

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Malcolm X: 'There will be a clash between oppressed, oppressors'
— PAGE 8

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 83/NO. 35 SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

US hands off Iran! End all Washington's sanctions now!

BY ROY LANDERSEN

A series of drone and missile attacks, claimed by Iranian-backed Houthi forces in Yemen, severely damaged Saudi Arabia's biggest oil site Sept. 14, cutting world oil supplies and escalating prices. President Donald Trump threatened the U.S. military was "locked and loaded, depending on verification," to retaliate.

Two days later, he warned that "the United States is more prepared than any country in history" to wage war, referring to the U.S. Navy armada and tens of thousands of troops in the Middle East. Yet the president said he hoped to avoid any war moves.

Trump had indicated interest in meeting with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, possibly at the opening of this year's U.N. General Assembly session. He said Sept. 17, after the attack on Saudi oil facilities, he no longer saw that happening. Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei ruled out any talks the same day.

Continued on page 9

Coal miners at Blackjewel 'stand up for what's right'

BY MAGGIE TROWE

CUMBERLAND, Ky. — Miners laid off and robbed of their wages by Blackjewel coal bosses July 1 are keeping up their encampment they set up July 29 to block the railroad track. They organized the protest on the tracks leading out of Blackjewel's Cloverlick No. 3 mine when the company tried to move the coal the miners had dug. The bosses declared bankruptcy and put some 1,700 miners on the streets in Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia and Wyoming.

Paychecks deposited in the miners' accounts were withdrawn without notice following the bankruptcy declaration.

A handful of miners who got calls about the company trying to move the train stood on the tracks and stopped it. They called as many co-workers, family and friends as they could. Soon others joined them and they've won moral and material support from across the region and beyond.

Continued on page 9

Build solidarity with striking GM workers!



Reuters/Rebecca Cook

Autoworkers picket in Flint, Michigan, Sept. 16. Strike shut down 33 plants, 22 warehouses.

UAW strikers fight for jobs, end to divisive concessions

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Nearly 50,000 members of the United Auto Workers walked off the job Sept. 16 in the union's first nationwide strike against General Motors in 12 years. The strike is part of an uptick in labor actions fueled by lower unemployment and the continuing efforts of the boss class to push the crisis of their capitalist system onto the backs of working people.

Picket lines went up shutting down 33 manufacturing plants in nine states — Michigan, Ohio, New York, Kentucky, Tennessee, Texas, Missouri, Indiana and Kansas — as well as at 22 parts distribution warehouses

Continued on page 7

GM workers, Blackjewel miners, fight for all of us

The following statement by Helen Meyers, Socialist Workers Party candidate for St. Paul City Council, was released Sept. 18.

SWP STATEMENT

The nearly 50,000 autoworkers on strike against attacks by bosses at General Motors are fighting not just for themselves, but for the entire working class. I've joined them on

Continued on page 9

Walmart is just 'a modern day sweatshop'

BY MARLEY WALKER

SAN LEANDRO, Calif. — "You can't make people work in total darkness," one Walmart worker told the *Militant* after managers at the store

Continued on page 4

SWP campaigns, wins support for workers organizing to fight



Militant

Touring Socialist Workers Party militants Alyson Kennedy, bottom right, and Malcolm Jarrett, top right, talk with Chris and Stacy Rowe at miners' encampment in Cumberland, Kentucky.

BY EDWIN FRUIT

SEATTLE — "We are seeing important examples of workers organizing to fight to change their conditions on the job. This is a change," explained Alyson Kennedy, to nearly 40 people at a Socialist Workers Party campaign rally in Seattle Sept. 13. Kennedy, the party's presidential candidate in 2016, and Malcolm Jarrett, its candidate for Pittsburgh City

Council, began a monthlong national tour in the Northwest.

"Many of these workers don't have a union, but they organize themselves, take a stand and in the process get solidarity and gain confidence," said Kennedy, a Walmart worker. She pointed to the fight by Blackjewel coal miners to get back pay stolen from them after the company declared

Continued on page 3

Hurricane Dorian exposed depth of class divisions in the Bahamas

BY SETH GALINSKY

Hurricane Dorian exposed the class divide between the wealthy ruling families and working people in the Bahamas, the disregard of the government for the lives of the majority who live there and the class values of the U.S. rulers, who dominate the islands' economy.

It is seen in who was hardest hit by the storm. In the way thousands of working people were left to fend for themselves during and after the hurricane. In the inadequate search operations for the dead that the government admits won't finish for months, and in the continuing chaos in getting aid to tens of thousands who

Continued on page 6

Inside

NYC forces homeless workers to turn over 'savings' 2

Cops fire Taser on customer in Walmart, drawing outrage 4

Over 150,000 attend Manila book fair in Philippines 6

—On the picket line, p. 5—

Uniform workers in Puerto Rico, make gains, end strike

Los Angeles truck drivers strike for right to join a union

Albany SWP runs on ‘program that can defend working people’

BY JACOB PERASSO

ALBANY, N.Y. — “I am running for Albany County Executive for the Socialist Workers Party to put forward a program that can defend working people from the carnage of the crisis-ridden capitalist system and unite the working class in struggle,” Abby Tilsner told supporters as she announced her candidacy at a press conference Sept. 10.

Tilsner, 53, who works at St. Peter’s Hospital, was among dozens of nurses who rallied in June in support of the contract fight being waged by nurses at Albany Medical Center.

Last April the nurses voted to unionize, joining the New York State Nurses Association. However, the hospital has refused to sign a contract.

“A central pillar of our campaign is organizing workers to extend solidarity to struggles like these nurses are waging,” Tilsner said.

The campaign was announced by WNYT Channel 13. Tilsner is joined on the SWP slate by rail worker Ved Dookhun, the party’s candidate for mayor of Troy, and Walmart worker Lawrence Quinn, its candidate for Troy City Council president.

The socialist candidates explain that it is possible for working people to take political power into our own hands and uproot capitalist exploitation.

Tilsner’s opponent, Democratic incumbent Daniel McCoy, has backed federal lawsuits against drug companies for pushing sales of addictive opioids. The pharmaceutical bosses

are making giant profits from opioid addiction.

“This crisis cannot be solved by suing pharmaceutical companies and transferring billions of dollars from them to the government and lawyers,” Tilsner explained. “The rising rates of suicide and addiction are the result of the broader crisis facing millions under capitalism. Our fighting program explains that working people can be transformed in the course of struggles against the bosses and their system, building our self-confidence and self-worth — along the way we can begin to address these issues.”



Militant/Jacob Perasso
Abby Tilsner, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Albany County Executive, speaks with Christopher Conroy, a truck driver, about party’s program in Waterford, New York, Aug. 24.

NYC forces homeless workers to turn over ‘savings’

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

NEW YORK — Officials here have come up with a new schema they claim will help homeless workers dependent on the city’s shelters “transition to permanent housing.” And it has nothing to do with building more homes or organizing workers to fight for a wage hike.

Instead, they will force workers in the city’s shelter system to hand over as much as 30% of their income to a “savings” account run by the Department of Social Services that workers get back only if they can afford to leave the shelters. The city doesn’t say how homeless workers are expected to live with 30% less in their pockets.

“People are not homeless because they’re not able to manage their money,” Giselle Routhier of the Coalition for the Homeless told *City Limits*, “They are homeless because they

can’t afford rent in New York City.”

In 2018 the city began putting the “savings” program for single adults into effect as a pilot program. If adopted, this regulation would apply to all single working adults staying in the shelters this year and would include all sheltered families in 2020. The Department of Homeless Services will hold a public hearing on this proposed rule Sept. 24.

The administration of Mayor Bill de Blasio justified the confiscation of workers’ wages, saying that a previous voluntary program to encourage the homeless to save was “ineffective,” according to *City Limits*.

Increasing numbers of those homeless work either full, part-time or temporary jobs, but low wages and high rents prevent them from being able to get a place to live, one effect of the capitalist crisis facing working people today.

In New York City, 45% of homeless single adults and 38% of homeless adults in families earn wages while homeless, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

On any given night at least 58,000 people are in the city’s shelter system, about three-quarters of whom are family members. And these figures don’t include the thousands of individuals who stay away from these shelters because of the abysmal conditions in many of them.

