

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Youth throng Manila book fair
for literature, culture, politics
— PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 83/NO. 38 OCTOBER 21, 2019

Liberals push impeachment, target is the working class

BY TERRY EVANS

Impeachment hysteria is consuming the Democratic Party, pushing their 2020 presidential candidates' competition aside, as the party's leaders in the House of Representatives have launched "impeachment inquiries" against President Donald Trump in no less than six different House committees. Their goal is to overturn the results of the 2016 election, and, if possible, to get Trump indicted.

For the most zealous liberals, evidence doesn't matter. Days after the inquiry announcement, Hillary Clinton told CBS News that Trump should be thrown out because he's an "illegitimate president."

Clinton derisively smeared workers who backed Trump as "deplorables" in 2016. The real target of the Democrats and middle-class left mania against the Trump presidency is the working class. The liberals believe the "deplorable" workers have to be cor-

Continued on page 9

Halt Ankara's assault against the Kurds in north Syria!

BY JOHN STUDER

Aiming to deal blows to the Kurdish peoples' struggle for national rights, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has begun airstrikes on the Kurdish-controlled region of northeastern Syria. President Donald Trump announced Oct. 6 the withdrawal of some U.S. troops in Syria near the Turkish border area, stating Washington would not stand in the way of Ankara's operation.

"The Socialist Workers Party demands the Turkish rulers halt their attacks on the Kurds in Syria and pull their forces back from the border," Seth Galinsky, SWP candidate for New York City public advocate, said Oct. 9. "The Kurds have the right to self-determination."

"We also call for Washington to get all its troops and weaponry out of the Middle East," he said.

Erdogan plans to force hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees in Turkey to move into the Kurdish-controlled

Continued on page 4

UAW strike against GM is battle for all workers

Back fight to end bosses use of temps, two-tier pay



Militant/Samantha Hamlin

Autoworkers picket line at Bolingbrook, Illinois, GM plant was reinforced by Steelworkers Oct. 5. As bosses force longer strike, UAW strikers need solidarity to stand up to auto barons.

BY ILONA GERSH

FLINT, Mich. — So many drivers were honking their horns in solidarity that at times it was hard to carry on a discussion on the United Auto Workers picket lines at the General Motors plants here during an Oct. 5-6 solidarity visit. Some 49,000 GM workers at 33 factories and 22 parts warehouses

around the country went on strike Sept. 16.

"We took cuts for GM when they were bailed out. Now they're making a lot of money," Christine Bradley, a 28-year-old assembly worker, told this worker-correspondent. "It's our time now. We gave up a lot. Now we can

Continued on page 7

Join 9-week drive to win readers to 'Militant,' revolutionary books



Militant/Eric Simpson

Joel Britton, Socialist Workers Party candidate for San Francisco mayor, left, talks with Mark Baldwin in San Leandro, California, Sept. 20. He decided to get a subscription to the *Militant*.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

With an uptick in workers' battles — like the UAW strike against GM and the Blackjewel coal miners' fight to win wages stolen from them by the bosses — the Socialist Workers Party has launched a nine-week drive to expand the reach of the *Militant* and readership of books by SWP leaders and other revolutionaries.

The drive, which began Oct. 5, is aimed at helping workers gain a deeper understanding of the party's

program and perspectives, and the lessons of past battles by our class around the world. The *Militant* urges all its readers and supporters to join in helping make this a success.

The drive, which runs through Dec. 10, has an international goal of winning 1,100 subscribers and selling 1,250 books. It runs concurrently with a drive to raise \$100,000 to finance the work of the party. Next week we will publish a list of area goals in the

Continued on page 2

Hong Kong ban on masks can't stop struggle for political rights

BY ROY LANDERSEN

As mass protests for political rights and against Beijing's interference continued, the Hong Kong government announced Oct. 4 it was imple-

menting a highly controversial ban on people wearing face masks at public assemblies. The Chinese government applauded the repressive measure, declaring it "extremely necessary," and called for "all necessary measures" to restore order in the city.

Carrie Lam, the pro-Beijing chief executive of Hong Kong, invoked

Continued on page 9

SWP: Working people can make gains 'when we stand and fight'

BY SUSAN LAMONT

PAVO, Ga. — "The protest by Blackjewel coal miners in Kentucky is an example of what working people can accomplish if we stand together and fight," Alyson Kennedy, the Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate in 2016, told Willie Head Oct. 2. Head is a decadeslong veteran in the fight by farmers who are Black to keep their land.

Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett, SWP candidate for Pittsburgh City Council, were visiting Head on his

Continued on page 3

Inside

Iraqi protests demand jobs, end to Tehran intervention 4

Montreal rally: End ban on wearing religious symbols 6

Independent truckers protest new gov't regulations 7

—On the picket line, p. 5—

Idaho miners' rally marks two-and-a-half-year walkout

California sheet metal workers end strike, cite gains

Join ‘Militant,’ books drive

Continued from front page
U.S. and worldwide.

Central to this campaign will be exchanging views and sharing experiences with workers, farmers and other exploited producers in cities, towns and rural areas, laying the groundwork for working together in solidarity with strikes and other working-class protests, and on the party’s 2019 and 2020 election campaigns.

Through joining these working-class struggles, discussing their significance and the class view of other political developments on workers’ doorsteps, SWP members and partisans of the paper can establish deeper relations with union fighters and other class-struggle-minded workers and youth.

The drive is an international effort — with participation by the SWP’s sister Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the UK, as well as all others who join in, from Iraq to the Philippines.

Crisis of working-class leadership

Worldwide, working people in sustained protests involving millions have toppled governments in Sudan, Algeria and Puerto Rico in recent months. But while hated rulers there have been forced out, the governments that defend the interests of the capitalist rulers remain in place. What’s lacking is a revolutionary leadership capable of advancing the fight to build an independent working-class movement that can chart a course toward taking political power.

This points to the importance of getting into the hands of working-class fighters a broad range of books that explain — from the past experiences of our class — how we can transform ourselves in struggle, gaining self-confi-

dence and growing class consciousness. To facilitate this campaign, all Pathfinder books and copies of the Marxist magazine *New International* will be offered at 20% off during the drive.

In addition, eight books that deal with some of the central questions of class politics and the party’s course today are available at half-price with a *Militant* subscription.

They are: *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power, Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* and *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record*, all by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes; *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* and *In Defense of the US Working Class* both by Mary-Alice Waters; “*It’s the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US ‘Justice’ System*” by the Cuban Five; *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions* by Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Farrell Dobbs and Barnes; and *The Jewish Question* by Abram Leon, a revolutionary in Belgium.

Available just a few weeks after the drive begins will be a new Pathfinder book, *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* by Barnes. It explains how the SWP throughout its history has fought to build a party based in the working class and in our unions. The title will be an invaluable tool to introduce to workers door to door, among co-workers and at political events.

Another opportunity to get books at discounted prices is to sign up for the Pathfinder Readers Club. For just \$10 a year, all of the hundreds of books published by Pathfinder Press are available at a 25% discount.

To join in the drive get in touch with the SWP or Communist League in your area, listed in the directory on page 8.

