

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Nepal event discusses Cuban Revolution, way forward for workers
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Oberlin College demands judge overturn victory won by bakery

BY TERRY EVANS

Lawyers for Oberlin College filed post-trial motions Aug. 14 seeking to quash the trial verdict that found the college and its dean of students and vice president, Meredith Raimondo, guilty of slandering and wreaking damage on Gibson's bakery. The family-run small business sued the college — which dominates the small Ohio town — after the college maliciously smeared the Gibsons as “racist.”

In a ruling that was a victory for all working people, a unanimous jury found the college guilty and Judge John Miraldi ordered the college to pay Gibson's bakery over \$30 million in damages and attorneys fees.

The post-trial motions listed on the college website request “judgment notwithstanding the verdict” — a call for Miraldi to reverse himself and throw out the jury's verdict. If that motion fails, Oberlin College filed a separate motion requesting the judge order a new trial.

Oberlin, a nationally known liberal arts institution with over a billion dollar

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Mass Hong Kong protest demands political rights

Beijing searches for way to tamp down actions



Reuters/Tyrone Siu

Throng fills streets in peaceful protest in Hong Kong Aug. 18 in largest action in two months.

BY ROY LANDERSEN

In defiance of Beijing's threats, some 1.7 million people rallied in Hong Kong Aug. 18 to demand greater political rights and the resignation of Chief Executive Carrie Lam. Beijing is exerting its leverage on companies in the semi-autonomous Chinese

territory, demanding that bosses victimize workers who participate in the actions, now in their 11th week.

This was the largest action since some 2 million people rallied in mid-June forcing Lam to suspend consideration of a proposed extradition law. The demonstrators are demanding the bill, which would have enabled the Chinese government to go after political opponents in Hong Kong, be “formally withdrawn.” Other demands are for the release of all those arrested during the recent protests, an investigation into cop violence against demonstrators, and for direct elections of the city's chief executive, instead of appointment by a Beijing-dominated committee.

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Miners fight for pay, jobs in Blackjewel bankruptcy

BY JOHN STUDER

“We want our pay, but we want everyone — from West Virginia to Wyoming — to be paid,” former Blackjewel coal miner Jeff Wilig told the press in Harlan County, Kentucky, Aug. 15. He had worked at the company's Cloverlick No. 3 mine

ORGANIZE SOLIDARITY FOR MINERS' BATTLE

— SWP statement p. 9

in Cumberland before the bosses abruptly shut it down and workers' paychecks bounced.

Overall, Blackjewel put over 1,700 miners on the streets when it suddenly declared bankruptcy July 1. In addition to mines in Kentucky, the company has two surface mines in Wyoming's Powder River Basin — with the fourth and sixth most production in the country — and in West Virginia and Virginia.

Miners and growing numbers of supporters have been camped out on

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New York cops fire officer who killed Eric Garner



Mpi43/MediaPunch/IPX

NEW YORK — “We're not finished,” Gwen Carr said at a rally, above, after New York City cop Daniel Pantaleo was fired Aug. 19 for the 2014 killing of her son Eric Garner. “We have other officers that we have to go after. You have heard the names. We know the wrongdoing they have done. They all need to lose their jobs.”

Garner, 43, died from a chokehold applied by Pantaleo after police claimed he was selling untaxed cigarettes. During the assault in Staten Island, Garner pleaded 11 times “I can't breathe!” which became a rallying cry across the country in fights against police brutality.

No criminal or civil charges were ever filed against Pantaleo or any other cop involved. His family says there are at least 11 other cops who were involved and who should be held accountable for Garner's death. Sgt. Kizzy Adonis, the first police supervisor on the scene, pled guilty to departmental charges Aug. 21, with 20 days vacation deducted as punishment.

In an Aug. 20 television interview, Mayor Bill de Blasio said that none of the other cops will be disciplined.

“All the other cops involved in Eric Garner's death should also be fired, as well as those who killed my son,” Hava Bah, told the *Militant* Aug. 19. She is the mother of Mohamed Bah who was shot by New York police in 2012.

— JANET POST

‘Bosses have two parties – Democrats and Republicans, we need our own’

BY JANET POST

“The Socialist Workers Party takes its political positions on all questions based on the fact that there are two classes — the working class and the capitalist class,” said John Studer, SWP national campaign director, to over 30 people attending a Militant Labor Forum in Albany, New York, Aug. 17. The event celebrated the opening of a new storefront SWP headquarters.

The capitalist class is a handful of wealthy billionaire families that rule through their two parties, the Democrats and Republicans, Studer added.

He said that the SWP joins fights by working people and puts forward a

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Join fight against Florida prison officials' efforts to ban the ‘Militant’

BY SETH GALINSKY

With the notice this week from Florida prison officials that they have impounded issues no. 29 and 30, they have now banned 11 of the last 12 issues of the *Militant*. In upholding these bans, the Department of Corrections Literature Review Committee has never cited

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British Columbia aerospace workers fight concessions

College tries to overturn verdict

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endowment, has made it clear it intends to wage a protracted and expensive appeals fight, one that could result in the Gibsons being driven out of business before the case is ever settled. The bakery owners have 14 days to respond and the court says it will rule Sept. 9.

A Lorain County jury found the college and Raimondo orchestrated protests outside the Gibson's store, smearing the bakery owners as racists, claiming — without ever producing a single piece of evidence — that they had a long history of racial profiling. The college also backed a boycott campaign that damaged the small business. Raimondo encouraged, organized and accompanied hundreds of students over two days of actions outside the store after the arrest of three Black students who had attempted to steal from the bakery.

All three of the students pled guilty to misdemeanor charges and stated in court that no racism was involved in Gibson's response to the theft.

"I hope we rain fire and brimstone on that store," texted interim Assistant Dean of Students Antoinette Myers to Raimondo when the three students that stole from the bakery submitted their guilty pleas. And that is exactly what the college has been doing.

College officials refused the Gibsons' request from the beginning that the administration issue a statement acknowledging that the Gibsons are not racists and had no record of racial profiling. When the case went to trial they attempted to get the Gibsons to give up the fight by dragging out the trial proceedings, conducting 32 depositions, including some lasting several days.

With disdain for working people in Lorain County, where Oberlin is located, the college's legal brief claims it

"could not (and did not) receive a fair trial in Lorain County." They had tried to get the trial moved from Lorain, contemptuously claiming the jury pool there was "poisoned."

The college argues the award of \$25 million in damages against it, which it calls "grossly excessive," was "given under the influence of passion and prejudice."

It wasn't "passion and prejudice," but working-class solidarity that drove the response of many across the region who have supported the Gibsons, disgusted at the college's race-baiting and attempts to crush the small business. Many came to shop at the store in a show of support and put signs on their lawns backing the family.

College tries to twist the issue

Oberlin's lawyers claim the slanders of "racism" and racial profiling are simply opinions being expressed by the college's students, constitutionally protected free speech.

But the Gibsons never sued the students. They sued the college and the dean for what they did in slandering the family as "racist" and damaging their business. During the protest college officials encouraged and let students use college copiers to print flyers, gave them food and drink, cancelled classes and awarded students who took part in the protest with credits. And they cut the Gibson's contract to supply the college with baked goods.

This is explained in an updated FAQ document provided by Gibsons' lawyers. It can be viewed at: <https://www.lawlion.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/UPDATED-FAQs-re-Gibsons-Bakery-v.-Oberlin-College.pdf>.

As part of a national effort to push back against the court decision, Ober-

SWP delegation brings solidarity to Puerto Rico



Militant/Linda Joyce

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — Alyson Kennedy, above right, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president in 2016 and a Walmart worker in Dallas, joined a 200-strong demonstration "For our lands" here Aug. 16, at the start of a five-day solidarity and fact-finding party delegation to Puerto Rico, a colony of the U.S. capitalist rulers. She was joined by Seth Galinsky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York City public advocate, left, and Linda Joyce, a party supporter from Georgia.