Homelessness increased by nearly

47% in New York state since 2007. Nationwide, during what the bosses call an economic recovery, more than 550,000 working people were homeless last year, according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Another indication of the rising numbers of homeless people here are those being shuffled into “hotel” shelters, a figure that has “surged over the last two years,” reported the *New York Post*. There were 5,473 households living in hotels across the city last month — two-thirds of which have children.

“Hotels lack kitchens for the parents to cook and spaces for the children to play,” the *Post* article said. “Often families are forced to spend weeks or more living together in cramped rooms.”

In 2017, de Blasio promised that the worst of these shelters would be closed and 90 more livable ones would be built by 2023. So far just 25 have been opened, a further indication that the capitalist rulers have no answers to the growing number of homeless in this city.

New International
A magazine of Marxist politics and theory, 1934-present
Articles, polemics and reports by leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and world communist movement.
Online at themilitant.com

THE MILITANT

Moscow frees Ukrainian political prisoner Sentsov

Ukrainian filmmaker Oleg Sentsov, framed-up and imprisoned for five years for protesting Moscow’s 2014 seizure of Crimea, was freed in a ‘prisoner swap’ Sept. 7. The ‘Militant’ demands Moscow get its forces out of Crimea and defends Ukrainian sovereignty.

Volodymyr Petrov
Oleg Sentsov, after being freed Sept. 7.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

☐ \$5 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

☐ \$10 for 12 weeks

☐ \$20 for 6 months

☐ \$35 for 1 year

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

PHONE

E-MAIL

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT,
306 W. 37TH ST., 13TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018.
OR SUBSCRIBE ONLINE AT:
WWW.THEMILITANT.COM

12 weeks of the *Militant* outside the U.S.: Australia, A\$10 • United Kingdom, £3 • Canada, Can\$7 • Caribbean and Latin America, US\$10 • Continental Europe, £10 • France, 8 euros • New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, NZ\$7 • All other areas, US\$16 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

The Militant

Vol. 83/No. 35
Closing news date: September 18, 2019
Editor: John Studer
Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Terry Evans, Seth Galinsky, Emma Johnson, Martín Koppel, Roy Landersen, Jacob Perasso, Brian Williams.

Published weekly except for one week in January, one week in June, one week in July, one week in September.

Business Manager: Valerie Johnson
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.
Telephone: (212) 244-4899
Fax: (212) 244-4947
E-mail: themilitant@mac.com
Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.
Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: For one year send \$35 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.
Africa, Asia, and the Middle East: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.
Canada: For one year send Canadian \$45 to the Militant, 7107 St. Denis #204, Montreal, Quebec H2S 2S5.
United Kingdom: Send £26 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, 5 Norman Road (first floor), Seven Sisters, London, N15 4ND, England.
Republic of Ireland and Continental Europe: Send £85 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London at above address.
France: Send 100 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15.
New Zealand and the Pacific Islands: Send NZ\$55 for one year to P.O. Box 13857, Auckland 1643, New Zealand.
Australia: Send A\$70 for one year to Suite 22, 10 Bridge St., Granville NSW 2142, Australia.

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

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

SWP campaigns, wins support

Continued from front page
bankruptcy.

She described how “lights went out at a Walmart store in San Leandro, California, and bosses gave out headlamps, telling everyone to keep working. But a number of workers refused to work in unsafe conditions and went home. And they returned to work the next day, not fired.”

Kennedy pointed to a headline “The World’s Wealthiest Family Gets \$4 Million Richer Every Hour” that appeared on the Bloomberg News website, describing the Walton family, the owners of Walmart. The article says the world’s 25 richest families have 24% more wealth today than they did last year.

“These wealthy capitalist families have a whole layer of upper middle-class lawyers, college professors, politicians and professionals,” Kennedy noted, “who justify this set up, by saying ‘we’re rich too, because like them we’re smart.’”

“There has been a slowdown in the world capitalist economy for sometime,” Kennedy told the rally. “And direct assaults on workers will increase as economic conditions worsen.”

In the face of this she explained the SWP puts forward a program that begins, “Support workers’ struggles to organize to defend themselves, to use union power on behalf of ourselves and all working people.”

Black nationality forged in struggle

Kennedy and Jarrett had a lunchtime meeting with Walmart workers Pat Scott and Tanae Hitchye. They were interested to hear about the response of workers at the San Leandro store to the bosses demands that they work in dangerous conditions and to discuss the campaign program presented by the socialist candidates. During their discussion, when Jarrett described what had been conquered by the civil rights movement, Hitchye remarked that African Americans face less racism today.

In his presentation to the rally Jarrett pointed out that many liberals write off the working class as bigoted. “They say that all Caucasians are racist and that it is in their DNA,” he said. Such arguments obscure the fact that racism is used by the capitalist rulers to divide working people and intensify competition.

“The African American nationality was forged in struggle,” Jarrett explained, including through the U.S. Civil War, the mass movement for civil rights that overturned segregation and count-

less other working-class battles. “It will be in the forefront of future working-class struggles,” he added.

Kennedy pointed to struggles by working people this year in different parts of the world where mobilizations in Sudan and Algeria have forced the resignation of hated regimes. But “governments that defend the rule of the exploiters remain in place,” she said. “What is in front of working people is forging our own revolutionary leadership.”

“We need to build our own party, one that can lead working people to overthrow the capitalist class’s dictatorship. The Cuban Revolution shows this is possible,” she added. Kennedy urged participants to join the SWP to help make this perspective presented by the socialist candidates become a reality.

At another lunchtime gathering, Kennedy and Jarrett met with Violet Peterson-Wallace and a friend of hers. Peterson-Wallace recently got a subscription to the *Militant* and the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* from SWP members in Seattle.

“There needs to be a line drawn on



Militant/Edwin Fruit

Alyson Kennedy, SWP candidate for president in 2016, addresses campaign rally in Seattle Sept. 13. Left, Henry Clay Dennison, SWP candidate for Seattle City Council; right, Malcolm Jarrett, SWP candidate for Pittsburgh City Council. Kennedy, who is on tour with Jarrett, explained how workers are beginning to take action, organize and gain confidence.

hateful speech. That kind of talk can spur on people to acts of violence and I am not sure that should be allowed,” Peterson-Wallace said.

In response Jarrett explained that denying anyone the right to speak sets a precedent that will be used by the

bosses and their government against the working class. “We need to be able to discuss and debate all kinds of ideas. By exchanging ideas and experiences in the course of our struggles workers will figure out the way forward for our class,” he said.

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 to defend themselves, to use union power on behalf of 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 cradle-to-grave 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 CO₂ 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 suppression 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.

Join the Socialist Workers Party campaign!

Discounted books for prisoners

Pathfinder Press offers books at a 50% discount plus \$2.75 shipping per order. Prisoners can mail their prepaid orders to: Pathfinder Press, PO Box 162767 Atlanta GA 30321-2767 Friends and family members can order for them online. For more info: www.pathfinderpress.com

Hear the SWP candidates

Come meet and hear Alyson Kennedy, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president in 2016, and Malcolm Jarrett, SWP 2019 candidate for Pittsburgh City Council, who are speaking and campaigning across the country.

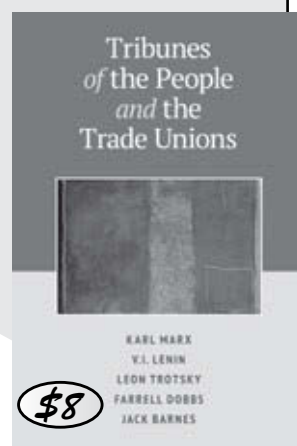
Sept. 20-22 Twin Cities
Sept. 27-29 Dallas
Oct. 1-4 Atlanta

Please contribute to the \$10,000 fund to make the tour possible. Send your contributions to the SWP National Campaign Committee, 306 W. 37th St., 13th flr., New York, NY 10018.

Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions

A tribune of the people uses every manifestation of capitalist oppression to explain why it’s 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 competition but on solidarity among working people worldwide.

pathfinderpress.com



In race to speed up deliveries, retail bosses squeeze workers

BY JANET POST

Retail giants Amazon and Walmart, the two biggest employers, are racing to speed up order delivery times as they seek to crush rivals and squeeze out of workers more profits for the bosses.

