

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

French rulers expand military intervention into West Africa

— PAGE 4

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 83/NO. 46 DECEMBER 16, 2019

SWP drive expands reach of 'Militant,' books, fund

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

As the Socialist Workers Party drive to expand the readership of the *Militant* and books by revolutionary leaders of the working class enters its final week, party members are finding interest in the need to build a working-class movement independent of the capitalist two-party system.

The paper's coverage of the recently concluded Canadian National Railway strike by Teamsters, and the ongoing copper workers' battle against Asarco's union-busting drive in Arizona and Texas point to the impact of working-class solidarity in advancing struggles that are in the interests of all workers. And the protests shaking capitalist regimes from Colombia, Chile and Ecuador to Iraq, Lebanon and Iran today pose questions about forging the leadership working people need — questions that are addressed in books by revolutionary leaders

Continued on page 3

Democrats drive to oust Trump targets working class

BY TERRY EVANS

The Democratic Party is sharply divided, with its leaders panicking that their drive to impeach and indict President Donald Trump — which began the day he took office and has continued ever since — is failing to win support. They fret that none of their myriad of presidential hopefuls can defeat the president in 2020.

One of their responses is to step up efforts to keep working-class and other third parties off the ballot, dealing blows to the political rights of working people.

The ruling U.S. capitalist families maintain their hold on power through their two-party system, convincing workers and others to vote for the "lesser evil" of a Democrat or Republican, back and forth, in each election. The fraying of this operation is one of the key things revealed by the Trump victory in both the 2016 Republican

Continued on page 6

Copper strikers fight Asarco union-busting



United Steelworkers

Striking copper workers picket at Asarco Ray Mine near Kearny, Arizona, in November.

Bitter strike battle enters 8th week, no end in sight

BY SETH GALINSKY AND BERNIE SENTER

As the bitter strike by some 1,700 workers against Asarco copper bosses' union-busting drive entered its eighth week, the company claimed there is an "impasse" in negotiations. It is implementing its "best, last and final" offer as of Dec. 2.

Asarco's final offer includes doubling or tripling health insurance costs, freezing wages for three-quarters of the copper workers — who haven't had a raise in nearly 10 years — freezing pensions and eliminating contractual protections for union activity on the job. The only people toiling at the company's mines, smelters and refineries today are a growing number of strikebreakers and some

Continued on page 5

All out in solidarity with striking copper workers!

A battle with real stakes for all working people is playing out today in the copper towns of Arizona and Texas. Asarco workers are fighting a

EDITORIAL

naked union-busting assault by bosses — they need our solidarity. Build support for their struggle!

Every fight working people wage

Continued on page 9

Protests in Chile demand end to attacks by gov't, capitalist rulers



Sonar FM radio

Union contingent of Walmart workers at Oct. 23 march in Santiago, Chile, part of nationwide general strike protesting low wages, woefully inadequate pensions and health care.

BY SETH GALINSKY

Pro-business pundits used to call Chile the "Latin American tiger," which they attributed to its rulers' embrace of the capitalist free market, "fiscal responsibility" and openness to imperialist penetration. Eduardo Frei, president in much of the 1990s, even privatized the delivery of drinking water.

But the myth of the Chilean "miracle" has been shattered by mass protests that began Oct. 15. The economy contracted 3.4% in October, Reuters reported Dec. 2, the biggest drop since the worldwide financial crisis in

2008.

High school students were first to take to the streets, demanding reversal of a 30 peso increase in subway fares. Then protests mushroomed as workers, peasants and students aimed demands at the government — like similar actions in Colombia and Ecuador.

Chile President Sebastián Piñera — who just days before had boasted that the country of 18 million people was an "oasis" in a region rife with social unrest — unleashed the hated carabineros, the national police. The

Continued on page 9

Communist League in UK: 'Jew-hatred is deadly threat to the working class'

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn's handling of anti-Semitism makes him "unfit for high office" writes Ephraim Mirvis, the U.K.'s chief rabbi, in the *Times* of London, weeks before Corbyn faces Prime Minister Boris Johnson in the country's parliamentary election, Dec. 12.

A *Jewish Chronicle* editorial urged people to not vote Labour, while Johnson utilized Mirvis' remarks to rail against Corbyn.

Mirvis' claim that a "poison" has taken hold in Labour "sanctioned at

Continued on page 2

CN rail workers 'strike for safety' won broad backing

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL — Following a Nov. 26 tentative agreement between Teamsters Canada Rail Conference officials and Canadian National Railway bosses, the 3,200 CN conductors, including yardmen and yard-

Continued on page 6

Inside

Australia: Women make gains in right to choose abortion 4

'The making of a union bureaucrat' from new book 7

Iraq upsurge continues, prime minister to resign 9

—On the picket line, p. 5—

New York labor rally supports Amazon warehouse workers

Senior residence workers in Quebec strike for higher pay

Threat of Jew-hatred

Continued from front page

the very top,” is contested only by the Labour leader’s most devoted backers. They claim he just opposes Israel’s attacks on Palestinians.

But Corbyn has associated with Holocaust deniers and defended an anti-Semitic mural that depicted Jews conspiring to control the world on the backs of exploited and oppressed. He has described as “comrades” and “friends” leaders of Hamas, an organization that advocates the killing of Jews and the destruction of Israel. He has participated in a commemoration of the terrorists who murdered Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics. He protects Labour Party leaders who have slandered Jews.

When asked Nov. 26 by BBC interviewer Andrew Neil to apologize for the party’s record of anti-Semitism, Corbyn declined. Since he became Labour leader in 2015, thousands of middle-class radicals who call for the destruction of Israel have joined the party. Thirteen Labour Members of Parliament have resigned from the party, citing its leadership’s refusal to combat anti-Semitism.

CL: ‘No to Jew-hatred’

The Communist League is standing its own candidates against the Conservatives and Labour, the U.K.’s main capitalist parties. As it explains why workers need to organize independently of the bosses and their parties, the CL’s campaign program points to the necessity of combating Jew-hatred.

And its candidates — this worker-correspondent in Tottenham, London and Caroline Bellamy in Wythenshawe and Sale East in Manchester — build solidarity with working-class struggles, like the strike underway today by

workers at South Western Railway against bosses’ attacks on safety, jobs and the Rail, Maritime and Transport union, and protests demanding the removal of flammable cladding that still covers thousands of homes two years after 72 people died in a fire at Grenfell Tower.

In response to an inquiry about the CL’s stance on anti-Semitism and Israel from the Britain Israel Alliance, I wrote that the CL “considers Jew hatred to be a poison. It’s advanced especially by middle-class forces both on the ultra-right and on the left who perpetuate the ‘Jew-money’ myth.”

Casual anti-Semitism among working people is low today, but when the class struggle sharpens Jew-hatred will be utilized by the rulers to try to save their capitalist system.

“Anti-Semitism divides working people,” the CL’s letter to the BIA explains. “Only through mobilizing united working-class struggle and solidarity can we meet the efforts of the propertied rulers to make working people pay for the crisis.”

The CL’s candidates condemned the beating of an unnamed rabbi in Stamford Hill, London, Nov. 29. Assailants shouted, “Kill the Jews,” as they repeatedly punched him, neighborhood watch group Shomrim reports.

In his denunciation of Corbyn, Mirvis



Jonathan Silberman, Communist League candidate for Tottenham in U.K., speaks Dec. 2 at pre-election candidates forum of 40 people at Turkish Cypriot Community Association, along with candidates from Labour, Liberal Democrats and Conservatives. “We need to build an independent working class movement like in the Cuban Revolution,” he said.

states that anti-Semitism runs counter to what he calls the “British values of which we are so proud.” But the country is divided between conflicting classes, with opposing class values. While many workers took to the streets in the 1930s to fight forces organized by Jew-hating fascist leader Oswald Mosley, Britain’s capitalist rulers and their political representatives have a long record of anti-Semitism.

The government’s 1905 Aliens Act, passed with bipartisan support, was aimed at cutting entry to the U.K. by Jews, whose numbers there were growing, following pogroms in Central and Eastern Europe.

The British government restricted immigration by Jews fleeing Nazi persecution in the 1930s — both to the U.K. and to Palestine, which U.K.’s imperialist rulers controlled at the time.

Three years before he became Britain’s prime minister, Winston Churchill described Jews in 1937 as “a little state within the state” who brought persecution upon themselves and said that leaders of the Russian Revolution sought “a worldwide communistic state under Jewish domination.”