Demonstrators were protesting against proposed zoning changes by the colonial government's Planning Board that they fear will lead to the destruction of protected agricultural and park land as well as accelerate selling government-owned land to profit-hungry U.S. capitalists. The action was called by a coalition of groups following the massive protests that forced the resignation of Gov. Ricardo Rosselló.

"Working people in the United States and in Puerto Rico have common interests," Galinsky told the crowd. "We need to fight together." He said the SWP campaigns for cancelling Puerto Rico's \$74 billion debt.

Kennedy, Galinsky and Joyce spoke with fishermen, farmers and pharmaceutical, hotel, farm, steel and construction workers here and in Humacao, Yabucoa, Punta Santiago, and Naguabo. Full coverage will appear in next week's *Militant*.

— LINDA JOYCE

lin College President Carmen Twillie Ambar told the *Wall Street Journal* that "you can have two different lived experiences and both those things can be true," seeking to justify college officials' continuing attacks on the bakery owners. But the jury made its decision from the material *fact* that the college helped to organize a campaign to damage the Gibsons.

The jury awarded \$44 million in damages to the Gibsons, but this was reduced to \$25 million by Miraldi. Ohio state law caps the amount of punitive damages successful plaintiffs can win from a jury.

The Gibsons' attorneys announced that if the college goes ahead with its appeal and drags out their victimization of the Gibsons, the family will take legal

action to overturn the state law and have the jury's full damage award restored.

Laws passed in a number of states to cap damages have been pushed by wealthy businesses and individuals seeking to limit their liability when they willfully do harm to others. Courts in 13 states have ruled that similar damage restrictions are unconstitutional.

THE MILITANT

Stop the raids! Amnesty for immigrants!

Recent immigration raids aim to strike fear into millions of workers without papers, as the bosses seek ways to drive down wages and conditions of all working people. The 'Militant' explains why the fight for an amnesty for immigrants in the U.S. is in the interests of all workers.



AP photo/Rogelio V. Solis
Aug. 11 Canton, Mississippi, protest against arrest of 680 workers in immigration raids.

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‘Bosses have their two parties’

Continued from front page

program to advance the line of march of the working class.

Ved Dookhun, SWP candidate for mayor of Troy, New York, welcomed everyone and introduced the other SWP candidates in attendance: Lawrence Quinn for Troy City Council president, Abby Tilsner for Albany County Executive, and Lea Sherman for New Jersey General Assembly.

The meeting was attended by campaign supporters from across the region. By the end of the evening \$2,600 had been raised toward the \$3,500 fund for the new hall.

Louisville SWP headquarters opens

The same evening SWP leader Dave Prince was the speaker at a Militant Labor Forum at the new forum hall and SWP campaign headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky.

“The Socialist Workers Party decided to organize a branch here about a year ago, but the party has a long history in Kentucky and the area,” Prince said.

“It has participated in miners’ and other labor and social struggles in Kentucky and West Virginia; in the 1975 Louisville school desegregation fight; the struggle for women’s access to family planning, including the right to abortion; and voting rights for “felons.” The SWP is well known, he said.

Among the participants in the event were a couple of workers from a Walmart store in the area who work with members of the SWP there.

Prince explained that there is bipartisan agreement by the Democratic and Republican parties, both parties of the capitalist rulers, on major questions.

“Former President Bill Clinton started wars that George Bush, Barack Obama and Donald Trump continued,” Prince said. “On his watch with mandatory sentencing and other measures, the number of people incarcerated jumped to 1.4 million in the U.S. He was known as the ‘death penalty president.’”

Kentucky SWP candidates Amy Husk for governor and Samir Hazboun for lieutenant governor were at the meeting. The SWP builds solidarity with the coal miners and their families who have been protesting for weeks in Harlan

County against nonunion Blackjewel Coal Co. Party members have made several campaign trips to the area, and used the campaign to build solidarity around the state. (See article on front page.)

“SWP members do everything possible to organize unions,” said Prince. “A union isn’t a ‘thing,’ but the act of workers building unions, solidarity of workers fighting together to defend themselves and other workers from the bosses’ attacks. It is about what we do. And in the process we change our view of ourselves and what we’re capable of.”

The SWP branch has now raised \$2,000 of a goal of \$2,500 toward establishing the new headquarters and getting books with the program of the party.

Workers need their own party

Campaigning door to door in Amery, Wisconsin, Aug. 17, Helen Meyers, SWP candidate for St. Paul City Council, met retail worker Patrisha Castilleja. “Workers need our own party that fights to end the big problems we face today,” Meyers told her.

Castilleja said she is still paying for the premature birth of her son, even though she had health insurance at the time. “He is now 4 years old,” she said.

Meyers explained that health care in Cuba is available as a product of the revolution made by working people, who overturned capitalist rule and took



Militant/Kevin Dwire

Helen Meyers, left, SWP candidate for St. Paul City Council, talks with Patrisha Castilleja, store worker, in Amery, Wisconsin, Aug. 17. Meyers pointed to Kentucky miners fight for back pay.

power into their own hands. “Workers get the health care they need, not what they can pay,” she said.

They also discussed the fight by the Kentucky miners. “If the community doesn’t stick together, nothing is going to change,” said Castilleja. She bought a six-month subscription to the *Militant*.

In London, Communist League members joined a demonstration Aug. 15 of thousands for Kashmiri freedom outside the Indian High Commission.

“They have occupied Kashmir since

1947,” Fazal Hussain told the *Militant*. “Now there’s a curfew, shortages of food and medicines.”

Seven people picked up subscriptions to the *Militant* from Communist League members and 16 bought books on revolutionary politics, including eight copies of *Malcolm X*, *Black Liberation*, and *the Road to Workers Power*.

Jacob Perasso in Albany, New York, and Maggie Trowe in Louisville, Kentucky, contributed to this article.

Bob Redrup, communist fighter for seven decades

BY NORTON SANDLER

LOS ANGELES — Bob Redrup, a seven-decade member of the Socialist Workers Party, died on Aug. 15 after a short illness. Redrup was 92.

Born in New Jersey in 1927 to a working-class family, Redrup joined the Merchant Marine in 1944 at the age of 16. He worked on the Liberty Ships until the end of World War II. Fatality rates on these ships were high. They not only came under attack by German submarines but also came apart and sank having been shoddily built during speedup imposed across industry as part of the rulers’ war efforts.

While working on freighters for United Fruit Company in 1950, Redrup met members of the SWP who were in the party’s trade union fraction in the National Maritime Union. They gave him the books *In Defense of Marxism*, *The Revolution Betrayed* and *The Stalin School of Falsification*. He eventually joined the party during the early 1950s.

Previously he worked on the ships with members of the Communist Party who tried to recruit him. But Redrup said the CP supported the “no-strike policy” the government imposed on the unions during the war and its members didn’t answer questions he had about the course of the Stalinist leadership of the Soviet Union in the postwar years.

During the witch hunt, which targeted communists and other working-class militants, his seaman’s papers were pulled and Redrup was informed he could no longer work as a Merchant Marine. At that time in 1953 he was recuperating from tuberculosis.

Redrup then went to work at the General Motors plant in Linden, New Jersey, and was an active member of the United Auto Workers union there. He was eventually fired by GM in 1960.

Redrup and his wife Ann, also a long-time party member, transferred from the New York to the Los Angeles branch in

1976. She returned to New York in the early 1980s. He moved to Washington state in the spring of this year due to failing health.

