

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
**Introduction to *The Turn to Industry:*
Forging a Proletarian Party**

— PAGES 5-8

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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SWP drive to sell books to explain party, its program

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Socialist Workers Party members and supporters in Chicago have been taking the *Militant* and books by SWP leaders and other working-class revolutionaries to workers at GM strike picket lines and some other large United Auto Workers-organized plants in the area. “We’ve met a number of workers who want to know more about the SWP’s program,” reports Ilona Gersh.

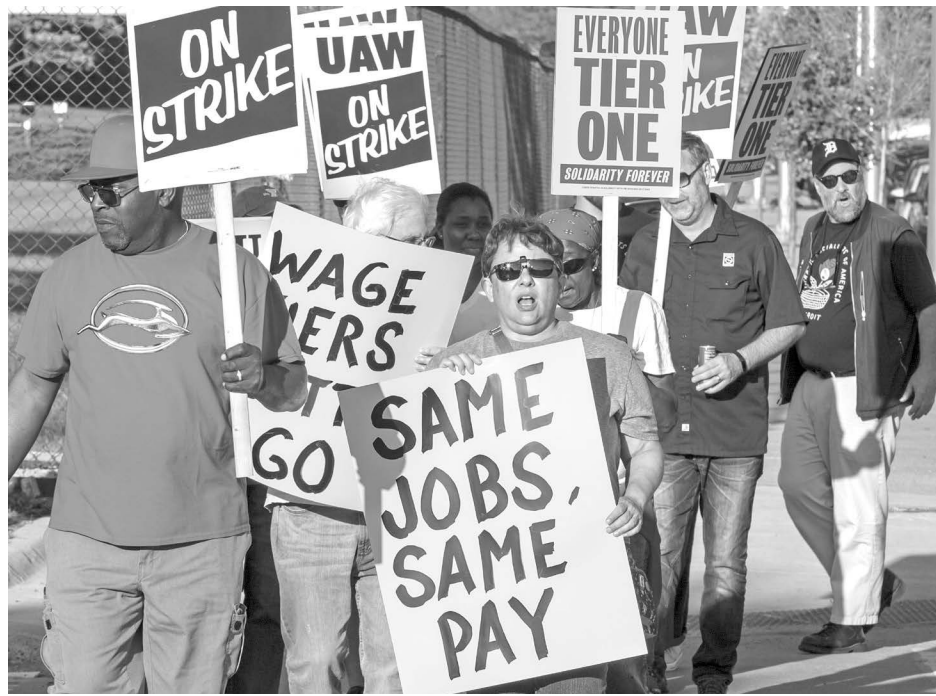
At an afternoon plant gate sale Oct. 21 at the Ford assembly plant there, workers bought one subscription, 31 copies of the paper and three books — *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*; *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart*; and *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning*, all by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. The plant employs some 6,000 workers.

“There was a lot of interest in the GM strike and the teachers strike taking place here,” said Gersh. “One worker who bought a single copy on an earlier sale stopped by this week

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After 40-day strike GM workers approve contract

Discussion continues on fight to end wage tiers



Jim West/Zuma Wire

GM workers gained confidence during the strike, standing together and building unity in fight for equal pay for equal work. Above, Sept. 18 UAW picket at Detroit-Hamtramck plant.

BY SAM MANUEL

SPRING HILL, Tenn. — Some 49,000 United Auto Workers members are back at work at General Motors after approving a new four-year contract 57% to 43%. The discussion among workers continues on what was accomplished in the 40-day

strike, and the need to fight to end divisive multitier wage scales; equalize pay and benefits for workers at assembly plants, part plants and distribution centers; and to strengthen the union.

With the GM strike over and contract approved, UAW officials opened talks with Ford, while extending the old contract with Fiat-Chrysler.

GM workers went on strike Sept. 16 at 33 factories and 22 parts warehouses. Workers were looking to regain ground lost over the last decade when GM used a carefully engi-

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Back strikers’ fight against copper bosses’ union busting

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

AMARILLO, Texas — Two weeks into the strike by more than 1,700 Asarco copper workers in Arizona and Texas, the bosses have refused to negotiate with the seven unions there, claiming they won’t meet until Nov. 14. It looks like Asarco is organizing to bring in replacement workers to try to break the strike, Teamsters Local 104 spokesperson Dawn Schumann told the *Militant* by phone from Tucson, Arizona, Oct. 29.

The workers and their unions are also preparing for what they believe could be a long and hard-fought strike. Groups of workers fanned out from the picket line by the Mission Mine in Sahuarita, Arizona, Oct. 29 to pass out flyers explaining what’s at stake in the strike, in neighboring communities. Plans are in the works already for a Thanksgiving dinner for strikers.

Workers who belong to the United

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Protests in Iraq, Lebanon target government, Tehran interference



Reuters/Thaier Al-Sudani

Protesters gather on Baghdad’s al-Jumhuriya bridge Oct. 29, fifth day of protests across Iraq against government corruption, anti-working-class measures, Iranian intervention.

BY TERRY EVANS

Demonstrators in both Iraq and Lebanon are protesting against their own governments as well as against forces organized and armed by Iran’s capitalist rulers. While working people in both countries join mass protests demanding a halt to deteriorating living conditions, for political rights and against Tehran’s interfer-

ence, sharp competition for economic and military sway in the region between Washington, Tehran, Ankara and other capitalist powers continues.

A new round of protests broke out in Iraq Oct. 25. Government buildings as well as offices of the Tehran-backed militias across southern Iraq were attacked, in some cases burnt to the

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2020 campaign reflects crisis of US rulers’ two party system

BY TERRY EVANS

Well short of the backing they need from Republicans to impeach and oust President Donald Trump before the 2020 election, many Democrats are becoming increasingly nervous that none of the 18 candidates contesting their party’s presidential nomination is capable of beating him at the polls.

“There is genuine concern that the horse many have bet on [Joe Biden] may be pulling up lame,” David Axelrod, a long-time Democratic Party operative and former adviser to Barack Obama, told the *New York Times*. “And the horse who has sprinted out front [Elizabeth Warren] may not be able to win.”

The crusade to impeach and indict Trump is driven by liberals’ contempt for — and fear of — the millions of

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UFCW union local says ‘No!’ to any prison ban of ‘Militant’

BY SETH GALINSKY

“While you can imprison the person, you cannot imprison their mind,” United Food and Commercial Workers Local 770 President John Grant wrote Florida prison officials Oct. 16. “We call on you to do the right thing and respect the constitutional foundations of our country and society: stop censoring the *Militant* and other pub-

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Steelworkers in New Brunswick
fight Glencore lockout

Quebec senior residence workers
strike for wages and more staff

Protests sweep Iraq, Lebanon

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ground. “Iran get out, get out,” demonstrators in Tahrir Square, Baghdad, chanted Oct. 26.

The Iraqi government is partly dependent for its defense on militias, known as Popular Mobilization Forces, organized among Shiite Iraqis by Tehran’s Revolutionary Guard.

Despite mounting casualties the numbers joining the anti-government protests has broadened. In defiance of the education minister, school students walked out of classes Oct. 28. The teachers’ union announced a four-day strike that day, demanding the government resign.

Tehran seeks to extend reach

The bourgeois clerical regime in Iran has relentlessly fought to extend its counterrevolutionary reach throughout the Mideast, using proxy fighters like the Popular Mobilization Forces in Iraq, as well as Hezbollah in Lebanon and Syria and Houthi rebel forces in Yemen.

The Israeli rulers launched airstrikes on PMF bases in Iraq this summer seeking to prevent Tehran from transferring weapons to allied militias in Syria where they are used to target Israeli civilians. Hezbollah’s leaders boast they have missiles in place that can hit every square inch of Israel.

The Iranian rulers’ interventions across the Mideast are falsely presented by both Washington and the capitalist rulers in Iran as the result of the 1979 Iranian Revolution.

In fact the moves of Iran’s bourgeois clerical rulers both at home and abroad are the outcome of a counterrevolution they carried out, taking years to turn back significant gains by workers, farm-

ers, women and oppressed nationalities won with their revolution.

Millions had mobilized to overthrow the brutal rule of the U.S.-backed shah. They organized to use that victory to win new political and social rights. Workers set up workers councils in the oil fields, auto plants and other workplaces to fight for their class interests.

“In Iran today, faced with rising unrest among working people and the oppressed, the only way for the capitalist rulers to defend and preserve their counterrevolutionary regime at home is to continue extending political reaction throughout Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and divided Kurdistan,” Socialist Workers Party leader Steve Clark explains in *Revolution, Counterrevolution and War in Iran*, a *Militant* supplement published last April. It is available on the *Militant*’s website.