Ernest Bevin, foreign secretary in the post-World War II Labour government scapegoated Jews for shortages of basic necessities. He led the government’s effort to block the creation of Israel.

The fighting program the CL campaigns with today calls “for the recognition of Israel and a viable, contiguous Palestinian state. For the right of Jews to return to Israel as a refuge in the face of capitalist crisis,

Jew-hatred and murderous violence.”

The statement concludes by pointing to the need to build a movement of millions to establish a workers and farmers government in the U.K. Thousands of copies have been circulated during the campaign, as has my reply to the BIA explaining the stakes for working people in fighting Jew-hatred. CL campaign supporters are discussing this and other questions facing working people on picket lines, doorsteps, with workmates and at social protests.

— CALENDAR —

NEW YORK

New York

Thomas Sankara’s Legacy Today. Sankara Everywhere. Sankara Nowhere. Speakers: Dr. Boukary Sawadogo, professor, City College; Issa Zoungrana, project coordinator, Stand for Life & Liberty; Basinwende Isonore Dianda, teacher; Peter Thierjung, Socialist Workers Party. With the participation of Paul Sankara, brother of Thomas Sankara. Sun., Dec. 8, 4 to 8 p.m. Translation to French. *Harlem YMCA, 180 W. 135 St.* Sponsored by the International Committee of Sankara Annual Conference.

Commemorate and Celebrate 5th Anniversary of Freedom for All of the Cuban Five! Speakers: Ana Silvia Rodríguez, Cuba’s ambassador to United Nations; Martin Garbus, lead attorney for Cuban Five and author of *North of Havana*; Mary-Alice Waters, author and editor, “*It’s the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US ‘Justice’ System*”; *The Cuban Five Talk About Their Lives Within the US Working Class.* Solidarity video message by the Cuban Five. Music performance by Bomba Yo. Sat., Dec. 14. Reception, 6 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. Suggested donation: \$10. *The People’s Forum, 320 West 37th St.* Sponsored by the New York/New Jersey Cuba Si Coalition. Tel: (917) 887 8710.

Latin America, Caribbean: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Africa, Asia, and the Middle East: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Canada: For one year send Canadian \$45 to the Militant, 7107 St. Denis #204, Montreal, Quebec H2S 2S5.

United Kingdom: Send £30 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, 5 Norman Road (first floor), Seven Sisters, London, N15 4ND, England.

Republic of Ireland and Continental Europe: Send £85 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London at above address.

France: Send 100 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15.

New Zealand and the Pacific Islands: Send NZ\$55 for one year to P.O. Box 13857, Auckland 1643, New Zealand.

Australia: Send A\$70 for one year to Suite 22, 10 Bridge St., Granville NSW 2142, Australia.

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

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

THE MILITANT

Join fight against cop brutality, killings

Wherever and whenever protests against cop brutality and killings occur, the ‘Militant’ covers and supports these fights. Armed police are used by the propertied rulers to protect their profit system. Cops like those who killed Bijan Ghaisar should be arrested and prosecuted.

Militant/Glova Scott
Bijan Ghaisar’s family protests Nov. 17 demanding cops who killed him be charged.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

\$5 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

\$10 for 12 weeks

\$20 for 6 months

\$35 for 1 year

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION _____

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

12 weeks of the *Militant* outside the U.S.: Australia, A\$10 • United Kingdom, £4 • Canada, Can\$7 • Caribbean and Latin America, US\$10 • Continental Europe, £8 • France, 8 euros • New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, NZ\$7 • All other areas, US\$16 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

The Militant

Vol. 83/No. 46

Closing news date: December 4, 2019

Editor: John Studer

Managing Editor: Terry Evans

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Emma Johnson, Martín Koppel, Roy Landersen, Jacob Perasso, Brian Williams.

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

Business Manager: Valerie Johnson

The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Telephone: (212) 244-4899

Fax: (212) 244-4947

E-mail: themilitant@mac.com

Website: www.themilitant.com

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

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

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

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

'Militant,' books, fund drive

Continued from front page

available from SWP members that draw on the lessons conquered in over 150 years of working-class struggle.

Gains being made in the fight against cop brutality, frame-ups and the other indignities of the rulers' criminal "justice" system is a question SWP members often discuss as they present the party's campaigns.

When George Chalmers introduced the SWP's campaign of Gerardo Sanchez for U.S. Senate from Texas to Paul Young, a 29-year-old bricklayer at his home in Fort Worth, Young replied, "We have to get rid of Ted Cruz," the Republican incumbent.

Chalmers explained that the SWP runs against the capitalist two-party system — Republicans, Democrats and their socialist hangers-on. And he pointed to the capacities of working people to fight together to change the

Chalmers showed Young a copy of *The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record: Why Washington Fears Working People*, by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, pointing to the book's description of the massive jump in the number of people incarcerated under Bill Clinton's presidency. Clinton also lays "justified claim to the shameful designation, the 'death-penalty president,'" Barnes writes. His administration expanded the number of crimes subject to capital punishment.

Young bought a copy of the book, a subscription to the *Militant* and asked Chalmers to stay in touch.

"I like what you say about workers needing our own party," electrician Max Subuchov told Jonathan Silberman, Communist League candidate for the Tottenham seat in this month's U.K.'s parliamentary election, when Silberman knocked on his door in Tottenham Hale, Dec. 1. Subuchov had come to the U.K. from Ukraine 18 years ago.

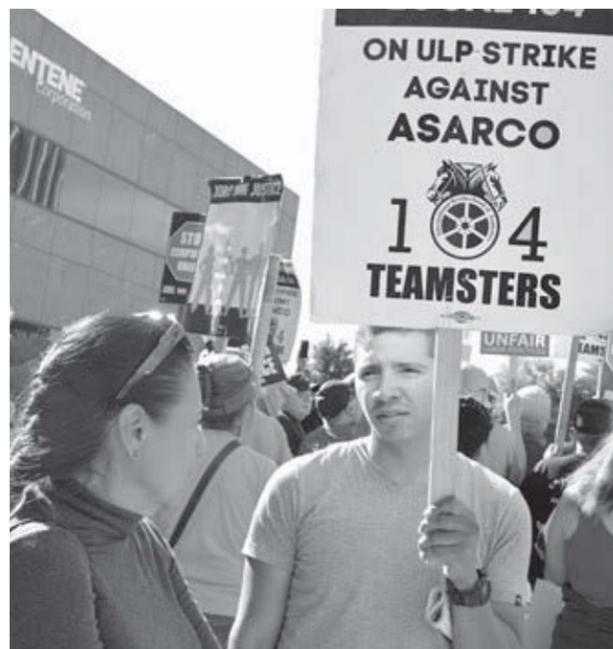
"We could do with a Maidan in the U.K.," Subuchov said, referring to the mobilizations and pitched street battles that led to the overthrow of the hated pro-Moscow regime of Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich in 2014. The powerful movement had a big impact on the confidence and fighting spirit of working people across the country. Subuchov bought the CL campaign button that reads "Workers need our own party — Workers control over safety — Vote Communist League."

The same day, students Christian and Dana Dunca picked up campaign buttons and got a subscription to the *Militant*. "We came here from Romania to improve our lives and bring up a family," Christian Dunca told CL campaigners, "but the parliamentary



Militant/Alyson Kennedy

SWP member George Chalmers, right, discusses victory by family of Rodney Reed winning stay of execution with bricklayer Paul Young at his home in Fort Worth, Texas, Nov. 23. Young got *Militant* subscription, copy of *The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record* book.



Militant/Eric Simpson

Roberto Banegas, a heavy equipment operator at Asarco's Mission Mine in Arizona, on strike for pay raise and against company effort to break union, talks with Socialist Workers Party member Ellie Garcia at solidarity rally in Tucson, Nov. 18.

conditions we confront. He described the protests organized by the family of Rodney Reed that forced state authorities to grant a stay of execution to Reed just days before it was scheduled.

Reed, an African American, was convicted by an all-white jury in 1998 for the rape and murder of 19-year-old cashier Stacey Stites in Bastrop, Texas. "I just heard about Reed's case," Young replied.

parties do not represent the views of working people."

Push needed to complete fund

The drive to sell 1,100 *Militant* subscriptions and 1,250 books runs through Dec. 10. At the same time the SWP is on a drive to raise \$100,000 to help fund the party's political activities. A final push to win new contributions can ensure the party meets and exceeds its nationwide quota.

