Heritage Day festival in London July 6.

“Workers don’t need the fraud of long inquiries and ‘better’ regulations or ‘feel your pain’ visits by party leaders and the Royals,” says a widely circulated statement the CL issued days after the fire. France got a copy. “We should join with the survivors of Gren-

fell Tower in their fight for immediate quality re-housing in the local area and serious compensation. The trade unions should engage in a mass campaign — working together with tenants around the country demanding the immediate dismantling of cladding, installation of sprinklers and other protective measures nationwide.”

“Money-saving trumps safety under capitalism,” Communist League member Jonathan Silberman said. “Workers and our unions must fight for workers control over construction and building work to prevent further Grenfell Towers.”

## Campaign with the Socialist Workers Party candidates!

- California**  
Dennis Richter, Los Angeles City Council  
Joel Britton, Mayor of San Francisco
- Florida**  
Anthony Dutrow, Miami City Commission
- Georgia**  
Rachele Fruit, Atlanta School Board
- Kentucky**  
Amy Husk, Governor  
Samir Hazboun, Lieutenant Governor
- Minnesota**  
David Rosenfeld, St. Paul City Council

- New Jersey**  
Lea Sherman, State Assembly  
Candace Wagner, State Assembly
- New York**  
Seth Galinsky, New York City Public Advocate  
Ved Dookhun, Mayor of Troy  
Lawrence Quinn, Troy City Council
- Pennsylvania**  
Osborne Hart, Mayor of Philadelphia  
John Staggs, Philadelphia City Council  
Malcolm Jarrett, Pittsburgh City Council
- Washington**  
Henry Clay Dennison, Seattle City Council

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

## THE MILITANT

### Workers control only road to safe trains, crew sizes

*The dangerous push by rail bosses to keep increasing train lengths while cutting crew sizes can only be met by the fight for workers control. The ‘Militant’ supports calls for 50-car limit and four person crew, two in front and two at rear, to defend safety of rail workers and public nearby.*



Gerry Putz

Rail bosses push dangerously long trains. SWP calls for 50 cars max, four-person crew.

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# ‘Break with two-party system’

Continued from front page

slate of candidates throughout the country advancing a fighting program for working people to confront the economic, social, and moral crisis capitalism has created. The New Jersey forum featured three of these candidates — Lea Sherman and Candace Wagner, the party’s candidates for New Jersey General Assembly and Seth Galinsky, its candidate for New York City public advocate.

There is widespread interest in finding a road forward among working people, Studer said, a break from the crisis-ridden capitalist system, with its wars, economic crises and the carnage it inflicts on our class. In this context, he said, the party is organizing Alyson Kennedy, the SWP candidate for president in 2016 and its candidate for Dallas mayor this year, and Malcolm Jarrett, SWP candidate for Pittsburgh City Council, on a series of national trips to campaign across the country. They will campaign in Kentucky July 19-22 and the following weekend in Pittsburgh, helping put Jarrett on the ballot.

“They will join the party candidates Amy Husk and Samir Hazboun for Kentucky governor and lieutenant governor, campaigning in coal-mining areas in both eastern and western Kentucky,” Studer said, “and bring solidarity to striking workers who drive ready-mix trucks and pour concrete at Irving Materials

in Evansville, Indiana.”

Lea Sherman pointed to the U.S. government’s most recent war threats against Iran. “Washington maintains troops and bases all over the world to defend the ruling class’s political and economic interests,” she said.

“The sanctions they impose on Iran, Venezuela, and Cuba weigh heaviest on the working classes,” Sherman added. “The SWP demands ‘U.S. rulers hands off!’ and unconditionally defends the sovereignty of countries under attack from Washington and demands an immediate end to the economic war being waged against workers there.”

Galinsky described how he joined a rally of striking taxi drivers May 8, and said the SWP campaign is a voice for solidarity with drivers looking for ways to fight assaults on their wages. There are 100,000 taxi and app-based drivers in New York City that the bosses have pitted against each other in their drive for profits.

## ‘Drivers need a single union for all’

“Drivers need a single union for all, whether yellow cab, black car, Uber, Lyft, or other e-hail drivers,” he said. “In the course of coming together to fight we can transform ourselves, and change society from top to bottom.”

Wagner, a rail worker, described discussions among her co-workers about the contenders for the Democratic Party’s presidential nomina-



Militant/Maggie Trowe

Amy Husk, SWP candidate for Kentucky governor, talks with factory worker Jason McCray in Evansville, Indiana, July 6, campaigning in support of Teamsters on strike against Irving Materials there. Bosses are pushing to cut dental and other benefits in new contract.

tion. “Several Democratic candidates back the Green New Deal, which is modeled on President Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal — put in place to convince working people that the capitalist government held the solution to the crisis workers faced during the Depression in the years leading up to and through the second imperialist world war,” she said.

The SWP campaign points in the opposite direction — to workers’ capacities to unite and struggle together against the bosses and the parties that serve them to change the conditions they face. A working-class road for-

ward, she said, points to the need to overturn capitalism and replace it with a workers and farmers government.

## Amnesty for undocumented workers

Erika Remegio from the immigrant rights group Cosecha, which has been leading the fight in New Jersey to win access to driver’s licenses for undocumented workers, also addressed the meeting, describing the fight that group is waging. “We want respect, we came here to work,” Remegio said.

Some immigrants, she noted, “have lost family members because they were afraid to go to the hospital or lacked transportation to get help.” Drivers without licenses face steep fines, jail and even deportation. She invited those at the meeting to come to Cosecha Family Day in Matawan, New Jersey, July 14.

Sherman described her participation in several of Cosecha’s actions for driver’s licenses, and how the Socialist Workers Party calls for the unions to fight for amnesty for all workers in the U.S. without papers. “This is the road to overcome divisions imposed by the ruling class and to build the labor movement and unions,” she said. “The capitalists rake in massive profits by keeping us divided.”

Participants at the forum kicked in over \$1,000 towards the refurbishment of the new hall and the expansion of the stock of revolutionary books SWP campaigners will use to introduce the party’s program.

If you’d like to find out more about the SWP campaign, contact the branch nearest you, listed on page 8.

## Socialist Workers Party 2019 campaign program

*The Socialist Workers Party’s fighting program to confront the economic, social and moral crisis caused by capitalism:*

**UNIONS** Support workers’ struggles to organize and strengthen unions, to use union power to defend ourselves and all working people. *One union for all drivers — taxi, Uber, Lyft, other app-based and car service drivers! Support farmworkers in their fight to organize unions and for safe working conditions.*

**AMNESTY FOR ALL UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS** in the US, a life-and-death question for the unions to unite workers and cut across divisions the bosses use to drive down wages. For access to driver’s licenses for all.

**JOBS** Fight for a federal government-financed public works program to put millions to work at union-scale wages building roads, bridges, hospitals, child care centers, mass transportation and quality affordable housing workers need. Set the minimum wage to allow workers to have a home and support a family.

**OPPOSE WASHINGTON’S WARS** US hands off Iran, Venezuela, and Cuba. US troops out of Afghanistan, Korea, the Middle East. End US colonial rule in Puerto Rico.

**CUBA — AN EXAMPLE** End the embargo against Cuba; US out of Guantánamo. The Cuban Revolution in 1959 showed it is possible for workers and farmers to transform themselves in struggle, to take political power and uproot capitalist exploitation.

