

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Overseas Chinese and China's growing weight in world politics  
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 83/NO. 47 DECEMBER 23, 2019

## Welcome new readers! Help get out books, the 'Militant'

BY JANET POST

The *Militant* extends a warm welcome to the 1,208 readers who subscribed to the paper during the Socialist Workers Party fall drive to win new readers that concluded Dec. 10. Party members also raised over \$100,000 for the party's annual fund drive and sold 1,592 books by SWP and other revolutionary working-class leaders, meeting each of the goals set during the drive in full and on time.

We offer a special welcome to the 28 workers behind bars who got or renewed their subscription. The fall campaign came on the heels of the victory by supporters of democratic rights against Florida prison authorities' suppression of the *Militant*.

New readers will find the *Militant* a unique source of information about today's labor struggles and a tool for building much-needed solidarity with these fights.

Holding up signs saying, "Read about CN rail strike for safety," SWP members Tony Lane, Malcolm Jarrett and Ruth Robinett got a good response  
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## Strikers hang tough in battle against Asarco

Solidarity crucial in fight against union busting



Militant/Betsey Stone

Copper workers on strike against assault by Asarco bosses picket Ray Mine in Arizona Dec. 9.

BY BETSEY STONE AND ELLIE GARCIA

KEARNY, Ariz. — "This strike is about whether they can take away what earlier generations have fought for," retired Asarco miner Susan Miller-Middaugh told these *Militant* worker-correspondents outside an IGA grocery store here after we

stopped her to ask directions to the United Steelworkers union hall Dec. 8. "If they break this union, which is what they are trying to do, the workers will have no protection. They can be fired for any reason. There is no excuse for those who cross the picket line."

Some 1,700 members of the Steelworkers, Teamsters and five other unions are in a bitter fight against copper giant Asarco. Workers have  
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## NATO summit reflects crisis of imperialist world 'order'

BY TERRY EVANS

As they press every opening to take down Donald Trump before the 2020 elections, Democrats and the liberal press leapt on tapes of French President Emmanuel Macron, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and other government leaders making fun of the U.S. president at NATO's 70th anniversary summit in the U.K. Dec. 3.

Joe Biden, front-runner for the Democrats' presidential nomination, claimed Trump's conduct there was damaging "America's standing in the world." The summit showed NATO "may not survive" if Trump is reelected, Max Boot moaned in the *Washington Post*. Liberals claim Trump is ripping the U.S.-dominated alliance apart.

The U.S. capitalist rulers put the North Atlantic Treaty Organization together in 1949 after Washington came out as top dog from the second imperialist world war. Their goal was  
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## See revolutionary Cuba for yourself: Join International May Day brigade!



Militant

Members of International May Day brigade to Cuba join voluntary labor in Caimito, April 24, 2019. Brigade is organized in solidarity with Cuban Revolution, against U.S. rulers' embargo.

BY SETH GALINSKY

The National Network on Cuba, a coalition of organizations that oppose the U.S. rulers' economic war on Cuba, is inviting those who want to learn firsthand about the Cuban Revolution to join the U.S. delegation to the upcoming 15th International May Day Brigade of Voluntary Work and Solidarity With Cuba.

Last year 320 people from 21 countries, including 65 from the U.S., participated in the brigade, which is hosted by the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples. They worked side by side with Cuban farmers to prepare fields for planting, met leaders of mass people's organizations, visited hospitals and schools, and met  
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## 'Militant' sends holiday greetings to workers behind prison walls

The *Militant* sends New Year's greetings to fellow workers behind bars. We pledge to continue to report the truth about the conditions you face and to fight to get to you news about the struggles of working people worldwide.

The U.S. rulers preside over the

## EDITORIAL

highest incarceration rate in the world, with almost 2.3 million behind bars and 4.5 million on parole or probation. Over 90% of those locked up were intimidated into signing plea bargains, waving the right to a jury trial, under threat that even harsher sentences would be imposed.

The "justice" system under capitalism is designed to break and demoralize workers and to serve as a warning to millions of other working people to sub  
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## US gov't weighs sending more troops into its Mideast wars

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The administration of President Donald Trump is weighing a new deployment of thousands of troops and additional weaponry to the Middle East as it continues to battle for influence against the capitalist regime in Tehran. The Iranian rulers have taken advantage of the unraveling capitalist "order" in the region to expand their  
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## Inside

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—On the picket line, p. 5—

Virginia transit workers strike for equal pay, workplace safety

Airline food catering workers rally for higher pay, health care



# US life expectancy declines for three years in a row

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

One of the most gruesome results of the impact of the economic and social crisis of capitalism today is that life expectancy in the U.S. has fallen for three straight years. Since 2010, mortality rates for workers in their prime working years between 25 and 64 have increased in nearly every state, according to a Nov. 26 report by the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

The main causes are opioid drug overdoses, which have killed some 250,000 people in recent years, as well as alcohol abuse and suicides. But the declining availability of quality and affordable health care for millions of workers has also led to more deaths from heart disease, strokes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and other medical conditions.

The entire working class is being affected, the *New York Times* reported the same day. While “the focus has been on the plight of white Americans in rural areas who were dying from so-called

deaths of despair,” the paper said, the report shows “that the increased death rates among people in midlife extended to all racial and ethnic groups, and to suburbs and cities.”

Since 1959 life expectancy in the U.S. had increased from 69.9 to 78.9 years old. But in 2011 the lifespan stopped growing and, in 2014, started to decline, a trend that continued over the next two years.

The states with the greatest increase in death rates among young and middle-aged adults — 20 percent and over — were New Hampshire, Maine, Vermont, West Virginia and Ohio.

The deaths were most concentrated in industrial areas where the loss of manufacturing jobs, and the closure of steel mills, auto plants and coal mines have uprooted the lives of working people and entire communities. Four states — Ohio, Pennsylvania, Kentucky and Indiana — accounted for fully one-third of the increased death rates.

“Something changed in the 1980s,” the report’s lead author Steven Woolf, told the *Times*, “which is when the growth in our life expectancy began to slow down compared to other wealthy nations.”

What “changed” is the capitalist rulers deepening offensive against the working class as they’ve sought to offload the deepening crisis of their system onto our backs. And this has been heightened by U.S. imperialism’s seemingly endless wars in Afghanistan and the Middle East and the number of workers who return home injured, facing the crisis in the Veterans Affairs department that mean months of delay in medical care.

## NY event discusses ‘Thomas Sankara’s Legacy Today’



NEW YORK — Some 100 people attended a program at the Harlem YMCA here Dec. 8 on “Thomas Sankara’s Legacy Today: Sankara Everywhere, Sankara Nowhere.” Speaking were Basninwende Isonore Dianda, a teacher; Inem Richardson, a Barnard College student and researcher; Issa Zoungrana, project coordinator, Stand for Life and Liberty; Dr. Boukary Sawadogo, professor at City College of New York; and Peter Thierjung, Socialist Workers Party. Paul Sankara, brother of Thomas Sankara, attended the meeting.

A wide-ranging discussion followed the presentations. Participants came from New York and northern New Jersey, as well as Boston, Montreal, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.