‘End sectarian political system’

Working people in Lebanon are demanding the fall of the governing coalition, where posts are allocated on religious lines. The prime minister has to be a Sunni Muslim, the speaker a Shiite Muslim and the president a Maronite Christian. Strict quotas determine appointments in the army and other state institutions. Hezbollah, which claims to represent all Shiites in Lebanon, plays a crucial role in the government. Hezbollah head Hassan Nasrallah has fought to quell the protests, but instead they have spread into Shiite areas that the Tehran-backed outfit controls.

State security forces stood aside as Hezbollah thugs set fire to and broke up an encampment protesters had set up in central Beirut.

Initially organized to protest tax hikes

Hong Kong protests back Catalan independence fight



Hong Kong Free Press/May James

Protesters in Hong Kong hold Catalan flags showing solidarity with Catalonia’s independence movement in Spain during the 20th week of marches for political rights Oct. 20. The action was on the Chinese mainland, in Kowloon, which is part of the semi-autonomous territory of Hong Kong.

In Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia, some 350,000 marched Oct. 26 demanding Madrid free nine jailed separatist leaders. There have been daily protests since the Spanish Supreme Court imprisoned them Oct. 14 for helping organize a referendum for independence in 2017.

Wilson Ng wrote the *Militant* from Hong Kong Oct. 26 that he “took part in the mass demonstration in Kowloon,” and it was “well over 100,000.”

Jimmy Sham, convener of the Civil Human Rights Front, was assaulted by four masked thugs with hammers and knives Oct. 16 and hospitalized with head injuries. The coalition, which has organized the largest marches in Hong Kong, demands an end to cop brutality, amnesty for over 2,600 arrested protesters and direct election of city officials.

The demonstrations are a response to Beijing tightening its grip on the financial hub and former British colony, run by the Chinese leaders under a 1997 agreement as “one country, two systems.” The protest movement is a major political crisis both for Hong Kong’s administrators and for Chinese President Xi Jinping, who vows to suppress any attempt to split China.

— ROY LANDERSEN

on gas, tobacco and WhatsApp, which many use for communication, demonstrators are increasingly demanding the fall of the government. Acceding to the protests, Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri said Oct. 29 he will hand in his resignation. His cabinet will remain in office until a new government is formed.

“It’s a country where which sect or which political leaders you belong to secures you a job,” Nina Sabbah told Reuters. Sabbah, a Shiite Muslim from Hezbollah-dominated southern Lebanon, joined Sunnis, Christians and Druze to protest the sectarian setup.

“All of them means all of them. Nasrallah is one of them,” has become a

popular chant at demonstrations.

Despite threats of attack, some 170,000 protesters of all religions formed a 105-mile human chain Oct. 27 connecting the country’s north and south. The government “kept us caged in their little sects and forced us to hate one another,” Yara Khawam, one of the organizers, told CNN.

U.S. rulers exert power

Despite claims by liberal opponents of the Donald Trump presidency, Washington has no intention of pulling out of the Middle East and giving up U.S. imperialism’s economic and political in-

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THE MILITANT

Solidarity with student, union protests in Chile

Student protests in Chile sparked by a train fare hike have been joined by unions fighting back against decades of government and bosses’ attacks. The ‘Militant’ covers the eruption of protests from Chile to Lebanon, Hong Kong to Iraq spawned by deepening capitalist crisis.



Fernando Lavoz/NurPhoto via ZUMA Press
Students in Osorno, Chile, Oct. 19 protest government attacks against working people.

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

Books explain party program

Continued from front page
to sign up for a subscription.” At another afternoon shift there 12 days earlier workers snapped up five subscriptions, three books and dozens of papers.

At a plant gate sale at the Chrysler assembly plant in Belvidere Oct. 25, UAW members purchased two subscriptions and 19 singles, Gersh said, and another subscription and two single copies were sold knocking on workers’ doors in the area.

At a rally of striking Chicago teachers and other school workers the next day, party members and supporters sold six subscriptions and 11 books, including *In Defense of the US Working Class*.

Chicago distributors rapidly ran out of the 80 papers they had ordered for the week, so 50 more were rushed to them in time for another Ford plant gate team Oct. 29.

The nine-week drive to sell 1,100 *Militant* subscriptions and 1,250 books goes until Dec. 10. It runs concurrently

Iraq, Lebanon

Continued from page 2
terests in the region. One example was the Pentagon’s special forces mission to cold-bloodedly assassinate Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the central leader of the reactionary Islamic State, near Idlib, Syria, Oct. 26.

Just as Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama took pride in overseeing Washington’s execution of Osama bin Laden in 2011, so Trump contemptuously bragged that al-Baghdadi “died like a dog.” Nine other people were killed in the operation.

Washington has also redeployed troops and armored vehicles from Iraq into the Deir el-Zour region of Syria. Additional military assets were being sent, the Defense Department said, “to prevent the oil fields from falling back into the hands of ISIS [Islamic State] or other destabilizing actors.” Those other “actors,” of course, include the Syrian dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad.

Washington also deploys some 200 special forces in al-Tanf, alongside an allied Syrian rebel commando unit, near one of the main roads from Iraq that connects Tehran to Damascus and Lebanon.

with the Socialist Workers Party’s fall campaign to raise \$100,000 to finance its ongoing political work.

The SWP aims to expand readership of the books and the *Militant*, and to introduce working people to its revolutionary program. Party members offer them the opportunity to read about lessons from previous working-class struggles on how to build an effective independent fighting movement to counter the bosses and their government. They focus on discussions with working people on their doorsteps in cities, towns and rural areas, and at labor actions and social protests.

To encourage greater understanding of the party’s revolutionary program, all Pathfinder books and copies of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* are being offered at 20% off. In addition, eight titles are offered at half price when purchased with a *Militant* subscription. (See ad below.)

An invaluable new book has just been added to the party’s arsenal — *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* by Jack Barnes. The introduction is printed in a special four-page spread in this issue. Through Dec. 31 the title is being offered at a special price of \$12, \$10 with a *Militant* subscription.

Fund drive starts strong in Oakland
In Oakland, California, party mem-



Militant/Samir Hazboun
SWP member Maggie Trowe talks with GM striker Kenneth Matczak at his doorstep in Bowling Green, Kentucky, Oct. 18. “We’re trying to raise the standard for all workers,” he said about their walkout. He got a *Militant* subscription and *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?*

bers have already collected over half of the \$12,000 quota adopted by the SWP branch there. “We’ve had an enthusiastic and early response to a letter appealing for contributions to the Party-Building Fund we sent out in the first week of the drive,” wrote Carole Lesnick.

“The party’s work described in the *Militant* has been quite an inspiration for fund contributors,” she said. “We included a sub blank for those whose subs were about to expire. Four people

have sent them back so far — three resubscribing for a year.

“We’re working on getting new contributors,” Lesnick said. “We’ve gotten \$13 from campaign teams talking to workers and look to increase this.”

Those wanting to join the effort to broaden the reach of the *Militant* and revolutionary books and to kick in to the fund drive, can contact the SWP or Communist League branches listed in the directory on page 9.

Vote Nov. 5 for the 2019 Socialist Workers Party candidates!

- California**
Joel Britton, Mayor of San Francisco

Florida
Anthony Dutrow, Miami City Commission

Kentucky
Amy Husk, Governor
Samir Hazboun, Lieutenant Governor

Minnesota
Helen Meyers, St. Paul City Council

New Jersey
Lea Sherman, State Assembly
Candace Wagner, State Assembly
- New York**
Seth Galinsky, New York City Public Advocate
Ved Dookhun, Mayor of Troy
Lawrence Quinn, Troy City Council
Abby Tilsner, Albany County Executive

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

Washington state
Henry Clay Dennison, Seattle City Council

See directory on page 9 to contact party campaign office nearest you.