To facilitate a greater understanding of the SWP's revolutionary program, all Pathfinder books and copies of the Marxist magazine *New International* are being offered at a 20% discount through the end of the drive. Also, eight titles are offered at half price when purchased with a *Militant* subscription.

And the new title *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* by Jack Barnes is available at a special price of \$12, or \$10 with a subscription. Three copies of the book were sold by party members in Dallas, after they contacted *Militant* subscribers, Alyson Kennedy reports.

The book "is about the working-class program, composition, and course of conduct of the only kind of party worthy of the name 'revolution-

ary' in the imperialist epoch," writes Barnes in the introduction. "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."

Those wanting to join the effort to broaden the reach of the *Militant* and revolutionary books and help with the fund drive can contact the SWP or Communist League branches in your area listed on page 8.

New International magazine from 1934 & Intercontinental Press from 1963 to 1986
Available online at:
www.themilitant.com or
www.pathfinderpress.com

Fall Campaign to sell Militant subscriptions and books

Oct. 5 - Dec. 10 (Week 8)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold
UNITED STATES				
Albany	70	54	70	108
Atlanta	70	62	110	100
Chicago	110	113	100	86
Dallas	35	37	35	35
Lincoln	12	11	15	15
Los Angeles	90	85	90	88
Louisville	65	58	65	59
Miami	25	19	25	19
New Jersey	40	45	70	77
New York	80	61	120	136
Oakland	70	66	100	92
Philadelphia	25	23	25	28
Pittsburgh	25	30	25	22
Seattle	70	66	90	83
Twin Cities	35	27	45	29
Washington	50	43	50	46
Total U.S.	872	800	1,035	1,023
Prisoners	25	20		
UNITED KINGDOM				
London	50	51	75	77
Manchester	35	31	45	32
Total U.K.	85	82	120	109
Canada	70	68	150	143
New Zealand	20	25	20	33
Australia*	25	28	35	39
Total	1,097	1,023	1,360	1,347
SHOULD BE	1,100	979	1,250	1,113
*Raised goal				

Special offer on books...

Prices are: Book only/Book with subscription.

See distributors on page 8

Socialist Workers Party Fund Drive		
Oct. 5 - Dec. 10 (Week 8)		
Area	Quota	Collected
Albany	\$6,000	\$2,225
Atlanta	\$9,250	\$7,654
Chicago	\$11,000	\$8,556
Dallas	\$2,500	\$1,838
Lincoln	\$250	\$189
Los Angeles	\$10,500	\$10,772
Louisville*	\$2,800	\$1,688
Miami	\$3,500	\$3,220
New York	\$14,000	\$11,887
New Jersey	\$3,300	\$2,871
Oakland	\$12,000	\$10,449
Philadelphia	\$2,500	\$2,180
Pittsburgh*	\$2,300	\$2,125
Seattle	\$10,000	\$6,912
Twin Cities	\$4,500	\$2,170
Washington, DC	\$4,600	\$3,864
Other		\$500
Total	\$99,000	\$79,099
Should Be	\$100,000	\$88,888
*raised quota		

French rulers expand military intervention into West Africa

BY PETER THIERJUNG

French ground troops are being deployed to Burkina Faso. This is the first major dispatch of imperialist troops to that West African country, an attempt to shore up a weakening capitalist regime in a region racked by instability. The deployment was announced Nov. 4.

Two days later, gunmen slaughtered at least 38 gold miners and wounded 60 more in an attack on a five-bus convoy transporting workers to a mine in eastern Burkina Faso. Miners told the press that demands they made for greater protection five months earlier had been disregarded by Semafo, the Canadian-based owner.

Burkina Faso is in the midst of a gold rush driven by imperialist interests, making it the fourth largest gold-producing country in Africa. Only a decade ago, Burkina Faso's primary export was cotton. But the discovery of gold has done little to better the lives of the vast majority of working people in what is one of the world's poorest countries, with a population of 20 million.

Since 2015 there have been more than 1,100 casualties in Burkina Faso resulting from some 620 attacks by armed criminal gangs and reactionary jihadist terror groups affiliated with al-Qaeda and Islamic State.

Many more have been killed by government forces and local militias in "counterterrorism" operations. Burkina Faso's military is implicated in dozens of killings of innocent civilians, Human Rights Watch reported. These include a raid on a village where troops were reported to have pulled 150 men and boys from their homes and summarily executed them.

Since the end of 2018 the Burkina Faso government has declared states of emergency in several northern provinces where it has effectively lost control. More than 267,000 people since July, and half a million overall, have fled these areas looking for safe haven. Peasants have had to abandon farms, and agriculture has collapsed. More than 2,000 schools have been shuttered, affecting some 330,000 students.

French rulers' intervention in Mali

In neighboring Mali to the north, France has had 4,500 troops deployed since 2013. These forces, along with 15,000 United Nations "peacekeeping" troops, initially dealt blows to jihadist terror groups and to Tuareg forces opposed to Mali's central government. The Tuareg are a largely nomadic oppressed ethnic population spread across much of North Africa.

The military gains by French and U.N. troops have been short-lived. Is-

lamic State claimed responsibility for killing some 53 Malian troops Nov. 1. At the end of November, French forces suffered 13 casualties in a midair helicopter collision, the largest number of their troops killed in a single action since 1986.

Initially hailed in 2013 as liberators who would restore security, French troops are now increasingly reviled by Malians, who have begun organizing mass protests to demand they get out. Many Malians blame French forces for atrocities and for pitting ethnic groups and tribes against each other.

Responding to this pressure, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, Mali's president, went on the radio Nov. 30 to call on the population to support continued French intervention. "We need their help," he said, and we should be "humble and grateful."

"This sentiment against the French military presence is not just measurable in Mali, but also in Niger and Burkina Faso," Christian Bouquet, a French academic, told Bloomberg News.

The return of body bags to France and growing opposition in Mali have led French President Emmanuel Macron to press other imperialist powers in Europe to contribute ground troops. But only financial and logistical assistance, no troops, have been forthcoming so far.

Last February, Washington's Africa Command organized Operation Flintlock in Burkina Faso to train African special operations forces in counterinsurgency tactics and intelligence gathering. Today about 7,200 U.S. military personnel are stationed in Africa. Some 1,300 special forces operate in about a dozen countries on the continent. Washington has also dispatched some \$100 million in military aid to Burkina Faso over the last two years.

Florence Parly, the French armed forces minister, warned that the crisis in the Sahel, if not resolved, will find its way to Europe's doorstep. Europe "will have two swords of Damocles over its

Sahel region, Africa



French government has deployed troops to Burkina Faso and Mali in Sahel region in Africa.

head," she said, "terrorism and kidnappings, but also illegal immigrants."

Revolution led by Thomas Sankara

The escalating violence in Burkina Faso can be traced back to the rule of Blaise Compaoré, who seized power in a 1987 coup against the revolutionary government of Thomas Sankara, in which Sankara was assassinated.

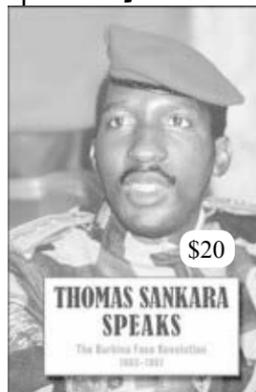
Through the 1983 revolution led by Sankara, millions of toilers joined in waging campaigns for land reform, to eliminate illiteracy, and to wipe out curable diseases. They organized to preserve the environment by planting millions of trees and built a nationwide railroad to tie the nation together. The revolution promoted self-sufficiency in

food and clothing and drew women into economic, social, and political activity.

Sankara spoke out in the interests of workers and farmers internationally, and resisted imperialist pressure and sabotage from Paris and Washington. He collaborated with revolutionary Cuba and others struggling against oppression. His speeches, published by Pathfinder Press, remain popular today not only among Africans but many others the world over.

Compaoré reversed the gains of the revolution, ruling with an iron fist. His regime renewed close ties with the capitalist rulers in France and the U.S. and collaborated with terrorist groups in the country and region with the aim of fending off challenges to his rule.

Speeches of Thomas Sankara



We Are Heirs of the World's Revolutions

In English, French, Spanish, Farsi.

Thomas Sankara Speaks

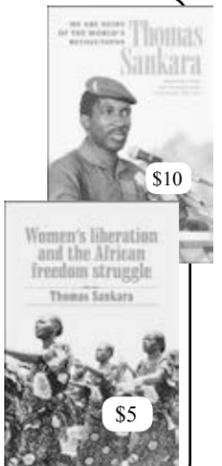
The Burkina Faso Revolution, 1983-1987

In English and French.

Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle

In English, French, Spanish, Farsi.

pathfinderpress.com



Australia: Women make gains in right to choose abortion

BY FELICITY COGGAN

SYDNEY — In a gain for women's rights, a new bill decriminalizing abortion passed the New South Wales state parliament Sept. 26. The vote followed a rally of 500 held here Sept. 14 in support of women's right to choose to have an abortion, followed by an anti-abortion-rights protest of several thousand the next day.

The new Abortion Law Reform Act removes abortion from the Crimes Act and allows abortion on a woman's request up to 22 weeks of pregnancy. After this it introduces the restriction that a woman must gain the approval of two specialist medical practitioners to obtain an abortion.

New South Wales is the last Australian state to remove abortion from the criminal code, which dates back to 1900. It had said that anyone who "unlawfully uses any instrument or other means" with the intention to force a miscarriage would face 10 years in prison.

Despite the archaic provisions of the law, legal abortion has in fact been widely available in New South Wales

and elsewhere in Australia since the rise of the modern women's rights movement in the 1970s. A series of common law court rulings established that abortions in certain instances could be legally carried out. A 1969 decision in the state of Victoria was followed by the landmark 1971 "Levine ruling" in New South Wales, which defined abortion as "lawful" if necessary to preserve the woman's life, or her physical or mental health. Further court decisions upheld and broadened these provisions, which were legal at any stage of pregnancy.

Since then, new abortion reform laws have introduced term limits on abortion on request in most of Australia, with restrictions for later term abortions.

The change in the law was an advance for women, Margaret Kirkby, a long-time activist in Women's Abortion Action Campaign, told the *Militant*, but "term limits are not what we want. It comes down to abortion should be a woman's right to choose."

"We welcome the decriminalization of abortion, something women have long been fighting for," said Linda Har-

ris, the Communist League candidate for Granville in the New South Wales state elections earlier this year.

"The Communist League stands for women's right to unrestricted access to family planning services, including the right to safe, secure abortions and low-cost child care," Harris said. "We oppose the state intervening in a woman's right to control her own body. The League does not support the restrictions on access to abortion introduced under the new law."

Opponents of decriminalizing abortion were successful in forcing a ban on "sex-selection abortion" in the law, which they falsely insisted would become widespread if it passed without this restriction.

Dr. Deborah Bateson, medical director of Family Planning New South Wales, said this would make doctors become "inquisitors," probing the motivations of patients to avoid prosecution.

"I've worked in this area for many, many years," she said. "I've never had anyone talk to me about wanting to have an abortion based on gender selection."

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA
Oakland

Stakes in Gibson's Bakery Fight Against Oberlin College Smear Campaign. Oppose Race-Baiting Slanders. Speaker: Carole Lesnick, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 675 Heggenberger Road, Suite 250. Tel: (510) 686-1351.

—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.

New York labor rally supports Amazon warehouse workers

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. — Workers at the large Amazon warehouse here were joined by some 100 area unionists and other supporters to greet workers coming and going from their jobs at the giant e-commerce company's fulfillment center here Nov. 25.

Banners and signs said, "We are not robots," referring to the grueling work pace bosses demand from Amazon pickers and packers here and at all their warehouses. The pace is set to keep up with the growing number of robots.

A recent study by the New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health describes the high injury rate among the 2,500 warehouse workers at the Staten Island facility. Of those interviewed, fully 66% of the workers described having pain from trying to keep up on their jobs, and 42% said the pain continued after they left work.

Other placards and chants highlighted the company's refusal to help with transportation to the warehouse's remote location and the need for water and bathroom breaks that don't count against production rates. Amazon management calls these health needs, "Time Off Task."

Several of the Amazon workers addressed the crowd, describing the pressure from the speed of their work and the number of injuries daily. Workers are pushed to return to work injured. They thanked the crowd, saying efforts to change the conditions they face would continue.

Teamsters Local 863 hosted a bus to bring Teamsters from New Jersey to the rally. This local organizes over 3,000 workers, including ShopRite warehouse workers. The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union also had a sizable presence, along with the Communications Workers of America and the groups Make the Road and New York Communities for Change.

— Candace Wagner

Senior residence workers in Quebec strike for higher pay

MONTREAL — Some 375 workers at four private seniors' residences in Quebec began a five-day strike for higher wages here Nov. 26. The orderlies, kitchen, janitorial, laundry and maintenance workers — members of

the Quebec Union of Service Employees (SQEES) in Montreal, Quebec City and Saint-Jean-Sur Richelieu — are demanding a minimum wage of 15 Canadian dollars an hour (\$11.30) and a CA\$1 pay increase each year in a three-year contract.

"Workers here now start at the minimum wage of \$12.50 an hour. Every time we negotiate, the Residence Anjou always gives the same excuse — they don't have the money. But now is the time for a minimum starting wage of \$15 per hour," Garcia-Gregory Saint-Fleur, a union representative for SQEES Local 298, told the *Militant* on the picket line.

Marie-France Lemay, vice president of operational services at Chartwell, one of the companies affected, insulted the strikers, saying the company is offering "compensation that is equitable, competitive and reflects the competencies of our employees." "That's disgusting to say that," SQEES President Sylvie Nel-



Militant/Beverly Bernardo

Workers at seniors' residences picket during five-day strike for \$15 Canadian an hour, Nov. 26. Bosses insultingly claim current rate of \$12.50 an hour "reflects the competencies" of workers.

son replied angrily in front of one of the residences in Quebec City. "It makes no sense to not be able to pay people \$15 an hour to take care of seniors who have worked their whole lives."

In Quebec City, residents at the Bordeaux Apartments organized a petition supporting the union's demands and recognizing the work done by the strik-

ers. Delegates from the Quebec Federation of Labor (FTQ) convention meeting in Quebec City, including FTQ President Daniel Boyer, joined the picket line there on the first day of the strike.

"Solidarity is very important," striker Isabelle Martel told this *Militant* worker-correspondent on the picket line.

— Beverly Bernardo

Bitter Asarco strike battle enters 8th week

Continued from front page

workers who've crossed the picket lines.

In a letter to Asarco, Manny Armenta, United Steelworkers District 12 sub-director and lead negotiator for the seven unions on strike, objected to "the Company's unilateral implementation" of its contract, saying the unions have put a new proposal on the table. Since the strike began, Asarco has only agreed to one meeting, Nov. 14, at which it refused to negotiate. The company hasn't responded to repeated requests for comment from the *Militant* or any other media.

"Asarco's intention is to write the union out of the workplace," Steelworkers Local 937 President Alex Terrazas, told the *Militant* by phone Nov. 30. "For the guys out on strike it's no surprise." Terrazas is a utility worker at the Mission open-pit mine. The unions are "gearing up for Christmas, reaching out and making sure no striker's family goes without gifts," Terrazas said.

"The company is taking a stance of take it or leave it," Greg Schuett, Steelworkers unit chair at the Silver Bell Mine, said by phone, adding "Grupo Mexico [which owns Asarco] is notorious for doing stuff like this."

Strikers at Asarco's four Arizona mining complexes and its refinery in Amarillo, Texas, continue to win broad solidarity and aid. Unions and working people made sure all strikers' families had Thanksgiving meals at the picket lines.

High stakes involved

A lot is at stake in the strike. Asarco is the last unionized copper company in Arizona at a time when mining bosses are pouring billions of dollars into expanding copper production for anticipated new markets.

Before the strike Asarco spent \$229 million modernizing its Hayden, Arizona, smelter. Nonunion Freeport McMoRan is completing a \$250 million modernization of its smelter near Globe, Arizona. Resolution Copper

is spending over \$2 billion to open a new mine shaft and restart production at the Magma Mine.

Asarco is willing to forego substantial profits today in their drive to defeat the strike and break the unions, and make up the "loss" and then some afterwards.

Century of union battles

There is a long history of fights for union protection and job safety by workers in Arizona copper mines, as well as vicious attacks by the copper barons backed by the government to block advances by the union.

Between 1906 and 1907 some 1,200 men were fired for fighting for a union in the copper mines, many of them workers of Mexican and southern European descent. In July 1917 armed vigilantes at the service of Phelps Dodge and other copper barons rounded up more than 1,000 copper workers on strike for better wages and safe working conditions and forcibly "deported" them to New Mexico. The Bisbee town government mounted guards on all roads into town to make sure "troublemakers" couldn't return.