Titles by SWP leaders attract interest at Paris Fete



Militant/Derek Jeffers

LA COURNEUVE, France — “The workers movement here has been pushed back hard for years, but we got woken up by the yellow vests,” Regis Lanier, a nurse from Amiens, on the left, told Pathfinder supporters at their bookstand at the Fete de l’Humanite held here in Sept. 13-15. Amiens is an old industrial center 100 miles north of Paris.

Lanier was attending the festival for the first time in two decades, along with his son Roman, second from left, a college student who brought his yellow vest. They both said they had participated in the yellow vest protests last winter. They decided to get French-language editions of *Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs and *In Defense of the US Working Class* by Mary-Alice Waters.

Fete de l’Humanite, an annual event organized in a working-class suburb outside Paris by the French Communist Party, is open to all comers. Supporters of Pathfinder Press set up a booth every year, offering dozens of titles by leaders of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party and other revolutionaries.

Thirty-one copies of *In Defense of the US Working Class*, released in French right before the book fair, were sold. Sales were 20% higher than last year.

Altogether, 190 Pathfinder books were sold at the festival, including 44 copies of *Women’s Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* by Burkinabe revolutionary leader Thomas Sankara; 16 copies of *The Communist Manifesto*; and 11 copies of *The First and Second Declarations of Havana*.

—DEREK JEFFERS

Contribute to SWP Party-Building Fund!

The SWP Party-Building Fund of \$100,000 is essential for the party to cover its basic expenses and to take advantage of new opportunities in the class struggle. Winning contributions through discussions on workers’ doorsteps, on the job and in joining labor and political actions will expand the number of supporters of the party’s work and help develop closer relations with workers.

The SWP’s only source of income is its members, supporters and those who are won to look to the party as crucial to advancing the interests of all those who are exploited and oppressed.

Contributions can be sent to SWP branches, or checks made out to the Socialist Workers Party can be mailed to: SWP, 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

—BRIAN WILLIAMS

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THE MILITANT

Fight against police brutality, killings!

Amber Guyger, the cop who killed Dallas worker Botham Jean in 2018, was sentenced to 10 years in prison after jury convicted her of murder Oct. 1. The ‘Militant’ stands with all those fighting police brutality, U.S. rulers’ whole criminal ‘justice’ system.



Christian Chronicle/Bobby Ross Jr.
Protest in Dallas September 2018 by supporters of Botham Jean, who cop killed.

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‘Workers gain when we fight’

Continued from front page

farm here. They were joined by Rachele Fruit, SWP candidate for Atlanta School Board.

“The same thing is true of the almost 50,000 autoworkers on strike at GM and the broad solidarity they’re getting from working people,” Kennedy said. The two SWP spokespeople are on a national tour campaigning to build the SWP.

Kennedy and Jarrett had visited the encampment of Blackjewel miners in Cumberland, Kentucky, fighting for pay that had been stolen by the mine bosses when the company declared bankruptcy July 1. The miners blocked a train filled with coal they had mined, determined to get their pay before allowing it to move. Although the encampment has ended, a court order bars the train from moving, and the miners’ fight continues.

Kennedy and Jarrett have also joined United Auto Workers picket lines in Arlington, Texas; Bedford and Kokomo, Indiana; and Hudson, Wisconsin.

“Coal bosses have been filing for bankruptcy for decades, trying to break unions and assault wages and working conditions,” Kennedy told Head. “But this time the miners said, ‘Enough,’ and were joined with an outpouring of solidarity and support from fellow workers.

“People everywhere know they’re getting shafted by the capitalist system,” she said. “But it takes workers and working farmers deciding to *act*, like the coal miners and autoworkers, to begin to change things.”

Head farms corn, greens, soybeans and other crops. But like many small farmers, he has worked industrial jobs off the farm to be able to pay the bills.

Head said he agreed with Kennedy about how workers and farmers need to stand up and fight, and described some of the struggles Black farmers in the South have waged.

“We usually can’t get loans from the banks or the Department of Agriculture,” he said. “The so-called political leaders know that Black farmers aren’t getting anything, but they do nothing. Because you can’t get credit, you have to pay cash for everything.”

Head has visited Cuba several times and is an outspoken supporter of the Cu-

ban Revolution. “I have seen firsthand what it means for workers and farmers to have made a socialist revolution and taken power out of the hands of the capitalists,” he said. “I tell other farmers about what they’ve accomplished.”

He asked Kennedy and Jarrett what they thought of Democratic Party 2020 candidates Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders. “Our views are the opposite of Sanders and Warren,” said Kennedy. “We’re working to build a fighting movement of workers, to make a revolution and take political power from the capitalists. The Democrats are trying to band-aid their system in the hope of preventing workers from rising up.”

They talked for hours, discussing politics, the SWP’s fighting program and other battles by workers and farmers.

The SWP members thanked Head for the visit, saying it would help them describe the crisis facing farmers today and to win solidarity with Black farmers’ ongoing fight to stay on the land.

Head renewed his *Militant* subscription and got a copy of *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions*.

‘You sparked me up!’

Campaign supporters Jose Alvarado and this worker-correspondent joined Kennedy and Jarrett going door to door in Hogansville Oct. 1. They visited the home of Reggie Jackson, a former Walmart worker, who is disabled. Three months ago Jackson had subscribed to the *Militant* and bought a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes.

“That book shook me up,” Jackson said. “They don’t teach you this history in school.”

Jackson spent 10 years in the army. “The Veterans Administration treats vets badly,” he said. For veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder “it’s a struggle.”

“How veterans are treated is a prime example of how working people in general are treated in capitalist society,” Jarrett said. “But it’s better to fight — like the GM workers now on strike. You see men and women, Black and Caucasian, and other workers side by side on the



Militant/Susan Lamont

Farmer Willie Head, center, meets with Alyson Kennedy, SWP 2016 candidate for president and Malcolm Jarrett, SWP candidate for Pittsburgh City Council, Oct. 2 in Pavo, Georgia.

picket line, showing the working class is less racist and more united than ever.”

“You all have sparked me up!” said Jackson. He renewed his subscription and bought *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions*; *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?; In Defense of the US Working Class*; and *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record*.

Jarrett and SWP supporters also visited with Uber and Lyft drivers at the Atlanta airport. Jarrett explained that the campaign supports the fight to organize “one union for all drivers,” app, taxi and limousine drivers. Three drivers got copies of the *Militant* and thanked the party for stopping by.

Kennedy and Jarrett attended the Decatur trial of the DeKalb County cop Robert Olsen, who shot and killed 26-year-old Afghanistan war veteran Anthony Hill in 2015. Olsen shot Hill, who suffered from PTSD and bipolar

disorder, while he was walking around naked and unarmed in his own apartment complex. It was only the efforts by Hill’s family and opponents of police brutality that forced murder charges to be filed against the cop.

While talking with supporters of Hill outside the courtroom, Kennedy and Jarrett learned of the murder conviction of Amber Guyger, the policewoman who shot and killed Botham Jean in his apartment in Dallas. She was sentenced to 10 years in prison the next day.

As of Oct. 8, the jury in the Hill case was still out.

The tour wound up with a lively Militant Labor Forum that drew 25 people and raised \$820 for the SWP national campaign.

Rachele Fruit, Lisa Potash and Janice Lynn from Atlanta contributed to this article.

