

## New Zealand protesters say 'Abortion is not a crime'

BY MIKE TUCKER

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — “I am a young person who doesn’t believe abortion should be in the Crimes Act,” high school student Lucy Mackenzie told the crowd as she kicked off a rally here Feb. 18 demanding a woman’s right to choose.

Before the rally, Mackenzie and fellow high school student Holly Wakeelin led a march through the city center with a large banner, “My body, my choice.” Some 250 people, a majority young women, joined the action, chanting, “Whose bodies, our bodies. Whose choice, our choice,” and “Abortion is not a crime. Now, now, now is the time.” Similar protests took place in other cities, part of a National Day of Action.

Young women have taken the lead in organizing campaigns in support of their right to choose to have an abortion. Over the past few years there have been actions in Ireland, South Korea, Argentina and elsewhere, with some mobilizations bringing hun-

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## SWP presidential candidate in Kentucky 'We need a labor party, independent of the bosses'



Militant/Kaitlin Estill

Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy speaks to meeting at Louisville apartment complex Feb. 20, hosted by resident Lamont Anthony, standing behind Kennedy.

BY AMY HUSK

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — “We don’t say, ‘Vote for me and I’ll fix everything,’” Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, told a meeting at the Mount Lebanon of Cedars apartments community room here Feb. 20.

Instead, Kennedy, running mate Malcolm Jarrett, and dozens of SWP candidates across the country use the election campaign to explain that workers need to rely on their own strength, independent of the capitalist rulers, their state and their political parties.

The Socialist Workers Party 2020 platform, she explained, points to the need for “a movement of millions” that will fight to replace “the rule of the exploitative capitalist class with a workers and farmers government.”

“There have been movements of millions in U.S. history,” Kennedy said. “The civil rights movement of

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## Capitalist two party system's stability won't be restored

BY TERRY EVANS

The deep divisions in the Democratic Party continue to chafe as Bernie Sanders, who says he is a democratic socialist, is leading the party’s early primaries. His centrist opponents are desperate to prevent him from getting the nomination and stop his supporters from expanding their influence in a party that is a mainstay of capitalist rule.

Many are convinced that none of the party’s hopefuls have a chance at unseating President Donald Trump and are eager to find something new to try to oust him from power before November.

Both the Democrats and Republicans want to keep working people wrapped up in the capitalist party setup, whether there are two, three or more parties defending the bosses’ interests. They want to prevent us from organizing *ourselves* to fight together to change our conditions and defend our interests. And in so doing to develop self-confidence, courage and class consciousness. This is

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## Striking Asarco miners protest bosses' union-busting attacks



Militant/Eric Simpson

Striking Asarco copper workers and supporters protest in Phoenix Feb. 24 against bosses’ attacks and refusal to negotiate. Some 1,700 workers have been on strike since Oct. 13.

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

PHOENIX — “Asarco, Asarco, you can’t hide. We can see your greedy side,” chanted over 100 copper strikers and their supporters protesting here Feb. 24 in front of the Society for Mining, Metallurgy and Exploration conference. The gathering attracted thousands of executives, mining engineers and other officials from a wide range of coal, copper, silver and other mining companies. “We’re here. We’re not going away.

We’re fighting for our brothers and sisters,” Alex Terrazas, a striker from Asarco’s Mission Mine in Sahuarita and vice president of United Steelworkers Local 937, told the rally.

Some 1,700 workers from seven unions have been on strike since Oct. 13 at mine complexes in Sahuarita, Hayden and Ray in Arizona and Asarco’s refinery in Amarillo, Texas. They’re fighting a vicious union-busting drive by the

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## Federal court says Florida law gutting felons' right to vote is unconstitutional

BY CINDY JAQUITH

MIAMI — The attempt by the Florida government to gut a referendum passed by over 60% in 2018 restoring voting rights to former prisoners was pushed back Feb. 19. A three-judge federal appeals court panel ruled that a new law requiring that “felons” pay all outstanding court fees, fines and restitution assessed against them before being allowed to register is unconstitutional.

Widely popular Amendment 4 changed the state constitution to restore the right to vote to former prisoners once they are off parole or probation, with the exception of those found guilty of murder or sex crimes. Some 1.6 million people became eligible to vote.

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## Over a million Syrians forced to flee Idlib in face of regime's offensive

BY TERRY EVANS

The Syrian dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad — backed by Moscow’s air power and Tehran-organized militias — continues its murderous bombardment of rebel fighters and civilians in the country’s Idlib province, with disastrous consequences for working people. Over a third of the province’s 3 million people have fled their homes since Assad’s offensive began in December.

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NZ abortion rights actions

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dreds of thousands into the streets. In Ireland, a sustained campaign scored a victory in 2019 when the government legalized abortion for the first time.