**HEALTH CARE FOR ALL** Fight for universal, government-guaranteed health care and retirement income for all.

**ABORTION** Defend women’s right to unrestricted access to family planning services, including the right to safe, secure abortions.

**ISRAEL & PALESTINE** For the recognition of Israel and of a contiguous Palestinian state. For the right of Jews to return to Israel as a refuge in the face of capitalist crisis, Jew-hatred, and murderous violence.

**LAND AND LABOR** Capitalism’s profit drive is the despoiler of nature and cause of unsafe working conditions. Workers and our unions must fight for workers control over production and safety in the factories, mines, railroads and all energy monopolies to protect those on the job and in nearby communities, and to control emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases and prevent the poisoning of the air, water and soil. Workers control over production to prevent disasters like the Boeing 737 MAX.

**“JUSTICE” SYSTEM** Fight against police brutality, racist discrimination and the entire capitalist injustice system with its frame-ups, “plea bargains,” onerous bail, and outrageous prison sentences, all of which disproportionately hit workers who are Black. For the right to vote for ex-prisoners and all workers behind bars.

**DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS** Defend democratic rights — the right to vote, to free speech and assembly, and to bear arms, under attack from Democrats and Republicans alike. Stop FBI and other government spying, harassment and disruption.

**PRISONER RIGHTS** End solitary confinement. End censorship of the *Militant*, books and newspapers by prison authorities. Abolish the death

penalty, an anti-working-class weapon in the hands of the rulers.

**FARMERS — WORKERS ALLIES ON THE LAND** To put a halt to farm foreclosures, bankruptcies and skyrocketing rural debt, we demand nationalization of the land. This puts the soil at the service of the farmers who till it, as opposed to control by the banks and landlords. We demand the government guarantee farmers their costs of production, including their living expenses.

*Working people must organize and act independent of the ruling capitalists and break from their political parties — the Democrats and Republicans. A movement of millions can be built to fight for these demands along a course to replace the rule of the exploitative capitalist class with a workers and farmers government.*

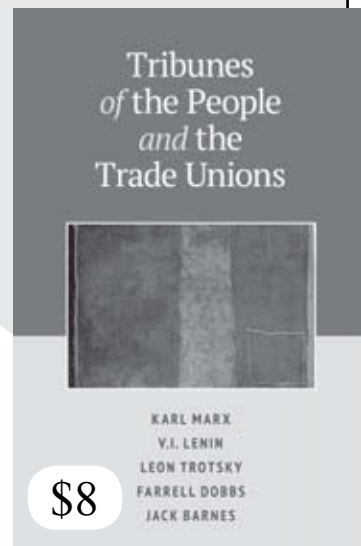
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# Ethiopian Israelis fight police brutality, racism

BY SETH GALINSKY

Thousands of Ethiopian Israelis have taken to the streets across Israel since June 30, when an off-duty cop shot and killed unarmed 19-year-old Solomon Tekah in Haifa.

“Since I’m 13, I’ve been beaten by cops,” Aviel, 19, told *Haaretz* at a July 2 rush-hour protest in Tel Aviv, one of many that blocked traffic across the country. He described being harassed by cops just because he is black. Another young protester added that some cops “think they can do anything, like they are God.”

By July 3, 136 protesters had been arrested. Police say 47 cops and 26 protesters were injured during the clashes over several days.

“This is not the first incident of a young Ethiopian being treated brutally,” Efrat Yerday, a leader of the Association of Ethiopian Jews, told the press July 2. In response to police saying they would hire more Ethiopian cops to better understand “their culture,” she said, “It’s not about culture, it’s about police violence, it’s about racism and [racial] profiling.”

Thousands protested in January after cops killed 24-year-old Ethiopian Yehuda Biadga, who was suffering from psychological problems. Thousands took to the streets in 2015 after a video showed police beating Damas Pakada, an Ethiopian Jewish soldier who was wearing his Israeli army uniform.

Little has changed, Yerday said. The cop said he feared for his life and fired one shot, which ricocheted off the ground and killed Tekah, after rocks were thrown at the cop when he tried to break up a fight. “We don’t believe the police,” Yerday said. Even if there was a fight, she said, “You don’t take a gun out on children.”

The cop is under house arrest after the shooting, but hasn’t been charged.

In an attempt to undercut the protests, the cops leaked to the media that Tekah had once been convicted of theft. “When the police are briefing the media about Solomon’s criminal past,” a member of his family told the *Jerusalem Post*, “for us they murder him again. Let’s assume that he had a certain past, is that a reason to kill him?”

## Operation Moses

For much of the early history of Israel, Ethiopians Jews weren’t considered by authorities as real Jews, and were denied

the right to return. This changed in the 1970s, and in November 1984 the Israeli government began Operation Moses, which brought some 6,500 Ethiopian Jews. In 1991 the Israeli government brought another 14,000.

From the start, Ethiopian Jews faced racist discrimination in every aspect of life — from housing and jobs to education — as well as police brutality.

Today there are some 150,000 Israeli citizens of Ethiopian descent — about 1.7% of Israel’s 8.5 million people — and at least 40% are “sabras,” meaning they were born in Israel.

More than 35% of Ethiopian Israeli families live under the official poverty line, and Ethiopian youth are arrested three times more frequently than other youth.

“Sometimes we call on the phone and they say they have an open position,” Michal Avera Samuel, executive director of the Association for Education and Social Integration of Ethiopian Jews, told the *Militant* July 10 from Lod. “But then when we arrive for the job interview, they tell us the position has been filled.”

“There was no organization behind these protests,” she said. “It was young people who are not willing to be quiet. They said enough!”

This is part of the reality of the class struggle in Israel, where Jews from Af-



Reuters/Corinna Kern

**Ethiopian Israelis and supporters block one of Tel Aviv’s main roadways in Israel July 2, protesting cop shooting of 19-year-old Solomon Tekah. Protests won solidarity from working people.**

rica and Arab citizens of Israel face racial discrimination, which bosses use to try and weaken the working class.

“We support any demonstration against racism,” Yaniv Bar Ilan, a spokesperson for the trade union federation Koach LaOvdim, which includes many Ethiopian members, told the *Militant* by phone from Tel Aviv July 8.

There are 15 private bus companies in Israel, he said, and the bosses have been driving down wages and work conditions. “As a result, workers from the lower income levels have taken the place of European-origin drivers. Half the bus drivers in Israel are now Arabs,” Bar Ilan said. “And a growing number

are Ethiopian Jews. They are exposed to racism on a daily basis.”

“We saw a lot of understanding from the Arab bus drivers,” he said about the highway protests. “In many cases they didn’t stay on the bus, but got off to show they supported the protests.”

*Jerusalem Post* writer Dov Lipman described similar solidarity from other Jews, when he was stuck on a bus for five and a half hours at one of the road-block protests.

“Tens of thousands of people sat in traffic — missing weddings, memorial services, army ceremonies, work, etc. — and held in their anger for hours because they identified with the demonstrators,” he wrote.

# Sudan military lifts siege, agrees to rule with opposition

BY JANET POST

The military rulers in Sudan agreed July 5 to form a joint military-civilian government set to last three years and three months with opposition leaders who’ve been mounting mass protests for weeks. After this “transition” to civilian rule, the agreement says, elections will be held and the military will return to its barracks.