Workers succeeded over time in battling and winning the union at the major copper complexes in the state. But in 1983, Phelps Dodge decided it would no longer go along with "pattern" bargaining agreements reached between the unions and bosses at Kennecott and Magma, forcing the workers out on strike.

When the bosses brought in scab labor to reopen their Morenci mine, a thousand strikers and supporters blocked the gates, shutting down production.

Arizona Gov. Bruce Babbitt, a Democrat, traveled to the area and pressured the unions to agree to a 10-day cooling off period, promising this would lead to an acceptable settlement.

The strikers found they'd been bamboozled. On the morning of Aug. 19, 1983, a miles-long convoy of armored tanks, other vehicles, armed national

guard and SWAT teams made its way up the mountain road to the mine entrance, ensuring the scabs could go back to work.

In October 1984, Phelps Dodge engineered a government-monitored vote — with the strikers excluded — that decertified the union. By February 1986, the strike was officially over after the National Labor Relations Board rejected the unions' appeal.

The mine is now owed by Freeport-McMoRan and is still run nonunion.

Over the next decades the remaining unionized mines closed, leaving Asarco as the only major unionized copper company in the state.

International solidarity

The striking unions have filed an unfair labor practices complaint with the National Labor Relations Board, which hasn't said when it intends to take it up. But with the bosses planning to crank up production with strike-breakers, strike solidarity is needed more than ever.

Solidarity has begun coming in from around the world. "We support your struggle for fair pay rises, fair bonuses and fair treatment after years of austerity and pay freezes," said a resolution sent by the Mining & Energy Workers division of the CFMEU of Australia. The union represents 20,000 coal and metal-ore mining workers.

The Fensuagro agricultural workers union and the USO oil workers union in Colombia as well as indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups there sent solidarity videos in both Spanish and English to the Asarco strikers.

More is needed. Strike supporters are encouraged to come strengthen the picket lines, which are up 24/7. Urge your union to send a generous contribution to the strike fund and food pantry, to the Pima Area Labor Federation Community Services via paypal.me/palfcommunityservice.

Circulate solidarity messages, cards and holidays greetings for coworkers to sign and send them to the strikers at palfchair@gmail.com.

Teamster Rebellion

by Farrell Dobbs

The story of the strikes the men and women of Teamsters Local 574 carried out in Minnesota in 1934, paving the way for the rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations as a fighting social movement.

\$16

pathfinderpress.com

CN rail workers ‘strike for safety’

Continued from front page

masters, returned to work Nov. 27 after an eight-day “strike for safety.” The workers will meet to debate the proposal over the next few weeks and vote in the weeks after.

The strike won wide support among working people, many of whom face similar attacks from bosses on working conditions, hours and schedules.

CN supervisors managed to run a few trains, but fuel, wheat, fertilizer and manufactured goods largely remained sitting idle in rail cars and warehouses.

Bosses in oil, mining, chemicals and other industries, backed by a compliant big-business press, set up a howl of protest. They demanded the government order an end to the strike, which Ottawa has done in past rail strikes. They hoped their demand would get an echo from workers who faced layoffs from the strike. In Saskatchewan over 500 potash miners were laid off Dec. 2 when Nutrien bosses said they had too much inventory on hand.

But parliament wasn’t in session, and the minority Liberal-government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau decided not to call legislators back, due in part to the strike’s popularity.

Many farmers were affected by the strike. Some protested outside CN’s headquarters in Montreal, demanding the rail bosses get them propane, needed to keep animals warm and to dry crops at harvest. CN had plenty of tank cars loaded with propane, but hadn’t taken steps to deliver the gas to farmers, hoping they would turn against the strike.

When some rail workers and their supporters — including members of the Communist League — went to farmers’ protests and then visited farm to farm, they found many farmers were responsive to the aims of the strike.

Widespread support

The strike began Nov. 19 after workers voted to take on the profit-driven move by CN bosses to cut crew size, reduce rest periods, and other demands that would increase the likelihood of derailments, injuries and deaths.

During the strike workers adapted the generic printed Teamsters union picket signs with handwritten slogans like “I’m tired of being tired” and “Rail workers lives matter.” They explained the dangers both they and working people living in the vicinity of railway tracks face from the inevitable consequences of the bosses’ disdain for safety.

The memory of the 2013 Lac-Mégantic oil train disaster in Quebec was an important factor in the broad support for the strike.

Millions of working people across the country know that the causes of that derailment and fire, which killed 47 people and destroyed the town center, are the same profit-driven cost-cutting policies now risking the lives and limbs of the CN workers.

This was reinforced both by the official report of the Transportation Safety Board on the disaster and by the popular verdict finding union train crew members Tom Harding and Richard Labrie not guilty in the 2018 frame-up trial when rail bosses and the government tried to pin the blame for the derailment on them.

On the final day of the strike this *Mili-*

tant worker-correspondent distributed a well-received press release from the Coalition and Organizations Committed to Rail Safety in Lac-Mégantic declaring they were “eager to give its full support to CN Rail workers who are currently struggling to improve their working conditions.”

Bosses disregard for workers’ safety

“There are no small consequences with a train,” Jean-Gabriel Besner-Richer, a CN worker, told the online *La Presse* while picketing at CN headquarters in downtown Montreal Nov. 26. “There is the risk of injury and deaths when a locomotive engineer is tired.”

Other workers agreed. “I am here because it is important for other workers to come to support the conductors. They are fighting for big stakes, like health and safety,” Walmart worker Pierre-Luc Filion, who came to the picket line to show support, told *La Presse*.

Rail workers in the U.S. who face the same push by the bosses to cut crews and safety followed the strike closely. Solidarity messages were hand delivered to strikers from rail workers in Chicago and in a card sent by BLET Division 226 in the New York/New Jersey/



Militant/John Steele

More than 50 Teamster rail strikers picket Canadian National headquarters in Montreal Nov. 26 before tentative agreement was announced. Now debate over contract begins before vote.

Pennsylvania region signed by 25 engineers, conductors and van drivers.

The day before the agreement Teamsters union officials made public a 2018 tape recording of a CN supervisor ordering a conductor, who has 30-years’ experience, to move his train through a residential area east of Toronto despite the fact that he says repeatedly that after almost 11 hours of work he and his engineer are “exhausted” and need to be relieved. The tape was played repeatedly on televi-

sion, written up in the print media and spread all over social media.

“My engineer is exhausted. I’m exhausted. I’ve told you we’re exhausted right from the get go,” the conductor tells the supervisor. “If I take this train out now and we hit somebody, who is responsible for that now? Me or you?” The conductor didn’t move the train and was suspended for 14 days without pay.

Now the contract proposal is in the hands of CN workers to debate and decide.

Democrats drive to oust Trump targets working class

Continued from front page

primaries and against Hillary Clinton in the presidential race.

Three smaller capitalist parties — Greens, Libertarian and Constitution — “played a spoiler role in crucial states such as Wisconsin and Michigan” in 2016, Michael Scherer claimed in the *Washington Post* Nov. 27.

Desperate to put the Clinton family back in the White House that year, the *New York Times* ran an op-ed shortly before the vote urging its readers not to vote for Alyson Kennedy, presidential candidate of the Socialist Workers Party — a party the *Times* otherwise studiously refuses to mention.

The Democrats’ solution? Make it even harder for other parties to run. This fall New York’s Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo tasked the state’s non-elected public financing commission with hiking petitioning requirements for parties other than the Democrats and Republicans to get on the ballot. The commission obliged Nov. 25, tripling the number of signatures. And, if some third party manages to make it — like the Working Families Party — the commission more than doubled the number of votes they would have to get to stay on the ballot for the next election.

The Working Families Party was originally set up to corral workers frustrated with the Democrats to vote for their candidates anyway by putting them on an “independent” ballot line. But in the last couple elections its leaders have occasionally chosen more radical-sounding Democrats to run, including against the regular party leadership’s offerings.

In the long run, the Democrats’ goal is to keep working-class parties like the Socialist Workers Party from using ballot status to present an independent revolutionary program of struggle, a road to fight for workers and farmers to take political power into their own hands.

While the Democrats unanimously back trying to get Trump ousted —

and have a House Judiciary Committee hearing on Dec. 4 to consider articles of impeachment — they fear they will not be able to get him. So far working people have responded to their carefully stage-managed witch hunt with growing disinterest. In fact, recent polls show opposition to Trump’s ouster is growing.