Legislation before Parliament in New Zealand would remove abortion from the Crimes Act, and change the law to allow a woman to choose to have the procedure in the first 20 weeks of pregnancy. After this she must get the approval of a medical practitioner. The legislation passed its first vote by a wide margin last August. To become law it has to go through two further votes.

‘End stigma around abortion’

“We need this to happen to end the stigma around abortion,” Mackenzie told fellow marchers. “Girls need choices, not judgment.”

Wakelin was the second speaker at the rally. Under the existing law, she said, women “have to pretend we are mental-

ly unstable to get a legal abortion.” High school age women often can’t get them at all, she said, because they are reliant on their parents.

The 1977 law currently in effect says abortion is illegal. But mass protests forced authorities to loosen its application, permit many abortions, and allow clinics to perform them. But women must get the approval of two certifying medical consultants on the grounds that an abortion is needed to prevent danger to their physical or mental health. Under this law, some 30 percent of women in New Zealand have had an abortion during their lifetime.

“Ninety-eight percent of abortions in New Zealand are currently granted on mental health grounds. Putting abortion in the Crimes Act says women are not capable of making our own decisions,” Ella Shepherd, chairwoman of the Auckland University Campus Feminist Collective, told the rally. “It’s not enough just to remove abortion from the Crimes Act, it also has to be available and accessible.”

Restrictions must be removed

Many public hospitals, especially outside the big cities, don’t provide abortions. Due to restrictions in the law and difficulties in arranging to have the procedure, many women often find themselves having to wait weeks to get an abortion. As a consequence, 80% of abortions performed today are invasive surgical procedures. If the obstacles are cleared away, many more can be induced with a pill.

“This is my second protest,” Barбора Sharrock told the *Militant*. “The first was ‘Schools Strike for Climate.’ Abortion is more controversial, but has always been



Militant photos: above, Mike Tucker; inset, George Fyson  
Above, Feb. 18 march in support of abortion rights in Auckland, New Zealand. Inset, high school students Lucy Mackenzie (with mic) and Holly Wakelin, first two speakers at rally.

an important issue to me.”

Four high school students from Rosehill College came as part of a joint project for their social studies class — to do a report on why abortion should be legal. “We welcome the decriminalization of abortion, something women have long been fighting for,” Annalucia Vermunt, who was the Communist League candidate for mayor of Auckland in 2019, told them.

“The Communist League stands for women’s right to unrestricted access to family planning services, including the right to safe, secure abortions and



government-funded child care,” she said. “We oppose the state intervening in a woman’s right to control her own body and reject any restrictions on access to abortion under the new law.”

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# Striking Asarco miners protest

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bosses who refuse to negotiate. Grupo Mexico-owned Asarco insists on imposing a longer extension of the decadelong wage freeze for most of the miners, freezing pensions, doubling or tripling health care costs, and restricting the unions' right to protect workers on the job.

The company has been using supervisors, nonunion contractors, newly hired strikebreakers and a few hundred workers who crossed the picket line to try to get production back up. Asarco has not answered repeated interview requests from the *Militant*.

Buses brought strikers from across Arizona to the protest. Four workers on strike at the Amarillo refinery drove more than 10 hours to participate. They also visited the Arizona picket lines.

This is the first strike for Lisa Olivares, a laborer at the Hayden complex concentrator. "I'm a single mom and I have three kids," she told the *Militant* at the rally. "We start out at \$16.75 an hour and it's hard. You get \$18.75 after getting signed off on higher skills."

"I know of three people crossing the picket line who have been fired for not meeting production quotas," she said. "Before the strike no one I know of got fired for not meeting quotas." That's the difference a union makes.

Donald Lopez is Lisa Olivares' uncle, a mill operator in the Hayden concentrator. "We're seven generations of miners. My father and great-grandfather worked underground. I work above ground," he said. "This is about greed. We're still about safety. What they want to do is break down our union."

## More solidarity needed

"We're getting some support for our strike but we need more," Debora Hewitt, a forklift driver at the Amarillo refinery, told the *Militant* at a dinner at the Mission Mine picket line Feb. 23. "Some of the strikers are barely making it or trying to get other jobs, but we're not giving up."

Eric Simpson, a Walmart worker in San Leandro, California, was one of those who came to the dinner. He brought a solidarity card signed by 50 co-workers in English, Filipino and Spanish, along with their contribution of \$100 that was presented to the strikers.

We are also going through attacks on our working conditions," said Simpson, "including having our hours cut, some-

times by more than half."

The beautiful handmade card, including drawings of picket signs and work boots, impressed the strikers. "This is exactly what it means when we say Your Fight is our Fight!!! Thank you! In Solidarity!" Steelworkers Local 937 wrote on its Facebook page alongside a picture of the card.