Under the agreement, brokered by the African Union and Ethiopian rulers, with help from the rulers in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, a military general will head the transitional government for 21 months, then a civilian leader for the final 18 months. Five seats will be held by the military, five by representatives chosen by the opposition Forces for Freedom and Change umbrella group, and an 11th by another civilian agreed upon by both sides.

Workers, professionals and youth have taken part in huge protests for months in Sudan, backed by solidarity actions around the world demanding an end to military rule. The mobilizations led to the ouster of the hated regime of President Omar al-Bashir in April. Bashir came to power in a coup 30 years ago.

While there remains widespread distrust of the military, many workers and youth are hopeful the agreement can work. “The people remain on standby; the revolution is still alive, and it is not over until we get a full civilian government,” Amir Bashir, president of the Sudanese Association in New Zealand, told Annalucia Vermunt, Communist League candidate for mayor of Auckland, July 6.

“We still want the people who murdered peaceful protesters to be brought to justice,” he added. “We have no illusion in the Transitional Military Council

— it is on us to keep them honest.”

As in Tunisia, Egypt and other countries where “Arab Spring” protests brought down hated governments, there is no tested revolutionary working-class leadership in Sudan.

## Months of protests and solidarity

After Bashir was ousted the protests continued, demanding the military, which seized power, step aside. Army troops, joined by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, moved to attack encampments of thousands of protesters outside army headquarters in the capital city of Khartoum June 3. Over several days 140 people were reportedly massacred, with many more shot, raped and beaten.

Thousands of heavily armed troops still occupy the streets of Khartoum. Rapid Support Forces patrol the area in trucks with mounted machine guns and bundles of rocket-propelled grenades.

In the wake of the June 3 attack, hundreds of thousands took to the streets again June 30, demanding a civilian government.

Demonstrations took place all over the world. Over 100 people rallied June 30 in Auckland, in a protest called to “Stand with Sudan.” In Albany, New York, a group of high school and college students organized a solidarity demonstration June 28 that drew more than 250 people, overwhelmingly Sudanese.

“I’m so proud and inspired by the protesters in Sudan and their strength and courage to stand in the face of their oppressor and demand their freedom despite all the injustices they face,” Esra, a Sudanese student who helped organize the Albany action, told the *Militant*.

“I want to say, ‘Shame!’ to the major powers in the U.N. like the U.S., Russia, China, Britain and France,” pro-

tester Abdalkhadir Ahmat told the rally. “They only follow their own interests.”

Alex Huinil spoke for the Socialist Workers campaign. “We call for the United Nations and all foreign powers to get out of Sudan. The United States, England — which colonized Sudan — and other imperialist powers only act in the interests of the capitalist class in their own countries,” he said to an enthusiastic response.

“It is the Sudanese people who are fighting for their rights,” he said. “We can help by building a powerful revolutionary working-class movement in the United States.”

At the protest Huinil’s co-worker, Susan Mohamed, said, “Our kids die in the war in Yemen. We don’t agree with this government that sends them to this war. We have been fighting for seven months now but we will keep our spirit. That is why my daughter and I came to the rally.”

## Paramilitaries from war in Darfur

Ever present in the minds of the toilers is the genocide carried out by the Sudanese government in Darfur. The paramilitary force there, then known as the Janjaweed, was led by Gen. Mohamed Hamdan. Today he is second in command in the Transitional Military Council and runs the Rapid Support Forces.

The government tried to divide and weaken the protesters by stirring up national and religious antagonisms among them. But it failed. Protesters stuck together, chanting, “We are all Darfuris.”

Today’s protesters are determined to unite Sudanese — Arabic or English speaking, Muslim or Christian or tribal religions — across all nationalities.

*Kathie Fitzgerald from Albany, New York, contributed to this article.*

## For recognition of a Palestinian state and of Israel



**Socialist Workers Party statement**

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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](mailto:themilitant@mac.com) or through our website, or mail them to 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

## Airport, catering workers say, 'One job should be enough!'

SAN FRANCISCO — Airport workers who are members of United Service Workers West, part of the Service Employees International Union, joined forces here July 3 with LSG Sky Chefs and Gate Gourmet catering workers — members of UNITE HERE Local 2 — demanding, “One job should be enough!” About 3,000 SEIU members work at the airport, including baggage screeners and handlers, passenger service agents and janitors.

UNITE HERE Local 2 members are part of a national contract fight with the two airline catering giants, involving 25,000 members of their union along with Teamsters and the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union.

American Airlines and Southwest are shifting some union customer service jobs over to nonunion contractors. SEIU members handed fliers to departing passengers explaining that the airlines’ moves have left “workers with inadequate healthcare and harder workloads, and sometimes even with a boss that commits wage theft.”

Picketing also took place in New York, Philadelphia, Miami, Dallas, Washington, D.C., and other cities. Unionists at Los Angeles airport walked through the Southwest terminal carrying heart-shaped signs mocking Southwest’s logo, asking “Where’s the LUV?”

Workers at the San Francisco airport picketed, chanted and marched to Terminal 1 for a spirited rally. The airlines and contracting companies “make billions of dollars off our hard work,” Romeo Mendoza, a passenger service worker, told the rally.

Mary Ann Bueno works in the dish room at Gate Gourmet. “I don’t make enough money as a single mother. Rent, medical costs and what about retirement?” she told the *Militant*.

Bueno said that some years ago she worked a nonunion job while her mother worked at a Hilton hotel and was an active member of Local 2. “I used to tell my mom, ‘You’re just wasting your time,’” she said. “Now that I’m with the union my mom is so proud of me. I say, ‘Don’t stop until you win!’”

—Eric Simpson

## Ramp workers protest working conditions at Miami airport

MIAMI — Several dozen nonunion ramp workers held a rally here June 27 to protest working conditions at Eulen America, which provides flight services to Delta and American Airlines.

Although many of the workers make \$15 to \$16 an hour, their health insurance costs are in the range of \$600 monthly, baggage handler Fran Alonso told the *Militant*.

Where he works, Alonso said, there is no air conditioning and frequently no drinking water available, despite the punishing Miami heat and humidity. Workers load between 500 and 1,000 pieces of luggage in each seven-hour shift. Eulen refuses to hire more staff. “Even one more person on the shift could make a difference,” he said.

Other signs workers carried called for more safety on the job and an end to harassment of workers who speak out about dangerous conditions.

Several other Miami airport workers joined the action, as did a couple of area Walmart workers. The rally was organized by Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ, which seeks to organize workers at Eulen.

—Cindy Jaquith

## Indiana Machinists strike for health care, living wages

VALPARAISO, Ind. — “My family is on strike,” Stephanie Lambert, a striking lab worker at Regal Beloit Manufacturing, told the *Militant* July 6. Some 130 members of International Association of Machinists Local 2018 walked out here a week earlier when their contract expired. The Machinists, who make ball bearings for the airline industry, set up a 24-hour picket across from the plant, after voting 99-5 to go on strike against the bosses’ proposed concession contract.

“That was one of our proudest moments, we all stuck together,” said Russell Bramlet, who has worked at Regal for 35 years.

The workers are striking for affordable health care, defined break times, and higher wages. Some workers told the *Militant* that they are living paycheck to paycheck on their current wages. Regal bosses are demanding higher monthly health insurance rates — to the equivalent of a whole week’s pay.

Lambert explained that Regal’s already low wages and high health insurance rates make it difficult to raise a family. “I’m a single mom with two kids and I’m half drowning,” she said.