‘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

Fall Campaign to sell Militant subscriptions and books

Oct. 5 - Dec. 10 (Week 3)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold
UNITED STATES				
Albany	70	18	70	11
Atlanta	70	25	110	66
Chicago	110	75	100	47
Dallas	35	15	35	9
Lincoln	12	6	15	7
Los Angeles	90	43	90	38
Louisville	60	22	60	13
Miami	25	9	25	6
New Jersey	40	17	70	41
New York	80	18	120	78
Oakland	70	34	100	52
Philadelphia	25	6	25	10
Pittsburgh	25	12	25	4
Seattle	70	26	90	18
Twin Cities	35	14	35	22
Washington	50	16	50	13
Total U.S.	867	356	1,020	435
Prisoners	25	11		
UNITED KINGDOM				
London	50	22	75	40
Manchester	35	14	45	11
Total U.K.	85	36	120	51
Canada	70	24	150	22
New Zealand	20	9	20	10
Australia	25	10	25	4
Total	1,092	446	1,335	522
SHOULD BE	1,100	363	1,250	413
*Raised goal				

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\$8/\$5

THE CUBAN FIVE
\$8/\$5

Malcolm X Black Liberation & the Road to Workers Power
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\$8/\$5

WE'VE HAD ENOUGH
\$5/\$3.50

In defense of the US working class
\$5/\$3.50

Prices are:
Book only/Book with subscription.

See distributors on page 9

Socialist Workers Party Fund Drive Oct. 5 - Dec. 10 (Week 3)		
Area	Quota	Collected
Albany	\$6,000	\$0
Atlanta	\$9,250	\$2,800
Chicago	\$11,000	\$2,965
Dallas	\$2,500	\$475
Lincoln	\$250	\$75
Los Angeles	\$10,500	\$1,938
Louisville	\$2,500	\$825
Miami	\$3,500	\$0
New York	\$14,000	\$3,792
N. New Jersey	\$3,300	\$375
Oakland	\$12,000	\$5,700
Philadelphia	\$2,500	\$475
Pittsburgh	\$2,000	\$600
Seattle	\$10,000	\$2,699
Twin Cities	\$4,500	\$275
Washington, DC	\$4,600	\$0
Other		\$0
Total	\$98,400	\$22,994
Should Be	\$100,000	\$33,333

Back copper miners strike

Continued from front page

Steelworkers, the largest numbers on strike; the Teamsters; and five other unions walked out Oct. 13 after rejecting Asarco's "last, best and final" concession contract, which would have left most of the workers facing four more years without a pay raise, on top of nearly a decade without one.

Asarco is a subsidiary of Grupo Mexico, the fourth largest copper mining company in the world.

The Hayden, Arizona, and Amarillo smelters are shut down because of the strike. The Silver Bell mine, Asarco's smallest, is still working, because some miners are crossing the picket lines, as are some workers at other mines. If Asarco attempts to bring in "replacement" workers, it would be a major escalation in its attack on the unions.

This area has been the scene of bitter struggles between miners and copper bosses for over 100 years, including the bruising three-year fight against Phelps Dodge in Morenci, Arizona, in the 1980s. Bosses replaced strikers with scabs and got the state government to send armed National Guard troops and SWAT sharpshooters to break the union.

Asarco hasn't replied to interview requests by the *Militant* or other media.

'We need the union'

"It's not just about the money," Jack James, a Haul truck operator at the Mission Mine, told the *Militant*. With the dangerous conditions in mining and smelting, "we can't just wait for a government MSHA inspector to come by. We need the union to be there to make sure that faulty equipment and conditions are fixed quickly."

James said that for the last decade workers "didn't even get a cost-of-living increase. That means in reality our wages went down." James was one of the unionists passing out flyers encouraging people to call Asarco and tell them to return to the negotiating table.

Worker-correspondents from the *Militant* visited the picket shack across from the Asarco refinery in Amarillo Oct. 19.

"We are standing up to let them know that we're not going to go backward anymore," said David Devore, a mobile equipment operator. "We are striking for the future. I have been here since 1976. But most of the workers here are young."

"When Grupo bought Asarco in 1999, they let this refinery go bankrupt. We took a pay cut at the time," Devore recalled. "In 2005 we went on strike for 5 ½ months. With the proposed increase in health insurance premiums we will actually lose \$2 an hour."

He said Asarco also wants to increase health insurance deductibles and to freeze retirement pay.

"The jobs are dangerous," said Dave Burris, a journeyman electrician and member of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1602. "We

work with molten copper, high voltage and old broken-down equipment."

"The union at Union Pacific railroad is refusing to bring materials into the plant," Jon Mares, USW Local 5613 secretary-treasurer, told us while we walked the picket line. "FedEx and UPS truck drivers won't cross the picket lines either."

"A Teamsters local donated \$3,000 for our food pantry," he said. "Members of USW Local 13-1 from down south drove over nine hours with a U-Haul full of supplies."

While I was on the picket line area workers came by to give support. "They are our union brothers and sisters. We have to stick together," said Jose Mirales, a member of Teamsters Local 577 at the Tyson beef slaughterhouse here.

Mares told the *Militant* by phone Oct. 30 that the union is organizing a rally at the Amarillo picket line Nov. 6. Strikers are picketing in below freezing temperatures and snow.

Like their fellow strikers in Amarillo, Asarco workers in Arizona are getting donations of money, food and other items from other unions, workers and small businesses in the area. The IBEW in Tucson, another of the unions on strike, is coordinating a food pantry for strikers.

Solidarity messages can be sent to the strikers via palfchair@gmail.com. Donations to the food pantry can be made via: [paypal.me/palfcommunityservice](https://www.paypal.me/palfcommunityservice).

Seth Galinsky in New York contributed to this article.

Blackjewel miners' encampment protest wins back pay



Blackjewel Employees Stand Together

Coal miners in Cumberland, Kentucky, who blocked a coal train for two months, have won their fight to get the wages owed them. Their final paychecks had been clawed back by bankrupt Blackjewel bosses in July.

"The credit for this settlement belongs to the miners and their families who blocked the railway tracks," Ned Pillersdorf, attorney for the Blackjewel miners in the bankruptcy court, told miners and supporters Oct. 24.

Blackjewel, then the sixth-largest coal mining company in the U.S., declared bankruptcy July 1 and laid off 300 miners in Kentucky and 1,400 more in Virginia, West Virginia and Wyoming.

On July 29 when miners learned Blackjewel was loading and preparing to haul out coal produced by their unpaid labor, they occupied the tracks. They won broad solidarity and material support from the community and beyond.

"Wonderful news," Donna Sexton, mother of laid-off Blackjewel miner Chris Sexton, the first to block the tracks, texted the *Militant* Oct. 25. "It just proves to the world that if you stand together as a whole, you can stop a train."

"It was worth the struggle," Stacy Rowe, wife of miner Chris Rowe, told the *Militant* two days later. Chris and Stacy slept in a tent at the camp for two months. "A lot of people had guts. I don't think we would have gotten our money if we hadn't protested. It would have gotten swept under the rug the way it always does when big companies hurt workers."

"We really appreciate the effort people put in coming to see us and showing their support," she added. "We would not have won without the support."

— MAGGIE TROWE

After 40-day strike GM workers approve contract

Continued from front page

neered bankruptcy and the effects of the world capitalist financial crisis to begin imposing lower wages for new hires, spun off "unprofitable" plants, and set up different divisions that paid lower wages across the board.

The strike won widespread support from other working people and small business owners, who honked horns as they drove by picket lines, and dropped off food, beverages, wood for burn barrels and more to help workers stay strong during the strike. And many other workers watched the strike closely, considering how unions and solidarity can be used to advance their class interests.

Under the old contract so-called legacy workers, those hired in the assembly plants prior to 2008, got the top wage, some \$30 an hour. Workers hired since 2007 started out at just over half that and took eight years of "progression" before they reached top rate, which is not quite what the legacy workers got.

The new contract has two raises, two lump-sum payments that don't roll over into workers' wages, and a signing bonus.

In the new deal, some 3,000 workers at GM's parts manufacturing subsidiary GMHC — created in 2009 — top out at \$22.50 an hour. Another set of wage tiers at GM's parts warehouses top out at \$25 for those hired after 2015 and at \$31 for those hired earlier.

GM contracts out 850 cleaning and maintenance jobs at its plants in Ohio and Michigan to Aramark Corporation. The workers also belong to the UAW and approved a separate contract.

Strikers made clear their desire to get rid of the divisions. "No more tiers," read

many signs on the picket lines. "Equal work, equal pay! Temp lives matter," was a popular slogan on T-shirts.

Some divisions were narrowed with the new contract. Temporary workers at the assembly plants, numbering 7%, get both lower pay and fewer benefits. They are now supposed to become permanent workers after three years. All permanent workers in these factories are to reach top rate in four instead of eight years.

While the contract passed at most of the assembly plants, workers at every GMHC parts plant and most of the parts warehouses voted no. Two major assembly plants, the one here and one in Bowling Green, Kentucky, rejected the contract by narrow margins. The vote here was 51% to 49%.