‘The stewardship of land and labor falls to the working class’

BY JOHN STEELE AND JOE YOUNG

MONTREAL — Pierre-Luc Filion, Communist League candidate in the Montreal riding of Longueuil-St. Hubert, and Steve Penner, CL candidate in the federal riding of Papineau in Montreal, and a number of supporters went to the “climate crisis” rally here Sept. 27. They spoke with workers and students about how rapacious capitalist competition for profit is the driving force behind damage to the environment, and that the working class is the only force capable of ending it.

The event had all the trappings of a government-sponsored affair. The school boards closed schools and many students were organized by teachers to attend the event, in some cases receiving free lunches. The city provided free public transportation.

“They have to do something,” Nicole Biernocik, a student from Concordia University, told Filion. “The situation is irreversible.”

“It isn’t irreversible,” replied Filion. “The bosses and their profit system are responsible. It’s not in their class interests to stop attacking workers and nature. We *can* do something — the working class can organize and build unions to fight for workers control of production. This is the road both to safe working conditions on the job and to take steps against the rape of the environment. To end it once and for all working people need

to take political power.”

Komal Mohite, a McGill University student from Mumbai, India, said she agreed when Penner explained, “It’s not possible to wage an effective fight against capitalism’s poisoning of the earth’s land, water and air unless the world’s toilers unite in an international movement.

“It can’t be done on the basis of the reactionary call by the Climate Strike Canada organizers to ban fossil fuels,” said Penner. “This would mean turning our backs on the over 800 million workers and peasants in Asia, Africa and other areas underdeveloped by imperialism that need energy to develop electricity, modern industry and open the door to culture and politics.”

Mohite said, “There are hundreds of millions of people in India alone in exactly that kind of situation.”

Communist League campaigners featured *New International* no. 14, which includes a statement by the Socialist Workers Party, “The Stewardship of Nature Also Falls to the Working Class: In Defense of Land and Labor.” It explains how these questions developed historically and outlines the SWP’s program.

“Green politics,” it says, leads “away from the fight for independent working-class political action and the conquest of power by workers and farmers — the only road to peace and to the effective defense of labor and the earth’s land, waters and atmosphere.”

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Iraqi protests demand jobs, end to Tehran intervention

BY TERRY EVANS

Despite unbridled government and paramilitary assaults that have left over 100 dead, 6,000 wounded and hundreds jailed, working people continue to protest in Baghdad and cities across southern Iraq. They are demanding an end to years of unemployment, widespread corruption and the Iranian rulers' military and political interference in the country.

The actions, which began Oct. 1, take place as Washington continues to intensify its sanctions against Tehran that have made life difficult for workers in Iran. The rulers in the U.S. and Iran both have forces stationed in Iraq and vie for influence against each other. Washington maintains 5,000 troops in the country to defend the interests of the U.S. rulers and push back Tehran's military and political power there.

The Baghdad government is still largely dependent for its military defense on Shiite militias organized by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards.

Working people have used the opening of political space since the defeat of Islamic State — which had seized large parts of Iraq in 2014 — to organize widespread protests against successive Iraqi governments, first in the summer of 2018 and again today.

Protesters demand jobs, improved supplies of electricity, water and sanitation, and removal of Tehran's grip from the country. Increasingly they demand the removal of the government of Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi, which took office a year ago. While insisting he will meet many of the protesters' demands for change, Mahdi's government has responded with curfews, cutting off the internet, arrests and assaults.

Politicians have been "stealing, stealing from the year 2003 until now," Yousif Emad, a 25-year-old unemployed worker with a wife and child, told the *Financial Times* Oct. 5. "Enough."

"Our rights have been taken. Our dreams were taken," Emad said, as he tried to get past government security forces to reach fellow protesters in Baghdad's central square.

"I live in a very small house in a bad neighborhood," he said. "No sewage, no electricity, no water. How do you expect me to live?"

Official unemployment figures have not dropped below 8% over an entire two decades, with youth unemployment remaining double that figure.

With disdain for these growing

hardships working people face, Mahdi said Oct. 4 his government had "no magic solution."

The next day, government forces opened fire on protesters in Baghdad with water cannons and tear gas grenades. Saraya al-Khorasani paramilitaries, one of the Tehran-backed forces, started using live ammunition. "They had snipers in buildings targeting the protesters," one marcher told the media.

The leader of the largest bloc in parliament, Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, pulled his forces out of the assembly Oct. 5, calling for new elections. A few other parties have followed suit.

Actions target Tehran's intervention

Some participants carry photos of former deputy head of Iraqi counterintelligence operations Abdul-Wahab al-Saadi, who the government replaced Sept. 27. Saadi wanted to limit the power of Tehran-backed militias known as the Popular Mobilization Forces.

Under pressure from Washington, Mahdi issued an order in July to bring the Tehran-backed militias under greater government control. But they still retain widespread sway.

"Iran and Iraq are two nations whose hearts & souls are tied together," Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of Iran's bourgeois clerical government, tweeted Oct. 7. "Enemies seek to sow discord but they've failed & their conspiracy won't be effective."

The aim of Iran's capitalist rulers is



Ameer Al Mohammedaw/DPA via ZUMA Press

Protesters in Baghdad Oct. 1, one of many actions across southern Iraq. Working people have used opening of political space with the defeat of Islamic State to press demands for jobs, services, for the fall of the government and for Tehran's hated militias to leave the country.

to increase their regional power and influence by force of arms, extending the nearly four-decade-long political counterrevolution that pushed back the workers, farmers, women and oppressed nationalities who carried out the historic Iranian Revolution of 1979.

That was a far-reaching, popular social revolution, not a religious jihad as the U.S. rulers and their media falsely portray it. Workers organized councils in factories, refineries and elsewhere and fought to extend their reach over politics.

The bourgeois-clerical figures who rule in Tehran today came to power in a counterrevolution that pushed back against the toilers who led the massive

mobilizations in 1979. It was not until the mid-1980s, on the heels of a long, bloody war with Saddam Hussein's Iraq, that the predecessors of today's Iranian regime were able to consolidate power.

Since then they have made gains in extending their reach in the region, backing the Bashar al-Assad dictatorship in Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Houthi rebels in Yemen, and in Iraq.

Tehran's rulers won a victory when the Iraqi government re-opened its border crossing with Syria at Qaim, Sept. 30 for the first time in eight years, giving a boost to Tehran's efforts to resurrect Syria's Assad. Tehran-backed militias have control of much territory along Iraq's Syria border.

Halt Ankara's assault against the Kurds in north Syria!

Continued from front page

area of northeastern Syria once his military occupies it. He hopes this "Arabization" would separate Kurds in Turkey from their brothers and sisters across the border in Syria and create a base of support to thwart the Kurds' struggle for self-determination.

Turkish government forces launched airstrikes on Kurdish fighters in Ras al-Ain and other Syrian border villages Oct. 9, three days after a phone call between Trump and Erdogan.

Some 30 million Kurds are an oppressed nationality spread across Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey. Over decades the capitalist rulers there suppressed Kurds' struggle for rights and a homeland, with the complicity of Washington and other imperialist powers. The U.S. rulers have turned support for the Kurds on and off, as best serves their imperialist interests.