While in Los Angeles, Redrup, a factory electrician, worked many years at Continental Can, organized by the United Steelworkers, and at Entenmann’s bakery, organized by the International Association of Machinists.



Meeting to celebrate life of Bob Redrup, above, will be held in Los Angeles Sept. 1.

Redrup regularly staffed the party bookstore here in the 1980s. Under the impact of the 1979 Nicaraguan Revolution, where working people had established their own government, and of the war in El Salvador, the party branch headquarters near Pico Boulevard and Vermont Avenue was a center of activity and discussion for those looking for a working-class road forward. It was destroyed by fire in the riots in the aftermath of the 1992 verdict that acquitted Los Angeles cops for the beating administered to Rodney King. Redrup and many others responded rapidly, rebuilding the headquarters and book center.

Redrup volunteered to help maintain, build or improve party headquarters over the years, including national party offices in New York City and the party’s leadership school in upstate New York.

A meeting to celebrate Redrup’s political contributions to building the SWP will be held in Los Angeles on Sunday, Sept. 1, 1:30 p.m. at 5828 Wilshire Blvd., 3rd floor. Messages from those who knew and worked with Redrup can be sent to the SWP branch in Los Angeles, swpla@att.net.

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is workers and our allies who can and will — in the course of struggles by the unions and beyond — lay the foundations for a world based not on violence and

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Malcolm Jarrett, Pittsburgh City Council

Washington

Henry Clay Dennison, Seattle City Council

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

Miners fight for pay, jobs

Continued from front page

rail tracks owned by CSX Railroad outside the Cloverlick mine since July 29 when they found out the bosses were trying to move a train carrying 75 full hoppers of coal worth more than \$1 million. The miners are blocking coal bosses from hauling coal out of the mine. Their slogan is, “No pay, we stay.”

Willig said their action is “for every blue collar worker that’s ever been stepped on.”

“Their voices weren’t heard,” he said. “They got walked over. Well, now the time stops. Don’t let corporate people take advantage of you.”

He urged workers to organize and fight. “Stand, unite, remain strong, defend your rights,” Willig said.

Their camp has won broad support from area workers and small business people. The tents they’ve set up were donated by funeral homes. A Chinese restaurant has raised thousands of dollars for them. Barbershops have offered free back-to-school haircuts for their children. And portable toilets, a generator and books, toys and cribs for a children’s tent have all been donated. Ice for cold drinks comes from a local nursing home. Food is coming in by the carload.

In nearby Clay County, where some of the displaced miners live, dozens came out for a march Aug. 17 wearing T-shirts that read, “I stand with Blackjewel miners.”

“We established this walk just to bring awareness that there are Blackjewel miners in a number of different counties,” former Blackjewel worker Clifford Berry told WYMT-TV. Similar actions were planned in Bell and Laurel counties.

“I support the Blackjewel miners 150% and I’ve stopped by their camp,” Keith Adams, a city worker in Cumberland, told Amy Husk and Samir Hazboun, Socialist Workers Party candidates for governor and lieutenant governor of Kentucky, in Lynch, Aug. 9. “My stepdad worked for Blackjewel and his bank balance is negative \$2,100.” Adams had been a coal miner for 14 years until he was injured on the job.

“The bigwigs make their money from the ones with the calloused hands and sore backs,” Adams said.

After Blackjewel declared bankruptcy, its mines and other assets were put up for auction in a West Virginia court. KopperGlo bought the Cloverlick mine, pending agreement

by the U.S. government. KopperGlo bosses offered the workers \$800 toward their unpaid wages if they would end their protest and get off the tracks. Miners calculate they were each owed \$4,202.91 on average.

“They’ve offered \$800 in exchange for \$4,000 in unpaid wages,” miner Chris Rowe told Trains News Wire Aug. 16. “The way we see it, we’ve already worked for it once, so we’re not interested in doing the work twice and getting paid for it once.”

At the same time, former CEO of Blackjewel Jeff Hoops has asked the bankruptcy court to grant him some \$22.2 million. Half of that is for loans he said he made to the company, though he admits there is no documentation. Two other companies run by Hoops have filed claims for \$11.2 million in royalties and rents — with documents signed by him as both Blackjewel boss and the head of the companies making the claims against Blackjewel!

Hoops is currently building a multimillion dollar resort in Milton, West Virginia, which will include a hotel, a 500-person convention center, nine-hole golf course, a 3,500-seat replica of the Roman Coliseum, horse stables, and replicas of Yankee Stadium and other baseball stadiums.

Miners fight in Wyoming

The 600 Blackjewel miners thrown out on the street in Wyoming are in a similar fight to get their jobs back, and are receiving widespread solidarity.

The bankruptcy court has authorized the sale of Blackjewel’s Eagle Butte and Belle Ayr mines near Gillette, as well as



Mountain Top News

Laid-off Blackjewel miners and supporters express solidarity with rail workers as train engine leaves without coal cars. They’ve blocked tracks since July 29 in fight to be paid for work done.

its Pax Surface Mine in West Virginia, to Contura Energy, Inc. The sale, like the one in Kentucky, is still dependent on agreement from Washington for over \$60 million in unpaid royalties.

Contura bosses sold the mines to Blackjewel just two years ago. They were looking to get out of Wyoming’s coal, which is used for generating electricity, and to focus on metallurgical coal, and to avoid paying for reclamation and cleanup costs if the mines are closed.

They say they definitely plan to keep running the metallurgical coal mine in West Virginia. They’ve promised to hire some of the 600 miners back in Wyoming too, but they admit they have “a more short-term opera-

tional approach” there.

“If you’re not looking for another job at this point, you’re setting yourself up,” miner Deanna Fritz told the *Gillette News Record* Aug. 14.

“It’s not sure the mine is going to come back,” she said. Fritz went through layoffs a few years ago at the Buckskin mine.

“I’m not looking for something part time and to hop to another job and hop to another job,” she said. “I’m not a disposable commodity and am not going to allow someone to treat me like that.”

One person who plans to make out well from the deal is new Contura CEO David Stetson. He gets a \$1 million salary this year, with a possible \$450,000 bonus.

Moscow covers up nuclear blast at White Sea site

BY JANET POST

It took Russian government officials two full days to acknowledge that an explosion that killed seven people Aug. 8, involved workers handling nuclear material at its Nyonoska missile testing site on the White Sea. Moscow has a long record of callous indifference to those living near its nuclear plants, including its deadly cover-up of the world’s worst nuclear disaster at Chernobyl in the Ukraine in 1986.

Russia’s weather agency, Rosgidromet, reported radiation levels in Severodvinsk, 18 miles from Nyonoska, were up to 16 times higher than normal after the explosion. Workers posted photos of radiation monitors on social me-

dia. But the government only acknowledged the spike in radiation levels days later on Aug. 11.

The day before it also announced that two stations that monitor nuclear activity nearest to Nyonoska, at Dubna and Kirov, had “communication and network issues” and were no longer able to provide information. The blast threw several staff members from Rosatom, the state nuclear agency, off a testing platform into the sea.

Thousands turned out for the funerals Aug. 12 of the workers killed.

Five days after the explosion Severodvinsk news announced that people in the village of Nyonoska, adjacent to the testing site, would be evacuated by train. But Igor Orlov, governor of the region, denied this would happen.

At local pharmacies there was a run on iodine tablets, which protect the thyroid gland against absorbing some radiation.

Workers injured in the explosion were taken to Arkhangelsk regional hospital. Doctors there told the *Moscow Times* that medical workers were never informed that the patients they were treating were radioactive. One doctor now has Caesium-137, a radioactive isotope, in his muscle tissue.

Meanwhile, the mayor of Severodvinsk went on vacation.