"There was no provision for job security," Lisa Carr who works on the brake line in Spring Hill told the *Militant* Oct. 23. This is her third GM plant after having to transfer from two earlier closures.

"It's time to make the temps equal," Carr added. "We all work hard in this plant" noting that there's just 30 to 90 seconds to complete most job tasks.

Dwayne Klepper, 53, has worked as a temp here for three years, but because any layoff over 30 days restarts the clock, GM only counts him as having one year of service. "'Temp' is a bad word," he said. "We're all workers."

Gary Corr, a picket captain, told this worker-correspondent he voted for the contract because of the wage increases. Corr has worked at GM for 4 ½ years. Job security is important but you can't get a guarantee on that, he said. "They can promise not to close the plant and just shut it down anyway."

What the bosses did under the old

contract, which had some language about having to talk to the union about plant closings, was to "unallocate" vehicles for production at Lordstown, Ohio, and shutter the plant.

Several workers said after being on the picket line that they got to know more of their co-workers, gaining confidence in their ability to fight together. "People were strong and didn't blink in face of a tight situation," Corr noted.

UAW members at GM's Corvette plant in Bowling Green, Kentucky, also voted the contract down. Bill Mulligan, who had transferred there from the now-closed plant in Lordstown, told the Bowling Green *Daily News* that he was skeptical about the new contract's promise on temp workers.

"I was hired as a temp," he said. "All they're going to do is lay them off before their time is up, and then they'll have to start over again."

Another UAW member, James Hawks, told the paper he voted against the contract even though "there are some good things, like the health insurance." The bosses dropped demands to raise workers' payments for medical.

Hawks is still an "in-progression" worker. "I voted no and didn't have to think twice about it," he said. "I can't just look out for myself. I have to look at my fellow workers and consider if it's fair for them. If it doesn't help us all, it helps none of us."

David Parnell Jr., who works at the GM Flint Assembly plant, told the *De- troit News* that "I'm happy" with the contract. "We got what we could out of this fight," he said, "and in 2023 [when the contract expires] it's going to be a different fight."

Mack Truck strike ends

The 12-day strike by 3,500 UAW members at six Mack Truck plants or warehouses in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Florida ended with a tentative agreement Oct. 25, and a return to work, while voting is organized. The terms of the deal have not been announced.

The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party

Advancing a working-class program requires a party working class in composition



Jack Barnes

Below is the introduction to the new book, The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party by Jack Barnes. Barnes is the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. Copyright © 2019 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY JACK BARNES

The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party is about the working-class program, composition, and course of conduct of the only kind of party worthy of the name “revolutionary” in the imperialist epoch. The only kind of party that can recognize the most revolutionary fact of this epoch — the worth of working

people, and our power to change society when we organize and act against the capitalists and all the economic, social, and political forms of their class rule.

This book is about building such a party in the United States and in other capitalist countries around the world. It is about the course the Socialist Workers Party and its predecessors have followed for one hundred years and counting.

“We will not succeed in rooting the party in the working class, much less in defending the revolutionary proletarian principles of the party from being undermined, unless the party is an overwhelmingly proletarian party, composed in its decisive majority of workers in the factories, mines, and mills,” emphasized resolutions adopted by the SWP convention in 1938. The party must become “an inseparable part of the trade unions and their struggles.” It must be an inseparable part of daily battles waged by the working class and other exploited producers to defend ourselves and our families against the brutal consequences of capitalist oppression.

Special offer!

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Forging a
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JACK BARNES

Below is the introduction to the new book, The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party by Jack Barnes. Barnes is the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. Copyright © 2019 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

That orientation — the course of the Bolsheviks under V.I. Lenin in leading the workers and peasants to power in October 1917 — has been our strategic course since a communist party was founded in the United States two years later, along with others affiliating to the new Communist International. The new party had one sole aim — emulating the Bolsheviks’ example. The SWP is the direct descendant of that party.

With the rise of industrial capitalism some two hundred fifty years ago, conflicts between workers and employers increasingly took on “the character of collisions between two classes,” explained Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in the Communist Manifesto, the founding program of the revolutionary workers movement. In face of the capitalists’ cutthroat drive for profits, workers have no choice but to “club together in order to keep

up the rate of wages” and resist employers’

push to extend the workday and speed up production, with cold disregard for our health and safety. Inevitably, workers “begin to form combinations (trade unions)” against the employing class.

Some two centuries of class-struggle experience have confirmed that such “combinations” take many initial forms — from acts of resistance on the job; to battles against company lockouts; to strikes, organizing drives, and campaigns to expand union power.

The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party is a new edition of the book first published in 1981 under the title *The Changing Face of US Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*. It is intended to be read, and above all used, as a guide to building a revolutionary workers party. Along with documents from earlier editions selected to focus on fundamental questions at the heart of the Socialist Workers Party’s turn to industry from the 1970s on, it also includes three new pieces that give further concreteness to these reports.

Two of them are from the pages of the *Militant* newsweekly — one on the Steelworkers Fight Back campaign of the mid-1970s, the other a column by party veteran Marvel Scholl entitled “The Making of a Union Bureaucrat.” The third is from a February 1980 report by Ken Shilman, who organized the work of party members in the United Mine Workers union at the time, drawing a balance sheet on the first two years of party building and trade union activity in the coalfields of West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Alabama.

During the 1960s the SWP and its affiliated youth organization, the Young Socialist Alliance, had grown rapidly, recruiting large numbers of new members who had been won to the revolutionary working-class movement as students fighting Jim Crow segregation — North and South — as well as organizing against the Vietnam War and the oppression of women. In February 1978 the

Continued on page 6



Sydney Boles



Militant/Siu Singer

Top, miners block rails, Harlan County, Kentucky, July 2019, to stop Blackjewel bosses from hauling coal until wages owed them were paid. The nonunion miners won broad support and, in October, their back pay. **Above**, miners hold national protest in Washington, D.C., March 1981, a few weeks before 160,000 began 10-week strike, turning back concession contract demanded by mine bosses.



Reuters/Kyle Gritlot



Militant/Martin Koppel

Top, port drivers rally October 2018 to win recognition of Teamsters as their union and to defend immigrant workers facing deportation. **Above**, two busloads of workers from Sparrows Point steel plant in Baltimore, including socialist workers who helped organize caravan, joined March 1979 rally of 3,500 in Newport News, Virginia, to back strike for recognition of Steelworkers Local 8888 at Tenneco shipyards. Fight registered gains of working class and unions from Black rights victories in South. **Inset**, strikers picket shipyard February 1979.



Militant/John Cobey

See distributors page 9 or
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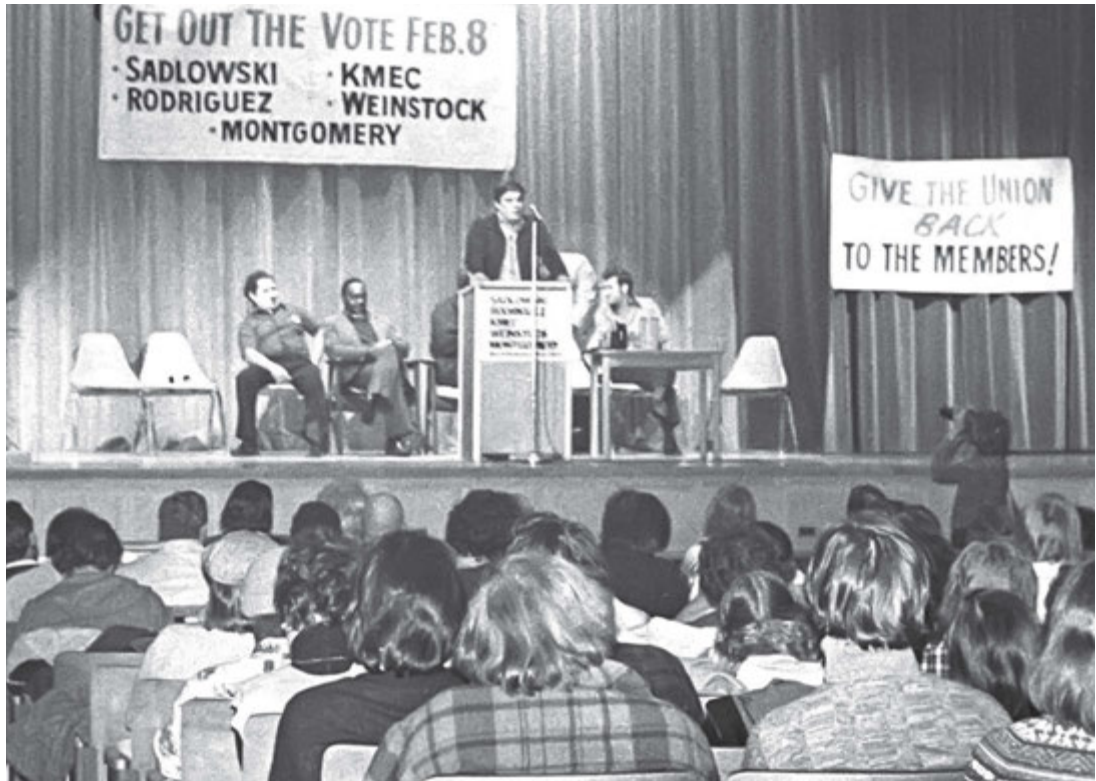