Democratic Party crisis deepens

In response, the Democrats are split between one wing that believes they have to find a way to win back workers who voted for former President Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012 and then switched to Trump in 2016, all in search of some “change,” and another wing that writes off such workers as reactionary and “irredeemable.” This wing’s strategy for 2020 is to ignore the working class and try to seize the presidency by appealing to a new “base” — Blacks, Latinos, women, immigrants and sophisticated professional layers in the country’s metropolises.

Both wings of the Democratic Party, like other meritocrats and the capitalist rulers they serve, fear the working class, sensing the crisis of capitalism impacting on the livelihoods of working people will lead to rising struggles.

On his side, Trump is campaigning for reelection by pointing to the fact there are more jobs today, which gives workers more confidence to fight for better wages and working conditions.

But the real beneficiary of the stock market boom today is the capitalist class, whose growing wealth stands in stark contrast to what workers face.

The crisis of the capitalist system continues to deepen — regardless of modest cyclical ups and downs. Workers’ life expectancy is falling, the U.S. rulers’ wars go on and on, bosses from Asarco copper mining to Walmart are pushing for speedup with more hours and less safety, and household debt is exploding.

Trump also brags he has “Made America Great Again” worldwide by

rebuilding Washington’s military might without committing more troops to ground combat. The president flew to Afghanistan Nov. 28 and announced his administration intends to reduce U.S. troop numbers there from 14,000 to 8,600 and resume talks with the Taliban. He said U.S. forces would remain until “we have a deal or we have total victory.” Last year Washington launched more airstrikes against the Afghan people than at any time since the war began 18 years ago.

The reality is that the U.S. rulers’ strategy today is no different than that under Obama. The best they hope for is to preserve the weak Afghan government and contain the Taliban.

Both Republicans and Democrats — Trump, Elizabeth Warren, Bernie Sanders, Joe Biden, etc. — seek to protect the interests of the capitalist ruling class.

Not one Democrat vying for the party’s presidential nomination proposes U.S. forces get out of Afghanistan now.

In contrast to both the Democratic and Republican wings of the capitalist two-party system, the Socialist Workers Party candidates in 2020 “demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Afghanistan and the Mideast,” Alyson Kennedy, the party’s candidate for president in 2016, told the *Militant* Dec. 1.

“Washington’s wars abroad,” Kennedy said, “are fought in the interest of the same capitalists who have for years held down wages and worsened the conditions of working people at home.

“Party members organize together with co-workers and others to fight the bosses’ attacks, build solidarity with workers’ battles from Asarco to the Canadian National rail workers fighting for safety,” Kennedy said. “We call for building a labor party based on these struggles — a party that advances a break from the Democrats and Republicans and the fight to establish a workers and farmers government.”

'The making of a union bureaucrat'

From 'The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party,' new book from Pathfinder Press

The following is a chapter excerpted from *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes. *The Militant* ran the new book's introduction in its Nov. 11 issue, and will continue to publish further excerpts.

Marvel Scholl, a 50-year cadre of the Socialist Workers Party, was a leader of the women's auxiliary during the 1934 strikes and organizing drive led by Teamsters Local 574 (later 544) in Minneapolis. She served on the staff of the local's Federal Workers Section, which organized the unemployed to fight for their interests during the Great Depression. Scholl contributed to the Northwest Organizer, the Minneapolis Teamsters weekly. In the 1960s and 1970s she wrote regularly for the *Militant*, including for many years the National Picket Line column. The following article appeared in the April 14, 1972, issue of the *Militant*. Copyright © 2019 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY MARVEL SCHOLL

The *Militant* has many new readers, many of whom have never belonged to trade unions. Therefore, it's possible that the words "bureaucrat" and "bureaucracy" applied to the organized labor movement may not have much meaning or may be confused with the government hacks who wrap everything up in yards of red tape in order to maintain the status quo.

While there are a great many similarities between the government and trade-union bureaucracies, there are almost as many differences, particularly in how each type of bureaucrat or bureaucracy got that way.

The trade-union officialdom, especially in the higher echelons, is composed of elected officers who have interpreted their own international constitutions in such a way as to practically perpetuate themselves in office — some of them for life, but most of them, in any case, long after they have outlived their usefulness. This is done by rigging the conventions where most international officers are elected or by questionable balloting procedures in referendum votes. But the men and women who make up this select coterie are not those I would like to discuss.

It is the men and women in the lower



Illustrations from *The Turn To Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party of Steelworkers Fight Back* campaign led by Ed Sadlowski in USWA, 1977. Campaign was used by ranks to challenge entrenched bureaucracy, fight to combat discrimination, for democratic control of their union.

and middle echelons of the hierarchy, the business agents and organizers, that need examining. These people are charged directly with keeping the rank and file in order, riding herd on them in strike situations, and getting them out to vote for the Democratic "friends of labor."

Some of these lower-echelon union officials "got on the pie," as workers characterize getting on the union payroll, with malice aforethought — demonstrating their militancy in the plant primarily to further their own ambitions.

But many others got there by another route — being kicked upstairs in order to get them out of the hair of both management and the union hacks.

Let's take a not-so-mythical example of one militant trade-unionist who was turned into a typical bureaucrat.

Joe Jones worked on the line in an auto plant, alongside his best friend, Jack. Both men's families had a close social life. Jack was a good union militant, but not an aggressive one. He looked to Joe for leadership and supported him as the section grievance-committee man ("griever").

Joe worked hard attempting to settle the many beefs the rank-and-file workers had. He honestly believed in enforcing the contract to the letter.

Joe was a World War II veteran and

joined the union after his discharge from the Army. He came from an old-line trade-union family. Both his father and his grandfather had been part of the great strike wave of the 1930s. He had listened to many stories from them about the days when the rank and file in these new industrial unions controlled their own leadership.

As a griever he tried to do his job. In the eyes of both the company and the local union hierarchy he became a "gad-fly." At one point, angered at the growing number of unsettled grievances in his file, he fought with a foreman and was fired. Word went through the plant like wildfire and all the men walked off the job. Joe got his job back.

By now both management and the union hacks knew they had to do something about Joe.

Management decided to offer him a supervisory job — an old gimmick that sometimes succeeded in making the former union militant one of the best of company men.

Over 10,000 farmers in Germany protest against gov't restrictions

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Over 10,000 farmers from all over Germany drove more than 5,000 tractors in a 6-mile-long convoy crawling through the streets of Berlin Nov. 26 to protest government plans to sharply restrict the use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizer. Farmers also protested in France and Ireland.

In response to regulations and fines imposed by the European Commission, Germany's capitalist rulers plan to phase out and ban the weedkiller glyphosate by 2023 and tighten regulations on the use of fertilizers, supposedly to reduce nitrate content in groundwater. The government also charges the chemical is reducing the number of butterflies and bees. Glyphosate, an active ingredient in weed-control products like Roundup, is used by many farmers worldwide to boost production. These products have been the target of lawsuits and challenges by environmental reform-

ers, profit-driven attorneys and radical middle-class currents.

Banners on some of the tractors read, "No farmers, no food, no future" and "We fill you up." One large sign described in English the dictionary definition of "farming" as "The art of losing money while working 400 hours a month to feed people, who think you are trying to kill them."

Another banner said, "7.5 billion people — 200 million can feed themselves as hunters and gatherers. The rest need farmers."

The German government restrictions come on top of a deepening economic crisis facing farmers worldwide. They are squeezed by capitalist monopolies controlling inputs like seed and fertilizer as well as processing and distribution, and by falling prices.

"Enough is enough," farmer Benjamin Meise from the Oderland re-

gion said. "The government is trying to kill us."

More and more, Joe went along with the district and local union bureaucracy and the international leadership. He had been house-trained.

His former close friends watched Joe change from a fighting militant into a well-trained, tamed, and contented union hack — one they could not remove. They hadn't elected him, so they had no recourse to the unions' constitutional provisions for recall.

He griped a lot and considered going back into the plant, but his much higher salary as a union hack got in the way. His family now had a new home in a much nicer neighborhood and a new car. This "better way of life" was changing Joe's whole outlook. He stopped visiting the plant every day, avoided the grievance-committee men who swarmed over him when he did come in, and spent less and less time socializing with his best friend, Jack.

He didn't like himself much, but held onto the idea that he could still do something concrete for the workers in the plant.

Gradually, he settled into his new role, began to accept the frustrations that went with it, and became just another lower-echelon bureaucrat—a "leader" with his eye out for promotions within the hierarchy.

More and more, Joe went along with the district and local union bureaucracy and the international leadership. He had been house-trained.