SMART-TD Local 1544 rail union in Los Angeles also sent a message to the strikers. "The concessions demanded by Asarco are a serious attack on you and a danger to all workers," wrote Local President Tom Reindersma. "An injury to one is an injury to all."

More solidarity is needed. The miners welcome supporters joining their picket lines, and joining in the dinners and movie nights they organize every week. They also need donations to their food pantries and strike funds.

Send financial contributions and solidarity messages to USW Local 915 Strike Assistance, P.O. Box 550, Kearny, AZ 85137; USW Local 5252 Strike Assistance, P.O. Box 896, Kearny, AZ 85137; USW Local 5613, 4230 Texas Hwy 136, Amarillo, TX 79108; or via [paypal.me/palfcommunityservice](https://paypal.me/palfcommunityservice) for Tucson area strikers. Solidarity messages can also be sent to [palfchair@gmail.com](mailto:palfchair@gmail.com).

Contribute to the food pantries at: USW 915 and 886 hall, 107 Hammond Dr., Kearny; IBEW Local 570 hall, 750 S. Tucson Blvd., Tucson; USW Local 5613, 4230 Texas Hwy 136 Amarillo, Texas.

# Florida law gutting felons' voting is unconstitutional

Continued from front page

Before this victory for voting rights, a 19th-century Jim Crow plank in the constitution left any restoration of an ex-inmate's right to vote up to the whim of the governor.

State legislators responded to the referendum victory by rapidly moving to pass a law "clarifying" the amendment. To get the right to vote, the law said, former prisoners had to first complete "all terms of [their] sentence." For most that means having to come up with thousands of dollars.

A University of Florida study estimates that 80% of former prisoners — who face rampant job discrimination — will never earn enough to pay the fees.

Many defenders of the right to vote explain that this amounts to a modern-day poll tax, like those used across the South for decades to keep Blacks from voting. Before the passage of Amendment 4, over 20% of Blacks in Florida were ineligible to vote because of a criminal conviction.

The appeals court panel ruled that the restrictions violate the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees equal protection under the law to everyone. The law is "preventing the plaintiffs from voting based solely on their genuine inability to pay legal financial obligations," the three judges wrote in their unanimous decision. "[T]hese plaintiffs are punished more harshly than those who committed precisely the same crime" but who had enough money to pay the judgments against them "by having their right to vote taken from them likely for their entire lives."

For the time being the ruling applies only to the 17 former felons who

## Kennedy: 'All workers should back Asarco strike'



Militant/Eric Simpson

SAHUARITA, Ariz. — "I will get out the word about your strike wherever I go. This strike is important and bringing more solidarity to bear is important. My campaign is behind you 100%," Alyson Kennedy, SWP candidate for U.S. president, told more than 50 Asarco strikers and their supporters at the weekly Sunday dinner at the Mission Mine picket line here Feb. 23.

Some 1,700 copper workers — members of the Teamsters, United Steelworkers and five other unions — have been on strike since Oct. 13, standing up to Asarco bosses' union busting.

"What we are doing is for every other worker in the country," Chris Antone, above right, a striker who has worked at the Mission Mine for 12 years and is an assistant chief steward for Teamsters Local 104 at the mine, told Kennedy, center. "It's not going to get better, just worse."

"The way workers can change things and better our conditions is by standing up and fighting like you're doing," Kennedy said. "It's out of experiences like the battle you're waging that workers in their millions will become convinced that we need to build our own party, a labor party."

Kennedy joined a strike protest rally the next day in front of the Phoenix Convention Center (see article on front page). On Feb. 25 she joined strikers on the picket lines at the Ray Mine in Kearny and the Hayden smelter.

— LESLIE DORK

filed the suit, stating they could not pay the fees.

Gov. Ron DeSantis said his office will appeal the ruling, asking for the full 11th Circuit Court of Appeals to overturn it.

"We are cautiously optimistic," Desmond Meade, a central leader of the campaign that won the passage of Amendment 4, told the press, adding, "We know that this legal battle is far from over."

Cynthia Landy, a stocker at a Miami Walmart, said the attempts to deny ex-prisoners the right to vote, "are wrong when so many of us voted to give them that right." An Afri-

can American, Landy has worked at Walmart for 10 years. "Many of us have fought so hard to get the right to vote for everybody," she said.

The Socialist Workers Party joined in the campaign for Amendment 4. SWP candidate for U.S. Congress Anthony Dutrow hailed the court ruling and commended the former prisoners who have taken the lead in fighting to extend the franchise. "We stand with you in this fight, which is in the interests of all working people," he said.

In April the question of whether the case covers all former prisoners will go to trial.