Militant/Tom Iann



Militant/Nancy Cole

Left, unionists across U.S. joined march of 5,000 in Austin, Minnesota, April 1986, to back UFCW Local P-9 against Hormel. **Above**, UMWU contingent in labor march for Equal Rights Amendment, Richmond, Virginia, January 1980. Leaders of Coal Employment Project, which helped women get mining jobs, hold banner. **Right**, Ed Sadlowski, Steelworkers Fight Back candidate for union president, speaks at Detroit rally, Feb. 5, 1977. Ranks used campaign to seek control over their union and end to USWA officials' connivance with steel bosses.



Jim West



December 1974 march in Boston to support school desegregation. Mass meetings, protests and defense of school buses beat back attacks organized by Democratic Party leaders. Battle was a "decisive combat experience for an entire layer of the party leadership," Barnes says.

Continued from page 5

party's National Committee adopted the first report in this collection, "Leading the Party Into Industry," and began a historic turn.

Members of the party responded with enthusiasm, as well as disciplined attention to every detail. By the mid-1980s the large majority of party members were carrying out union and political work alongside other workers in auto plants, steel mills, rail yards, coal mines, oil refineries, electrical equipment factories, garment shops, textile mills, packinghouses, airports, and other industrial workplaces. Readers will find the breadth of this activity captured in the reports and the new and greatly expand-

ed photo pages throughout the book.

Over the years since the SWP made what has become known as the turn to industry, the imperialist order has sunk into deeper and deeper crisis: declining profit rates; intensifying global capitalist competition; stagnation in capital investment to expand plant, equipment, and industrial employment; mounting pressures toward currency wars; and unending military conflicts. Workers and our families face attacks by the capitalist class, its government, and its Democratic and Republican parties, with their "socialist" wings, on our living and job conditions — on our very life and limb.

The rulers' blows don't fall evenly or with the same force on all sections

of working people. Inequalities are widening not only between social classes but within the working class itself.

In face of these unrelenting assaults, the working class and labor movement have been in retreat since the 1990s, one symptom of which has been the sharp decline in union organization. Union membership in private-

ly owned workplaces has fallen from more than 20 percent when the reports in this book were given to 6.5 percent today. The drop has been steep among industrial workers — from 87 percent of underground coal miners in 1977 to some 20 percent in 2018; from more than 90 percent of automobile workers

in the late 1970s to some 50 percent today; with comparable trends among other mining and manufacturing workers.

But the necessity — and opportunities — for working people, nonunion and union alike, to be bold, to organize ourselves, and to mobilize mutual solidarity have seldom been greater. And necessity is pushing us in that direction. The measure of our success will often not initially be the formation of new and powerful unions fighting for the interests of our class.

It will be the experience and confidence workers gain as we act together.

It will be our increasing political knowledge and consciousness of the employers — and of ourselves.

It will be our pride and our readiness to stand up and be counted as we act together as part of a common class.

And it will be our deeper understanding, explained by Engels as far back as 1847, that "communism is not a doctrine but a movement; it proceeds not from principles but from facts." It is the line of march of the working class toward political power.

Socialist Workers Party members today work and fight alongside rail workers — freight conductors to yard workers — confronting concession contracts, cuts in crew size, and increasingly dangerous job conditions as a result of the carriers' profit drive. We work and fight alongside workers at large retail stores owned by Walmart, the biggest private employer in the United States, with a nonunion workforce of some 1.5 million. We carry out political activity with car service and taxi drivers — from Africa, Asia, North America, and elsewhere who are working longer and longer hours under conditions of plunging take-home pay, unsustainable debt, and rising suicide rates in face of cutthroat competition among them fostered by

owners of the fleet companies and "gig economy," "woke" capitalists.

The workers most open today to acting against the employers and to giving consideration to working-class political alternatives are those the capitalist families and the professional and upper middle classes dismiss as "deplorables" or smear as "criminals" or just "trash." Those contemptuous slurs are the opposite of the Socialist Workers Party's knowledge of the big majority of our class. We consider them a better class of people. We come from them. We're part of them.

These are men and women of all skin colors and ages. They and their kin come from urban and rural backgrounds, from all continents and national origins. It is among these "deplorables" that a disciplined and fighting union vanguard of the working class — and above all a tested class-conscious political vanguard, independent of the Democratic and Republican parties — will be forged and steered over time in struggle against the employing class.



The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party stands on the revolutionary continuity of the Socialist Workers Party, explained and defended some eight decades ago in *In Defense of Marxism* by Leon Trotsky and *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party* by James P. Cannon. The articles and correspondence in those two books record the successful effort to maintain a communist course in face of an opposition in the party and its youth organization that

began bending to imperialist pressure and public opinion during Washington's buildup to enter World War II.

"The opposition is under the sway of petty-bourgeois moods and tendencies. This is the essence of the whole matter," Trotsky wrote in December 1939 in one of his articles collected in *In Defense of Marxism*. "Any serious factional fight in a party is always in the final analysis a reflection of the class struggle." That's why, as Trotsky explained in a letter written a few weeks later, "The class composition of the party must correspond to its class program."

Trotsky had become by early 1917 a central part of the Bolshevik leadership forged by Lenin that led the workers and peasants of Russia in making the October 1917 revolution and two years later launching the Communist International. In 1929, some half a decade after Lenin's death, Joseph Stalin banished Trotsky from the Soviet Union for leading the fight to continue Lenin's proletarian internationalist policies. Trotsky did so in direct political opposition to the rising petty bourgeois layers in the USSR whose privileges and interests were increasingly safeguarded by Stalin. Proletarian revolutionists the world over, including Cannon and other leaders of what became the Socialist Workers Party, joined with Trotsky in founding a new world communist movement loyal to Lenin's course.

The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party also builds on Farrell Dobbs's firsthand account of the class-struggle leadership that organized and

led workers across the Midwest in the 1930s in the strikes and union drives that transformed the Teamsters into a fighting industrial union movement. Dobbs's four books — *Teamster Rebellion*, *Teamster Power*, *Teamster Politics*, and *Teamster Bureaucracy* — "are worth reading, rereading, and reviewing every year," as I explain in one of the reports published here. "The more comrades get into industry, get to know the unions, and begin operating as part of party fractions, the more we'll get out of those books every time we go back to them."

It is also important to see *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* as a companion to three other more recent works that expand on social and class issues at the heart of America's road to socialism:

- *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes (2009);
- *Are They Rich Because They're Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism* by Jack Barnes (2016); and
- *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions* by Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Farrell Dobbs, and Jack Barnes (2019).

Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions centers on the party's broad and systematic propaganda activity in the working class. SWP members, supporters, and young socialists support picket lines, knock on doors, and stand on porches to talk with working people in cities, towns, and farm country, as we carry out such activity on the job and in the unions. We use the *Militant* newsweekly, books on working-class politics, and our SWP election campaigns to explain the truth about the capitalist parties and the exploitation, oppression, and wars by capital they uphold. *Above all, we report how working people are organizing to resist assaults on our rights and conditions of life and work — on the job and off.*

The *Militant* has tremendous leverage to advance the organization and education of class-struggle-minded workers and unionists. As a "newsweekly published in the interests of working people," which the *Militant's* masthead proudly proclaims, each issue features firsthand reports by working people — written in our own voices, and in

our own names — about resistance to the capitalist rulers in factories, mines, and other workplaces and working-class communities. We do so openly and boldly as who we are and what we stand for, never pretending to be anything different. And we back our co-workers in acting the same way.

Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions also features Trotsky's 1940 article, "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay," which, as Farrell Dobbs wrote in a 1969 preface, contains "more food for thought (and action) . . . than will be found in any book by anyone else on the union question."