In the latest step in their cutthroat competition, Amazon announced this month that it would lease, or contract to build, massive multistory warehouses to reduce delivery time and cut labor and transportation costs, especially in urban areas.

Amazon has just leased a three-story warehouse in Seattle, the first of its kind in the U.S., where a ramp enables trucks to drive right up to the second floor and freight elevators take forklifts to the loading docks.

At least three multistory warehouses are planned for New York City. As of August, Amazon also plans to add 37 fulfillment centers to its current 75 in North America.

Meanwhile, Walmart, already the largest grocer in the world, announced this month it would establish by year's end a fresh food and general merchandise delivery service in some 1,600 stores covering 50% of the country. It will entail a \$30 minimum order, \$98 annual fee, and will require workers to pick, pack and deliver orders to customers' doorsteps in four hours.

Since purchasing Whole Food Market Inc. two years ago Amazon has been offering same-day grocery deliveries in some cities. Last year Walmart scrapped plans to pay store workers to deliver to customers' doorsteps after their shifts of up to nine hours. Workers at the stores where the company's scheme was piloted showed little enthusiasm for using their own vehicles to help the bosses out.

Amazon also plans to build 3,000 of its Amazon Go stores by 2021, Bloomberg News reported. Go stores automatically scan the cost of products as they are taken off shelves to the customer's Amazon account — using no cashiers, and eliminating waiting lines. But putting millions into Amazon's coffers.

Both companies increasingly use robots to press their relentless speedup of work and intensify the exploitation of workers. Amazon uses them in its warehouses and has begun testing a delivery robot in Seattle, San Francisco and Irvine, California.

Walmart has installed robots at 1,500 of its 5,000 stores nationwide that sort inventory, unload trucks, scan shelves, clean floors and other tasks.

"The robots," wrote the *Washington Post* in June, "don't complain, ask for raises, or require vacations or bathroom breaks."

It is workers who are the main target of the retail bosses' efforts to win greater market share. Amazon, Walmart and their rivals compete to limit wage hikes, cut benefits and exercise tighter control over workers' schedules. And, at all costs, attempt to block any effort by workers at stores and warehouses from fighting to organize unions.

Walmart is nothing but 'a modern-day sweatshop'

Continued from front page

here demanded employees continue working after a power outage shut down the lights from midday to almost closing time Aug. 16. She was one of a number of workers at this store who refused to remain and work under unsafe conditions, and went home.

This was an important and inspiring action, pointing the way for workers to organize together to meet attacks and indignities foisted on them by the bosses.

"I felt abused, bullied and disrespected when they demanded I stay," said another who refused to work. She said she was glad the *Militant* was going to cover what happened and urged the paper to headline this article, "Walmart is a modern-day sweatshop. All that is lacking are the sewing machines."

Workers from a number of stores participated in a discussion at a Sept. 14 Militant Labor Forum in Oakland about what they can do to organize and fight the dangerous conditions like this that the bosses impose.

One participant in the forum said she had remained at the store after bosses refused her request to leave. "We have been afraid to raise our voices, because we need to work," she said. "I'm here to find out what we can do."

"Exposing the unsafe conditions we face is one step," replied Betsey Stone, a Walmart worker, member of the Socialist Workers Party and the featured speaker at the meeting. "More impor-



Doug Strickland/Chattanooga Times Free Press via AP

Workers at Amazon warehouse in Chattanooga, Tennessee, 2017. Retail rivals Walmart and Amazon are ramping up the pressure on workers as they compete for ever faster deliveries.

tant is the example set by the workers who stood up to the company, including fighting against attempts to give them disciplinary points.

"As this gets known, it gives confidence to more workers to stand up," she said, "something that can be used as an example and built on."

During the outage, bosses urged workers to wear headlamps. When the store's supply of headlamps ran out, bosses pressed workers to use their cellphones as flashlights.

"With the headlight you could see a little ahead, but what about what was under your feet?" another worker told the *Militant*.

The outage hit the entire shopping center and surrounding neighborhood, not an unusual occurrence in this area where PG&E is notorious for inadequate maintenance of its infrastructure.

After about five hours, lights went on in other stores in the shopping center, but not at Walmart. After sunset, the store fell into total darkness.

When the afternoon shift arrived, bosses instructed workers to work as normal, unloading freight, palletizing and stocking. Large pallets of freight were dragged to the floor through crowded passages in the dark.

Managers threatened to give workers a "point" for being absent if they refused to work without light and went home. If workers accumulate just five points they can be fired under the company's disciplinary rules.

"Stay another hour, the power will come back," one boss prodded, reported another worker who decided it wasn't safe and went home. "If I do work in the dark, rats like the dark as well," one worker told the *Militant*. A rat infestation has been an acute problem at the store, drawing the attention of co-workers and shoppers alike. Workers have encountered rats at close quarters as they move boxes.

Walmart maintenance workers, without necessary training and equipment, have been asked to collect dead rodents from traps set by an exterminating company — a cost-cutting measure the bosses have used to avoid paying a pest control service to dispose of the vermin.

Workers at the San Leandro Walmart have been asked more than once to work in the dark, as have workers at the Richmond store, and no doubt others.

Participants in the forum discussed the example set by coal miners in Kentucky who have blocked railroad tracks, determined to stop bosses moving coal from the mine until they are paid for wages stolen from them when the company declared bankruptcy. Like most workers today they do not have a union, but this did not stop them from organizing themselves to stand up to this attack and to win support.

Cops fire Taser on customer in Walmart, drawing outrage

BY SEAN WALSH

NORTH MIAMI BEACH, Fla. — When a customer at the Walmart store here argued with cops after mistakenly leaving a \$4 item at the bottom of his cart, the cops "settled" the dispute by stunning the man with a Taser, Sept. 3.

Cops fired the weapon three times before taking the older man away. Paramedics cleaned up blood and piles of copper wire on the floor from the Taser firing. Managers surrounded the area to keep customers and workers from trying to find out what had happened.

Tasers incapacitate people by hitting them with up to 50,000-volts of electric shock. More than 1,000 people have died after cops stunned them with Tasers, said a 2017 Reuters report.

Over the next days the incident was the subject of a wide-ranging discussion by many of the store's workers.

"There were hundreds of people crowded in the area during that time," said a cashier. "How could they shoot an unarmed, disabled man? They certainly didn't make me feel safer!"

"The treatment that customer received was outrageous," another store worker said. Others nodded in agreement. "They almost never arrest people for small amounts. They usually wait until someone steals several hundred dollars so they can get them arrested on felony charges. For small amounts both the company and the cops figure it's not worth their time."

A worker who came to Florida from Cuba said, "This would never have happened in my country! How do they justify this violence against an old person? I heard people say that it was because he was too angry — so now it's a crime to be angry with Walmart? The whole

mess was unnecessary — from the queues to shortages to harassment by the cops to the managers' attitude."

The incident occurred as retail stores throughout South Florida were filled with working people desperate to stock up on packaged food, bottled water, batteries and fuel as Hurricane Dorian approached. At this store truckloads of bottled water were being offloaded as soon as they arrived — even then those aisles seemed to be empty. Uniformed police joined the regular complement of security guards, and additional police were called into the store in response to calls from store management.

Another store worker told this reporter, "The managers feel like they can do anything here no matter how wrong or stupid it is. We have to start standing up to it and work to get a union in here to defend us."

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

Oakland

Escalating Tensions in the Middle East — U.S. Hands Off! Speaker: Andrea Morrell, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Sept. 28, 7:30 p.m. Donation \$5. 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Tel: (510) 686-1351.

FLORIDA

Miami

Bahamas Social Disaster Is a Product of Capitalism. Speaker: Steve Warshell, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Sept. 27, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5. 1440 Biscayne Blvd. Tel: (786) 626-2499.

KENTUCKY

Louisville

Pipeline Explosion in Junction City, Kentucky: Workers Pay the Price for Capitalist Greed. Speakers include Ned Measel, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Sept. 28. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5. 1939 Goldsmith Lane, Suite 134. Tel: (502) 882-1041.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

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

Uniform workers in Puerto Rico, make gains, end strike

After one week on strike 110 workers, members of the General Workers Federation, at Cadillac Uniform & Linen Supply Inc., in Bayamón, Puerto Rico, won a wage increase and better working conditions. Most workers there were earning the federal minimum of \$7.25 an hour and had not had a raise in 15 years.