Thomas Sankara was the leader of the 1983-87 popular democratic revolution in the West African country of Burkina Faso. The revolutionary government organized millions of Burkinabe toilers in campaigns for land reform, to eliminate illiteracy and curable diseases, and to plant 10 million trees to stem destruction of the soil. It promoted self-sufficiency in food and clothing and drew women into social and political activity. It resisted French and U.S. imperialist pressures and collaborated with revolutionary Cuba.

Sankara was assassinated in 1987 in a counterrevolutionary coup. The International Committee of Sankara Annual Conference sponsored the event. The next issue will feature a full report.

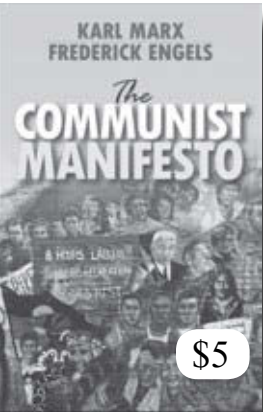
— LEA SHERMAN

*“Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever expanding union of the workers.”*

— Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

Written in 1848, the Communist Manifesto explains why communism is the line of march of the working class toward power, “springing from an existing class struggle, a historical movement going on under our very eyes.”

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# THE MILITANT

*Protests in Chile demand end to gov’t attacks*

*Mass protests are rocking Chile today, as working people and youth demand an end to attacks on their living conditions in a country with the greatest class disparities in Latin America. The ‘Militant’ gives voice to the protesters, offers solidarity to their fight.*

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Help get out books, ‘Militant’

Continued from front page

from rail workers they spoke to at the Conway rail yard north of Pittsburgh Nov. 27. They sold one subscription to a rail unionist and six copies of the paper.

“We’re tracked and trained to work for big companies from an early age,” said Tatiana Nelson, a 20-year-old Walmart worker in Atlanta, who recently purchased the book *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. In the book Barnes explains that under capitalism working-class schooling is organized for the “destruction of human solidarity, as the organization of a society based on class differentiation, where human beings in their late teens become units of production in the minds of personnel managers.”

Nelson got the book and a subscription to the *Militant* from co-worker Lisa Potash, an SWP member, after Potash showed her articles in the paper about the bosses’ offensive in the retail industry and ongoing labor battles. Nelson told Potash that she had to leave college because of the high cost and now goes to school after moving back in with her family.

In Hometown, Illinois, Chicago SWP members Dan Fein and Leroy Watson met Joshua Gantile when they campaigned door to door Dec. 8. He wondered what the difference is between the Democratic Socialists of America and the SWP. “We’re building a work-

ing-class movement to replace capitalism through a socialist revolution,” said Watson. The DSA works inside and tries to strengthen the Democratic Party, one of the twin parties the U.S. imperialists use in their assaults on working people and their wars abroad. The SWP urges working people to break with the capitalist two-party system, pointing to the need to build a labor party to defend the interests of all workers.

“This book describes the kind of party necessary to lead a working-class revolution in the U.S. and other capitalist countries,” Fein explained, showing Gantile *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* by Barnes. He got the book and *In Defense of the US Working Class* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters, as well as a subscription to the *Militant*.

Party fund drive goes over goal!

Some \$106,000 was raised for the SWP’s fund drive, over the \$100,000 goal. Contributors to the fund included working people that party members met as they campaigned door to door and others who wanted to back the work of the party after hearing its candidates speak and joining their campaigns.

Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the U.K. joined the drive to win new readers to the *Militant* and distribute books. The last weekend of the drive coincided with the final weekend of the U.K. general election campaign. Supporters of Jonathan Silberman, Communist



Militant/Dan Fein

SWP member Leroy Watson, right, talks to Joshua Gantile on his doorstep in Hometown, Illinois, Dec. 8. SWP says workers need to build a labor party to defend our class interests.

League parliamentary candidate in the London constituency of Tottenham, took their campaign to working people in Harlow, Essex, Dec. 6, selling three subscriptions and two books on revolutionary politics.

One new subscriber, health care worker Daniel O’Sullivan, bought a campaign button that reads, “Workers need our own party — For workers control over safety — Vote Communist League.” “Wearing that will be a great way to get serious discussion going,” O’Sullivan told Silberman and campaign supporter Pete Rosner.

On Dec. 8 CL campaigners participated in a “Together Against Antisemitism” rally of 3,000, in central London. During the election campaign, Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn has faced widespread criticism for his backing to anti-Semitic members and leaders in his party.

Some rally participants were surprised to hear that former Cuban President Fidel Castro spoke out unequivocally against Jew-hatred and defended the existence of Israel. Demonstrators took campaign literature and bought 10 copies of the *Militant*. One person got the book *The Jewish Question* by Abram Leon from the CL campaigners.

In the book Leon explains how in times of deepening social crisis Jew-hatred is incited by the capitalists to mobilize reactionary forces against revolutionary struggles and help save the rulers’ exploitative system. It de-

scribes how the future of the Jewish people is tied to the capacities of working people to organize a movement to end capitalist rule.

Books on revolutionary politics offered during the drive explain how workers and their allies will be transformed through such struggles and become capable of taking power into our own hands.

Efforts to expand the readership of the *Militant* and books on revolutionary politics do not end with the conclusion of the fall drive, but will continue as Socialist Workers Party candidates for office get their campaigns underway for 2020. The *Militant* is an irreplaceable tool for learning what can be done to advance the struggles of working people today.

To join efforts to get the paper around, get in touch with a branch of the Socialist Workers Party or Communist League listed on page 8.

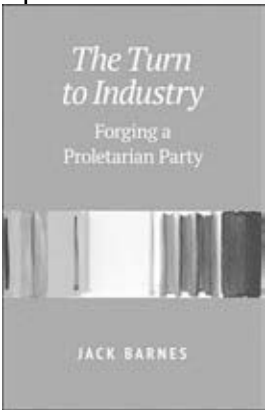


Militant/Rebecca Williamson

“It’s going to take a revolution to make real change,” Samantha Hanson said to SWP member Jeanne FitzMaurice, right, when she knocked on Hanson’s door Nov. 23 in Kent, Washington.

Special offer on new book

The Turn to Industry:  
Forging a Proletarian Party



Explains the working-class program, composition, and course of conduct of the only kind of party worthy of the name ‘revolutionary’ in the imperialist epoch.