“We don’t live to work, we work to live,” said Greg Miller, a striking machinist who hired on last year. “What we’re making over here doesn’t keep up with the cost of living.”

Striking workers said they’ve received support from area workers. Union retail and steel mill workers have stopped by with bowls of fruit, water, Gatorade and snacks.

The strikers’ picket line is set up across the street from the plant on the



Militant/Eric Simpson

Chanting “One job should be enough!” airport workers as well as Sky Chef and Gate Gourmet workers picket together at San Francisco International Airport for higher wages, new contracts.

front lawn of a union Steelworker who offered it in solidarity. They organize to keep it clean, and are collecting for a thank-you gift.

Shortly after the strike began, the bosses sent a letter to all union members urging them to cross the picket line. “They try to pit us against each other,” said Miller. “They make it sound like we’re family, but if I died, they’d have me replaced before my obituary was written.”

—Samantha Hamlin

## New Zealand workers who care for disabled strike for contract

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — More than a dozen IDEA Services workers picketed the South Auckland regional office here June 23, part of a 24-hour nationwide strike against the division of IHC. IDEA (Intellectual Disability Empowerment in Action) Services contracts to work with adults of all ages with intellectual disabilities by providing personal care, household chores, vocational aid and other activities. This is done in more than 600 supervised care homes and in court-ordered compulsory care facilities.

This is the seventh strike taken by some 3,000 members of E tu union since their contract fight began eight months ago. One major issue is premium pay on weekends. “We want the company to

recognize that the normal workweek is Monday to Friday, not Monday to Sunday, and that weekend work should be rewarded,” Dawn Kopa, an E tu shop steward who’s worked for the company 17 years, told the *Militant*.

Other issues are higher pay for senior support workers and the protection of key health and safety rights. They are also resisting IDEA Services bosses’ demands for more flexibility over workers’ schedules.

“For me the central question is respect,” said Virginia Sarich, a shop steward for those working in compulsory care homes.

—Annalucia Vermunt

## Read about the battles that built the US labor movement



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## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



July 25, 1994

The massive gay rights demonstration in New York June 26 struck a blow against the right-wing assault on gay rights. It was a boost for the working class and all defenders of civil liberties and democratic rights.

Attacks on the civil rights of homosexuals, and laws such as the Pentagon’s ban on gays in the military, cut away at the democratic rights that workers have fought for and need today to defend their interests. Its aim is to make it harder for working people to unite across such barriers as race, sex, and national origin to wage an effective fight against the capitalists and the disaster their system has in store for humanity.

The demonstration on the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall rebellion was a powerful answer to this offensive. The organizers set an important tone of civility — welcoming anyone who opposed discrimination against gays.



July 25, 1969

The action taken by the Seattle antiwar movement welcoming home the first contingent of GIs withdrawn from Vietnam, and exposing the hoax that the so-called “withdrawal” represents, sets an example for the entire antiwar movement in the United States.

Nixon hopes to swindle opponents of the war into believing that he is vigorously pursuing all opportunities for ending the war. Nothing could be more dangerous than to accept such a myth. American men and Vietnamese men, women and children continue to die every day, every hour, every minute as the U.S. policy of maximum military pressure on the “enemy” is maintained. The only thing Nixon is “vigorously pursuing” is more freedom from pressure created by the antiwar sentiment in the U.S.

It is crucial that mass actions continue to demand that *all* the men be brought home, not just a few thousands.



July 22, 1944

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — 1,800 delegates, representing more than 800,000 Michigan CIO workers met here for their seventh annual state convention. This gathering was marked by a rank and file revolt against the no-strike pledge foisted on the membership by the top CIO officialdom. Forming their own caucus with but little preparation, the ranks waged a strong uphill battle against the bureaucrats and succeeded in mustering more than a third of the delegates to rise in favor of rescinding the no-strike pledge.

A score of leading UAW and CIO officials warned against the consequences that would befall the workers if the no-strike policy were altered. The war would be lost, Roosevelt would be defeated, and public opinion would be inflamed against the working class. Yet the ranks not only fought back but forged a leadership in the very heat of battle.



# Living ‘paycheck to paycheck’

Continued from front page  
the best economy ever.”

U.S. workers have faced stagnant wages for decades, and got slammed during what the capitalist pundits call the 2008 “Great Recession.” At the same time they’ve been hit with rising expenses for housing, health care and education — and now record levels of personal debt.

After adjusting for inflation, 50 percent of U.S. households have less income today than they did 30 years ago, the Federal Reserve Bank reports. While more jobs are available today, increasing numbers of workers are forced to work two or even three jobs to make ends meet. Wages are less than \$18.58 an hour for half of all U.S. jobs, and more than a third pay less than \$15. Some 4.3 million workers seeking full-time jobs are forced to accept part-time hours, the government admits.

## Speed up and longer hours

At the same time, many bosses push those who do have jobs to work faster and for longer hours. Nurses, for example, are being overworked to the detriment of their own health and care for patients. With daily workshifts of 12 hours or more, 31 percent of nurses show symptoms of chronic insomnia, according to a recent study by the Associated Professional Sleep Societies. Some 13% of nurses say they have to rely on medication to help keep them awake. Similar conditions affect railroad workers, who say fatigue is a constant threat.

Other employers are trying to use technology to squeeze superhuman productivity by ramping up the pace of work. Robotic storage cubicles that swarm around the 2,500-worker Amazon warehouse on Staten Island in New York bring goods for pickers to pack at breakneck speed, raising the rate from 100 items an hour to between 300 to 400.

“We try to eliminate any wasted motion,” one picker-trainer told the *New York Times*. “If you have one second that’s adding to the process, it doesn’t seem like a lot. But if you do that 1,000 times a day, that’s when it starts adding up.”

## Debt explosion

Under these conditions, more and more workers face mounting debts.

There’s a lot of press about student loan debt, and the 24 competing Democratic presidential candidates argue about whether they can cancel student debts, but the fact is there’s a steadily mounting debt burden of all kinds facing workers and farmers today.

Total U.S. household debt in the first quarter of this year reached a record level of \$13.7 trillion, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York says. A rising component of this is car loans, with auto finance companies pushing subprime loans, which involve low down payments and high interest rates that many working people can’t keep up with.