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power, as emphasized in its very first paragraphs, explains the unbreakable link between the fight for Black freedom and a course toward the "revolutionary conquest of state power by a politically class-conscious and organized vanguard of the working class — millions strong." A workers and farmers government, it says, is "the mightiest weapon possible" to wage the battle to end not only racism and Black oppression but also the subjugation of women "and every form of exploitation and human degradation inherited from millennia of class-divided society."

The introduction to that book explains why it is dedicated to SWP cadres who are African American, "who have never tired of getting in the face of race-baiters, red-baiters, and outright bigots and demagogues of every stripe who have sought to deny that workers, farmers, and young people who are Black — and proud to be Black — can and will become communists along the same road and on the same political basis as anyone else."



There is a concerted attack today on the recognition that class divisions un-

derlie *all* forms of exploitation and oppression, and that class struggle and class consciousness — *working-class consciousness* — are central to any effective fight for liberation. The assault comes not directly from the capitalist ruling families themselves, who have always tried to hide that dangerous truth — dangerous to *them*.

Instead, the offensive comes from what many refer to as "the left," liberals and radicals among the middle class and professionals — from privileged college and university campuses such as Harvard, Oberlin, and others; to prominent newspapers, magazines, and TV networks from the *New York Times* and *Atlantic Monthly* to CNN, BBC, and *The New Yorker*. It is promoted on websites and "social media" proliferating too rapidly to keep track of. These voices — which include individuals and political groups claiming to speak on behalf of working people and the oppressed — insist that conflicts based on race, skin color, or what they call "gender" — not class — are the driving force of history.

But the observation that the record "of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" remains as true today as it was nearly 175 years ago when Karl Marx and Frederick Engels pointed it out at the opening of the Communist Manifesto, the founding program of the modern revolutionary workers movement.

Denial of the class struggle is nothing new. There are more than enough grandparents to current "theories" about "identity politics," "intersectionality," and so on noisily propagated by young professionals and other upper middle class layers today. In 1940 James P. Cannon polemicized against petty bourgeois currents on the eve of World War II who "rail at our stick-in-the-mud attitude

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Militant

Rail workers under attack

By Dick Roberts
The U.S. railroad industry has launched a violent campaign to drastically reduce the size of the rail workforce and the size of rail workers' wages. This campaign could threaten the livelihoods of rail workers and the lives of our nation's citizens. The campaign could threaten the livelihoods of rail workers and the lives of our nation's citizens. The campaign could threaten the livelihoods of rail workers and the lives of our nation's citizens.

Railroad workers set protest

Milwaukee Rd. bankruptcy: owners plan ripoff



Communists use the *Militant* newsweekly, books on working-class politics, and our election campaigns to explain the truth about capitalist parties and the exploitation, oppression, and wars by capital they uphold.

Top, Dan Fein, steelworker and SWP candidate for mayor of Phoenix, Arizona, in 1979. **Above**, articles in the *Militant* report on how Milwaukee Road rail bosses used bankruptcy courts to cut crew sizes, lay off workers and boost profits. Rail workers put out buttons and T-shirts demanding, "Investigate Milwaukeegate." **Right**, *Militant* article on how coal miner Bill Hovland, who was also the SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in West Virginia in 1982, won back his job after he was suspended by bosses at Old Ben Coal. Hovland's firing was seen by fellow mine workers as part of ongoing battle between bosses and the union. Workers went on strike, forcing bosses to back down.



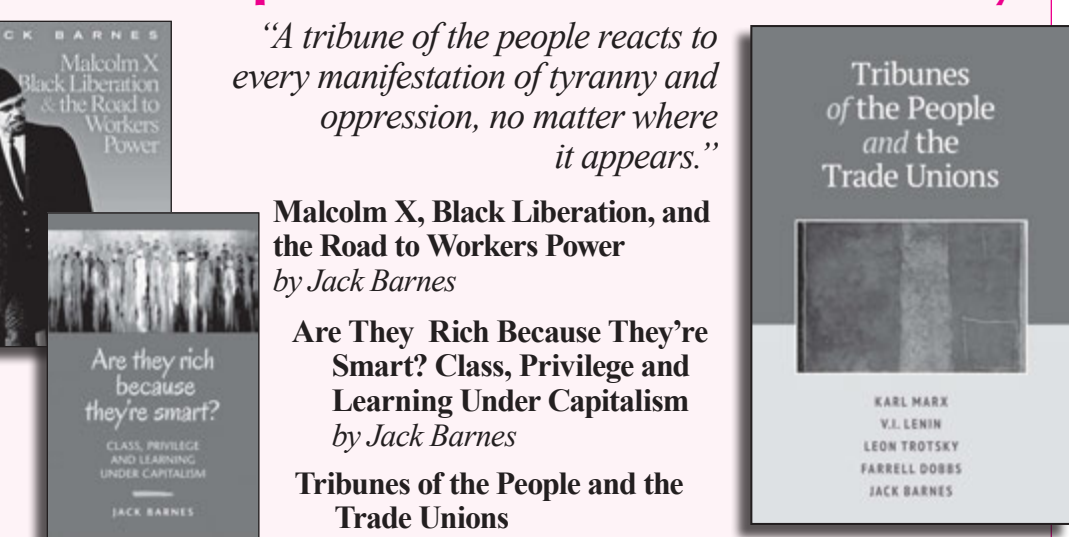
Miners fight safety cuts, firings

By John Studder
PHILIPPI, West Virginia — A victory has been won in an ongoing battle taking place here between Old Ben Coal, a subsidiary of Standard Oil of Ohio (SOHO), and 600 members of United Mine Workers Local 2085 at Kitt mine #1.
This running battle came to a head on September 22 when Old Ben framed up and "suspended" with intent to discharge" miner Bill Hovland.
Hovland has worked in the mine since January 1981. He is currently on the ballot as Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in West Virginia. As a number of miners put it, Hovland's suspension was "the straw that broke the camel's back."
On October 6 the miners in Local 2085



Miner Bill Hovland won job back.

Get the companion books to the Turn to Industry



"A tribune of the people reacts to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears."

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power by Jack Barnes

Are They Rich Because They're Smart? Class, Privilege and Learning Under Capitalism by Jack Barnes

Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions by Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Farrell Dobbs, Jack Barnes

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Introduction to: The Turn To Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party

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toward the fundamental concepts of Marxism — the class theory of the state, the class criterion in the appraisal of all political questions, the conception of politics, including war, as the expression of class interests, and so forth and so on.

“From all this,” said Cannon, “they conclude that we are ‘conservative’ by nature, and extend that epithet to cover everything we have done in the past.”

The epithet today is not simply “conservative,” but some variant of “homophobic” or “racist,” leveled against the working class by self-anointed “social justice warriors.” Many of them resort to slander and thuggery to intimidate those they come into conflict with, whether over political differences, relations between the sexes, or small shopkeepers merely protecting themselves from shoplifting or other depredations. Showing disdain for due process and constitutional protections conquered in class battles by workers, African Americans, women, and others, these sanctimonious inquisitors organize to smear, shout down, and silence their chosen antagonists.

The real targets, however, are tens of millions of working people across the US, whom these scornful (and sometimes newly minted) bearers of class privilege seek to drum out of the human race as ignorant, backward, racist, and reactionary. But these “deplorables” are simply the current generations of workers whom the bosses — as well as many union officials — wrote off as “trash” during the great labor battles that exploded to their shock in the 1930s.

What I wrote in *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* about today’s self-designated “enlightened meritocracy” has been confirmed many times over. This “handsomely remunerated” layer — university presidents, deans, and professors; high-and-mighty officials of “nonprofits” and NGOs; media and hi-tech professionals; entertainment and sports personalities; and many others — “is determined to con the world into accepting the myth that the economic and social advancement of its members is just reward for their individual intelligence, education, and ‘service.’” They truly believe they have “the right to make decisions, to administer and ‘regulate’ society for the bourgeoisie — on behalf of what they claim to be the interests of ‘the people.’”

But above everything else, “they are mortified to be identified with working people in the United States — Caucasian, Black, or Latino; native- or foreign-born. Their attitudes toward those who produce society’s wealth, the foundation of all culture, extend from saccharine condescension to occasional and unscripted open contempt, as they lecture us on our manners and mores.”

A few years on, the only update needed is the allusion to their open contempt being “occasional” and “unscripted.” Today it’s both frequent and intentional.