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— Jack Barnes, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party

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Socialist Workers Party Fund Drive		
Oct. 5 - Dec. 10 (Final chart)		
Area	Quota	Collected
Albany	\$6,000	\$6,050
Atlanta	\$9,250	\$9,507
Chicago	\$11,000	\$11,699
Dallas	\$2,500	\$2,613
Lincoln	\$250	\$263
Los Angeles	\$10,500	\$12,014
Louisville*	\$2,800	\$3,121
Miami	\$3,500	\$4,045
New York	\$14,000	\$14,380
N. New Jersey	\$3,300	\$3,862
Oakland	\$12,000	\$12,069
Philadelphia	\$2,500	\$2,530
Pittsburgh*	\$2,300	\$2,501
Seattle	\$10,000	\$10,867
Twin Cities	\$4,500	\$4,557
Washington, DC	\$4,600	\$4,742
Other		\$1,200
Total	\$99,000	\$106,020
Should Be	\$100,000	\$100,000
*raised quota		

Fall Campaign to sell Militant subscriptions and books				
Oct. 5 - Dec. 10 (Final chart)				
Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold
UNITED STATES				
Albany*	70	71	85	123
Atlanta	70	76	110	114
Chicago*	110	129	100	114
Dallas	35	41	35	39
Lincoln	12	13	15	16
Los Angeles	90	97	90	95
Louisville*	65	66	65	73
Miami	25	26	25	30
New Jersey	40	51	70	85
New York	80	82	120	155
Oakland	70	75	100	108
Philadelphia	25	27	25	31
Pittsburgh	25	33	25	26
Seattle	70	80	90	102
Twin Cities	35	36	45	46
Washington	50	53	50	54
Total U.S.	872	956	1,050	1,211
Prisoners	25	28		
UNITED KINGDOM				
London	50	56	75	84
Manchester	35	37	45	49
Total U.K.	85	93	120	133
Canada	70	76	150	163
New Zealand	20	26	20	43
Australia*	25	29	35	42
Total	1,097	1,208	1,375	1,592
SHOULD BE	1,100	1,100	1,250	1,250
*Raised goal				



# US weighs troops to Mideast

**Continued from front page**

military and political reach in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Gaza and Yemen.

Meanwhile, anti-government protests in Iraq, Lebanon and inside Iran itself have faced brutal assaults from those governments as well as counterrevolutionary paramilitary forces organized by the clerical regime in Iran.

Even as its dominance in the region weakens, Washington continues to defend its imperialist interests and to strike at its foes. The U.S. rulers' military maneuvers and economic sanctions against Tehran continue, weighing heaviest on working people there. At the same time, President Trump says he wants to withdraw U.S. forces from the region, but finds he can't.

The Dec. 4 *Wall Street Journal* reported that up to 14,000 more U.S. troops could be sent to the region, which would double the number sent since the start of a troop buildup in May. The number of warships stationed in the vicinity has also grown, along with new air and ground units. The Pentagon has reestablished a major air base in Saudi Arabia for the first time in 16 years.

On any given day Washington has between 60,000 and 80,000 troops deployed in the Middle East and Afghanistan.

To justify a new buildup, Pentagon officials say they have intelligence reports that Tehran transferred short-range rockets into Iraq. And a U.S. warship recently intercepted a boatload of missiles headed for Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen, who are fighting a proxy war against Saudi-backed forces there.

Speaking at a regional "security" conference in Bahrain Nov. 23, Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, chief of U.S. Central Command, bemoaned the fact that "there is a lot of water to cover" for Washington's Navy. While the Pentagon is moving to step up its naval footprint against Tehran, it is also pressed to deploy naval power to counter Beijing's continuing military buildup in the Pacific.

However, only five of the U.S. rulers' 11 aircraft carriers are currently deployable — the rest are being repaired, serviced or are currently stationed stateside.

## Protests in Iraq, Lebanon

Up to 25 people were killed when both Iraqi security forces and masked thugs attacked anti-government protesters occupying Tahrir Square in central Baghdad Dec. 7. The thugs carried out a series of deadly gun and knife attacks. They are armed groups operating under the umbrella of Tehran-organized militias known as the Hashd al-Shaabi, which function as part of the Iraqi military.

Over 440 Iraqis have been killed, over 20,000 wounded and many more detained or disappeared.

After the violence escalated, Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi was forced to resign. The country's top Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, withdrew his support from Mahdi's government and backed protesters' calls for no "foreign interference" from either Tehran or Washington in choosing a new government.

Nevertheless, both Gen. Qassim Soleimani, head of the Iranian government's counterrevolutionary interven-

tions abroad, and Mohammed Kawtharani, from Tehran-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon, have participated in some of the talks. And Washington continues to press its interests.

In Lebanon anti-government protests that forced Prime Minister Saad Hariri to step down Oct. 29 show no signs of abating. Samir Khatib, the privileged head of a large construction firm there, sought to become the new prime minister for a few days. But he abruptly withdrew Dec. 8 and Hariri said he was willing to retake the reins.

Protesters have demanded the whole political setup — which requires the three top government offices to be occupied by a Sunni, a Shiite and a Maronite Christian — be scrapped. The demonstrations have been attacked by Tehran-backed Hezbollah forces.

## Iran protests put down in blood

For now the Iranian rulers have brutally suppressed the deepest unrest by working people there since the Iranian Revolution in 1979. Protests in the hundreds of thousands erupted across the country in mid-November after a fuel price hike, but rapidly expanded demands against the government and Tehran's military maneuvers and aid to proxy military forces abroad.

Hundreds were killed and over 7,000 imprisoned during the protests. According to media reports, Revolutionary Guard forces in Mahshahr mowed down over 100 youths with machine gun fire Nov. 18.

The clerical regime announced Dec. 8 that in the face of Washington's sanctions and the growing economic crisis they intend to continue steps to reduce government programs and expand cuts on subsidies for gas and electricity. These moves, which led to the protests, put the burden of the crisis even more onto the backs of working people.

# Join the International May Day brigade to Cuba!

**Continued from front page**

working people in their communities. A highlight of the brigade every year is participation in the million-strong international workers day march in Havana May 1.

Along with learning about the revolution, members of the U.S. delegation will have an important contribution to make by helping Cubans and brigadistas from other countries they meet learn more about the class struggle and activities of supporters of the Cuban Revolution in the U.S. This year's brigade will take place April 26 to May 10.

Kaitlin Estill, who participated in last year's brigade, told the *Militant* that going "had a really big impact on me. Before the trip, I looked to the idea of socialism as a way of organizing society and knew something about Cuba and the advances there, but I didn't know how the revolution happened.

"There is so much anti-Cuba propaganda from the U.S. government," said Estill, a worker at Walmart in Louisville, Kentucky. "It's one thing to read books and talk to people here. It's different to be in Cuba and talk to Cubans and hear about why they defend their revolution."

Going to Cuba helped Estill decide to join the Socialist Workers Party.

"A lot of people in the U.S. don't think life under capitalism is working," Estill said. "I think a lot of my

## Mass protest advances Hong Kong political rights fight



Reuters/Thomas Peter

Protesters in Hong Kong hold up five fingers as a sign of continued support for their five demands Dec. 8 in the largest action for greater political rights in months. Others carried large banners such as "Free Hong Kong." The Civil Human Rights Front, which organized the march, said that some 800,000 people participated. Hundreds of marshals were organized to ensure there were no provocations during the huge procession.

The demonstration was the first to receive police permission since 1.7 million marched Aug. 18. The semi-autonomous city government, with the backing of the regime in Beijing, has been denying permits for larger protests while using riot police, tear gas and water cannons to break up smaller "illegal" ones. Confrontational tactics against the cops by a small minority has played into the hands of the authorities as well.

Two weeks previously, a landslide win for "pro-democracy" candidates in local council elections, in effect a referendum on mass support for the movement, showed majority sentiment against the government crackdown. One of the key demands of the actions is for direct elections for the chief executive and the legislative council by universal suffrage, instead of appointment by a Beijing-dominated committee. Other demands are for an inquiry into the police repression and the dropping of all charges against over 6,000 arrested protesters.

This popular movement is a serious political obstacle for Chinese President Xi Jinping as he seeks to tighten Beijing's rule over the former British colony. The Chinese rulers are worried the sustained mass actions for political liberties in this Asian financial hub will become an example for workers and youth attracted to their struggles on the mainland.