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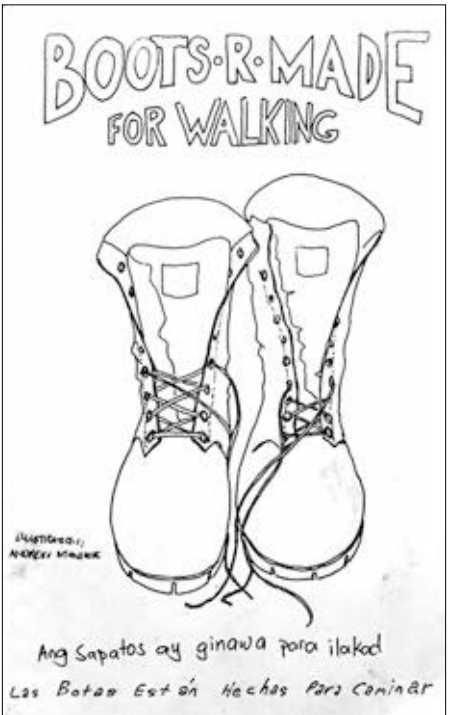
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"...and striking" said attractive 5-page solidarity card to Asarco strikers from 50 Walmart workers in San Leandro store.

... about building the only kind of party worthy of the name "revolutionary" in the imperialist epoch.

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# ‘Workers need a labor party’

Continued from front page

the '50s and '60s and the powerful movement that built the industrial unions and won unemployment benefits and social security in the 1930s, for example. When working people begin to stand up in their millions again, we can build our own party, a labor party that fights for working people all year round. Supporting fights today like the copper miners on strike against Asarco in Arizona strengthens this course.”

During Kennedy’s tour in Kentucky she also spoke at a Militant Labor Forum, was interviewed by WAVE 3 TV News and a gospel radio station, in addition to campaigning door to door here and Bedford, a small town outside of Louisville. Margaret Trowe, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate, Samir Hazboun, the party’s candidate for the 3rd Congressional District, and supporters in the area accompanied her.

Some 25 people came to the meeting at the Mount Lebanon of Cedars hosted by Lamont Anthony, who lives in this government-subsidized assisted living housing complex. Anthony, 62, met the SWP when Amy Husk, the 2019 candidate for governor, spoke at a church breakfast. He joined the party in bringing solidarity to autoworkers on strike against General Motors last fall and in campaigning for prisoners’ rights.

About half the participants were residents of the complex. There were also Walmart, restaurant and other area workers attending.

During the discussion period Denisha Rivers told Kennedy that she had worked at a hotel with immigrant workers, some of whom didn’t speak English. “The way management treated these workers was so disrespectful,” she said. “As a Black woman I was offended by it. Some people say immigrants are stealing our jobs. But I don’t think we can accept these attitudes towards immigrants. What do you think about Trump putting immigrant children in concentration camps?”

“Most workers believe an injury to one is an injury to all,” Kennedy responded. “It’s important to do what you did and stand up against injustice on the job or anywhere we see it.”

The Socialist Workers Party opposes the abusive treatment of workers caught up in the immigration jails just like it opposes the abuse of prisoners everywhere.

## Amnesty for immigrants

“Immigrants come to the U.S. because they are escaping difficult condi-

tions created by imperialist and capitalist exploitation in their home countries,” Kennedy said.

She noted that keeping workers without papers as a pool of superexploited labor is a bipartisan policy, carried out by both Democrats and Republicans alike. President Bill Clinton collaborated with Republicans in Congress to pass the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, which is used today to victimize immigrants and divide the working class.

U.S. imperialism depends on immigrant labor to drive down wages to better compete with its capitalist rivals around the world. It tightens or relaxes controls at the border depending on the needs of the employers.

“My party demands amnesty for all immigrants without papers here and we support struggles of workers in other countries against conditions the U.S. government has helped impose there,” Kennedy said. “This is a life-and-death question for building a fighting union movement that can unite the working class.”

## Radio host: ‘Party for working class’

Bishop Dennis Lyons opened up his “Gospel in My Soul” radio interview with Kennedy by saying, “I understand that your campaign is for the working class. Your platform points out that the bosses and their government always lie to working people about how much money they make. They always say they can’t pay higher wages.” He asked her to explain the party’s demand for workers control of production.

“I work for Walmart, one of the richest companies in the world. In Texas, they pay us \$11 an hour,” Kennedy said. “We know they can pay more. As working people organize to defend themselves, we can force the employers to open their books so we can see the real situation, including how big their profits are. We’ll learn how they cut corners to cheat us and the workers who shop there.

“Then we can fight to take more and more control over how things are done. Of course that will require strong unions that we control. In the process we will learn we are capable of organizing production and running the economy,” she said. “We can build a labor party, a party of millions, that can organize our fight to take political power.”