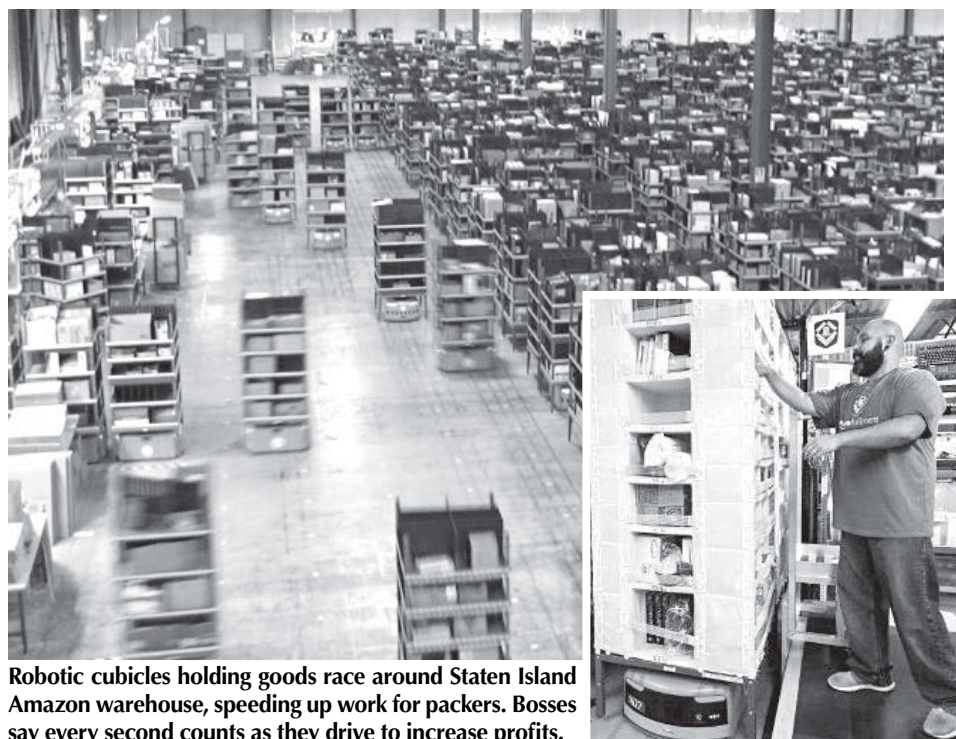
The number of people “seriously delinquent” on car loan payments rose to the highest level on record in 2018 — 7 million people, a million above the previous peak in 2010.

Dairy farmers are facing unprecedented pressure to fold up shop, as their income has been squeezed to below zero by the seed and fertilizer monopolies, processors and banks.

This spiraling debt has spawned one seriously expanding capitalist job category — the repo man.

The number of debt collection hounds is exploding and lawsuits by these agencies are boosting their profits on workers’ misery. Debt-claim suits rose 29 percent in Texas last year to 214,000 cases. In New York City court filings rose 32% in 2018 and 61% in 2017.

And today’s laws allow the leeches to garnish your wages — often with-



Robotic cubicles holding goods race around Staten Island Amazon warehouse, speeding up work for packers. Bosses say every second counts as they drive to increase profits.

out you even knowing they’re coming — and to slap liens on any property you’ve managed to acquire.

These collection outfits purchase packages of consumer debts, paying a few pennies on the dollar, and then pursue borrowers with fervent gusto for the face value of the debt plus interest, which may have accumulated for over 20 years.

One example of how this works was described in a July 5 *Wall Street Journal* article titled “Debt Collectors Wage Comeback.” Debt-buying company AM Solutions LLC sued Philadelphia couple Adolph and Doris Muir in 2017 to foreclose on the couple’s home and collect more than \$83,000 for what the company claimed was defaulting on a \$6,500 mortgage in 1983.

But, as the Muirs tried to explain,

the fact was they paid \$4,500 cash for the house in 1978 and never took out a mortgage on it. The debt thieves got the story wrong. But for 15 months the Muirs faced the threat of eviction, and faced the expense of hiring lawyers, while the courts pondered over the case. Eventually the court said they were right.

Others aren’t so lucky. Many cab drivers in New York took out loans to pay hundreds of thousands on medallions to own and operate cabs, promised lifetime returns and a happy retirement. But with the steep increase in competition that has exploded from Uber and other app-based for-hire cars, the medallions today are virtually worthless. And the competition means Uber drivers find it very hard to get by as well. The resulting debts have led to a rash of driver suicides.

# ‘Militant’ fights Florida, Kansas prison censorship

Continued from front page

will strengthen the fight against prison censorship around the country, including in Florida where the *Militant* is appealing bans on at least five issues of the socialist newsweekly.

The massive scale of censorship in Kansas came to light after Seattle-based Books to Prisoners and the Human Rights Defense Center obtained the list of banned publications. Books to Prisoners called the sheer number of banned books “unbelievable.”

*Newsweek* magazine ran an article, dated May 31, on the breadth of the prison censors’ efforts to restrict inmates right to read. And they appended the whole list, which is where the *Militant* saw it was on the list.

The *Militant* wrote to a prison subscriber in Kansas to inquire about the ban, and received forms from Department of Corrections Publication Review Officer Jamie Segreto claiming, “The content of this newspaper poses a threat to the safety and security of correctional facilities.”

The *Topeka Capital-Journal* editorialized June 23 that “many books about the prison system are banned,” including *Prison Grievances: When to Write, How to Write* and *Are Prisons Obsolete?* by Angela Davis. Famous novels like *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* are also banned.

## Censorship ‘simply head-scratching’

The *Capital-Journal* said it found the banning of some of the titles “simply head-scratching.” Among those

the paper listed are Bloomberg’s *Businessweek*, and *Bon Appétit* magazines.

Kansas also apparently bans any books with maps — even imaginary ones — “because, you know, somehow it could lead to a prisoner escaping to Westeros [an imaginary country in *Game of Thrones*],” Michelle Dillon, who works with Books to Prisoners and the Human Rights Defense Center, told *Newsweek*.

Over the last 15 years the censorship of 1,622 books and periodicals have been appealed, but only 141 were overturned.

In the face of the public outcry, then Kansas Department of Corrections Secretary Roger Werholtz said, “A quick perusal of the list does raise questions about the overzealousness” of the censors.

“But it’s not a question of ‘overzealousness,’” *Militant* editor John Studer said July 10. “It’s a question of the Bill of Rights, the right to freedom of the press, the right of workers behind bars to read material of their choosing, to think for themselves, to be part of the world. The Kansas Department of Corrections should abolish their list of banned publications and stop interfering with the rights of inmates.”

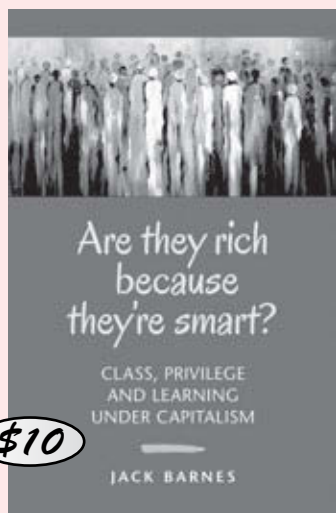
“Some bans are just arbitrary, a way for prison

officials to try to demoralize and beat down prisoners,” Studer noted. “Other bans are aimed at denying prisoners material that can help them protect their own rights.”

Meanwhile, the *Militant* is campaigning to convince the Florida prison systems’ Literature Review Committee to lift the ban there on five issues of the *Militant*. Those issues were banned either for covering a speaking tour by Albert Woodfox, who spent more than 40 years in solitary confinement in the notorious Angola state penitentiary in Louisiana, or for reporting on the fight to overturn their censorship of the *Militant*.

Join the fight!

## Recommended reading...



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## Join the fight against prison censorship!

**Get out the word:** Download, print and distribute *Militant* articles on this fight.

**Get support statements** from co-workers, unions, church groups and defenders of political rights.

**For Florida prisons** email to: Dean Peterson, Literature Review Committee, [Allen.Peterson@fdc.myflorida.com](mailto:Allen.Peterson@fdc.myflorida.com).

**For Kansas prisons email:** Kansas Department of Corrections Acting Secretary Jeff Zmuda via [hope.burns@ks.gov](mailto:hope.burns@ks.gov)

Send copies to [themilitant@mac.com](mailto:themilitant@mac.com)

**Send checks** to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018, for “Prisoners Rights Fight.”

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# 2020 election debates show crisis of bosses two parties

Continued from front page

to discuss an alternative to the anti-working-class course of successive Democratic and Republican administrations.