Working people have nothing to gain and everything to lose by relying on the propertied families, their capitalist two-party system, their “socialist” water carriers among professionals and the upper middle class, and their

government and state. We must organize ourselves independently, both politically and organizationally, of the propertied classes who derive their enormous wealth and power from exploiting the social labor of workers, farmers, and other toiling producers — and who above all work to conceal that reality from us in order to retard the development of *class consciousness*.

Today, the program and course of action presented in *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* are needed by working people whether fighting for unpaid wages in a mine in Kentucky; organizing to resist unsafe working conditions in a massive retail conglomerate or on a two-hundred-car freight train; defending a woman’s right to choose abortion; demanding amnesty for undocumented immigrants; mobilizing against cop brutality; or organizing solidarity with struggles by working people anywhere in the world.

Class-conscious workers openly and boldly join in every fight, every “combination” we can to resist the bosses’ assaults, whether or not we’ve yet forged a union in our workplace.

We join in the pressing task of rebuilding and strengthening the labor movement, taking part in and championing efforts to organize the unorganized wherever workers are fighting, whatever the official status of their “papers.”

And we explain the need for and help advance *class consciousness*, which *unites* not divides us, as we begin to transform ourselves and the trade unions into instruments of struggle against capitalist rule and exploitation itself.

There are no guarantees about what percentage of our class will become organized into unions, or how many unions will be transformed. “We’re not prophets but revolutionaries who work to steer developments in the direction of strengthening the unity of the working class in struggle,” notes the report in these pages that draws lessons the SWP learned from the



Top, Cuban youth leader Kenia Serrano, right, on U.S. speaking tour, listens to UAW pickets on strike at Caterpillar plant in York, Pennsylvania, March 1995, explain their fight. Strikers also welcomed learning from Serrano about the Cuban Revolution.

first year of our turn to industry.

In the two great socialist revolutions of the twentieth century — in Russia in 1917, and then some four decades later in Cuba — the centrality of trade unions and the fight to transform them came largely after, not before, the struggle for workers power. But revolutionary-minded workers can’t bank on that pattern being repeated in today’s world, in which both the level of industrialization and the size and weight of the working class are much larger, not only in imperialist countries but also many others.

One thing we know for sure, however, is that a socialist revolution in the United States is inconceivable *without organizing our class to fight to build unions and to use union power to advance the interests of working people here and around the world. And the forging of a proletarian party — a revolutionary political instrument of the working class, aimed above all at changing which class is exercising state power — is impossible without*

participating in that struggle.

The biggest obstacle to class consciousness is what all the institutions of capitalist society teach working people to think of ourselves. What we’re taught about our worth as human beings. What we’re told we’re *not* capable of doing and never will be. What we’re lectured about day in and day out by the bosses and their middle class “experts” and “regulators,” much of it echoed by union bureaucrats.

But the class struggle has a different story to tell. Malcolm X, Ernesto Che Guevara and Fidel Castro, Maurice Bishop, Thomas Sankara, and other outstanding revolutionary leaders never tired of reminding working people why discovering *our worth* is more important than harping on our oppression and exploitation. Of explaining what we *are* capable of becoming. And of showing us in action how we *are* capable of transforming ourselves — and the foundations of society itself — *as we organize together and fight*.

It is through such class battles, which include all social and political struggles in the interests of working people, that we gain experience and confidence, in ourselves and in each other. It’s how ties of class solidarity and loyalty are forged. The SWP’s program adopted in 1938, and still guiding our course today, tells the truth as well as it is possible to do:

“All methods are good that raise the class-consciousness of the workers, their trust in their own forces, their readiness for self-sacrifice in the struggle. The impermissible methods are those that implant fear and submissiveness in the oppressed in the face of their oppressors, that crush the spirit of protest and indignation or substitute for the will of the masses — the will of the leaders; for conviction — compulsion; for an analysis of reality — demagoguery and frame-up.”

There’s nothing to add today to the closing sentences of that program. The Socialist Workers Party “uncompromisingly gives battle to all political groupings tied to the apron strings of the bourgeoisie. Its task — the abolition of capitalism’s domination. Its aim — socialism. Its method — the proletarian revolution.”

September 27, 2019



In June 1987, U.S. coal miners, including Alyson Kennedy (front), visit British coalfields to learn about resistance to rulers’ drive to close mines and break National Union of Mineworkers. They were hosted by Women Against Pit Closures, made up of miners’ wives and other NUM supporters. In 2016 Kennedy was the SWP candidate for president of United States.

—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.

Steelworkers in New Brunswick fight Glencore lockout

MONTREAL — Some 280 members of United Steelworkers Local 7085, locked out since April 24 by Glencore at its smelter in Belledune, New Brunswick, are determined to continue their fight. Workers had voted by 96% to strike. Hours before this was to take effect, the company locked them out.

Under threat of plant closure, union members had given up millions of dollars in pay and pension money over the last few years, which the union members are now fighting to get back. “We’re drawing the line,” Local President Bart Dempsey told the *Militant* Oct. 10. “It’s our turn now, no concessions.

“We work with a hundred toxins — cadmium, mercury, etc., holding tanks at 500 to 800 degrees, and a multitude of heavy equipment traffic,” said Dempsey. “The company tries to spin that it’s an everyday place to work. No. We need a union safety rep on full time.” The company wants to eliminate this position.

The fight is getting wider support and giving a boost to others. The 180 sawmill workers at the Chaleur mill in Belledune won union representation this September.

Send solidarity messages and fi-

nancial contributions to USW Local 7085, PO 1003, Belledune, NB E8G 2X9.

— Katy LeRougetel

Quebec senior residence workers strike for wages and more staff

GATINEAU, Quebec — The 110 workers at Le Monastere d’Aylmer senior residence picketed here Oct. 14, chanting and carrying signs saying, “Take Care of the Seniors” and Solidarity.”

Members of Teamsters Local 106 have been on strike since Sept. 30. Their main demands are for more staff and higher wages.

The majority earns about 12.50 Canadian dollars an hour (\$9.50) despite many years of service. They want wage parity with patient care attendants at the other residences that belong to Chartwell, the company that owns Le Monastere.

Strikers wore red T-shirts saying



Courtesy of USW Local 7085

United Steelworkers Local 7085 members, locked out by Glencore smelter in Belledune, New Brunswick, rally Oct. 8 in fight for job safety, outstanding back pay, against attack on pensions.

“We respect our seniors and those who look after them.” Several drivers going by honked to support the strikers.

The attendants “work like crazy. Sometimes one person is responsible for 20 rooms,” union representative

Sylvie Souliere told the *Militant*.

In July, 950 workers in other senior residences in several towns in Quebec had struck for 10 days for a \$15 an hour minimum wage. Their fight still continues.

— François Bradette

Florida ex-felons push back restrictions on right to vote

BY CINDY JAQUITH

MIAMI — The state of Florida cannot require ex-felons to pay all outstanding court fees, fines and restitution before they are allowed to vote, a federal judge here ruled Oct. 18. This decision is the latest development in the fight to force Democratic and Republican politicians to implement Amendment 4, which restores the right of former felons in Florida to vote, except those convicted of murder or sex crimes. The popular measure was adopted by more than 64% in November 2018.

An estimated 1.4 million workers have been denied their right to vote in Florida. “Historically, Florida disenfranchised a higher percentage of its adult citizens than any other state in the United States, more than 10 percent of the overall voting age population, and more than 21 percent of the African-American voting age population,” the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund said in its court brief calling for state law SB 7066 to be overturned.

After Amendment 4 passed, the Florida state legislature retaliated by adopting new restrictions requiring ex-felons to first pay all court fees before they can legally register to vote. Otherwise they are committing a crime and can be sent back to prison.

Seventeen former prisoners challenged this reactionary law, whose goal was to limit the franchise. The American Civil Liberties Union, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Southern Poverty Law Center, and Campaign Legal Center filed legal challenges to the law on their behalf.

These suits were consolidated into one case by federal Judge Robert Hinkle, who issued a preliminary injunction Oct. 18 saying the state cannot use a person’s inability to pay court fines to deny their basic right to vote. This ruling initially will affect only the 17 who filed the suit, not all ex-felons. The decision will stand until the lawsuits go to trial, scheduled for April 2020.

Hinkle said that it is not unconstitu-

tional for the state to demand all fees be paid prior to restoring someone’s voting rights, but the government cannot force a person to pay the fees if they can’t afford to. Given the pervasive job discrimination workers with a record face, many will never be able to pay off the debt.

“What the state did is impose a modern-day poll tax, the type of discriminatory law that was used in past decades to bar the right to vote for Blacks,” Anthony Dutrow, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Miami City Commission, told the *Militant* Oct. 20. “The fight to overturn this reactionary law is in the interests of all working people.”