He griped a lot and considered going back into the plant, but his much higher salary as a union hack got in the way. His family now had a new home in a much nicer neighborhood and a new car. This "better way of life" was changing Joe's whole outlook. He stopped visiting the plant every day, avoided the grievance-committee men who swarmed over him when he did come in, and spent less and less time socializing with his best friend, Jack.

He didn't like himself much, but held onto the idea that he could still do something concrete for the workers in the plant.

Continued on page 9

Special offer on new book

The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party

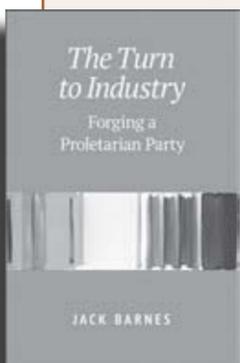
is about the working-class program, composition, and course of conduct of the only kind of party worthy of the name 'revolutionary' in the imperialist epoch.

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 capitalist class in all its economic, social, and political forms.

This book is about building such a party in the United States and in other capitalist countries around the world.

— Jack Barnes, National Secretary
of the Socialist Workers Party

Special offer: \$12 — or \$10 with *Militant* subscription
pathfinderpress.com



'Peoples of Cuba and the US are fraternal and invincible'

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for December. The book is about the struggles of working people in the imperialist heartland, the youth who are attracted to them and the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary — it can be made. The excerpt is from the foreword by Mary-Alice Waters, a leader of the SWP. She quotes Ramón Labañino, who was freed along with his other Cuban Five compatriots in December 2014 after a decade and a half in U.S. prisons for efforts to defend the Cuban Revolution. Copyright © 2001 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



AP/Ramon Espinosa

Cuban Five in Havana, Dec. 20, 2014, after up to 16 years in U.S. prison. From right, Ramón Labañino, René González, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and Gerardo Hernández. They won freedom with support of the Cuban people and an international "jury of millions."

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

This is the world in which the example set by the people of Cuba remains as important as it was the day they took power, demonstrating in practice what it takes to break the stranglehold of imperialist exploitation and defend those conquests. Explaining that truth to workers and farmers in the United States as they find themselves propelled into struggles that lead them to rethink many long-held prejudices in quite unexpected ways is not simply an act of working-class solidarity,

however important that may be. It is a proletarian necessity, essential to the internationalist political education and transformation of the working class itself. As the Cuban people proudly say of their aid to the peoples of Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and elsewhere around the world, "Those who are not ready to fight for the freedom of others will never be ready to fight for their own."

Shortly before *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* came off the press in 2001, Colin Powell, the new secretary of state, explained Washington's uncompromising stance toward Cuba's revolutionary government. He did so more accurately than he perhaps intended. Testifying April 26, 2001, before a congressional committee, he responded to the question of why the U.S. government refuses to alter its decades-long policy toward Cuba. Powell replied that in China, Russia, and Vietnam "you can see leaders who the world is changing." But in Cuba, he said, Castro "hasn't changed his views in any way."

The secretary of state got it only partially right, of course. As with each of his predecessors, his inability to fathom the human beings driving the Cuban Revolution was above all a class blindness. It is not only Fidel and the broad

and deep revolutionary leadership of Cuba who have not changed their revolutionary convictions. It is the people of Cuba in their overwhelming majority who have never surrendered. Who refuse to subordinate the interests of working people to the prerogatives of capital. Who stand ready, as always, to aid revolutionary struggles wherever they may occur, by any means necessary. Whose message to would-be invaders remains the same as at Playa Girón: If you come, you stay.

The most important response to *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* has been among new generations of readers who discovered something unanticipated in its pages. Those new readers, we are honored to say, included U.S. Federal Prisoner #58734-004, Ramón Labañino Salazar, one of Pathfinder's many readers behind bars, and one of five heroes of the Cuban Revolution who has been imprisoned in the United States now for nine years. Like his comrades-in-arms Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González, and René González at the time of their arrest in September 1998, Ramón was living and working in the United States, tracking the activities of Cuban counter-revolutionary organizations that operate with impunity here, and providing the Cuban government with advance notice,

when possible, of their murderous plans for sabotage and armed actions against the Cuban people. He was framed and convicted on charges of acting as an unregistered agent of a foreign power and conspiring to commit espionage. In what can best be called an act of political retribution aimed at punishing the Cuban people for their continuing revolutionary defiance of Washington's demands that they "change," he was handed a life sentence, which he is currently serving in U.S. federal prison in Beaumont, Texas.

After reading the foreword by Jack Barnes to *Playa Girón/Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas*, reprinted here as "1961: Year of Education," Ramón wrote to express his appreciation. While he had read numerous books and documents about Playa Girón, Ramón said, in this one he had learned something he "had never read in any other book on this subject." For the first time, he noted, he had a feel for "the direct influence of the Cuban Revolution, its example and impact, on the people of the U.S., and on the education of the revolutionary left movement and the movement in solidarity with our country." It gave evidence once again, Ramón added, "that our peoples are fraternal and invincible."

Many young readers in the U.S. reacted similarly to learning how a previous generation of young socialists here in the United States had waged an intense political battle in defense of the Cuban Revolution in the weeks leading up to, during, and after the Washington-organized invasion in 1961. This previously unrecorded chapter in the history of the communist youth movement was to its continuators today not just an interesting account of something long past. It has become a model of mass work to be emulated, a guide for action today. ...

When Fidel Castro defiantly announced to the world on March 13, 1961, that "there will be a victorious revolution in the United States before a victorious counterrevolution in Cuba," he was not gazing in a crystal ball, or engaging in verbal bravado. Nor did those of us whose political lives began in those days of struggle think it was an exhortation. It was a political course to guide a lifetime of action — one that remains today as compelling and necessary to the future of humanity as it was then.

December BOOKS OF THE MONTH

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS

30% DISCOUNT

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes
Describes struggles of working people in the imperialist heartland, the youth attracted to them and the example set by the people of Cuba.
\$10. Special price: \$7



Our History Is Still Being Written

The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution
by Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, Moisés Sio Wong, Mary-Alice Waters
\$15. Special price: \$10.50

The Communist League of America

Writings and Speeches, 1932-34
by James P. Cannon
\$25. Special price: \$17.50

The Challenge of the Left Opposition (1923-25)

by Leon Trotsky
\$25. Special price: \$17.50

The Case of the Legless Veteran

by James Kutcher
Fight against the anti-communist witch hunt by a worker and member of the Socialist Workers Party who lost both legs in World War II.
\$17. Special price: \$12



Le socialisme en procès

(Socialism on Trial)
by James P. Cannon
\$15. Special price: \$10.50

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

ORDER ONLINE AT
WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM
OFFER GOOD UNTIL DECEMBER 31

IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

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

UNITED STATES

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

FLORIDA: Miami: 1444 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 215. Zip: 33132. Tel: (305) 929-8966. Email: swpmiami@icloud.com

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

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

KENTUCKY: Louisville: 1939 Goldsmith Lane, Suite 134. Zip: 40218. Tel: (502) 882-1041. Email: louisvilleswp@gmail.com

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

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

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

NEW YORK: New York: 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor. Zip: 10018. Tel: (646) 434-8117. Email: newyorkswp@gmail.com **Albany:** 285 Washington Ave. #1R. Zip: 12206. Tel: (518) 810-1586. Email: albanyswp@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia: 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite 16. Zip: 19149. Tel: (215) 708-1270. Email: philaswp@verizon.net **Pittsburgh:** P.O. Box 79142. Zip: 15216. Tel: (412) 610-2402. Email: swppittsburgh@gmail.com

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

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

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

AUSTRALIA

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

CANADA

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

FRANCE

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

NEW ZEALAND

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

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND: London: 5 Norman Road (first floor). Seven Sisters. Post code: N15 4ND. Tel: 020-3538 8900. Email: cllondon@fastmail.fm **Manchester:** 329, Royal Exchange Buildings, 3 Old Bank St. Post code: M2 7PE. Tel: (0161) 312-8119. Email: clmanchr@gmail.com

All out for striking copper workers!

Continued from front page

— whether it's a strike picket or public protest — needs working-class solidarity, a mighty weapon we can wield against bosses and their government, who *think* they are all-powerful. Like capitalists everywhere, who hold down our wages and dump the crisis of their system on our backs, Asarco's bosses misjudge what workers are capable of when we stand up for ourselves and fight together.

They refuse to talk to the union. They believe they can go “one day longer,” by organizing strike-breakers and unilaterally imposing their union-busting contract. We should respond with a drive to expand solidarity with the miners' fight, by workers and unions across the country and beyond.