After millions of working people joined an uprising against the Bashar al-Assad dictatorship in Syria in 2011, Kurds were able to carve out an autonomous area. That region expanded as the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces helped lead the ground efforts to defeat the reactionary "caliphate" of Islamic State. This area now covers some 25% of the country, including most of its oil. The Turkish rulers see the Kurdish-controlled area of Syria as a threat to their efforts to repress Kurds in Turkey, who are also fighting for their national rights.

While Trump says he wants "to get out of these ridiculous, endless wars ... and bring our soldiers home," his administration's measures amount to moving an estimated 50 U.S. special opera-

tions troops out of two border outposts.

Facing bipartisan criticism in Congress that he was abandoning a U.S. "ally," Trump said he had no intention of abandoning the Kurds and threatened to "obliterate the Economy of Turkey" if Ankara's forces did anything he deemed "off limits." None of the 1,000 troops the U.S. rulers deploy in northeastern Syria have been told to leave and most still remain in areas controlled by the Syrian Democratic Forces.

Washington has been engaged in a series of disputes with Ankara, its fellow NATO member, including opposition to the Turkish regime's decision to accept

an anti-missile system from Moscow.

In response to the Turkish government's threat to push back and punish Syrian Kurds, commanders of the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) ordered their forces closer to the Turkish border.

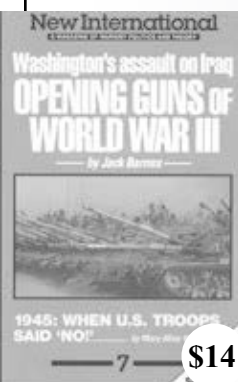
Kurdish regional officials are seeking protection from the Syrian and possibly even the Russian government "to fill the void," they say, if U.S. forces depart. But like Washington, both Damascus and Moscow have long records against the Kurds' fight for national rights. Assad says he wants to seize control of northeast Syria back from the Kurds.

For further reading

Washington's Assault on Iraq Opening Guns of World War III

"Despite the results of the U.S. military 'victory' in Iraq, an imperialist-imposed Mideast 'peace' is further from Washington's grasp than ever."

— Jack Barnes in *New International* no. 7.

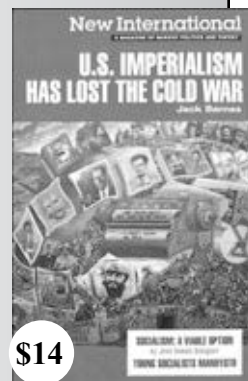


\$14

US Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War

"The exploiters have not been able to resolve the increasing stagnation and vulnerability of the world capitalist system or to prevent rebellions and fights by workers and peasants."

— Jack Barnes in *New International* no. 11.



\$14

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—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

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U.S. and Chinese Rulers' Intensifying Rivalry. Speaker: Jeff Powers, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Oct. 18, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Tel: (510) 686-1351.

FLORIDA

Miami

Jew-Hatred: Deadly Threat to Working Class. Speaker: Cindy Jaquith, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Oct. 18, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5. 1444 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 215. Tel: (305) 420-5928.

—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.

Idaho miners' rally marks two-and-a-half-year walkout

MULLAN, Idaho — Some 100 members of United Steelworkers Local 5114 and supporters marched and rallied here Oct. 5, marking two and a half years since silver miners at the Lucky Friday mine went out on strike against Hecla Mining Company.

The company wants to gut the union-enforced system under which workers bid on job crews based on seniority, a system miners say helps protect their safety and lives. The company also wants to increase miners' medical insurance payments and cut bonuses and silver premiums, an important part of what miners take home.

Hecla bosses want to run the mine 24/7 except for two holidays a year, Bruce Baraby, who has worked at Lucky Friday for 35 years, told the *Militant*. "In the past the company always asked for volunteers for holiday or Sunday work," he said. "Now they want to make this mandatory for all workers. It's not worth what your body has to go through working underground."

Baraby said that the mine has been operating at a limited capacity with management personnel and about a dozen scabs who have crossed the picket line.

At the rally, Local President Dave Roose thanked the wives and relatives of the miners "who have been the cornerstone of the fight, including keeping a food bank going for the length of the strike." Roose told the *Militant* that negotiations are ongoing with the company.

— Edwin Fruit

California sheet metal workers end strike, cite gains

STOCKTON, Calif. — After 26 days on strike, workers voted Oct. 1 to approve a new contract with Simpson Strong-Tie, a maker of metal parts used in the building and construction industries. Three hundred and nineteen workers at the plant had been on

strike since Sept. 5.

"Most important, we kept our medical and pensions," Jose Rojo told the *Militant* at the plant gate Oct. 4. The company backed away from earlier demands that workers contribute to long-standing, fully-paid medical premiums.

The strike featured mass picketing by members and supporters of the Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers Local 104. The company hired some strikebreakers but not a single striker crossed the picket line. Teamster delivery drivers refused to drive through the picket lines and Building Trades unions donated supplies and money to the striking workers.

The four-year contract includes annual wage increases from 70 to 75 cents an hour.

"We wanted to get more," John Henry told the *Militant*. "The cost of living is going up. Rents have gone up hundreds of dollars in the past three years.

"What gets me is the gap between how much money these companies make and what they pay us. The greed, it's getting worse. We were just trying to get a little more, a little extra, to pay the bills and so we can afford to take the family to the amusement park."

— Joel Britton

Albany nurses fight for union contract, against short staffing

ALBANY, N.Y. — "What do we want? Contract! When do we want it? Now!" chanted hundreds of nurses and their supporters outside Albany Medical Center here Sept. 25.

"We nurses love to take care of our patients but, at this point we have a crisis in the hospital, most significantly staffing," Jennifer Bejo, a nurse at the hospital, told the rally.

In addition to demanding a reduction in the nurse-to-patient ratio in order to provide safe care, nurses are fighting for adequate on-the-job training and against high medical insurance premiums, which nurses reported were \$350

African conference advances solidarity with Cuba



Militant/Ved Dookhun

ABUJA, Nigeria — Over 300 people marched almost 2 miles through the streets here and rallied at Freedom Fountain Park in the Nigerian capital Sept. 25 to protest the U.S. rulers' economic war against the Cuban Revolution. The demonstration demanded an end to harsh U.S. sanctions against Cuba and the end of Washington's occupation of Guantánamo.

Initially organizers projected marching to the U.S. Embassy, but U.S. authorities in a complaint to the Nigerian government asked that the police stop the protest from getting to the embassy. Organizers agreed to an alternative route, and Washington's violence-baiting of the action only served to enliven participants' resolve.

The march took place on the last day of the Sixth African Continental Conference of Solidarity with Cuba. Nearly 300 delegates participated in three days of discussion and debate on how to advance solidarity with Cuba on the African continent. Twenty-nine delegations from 26 countries in Africa participated, along with three non-African delegations — Cuba, Venezuela and the U.S.

The conference was broadly sponsored by the Nigerian labor movement, with members and leaders from the Nigerian Labour Congress; Trade Union Congress; the National Union of Textiles, Tailoring and Garments Workers and the National Union of Air Transport Employees joining in the discussion. The Nigeria Cuba Friendship and Cultural Association and the Amilcar Cabral Ideological School also played a prominent part in the conference.

— JAMES HARRIS

per paycheck for a family.

The two-part action, one held around morning shift change and the other during lunch time, was the largest protest the nurses have organized so far in this fight. Members of the Laborers Union, United Union of Roofers, SMART rail union Local 83, nurses from the nearby Veterans Administration hospital and some nursing students joined the action.