In the face of this, the liberals work feverishly to corral working people back into the rulers' two-party shell game, to convince us we absolutely *have to* back the "lesser-evil" among the bosses' parties or disaster beckons.

Most union officials join in pushing workers to rely on the bosses' parties. United Mine Workers of America President Cecil Roberts has appealed to all of the Democratic presidential contenders to tour a coal mine and get to know the concerns of the miners.

The rulers use the debates to try to sift out *their* best alternative to lead that party today, the ones most successful in conning working people. Then they'll use whomever wins the 2020 elections to command their state and advance their interests at home and abroad, as Democratic and Republican presidents have always done.

All the Democratic candidates speak of "we Americans" — a classless blob that includes both workers and bosses. But more workers today see that the only "we" is working people and their allies on the farm, here and across the world, who share common class interests. We have nothing in common with the bosses and their meritocratic enablers who profit from exploiting and oppressing us.

## Do workers need more regulations?

President Trump says he has "cut more regulations ... than any other administration," part of the Republicans' claims to be partisans of "small government." He boasts that this and his tax cuts for the employers have contributed to the drop in unemployment. But the big gains from today's temporary upturn all accrue to the employers and speculators who delight when the stock market rises.

The cyclical uptick in jobs for workers hasn't turned around the stagnant wages, growing indebtedness, declining life expectancy and lack of health care and opportunities for affordable

family formation that millions confront today. It hasn't touched any of the underlying causes of the crisis of capitalist production and trade that are the source of the rulers' continuing attacks on working people.

The Democratic aspirants all claim they want ever more regulations and government agencies to place the "smart" meritocrats in every government nook and cranny to do "good" for the downtrodden, who've proven too dangerous to make decisions for themselves.

## Is Roosevelt's New Deal the answer?

The Green New Deal proposed by Ocasio-Cortez, with the support of most of the Democratic aspirants, is a prime example of their intentions. She proposes a massive strengthening of the capitalist state modeled on the government "mobilizations" carried out by the U.S. rulers during Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal and even more so during the second imperialist world war.

The real goal of Roosevelt's New Deal was to control the rebellious labor upsurge that swept the country during the 1930s depression. It coupled some grudging concessions with efforts to tie labor in regulatory red tape and hogtie the strike wave.

The New Deal evolved naturally into the war deal, as the U.S. recovery petered out and the rulers prepared to make their move to take over as top imperialist dog in the world. They used workers' abhorrence of Nazism to try and convince them to fight and die for U.S. capitalism. And as an integral part of their drive, they unleashed the FBI against the Socialist Workers Party and the militant Teamsters union in the Midwest who were leading the anti-war opposition in the labor movement.

The hook Ocasio-Cortez advances to try and convince workers to back her call for a bigger, stronger capitalist state is fear of climate-change-generated disaster. Hysterical — and unscientific — claims of impending catastrophe are supposed to make you happy to turn your life over to the government. She says her "model" is the massive command state Roosevelt

## Who's He Kidding?



Toledo Union Journal, Jan. 12, 1944

Cartoon from Feb. 26, 1944, *Militant* shows President Franklin D. Roosevelt claiming government's aim in World War II was to defend "American free labor" as he proposed government impose compulsory labor conscription on U.S. workers, shown by chains in his hand. In fact, U.S. rulers entered war to advance interests of U.S. imperialism against rivals and allies alike.

ran in the 1940s war.

Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, and some of the other Democratic contenders also say the answer to today's problems is big government.

Sanders criticized Trump July 1 after the president met with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, saying he "weakened the State Department."

"If we're going to bring peace to this world," the Democratic hopeful opined, "we need a strong State Department." But the State Department is just the flip side of the "Defense" Department — the war machine of the capitalist rulers. It has nothing to do with what "we" need.

Trump says all socialists like big government. But if you look at the real continuity of the revolutionary working-class movement — from Karl Marx and Frederick Engels to the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia to Fidel Castro and the Cuban Revolu-

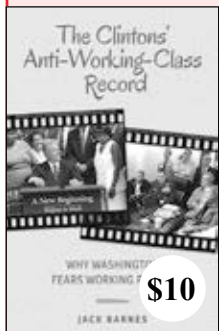
tion to the program of the SWP today — you see the opposite is true. Writing in 1871, Marx explained that the Paris Commune, the first time that the working class held power, "made that catchword of bourgeois revolutions — cheap government — a reality by destroying the two greatest sources of expenditure: the standing army and state functionarism."

The Socialist Workers Party campaigns in 2019 — and the ones to come in 2020, including for president — have the same goal. We fight to dismantle the U.S. capitalist rulers' war machine and its massive, oppressive state power, as we fight to eradicate exploitation and all oppression, transforming ourselves in the process.

That is possible when the workers and farmers take power — forming a government of the associated producers in the interest of all. Join us!

## For further reading

### The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record

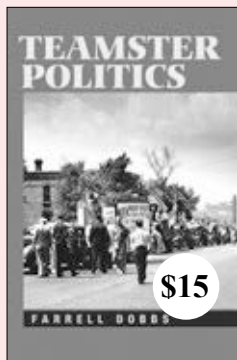


*Why Washington Fears Working People*, by Jack Barnes  
Lays bare the record of the Clinton White House and why millions of working people are starting to reject being made to bear the brunt of capitalism's global economic and social crisis and brutal wars.

### Teamster Politics

by Farrell Dobbs

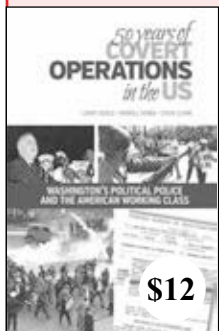
"Workers must enter the political arena as an independent class force, with their own party."



### 50 Years of Covert Operations in the US

*Washington's Political Police and the American Working Class*

by Larry Seigle, Steve Clark, Farrell Dobbs



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## 50,000 New Zealand teachers shut the schools down, win higher pay

BY PATRICK BROWN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — After flexing their muscles in a national strike at the end of May, New Zealand teachers at government-run primary and secondary schools voted to approve a new three-year contract that included pay increases of 3 percent a year. An agreement on "pay parity" will bring the wages of primary (elementary school) teachers into line with teachers at high schools, raising their annual base rate by 14,500 New Zealand dollars (\$9,620). Both primary teachers, organized in the New Zealand Educational Institute, and secondary school teachers in the Post-Primary Teachers Association approved the agreement.

The workers had previously rejected several contract proposals over the last eight months. On May 29 the two

unions joined in a 50,000-strong one-day strike that closed schools across the country. After that action — and the threat of further stoppages — the Labour Party-led government anted up an extra NZ\$271 million dollars to fund its increased pay offer.

Auckland teachers told the *Militant* their fight against growing workloads goes hand in hand with the wages issue. "I am seeing new teachers coming in and saying I can't do this, the demands are too great," said Kylee Williams. "I am a teacher, I can't also be a social worker, counselor and mum to hundreds."

These workload issues are supposed to be taken up in ongoing negotiations, according to an agreement signed June 14 that notes "growing demands" on teachers. The accord was approved by the members of both unions.