Moscow’s cover-up at Chernobyl

The disastrous Chernobyl nuclear power plant explosion in 1986 affected the atmosphere over some 8.4 million people. It highlighted the brutality and contempt for working people of the Soviet government in

Moscow that had refused to construct a containment vessel for the plant that would have impeded the release of radiation. Stalinist officials did not immediately evacuate the area after the explosion and denied the death toll, but tens of thousands died or were stricken with cancer, maybe more.

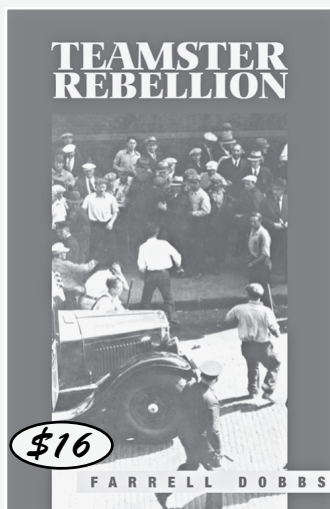
In contrast to the response by Moscow, Cuba’s revolutionary government provided medical care free of charge to more than 25,000 Chernobyl victims, overwhelmingly children, from Ukraine between 1990 and 2011.

Washington says the explosion at Nyonoska involved the prototype of a nuclear-powered cruise missile that Russian President Vladimir Putin previously boasted could avoid detection by missile defense systems.

Today Washington and Moscow have 90% of the world’s nuclear weapons.

Washington is the only government to have ever used them when it dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The Socialist Workers Party has always demanded that U.S. rulers dismantle their stockpile unilaterally, and calls on Moscow and all governments that have nuclear arms to do so as well.

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—ON THE PICKET LINE

Philippine beverage workers strike backs contract workers

PASIG CITY, Philippines — About 100 workers, mainly contract employees, have been on strike at ZAGU, a major Filipino beverage company here, since June 6. Through their union, the Organization of ZAGU Workers, they are fighting to be hired as permanent workers with full benefits.

The company, known for making pearl shakes, employs about 600 people nationwide. Most have worked for years as outside contractors.

Cristina Aurestila, a 17-year company-hired field worker, told the *Militant* that an attempt to organize a union in 2007 was foiled by management. In 2018, a second unionization drive by ZAGU workers succeeded.

“They are taking a hard line but we will continue to demand for our co-workers to be regularized,” Jenelyn Machica, a permanent worker there for 15 years, told the *Militant*.

The strike gained wider publicity July 8 when about 50 security personnel and pro-company workers tried to push the picketers out of the driveway. A video of the violent confrontations went viral.

Vico Sotto, the mayor of Pasig City, in eastern Manila, visited the picket soon after the clashes. Posing as a friend of the workers, he chided the bosses for not directly hiring workers, many of whom “have been with you more than 10 years yet remain contractuales.”

“We’re not just fighting for ourselves, we’re fighting for all the others too,” Aurestila said, referring to the masses of contract workers in the country.

— Genoveva Valdez

British Columbia aerospace workers fight concessions

DELTA, British Columbia — Over 150 day-shift workers, members of International Association of Machinists Local 11, walked off the job Aug. 1 to protest Avcorp’s concession demands. These include attacks on seniority rights and vacations, contracting out jobs, and no pay raise in the first year of an eight-year contract.

“The walkout showed we’re united

and won’t compromise with extreme rollbacks,” IAM member Mike Smith, a 24-year mechanic at Avcorp, told the *Militant*. “We have to hold our ground for ourselves and future generations to keep up with the cost of living.”

The company “wants to give us nothing so they can give themselves big bonuses,” added 20-year union member and mechanic Blair Price. Workers went back to work the next day.

Avcorp employs over 250 workers here, who assemble aircraft structural parts for Boeing, Bombardier, Lockheed Martin and BAE Systems. Messages of support can be sent to Local 11, IAMAW District Lodge 250, 19005 – 94th Avenue, Surrey, B.C. V4N 3S4

— Ned Dmytryshyn, IAM Local 11 member at Avcorp

Debts, bankruptcies are soaring for older workers

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Debts and bankruptcies are soaring for working people over age 65. Bosses have held wages down for years and governments have gone after social benefits workers won in struggle in decades past, with a disastrous impact on elderly workers.

According to a 2018 report titled “Graying of U.S. Bankruptcy,” one in seven people who file are now aged 65 or older — an almost fivefold increase over 25 years.

And as working people live longer, their conditions become more dire. In 1989 one in five persons in the U.S. over 75 were in debt. By 2016, almost half were, according to the U.S. Federal Reserve. Of these there has been a tenfold increase in bankruptcy filings since 1991, up to 3.3%.

Workers face stagnant wages for decades while being hit by rising expenses for health care, housing and education. A quarter of retirees in the U.S. have an annual household income of less than \$25,000. And 50% of all U.S. households have less income today than they did 30 years ago.

Health care costs have skyrocketed with increasing numbers of working



Rappler/Enrico Berdos

Beverage workers on strike in Philippines read government notice to move their picket line June 27. Unionists are demanding company directly hire contract workers with full benefits.

people forced to shell out higher co-payments and deductions under their insurance plans. Under Medicare, out-of-pocket spending comprises about 20% of one’s income, with dental care, hearing aids and glasses not covered. And a 65-year-old retired couple face about \$200,000 in medical payments during their retirement years, the report says.

For decades union officials retreated from the militant struggles that built the industrial unions in the 1930s. They sought to get benefits from individual employers without mobilizing the union ranks to fight for what workers really need — federally funded retirement and health care plans as social protections for all workers.

More and more pension plans that officials negotiated became contingent on the profitability of the bosses. And when the bosses’ profits started to dive, workers’ pension plans went with them.

Many bosses succeeded in eliminating industry-based pensions. They’ve substituted 401(k) plans, which require deductions from workers’ paychecks and are based on speculating with retirement funds on the stock market.

For increasing numbers of workers, contributing a percentage of their wages

to 401(k) schemes is becoming more difficult as they need what little they earn just to make ends meet. According to a UBS bank survey, 40% of workers are unable to cover a \$400 unexpected expense with cash or savings.

Rising auto, student debts

Also propelling bankruptcies for those over 65 are demands for payments for auto or student loans, including those co-signed with a child or grandchild.

“Suddenly the credit card companies were trying to garnish 25% of my pension,” Freddie Green, 69, a retired auto worker from Pontiac, Michigan, who filed for bankruptcy, told the *Financial Times*, “and a guy showed up trying to take my son’s car because of a loan I co-signed for him.”

According to the U.S. Consumer Finance Protection Bureau Office of Older Americans, the number of those over 60 with student debt quadrupled between 2005 and 2015, “mostly because they co-signed for children or grandchildren. And 37 percent of federal student loan borrowers aged 65 or older are in default.”

Workers’ struggles in the 1930s won Social Security payments, however inadequate, alongside federal-guaranteed universal unemployment benefits, guaranteed disability compensation, and Aid to Families with Dependent Children, the latter of which the Democratic administration of Bill Clinton eliminated in 1996.

Out of the proletarian-led Black rights battle against Jim Crow segregation in the 1950s and early 1960s, the working class won the extension of Social Security to include health benefits like Medicare for the elderly and Medicaid for workers with very low incomes.

The rulers seek to whittle away if not eliminate these social gains entirely. “The capitalist does not care about the first thirteen years of workers’ lives,” wrote Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes in *Capitalism’s World Disorder*, “then he cares about our ability to work hard for the next fifty years; then he hopes we die quickly. That coarse attitude is what the rulers try to get layers of the working population to accept as well.”

But workers “cannot think of each other the way capitalists think of us,” Barnes wrote. “We have a different class view, a different moral view of society. Elementary human solidarity is in our interests, not in conflict with them.”