When the company pulled out of negotiations, they voted to go on strike Aug. 26 and began picketing the plant, shutting down production. The plant manufactures uniforms and also cleans linen from hospitals.

"They are exploiting us," striker Dianissa Resto, 40, told the press. "Eighty percent of us are women who they force to work long hours."

Cadillac owners won a court injunction, ordering workers to stop blocking the entrances. But the workers ignored the order, winning solidarity from other workers and all the main union federations on the island.

On Sept. 2 Cadillac caved in and offered the workers a three-year con-

tract. It includes a wage increase that will bring the lowest paid workers to \$8.90 an hour at the end of three years and gave all workers the same number of sick and vacation days.

Outside the plant, workers cheered when they learned that layoffs and work assignments would now be based on seniority, that workers who handle contaminated laundry would receive paid vaccinations, that workers fired for supporting the union would be back on the job, and that all disciplinary warnings had been erased.

"We didn't get everything we wanted," CGT Organization Secretary Scott Barbés told the *Militant* by phone Sept. 13. "But we showed that in the midst of the economic crisis and colonial rule we can use our unions to fight and if we fight we can win."

— Seth Galinsky

Los Angeles truck drivers strike for right to join a union

WILMINGTON, Calif. — Port truck drivers employed by NFI Industries' California Cartage Express subsidiary began a weeklong strike Sept.



Truck drivers employed by NFI Industries' California Cartage picket port in Wilmington, California, Sept. 9 during weeklong strike, demand to be treated as workers, not "contractors."



Juan Luis Martínez Pérez

Workers at Cadillac Uniform & Linen Supply in Bayamón, Puerto Rico, celebrate Sept. 2 the winning of a wage increase and improved working conditions in one-week strike.

9 to protest discrimination against workers fighting to establish a union at the company. NFI bosses claim the drivers are not workers but "independent contractors."

Striking workers have the support of the Teamsters Port Division and Teamsters Local 848 and set up picket lines at the Port of Los Angeles, in Wilmington and at the Rio Tinto Mine in Boron.

"Instead of giving us six-month contracts like usual, those of us supporting the union are receiving one-month contracts," Jose Antonio Garcia, told the *Militant* on the picket line here Sept. 11. Garcia has been a truck driver for 14 years and works for NFI/Cal Cartage Express.

"We have no medical, unemployment or other benefits, no vacations. We pay for costs like tags, tires, repairs," Garcia added. The big majority of the hundreds of trucking companies in Los Angeles and Long Beach classify the drivers they hire as contractors so that they can pay them by the load and not the hour and force them to finance their own trucks by taking on debts they cannot afford.

"We are on strike because we are

misclassified," Jesus Maldonado, a driver for 12 years who works at NFI/Cal Cartage, told the *Militant*. "We need to organize and fight. Prices go up and wages stay the same."

— Deborah Liatos

Health care workers rally against two-tier contract, for wage hike

OAKLAND, Calif. — Thousands of Kaiser Permanente health care workers protested here and in Sacramento, Los Angeles, Denver and Portland, Oregon, on Labor Day. They were rallying to press demands for a pay raise, an end to understaffing and against the company's attempt to impose a two-tier contract, with less pay and cuts in benefits for new hires.

The contract ran out a year ago for some 80,000 workers, members of the Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions in California, Colorado, Oregon, Washington, Maryland, Virginia and Washington, D.C.

"They are trying to divide us and weaken the union," Roy Ongpin, an emergency room technician at the South San Francisco Medical Center told the *Militant* at the protest, referring to the two-tier.

"I'm ready to strike if I have to," said Maria Vega, a housekeeper at the hospital in San Leandro. Vega wants to get a guarantee from the health care giant that they will not "outsource" jobs such as hers to contractors, a step bosses use to cut wages and benefits.

"Many who do similar jobs make less than Kaiser workers," she said. "But it's still hard to live on what they pay us, with prices going up."

"The people that run Kaiser are in a different world from the rest of us," said Darnyl Love, who works at the South San Francisco hospital. "They don't care what we are going through."

Out of the 80,000 Kaiser workers, 37,000 are members of SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West. The Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions announced that some 80,000 Kaiser workers across six states and the District of Columbia will strike Oct. 14.

— Betsey Stone

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



October 3, 1994

ROSETOWN, Saskatchewan — Unionized since 1936, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, Canada's largest grain-handling company, had never been struck by its employees. But after months of rancorous negotiations marked by the big cooperative's demands for contract concessions, the Grain Services Union set up picket lines September 7. The GSU represents 1,800 Wheat Pool workers.

With Saskatchewan harvest operations in full swing, the union aims to shut down the cooperative's entire elevator system. Contract provisions involving seniority rights, hours of work, use of part-time workers, and job security are under attack. A key issue in the strike is management's decision to contract out construction of a new generation of mammoth concrete elevators to nonunion firms. More than 100 GSU construction workers will lose their jobs.



October 3, 1969

DETROIT — Students at the University of Michigan and local Ann Arbor antiwar activists gave a rocket-like thrust to the upcoming fall offensive. The Ann Arbor New Mobilization Committee propelled thousands into action over what normally would have been a routine football weekend.

While people inside the stadium were watching Michigan beat Vanderbilt, activists were gathering at the main exit gates of the stadium readying themselves to lead an antiwar march through the streets a mile and a half to a rallying spot in the middle of the campus.

People had been leafleted earlier as they entered the stadium and a sizable march was expected. But only the bold-est thought that over 15,000 would join!

The police, who had brutally suppressed students and street people last summer, obligingly stopped traffic for the marchers.



September 30, 1944

The California bosses have launched a new all-out open shop drive. They are now campaigning for the adoption of the so-called "Right to Work" amendment to the California constitution, sponsored by the Merchants and Manufacturers Association of Los Angeles, which aims to outlaw the union shop.

The open shop drive in California follows the pattern established in a number of states, which have adopted vicious anti-labor laws in the recent period.

To ward off the assault of Big Business the labor movement must be rallied in independent struggle on both the economic and political field. On the order of the day in California is the calling of a state-wide conference of all unions, regardless of affiliation, to draw up a program of action around which the ranks of organized labor can be mobilized against the open-shop union haters.

**Subscribe,
contribute to the
'Militant' online at
themilitant.com**

Class divisions in Bahamas

Continued from front page
desperately need it.

“Everybody’s been hit, the rich and the poor, but for the rich it’s less severe because they live in better buildings.” Jean Claude Timothy, 41, an electrician, told the press visiting the Great Abaco island’s Mudd neighborhood in Marsh Harbour, which was destroyed in the storm. “The people you work for for years don’t send a private plane for you ... don’t give you any food, any vacation pay.”

Abaco and Grand Bahamas — the two hardest hit areas — are well-known for their resorts, marinas, luxury condos and golf courses. The wealthiest residents there abandoned the islands well ahead of time.

But those living in the poorer neighborhoods, including what the government calls shantytowns, mostly populated by Haitian immigrants and their descendants, were stuck, at best taking shelter in churches and schools, many of which collapsed during the storm.

The *Washington Post* reported Sept. 13 that Baker’s Bay Golf & Ocean Club on a small island not far from Great Abaco hired 16 private security guards equipped with helicopters and assault rifles to protect their property, including homes for the rich and famous.

While many roofs were damaged, Baker’s Bay homes survived the storm. Not so the Mudd shantytown across the water and nearby Pigeon Peas. The flimsy homes there, many which have never had running water or electricity, were leveled.

Eager that company bosses can get back to making a profit, Baker’s Bay Chief Executive Mike Meldman told the *Post* he’s considering docking a “mini-cruise ship” off the coast to get the resort back up and running. Some 2,000 mostly Haitian workers used to commute daily to Baker’s Bay by ferry.

Discrimination against Haitians

Whether or not the workers of Haitian descent will be able or allowed to rebuild is an open question. The Bahamian government has long fostered discrimination against Haitians to divide the working class and facilitate the bosses’ efforts to push down the wages and

conditions of all working people.

The Bahamas-born children of Haitian immigrants are not automatically granted citizenship. Thousands of Haitians have been deported over the last several years.

The Bahamian government had been threatening to bulldoze the Abaco shantytowns, claiming they are illegal.