Last year, nurses at Albany Medical

Center voted 1,161-582 to be represented by the New York State Nurses Association. Albany Med tried to intimidate nurses from the Philippines working at the hospital but failed. "They told some nurses they would lose their green card if the union won," said Maria Bartolome, a nurse at the rally. That hasn't happened.

Negotiations have stalled since the union vote. "They are not taking us seriously. We are short staffed. We want a voice on staffing. They will not even look at us," said Karen Gerstenberger, a nurse of 35 years.

Abby Tilsner, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Albany County Executive, joined the picket line on her lunch break from nearby St. Peters Hospital, where she works as a nurse. "Health care should be a right, not a profit-making insurance business," she said in discussions with nurses there.

— Jacob Perasso

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



October 24, 1994

With almost unanimous bipartisan support, U.S. president Bill Clinton has launched a mammoth military buildup in the Persian Gulf in preparation for a possible military attack on Iraq.

In a matter of days, tens of thousands of U.S. troops have poured into the region, along with hundreds of bombers and other war material.

Washington's new military moves against Iraq come as thousands of U.S. troops occupy the Caribbean country of Haiti. In the last two months, the Clinton administration has stepped up its provocations and attacks on Cuba, tightening restrictions on travel to the island and creating an explosive situation with the detention of 30,000 Cuban emigrants at its naval base in Guantánamo, Cuba.

U.S. defense secretary William Perry said that one of the options being considered was pre-emptive military strikes against Iraq.



October 24, 1969

As Oct. 15 drew to a close, Americans across the country attempted to comprehend the meaning and impact of the historically unprecedented day of action. Millions went into the streets to express their overwhelming opposition to the Vietnam war.

From New York, Chicago and San Francisco to Pocatello, Idaho, Juneau, Alaska, and Memphis, as one news analyst commented, "The mood of the country was O-U-T!"

The direct, mass action by millions showed that they felt their desires, as expressed in the normal electoral channels, have been thwarted. They went into the streets to make their opinions known. In New York hundreds of thousands took part in rallies all over the city — many of them occurring simultaneously. New York's board of education estimated that high school absenteeism was "well over 90 percent."



October 21, 1944

With the approval of Washington and the counter-revolutionary Stalinist gang in Moscow, the British imperialists are moving armed forces into Greece to crush the insurrectionary Greek workers and install in Athens the rotten Greek government-in-exile as the guardian of capitalist private property.

Events in Greece provide one of the clearest demonstrations of the reactionary purposes animating the policies of the Allied imperialists. Last week the Greek masses rose and seized Athens and Piraeus as Nazi forces began evacuating the country. Partisan forces in other towns and innumerable villages likewise rose and took control. Nowhere did they have difficulty in overcoming resistance by the retreating Nazis and their Greek collaborators.

Churchill and his friends decided to intervene. Against whom? Obviously against the insurgent masses!

Read about the battles that forged the US labor movement



See distributors on page 8, or order at www.pathfinderpress.com

Youth throng Manila book fair for literature, culture, politics

BY MIKE TUCKER
MANILA, Philippines — Over 150,000 people flocked to the 40th Manila International Book Fair held in the huge Mall of Asia shopping complex Sept. 11–15. This was larger than last year. Over 100 publishers and distributors, mainly from the Philippines, set up at the event, including the two main national book chains.

There were novels, religious and educational titles, reference books, and political literature, as well as children’s books and comics. Many titles were in English, which is taught here starting in kindergarten.

The growing instability of the capitalist world order, including rising tensions between Beijing and Washington in the Pacific — as well as the political and economic crisis in the Philippines itself — were a lively topic of discussion at the Pathfinder booth.

Pathfinder also had a booth last year which was well received. Books by revolutionary leaders, in their own words, cover the class struggle and building a revolutionary party in the U.S., the Americas, Cuba, Africa and Asia, and the world. These include titles by Karl Marx and V.I. Lenin; by Fidel Castro, Malcolm X and Thomas Sankara, who led a revolution in Burkina Faso; and on women’s emancipation. The booth was staffed by volunteers from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United States and the Philippines.

“I have waited a whole year to get this book,” said Cerise Guerrero, a high school teacher, as she purchased *History of the Russian Revolution* by Leon Trotsky. Since it was sold out when she visited the booth last year, she took a day off work the first morning of the fair to make sure she got it this time. She also got five other titles and a subscription to the *Militant* newspaper.

Several students came into the Pathfinder stall looking for answers because they had read *Animal Farm* by George Orwell as part of their high school studies. The novel satirizes the Stalinist degeneration of the Russian Revolution. Despite the decline of Stalinist forces in the Philippines, the Maoist variant of Stalinism remains active here.

Like many others, three high school

students were glad to see Pathfinder’s titles on women’s liberation. They bought six books, including *Feminism and the Marxist Movement* by Mary-Alice Waters, and *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed and Waters. These were among the top selling titles at the fair. Abortion and divorce for women remain illegal in the Philippines.

Event discusses capitalist ‘learning’

Two books published by Pathfinder Press were presented at an event here drawing almost 50 people Sept. 14. The titles were *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism*, by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party in the U.S., and *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, and Yolanda Ferrer, three leaders of the Cuban Revolution and the Federation of Cuban Women.

Speaking on the panel were Jonald T. Bagasina, a high school teacher and former president of the Student Council at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP); Maria Miel Laurinaria, from the Philippines-Cuba Cultural and Friendship Association and Janet Roth from the Communist League in New Zealand. The meeting was conducted in English, which is commonly spoken here.

Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? “is about how class relations are not exclusive to the workforce,” Bagasina told the meeting, “but are embedded throughout capitalist society, including in the education system.” The book’s presentation of how it is class relations that determine the dynamics of every society provokes interest. Sixty-five copies were sold during the fair and on local campuses.

“Education is presented as formal schooling,” Bagasina said. “Without it they say, you are uneducated. But learning should be for everyone for a life-



Interested youth discuss, buy literature in Pathfinder booth at Manila book fair Sept. 14, following meeting presenting *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism*, and *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution*.

time.” He urged the students present, including some from his classes, to use what they have learned to help advance the struggles of working people.

Gains for Cuban Women

Laurinaria introduced the book *Women in Cuba*. “This book is about the Cuban Revolution and through these three women leaders we also learn how the revolution changed the social standing of women in Cuba,” she said. “This began before the 1959 victory, with Fidel Castro and the Cuban communists in the July 26 Movement, who led the struggle in Cuba and understood the central place of women in the revolution.”

“As class and national conflicts intensify,” Janet Roth explained, “working people need these books published by Pathfinder Press to help arm us for the battles we will be engaged in.” She said that as socialist workers use them in their work “we find a growing openness and interest among working people, regardless of where they were born or where they live.”

“The working class,” she said, “is the only class capable of leading a revolution to end capitalist rule.”

“The meeting was eye-opening,”

Jamil, a 19-year-old student, told the *Militant*. He had learned of the meeting while visiting the booth the previous day. It connected him with “issues of world politics, especially with regard to women and the working class.”

Interest among youth

Supporters of Pathfinder were invited by students from PUP to set up a table at their campus Sept. 18. Over 100 books and three subscriptions to the *Militant* were sold as students and others swamped the table.