— ROY LANDERSEN

co-workers at Walmart would be excited to go to Cuba and get a lot out of the experience."

This year the brigade will spend several days in Pinar del Rio province in western Cuba, where they will visit factories, farm cooperatives, universities, a day care center and health care centers. They will also visit working-class neighborhoods, meeting people where they live, along with leaders of unions and other mass organizations.

Brigade members will take part in panels on the Cuban economy, the legacy of Che Guevara and the truth about human rights in Cuba, as well as participate in an international solidarity conference, visits to museums and a dance class.

The upcoming brigade takes place in the midst of a stepped-up campaign by the U.S. rulers to use ever harsher economic sanctions to punish the Cuban people, seeking to undermine their revolution.

Washington has also unleashed a propaganda campaign slandering Cuba's internationalist medical missions, which provide health care for hundreds of thousands of people around the world. U.S. officials and allied capitalist governments like that of Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, are peddling fantastic and utterly false claims that volunteer Cuban doctors were forced into "slave labor." Washing-

ton-backed rightists who have seized power in Bolivia have charged that Cuban medical volunteers there fomented demonstrations against them.

## Answer Washington's slanders

Meeting Cubans who have been part of these internationalist missions, seeing firsthand the gains of the revolution and understanding the challenges the Cuban people face, will put participants in a better position to answer the slanders and lies of Washington and other opponents of the revolution when they return home.

Those going on the brigade can "use it as an opportunity to go to campuses and speak about the trip and to talk to local newspapers and ask if they can write an article about why they are going to Cuba," Cheryl LaBash, a co-chair of the National Network on Cuba, told the *Militant* Dec. 9.

Despite new U.S. government restrictions, many types of travel to Cuba are still legal and this trip is taking place in accordance with U.S. guidelines. Travel arrangements from the U.S. are being handled by Marazul Tours travel agency.

Total cost, not including airfare to Cuba, is \$725. Applications are due by March 27. Take advantage of this unique opportunity! For more information visit: [www.nnoc.info](http://www.nnoc.info) or email [ICanGoToCuba@nnoc.info](mailto:ICanGoToCuba@nnoc.info).



# —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](mailto:themilitant@mac.com) or through our website, or mail them to 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

## Virginia transit workers strike for equal pay, workplace safety

LORTON, Va. — Some 130 Metro-bus workers from Amalgamated Transit Union Local 689 at the Cinder Bed Road have been on strike since Oct. 24. They were briefly joined by nearly 600 Fairfax Connector workers, members of ATU Local 1764, who went on strike Dec. 5 for four days, facing some of the same issues before returning to work. The combined strikes impacted some 40,000 passengers in northern Virginia.

Both groups of workers are employed by Transdev, a French-owned multinational transit company, which operates in 200 cities in the U.S. and Canada. The Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority has contracted out services to Transdev to cut costs and weaken the union.

“We are fighting for equal pay for equal work,” Tharien Graham, a 22-year-old driver, told the *Militant*. “We drive Metro buses but we make \$12 less an hour than Metro workers.

“As each day passes I go deeper in debt,” he added. “I have to use my credit card to pay my car and rent bills. And our health care deductible is \$6,000. We have to stand up.”

After six weeks on strike here, spirit and determination of the workers remains strong. They keep up large picket lines at the Cinder Bed Road garage, and supporters bring firewood, coffee and food in solidarity.

“Safety is paramount in this strike,” said ATU Local 689 driver James Duffy. “When you work split shifts — from 4:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. and then 2:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. — you’re not rested.”

The drivers got some international solidarity when French railway workers — many of whom also work for Transdev — went on strike Dec. 5 and joined some 800,000 workers and their allies protesting across the country. From the march in Paris, CGT Railway Federation International Affairs Director David Gobé sent a video of support to the ATU.

—James Harris and Arlene Rubinstein

## Airline food catering workers rally for higher pay, health care

SAN FRANCISCO — Hundreds of airline workers joined protests at airports in 16 cities Nov. 26 in support of food catering workers fighting for higher pay and affordable health care coverage. The workers, employed by LSG Sky Chefs and Gate Gourmet, are members of the UNITE HERE union.

Some 150 people participated in a

picket line and protest at the airport here.

“We would like to make more money and improve our pensions but the main thing is health care,” Melieni Cruz, who has worked at Sky Chefs for three years, told the *Militant*. “We pay \$35 a week if you are single or \$70 a week for a family for coverage and there still is a very big deductible.

“The airlines are making billions and the catering companies are stonewalling our contract negotiations that have been going on for months,” she said.

Among other cities where actions took place were New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Philadelphia, Dallas and Washington, D.C.

Union members at Sky Chefs and Gate Gourmet work under the anti-working-class federal Railway Labor Act that wraps the union in bureaucratic red tape designed to restrict workers’ right to strike. Under the guise that the catering industry is essential to interstate commerce, workers must go through a lengthy mediation process and get a formal release from the National Mediation Board to be able to strike.

A number of other unionists, including several UNITE HERE members from San Francisco who participated in a hard-fought strike against the Marriott hotel chain last year, joined the picket line to show solidarity.

—Jeff Powers

## French public hospital workers protest government cutbacks

PARIS — Some 10,000 public hospital workers conducted a one-day strike and march here Nov. 14 to defend the country’s public hospitals. For the first time, members of all medical professions — from nursing assistants to doctors — acted together. Similar protests took place in many cities.

Budget cutting has created what many people call “medical deserts,” especially in rural areas, midwife Caroline Raquin told the *Militant*. She pointed to the example of the number of maternity



Militant/Glova Scott

Members of Amalgamated Transit Union on strike against Metro contractor Transdev rally in Fairfax, Virginia, Nov. 16 demanding ‘equal pay for equal work’ and better health care.

centers that have been closed. “There were 1,200 such centers in 1970,” she said. “Now there are only 540.”

Hospitals in Paris and other large cities are beginning to be affected as well. Five- to seven-hour waiting time is now common in public hospital emergency rooms here, and there are two- to three-month delays to see a specialist. The cutbacks have made it clear the government favors private, for-profit clinics.

Over 1 million people work in public hospitals in France. A second day of demonstrations has been called for Dec. 17.

—Nat London

## Bus drivers in New Zealand fight for higher wages

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — In the week beginning Dec. 2, around half of all bus trips in Auckland became free to the public. More than 900 drivers employed by two of the city’s bus companies — NZ Bus and Go Bus — stopped collecting passenger fares as part of their ongoing campaign to win new contracts, higher wages and improved conditions.

Many drivers, members of New Zealand Tramways Union and FIRST Union, said the reception from riders was positive, with many saying “good

luck,” as well as offering money and food. It’s the first time the unions have tried this tactic.

“I think it’s a brilliant idea,” Paul Albert, a driver and assistant Tramways Union delegate at Onehunga depot, told the *Militant*.

NZ Bus reacted Dec. 7 by issuing suspension notices to drivers as they turned up for work, locking them out. In response, drivers went to the union office and organized picketing at the gates of other bus companies that were still operating. On Dec. 9, 200 drivers staged a spirited rally outside the offices of Auckland Transport, a City Council organization that contracts all bus companies. They then marched through the central city.