“Everyone says we have a government for and by the people, but we know that’s not what’s really going on,” Lyons said. He then asked what Kennedy thought about police brutality, racist discrimination and the “outrageous crimi-



Militant/Rebecca Williamson

Michele Smith, right, campaigner for SWP presidential ticket of Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett, talks with construction and maintenance worker Maria Parada in Seattle Feb. 22. “It’s good to know about the world,” Parada said, as she got a *Militant* subscription.

nal injustice system.”

“Look at who is in prison. It’s working people, disproportionately African American,” Kennedy said. “It’s a class question. The wealthy rule by keeping us convinced that we are lowlifes and stupid. They want us to stay in our place and not get out of line. They use the schools to perpetuate these myths.”

Kennedy recalled how she had lived in Louisville for a couple years and taught at Wheatley Elementary School. “That experience was one of the many things that convinced me there’s something really wrong in this society, it’s impossible to really teach,” Kennedy said. “I was part of the fight to desegregate the schools here.”

## Oppose U.S. rulers’ wars abroad

Samir Hazboun joined Kennedy on the platform at the Militant Labor Forum Feb. 22. He took up the question of why the U.S. capitalist rulers are driven to fight imperialist wars abroad.

“Many workers agree with us that working people have no interest in supporting Washington’s wars,” Hazboun said. “They are beginning to understand who the real ‘we’ and ‘they’ are. When workers go on strike they see that ‘we’ are on one side of the fence and ‘they’ are on the other. We have to look at all questions, including Washington’s wars abroad, in class terms.”

“I’m opposed to most of the wars that the U.S. is involved in,” said Ryan Deason, a Walmart worker, “but wasn’t World War II different because it was against fascism?”

“Far from being a savior for workers, Roosevelt used the war drive to attack workers’ struggles and rights,” Hazboun said. “Members of our party were railroaded to prison for our involvement in fights like the Teamsters organizing drives in the Midwest and our campaign to explain that the coming war would be conducted to advance the capitalist rulers’ ability to exploit workers here and

abroad against their imperialist rivals. Roosevelt’s administration barred Jewish refugees trying to escape the Nazis from entering the U.S., sending them back to their deaths.”

Hazboun encouraged participants in the forum to join this year’s May Day International Brigade of Volunteer Work and Solidarity with Cuba. “The Cuban Revolution is an example of what is possible when working people take power,” he said.

Matthew Murphy, a 22-year-old student from Oakland, California, was in town visiting a friend who is a campaign supporter. After hearing Kennedy speak, he joined her campaigning in Bedford.

“I like how the Socialist Workers campaign explains the negative attitudes toward workers” promoted by the rulers and their meritocratic boosters, Murphy said.

Kennedy talked to Sally Patterson, a retired health care and factory worker, on her doorstep. Patterson told her she voted for Obama and thought that “Obamacare” was good because there were “a lot of children who didn’t have any health insurance.”

“But ‘Obamacare’ is still health insurance, you’ve got to pay,” said Kennedy. “It’s not health care.”

“Yes, that’s true,” Patterson said. She described the conditions of elderly people in nursing homes. “They have worked all their lives and everything they owned is now gone. They get told when to eat, when to sleep.”

“The capitalist class pushes their own dog-eat-dog morality onto us. To only look out for yourself,” Kennedy said. “Our class, the working class, has different values. We look out for each other.”

“That’s true, too,” Patterson said. She bought a subscription to the *Militant*, a copy of *In Defense of the US Working Class* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters, and a Kennedy-Jarrett campaign button to wear.

## Back Socialist Workers Party 2020 campaign Contribute to \$25,000 fund!

**Socialist Workers Party candidates Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett are on the campaign trail**, speaking at public meetings; talking to working people door to door in cities and towns, small and large; joining social protests; walking picket lines with workers on strike all across the country. Campaign supporters are planning efforts to get on the ballot in a number of states.

To cover the costs of the campaign, the Socialist Workers Party National Campaign Committee has launched a monthlong \$25,000 fund drive from Feb. 24 to March 22. The fund was kicked off with a bang with \$630 collected in Louisville, Kentucky, the first stop on the candidates’ national tour.

Any contribution of \$200 or more will be reported in filings with the Federal Election Commission.

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# Families, former inmates, SWP protest conditions at Georgia jail

BY JANICE LYNN

MARIETTA, Ga. — “It’s monstrous what they are doing. How do we allow this?” asked Wanda Webb, one of dozens of family members and former inmates who spoke out at a Feb. 18 meeting here protesting conditions at the Cobb County Adult Detention Center.

The meeting was sponsored by the Cobb County Southern Christian Leadership Conference, American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia, Cobb County NAACP and other groups demanding an independent investigation of the conditions and treatment meted out at the center. Speakers were both African American and Caucasian.