There is a class bias involved in SB 7066, James Harden, a Walmart worker in Miami, told this correspondent. “The kind of sentence and the type of jail conditions a rich person gets is very different from the rest of us,” Harden said. “The majority in this state voted to let ex-felons vote. I’m opposed to any effort to take that back.”

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Crisis of US two-party system

Continued from front page

working people who either voted for Trump in 2016, or who couldn't bring themselves to vote for either candidate of the two main capitalist parties. Convinced that these workers are backward and bigoted, liberals want at all costs to get Trump out now to prevent working people from electing him again in 2020.

Hillary Clinton, who smeared Trump supporters as "deplorables" when she lost to him in 2016, has stepped up her public appearances, refusing to rule out running again. Others from her wing of the party, like former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and former Secretary of State John Kerry are being urged to get into the race.

Weeks after launching their impeachment inquiry into the president — built around secret hearings and copious leaks to the press — Democrats now say they will put authorization for their inquisition up for a vote in the House.

Democratic House Majority Leader Nancy Pelosi says that the six House committees investigating Trump will then place their "findings" before the Judiciary Committee so it can consider filing articles of impeachment.

But liberals aren't convinced that their "evidence" against Trump will be sufficient to get him thrown out. It rests on the president's request that the Ukrainian government probe corruption, including Hunter Biden's efforts to profit from his father's position as vice president.

So they continue to dig around on other fronts. New York prosecutors got a court ruling that Trump must hand over his tax returns to a criminal investigation they are pursuing, a move the president appealed Oct. 23. The Democrat-led House Ways and Means Committee has sued the Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service to try to force them to hand over Trump's returns.

Their goal is to criminalize those they disagree with.

Democrats use of FBI and CIA agents against Trump opens the door for the use of the U.S. rulers' political police and criminal "justice" system against others they see as enemies. First and foremost this includes militant workers the U.S. rulers fear will wage struggles to defend themselves under the impact of the deepening crisis of capitalism.

Leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and the Minneapolis Teamsters union were convicted in 1941 for organizing opposition among workers to the rulers' drive to join the Second World War. This attack was led by Democratic President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the liberals who stocked his administration.

Stability of two-party system shaken

The ruling rich have not been able to restore the stability of their two-party system, damaged in 2016. That setup works by convincing working people that their only "choice" is to cast their votes for the "lesser evil" — one of the two main capitalist parties.

The swath of Democratic and Republican candidates in 2016 evoked unprecedented distrust and loathing from wide layers of working people. Trump said he stood outside of the Washington quagmire, claiming to be different from all factions within both parties. From the moment he got elected, Democrats and their mouthpieces in the liberal media like the *New York Times* have been in a frenzy to undo the result.

Both wings of the Democratic Party believe impeachment would help clear their way to power. The left and socialist wing of the party wants a road to the presidency built on turning their back on the majority of the working class they dismiss as reactionary. They believe they can get elected by winning votes of African Americans, Latinos, and women largely in the big cities.

Elizabeth Warren, the front runner for the Democrats' nomination, says she's a radical-minded capitalist who will manipulate taxes and use an army of federal regulatory agencies to manage the big corporations and make capitalist exploitation more agreeable. Bernie Sanders offers similar policies in the name of "socialism." Both contrive to treat workers as objects to be administered.

Like Trump they both say they dislike U.S. wars abroad, but all of them will continue to command Washington's vast military power in defense of U.S. imperialist interests around the world, if elected.

"In contrast to the Democrats, Republicans and other politicians who seek to reform capitalism, Socialist Workers Party candidates start with the capacities of working people to change our conditions," Seth Galinsky, SWP candidate for New York City public advocate, told the *Militant*.

"We organize together with fellow workers to fight against assaults by the bosses, their parties and their government. We advocate building a labor party, independent of the capitalist parties. Such a course offers a way to mobilize workers in our millions to take power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers and establish a workers and farmers government."

UFCW union local says 'No!' to bans on 'Militant'

Continued from front page

lications." (See sidebar for full letter).

The Los Angeles unionist said his local's members believe the bans on the *Militant* newsweekly earlier this year are "abhorrent" and "unacceptable."

The letter puts prison officials on notice that any new steps to ban the socialist newsweekly will be met with a growing outcry of public protest. Florida authorities overturned most of the bans and haven't seized any further issues since mid-August. Fourteen out of 16 issues before then had been impounded over three months, a serious attack on the constitutional rights of both the *Militant* and its prisoner subscribers.

Prison officials claimed — without any basis in fact — that articles reporting on conditions in other prisons around the U.S., on campaigns against solitary confinement, and even articles reporting on the *Militant's* fight to overturn prison bans were a threat to the "security, good order, or discipline" of the prisons or encouraged "physical violence or group disruption."

The *Militant* won broad and growing support in the fight against suppression of the paper.

More than 40 letters from a wide range of national and local organizations and individuals were sent to the Florida prison system's Literature Review Committee urging the bans be lifted. As a result, the committee reversed the last six prison bans in a row, and not a single issue has been impounded since.

Along with UFCW Local 770 other

Striking Chicago teachers, school workers win support



Militant/Dan Fein

CHICAGO — After two weeks on strike, 25,000 members of the Chicago Teachers Union are picketing and holding nearly daily rallies around the city.

They've won broad support in their fight for smaller class sizes and more support staff like nurses, social workers and librarians.

They've been joined from the beginning by 7,500 school support workers, members of Service Employees International Union Local 73. "We need to be with the students all the time and not get pulled out of our classrooms to cover for other teachers who are absent that day," Laura Orellana, an SEIU member who works with students with special needs, told the *Militant* Oct. 26.

On Oct. 28 the SEIU announced a tentative contract with city officials. The proposed deal includes raises of at least 16% over a five-year contract and improvements in working conditions.

"The camaraderie on the picket line was great. We're all in this together," Sylvester Boston, a custodian with 27 years in city schools, told this worker-correspondent as he headed in to vote on the contract Oct. 29. He plans to stay out with the teachers as long as their strike lasts. The SEIU is encouraging its members to do so.

As of Oct. 30, the Chicago Teachers Union says issues still in dispute include guarantees for reduced class sizes and restoration of 30 minutes of preparation time in the morning taken away in the previous contract.

— NAOMI CRAINE

groups that wrote included Amnesty International USA, PEN America, National Lawyers Guild, American Civil Liberties Union Florida, Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, the National Coalition Against Censorship, Florida Press Association, American Booksellers for Free Expression, Riverside Church Prison Ministry, American Library Association-Office for Intellectual Freedom, Southern Center for Human Rights, and more.

Numerous individuals sent letters, including unionists; professors; teachers and other school workers; over 80 workers at Walmart stores in Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Quebec and Washington; and factory workers in England.

Several of the *Militant's* subscribers behind bars in Florida filed grievances against the impoundments. A number wrote in to let the *Militant* know they are getting the paper once again and to congratulate us on our common success.

"This is a great victory," one prisoner wrote. "Thanks for your support in this struggle for our rights."

"Our paper's subscribers know that the *Militant* will never give up its defense of the rights of workers on both sides of the prison walls," said *Militant* editor John Studer. "As a result of our successful fight, more prisoners are subscribing and the *Militant* is better known."

"And it's an example that will help all those fighting to end prison suppression of other books and publications," he said.

770

October 16, 2019

VIA EMAIL: Allen.Peterson@fde.myflorida.com

Literature Review Committee
c/o Dean Peterson, Library Services Administrator
Florida Department of Corrections
501 S. Calhoun Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-2500

Re: The Militant

To the Literature Review Committee:

We, the members of the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union Local 770, are writing to protest the censorship of *The Militant* news weekly in your institutions.

We find it abhorrent, and not a little bit ironic, that you would censor a publication based on its campaign against censorship.

We find it unacceptable that you would censor this publication because of your fear that the free flow of ideas could "encourage activities which could lead to physical violence."

We find it self-serving and harmful that you would seek to keep from inmates stories and articles referencing the cruelty and destructive nature of solitary confinement.

We believe your actions stand in violation of the foundational principles of our nation and society.

While you can imprison the person, you cannot imprison their mind. They should be free to read what they will, without the filter of a self-serving prison bureaucracy.

We call upon you to do the right thing and respect the constitutional foundations of our country and society: stop censoring *The Militant* and other publications.

Sincerely,

UFCW LOCAL 770

John M. Grant, President

JMG:mi

cc: themilitant@mac.com