# ‘Mandela pays tribute to Cuba’s internationalist fighters’

*The Spanish edition of Cuba & Angola: Fighting for Africa’s Freedom and Our Own by Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro, Nelson Mandela and others is one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for July. The talk by Fidel Castro below, was given as he shared a platform with Nelson Mandela for the first time as they both addressed a mass rally in Matanzas, Cuba, July 26, 1991. Mandela, the historic leader of the African National Congress — the revolutionary democratic movement that overthrew apartheid in South Africa — had been released from prison the year before. This excerpt by Castro, commander in chief of the Cuban Revolution, is entitled, “The Most Profound Tribute Ever Paid to Our Internationalist Fighters.” Copyright © 2013 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FIDEL CASTRO

It would not be right for us to emphasize Cuba’s modest contribution to the cause of the South African people, but on hearing Mandela’s speech, compañeros, I believe that he paid the greatest and most profound tribute that has ever been paid to our internationalist fighters. I believe that his words will remain, as if they were written in gold letters, as homage to our combatants. He was generous,



Juventud Rebelde

In 1988 revolutionary Cuba sent tens of thousands of volunteer combatants and its best military equipment to help seal the defeat of the long-standing South African apartheid invasion of Angola. Above, all-women antiaircraft gun units that helped beat back South African air force.

very generous; he recalled the epic feat our people performed in Africa, where all the spirit of this revolution was manifested, all its heroism and steadfastness.

Fifteen years we spent in Angola! Hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of Cubans went there and thousands more went to other countries. That was the epoch in which imperialism would have given anything to see Cuba withdraw from Angola and end its solidarity with the peoples of Africa. But our firmness was greater than all the pressures and was greater than any benefit our country might have gained had we given in to imperialist demands — as if there could ever be any benefit in abandoning principles and in betrayal.

We are proud of what we have done, and our troops came back from Angola victorious. But who has said this the way he has? Who has expressed it with such honesty, such eloquence? What we have not said, because basic modesty prevented us, he has expressed here with infinite generosity, recalling that our combatants made it possible for the sister republic of Angola to maintain its integrity and achieve peace; that our combatants contributed to the existence of an independent Namibia. He added that our combatants contributed to the struggle of the South African people and of the African Na-

tional Congress (ANC). He said that the battle of Cuito Cuanavale changed the balance of forces and opened up new possibilities. ...

As Mandela was telling you, in this action the revolution staked everything, it staked its own existence, it risked a huge battle against one of the strongest powers located within the Third World, against one of the richest powers, with significant industrial and technological development, armed to the teeth, at such a great distance from our small country and with our own resources, our own arms. We even ran the risk of weakening our defenses, and we did so. We used our ships and ours alone, and we used our equipment to change the relationship of forces, which made success possible in that battle. I’m not aware of any other time when a war broke out at such a distance between so small a country and such a great power as that possessed by the South African racists.

We put all our chips on the table in that action, and it was not the only time. I believe we did the same in 1975, when we took an enormous gamble sending our troops to fight the South African invasion of Angola. ...

The truly critical situation occurred in Cuito Cuanavale, where there were no Cubans at the time because the closest Cuban unit was about two

hundred kilometers to the west. This brought us to the decision to employ the troops and the weapons necessary — on our own initiative and at our own risk — and to send whatever was necessary, even if it meant taking it from here.

Cuito Cuanavale is the site that became historic, but the operations extended along a line hundreds of kilometers long, and out of these operations a movement of great strategic importance toward southwest Angola developed. All of this is symbolized by the name Cuito Cuanavale, which is where the crisis began; but about forty thousand Cuban and Angolan soldiers with more than five hundred tanks, hundreds of artillery pieces, and about one thousand antiaircraft weapons — the great majority of these antiaircraft weapons of ours were transferred from here — advanced toward Namibia, supported by our air force and an airstrip constructed in a matter of weeks. ...

We could have waged big battles there, but given the new situation it was better to resolve the problem of Angola’s integrity and Namibia’s independence at the negotiating table. We knew — how could we not know! — that those events would have a profound effect on the life of South Africa itself, and this was one of the reasons, one of the motives, one of the great incentives that pushed us on. Because we knew that once the problem in Angola was resolved, the forces that were fighting against apartheid would also benefit from our struggles.

Have we said it this way before? No, never, and perhaps we never would have said this, because, in the first place, we believe that above and beyond whatever international solidarity the ANC has had, above and beyond the enormous support from abroad — of public opinion in some cases, of armed action in our case — the decisive and determining factor behind the ANC’s successes was the heroism, the spirit of sacrifice and struggle of the South African people led by the ANC.

This man, in these times of cowardice and so many things, has come to tell us what he told us this afternoon. It is something that can never be forgotten and it reveals the human, moral, and revolutionary dimension of Nelson Mandela.

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July

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS

Cuba y Angola

Luchando por la libertad de África y la nuestra (Cuba & Angola: Fighting for Africa's Freedom and Our Own) by Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro, Nelson Mandela

\$12. Special price: \$9

The First Five Years of the Communist International vol. 1

by Leon Trotsky

\$28. Special price: \$21

From Lenin to Stalin

by Victor Serge

\$18. Special price: \$13.50

The Struggle for a Proletarian Party

by James P. Cannon

The fight for the proletarian program and composition of the Socialist Workers Party that a petty-bourgeois opposition challenged on eve of Second World War.

\$22. Special price: \$16.50

Eugene V. Debs Speaks

by Eugene V. Debs

\$25. Special price: \$18.75

Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution

From Santiago de Cuba and the Rebel Army to birth of the Federation of Cuban Women.

by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer

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The Militant July 22, 2019



# Join fight against prison censorship!

The *Militant* is fighting for the right of workers behind bars to read the *Militant* and other books and publications they choose in two of the 21 states where we have prison subscribers — Florida and Kansas. We're asking our readers to help us push back the censors!

Write and get others to write — co-workers, your union, church or community group, and others — to authorities there urging them to reverse their censorship of the *Militant*.

And it's not just the *Militant* that faces the unconstitutional and arbitrary bans by prison officials. Kansas censors have barred some 7,000 books and periodicals. Prison authorities from coast to coast keep looking for ways to shut down access to news, information and culture.

Sometimes what they choose can seem so absurd you have to laugh. They tend to censor material that they fear will increase the class consciousness, understanding, discipline and sense of self-worth of inmates. Censorship, arbitrary or not, is one of the tools they use to try to break the spirit of those behind bars, to dehumanize and demoralize them, to keep them from discussing what workers face today and can do about it.

But the prison officials have a problem — whenever the censorship becomes public, they meet opposition and often are forced to pull back. That's what happened in New York state, Washington state, Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey and federal prisons when officials tried recently to restrict access to books

and newspapers. In each case, when word got out, the restrictions were rolled back.

Virtually all prisoners are fellow workers who happen to be behind bars. More than 90 percent never went to trial, never had a chance to make a case to a jury of their peers. They were pressured into signing plea bargains, under threat of more draconian sentences if they refused. The purpose of the capitalist rulers' so-called criminal justice system is to dehumanize and intimidate working people.

Workers on both sides of the bars, whatever our nationality or skin color, face many similar challenges, problems and common interests. Those behind bars have the same need to have access to reading material of their choosing, to think for themselves, to be part of the world.

Every time we win against the censors it is a blow to the capitalist rulers' efforts to control what we read, what we think and what we do. It helps hold them off, opens up room for prisoners to be part of struggling humanity. When we fight to defend the rights of our brothers and sisters behind bars, it is in the interests of the whole working class.