NZ Bus drivers had voted overwhelmingly Nov. 28 to reject the company’s offer to raise wages by 38 cents an hour. Their unions are demanding an 8 New Zealand dollar an hour raise (\$5.28). After the lockout notices, the company increased their offer to 44 cents an hour and a one-off payment of NZ\$500.

Long hours is another major issue for drivers. It is not uncommon for drivers scheduled on split shifts to spend 14 hours a day at work.

—Terry Coggan, member Tramways Union at NZ Bus Onehunga

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



### December 26, 1994

Under orders of President Boris Yeltsin 40,000 Russian troops invaded Chechnya in the northern Caucasus region December 11. The military assault, launched under the guise of “protecting” civilians, is being met by resistance in the Chechen republic and neighboring areas. The military action, unpopular among many working people in Russia, has already provoked divisions among Moscow’s top military brass and the country’s rulers.

Washington and other imperialist powers registered their support for Yeltsin’s war moves, declaring the assault an “internal affair.”

Chechnya has not “always” been a part of Russia. Following the Russian revolution in 1917, under the leadership of V.I. Lenin, the revolutionary government moved to restore to the people of the northern Caucasus the lands that were stolen from them.



### December 26, 1969

OCEANSIDE, Calif. — On Dec. 14, 4,000-5,000 antiwar demonstrators flooded this small seaside town near Los Angeles, dominated by the Camp Pendleton Marine base, for one of the largest actions to take place during the December Moratorium. The action was called by the Movement for a Democratic Military, a group of antiwar Marines and sailors based at Camp Pendleton and at naval bases in San Diego.

The 500 Marines and other military personnel at the rally provided evidence of the scope of opposition to the war and the willingness to listen to antiwar views which exists in the huge complex of military bases in the Los Angeles, Oceanside and San Diego area. The large number of third world enlisted men present was also striking.

A small group of hecklers tried to disrupt the rally but the demonstrators behaved in a disciplined fashion.



### December 23, 1944

DETROIT — Backed officially by their own international union and the mighty ranks of the auto workers and all other CIO unions in this area, over 2,000 members of Local 332, CIO United Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Employees, today entered the second week of their militant strike at four Montgomery Ward stores here.

Brushing aside the no-strike pledge for the first time since Pearl Harbor, virtually all CIO locals here have gone on record pledging “moral, financial and physical support” to the Ward strikers.

Once more the Ward workers are throwing a national spotlight on [President Franklin] Roosevelt’s kid-glove policy toward the open-shop employers. For over two years, the Ward corporation has brazenly defied WLB [War Labor Board] orders to grant a union maintenance-of-membership contract.

**Read about the battles that forged the US labor movement**



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# NATO summit reflects crisis

Continued from front page

to prevent working people in Europe from fighting to take power and to advance counterrevolutionary military operations wherever Washington saw an opening. Its first action was to mobilize troops for the U.S. war in Korea.

When the French rulers decided the military alliance was operating to the advantage of Washington, not their own, they pulled out in 1966, rejoining only in 1995.

From its founding 12 members, NATO has grown to 29, all dedicated to the preservation of capitalism.

Presidents Trump and Macron clashed at the meeting, reflecting the increasingly divergent interests of the rival powers that make up the “alliance.” These conflicts were underway long before Trump assumed the presidency. Each member of NATO seeks advantage for its own ruling class amid sharpening conflicts over markets and resources; unresolved wars in the Middle East; Moscow’s military interventions in Eastern Europe and Syria; and competition from the rising Asian power in Beijing.

## US rulers try to stem their decline

Like previous presidents, Trump seeks to hold off Washington’s relative decline as the world’s dominant imperialist power, while its NATO “allies” in Europe hope to continue to get protection under Washington’s military umbrella while they let their own armed forces dwindle. And the U.S. rulers are determined to prevent this.

Macron has bigger dreams. At the summit he defended his comment last month that NATO is experiencing “brain death.” He advocates EU members forming their own military alliance, with Paris as the chief.

He told the *Economist* that France is special, “as a permanent member of

the [U.N.] Security Council, a nuclear power, founding member of the European Union, a country which is present through its overseas territories on every continent and which remains very present because of the French-speaking world.” Macron’s main point was to highlight attributes of the French government, that its main European rival — Berlin — cannot lay claim to.

“We’re less aligned with American diplomacy,” he added, “which in this world gives us more room for manoeuvre.”

Macron’s France “needs protection more than anybody and I see him breaking off” from NATO, Trump told reporters before the summit.

Macron, a meritocratic former hedge fund millionaire, who runs things for the capitalist class in France, does have problems. Close to a million people went on strike and marched across the country a few days after his return home to protest his government’s latest effort to attack their pensions.

Trump used the NATO summit to threaten tariffs of up to 100% on \$2.4 billion of French imports to the U.S., after Macron’s government in July imposed a tax on U.S. tech companies that do business in France.

President Trump also dismissed promises by the German government that it would spend more on its military, calling it “delinquent.” Berlin used some creative bookkeeping to claim it had increased its contribution to NATO. German rulers counted money budgeted for new jets for government officials’ travel and some 800 million euros allocated to foreign aid development programs.

Not to be outdone, the French rulers did the same, counting both the budget for its federal gendarmes and the Paris fire department as NATO expenses.

The summit ended with a declaration condemning Moscow for its interventions abroad, asserting the need for NATO members to develop and stockpile nuclear weapons, and for the first time said the alliance faces a new threat from Beijing.

“The rhetoric is not always excellent, but substance is perfect,” NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told the press after the meeting, trying to put the best face on a fractious gathering that showcased the deepening imperialist world disorder today.

## Socialist Workers Party campaign

While Trump — like previous Democratic and Republican administrations — defends the rulers’ interests abroad, their capitalist two-party system at home is riven with a deepening crisis. Trump returned from the summit to the Democrats’ impeachment crusade, the latest phase of their three-year-long drive to overturn the 2016 election.

The real target of their witch hunt is the working class, which they hold responsible for electing the president. They consider workers reactionary — “white guys in diners,” according to *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman, who are driven by “animosity toward immigrants.”

The House Judiciary Commit-

## French protests say ‘Hands off our pensions’!



AP/Daniel Cole

PARIS — Unionists and other working people across France carried out a one-day strike Dec. 5 and mounted sizable demonstrations in defense of their pensions. The actions were centered among public service sector workers in transportation, schools and public hospitals.

The mobilizations were called after French President Emmanuel Macron, well known for his arrogant and demeaning attitude toward workers and their rights, announced government moves to revise the pension system. The “reform” would mean a serious decrease in benefits for many workers, raise the age to get maximum benefits and threaten early retirement in rail and public transportation.

Macron’s meritocratic government has sought to impose a series of anti-working-class measures, sparking last year’s mass yellow vest protests and now this nationwide strike.

Close to a million people demonstrated nationally, including in Marseille, above. The strike closed down 90% of rail traffic, 11 out of 16 Paris subway lines and 20% of passenger flights. Public schools were closed.

Rail and public transportation unions said their strike would continue. Some teachers also continued their strike.

A second one-day strike and series of demonstrations has been called by almost all the union federations for Dec. 10.

France’s capitalist rulers are determined to strengthen their position against U.S. competitors and in the EU.