Many of the inmates are waiting for a court date and haven’t been convicted of any crime. Seven have died in custody there in the last 14 months.

Webb said her 19-year-old son has lost more than 20 pounds and had been beaten. “He is thinking of taking a plea deal just so he could get out of there,” she said.

“What happened to innocent until proven guilty?” asked another mother who did not want to give her name fearing retaliation against her son. “We must do something.”

Another mother pointed out that many of the young men are being detained simply on the accusation of a police officer. “And we know they are known for lying,” she said.

Former inmate Susan Janette McCoy, who was wearing an ankle monitor, said conditions are “degrading and inhumane.” She described seeing guards use a Taser on a fellow inmate just because he was singing.

Family member after family member described how their son or daughter would tell them how hungry they were and how they had suffered significant weight loss. They told of black mold on the food trays.

Ivy Treadwell-Garcia said she had been detained at the center for six months. “I can corroborate what everyone is saying,” she said. “I have severe food allergies, but when I was booked in they wouldn’t give me access to my EpiPen. I lost 30 pounds.”

A monthlong lockdown kept inmates in their cells for 23 hours and 45 minutes a day, with no contact from family members and no letters or phone calls.

Tahj Hill, detained for three months for a probation violation, spoke about

the isolation during the monthlong lockdown. “Panic buttons to call for a guard weren’t working or just ignored,” she said, resulting in at least one of the deaths.

Rebecca Carlson, a cousin of William Kocour who died in September, said the family believes he wasn’t given proper medical care. “I want justice for *all* the inmates incarcerated who are facing this kind of treatment,” she said.

Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Georgia, also spoke. “This is a working-class issue,” she said. “I work at Walmart and many of my co-workers or their family members have also faced these same conditions. In Cobb County this may be particularly outrageous, but this type of abuse exists in prisons across the country. This is how the capitalist state treats working people to try to keep us in line.

“They aim to break our spirit, our humanity,” she said. “No human being deserves this kind of treatment.

## Socialist Workers Party 2020 campaign platform

*This is the SWP’s fighting campaign platform to confront the economic, social and moral crisis caused by capitalism:*

**UNIONS/FOR A LABOR PARTY** Support workers’ struggles to organize to defend themselves, to use union power on behalf of ourselves and all working people. Workers need their own party, a labor party. *One* union for *all* drivers — taxi, Uber, Lyft, other app-based and car service drivers! Support farmworkers in their fight to organize unions and for safe working conditions.

**AMNESTY FOR ALL UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS** in the US, a life-and-death question for the unions to unite workers and cut across divisions the bosses use to drive down wages. For access to driver’s licenses for all.

**JOBS** Fight for a federal government-financed public works program to put millions to work at union-scale wages building roads, bridges, hospitals, child care centers, mass transportation and quality affordable housing workers need. Set the minimum wage to allow workers to have a home and support a family.

**OPPOSE WASHINGTON’S WARS** US hands off Iran, Venezuela and Cuba.



At speak out protesting conditions at Cobb County Detention Center in Marietta, Georgia, Doug Jenkins, above, testifies about being incarcerated there during lockdown. Inset, Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Georgia, speaks at hearing.

My campaign will be speaking out about this fight.”

Cynthia Busby said her son told her he had no clean blanket, no TV or radio, and had to fight to get his hands on a newspaper that inmates had to share. Books are sharply limited — no more

than five — regardless of how long someone was incarcerated.

Copies of a Jan. 12 edition of the *Marietta Daily Journal* that reported on complaints of the inhumane treatment at the jail from an earlier public meet-

Continued on page 6

US troops out of Afghanistan, Korea, the Middle East. End US colonial rule in Puerto Rico.

**CUBA’S REVOLUTION — AN EXAMPLE** End the US rulers’ economic war against Cuba; US out of Guantánamo. The Cuban Revolution in 1959 showed it is possible for workers and farmers to transform themselves in struggle, to take political power and uproot capitalist exploitation.

**HEALTH CARE FOR ALL** Fight for universal, government-guaranteed cradle-to-grave health care, and retirement income for all.

**ABORTION** Defend women’s right to unrestricted access to family planning services, including the right to safe, secure abortions.

**ISRAEL & PALESTINE** For the recognition of Israel and of a contiguous Palestinian state. For the right of Jews to return to Israel as a refuge in the face of capitalist crisis, Jew-hatred and murderous violence.

**WORKERS CONTROL OVER PRODUCTION** The bosses and their government lie to working people about their production costs and profits, while they insist they can’t afford to pay higher wages. Demand they open their books for inspection by workers and consumers. To prevent capitalist collusion and thievery — and their production of shoddy and dangerous goods like the Boeing 737 MAX — workers in their millions will need to fight for control of production, a step towards taking political power and a school for running the economy for ourselves in the interests of all.