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



September 5, 1994

DUBLIN — “Twenty-five years — time for peace, time to go” was the slogan of a march here August 20 marking the 25th anniversary of the deployment of British troops on the streets of Northern Ireland. Several thousand people joined the demonstration, which ended in a rally that closed off O’Connell Street in the center of Dublin.

In addition to demanding withdrawal of British troops, the event served as a response to a recent wave of killings by right-wing thugs in Northern Ireland.

These attacks have claimed the lives of hundreds. They aim to terrify working people in Northern Ireland and perpetuate the divisions among those who are Catholic and Protestant.

Many placards and banners focused on the cases of thousands of political prisoners and victims of police frame-ups. “Bring all our prisoners home” was a popular slogan.



September 5, 1969

The courageous refusal of a battle-shattered company of GIs to carry out fruitless and unreasonable orders is heartening news to the antiwar movement. It is an ominous portent to the U.S. government. When the ranks of any army begin to question battle orders, that army is in trouble.

This makes serious trouble for the Nixon administration, which is trying to buy more time and freedom from the pressure of antiwar sentiment at home to continue the fighting in Vietnam.

Now, in addition to mounting pressure at home, some soldiers have said in the most dramatic fashion that they do not want to fight or die in Vietnam.

Now, more than ever, the antiwar movement must demonstrate its solidarity with American GIs who are saying, “No, we’ve had enough.” Now, more than ever, we must demand that all troops be brought home immediately.



September 2, 1944

In their frantic attempts to stem the rank and file movement to scrap the no-strike pledge, the union bureaucrats are peddling the promise that if the workers will only remain submissive “for the duration,” then “after the war” the union tops will lead a “show-down fight” against the anti-labor offensive of the employing class and the government.

This is a lie. The union officialdom are just as opposed to militant action in peacetime as during war. Their song-and-dance about leading the workers in fighting union action at any time is belied by their whole peacetime record. The union leaders opposed every independent struggle of the workers during the great upsurge of labor in the last decade. They “supported” strikes only when they were forced to do so by the pressure of the ranks and took over the leadership of struggles to behead them.

Protests in Kashmir oppose Indian rulers' crackdown

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

After announcing it would ease curfew rules and some other restrictions it had imposed in Indian-occupied Kashmir, the Indian government reversed its stance Aug. 16, in response to continuing protests there. Working people have joined actions to oppose New Delhi's decision to impose direct rule on the semi-autonomous area it has occupied for the past 70 years. By tightening its grip it aims to pave the way for greater exploitation of workers and farmers in Kashmir by India's capitalist rulers.

Despite a communications blackout, curfew conditions in many areas, a large Indian troop presence and growing numbers of people detained, protests "were growing more intense," Reuters reported Aug. 18.

In Srinagar, the largest city in Kashmir, cops and Indian troops clashed with local residents dozens of times over the Aug. 17-18 weekend. Dozens were injured but only a small number went to area hospitals for treatment, fearing they would be arrested.

The state government announced Aug. 16 that telephone landlines were restored in parts of the city, but internet and cellphones remain blocked. Indian authorities also ordered Kashmir government employees to return to work and that schools would reopen Aug. 19. But classrooms in Srinagar were deserted that day with parents keeping their children at home.

An unnamed government magistrate told Agence France-Presse that "at least 4,000 people were arrested and held under the Public Safety Act," which "allows authorities to imprison someone up to two years without charge or trial." Three former chief ministers of Kashmir are among those arrested.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi says his moves are necessary to remove Kashmiri appointed officials he says are corrupt and an obstacle to the area's economic development. In particular he aims to advance the interests of the capitalists and landowners in India against their rivals in Kashmir by ending rules that bar Indians from owning land there.

The conflict in Kashmir has its origin in the India Partition in 1947 by the departing British colonial power. In face of a rising, united working-class

struggle against colonial rule, London moved to cede independence. It maneuvered with bourgeois and landlord forces to divide the colony into a majority-Muslim Pakistan and a majority-Hindu India. The goal was to divide working people and their struggles, thwart steps towards a unified nation-state, and help maintain the influence of the British capitalist rulers.

In the state of Kashmir, the local monarch initially declined to join either Pakistan or India. The new government in Pakistan invaded and its Indian counterpart retaliated. A United Nations-brokered cease-fire in 1948 placed two-thirds of Kashmir under Indian rule and the remainder under Pakistan. It also called for a referendum on self-determination, but this was never carried out.

In an effort to gain support for partition, New Delhi granted a degree of autonomy to India-administered Kashmir.

Military tensions remain high between the governments of India and Pakistan, both of which are nuclear powers and continue to lay claim to the whole territory. An Indian soldier was killed in cross-border firing Aug. 17. And the Pakistan military said three of its soldiers were killed on the border earlier that week.

'End occupation of Kashmir'

Other actions worldwide have expressed solidarity with the Kashmiris' fight. At a rally in Auckland, New Zealand, Aug. 10, protesters held signs saying, "End occupation" and "Uphold the



AP photo/Dar Yasin

Protest Aug. 16 in Srinagar, Kashmir, against Indian government's imposition of direct rule, curfew and mass arrests in semi-autonomous region that is also claimed by rulers of Pakistan.

constitution," referring to the Indian government's decision to revoke article 370 granting Kashmir semi-autonomous status.

"The Kashmir Valley is the world's most militarized zone," Mujaddad Afzal, a student from Kashmir, told the *Militant* at the rally. New Delhi stations some 750,000 troops amid a population of 14 million in the area.

"We face two nuclear-armed powers," Haris Murtaza, another Kashmiri student, said, "and one that has a lingering presence — China."

In London, thousands demonstrated in opposition to the Indian government measures outside the Indian High Commission office Aug. 15 — Indian Independence Day, chanting "freedom! — Azadi." Attendees came from around the U.K., including 21 buses from Leicester in the East Midlands and six from Bolton near Manchester. Most participants were

Kashmiri and Pakistani immigrants; others of Bangladeshi, Somali and Indian descent.

Five days earlier about 500 people attended a similar solidarity protest in Birmingham, U.K. Speakers included local councillors, community leaders and representatives of women's groups.

"Britain was the colonial power and, through partition, sowed the seeds of the denial of the Kashmiris' right to self-determination," Communist League leader Jonathan Silberman said in his talk at the rally. Addressing calls by others that the U.K. government impose sanctions on India, he said, "It's not 'our' government. It defends the interests of the ruling rich in both its domestic and foreign policy."

Dag Tirsén in London and Janet Roth in Auckland, New Zealand, contributed to this article.

Thousands defend Maori land in New Zealand

BY MIKE TUCKER

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Some 100 cops turned up in Ihumatao early on July 23 to evict a handful of protesters occupying historic Maori land that Fletcher Building, one of New Zealand's largest companies, was set to turn into a housing development. "We are calling you all here to Ihumatao to come and stand with us to protect our whenua [land]," said Pania Newton, a leader of the occupation.

"When I heard the news on the radio, I drove my truck out here," Koroheke, a truck driver, told the *Militant* as supporters gathered to face down the police lines. Over the next few days hundreds came from throughout Auckland and across the country, setting up an occupation camp. By the weekend there were thousands there, including some well-known musicians who put on a free concert.

Hundreds continued the occupation throughout the following week. And thousands turned out again the next weekend when an 800-strong delegation visited from the neighboring Waikato province. It was led by King Tuheitia, titular head of the Tainui tribal confederation, whose boundaries include Ihumatao. Support protests have taken place across the country.

This is the biggest action in support of Maori land rights in 15 years.

After first declaring July 23 that her government would not intervene, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced

a few days later, as the protests grew, that she had met with Fletcher Building bosses and arranged a halt to any construction on the site until further notice. Newton called on Ardern to visit Ihumatao and meet with representatives of Save Our Unique Landscape, the group organizing the occupation.