— NAT LONDON

## Capitalism’s World Disorder

by Jack Barnes

“U.S. imperialism will use its weight in order to try to compensate for the disintegration of the stability of the capitalist social and economic order.”

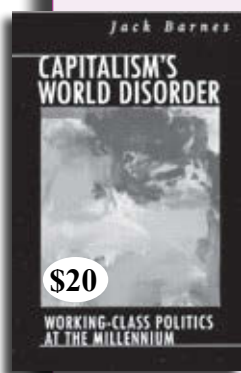
in *New International* no. 12

## Capitalism’s Long Hot Winter Has Begun

by Jack Barnes

“Neither NATO, an alliance born of the Cold War, nor coalitions in 1990s under UN or NATO fig leaves to fight wars in the Gulf or Yugoslavia, can serve evolving purposes of U.S. imperialism.”

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tee’s first hearing on articles of impeachment featured what they billed as learned legal “experts” above the fray. But this was quickly revealed to be another partisan hit job. Three of the four “experts” called by the Democrats turned out to be fervent Democrats themselves. Professor Pamela Karlan is head of a liberal lawyers group and has donated to Elizabeth Warren’s campaign, as she did to Hillary Clinton’s campaign in 2016.

All these “experts” did was bless the necessity of getting rid of the president as soon as possible. House Majority Leader Nancy Pelosi then said

the committee would rapidly draw up the articles of impeachment.

As the crisis of the capitalist two-party system unfolds, the Socialist Workers Party is fielding a growing slate of candidates for the 2020 elections.

They campaign in support of workers’ battles, from the Asarco strike in Arizona and Texas to opposition to the capitalist rulers’ wars abroad. The SWP urges working people to break with the twin parties of capitalist rule, the Democrats and Republicans, and build our own party, a labor party, to fight to take political power into our own hands.



German Navy

Despite German rulers having largest economy in Europe, not one of their six submarines was operational in 2018. Less than half their tanks, helicopters, fighter jets are usable. Mismatch between economic and military power will not survive deeper inter-imperialist conflicts.



# Overseas Chinese and China's growing weight in world politics

## Conference participants discuss impact of today's Washington-Beijing tensions

**BY PATRICK BROWN**  
GUANGZHOU, China —  
“Chinese Overseas and China: Through a Global Lens” was the theme of the 10th International Conference of ISSCO, the International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas, that took place at Jinan University here Nov. 8-11. Concern over fallout for the millions of Chinese living elsewhere around the globe from the sharpening economic and political confrontation — still in its early stages — pitting the governments of the United States and its imperialist allies against the People's Republic of China was the thread that ran through both plenary sessions and over 50 panel discussions.

“The rise of China and the West's reaction to that rise” is putting the spotlight on overseas Chinese everywhere, stressed Peter Li, retired professor of sociology at the University of Saskatchewan as he closed the conference. “Chinese overseas” includes both recent waves of emigrants, and those whose ancestors long ago put down roots and built new lives in other countries, combating discrimination and oppression in order to do so — conditions they still have to deal with today.

Three hundred people, including 80 student volunteers, attended the conference. About half hailed from mainland China. The rest came from 25 other countries and the Special Administrative Regions of the PRC, Hong Kong and Macau. English and Chinese were the official languages of the conference with plenary sessions and nearly half of the panels conducted in English.

ISSCO was founded in 1992, in the wake of the post-Cultural Revolution political course initiated by Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping that opened China to foreign investment and capitalist enterprise. It became possible for Chinese academics living and working outside China to meet and collaborate with their peers in the PRC, bringing the study of Chinese overseas out of its neglected corner.

International conferences, held every three years since then, have taken place in Beijing, Hong Kong, Taipei, Singapore and elsewhere in Asia, as well as



Courtesy ISSCO  
Some of the 300 participants in International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas conference in Guangzhou, China, November 8-11.

the United States, Denmark and Canada. A dozen smaller regional conferences have been organized as well, from New Zealand to Cuba, South Africa, Korea and beyond.

### PRC's growing muscle

The opening session of the conference focused on remarks of welcome from outgoing ISSCO President Tan Chee-Beng and the conference hosts — the School of International Studies/Academy of Overseas Chinese Studies of Jinan University and the national China Institute for Chinese Overseas Studies. They were followed by a “key-note forum” of five ISSCO leaders discussing the challenges faced by Chinese populations in five different regions of the world in light of the rising economic and military power of China.

“The relations between China and the Chinese overseas become more important as China rises in the world,” said Professor Lin Rupeng, the Communist Party secretary at Jinan University, in his welcoming remarks. “Academics,” he added forcefully, “have an important role to play in helping maintain the social stability of Hong Kong and Macau.”

There were no other references on the conference floor to the many months of protests in Hong Kong.

The panel that followed, one of the highlights of the conference, was chaired by Zhang Zhenjiang, dean of the School of International Studies/Academy of Overseas Chinese Studies. It was opened by Ling-Chi Wang, retired professor of Asian American and ethnic

studies at the University of California in Berkeley, talking about Chinese in the U.S. He emphasized that the fast-growing Chinese American population has undergone enormous changes since 1965, when the U.S. government eliminated the last of the regulations that constituted a Chinese exclusion policy first enacted on a national level in 1882.

Before 1965 “95% of immigrants were from the Pearl River Delta in southern China,” said Wang, who co-founded ISSCO with Professor Wang Gung-Wu of the National University of Singapore. “Today, however, people of Chinese origin come from all provinces, as well as Taiwan, Vietnam and Hong Kong.”

Chinese ancestry notwithstanding, Wang stressed, Chinese-Americans are “not homogeneous. They're extremely diverse and can't be united on any ‘China issue.’”

### Secondary migrations

Kee Pookong from Melbourne University spoke about the secondary immigration of “Chinese coming to Australia from Southeast Asian countries such as Malaysia where their families have been assimilated for generations.” Today only 40% of Chinese Australians came directly from China, Kee said. He also noted the fears voiced by many Australians of China's rising economic weight and said allegations concerning “Chinese influence in Australian politics have become a daily topic in the media.”

Longtime ISSCO leader Leo Suryadinata of Singapore's Institute of Southeast Asian Studies called attention to the fact that “72%” of the more than 40 million people of Chinese ethnicity who live in countries outside mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau “are located in Southeast Asia.” They constitute more than 75% of the population of Singapore, and sizable minorities in Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and others.

The global picture was rounded out by Mette Thunoe from Aarhus University in Denmark speaking on Chinese immigration in Europe and Li Anshan from Peking University in China discussing Chinese emigration to Africa today, which is overwhelmingly individual Chinese entrepreneurs seeking their fortunes.

Painting the picture of the diverse character of Chinese immigrant populations around the world brought home

the fact that the overwhelming majority are not temporary “sojourners” who will one day return to China. They remain proud of their Chinese heritage, but are part of the permanent social and economic fabric of the countries where they and their families have settled.

### Tension between China, imperialism

At the same time, as many of the conference panels documented, the growing tensions between China and the dominant imperialist powers mean that Chinese living abroad more often find themselves being held accountable for the local consequences of Beijing's policies. And more are coming under attack for that reason.