On Sept. 16, the Ministry of Housing and the Environment issued an order prohibiting anyone from rebuilding the shantytowns for at least six months on the pretext that it would interfere with removal of storm debris.

As of Sept. 17 the government has still refused to update the official death toll beyond the 51 reported a week ago. Everyone knows the figure is many times that. According to the government, there are still 1,300 people missing.

Some 7,000 people from Abaco and Grand Bahamas were evacuated to New Providence, the most developed of the islands, about 2,000 of them to shelters. At a shelter in Nassau, Timothy Rolle, one of the few Bahamians there, told the *New York Times* that Haitians and Bahamians are all being treated badly. He was so emphatic that a soldier warned the reporters who were interviewing Rolle that they were “inciting a riot.”

Everyone is worried about where they will live when they leave the shelters, and finding work. For those without official documents there is even greater uncertainty.

Immigration Minister Elsworth Johnson told the *Times* that the government has suspended deportation roundups in the areas damaged by the storm and the shelters. “Eventually persons will come out of those shelters,” he threatened, “and if they’re not properly documented, then we apply the law.”

Teachers who lost everything

“More than 200 of our members in Abaco and twice that in Grand Bahamas, lost their houses, their clothes, everything,” Belinda Wilson, president of the Bahamas Union of Teachers, told the *Militant* in a phone interview from Nassau Sept. 14.

“Our biggest concern is that they get housing and clothing,” she said, “and they need time to heal from the emo-

Over 150,000 attend Manila book fair in Philippines



Militant/Baskaran Appu

MANILA, Philippines — Over 150,000 people took part in the 40th Manila International Book Fair here Sept. 11-15. Above, fairgoers line up outside the exhibition hall on opening day. Many were high school and university students, and other youth. Because of an earthquake Sept. 13, a number of colleges closed the following day, boosting those attending to 50,000.

Over 100 exhibitors were at the fair, including the Philippines’ two national book chains — National Books and Fully Booked. Publishers and distributors of novels and educational textbooks and of children’s, religious and comic books drew many wanting to meet their favorite authors who were in attendance.

There was widespread interest in books presented by New York-based Pathfinder Press, one of several publishers from other countries at the fair. It publishes books by leaders of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States, of the Cuban Revolution and of the modern communist movement back to its founding. Titles cover workers’ struggles to build unions, women’s rights, and movements for national liberation and socialism. Pathfinder participated in last year’s fair and also some three decades previously. One repeat visitor, who bought several titles, said, “There’s a buzz about that there are communist books here.”

The booth was organized by Pathfinder Books in Sydney, the publisher’s Australian distributor. Over 500 books and pamphlets as well as 37 *Militant* subscriptions were sold.

— MIKE TUCKER

tional trauma.”

School authorities have still not decided where to send as many as 10,000 students displaced by the hurricane.

U.S. imperialism overwhelmingly dominates the archipelago. U.S.-based companies run many of the hotel and resort businesses there, which comprise more than 50% of the country’s gross domestic product. More than 80% of the Bahamas’ imports come from the U.S.

And despite some measures clamping down on “money laundering,” since 9/11 the Bahamas still serves as a haven for U.S. and other capitalists to set up businesses and avoid paying taxes.

Two weeks after the storm, the Bahamian government has still not even been able to organize the orderly arrival and distribution of donated aid. The three Bahamian airports had been so congested by uncoordinated flights from international aid and charity organizations that aviation authorities stopped all takeoffs for several hours Sept. 5.

Some food shipments have spoiled while waiting to be distributed.

U.S. government aid is being dispensed with an eyedropper. As of Sept. 14 it had approved a measly \$10 million.

Many Bahamians would like to go to the United States, at least until more progress is made in restoring jobs and housing. But President Donald Trump has said that he will not extend temporary protected status to any of the country’s residents. The status would allow them to come to the U.S. and work temporarily.

The revolutionary government of Cuba is setting an example of what is

needed to aid the people of the Bahamas. A group of 55 Cuban internationalist volunteers, who were in Bahamas prior to the storm as part of the Felix Varela Brigade, have been joining in the recovery efforts, including helping to repair damaged schools.

Cuba has offered to send experienced linemen to help rebuild the electric grid, volunteers with chain saws to clear roads, and doctors and nurses to provide medical care.

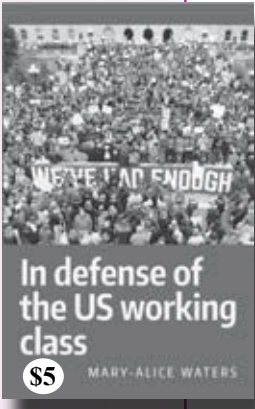
In Defense of the US Working Class

by Mary-Alice Waters

A GIANT HAS BEGUN TO STIR. Hillary Clinton calls them “deplorables” who inhabit “backward” regions.

But tens of thousands of teachers and school employees from West Virginia, Oklahoma, and beyond set an example in 2018 with their victorious strikes. “Workers never stop looking for ways to fight back,” said Waters, “and act when they find ways.”

pathfinderpress.com



Build solidarity with striking GM workers!

Continued from front page
across the country.

The unionists’ four-year contract expired the day before, with GM bosses claiming they need further concessions from workers to meet nonunion competition. The company, which made \$35 billion in profits in the U.S. over the last three years, is demanding workers pay more for health care coverage.

Workers are demanding an end to the two-tier wages system, imposed by GM in 2007, in which it takes eight years for all new hires to approach the pay scale of permanent employees and who get a riskier 401(k) retirement deal, versus a regular workers’ company pension. Another key issue is fighting for the growing number of even worse-paid temp workers to become regular GM employees.

Today’s highly profitable GM was a product of their 2009 bankruptcy, implementing a plan cooked up jointly with the Barack Obama administration. The “solution” involved splitting the company into two parts — “NewCo,” to be made up of the “good” GM, which involved keeping in operation Chevrolet, Cadillac, GMC and Buick; and “OldCo,” officially named Motor Liquidation Inc., which allowed the bosses to dump the Hummer, Saturn, Saab and Pontiac brands and their workers and pensions. The “new” GM exited bankruptcy in just 40 days with a \$50 billion government bailout.

For the remaining workforce it meant job cuts, two-tier wages and elimination of defined pension benefits.

This type of scheme has been imitated in a number of coal company bankruptcies in recent years, including the one that created Blackjewel.

Plant closures create ‘gypsies’

Another key issue is the bosses’ decision to close plants in Lordstown, Ohio; Baltimore; and in Warren and Hamtramck, Michigan.

A number of striking GM workers at the company’s Parma Metal Center outside Cleveland told the *Militant* that they call themselves “GM gypsies” because plant closures have forced them to move more than once. One worker named Gerry said he had worked at Lordstown until this March when bosses “idled” the plant. He said he is now considered a “seniority temporary worker.” He had moved to Ohio after GM shut down the plant he worked at in Trenton, New Jersey. Now, he said, he’s been told he’s being forced to move to GM’s Bowling Green, Kentucky, plant.

“The company abuses temporary workers,” he said, to the agreement of other picketers.

Union officials picked GM as the first of the “Big Three” auto companies to strike — the most profitable — to set a “pattern.” They granted temporary contract extensions to Ford and Fiat Chrysler, but many of those workers have been joining GM strikers’ picket lines. And the strikers have been getting broader solidarity and support from working people.

Since the onset of the capitalist financial crisis in 2007, UAW officials have promoted a series of concession contracts with GM, Ford and Fiat Chrysler, claiming they were necessary to keep the companies alive and competing



AP Photo/Bryan Woolston

Striking autoworkers picket GM assembly plant in Bowling Green, Kentucky, Sept. 16. Unionists are fighting to end two-tier wages system and for temporaries to become regular workers.

against foreign rivals. These contracts cut wages, opened the door to deep two-tier pay systems and the increase in temporary workers.

“We have given away so many concessions over the last eight-plus years, and this company has been ridiculously profitable,” 24-year-old second-tier Hamtramck plant assembler Chaz Akers told the *New York Times* Sept. 16. “That’s why we’re here. We’re fighting to get everything that we lost back.”

Akers said he gets \$18 an hour to install passenger-side headlights, while the lights on the drivers’ side were installed by a temporary worker getting \$3 less. “That guy has been a temp for two and a half years,” he said. “Is that temporary to you?” Workers hired before 2007 get \$31 an hour.