Confiscated land

Ihumatao was one of the first settlements established in New Zealand by Maori, the indigenous people here. It was confiscated by the New Zealand government in 1863. Government militias, backed by 12,000 British troops, invaded what is today the southern part of Auckland and much of the neighboring province of Waikato. This was the biggest military offensive against Maori in the 19th century New Zealand land wars.

"We have experienced ongoing injustices since Ihumatao was forcibly taken in 1863. Our ancestral lands have been quarried, our waterways polluted. We feel as though we have sacrificed enough for the greater good of Auckland, and all we're asking for now is that this small piece of land is returned back to the guardians so that we can hold it in trust for all," Newton told the London *Guardian* in an interview Aug. 3.

Save Our Unique Landscape was organized in 2015 by Newton and other Ihumatao residents in this predominantly Maori village of 80 households near

Auckland airport. Newton and others have occupied the intended building site since Fletcher began setting out survey pegs in 2016.

Part of this coastal area, the Otutaua Stonefields, is a historic government-protected reserve. But 32 hectares nearby are private land purchased by Fletcher Building, which plans to construct 480 houses there.

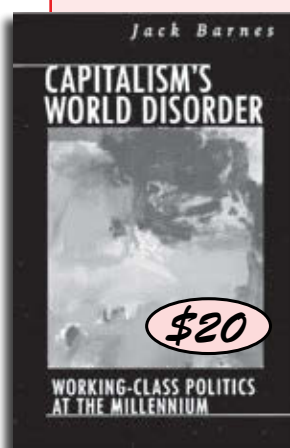
"This fight isn't just a fight for us and our kainga [village], it is for everyone to preserve this landscape," said Erueti Rakena, addressing protesters in front of the police line July 24. Rakena, who grew up at Ihumatao, had come from Rotorua to be part of the protest and to answer those who claimed that elders were not supporting the action.

"The government stole the land; the government should give it back," long-time Maori rights campaigner Tame Iti told the *Militant* Aug. 9 when he visited the Ihumatao occupation to extend solidarity.

As she campaigns door to door and at labor and social actions, Annalucia Vermunt, Communist League candidate for mayor of Auckland, has been building support for the battle at Ihumatao. "This fight sets an example for all working people of how we can unite and stand up to the capitalist bosses, their courts and their government when they try to ride roughshod over us," she said. "It shows how it falls to working people to defend our rights and our cultural legacy."

Capitalism's World Disorder

by Jack Barnes



"This sharpening political polarization and these rising class tensions — in face of the growing economic crisis of the capitalist system, interimperialist conflicts, and war threats — will mark our political lives in the years ahead as we prepare for deepening class battles."

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Nepal event discusses Cuban Revolution, way forward for workers

BY ANNALUCIA VERMUNT AND MARTÍN KOPPEL

BHAKTAPUR, Nepal — July 29 was a packed day of political and cultural activities in this historic city for a group of delegates who had just participated in a regional Cuba solidarity conference in Kathmandu, Nepal's capital. Highlights of the visit included a tour of Bhaktapur's ancient city center, learning about the exemplary role of Cuban internationalist doctors here after the 2015 earthquake, and speaking at a public meeting of 150.

Following the Ninth Asia-Pacific Regional Conference in Solidarity with Cuba held in Kathmandu (see report in last week's *Militant*), five delegates visited nearby Bhaktapur at the invitation of the Cuba Solidarity Committee Nepal (CSCN) and the Nepal Workers and Peasants Party (NWPP). Leaders of these organizations had previously met some of them at international Cuba solidarity conferences in Sri Lanka in 2012 and Bangladesh in 2014.

Surendra Raj Gosai, president of the CSCN, welcomed Janet Roth and Annalucia Vermunt from the Communist League in New Zealand, Baskaran Appu from the Communist League in Australia and Samir Hazboun and Martín Koppel from the Socialist Workers Party in the United States.

Over the years the Cuba Solidarity Committee Nepal has exchanged information with these parties as part of the effort to tell the truth about the Cuban Revolution. Its magazine translated into Nepali several *Militant* articles on the fight to free five Cuban revolutionaries imprisoned in the United States, while the *Militant* published photos of protests in Nepal in defense of the Five.

The theme of the July 29 event here was "60 Years of the Cuban Revolution and Anti-Imperialist Struggle." Held at the Khwopa Engineering College it attracted university professors, high school teachers, students, workers and farmers. The presentations were given in English with translation to Nepali.

"The Cuban Revolution is a paradigm of resilience against imperialism, not only in the Western Hemisphere but in



Top, July 29 meeting platform, Bhaktapur, Nepal. From left, Janet Roth, Communist League, New Zealand; Baskaran Appu, Communist League, Australia; Annalucia Vermunt, CL New Zealand; Martín Koppel, Socialist Workers Party; Saroj Gosai, Nepal Professors' Society; Srijana Sainju, deputy in provincial government for Nepal Workers and Peasants Party; Samir Hazboun, SWP; and Surendra Gosai, president of Cuba Solidarity Committee Nepal. Below, audience.

the whole world," said Subeg Bijukchen of the Nepal Professors' Society, which sponsored the program.

Srijana Sainju, a deputy representing the Nepal Workers and Peasants Party in the provincial parliament, called on the U.S. government "to stop its economic war against Cuba, economic war against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, interventions in Venezuela, invasion in Syria and other war-provoking activities in different parts of the world."

Martín Koppel described how the living and working conditions of workers and farmers in the U.S. have sharply declined over the past three decades and pointed to struggles working people are organizing to defend themselves. Today, he said, "we face a global capitalist crisis of the kind none of us have ever lived through. In every country the ruling class is making us pay for this crisis. Sharper struggles

are inevitable, including in the U.S."

A revolutionary workers party must be forged in struggle to lead working people to take state power, Koppel said. "That's why we point to the example of Cuba's socialist revolution." He described how SWP members join union and other social struggles and introduce the party and its program to fellow workers they meet campaigning in cities, towns and rural areas.

For working people in New Zealand the Cuban Revolution represents an example of the way forward too, Annalucia Vermunt, Communist League candidate for mayor of Auckland, told the meeting.

She noted that the government there is deploying troops in Afghanistan and Iraq alongside other imperialist powers. And she pointed to assaults on working people at home, including government moves to curb democratic rights after the murder of 50 Muslim worshippers by a gunman in Christchurch in March.

She described an ongoing fight led by Maoris, which CL members have joined, to stop the commercial development of land at Ihumatao, an area with important cultural significance for the indigenous Maori people.

Gosai, who like Sainju is a provincial parliamentary deputy for the Nepal Workers and Peasants Party, concluded the program by explaining the value of such political exchanges to strengthen common work by anti-imperialist fighters.

Audience members eagerly bought copies of the *Militant* and all 45 books on revolutionary working-class politics that SWP and CL members displayed, including topics from the Cuban Revolution to the class struggle in the U.S. to Russian revolutionary leaders V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky.

Earlier that day, Gosai and other NWPP leaders accompanied the

visiting communist workers on a tour of Bhaktapur's historic city center, two municipal colleges and a health center. They met with Narayan Man Bijukchhen, longtime chairman of the NWPP, which heads the municipal government. He described some of the history of peasant and other struggles in Bhaktapur, an area where the large majority of the population is Newar, one of Nepal's national minorities.

Cuban volunteers

Our hosts showed us the progress being made in restoring ancient temples and other historic sites damaged by the 2015 earthquake. They also described the solidarity Nepalis received in the wake of this disaster from a brigade of 50 Cuban volunteer doctors and health workers, who treated nearly 20,000 people across Nepal. The earthquake left nearly 9,000 dead and 2.8 million displaced from their homes.