One of them was Diana Taala, a teacher, who bought three books and a *Militant* subscription, after already having gotten a dozen Pathfinder titles at the book fair. Taala said she is interested in working-class history and politics, “because here in the Philippines they are always filtering what books and news we can read. They want us to be passive. But we need to know what happened before.”

The previous week a similar table was set up at the University of the Philippines where some 40 books and three *Militant* subscriptions were sold. Over 500 books and 37 *Militant* subscriptions were sold at the book fair itself.

activist in a group called The Right to Teach for All in Quebec, welcomed protesters. She introduced co-chair Bouchera Chelbi, a Muslim woman who teaches English as a second language.

“We have examples of teachers who are very qualified, but they’re being denied jobs because they won’t give up their religious beliefs,” Chelbi said. “We have interns who are being denied internships by school boards and people who are being harassed in the streets of Montreal. We want people to know that this is happening because of Bill 21.”

Among the rally speakers were Charles Taylor, a well-known philosophy professor emeritus at McGill University; Violaine Cousineau, a commissioner at the Montreal School Board; and a representative from the Quebec League of Rights and Freedom.

The day before the rally the Coalition Inclusion Quebec became the fourth group to take the Quebec government to

court to challenge the law. They argue that women are the main victims.

“There is little doubt that the target of Law 21 is hijab-wearing women, and, as the numerous cases of female teachers losing their jobs or being refused a job suggest, the effect of the law is disproportionately felt by women,” the coalition writes. They join the English Montreal School Board, the National Council of Canadian Muslims and the Canadian Civil Liberties Association in challenging Law 21.

“The Communist League’s campaign calls for the repeal of Law 21, its sole aim is to divide working people,” Pierre-Luc Fillion, Communist League candidate in Longueuil-St. Hubert, told more than 20 people at a campaign meeting after the protest. “Supporters of my campaign in the Oct. 21 federal elections, and of Steve Penner, the CL candidate in Papineau, will continue to build and join actions like the one today.”

GM strike fight for all workers

Continued from front page
get it back.”

Since 2007 the auto barons of the Big Three — General Motors, Ford, and Fiat Chrysler — have wrenched concessions from their workers. This accelerated with GM’s carefully pre-planned 2009 bankruptcy — where the bosses dumped all the lines that weren’t turning enough profit — followed by the U.S. government’s multibillion-dollar “bailout.”

GM now pays new hires less money, just over half what “legacy” workers get, followed by an eight years “progression” that never gets you all the way equal. More than 7% of GM workers are now temps at even lower wages, who have no guarantee they’ll ever be hired on full time. And they’ve cut labor costs further by contracting out work and spinning off parts plants.

This paid off big time for GM bosses, who made \$35 billion in profit over the last three years.

“I’ve never been on strike before,” assembly worker Bradley said. “You can feel the strength of solidarity. It gives me goosebumps. I decided I would come to the picket line every day even though we only have to picket four hours a week.”

Among the key issues in the strike are workers’ demands to make temporary workers permanent and “No more tiers.” Union officials are also demanding GM reopen or keep open four plants it plans to shutter.

There are thousands of GM “gypsies” who’ve had to move to new plants when theirs were shut down.

“They count on us temps,” Jessica Fields told the *Militant*. “We work six days a week, plus Sundays if the line is running. But we can’t ever call off. I called off one day because my father was dying, and my supervisor tried to write me up.”

They don’t get paid vacations, any kind of pension, not even a 401(k). They pay more for health insurance that covers less than permanent workers alongside them.

GM bosses keep on pressing

“Before the new plant was built in 2017, we made 36 doors an hour,” said body shop worker James Honea. “Now we build 50 an hour. The robots re-

placed workers, lifting the doors from station to station, and welding. Now we work two stations instead of one. It’s a lot of area to cover, walking back and forth. The robots eliminated the material drivers that supplied the line, but they hired 100 more temps to keep the line going at the speed they wanted.”

As a result, many workers have carpal tunnel, added Jane Stoffel, a permanent worker.

Among the strikers in Michigan and Ohio are 850 Aramark workers who are also members of the UAW.

“We make \$8 to \$9 less per hour than the GM skilled workers. And we’re all classified as janitors,” said Aramark pipefitter Bob Glass, who has worked at the GM plant for eight years, “even though there are about 35 skilled trades workers working for Aramark.”

Aramark workers went on strike 24 hours before the GM workers. “The company threatened the other workers that they’d lose their jobs if they didn’t cross our picket line,” said Jeremiah Ball, an Aramark painter. “A few drove up in their trucks and turned around and went home because they didn’t want to scab on us. We’re members of the same UAW local. And now we’re on the same picket line, with the same struggle.”

GM says it needs more concessions to compete with its nonunion rivals in the U.S., including Toyota, Hyundai, Honda and Volkswagen.

With its bank accounts flush — GM is sitting on \$17.5 billion in cash — the bosses are hoping to wear strikers down. They say they need to lower labor costs by \$5 an hour or more by increasing the number of temps and making permanent workers pay more for health insurance.

In 1999, 83% of car assembly plants in the U.S. were union. Today the figure is just 44%. Some 20% to 25% of workers at the nonunion plants are temps. In some plants as much as 40%. Many of those workers are watching the GM strike closely.

Many union officials have argued that the reason the Big Three’s competition is nonunion is because they are mostly located in the South, in so-called right-to-work states.

But both Michigan and Texas are also right-to-work states, where work-

Independent truckers protest new gov’t regulations



Angry truckers staged a “10-4” protest on the Mall at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., Oct. 4, above, to call attention to increasingly onerous government regulations that threaten the livelihood of independent owner-operators. When truckers use citizens band radio, “10-4” means, “I get the message.” Similar actions took place in South Dakota, Michigan, Kentucky and Indiana.

“Forty-four truckers gathered in Fredericksburg, Virginia, Oct. 3, dropped our trailers, and drove up to the Mall in Washington, D.C., the next day for the protest,” Chelly Bartow Menkhoff, vice president of United States Dedicated Drivers, told the *Militant* in a phone interview Oct. 8. Her husband Harry Menkhoff, inset, is an independent operator.

“Everything we use or eat was brought in by a truck,” Chelly Menkhoff said. “The truckers move the country, not the government. But the government makes rules and regulations” that undercut safety and increase costs. Some states are proposing big increases in the minimum required insurance for truckers. Others are pushing measures favoring driverless trucks.

Two eastern Kentucky Blackjewel coal miners and their wives — Chris and Stacy Rowe and David and Wanda Pratt — drove to Washington to join the protest. The Menkhoffs met the miners when they visited Cumberland, Kentucky, to back miners blockading the rail tracks of Blackjewel, a bankrupted coal company. The coal bosses stole the miners’ final paychecks and then tried to move coal out to sell.

“The miners won because we got our point across,” Wanda Pratt told the *Militant*. “You can’t do to workers what Blackjewel tried to do to the miners without getting a fight.”

South Dakota truckers organized by a group called “The Disrespected Trucker” carried out a “slow roll” on interstate highways around Sioux Falls, then continued to Pierre, the state capital, and some drove on to the Mall.