**“JUSTICE” SYSTEM** Fight against police brutality, racist discrimination and the entire capitalist injustice system with its frame-ups, “plea bargains,” onerous bail and outrageous prison sentences, all of which disproportionately hit workers who are Black. For the right to vote for ex-prisoners and all workers behind bars.

**POLITICAL RIGHTS** Defend democratic rights — the right to vote, to free speech and assembly and to bear arms, under attack from Democrats and Re-

publicans alike. Stop FBI and other government spying, harassment and disruption.

**PRISONER RIGHTS** End solitary confinement. End suppression of the *Militant*, books and newspapers by prison authorities. Abolish the death penalty, an anti-working-class weapon in the hands of the rulers.

**FARMERS — WORKERS ALLIES ON THE LAND** To put a halt to farm foreclosures, bankruptcies and skyrocketing rural debt, we demand nationalization of the land. This puts the soil at the service of the farmers who till it, as opposed to control by the banks and landlords. We demand the government guarantee farmers their costs of production, including their living expenses.

*Working people must organize and act independent of the ruling capitalists and break from their political parties — the Democrats and Republicans. For a labor party and a movement of millions to fight for these demands along a course to replace the rule of the exploitative capitalist class with a workers and farmers government.*

*Join the Socialist Workers Party campaign!*

**Vote Socialist Workers Party in 2020**  
**Alyson Kennedy for president**  
**Malcolm Jarrett for vice president**  
**SWP candidates coast to coast:**

**New York/New Jersey**

Lea Sherman, US Senate, New Jersey  
Willie Cotton, 9th CD, New York  
Seth Galinsky, 10th CD, New York  
Abby Tilsner, 20th CD, Albany  
Jacob Perasso, 21st CD, Albany  
Candace Wagner, 8th CD, Union City, NJ

**Mid-Atlantic Region**

James Harris, delegate to Congress, D.C.  
Osborne Hart, 3rd CD, Philadelphia  
Ruth Robinett, 14th CD, Washington, PA  
Dave Ferguson, 18th CD, Pittsburgh

**The South**

Rachele Fruit, US Senate, Georgia  
Anthony Dutrow, 27th CD, Miami

See directory on page 10 to contact party campaign office nearest you.

**Midwest**

Naomi Craine, US Senate, Illinois  
Maggie Trowe, US Senate, Kentucky  
David Rosenfeld, US Senate, Minnesota  
Samantha Hamlin, 3rd CD, Chicago  
Samir Hazboun, 3rd CD, Louisville  
Helen Meyers, 4th CD, St. Paul

**Southwest and West Coast**

Henry Dennison, Governor, Washington  
Rebecca Williamson, 9th CD, Seattle  
Gerardo Sánchez, US Senate, Texas  
Joel Britton, 13th CD, Oakland  
Dennis Richter, 37th CD, Los Angeles  
Deborah Liatos, 40th CD, Los Angeles

**Socialist Workers Party campaign button**

**Alyson Kennedy for president**  
**Malcolm Jarrett for vice president**



\$1

Available from  
SWP campaign offices  
listed on page 10



# Capitalist economies wobble as coronavirus cases spread

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Media worldwide headlined the news Feb. 24 with reports that coronavirus infections and deaths were spreading outside China, where it originated, with spikes in South Korea, Japan, Iran and northern Italy. Capitalist governments around the world either admit their health systems are ill-prepared for a sizable outbreak, or they're lying.

Medical systems like in the U.S., Europe and those imposed by the workings of imperialism in most of the semicolonial world are run for profit, not human needs. They increase the deadly risks — and danger to humanity — from this highly contagious disease. Because COVID-19 is a new virus to humans, no one is immune. Except for very rich people, hospital quarantine facilities would rapidly become overwhelmed, and ventilators and oxygen essential for those with the severe pneumonia this coronavirus can cause would rapidly run short.

The discovery that the incubation period may be up to double the 14-day quarantine being applied around the world has heightened concerns about the spread of the virus and the actual number of people that are infected and become carriers. It has a fatality rate 40 times that of the seasonal strains of flu. Even in the case of the flu today, the inadequate for-profit hospital system in the U.S., let alone in less developed countries, is overwhelmed. As of Feb. 24, at least 29 million people in the U.S. have caught the flu and so far some 16,000 have died.

The capitalist financial press is more and more concerned about a contraction in the world economy, a crisis that is exacerbated by so-called globalization. This has made production in the U.S. and other imperialist countries completely dependent on parts and other components produced thousands of miles away in countries where workers get lower wages. Facing the unfolding spread of coronavirus, world stock markets plunged Feb. 24-26.