In Bhaktapur, the Cuba Solidarity Committee organized health camps at schools where Cuban teams set up improvised operating centers. Naresh Khatri, co-chair of the Engineers' Society of Nepal, explained that Cuban health workers not only treated minor wounds but performed major operations, including for spinal injuries. Nepal, which faces a legacy of capitalist underdevelopment, lacks hospital facilities for some of these procedures.

"My father got surgery on his knee," said Khatri. "Because of the language barriers, we and the Cubans sometimes had to communicate by sign language, but we managed."

"There were long queues at all the medical centers to see the Cuban doctors," said Gosai. They won the trust of working people "not only because of their outstanding work, but because of how they treated people with respect."

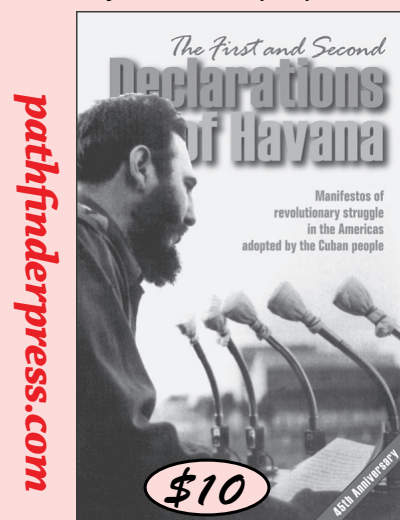
Janet Roth contributed to this article.



Cuban doctors treat Nepalese patient. A brigade of 50 volunteer medical staff from Cuba have served in Nepal, including in remote mountainous regions, since earthquake in 2015, extending medical care to almost 20,000 people. Such internationalism is hallmark of the Cuban Revolution.

The First and Second Declarations of Havana

Manifestos of revolutionary struggle in the Americas adopted by the Cuban people



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‘Men and women from nowhere’ changed Cuba’s history

Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution by Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui and Moisés Sío Wong, is one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for August. These three rebels of Chinese Cuban ancestry joined the revolutionary struggle led by Fidel Castro and eventually rose to become generals in Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces. They gave a series of interviews to Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press, and others from 2002 to 2005. The excerpts below are from the introduction to the book. Copyright © 2005 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong, three young rebels of Chinese Cuban ancestry, became combatants in the clandestine struggle and 1956-58 revolutionary war that brought down the US-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and opened the door to socialist revolution in the Americas. Each, in the course of a lifetime of revolutionary action, became a general in the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba. Through their stories the economic, social, and political forces that gave birth to the Cuban nation and still shape our epoch unfold.



Chinese Cuban members of New Democracy Alliance march in support of Cuban Revolution, July 10, 1960. Along with millions of other workers and peasants they were transformed as they fought to deepen socialist revolution in the country and change course of world history.

We see how millions of ordinary human beings like them — the “men and women from nowhere” who the rulers cannot even see — simply refused to accept a future without dignity or hope, refused to settle for less than they dreamed of. They marched onto the stage of history and changed its course, becoming different human beings themselves in the process.

The suggestion for this book originally came to us from Harry Villegas, himself a brigadier general (now retired) of Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces as well as a Hero of the Republic of Cuba. He is known throughout the world as Pombo, the nom de guerre given him in 1965 by Cuban Argentine revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara when together they fought at the side of the anti-imperialist forces in the Congo, and over the next two years in Bolivia as well. ...

The three young Chinese Cubans, of similar age, grew up in different parts of Cuba, under different class and social conditions. With each following his own path, all three came to the same revolutionary course of action. They threw themselves into the great proletarian battle that defined their generation — the struggle to overthrow the Batista tyranny and defend Cuba’s sovereignty and independence against the onslaught of the imperialist empire to the north.

The significance and historical weight of Chinese immigration to

Cuba starting in the mid-nineteenth century emerges from their accounts. In proportion to population, this immigration to Cuba was greater than anywhere else in the Americas, the United States included. In fact, thousands of Chinese laborers brought to build railroads in the US West later emigrated to Cuba in hopes of finding better conditions of life and work.

The lucrative trafficking in tens upon tens of thousands of Chinese peasants — their impressment, their death-ship transport to Cuba, their indentured labor on sugar plantations supplementing the dwindling supply of African slaves, and above all their resistance, struggles, and unblemished record of combat in Cuba’s 1868–98 independence wars against Spain — all that is sketched here in broad outlines. It is a story largely unknown outside Cuba.

What is presented here, however, is not history alone. This is one of the indispensable strands of revolutionary Cuba today. From the pre-1959 racist oppression and superexploitation of Chinese as well as black labor, to the measures taken by the popular revolutionary government headed by Fidel Castro to end this discrimination and combat its legacy, to the integration of Cubans of Chinese origin into every level of social and political life today, the story unfolds. As Sío Wong puts it so forcefully, the greatest measure taken against discrimination “was the

revolution itself.”

“The Chinese community here in Cuba is different from Peru, Brazil, Argentina, or Canada,” he emphasizes. “And that difference is the triumph of a socialist revolution.”

The revolutionary overthrow of the Batista dictatorship on January 1, 1959, was not the end of a story. It was the beginning. After taking power, the working people of Cuba began building a new society that posed an intolerable “affront” to the prerogatives of capital. For more than half a century they have defended that society built on new foundations, holding at bay the strongest imperialist power that will ever stalk the globe. In doing so the Cuban toilers and their government have become a beacon, and an ally, to those the world over seeking to learn how to fight to transform their lives — and how to fight to win.

Among the many responsibilities Choy, Chui, and Sío Wong have each shouldered over the years — within the Revolutionary Armed Forces as well as in government assignments and in the leadership of the Communist Party of Cuba — participation in Cuba’s internationalist missions abroad stands out.

“Because our system is socialist in character and commitment,” Choy explains, revolutionaries in Cuba have always sought to act “in the interests of the majority of humanity inhabiting planet earth — not on behalf of narrow individual interests, or even simply Cuba’s national interests.”

Each served in Angola at various times between 1975 and 1988, as Cuba responded to the request of the Angolan government, just gaining independence from Portugal, for aid to defeat an imperialist-backed invasion by the armed forces of South Africa’s apartheid regime.

Chui helped establish Cuba’s internationalist military aid missions in Nicaragua, Ethiopia, and Mozambique. Choy served as ambassador to Cape Verde from 1986 to 1992. Sío Wong in 2003 helped Venezuela’s toilers in their efforts to establish and extend small-scale urban agriculture. From 1992 to 2010 he served as president of the Cuba-China Friendship Association. ...

As each of the three generals makes clear, the future will be written not for the working people of Cuba, but by them.

August

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Back fight by Blackjewel miners!

The following statement was released Aug. 21 by Amy Husk, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Kentucky.

As workers learn about the unfolding fight of coal miners standing up to Blackjewel and the capitalist profit-seekers looking to take over its bankrupt mines in Kentucky, West Virginia, Wyoming and Virginia, they're moved to join in organizing to spread the word. This is what's needed — build solidarity for the Blackjewel miners' fight.

In their greed, the Blackjewel bosses thought they could move the coal the miners in Kentucky had already carved out of the ground and pocket the money themselves. But they underestimated the miners, who blocked the rail lines.

The bosses underestimated the support the miners would win from other working people who see they have a stake in strengthening this fight and organized to offer solidarity. I've visited their encampment and urge others to do the same, to organize financial aid and support, and to send messages of solidarity.

Like the big majority of workers today, the Blackjewel miners don't have a union. But through their activity — standing up to the bosses together, winning solidarity — they are gaining confidence in themselves and those who back them. That's what union building is — taking initiatives with fellow workers and organizing with others to resist the attacks of the bosses and their government.