“We’re planning a public protest meeting with an open mic Oct. 24 in Pierre,” Shawn McIntosh, 58, an owner-operator from South Dakota, told the *Militant*. “Trucks without drivers are going to kill a lot of people. All this technology is so they can put us out of business. Is it worth people getting killed?”
— MAGGIE TROWE

ers can legally opt out of joining the union. Autoworkers in both states are overwhelmingly in the union. Almost all of the workers at the GM plant in Arlington, Texas, are in the union. And the local there had one of the highest “yes” votes for a strike.

Government attack on union

GM bosses have gotten help in their attempt to undermine the strike. On Oct. 4, two former members of the UAW’s public relations departments, Rev. Peter Laarman and Frank Joyce, publicly demanded the entire UAW executive board resign because of federal Department of Labor agents’ accusations of corruption against UAW officials, including several indictments. Even though neither one has been part of the UAW in more than 15 years, their attack on the union in the midst of the strike got big play in the *Detroit Free Press* and the *Detroit News*.

The capitalist government’s intervention in union affairs is never good for working people. Only the union members themselves have the right to decide how to run their own affairs.

‘Strikes encourage you to stand up’

GM workers continue to win solidarity and morale is high on the picket lines.

Krista Brewer, who works at Horse-shoe Casino in Baltimore, which is organized by the UAW, organized a trip Oct. 1 with two other casino workers and two retail workers from a non-union Walmart in Landover, Maryland, to the picket line at the GM parts center in Martinsburg, West Virginia. They brought brownies, cases of water and 16 pizzas with them.

“The picket line is a good place if you are new to unions, to be part of something and feel welcome,” Brewer said.

Some strikers say they were inspired last year by the round of teachers strikes around the country. “I was very influenced by that,” striker Barry Burdue told the press at the picket line at GM’s Parma facility in Ohio, commenting on the West Virginia teachers strike. “I thought it was awesome that they walked.”

“I hope our strike encourages other places to stand up,” he said.

One other group watching carefully are UAW members at Ford and Fiat Chrysler — their contracts are temporarily extended until after the GM workers contract has been ratified.

Amy Husk from Louisville, Kentucky; Dan Fein from Chicago; and Arlene Rubinstein from Washington, D.C., contributed to this article.

Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution
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— Fidel Castro

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In Teamster battles, ‘Workers learned to fight as a class’

The following excerpt is from *Teamster Power*, by Farrell Dobbs, one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* for October. The title is about how members of Teamsters Local 574 learned to wield the union power forged through three 1934 strike victories in Minneapolis. Under class struggle leadership, the Teamsters extended their union throughout the Midwest, helped organize other unions and the unemployed, and strove for political independence. The book is the second volume in a four-part series by Dobbs, who emerged from the ranks to become the central organizer of the Teamster's 11-state campaign to unionize over-the-road truckers. Dobbs went on to serve as national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party from 1953 to 1972. Copyright © 1973 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FARRELL DOBBS

Workers who have no radical background enter the trade unions steeped in misconceptions and prejudices that the capitalist rulers have inculcated into them since childhood. This was wholly true of Local 574 members. They began to learn class lessons only in the course of struggle against the employers.

Their strike experiences had taught them a good deal. Notions that workers have anything in common with bosses



Minnesota Historical Society

Teamsters Local 574 used its union power to back other struggles, including that of hosiery workers at Strutwear Knitting Co. in Minneapolis, above, who won a union in 1935-36 strike.

were undermined by harsh reality. Illusions about the police being “protectors of the people” began to be dispelled. Eyes were opened to the role of the capitalist government, as revealed in its methods of rule through deception and brutality. At the same time the workers were gaining confidence in their class power, having emerged victorious from their organized confrontation with the employers.

To intensify the learning process already so well started, the union leadership now initiated an educational program. Study courses open to all members were organized. The curriculum included economics, labor history and politics, public speaking, strike strategy, and union structure and tactics. Wherever practical, officers’ reports at membership meetings were given with a view toward making them instructive as well as factually informative. Articles of an educational nature were printed in the union paper. The themes varied from analysis of local problems to coverage of events and discussion of issues in the national and international labor movement.

These endeavors stood in marked contrast to the policies of bureaucratic union officials. Bureaucrats don’t look upon the labor movement as a fighting instrument dedicated solely to the workers’ interests; they tend rather to view trade unions as a base upon which to build personal careers as “labor statesmen.”

Such ambitions cause them to seek collaborative relations with the ruling class. Toward that end the bureaucrats argue that, employers being the providers of jobs, labor and capital have common interests. They contend that exploiters of labor must make “fair” profits if they are to pay “fair” wages. Workers are told that they must take a “responsible” attitude so as to make the bosses feel that unions are a necessary part of their businesses. On every count the ruling class is given a big edge over the union rank and file. ...

Local 574’s leadership flatly repudiated the bankrupt line of the class collaborationists. There can be no such thing as an equitable class peace, the membership was taught. The law of the jungle prevails under capitalism. If the workers don’t fight as a class to defend their interests, the bosses will gouge them. ...

Union bureaucrats are quick to include a no-strike pledge in contract settlements and refer grievances to arbitration. The workers lose because arbitration boards are rigged against them, the “impartial” board members invariably being “neutral” on the employers’ side. Moreover, the bosses remain free to violate the working agreement at will, as grievances pile up behind the arbitration dam.

In a similar vein, conservative union officials are prone to make a general no-strike pledge when the capitalist government proclaims a “national emergency.” They do so by bureaucratic fiat, giving

rank-and-file workers no voice in the decision. Such “labor statesmanship” amounts to proclaiming an overall “truce” between the workers and the bosses. Actually no truce results at all. The capitalists simply use their government to attack the trade union movement under the guise of a “national emergency”; and the workers, deprived in such a situation of their strike weapon, get it in the neck.

A development in the fall of 1934 involved this very issue. In the name of “national recovery,” President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked labor to forgo its right to strike. Concerning disputes with employers, he said, trade unions should accept decisions by government boards as final and binding. William Green, president of the AFL, was quick to second Roosevelt’s proposal and call upon the labor movement to put it into practice. Local 574 gave both Roosevelt and Green its answer through an editorial in *The Organizer*:

“Labor cannot and will not give up the strike weapon. Labor has not in the past received any real benefits from the governmental boards and constituted authorities. What Labor has received in union recognition, wage raises and betterment in conditions of work, has been won in spite of such boards. ... The strike is the one weapon that the employers respect. ... Whether or not there is a period of industrial peace will depend upon the employers’ reply to our demands.” (Emphasis in original.)

It did not follow from this position that Local 574 called strikes lightly. There are always hardships involved for the workers in such struggles. If the union moved blithely from one walkout to the next, without careful regard of all factors in the situation, it could easily wear out its fighting forces. The important thing is that a union stand ready and able to take strike action when required. In fact there are occasions where readiness to use the strike weapon can make its employment unnecessary.

Retention of the unqualified right to strike and readiness to use the weapon were central to the local’s enforcement of the 1934 settlement with the trucking firms. Employer attempts to impose arbitration of workers’ grievances were brushed aside. There had to be full and immediate compliance with the settlement terms — or else.

October BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Hong Kong mask ban can’t stop struggle

Continued from front page

British colonial-era emergency powers to impose the ban. Thousands of protesters, including office workers and center city residents, immediately took to the streets to denounce this expansion of the cops’ powers.