Workers at Ford and Fiat Chrysler — and at other plants across the country — are watching the strike carefully. “People here are ready to fight to get rid of the tiers,” rod shop assembly line worker Brian Gulley at the Ford Assembly plant in Chicago told the *Militant* as he went into work Sept. 15. Workers there are members of UAW Local 551. “We need equal pay for equal work. We need wage increases.”

Forklift driver James Fischer said he thought “people in this country need to stand up for our rights. Look at what they have been doing in Hong Kong.”

Workers at the Ford plant bought 27 copies of the *Militant* at the shift change.

Autoworkers are following other fights as well. Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president in 2016, and Malcolm Jarrett, SWP candidate for Pittsburgh City Council, visited the UAW picket line outside GM’s Bedford, Indiana, plant Sept. 16. They were on their way to bring solidarity to coal miners camped out on rail tracks outside the bankrupt Blackjewel mine in Cumberland, Kentucky, who are blocking their former bosses from moving a coal train out until they are paid in full for wages stolen from them.

Kevin Hutchinson, president of UAW Local 440 at Bedford, told Kennedy he was following the miners’ fight. He gave her a message of solidarity to take to the camp, saying, “I support them 100%.”

GM bosses have claimed the auto strike won’t hurt them so much because they’ve got vehicles stockpiled to supply dealers for months. But they fail to men-

tion that Teamsters union truck drivers who deliver the cars are refusing to cross the UAW picket lines and won’t haul any GM products.

When GM workers walked out they joined some 850 UAW Aramark-employed maintenance workers who went on strike at midnight Sept. 15 at five GM facilities in Michigan and Ohio. They had been working under a contract extension since March 2018. Key issues are wages, health coverage, vacation time, job security and pensions.

Gov’t political cops help auto bosses

GM bosses are taking maximum advantage of a series of raids and arrests of UAW officials and staffers in an “investigation” of corruption aimed at smear-ing and weakening the union.

Two days before expiration of the UAW’s contract with General Motors, federal police arrested Vance Pearson, director of UAW Region 5. He was charged with embezzlement, fraud and money laundering. Two weeks earlier FBI and IRS agents raided the homes of UAW President Gary Jones and former UAW President Dennis Williams, as part of a nationwide sweep of sites tied to the union.

Williams “was held at gunpoint, ordered to lie down and handcuffed” after federal agents arrived at his California home, reported the *Detroit News*. He was outside smoking a cigar when they barged in.

“GM is outraged and deeply concerned by the conduct of union officials as uncovered by the government’s in-

vestigation and the expanding charges revealed today,” GM bosses hypocritically proclaimed in a Sept. 12 statement. “There is no excuse for union officials to enrich themselves at the expense of the union membership they represent.”

The big-boss press has gone further. “Blame Strike on UAW Corruption,” blared the headline on the *Detroit News* editorial Sept. 16.

From bosses who have profited off the backs of the workers for decades, their crocodile tears are an outrage. The FBI and other government political police agencies have no business interfering in the affairs of the unions. Whatever problems union members face are purely their own internal matters.

The capitalist rulers’ campaign has nothing to do with concern about corruption in the union. Their entire system is corrupt and immoral. Their goal is to undermine and weaken the unions and the fighting capacity of the working class.

Opposing all government intrusion into union affairs is essential for transforming the unions and building them as an independent fighting force. “Bureaucratic rule over the unions must be broken — and rank-and-file control established — without yielding an inch to the capitalist government,” wrote Farrell Dobbs, then national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, in the *Militant* in February 1967. Dobbs was a central leader of the 11-state Teamsters union campaign that organized tens of thousands of over-the-road drivers into the union in the 1930s.

“Defense of workers’ democracy must also include a fight for unconditional independence of the unions from government control,” he wrote. “Central to that fight must be a complete break with the Democratic Party of big business and the political arming of the workers to carry the class struggle onto the government plane through their own independent party.”

The bosses are afraid that working people, fed up with their attacks, now look to organize to fight back. There have been some significant strikes since teachers in West Virginia began a number of school workers’ actions across the country last year, including at Marriott hotels and Stop & Shop.

Support the GM strikers!

Alyson Kennedy in Bedford, Indiana, and Naomi Craine in Chicago contributed to this article.

Anti-union outfit targets UAW as auto workers strike

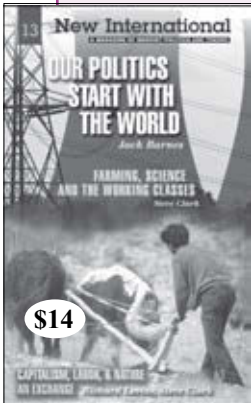
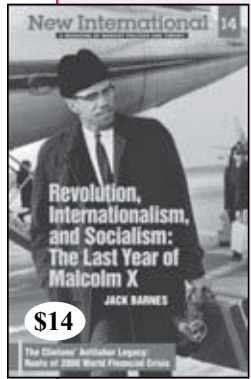
As nearly 50,000 United Auto Workers union members battle GM bosses, government raids and attacks in the big-business press, they are also being targeted by an anti-labor outfit that calls itself the Socialist Equality Party and its so-called Autoworker Newsletter. The group, which has a long history of anti-union disruption, is urging autoworkers to “break free from the stranglehold of the UAW.”

They rely on charges by the U.S. rulers’ political police, the FBI, that union officials are dipping into the union till and are rife with corruption. The Socialist Equality Party says the union president has “been exposed as a criminal.”

The charges come from the same government cops who have been responsible for frame-ups and witch hunts against communists and union fighters for decades! The FBI raided union headquarters and held their guns on the former president of the union as they raided his home two weeks before the GM strike deadline.

If we do face corruption — and misleadership — the only road forward isn’t to split the union in the middle of a fight, it’s to organize workers and use our power and transform our unions into class-struggle fighting machines. Part of that fight is to keep the government, its cops and its courts out of our unions.

— JOHN STUDER



‘There will be a clash between the oppressed and the oppressors’

Malcolm X *Speaks* is one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* for September. *Malcolm* broke from the Nation of Islam, headed by Elijah Muhammad, to become the outstanding leader of the struggle for Black liberation in the United States in the early 1960s. The excerpts below, from the chapter “Last Answers and Interviews,” were given in the final months of Malcolm’s life. Copyright © 1965. Reprinted by permission of Pathfinder Press.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

MALCOLM: The only person who can organize the man in the street is the one who is unacceptable to the white community. They don’t trust the other kind. They don’t know who controls his actions. ...

Marlene Nadle asked if he planned to use hate to organize the people.

MALCOLM: I won’t permit you to call it hate. Let’s say I’m going to create an awareness of what has been done to them. This awareness will produce an abundance of energy, both negative and positive, that can then be channeled constructively. ...

The greatest mistake of the movement has been trying to organize a sleeping people around specific goals. You have to wake the people up first, then you’ll get action.

MARLENE NADLE: Wake them up to

their exploitation?

MALCOLM: No, to their humanity, to their own worth, and to their heritage.

From Marlene Nadle’s article, Village Voice, February 25, 1965

QUESTION: What is your opinion of the world-wide struggle now going on between capitalism and socialism?

MALCOLM: It is impossible for capitalism to survive, primarily because the system of capitalism needs some blood to suck. Capitalism used to be like an eagle, but now it’s more like a vulture. It used to be strong enough to go and suck anybody’s blood whether they were strong or not. But now it has become more cowardly, like the vulture, and it can only suck the blood of the helpless. As the nations of the world free themselves, then capitalism has less victims, less to suck, and it becomes weaker and weaker. It’s only a matter of time in my opinion before it will collapse completely.

From interview, Young Socialist, March–April, 1965

Malcolm was asked about the outcome of the recent presidential election in the United States.

MALCOLM: It isn’t a president who can help or hurt; it is the system. And this system is not only ruling us in America, it is ruling the world. Nowadays, when a man is running for president of the United States, he is not running for president of the United States alone; he has to be acceptable to other areas of the world where American influence rules.

If Johnson had been running all by himself, he would not have been acceptable to anyone. The only thing that made him acceptable to the world was that the shrewd capitalists, the shrewd imperialists, knew that the only way people would run toward the fox would be if you showed them a wolf. So they created a ghastly alternative. And it had the whole world — including people who call themselves Marxists — hoping that Johnson would beat Goldwater.