The bosses count on keeping us divided. They tell us just to watch out for number one. But we are a class — the working class — with common

interests against the bosses, their Democratic and Republican parties, and their government.

The unity and courage the miners are showing on the picket line can be multiplied and reinforced with support from other workers. All workers have a stake in this fight. Tell your family, co-workers and friends, urge them to add their backing, send messages of support and bring aid to the picket lines. Join and use the *Militant* to get out the truth about this struggle.

Mobilizing solidarity also strengthens those who offer their support. It's a step towards building the kind of fighting labor movement we need, one that organizes independently and relies on itself to defend the interests of all workers. And whose struggles build self-confidence and class consciousness.

Bring to bear the power of working-class solidarity!

Chile protests demand end to attacks by gov't

Continued from front page

repression backfired, despite 22 dead and 2,200 injured, including 230 people who lost part or all of their eyesight after cops shot them in the face with “rubber” bullets and tear gas canisters. Concessions by Piñera haven't stopped the daily protests.

Chile's gross domestic product per capita is the highest in Latin America. And Chile is also the Latin American country with the greatest class disparities. The official minimum wage is about \$400 a month. Some 50% of retired workers get pensions of less than \$300 a month. By law, 10% of workers wages are taken from them and deposited into accounts run by the private Retirement Fund Administrators (AFP), who put them in stocks and bonds.

In 2008 the government instituted a so-called Solidarity Pillar pension for those — including farmers and street vendors — who never had a formal wage or retirement deductions. They get all of \$135 a month.

Meanwhile the 140 richest capitalists — the top 0.1% — billionaire President Piñera among them, control nearly 20% of the country's wealth.

Chile marked by imperialist domination

Imperialist plunder of Chile's natural resources and its cheap labor widens the gap. According to the *Wall Street Journal* the two-biggest supermarket chains control two-thirds of all retail sales. The largest retail chain is U.S.-based Walmart, which owns more than 370 stores across the country.

Unlike the U.S. where not a single Walmart store is unionized, the SIL union at Walmart is the largest in the country, with 17,000 members, 60% of them women.

The government falsely blamed protesters for the sacking of 70 Walmart stores, including 18 arson attacks, as well as the burning of several subway

stations. Many of the arson attacks were by masked anarchists, whose reactionary actions were both a direct blow to working people and gave the government a pretext to step up repression.

SIL union President Juan Moreno, who denounced the arson attacks, told the press that many Walmart workers join the protests after work. They earn a pittance, he said, and “those who work part time earn even less — and with that they have to pay rent, expensive medicine, school supplies for their kids, food. They feel punished by the system that does nothing for them.”

The largest copper company in the world is Chile's state-owned Codelco, an exception in the tumbling economy, with production growing 2% in October. The Escondida mine, the largest copper mine in the world, is in Chile, but its owners are Australia-based BHP and the U.K.-Australian Rio Tinto.

“Mine workers are among the better-paid workers in Chile,” Mario Antonio Guzmán told the *Militant* from Santiago Dec. 3. Guzmán is a journalist in the communications department of the Copper Workers Federation (FTC), which organizes workers at Codelco. Even with that, “most miners only live five or ten years after they retire,” he said, due to “the tremendous toll of working in the mines.”

The FTC supports the protests and is fighting Codelco bosses' attempt to fire some union activists who participated in the Oct. 23 national strike.

Far-reaching demands

The government agreed to meet Nov. 28 with the Social Unity Board, which includes the CUT trade union federation, student groups and other organizations that helped organize the protests. They demanded the government grant a 50% increase in the minimum wage, replace the private pension system, improve access to health care and convene a constituent assembly to draw up a replacement to the constitution imposed by the Augusto Pinochet dictatorship. So far the government hasn't replied.

The Chilean legislature includes representatives of some 18 parties — from the ruling National Renovation party and Christian Democrats to the Socialist and Communist parties. For many protesters and working people all these parties are discredited.

Gladys Zúñiga, a small vendor, told Univisión she has heard all the speeches and all the promises the politicians make. “The result was never what we wanted,” she said.

The 'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. Send a check or money order payable to the Militant earmarked “Prisoners' Fund” to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018 or donate online at: www.themilitant.com

German farmers rally

Continued from page 7

gion of Brandenburg, told Euractiv. “We farmers see more and more requirements and less and less money.”

A farmer from Bavaria at the Berlin protest told Deutsche Welle, “When we're supposed to reduce the use of fertilizers by 20% as the government wants us to, it means that our plants get 20% less nutrients every year, and that will have a corresponding impact on our yields and our incomes.”

The protest was attacked by the Green Party. “Doing even less for nature's conservation and spreading even more fertilizer,” party leader Anton Hofrieter told Euractiv. “That's not the right answer.”

On Nov. 27, some 1,000 farmers from across France drove their tractors in rolling roadblocks in Paris against growing restrictions on farmers. The same day Irish farmers ended their two-day tractor blockade of the center of Dublin.

Iraq upsurge continues, prime minister to resign

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi announced his resignation Nov. 29 after nearly two months of mass anti-government protests have shaken the country. The youthful demonstrators are demanding an end to the effects of the economic crisis — joblessness, lack of electricity and basic resources — and an end to interference in Iraq by Tehran and Washington.

The Iraq protests are part of a broader uprising shaking Iran and Lebanon, as working people seek to assert their interests in the midst of ongoing wars in the region and the battle for sway between the capitalist rulers in the U.S. and Iran.

Mahdi's resignation followed the brutal slaughter of over 25 protesters in Nasiriyah, capital of Dhi Qar province. When protests began there Nov. 27, Mahdi told army brass to establish military-led “crisis cells” to quell the uprising. Staff Gen. Jameel al-Shammari — notorious for leading murderous attacks on protesters in Basra last year — was assigned to this area.

Shammari's forces opened fire on protesters, killing and wounding dozens. They were joined in the attack by Shiite militias beholden to Tehran. Amnesty International described the scene as like “a warzone,” where “Iraqi security forces meted out “appalling violence against largely peaceful protesters.” Large crowds gathered for the funerals the next day.

As word spread, protests took place across the country. Previously the demonstrations had been centered in Shiite areas in Basra, Baghdad and southern Iraq. After the killings in Nasiriyah, they spread across the country, in areas both predominantly Shiite and Sunni.

Protesters vowed to stay in the streets. “We want to change everything,” 28-year-old protester Ali Dabdab told the *Washington Post* in Baghdad. “This resignation is only step one, but it's not what we came for. We want our country back.”

Iraq's Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani called for Mahdi to step down. Mahdi's resignation was accepted by Iraq's parliament Dec. 1. He will remain in office during efforts to form a new government. This can take weeks, as the government structure is built around three top posts assigned to representatives of Shiite, Sunni and Kurdish groups.

Iraq's judiciary announced Dec. 1 a travel ban and arrest warrant against Shammari.

Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, who has given support to the demonstrations, challenged the efforts to form a new government by the usual methods. “The next candidate for prime minister should be chosen by popular referendum,” he said.

Protesters say these steps will not satisfy their demands — for the fall of the entire corrupt “political class” that has dominated Iraq since Washington overthrew the rule of Saddam Hussein 16 years ago.

Broader uprisings in region

Iraq continues to be a flashpoint in the breakdown of the war-torn imperialist-imposed disorder in the Middle East. The Iraqi people have undergone long years of military conflicts and repression, from the U.S.-led assault in 1991 and Washington's invasion in 2003, to the brutal occupation of Sunni areas by reactionary Islamic State forces. Tehran has taken advantage of this to extend its political and military influence.

Since the start of October, over 400 people have been killed in attacks on the protesters.

In one of his regular visits to Baghdad, Iranian Revolutionary Guard Quds Force chief Gen. Qassim Soleimani, head of the Iranian rulers' counterrevolutionary interventions abroad, boasted to Iraqi military leaders Oct. 30, “We in Iran know how to deal with protests.”

Iran itself has been convulsed by hundreds of thousands protesting in mid-November, triggered by fuel price hikes. But the actions rapidly challenged the diversion of much of the country's revenue to the clerical regime's funding of its counterrevolutionary Guard and proxy militia forces from Iraq and Lebanon to Syria, Gaza and Yemen. The economic crisis in Iran has been intensified as oil exports have been choked off through Washington's latest economic sanctions.

The Iranian Interior Ministry admitted that over 200,000 working people, often from poorer areas with higher unemployment, took part in these nationwide demonstrations, the biggest in years.