Three days before, the Chinese rulers held a huge military parade in Beijing to showcase their emergence as a growing capitalist competitor against U.S. dominance. In his address marking the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic, Chinese President Xi Jinping asserted, “There is no force that can shake the foundation of this great nation.”

Despite a police lockdown of Hong Kong that day, tens of thousands protested, continuing their challenge to the Chinese rulers’ authority.

Xi called for stability in Hong Kong, unity among different ethnic groups in China — a cover for the regime’s brutal suppression of the Uighurs — and the “complete unification” of the country. This is a reference to incorporating Hong Kong and Macau, the special administrative regions of China now run under the “one country, two systems” arrangement, as well as to Taiwan, a self-governing island for the past seven decades, claimed by Beijing.

Xi’s goal to impose direct rule by the central government throughout greater China is threatened by the developments in Hong Kong.

For weeks, Hong Kong police have been escalating their violent attacks in pitched battles with mostly youthful demonstrators. On Oct. 1, live ammunition was used for the first time against the protests. An 18-year-old student was shot in the chest and seriously wounded. Rubber bullets and tear gas canisters were fired, while 269 protesters were arrested as police tried to disperse thousands of demonstrators.

— LETTERS —

Illinois prison book ban

I was reading the front-page article in your Sept. 9 issue on the Florida gulag system’s overturning the ban on several issues of the *Militant* and I came across the information about the Danville Correctional Center’s attempt to remove 200 books from the library. I have been challenging these folks for censoring our reading materials for over 50 years.

*A prisoner
Illinois*

Finally getting the ‘Militant’!

I want to thank you for all the effort and determination in helping all the subscribers of the *Militant* in the fight against banning our newspaper and defending our civil rights. I wanted you to know I received the five previously banned

issues you sent me.

The *Militant* keeps me informed about the situation in my Island of Enchantment Puerto Rico.

We have been victims of U.S. capitalism for many years and now my people on the island have stood up and confronted the reality that the U.S. has never helped us. Instead it has utilized us as slaves working for a few dollars while they get rich.

*A prisoner
Florida*

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Some of the protesters have employed provocative tactics that have given the authorities a handle for their attacks.

Broad opposition to the ban

The Civil Human Rights Front, an umbrella organization of some 50 political, labor, professional and religious groups, has mobilized protests of between 1 and 2 million people several times since June. The group issued a statement rejecting the ban on wearing masks that was established on the basis of “severe colonial law” imposed by the British rulers in 1922.

The anti-labor law was last used in 1967 by British authorities to put down pro-Beijing “riots” supporting the so-called Cultural Revolution, a violent bureaucratic upheaval in China.

The Civil Human Rights Front noted the main reason for demonstrators “wearing masks and industrial respirators is for protection from tear gas.” Surgical masks have commonly been worn in Hong Kong since the deadly outbreak of the SARS virus there in 2002-03, as well as for protection against pollution. The organization’s statement said the masks were “also a political gesture.” The authorities use high-tech surveillance to identify and target protesters, using techniques employed at home by Beijing.

The protests began in opposition to Lam’s efforts to adopt a hated extradition bill, which would have allowed Beijing to demand the deportation of “suspects” to the mainland for trial. But after Lam was forced to drop the bill, protests continued, demanding direct election of the city administration by universal suffrage; a probe into cop violence; and an amnesty for arrested demonstrators now numbering over 2,000. They are also fighting to defend freedom of speech and assembly.

Editor’s note: It seems that, for now, we have won a victory against the Florida prison system’s efforts to suppress the *Militant*. On Aug. 30 the Literature Review Committee reversed the bans on the last six issues that had been impounded and to our knowledge no issue of the paper has been impounded since then. Thanks to all those who sent letters to the Review Committee!

‘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

Impeachment push

Continued from front page

ralled, their rights constrained, so they can’t ever effect the outcome of a bourgeois election again.

New York Times columnist Charles Blow insists Trump should be impeached over and over, regardless of the outcome of this second witch hunt attempt, initiated on the heels of the failure of the inquisition run by former FBI boss Robert Mueller. Trump should be booted out because of his “unfitness” for office. Blow agrees with Clinton that the problem is working people, who he insists are reactionary and racist. He says the only reason Trump is in the White House is because of his “base.”

The Democratic House leadership says they got word of two “whistleblowers” who are unidentified CIA operatives. The first of these issued a complaint based on secondhand reports from other anonymous people about Trump’s phone calls with Ukrainian government officials.

The CIA is the U.S. rulers’ political police tasked with operations abroad. It is notorious for decades of interference in the affairs of other governments, and with torture and abuse against workers’ organizations and political struggles. It was set up and staffed in 1947 by “Cold War” liberals, and these types have honeycombed its ranks ever since.

Both of the unnamed CIA agents are represented by Andrew Bakaj, a lawyer with close ties to the Democrats, and who previously worked for Hillary Clinton.

The Democrats’ ire is focused on Trump’s urging Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to look into past efforts to sabotage exposure of corruption there. Trump mentioned Hunter Biden, the son of Democratic presidential hopeful Joe Biden, to Zelensky.

While he was vice president, Joe Biden was tasked as the Barack Obama administration’s “point man” for Ukraine. In that role he used threats and bribery to get Ukrainian officials he didn’t like deep-sixed. And his son was suddenly appointed to the board of scandal-plagued Ukrainian natural gas giant Burisma, with a sweet salary of \$50,000 a month.

Similar U.S. government arm-twisting, bribery and influence peddling has marked all administrations, Democratic and Republican alike.

“We have not spoken directly to the whistleblower,” Adam Schiff, Democrat in charge of the House Intelligence Committee, one of those leading the witch hunt, flatly lied Sept. 17. The *New York Times* admitted Oct. 2 that he and his staff members had been meeting with the CIA operative for weeks.

In another *Times* article, Allison Stanger portrays these “whistleblowers” as “stewards of our constitutional democracy” who speak “truth to power.” But in fact they are CIA agents, joining Democrats’ efforts to void the 63 million votes cast for Trump in 2016.

Trump says ‘full halt’ to cooperation

Democrats say they will churn out more articles of impeachment, if the administration doesn’t comply with the raft of subpoenas for documents and committee interrogations they’ve issued. The president says he won’t cooperate with any of the partisan witch hunt committees the Democrats have cranked up.

While not ruling out future cooperation, Trump says he won’t now. In particular, he points out, unlike the impeachment inquiries into former Presidents Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton, there has been no debate and vote in the full House to open an investigation.

And in both those cases, the inquiry was assigned to only one House committee, the Judiciary Committee, not a plethora. And, by nonpartisan agreement, the president was permitted to have his attorneys sit in on all sessions — open or secret, and both major capitalist parties were to be consulted on any subpoenas to be issued. None of these things have been done here, Trump points out, saying it shows the Democrats’ operation in the House today is a “totally compromised kangaroo court.”

Democratic Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, who took it on herself to just “announce” the far-reaching probe, alleges nothing “requires” her to have the House vote.

The sharpening factional conflict reflects the growing crisis of the capitalist two party system. And if liberals feel comfortable with using these kinds of methods against the president, who defends the interests of the bosses, think about what lengths they’ll go to, to shut up workers they consider “deplorables.”

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