I have to say this: Those who claim



Robert Parent

Malcolm X at Militant Labor Forum, New York, May 1964.

to be enemies of the system were on their hands and knees waiting for Johnson to get elected — because he is supposed to be a man of peace. And at that moment he had troops invading the Congo and South Vietnam!

Answer to question, Presence Africaine meeting, Paris, November 23, 1964

QUESTION: How do you define black nationalism, with which you have been identified?

MALCOLM: I used to define black nationalism as the idea that the black man should control the economy of his community, the politics of his community, and so forth.

But, when I was in Africa in May, in Ghana, I was speaking with the Algerian ambassador who is extremely militant and is a revolutionary in the true sense of the word (and has his credentials as such for having carried on a successful revolution against oppression in his country). When I told him that my political, social and economic philosophy was black nationalism, he asked me very frankly, well, where did that leave him? Because he was white. He was an African, but he was Algerian, and to all appearances he was a white man. And he said if I define my objective as the victory of black nationalism, where does that

leave him? Where does that leave revolutionaries in Morocco, Egypt, Iraq, Mauritania? So he showed me where I was alienating people who were true revolutionaries, dedicated to overturning the system of exploitation that exists on this earth by any means necessary.

So, I had to do a lot of thinking and reappraising of my definition of black nationalism. Can we sum up the solution to the problems confronting our people as black nationalism? And if you notice, I haven’t been using the expression for several months. But I still would be hard pressed to give a specific definition of the over-all philosophy which I think is necessary for the liberation of the black people in this country.

From interview, Young Socialist, March–April, 1965

PIERRE BERTON: There has been talk, I think by you, by Elijah Muhammad, about an Armageddon in the United States by 1984. I’m wondering if you still believe that, and why that particular date?

MALCOLM: Much of what Elijah Muhammad has taught, I don’t think he believes in himself; and I say that and can easily defend it sitting opposite him. But where an ultimate clash between East and West is concerned, I think that an objective analysis of events that are taking place on this earth today points toward some type of ultimate showdown.

You can call it a political showdown, or even a showdown between the economic systems that exist on this earth which almost boil down along racial lines. I do believe that there will be a clash between East and West.

I believe that there will ultimately be a clash between the oppressed and those that do the oppressing. I believe that there will be a clash between those who want freedom, justice and equality for everyone and those who want to continue the systems of exploitation. I believe that there will be that kind of clash, but I don’t think that it will be based upon the color of the skin, as Elijah Muhammad had taught it.

From interview on Pierre Berton Show, January 19, 1965

IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

Where to find distributors of the *Militant*, *New International*, and a full display of Pathfinder books.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: **Oakland:** 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Zip: 94621. Tel: (510) 686-1351. Email: swpoak@sbcglobal.net **Los Angeles:** 2826 S. Vermont. Suite 1. Zip: 90007. Tel: (323) 643-4968. Email: swpla@att.net

FLORIDA: **Miami:** 1444 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 215. Zip: 33132. Tel: (305) 420-5928. Email: swpmiami@icloud.com

GEORGIA: **Atlanta:** 777 Cleveland Ave. SW Suite 103. Zip: 30315. Tel: (678) 528-7828. Email: swpatlanta@fastmail.com

ILLINOIS: **Chicago:** 1858 W. Cermak Road, 2nd floor. Zip: 60608. Tel: (312) 455-0111. Email: SWPChicago@fastmail.fm

KENTUCKY: **Louisville:** 1939 Goldsmith Lane, Suite 134. Zip: 40218. Tel: (502) 208-9171. Email: louisvilleswp@gmail.com

MINNESOTA: **St. Paul:** 1821 University Ave. W Suite S-106A. Zip: 55104. Tel: (651) 340-5586. Email: twincities.swp@gmail.com

NEBRASKA: **Lincoln:** P.O. Box 6811. Zip: 68506. Tel: (402) 217-4906. Email: swplincn@gmail.com

NEW JERSEY: 3600 Bergenline, Suite 205B, Union City. Zip: 07087. Tel: (551) 257-5753. swpnewjersey@gmail.com

NEW YORK: **New York:** 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor. Zip: 10018. Tel: (646) 434-8117. Email: newyorkswp@gmail.com **Albany:** P.O. Box 8304. Zip: 12208. Tel: (518) 810-1586. Email: albanyswp@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA: **Philadelphia:** 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite 16. Zip: 19149. Tel: (215) 708-1270. Email: philaswp@verizon.net

TEXAS: **Dallas:** 1005 W. Jefferson Blvd., Suite 207. Zip: 75208. Tel: (469) 513-1051. Email: dallasswp@gmail.com

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 7603 Georgia Ave. NW, Suite 300. Zip: 20012. Tel: (202) 536-5080. Email: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

WASHINGTON: **Seattle:** 5418 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118-2439. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Email: swpseattle@gmail.com

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: Suite 22, 10 Bridge St., Granville, NSW 2142. Tel: (02) 8677 0108. Email: cl_australia@optusnet.com.au

CANADA

QUEBEC: **Montreal:** 7107 St. Denis #204 H2S 2S5. Tel: (514) 272-5840. Email: clcmontreal@fastmail.com

FRANCE

Paris: BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15. Email: militant.paris@gmail.com

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: 188a Onehunga Mall, Onehunga. Postal address: P.O. Box 13857, Auckland 1643. Tel: (09) 636-3231. Email: clauack@xtra.co.nz

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND: **London:** 5 Norman Road (first floor). Seven Sisters. Post code: N15 4ND. Tel: Tel: 020-3538 8900. Email: cllondon@fastmail.fm **Manchester:** Unit 9, Progress Centre, Charlton Place. Post code: M12 6HS. Tel: (0161) 258-2569. Email: clmanchr@gmail.com

September **BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS

The Third International After Lenin
by Leon Trotsky
\$20. **Special price: \$14**

Malcolm X Speaks
by Malcolm X
Speeches and statements published shortly after revolutionary leader’s assassination in 1965.
\$15. **Special price: \$10.50**

Revolution and the Twentieth Century Novel
by Paul N. Siegel
\$17. **Special price: \$11.90**

American Railroads: The Case for Nationalization
by Dick Roberts
\$10. **Special price: \$7**

Socialism: Utopian and Scientific
by Frederick Engels
The theory from the historic movement of modern proletariat is scientific socialism.
\$10. **Special price: \$7**

Las Mujeres en Cuba: Haciendo una revolución dentro de la revolución
(Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution)
by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer
\$17. **Special price: \$11.90**

Join Pathfinder Readers Club for \$10 and receive discounts all year long

ORDER ONLINE AT
WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM
OFFER GOOD UNTIL **SEPTEMBER 30**

GM, Blackjewel workers fight for all of us

Continued from front page

their picket lines and they deserve the solidarity of all those who stand on the side of working people.

Millions of other workers know only too well conditions like those GM bosses have imposed. Two-tier wages that the companies use to divide workers. The massive expansion of so-called temporary workers who make even worse wages than the lowest tier of “permanent” workers.

The gutting of pension plans and their replacement with 401(k) schemes that rise and fall with the vagaries of the stock market. After a life of making the capitalist owners rich, workers often are barely able to survive on the measly “benefits” that are doled out.

United Auto Workers members at GM have said “enough!” and are using their power to stand up to the bosses’ attacks. It’s part of other labor struggles taking place today that are a harbinger of more to come.

On July 29 miners laid off from the Blackjewel company blocked rail tracks at its Cloverlick No. 3 mine to prevent the bosses from moving and selling coal until they pay the miners the wages they are owed.

And at Walmart a number of workers walked off

the job and refused to work in dangerous conditions at the San Leandro, California, store when the lights went out Aug. 16.

These examples, large and small, point the way forward to organizing the unorganized. Walmart workers and the Blackjewel miners don’t have a union. But their resistance shows how workers gain confidence and learn what we are capable of.

Working-class solidarity can make a difference in beating back the bosses’ attacks. Tell your co-workers, friends and family about the GM strike and miners’ fight. Organize others to show their support and join the picket lines at factories and warehouses in over a dozen states. Visit the miners’ camp in Harlan County, Kentucky. Get your union, your church or your workmates involved in activity in solidarity with these workers. Send messages of support.