But to win, we need your help to organize support. Every letter can help make a difference. Join with the National Coalition Against Censorship, Amnesty International USA, the American Library Association, the Florida ACLU, the National Lawyers Guild and many others in our fight to overturn the bans on the *Militant* in Florida and Kansas!

## US hands off Iran! End sanctions now!

**Continued from front page**

was carried out at Washington's request.

Iranian Revolutionary Guard commander Mohsen Rezai responded by threatening to commandeer a British ship if the U.K. military doesn't release the tanker. So far the Guard has not carried the threat out. The British Heritage, a tanker loaded with oil bound for Iraq, turned around over the weekend to avoid Teheran's threats and is sheltering in place off the coast of Saudi Arabia.

**SWP: 'U.S. hands off Iran!'**

"The Socialist Workers Party says 'Washington's hands off Iran,'" Lea Sherman, SWP candidate for New Jersey General Assembly, told a forum in Union City, New Jersey, July 6. "Working people in the U.S. have no interest in interfering with the sovereignty of the people of Iran. We demand: End the sanctions and get all U.S. troops out of the Middle East."

The capture of the ship comes as the administration of President Donald Trump has imposed crippling sanctions on Tehran aimed at driving its oil exports to zero. It hopes the punishing measures will compel the Iranian rulers to engage in talks aimed at reining in militias they deploy in Syria and Iraq and ending any possibility Tehran could ever develop nuclear weapons.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani announced Tehran would begin further enrichment of its uranium stockpiles beginning July 7, to "any amount that we want." This breaches the conditions of the 2015 pact the Iranian government signed with former President Barack Obama, along with the governments of Germany, France, the UK, Russia and China. Trump pulled Washington out of that deal, which had placed limits on the Iranian rulers' nuclear weapons program in exchange for an easing of sanctions on Iran. He said it wasn't stringent enough. The European imperialist powers oppose the U.S. rulers' reimposition of sanctions, but their efforts to salvage the 2015 pact have failed.

In a reflection of their differences with Washington, Carl Bildt, co-chair of the European Council on Foreign Relations, questioned the legality of the tanker seizure. "One refers to EU sanctions against Syria," he said, "but Iran is not a member of the EU." Imposing sanctions on others, he said, is "what the U.S. does."

Mohammad Javad Zarif, Tehran's foreign minister, jumped on the statement with just one word

— "PRECISELY."

Tehran's oil exports have plummeted by 90% under the impact of the sanctions. The effects of these measures are felt most sharply by workers and farmers who confront the twin scourges of rising joblessness and a 50% inflation rate.

Politicians from both the U.S. rulers' Democratic and Republican parties portray Iran's government as the natural heir of the 1979 Iranian Revolution. In fact the clerical regime there consolidated power for the country's capitalist rulers in the early 1980s as part of a counterrevolution aimed at pushing back the gains working people made during the revolutionary struggle that ousted the U.S.-backed shah of Iran. To consolidate its reactionary rule at home, Tehran has pressed working people to fight in militias it organizes in the name of defending Shiite Islam, but whose real aim is to expand Tehran's military and political influence against its rivals in the wars that have wracked Syria and Iraq. Thousands of workers took to the streets across Iran last year to protest those wars and their effects inside Iran.

Under the guise of preventing "nuclear proliferation," the U.S. rulers seek to block Tehran acquiring nuclear capacity while maintaining their own massive stockpile. "The SWP calls on Washington to unilaterally dismantle its nuclear arsenal," Sherman told the forum. "And the party opposes the rulers of Iran or any other country developing these deadly weapons."

**Example of Cuban Revolution**

She pointed to the example set by Fidel Castro, the central leader of the Cuban Revolution. Castro explained, "We have never considered producing nuclear weapons, because we don't need them." In the face of Washington's relentless efforts to overthrow the socialist revolution there, Castro said, we trust in our revolutionary people. "The one weapon we haven't renounced is the 'war of the entire people.'"

Tehran's exports of oil to Syria, now interrupted by Washington's sanctions, accounted for nearly half of the Assad regime's petroleum. Oil in Syria itself is mainly located in parts of the country under control of the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces.

Moscow and Tehran have provided decisive military backing to shore up Assad's hated rule. In the last two months at least 544 people have been killed by airstrikes in a Moscow-led bombardment on the opposition-held Idlib province. Some 300,000 have fled toward the Turkish border.

## Cuba, Venezuela

**Continued from front page**

out of fear of drawing Treasury's ire."

AP pointed to the example of Italy's PB Tankers, blacklisted in April for transporting petroleum products from Venezuela to Cuba. When they slapped the new sanctions on Cubametales, U.S. authorities removed PB Tankers from their blacklist, saying it had broken off all relations with the Cuban export-import company.

There are more than 200 Cuban companies, ministries, hotels and other businesses on the U.S. blacklist, which face strict sanctions by Washington.

"Maduro is clinging to Cuba to stay in power, buying military and intelligence operatives in exchange for oil," Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin claimed July 3. This is the same lie that Washington has peddled for years, falsely claiming that the more than 20,000 Cuban internationalist volunteer doctors, nurses and teachers in Venezuela are in fact soldiers and spies.

The initial contract for oil between Cuba and Venezuela was signed Oct. 30, 2000, for "53,000 barrels per day for a five-year period" to Cuba amounting to "33 percent of the country's consumption," *Granma* noted in 2002.

While the oil is sold at lower than the world market price, the Cuban government has paid millions of dollars for it, *Granma* said. "For our part, we have not spared any effort, sacrifice, and expense to cooperate with that sister nation and we will continue doing so," *Granma* said, including with Cuban volunteer medical workers.

**Sanctions hit Petrocaribe countries**

In 2005 Venezuela initiated the Petrocaribe program. It grew to sell oil to some 18 Caribbean and Latin American nations with favorable prices and payment terms. But with the precipitous drop of Venezuelan oil production over the last several years, caused by a growing social and economic crisis in the country, combined with the impact of the U.S. sanctions, those nations have received almost no oil in months.

Haiti, one of these countries, now can only provide electricity three hours a day in much of the country. Some hospitals run on backup generators and gasoline sells for as much as \$12 a gallon on the black market. The U.S. rulers have done nothing to offer any aid.

The Treasury Department imposed sanctions on Venezuela's state-owned oil company PDVSA in January aimed at preventing all crude oil exports, especially targeting Cuba. In April it placed full sanctions on 34 ships owned or operated by PDVSA, including a Greek tanker. A week later, Washington extended the sanctions to four shipping companies and nine oil tankers from Liberia and Italy.

Nonetheless, some shipping companies — seeing opportunities to make profits — are defying Washington's violation of Venezuelan and Cuban sovereignty. Washington hopes that the new measure will bring more of them to heel.

In a speech to the Cuba's National Assembly April 10, Raúl Castro, first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba, said revolutionary Cuba will remain resolute in the face of the U.S. squeeze.

"We will never abandon the duty to act in solidarity with Venezuela. We have told the North American administration with the greatest clarity, firmness and serenity, through direct diplomatic channels and publicly, that Cuba does not fear the threats," he said.

"It is in the interest of working people everywhere to oppose U.S. imperialism's aggressive moves, which are aimed at punishing the workers and farmers of Venezuela and Cuba," Anthony Dutrow, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Miami City Commission said July 9. "We call on Washington to keep its hands off Cuba and Venezuela, lift all its punishing sanctions, end U.S. imperialism's economic warfare, and stop violating the sovereignty of those peoples."

### '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](http://www.themilitant.com)