Working people often underestimate ourselves. We face disdain from the bosses' politicians, who call us

“deplorables.” But in the process of fighting together, our view of what we are capable of changes. We gain self-assurance to use our power and learn how to fight in a disciplined way. We begin to gain class-consciousness, and look for others facing attacks we can act to support.

In their drive to maximize their profits, the capitalists constantly try to squeeze more out of us by going after our wages and working conditions.

There are far less union miners today than past decades — none at all in Kentucky. The government in Washington keeps stalling on guaranteeing miners' pensions as more mine bosses declare bankruptcy. And the scourge of black lung is once again on the rise. Karl Marx, more than 150 years ago, noted that the only social power working people have is their numbers. But, he said, “the force of numbers, however, is broken by disunion” that is “created and perpetuated by their *unavoidable competition among themselves*.”

By fighting together for everything from immediate necessities like higher wages and safety on the job to an amnesty for fellow workers who don't have papers the government recognizes, we will begin to see ourselves, as Marx said, as “champions and representatives of the whole working class.”

Organizing workers to defend ourselves from the bosses today is a necessary first step along the road to building unions and a working-class movement that fights for all the oppressed and exploited. We prepare for bigger struggles as the crisis of capitalism deepens in the coming years.

Organize solidarity with the Blackjewel miners!

Florida officials censor ‘Militant’

Continued from the front page

a specific sentence in any issue of the socialist news-weekly to substantiate the allegations that the *Militant* violates any prison rule or regulation.

Virtually all of the impoundment notices sent to the paper have claimed the ban is needed to keep out coverage of our fight against prison censorship.

“This sustained censorship is a serious attack on the rights of workers behind bars to receive and read the news and political opinions they choose,” *Militant* editor John Studer said August 20. “And it's an assault on freedom of the press.

“We're asking our readers to help win broad support for our fight to put an end to these bans,” he said.

The impoundment notices for issues no. 29 and 30 by the warden at Sumter Correction Institution don't make sense. The one for no. 29 claims that the paper “contains criminal history, offender registration, or other personal information about another inmate or offender, which, in the hands of an inmate, presents a threat to the security, order or rehabilitative objectives of the correctional system.”

But there isn't a single word in the entire issue that contains *any* information about “another inmate,” much less anything that presents a threat. The Florida prison system's rules require the impoundment form list the alleged offending article,

but on this one it's left blank!

The impoundment notice for issue no. 30 alleges an article that reports that the Florida Press Association, which represents almost every newspaper in the state, is a threat because it has called on the Literature Review Committee to rescind the bans on the *Militant*.

But then it lists “Page 7 Racist.” Besides an article on a Cuba solidarity conference in Nepal, the other two articles are “Do El Paso Killings Show a Rise of White Supremacists?” and “Gibson Family Vows to Continue Their Fight.” The first discusses questions on the front page of every paper in the country over the last couple weeks. The second describes the fight of a small bakery against slanders by Oberlin College that they are “racist.” There is no way for the *Militant* to know what the prison officials object to.

Many of the *Militant*'s subscribers in Florida prisons have filed grievances asking that the bans be overturned

“Our newspaper,” one subscriber wrote the *Militant* this week, “does not present a threat to the security of the institution whatsoever in any way, shape or form. This is not an underground newspaper.”

While they've banned his *Militant*, he reports, prison officials have allowed “neo-nazi and other racially informed reading material” into the facility.

Join the fight to overturn the ban on the *Militant*!

Supporters of fight against Florida prison censorship

American Booksellers for Free Expression
American Civil Liberties Union Florida
American Library Association, Office for Intellectual Freedom
Amnesty International USA
Defending Rights & Dissent
Florida Press Association
Freedom To Read Foundation
Kurt Vonnegut Museum and Library
National Coalition Against Censorship
National Lawyers Guild
NYU Prison Education Project
PEN America
Prison Ministry at the Riverside Church
Project Censored
Tully Center for Free Speech
WeCount! in Miami-Dade County
Woodhull Freedom Foundation

Kerwin Pittman, Exec. Dir. Recidivism Reduction Education Program Services, Raleigh, NC
Dawn Blagrove, Exec. Dir., Carolina Justice Policy Center
Kimberly Mukatarian, Pres. Save Our Sons, Raleigh, NC
John Walton Cotton, professor, Howard Univ.
Mark Ginsburg, professor, Univ. of Maryland - College Park
David LeFrancouis, professor, Univ. of Quebec
And more ...

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, churches and defenders of political rights. Mail to: Literature Review Committee Att: Dean Peterson, 501 South Calhoun St., Tallahassee, FL 32399-2500. Email to: Allen.Peterson@fdc.myflorida.com Send copies to themilitant@mac.com

Hong Kong protests

Continued from the front page

“Should the situation in Hong Kong deteriorate further,” warned Liu Xiaomong, Beijing's ambassador to the U.K., Aug. 15, “the central government will not sit on its hands and watch.”

Thousands of members of China's People's Armed Police with hundreds of trucks and armored vehicles began practicing drills earlier this month in Shenzhen, just across the land border.

A Hong Kong rally of almost 200,000 June 4 marked the 30th anniversary of the Chinese government's bloody suppression of protesters demanding political rights in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. Although the Chinese government seeks to erase the memory of the massacre it carried out, Hong Kong is the one place in China where that event is still publicly commemorated.

The scale of the latest mobilization makes it harder, for now, for Beijing to launch a military intervention. It has used assaults by smaller groups of protesters on Hong Kong's legislative building, police stations and symbols of its presence to claim that the broader movement for political rights is led by “terrorists.”

The Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union said 22,000 of its 100,000 members attended a protest Aug. 17 to back the demands of the Civil Human Rights Front. Wilson Ng, a teacher who joined the rally as well as the large protest the next day, told the *Militant* by phone that the teachers' action was to show support for the students who had led many of the protests. But Ng added that many people want to return to “using peaceful means to achieve our democratic demands.”

In the citywide strike Aug. 5, over 1,000 workers at Hong Kong-based Cathay Pacific Airways took part, forcing the cancellation of 150 of its flights. Hundreds more were cancelled when the airport was paralyzed by an occupation of thousands Aug. 12-13.

Beijing uses economic clout

The Chinese government has begun using its economic weight to pull the territory's companies into line demanding they victimize workers joining the popular protests.

Chinese civil aviation authorities laid down the law to Merlin Swire, the billionaire owner of Cathay, in Beijing Aug. 12. He responded by firing four employees, including two pilots who had joined protests. On Aug. 16 China's state-run media announced the airline's two top officials were being replaced. China Central Television called it punishment for management's “sins.”

Cathay and its subsidiary airlines are heavily reliant on Chinese flights and customers for over half its commerce.

Carol Ng, a flight attendant and chair of the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions, told the *Wall Street Journal* that Beijing's message was “go back to your job, keep your mouth shut.”

But, she added, “I don't think Hong Kong people will agree to keep their mouths shut.”

Beijing fears the impact that the fight for political rights will have on working people elsewhere across China who face attacks on jobs, living standards and working conditions.

Hong Kong, a former British colony, was handed over to China in 1997 as a semi-autonomous zone under a “one country, two systems” arrangement for 50 years. That year the economy of Hong Kong was one-fifth the size of mainland China. Now, since China's rapid capitalist expansion, the country's economic weight is 30 times larger than that of Hong Kong. In 1997 nearly half of China's trade was through Hong Kong, but today it is less than 12%.

Nonetheless, Hong Kong continues to be an important international financial center with its own currency, pegged to the U.S. dollar. It remains the main conduit for foreign investment into China. It is also the main channel for wealthy Chinese to send their money out of the country.

‘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