And this is the road to build a broader working-class movement. Many of the questions posed — the right to a job, government-guaranteed health care and retirement — are *social* questions. We need to organize to fight against the twin political parties of the bosses and their government to win them.

Blackjewel miners ‘stand up for what’s right’

Continued from front page

“This right here started with five guys and then we got out the word,” miner Chris Rowe told worker-correspondents for the *Militant* when they visited the camp Sept. 13. “If you’ve got support you can win what’s right.

“When it started I wasn’t sure it would grow as big as it has,” he said. “But now that it has, I’m hoping other employers take to heart that they can’t treat workers like this. And I hope other workers will have the courage to stand up and fight when it happens to them.”

Jeremy Ferguson, the newly elected president of the national SMART Transportation Division, a union that organizes train conductors and engineers, visited the encampment Aug. 27. Putting on the miners’ “Pay the Miners First, the Lawyers Last” T-shirt, he had his picture taken and posted on the union’s Facebook page, standing on the back of one of the coal hoppers stuck on the tracks.

Three truckers were at the camp Sept. 13 supporting the miners and building a benefit concert the next day featuring country singer Brandon Fulson, from Cumberland Gap, Tennessee. He was going to perform a song inspired by the struggle, “Black Jewel, White Lies.”

James Toller, Harry Menkhoff and his wife, Chelly Menkhoff, and other truckers on Aug. 16 blocked for 32 minutes Highway 119, which runs past the blockade. The truckers are part of a new group planning an Oct. 4 protest in Washington, D.C.

Solidarity keeps coming

Stacy Rowe, Chris Rowe’s wife, was cleaning the camp kitchen. She told us, “We’ve gotten a lot of support.”

“Rail workers donated \$1,000 and brought fried chicken,” she said. “It was great when Wayne Cryts, the Missouri farmer, came here to support us and told us about how he had faced the same problem in the 1980s when a silo company went bankrupt and stole his soybeans.”

Both Chris and Stacy Rowe had high praise for Joyce Cheng, the owner of Panda Garden Chinese restaurant in nearby Harlan, who has raised more than \$20,000 of the nearly \$90,000 in contributions donated to the miners through the local community organization With Love From Harlan. Cheng held benefit dinner buffet nights for the miners at her restaurant and donated the proceeds, and she ran 50 miles, win-

ning pledges that totaled some \$5,000. “Joyce Cheng is awesome,” Stacy Rowe said.

We had lunch at Cheng’s restaurant. Cheng came out to talk with us and thanked us for the coverage of the miners’ struggle in the *Militant*. She introduced Josh Lee, a high school student whose grandfather was Chinese. Lee works at the Panda Garden and is on the high school cross-country team. He accompanied Cheng on the 50-mile run and helped raise funds.

“I ran not only to raise money, but to bring attention to what the miners are fighting for,” Cheng said. “The newspapers don’t give them a lot of coverage, so I did my part to raise awareness.”

Cheng admires the miners for fighting. “I don’t talk about win or lose. The miners are winning because they’re standing up for what’s right,” she said. A lot of people in the area feel the same way.

Some of the Blackjewel miners have gone to Alabama to work. Jean Hatfield said 20-year-old Dalton Lewis, who went there with his father, Chris Lewis, was injured seriously in a mine there.

The miners’ attorney, Ned Pillersdorf, gave a report to about 50 miners and their families at the railroad tracks Sept. 14 on the results of the bankruptcy court hearing in Charleston, West Virginia, the previous week. At the hearing Blackjewel bosses asked the court to lift the “hot goods” order the judge granted after the U.S. Labor Department demanded the coal stay put until the miners are paid. The judge asked the parties to negotiate a settlement by mid-October.

Going seven weeks without pay has taken its toll on the miners and their families. “A lot of guys are having a hard time making ends meet,” Chris Rowe said. But he’s determined to keep fighting. “They’re either going to make it right or have a big problem. You might knock us down a bit, but one thing we can promise is we’ll always stand up and fight. We’re Harlan strong.”

Messages of encouragement and solidarity sent to With Love From Harlan are posted on the Blackjewel Employees Stand Together Facebook page. The site also carries reports from laid-off Blackjewel miners in Wyoming and Virginia, information about upcoming activities as well as information on how you can join in efforts to win solidarity and support.

A message from more than 20 railroad conductors and engineers of SMART-TD Local 1933 in northern Virginia says, “Your example of blocking the CSX railroad tracks to prevent the company from moving out a trainload of coal that you mined, while the company and the courts refuse to pay you for the work that produced that coal, is an inspiration to workers and unionists everywhere on how to fight to defend our rights and our unions.”

Another benefit concert is scheduled for Oct. 13 at the Mountain Arts Center in Prestonburg, Kentucky.

US hands off Iran!

Continued from front page

claiming, “Iranian officials, at any level, will never talk to American officials.”

The U.S. administration announced yet another round of sanctions Sept. 18, which chiefly hurt Iranian working people. Washington sees the increased military and political sway of the Iranian rulers across Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen as the biggest obstacle to defending its imperialist interests and the interests of its allies in the region.

“The Socialist Workers Party says U.S. hands off Iran!” Malcolm Jarrett, SWP candidate for Pittsburgh City Council, said in Cumberland, Kentucky, Sept. 17. “Workers have no interest in interfering with the sovereignty of the people of Iran. We demand: End U.S. sanctions and get all U.S. troops out of the Middle East!

“We don’t know whether Washington will use its formidable military assets in the area to hit at Iran, but whenever the U.S. government makes threats of military action, opponents of Washington’s wars have an obligation to speak out and protest,” Jarrett said.

Houthi Islamist forces said they had launched 10 drones from Yemen. The Iranian government-backed Houthis seized control of Yemen’s capital, San’a, in 2014. Since then, a U.S.-backed, Saudi-led coalition has been mounting relentless air strikes in Yemen, killing thousands of civilians. The conflict has reduced 10 million people, one-third of the population, to utter dependence on international food aid.

Key Saudi oil facilities damaged

The quite sophisticated operation included at least 17 hits on the massive Abqaiq oil processing plant near the Arab-Persian Gulf, run by the Saudi state oil company Aramco and nearby Khurais oil field. U.S. officials contend that satellite photos indicate the attacks came from the north — from Iran or from pro-Iranian militias in Iraq — not from Yemen in the south.

Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif denied his government was involved. He said Washington had failed at its maximum-pressure sanctions campaign and was now practicing “maximum deceit.”

The Tehran-based Fars news agency, which reflects views of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, did say the attack on the oil refinery was “smart and timely.”

The damage to Saudi oil production at Abqaiq will mean the loss for weeks of up to 5% of global supply. Capitalist pundits expressed concern about the impact of higher fuel prices on a slowing world economy.

The attack came days after Trump fired National Security Adviser John Bolton Sept. 10, citing disagreements with his more bellicose line towards Iran, the Taliban in Afghanistan, and other regimes and forces Washington opposes.

The challenges facing the Trump administration are due to a disintegrating decades-old imperialist world order as the dominance of the U.S. rulers — unchallenged since they emerged the primary victor out of the second imperialist world slaughter — is receding.

In his State of the Union address Feb. 5, the president had said, “Great nations do not fight endless wars.” Trump has since said he would seek to reduce the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan and the Middle East.

Trump had planned to hold discussions with Taliban and Afghan government officials Sept. 8 in an effort to reduce U.S. engagement in Afghanistan, but cancelled the talks after the Islamist group carried out a bomb attack that killed a U.S. soldier and 11 others.

The bourgeois clerical regime seeks to increase its regional power and influence by force of arms. It emerged from a counterrevolution that pushed back against gains made by workers, farmers, women and oppressed nationalities who carried out the 1979 Iranian Revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed shah.

This revolution was a deep, modern popular social revolution, not a religious jihad. Iran’s clerical bourgeois officials today are held up by the U.S. media of all political stripes as “leaders of the revolution.” But they are in fact leaders of the *counterrevolution*. There will be no end to Tehran’s reactionary wars, expansionism and anti-working-class social policies without an end to the counterrevolutionary regime.

“The sanctions and threats of Washington are an obstacle to Iranian workers and farmers gaining the political space to organize,” said Jarrett. “That’s why working people here need to campaign for U.S. rulers hands off Iran.”

‘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