For example, in her presentation entitled “Calling in the Calvary: Chinese Overseas and Their Envisaged Role in the Belt and Road Initiative,” Mette Thunoe noted that Beijing policy is to enlist wealthy overseas Chinese to help overcome local opposition to the initiative. The BRI, as it is called, is built around Beijing providing billions of dollars in loans to governments around the world to finance Chinese state-supported construction companies to build ports, railroads and other strategic infrastructure projects along the millennia-old land and sea routes of Chinese traders.

For Beijing, said Thunoe, Chinese overseas are potential “agents for China's foreign policy,” as well as sources of capital for economic development in China.

In one of several panels covering issues in the Philippines, Teresita Ang See of Manila's Kaisa Heritage Center and Rommel Banlaoi of the Philippine Association for Chinese Studies, documented the substantial rise in the number of Chinese immigrants to the Philippines in recent years. Most, they said, find work with gambling cartels, especially online gambling, which is legal in the Philippines but not China. There is growing fear among Tsinoys, or Chinese-Filipinos, that they will become “collateral damage,” Ang See said, amid anger aimed at newer Chinese immigrants who are blamed for rising crime rates linked to gambling and drugs.

Still worse, said Ang See and Banlaoi in their joint presentation, is the “great distrust” with which Chinese in the Philippines tend to be viewed as Beijing and Manila face off over territorial claims in the South China Sea.

When challenged that their presenta-

Continued on page 9

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# Asarco strikers hang tough

**Continued from front page**  
been on strike since Oct. 13 at Asarco's Ray Mine, a short drive north of here; at its smelter complex in nearby Hayden; at its Mission and Silver Bell Mine complexes near Tucson and at its refinery in Amarillo, Texas.

Asarco is out to bust the union. Asarco — which is owned by Grupo Mexico, one of the largest copper companies in the world — imposed its “last and final offer” Dec. 2, in other words, the company says no more negotiations. That “offer” includes a pay freeze for nearly three-quarters of the workers, a slight raise for the highest paid, a freeze on pensions, doubling or tripling health care costs and weakening union protections on the job.

“If you support the strike, I need to give you some strike support posters,” said Miller-Middaugh, who keeps a stash of placards in her car. She tells us that in 1973 she was the first woman to work in the Ray Mine, Asarco's largest complex, with some 800 workers.

Before the strike there were many women in the mine, she said, enough that there were all-women crews. When told that Stone was bringing a solidarity card from workers at the Walmart where she works, and that Garcia had worked at a Kennecott copper smelter in Utah in the early 1990s, she insisted on driving with us to the union hall.

The company claims that 340 workers have crossed the picket line. This includes about 100 workers, the ma-

jority, at the Silver Bell Mine — Asarco's smallest complex. The company has gotten some production going at the Ray Mine and Mission complexes, using supervisors, some workers who have crossed the line, nonunion contractors and newly hired scabs.

But the strike has forced Asarco to shut down the smelter and concentrator complex in Hayden and its Amarillo refinery. The company is stockpiling copper concentrate in Hayden produced from its mines, but will soon run out of storage space if the bosses can't get the smelter running again. Asarco just recently finished refurbishing the smelter, spending \$229 million.

In a conference call with its investors a couple weeks into the strike, Grupo Mexico said it planned to get production up to 100% at the Mission Mine by the end of the year and restart at the Ray mill by January. So far, the strike has upset those plans.

Strikers are picketing outside all the Asarco facilities around-the-clock, seven days a week. “We are here for as long as it takes,” Rico Lopez told us when we joined the picket line at the Ray Mine.

Lopez is a shovel and drill mechanic, as is his older brother Adrian Lopez. They come from four generations of copper miners.

## ‘Asarco tried to divide us for years’

“This company has been trying to divide us for years,” Adrian Lopez said. “Starting 10 years ago, they took away the bonuses of the new hires, something the union had fought for and won. Then they took away the defined pensions of workers with less seniority, substituting 401(k)s.

“Now they want to divide us by refusing wage increases to the majority, while giving raises to others,” he said. “We're saying, no.” To drive this point home, several picketers carried signs saying, “End inequality at Asarco/Grupo Mexico.”

Strikers said that some of those who crossed the picket line are workers from outside the area. “They haven't grown up with the idea of union,” said Adrian Lopez. “Some others aren't crossing, but they haven't become active in the union. We tell them we need to stand up or we'll keep going backwards.”

For more than a century eastern



Militant/Betsey Stone

**Striking Asarco workers picket Ray Mine Dec. 9. Copper miners need, deserve broad solidarity.**

Arizona has been a center of bloody battles between copper bosses and the miners. Rico Lopez said they grew up in this small town of 2,000 where generations of family members fought for the union and walked picket lines as children. Both brothers said that before the strike they had spent time discussing with workers about what had been won and defended through the union, urging them not to cross the picket line.

## Solidarity crucial

Strikers welcomed the solidarity from over 40 workers at the Walmart outside of Oakland, California, who wrote messages of support and encouragement next to their signatures on the solidarity card. Some strikers said they've gotten jobs at an area Walmart to help see themselves through the strike.

The strikers are buoyed up by the support they get in Kearny and nearby copper towns, where almost everyone has a family member or friend who has or is working in copper — from the waitresses at the Old Time Pizza to the small businesses people who put strike support signs in their windows.

Not everyone supports the strike. “It's polarized,” said

Richard Perez, an SX maintenance worker at the mine. “I grew up here being union, knowing that you are on one side or the other, there's no in between.” Perez was volunteering at the Steelworkers union hall to help fellow strikers get assistance.

The strikers need support, including solidarity messages, visits to reinforce picket lines and donations to strike funds and for Christmas. For strikers at the Ray Mine and Hayden Smelter in Kearney and Hayden, send contributions and messages of support to USW Local 915, Strike Assistance, P.O. Box 550, Kearny, AZ 85137. For strikers at the Mission and Silver Bell complexes outside of Tucson, send donations to the Pima Area Labor Federation Community Services via [paypal.me/palfcommunityservice](https://www.paypal.me/palfcommunityservice). Solidarity messages to the strike can be sent via [palfchair@gmail.com](mailto:palfchair@gmail.com).



**There is a long history of hard-fought copper mine battles in Arizona. Above, state government sent guardsmen and troopers to protect strikebreakers in 1983 strike against Phelps Dodge. Morenci mine is now owned by Freeport-McMoRan, remains nonunion.**

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## December BOOKS OF THE MONTH

### PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS

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### 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.

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### 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

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### 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.

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### Le socialisme en procès

(Socialism on Trial)

by James P. Cannon

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# Holiday greetings to workers behind bars

Continued from front page

mit to the dictates of the bosses and their government. Prisoners are subject to inhumane solitary confinement and numerous other indignities daily. And 40% of those in prison are Black, even though African Americans are just 13% of the country's population.

We hail the recent protests that forced the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals to block the execution of Rodney Reed, who has been on death row for over 20 years, framed up for a crime he didn't commit. Opposition to the death penalty — a weapon of terror wielded against the working class under capitalism — continues to grow.

We call for the release of all remaining imprisoned Black Panthers, including Ed Poindexter in Nebraska and Jalil Muntaqim in New York; of Leonard Peltier, a Native American activist framed on murder charges and imprisoned for decades far from his family; and Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was railroaded into jail in Pennsylvania in 1982 and has had to fight to get the medical care he needs. And of all class-struggle and political prisoners worldwide.

We celebrate the release from prison in Russia of Ukrainian filmmaker Oleg Sentsov, who was framed-up after speaking out against Moscow's seizure of Crimea in 2014. On his release this September Sentsov demanded freedom for all Ukrainian political prisoners held by the Vladimir Putin regime's gulag.

After a hard-fought battle this year a victory has been won against Florida prison officials' attempt to suppress the *Militant*. Broad support was won

from organizations and individuals who sent letters of protest to prison authorities. Several of the *Militant's* subscribers behind bars also stood up to prison authorities and filed grievances against the impoundment of their subscriptions. As a result of the campaign, since mid-August no further issues of the paper have been suppressed.

As we've done in New York, New Jersey and Florida this year, we will continue to join in ongoing fights for the right of workers behind bars to get the papers and books of their choice.

Over 6 million people in the United States are prevented from voting by laws that attack the rights of former felons. After working people in Florida overwhelmingly passed Amendment 4 last year to restore voting rights to over a million former prisoners who have completed parole, state legislators imposed new restrictions forcing former felons to pay all outstanding court fees before they can exercise their constitutional rights. The fight to regain the right to vote continues here and in Kentucky, Iowa and other states.

We encourage workers behind bars to get subscriptions to the *Militant* and order books by Socialist Workers Party leaders and other revolutionary fighters published by Pathfinder Press. These titles contain the lessons of previous revolutionary battles and help arm us to build the party that is necessary to lead working people to fight for political power.

We ask readers of the paper to contribute to the *Militant's* prisoners fund that makes it possible to offer reduced -price subscriptions to workers behind bars.

# Protest cop killing of Kumanjayi Walker!

BY MANUELE LASALO  
AND BOB AIKEN

SYDNEY — The police killing of 19-year-old Kumanjayi Walker Nov. 9 in Yuendumu, an Aboriginal settlement of some 1,000 people in central Australia, has sparked widespread protests across the country. Thousands nationwide joined demonstrations to protest the cop killing Nov. 13, including here and in Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Hobart, Darwin, Lismore and Canberra.

In response to the outcry, one of the cops, Zachary Rolfe, was charged with murder, the first cop to face this charge over an Aboriginal death in custody. Rolfe has been granted bail, and is suspended with pay. He says he will plead not guilty.

More than 1,000 people rallied in Alice Springs the next day, including several hundred who had come in a convoy three hours from Yuendumu. "We want to know the truth. No more lies," Warlpiri elder Harry Jakamarra Nelson told the crowd as they marched to the police station there.

The cops said they had gone to arrest Walker for breaches of a suspended sentence. He was shot three times in his own home, and eyewitnesses said he was dragged back to the police station where officers locked themselves in and switched off the lights. Walker received no medical attention.

Around 100 family members and others from Yuendumu gathered outside seeking word on his condition. They weren't told of his death until the next morning.

More than 400 Indigenous people have died while in custody since 1991.

Since the killing, the Territory Response Group, which is part of the Australian government's counterterrorism forces, has been deployed to the region.

The Walker family is demanding the Coroner's Court inquest — a public hearing required when someone dies in custody — take place in Yuendumu.

"We're just so angry," Napurrurla, Walker's grandmother, told the *New York Times*.

## '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](http://www.themilitant.com)

## LETTERS

### Cuba's socialist revolution

Keep up the good work that you are doing, especially on Cuba to defend the socialist revolution.

*A prisoner, Florida*

### Could not put 'Militant' down

Thank you for sending me the *Militant*. When I received my first issue, I could not put it down.

The article that touched me the most was on the Blackjewel miners. I am an Eastern Kentucky native. It reminded me of the struggles that many of my fellow Kentuckians, and

Americans face every day.

*A prisoner, California*

### Update on Brexit, Ireland

Thank you for providing me with the voice of the progressive left and update on issues like Brexit, Ireland, the U.K.

*A prisoner, California*

### Understanding capitalism

The *Militant* has helped me understand how U.S. capitalism works.

*A prisoner, Pennsylvania*

### Change ourselves!

People need to get out of prisons. They need help to stay out of prison.

Is it an issue of changing the conditions that are still a problem after 100 years? Is it to change who is in charge of these things? Change the way we deal with people and how we view our equals. Until we change ourselves we will never fix our problems.

*A prisoner, Kansas*

### Love this newspaper

I really love this newspaper.

*A prisoner, Pennsylvania*

# Overseas Chinese and China's growing weight in world politics

Continued from page 7

tion cast Beijing's policies in too negative a light, Ang See noted that was the topic of the panel: "New Chinese Immigrants in the Philippines: Racial Conflicts and the Security Dilemma."

### Surveillance by Washington and Ottawa

In his keynote address to the closing session of the conference, Peter Li pointed to the increased surveillance of Chinese scientists, engineers, researchers and students working in the U.S. by the FBI, employers and university administrators.

More than 180 researchers at 70 medical schools are now under investigation over alleged "theft of intellectual property," he reported, citing information published in the *New York Times*, the U.K. *Guardian* and other sources. Temple University physicist Xiaoxing Xi was one of several who have been arrested, charged with espionage, and then exonerated, Li said.

Increased surveillance is not limited to the U.S., however. Li also spoke of Dr. Xiangguo Qiu, who was removed from the infectious disease lab at the University of Manitoba in Canada in the midst of an investigation of her security clearance by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Her husband, Keding Cheng, and an unknown number of her students from China were under investigation at the same time.

There is growing concern, even "panic," said Li, among immigrants from China employed in various scientific fields and information technol-

ogy. They fear things will get worse.

Following the closing ceremony, a Special General Meeting of ISSCO members elected a new board of directors and officers, naming Li Minghuan of the Academy of Overseas Chinese Studies of Jinan University the new president.

Student volunteers from Jinan University played a big part in ensuring the conference's success. Among many other tasks, they helped oversee the busy courtyard of Jinan's Main Teaching Building where several publishers, including the academic publisher Brill, Jinan University Press, the Kaisa Heritage Center and Pathfinder Press were provided space for tables stacked with hundreds of books for display and sale.



Courtesy ISSCO

Conference participants gather around Pathfinder Press literature table.

The steady traffic of students, teachers and conference participants kept the tables busy, and volunteers staffing the Pathfinder table reported that almost every one of the 140 books available was gone by the end of the conference. The best selling title, available in both English and Chinese, was *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution* by Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong.

A visit to the on-campus museum dedicated to the history of Jinan University was one of the conference high points. It provided a window into the history of the class struggle in China through the tumultuous years of the 20th century, starting with the bourgeois democratic revolution that brought down China's last imperial dynasty in 1911. Among other important pieces of that history, the museum displays cast a spotlight on the founding of Jinan University in 1906 as part of the fight to extend education to the toiling masses of China, one of the driving forces of that revolutionary struggle.

Daylong tours to some of the great historical and cultural sites of Guangzhou, the port city at the heart of the Pearl River Delta, and the surrounding region concluded conference activities.

*A coming issue of the Militant will feature the conference panel presentation by Socialist Workers Party leader Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press, "Chinese Cubans in Cuba's Revolutionary History and Relations Between China and Cuba Today."*