The central government in Beijing is trying to restart export-oriented factories to overcome the interruption to China's already slowed economic growth. But more than one-third of China's 775 million-strong labor force are rural migrant workers, many facing a 14-day isolation period on their return from holiday or lockdown. Many are in limbo.

Capitalist pundits have lurched from complacency to fear not only about a pandemic but also about the economic shutdown in China. Container shipping in and out of the country has slumped. Demand for oil is the lowest since the global financial crisis over a decade ago.

As oil prices plunged, the S&P 500 index in New York lost \$2.138 trillion in market capitalization in four days. Wealthy investors rushed to safe havens in the U.S. dollar, treasury bonds and gold.

Capitalist traders will invest in anything to try and make a profit. In 2017, on the heels of the Ebola epidemic, the World Bank issued a special \$320 billion catastrophe bond to raise money in case of a pandemic. The bond is based on a series of "event triggers" related to the number of deaths in the country of the disease's origin and its neighbors.

Investors, smelling money, piled in. But "nobody expected coronavirus to come along," the *Financial Times* reported. Now it looks like the bond will go bust.

## Clusters of outbreaks

Officials from the World Health Organization sounded a warning Feb. 21 about the rapid spread in disease clusters in the South Korean city of Daegu and the Iranian city of Qom. Authorities in Tehran, like Chinese authorities before them, tried to hide the extent of the outbreak, denying reports that 50 people had died in Qom. On Feb. 24 they finally had to admit the reports were true.

Iraj Harirchi, Iran's deputy health minister, downplayed the outbreak, saying "quarantines belong to the Stone Age." He has since contracted the disease. New cases have spread from Iran to Lebanon and Canada. Neighboring countries from Iraq to Turkey as well as Dubai Airport have suspended flights to Iran.

The largest concentration of the outbreak has been among almost 4,000 passengers and crew confined to a cruise ship docked at Yokohama, Japan. Crowded together in close quarters on a vessel with no medical protection, more than 600 people have been infected so far and two have died.

WHO leaders are especially concerned about the virus spreading into African countries with growing links to China. Their health systems are notoriously stunted.



Above, AP/Ebrahim Noroozi  
Above, women in Tehran wear masks Feb. 23 after coronavirus outbreak, which has taken over 50 lives in Iran. Inset, trader on New York Stock Exchange. Shares slumped on reports disease has spread to Iran, northern Italy, more as world economy slows.

This unpredictable epidemic is part of the deepening social disaster that capitalism in crisis is imposing as a mounting toll on working people.

The Cuban internationalist mission in West Africa in 2014-2015 — Fidel Castro's "army of white coats" — that helped stem the Ebola virus spreading there points to what could be done by marshaling the voluntary efforts, self-discipline and creativity of millions to halt the march of this new disease. This example is brought to life in Pathfinder's new book, *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa* (see article on page 9).

## Disease started in China

By Feb. 26, over 80,000 definite cases were reported with almost 3,000 deaths, most of them in China. The Chinese rulers made the situation worse by trying to cover up the disease's spread until it became impossible to do so. There have now been more than 1,500 instances of infection in 36 other countries, mainly from people who traveled to China. WHO spokespeople say this could be just "the tip of the iceberg."

Factories across China are still closed or short-staffed, dislocating world supply chains.

Plants are closed across Hubei, where the outbreak was first reported. They are vital for global production from cars to aerospace, from medical to electronic products. Apple's largest factory with 200,000 workers run by Foxconn in Zhengzhou, Henan, was still stalled Feb. 21. Disruptions to just-in-time supply lines have forced Hyundai and Kia to halt production in South Korea. Automakers from Japan to Germany, France and even the U.S. are affected.

The lean inventories of major companies like Amazon, Apple and Nike avoid money being tied up in warehouse stockpiles awaiting sales. But this crisis has showed how vulnerable these just-in-time "globalized" supply lines are.

Decoupling of many U.S. firms from Chinese suppliers started with uncertainties about the Washington-Beijing tariff and trade dispute. Now this process of deglobalization will be hastened by the fallout from the virus.

## Airlines under mounting pressure

The fall in daily domestic and international flights from China from over 15,000 to just over 2,000 due to quarantine restrictions has put Chinese

airlines and Asia-Pacific carriers under mounting pressure. The massive fall-off of Chinese travelers, who account for about a fifth of all tourism spending worldwide, is having an impact across the board.

Outbreaks were reported at several jails in China Feb. 21, including in two Chinese provinces outside Hubei. Some 230 cases were diagnosed at Wuhan Women's Prison alone. Two hospitals in Beijing have reported an outbreak with about 400 cases sparking fears of an epidemic in the capital of 22 million people.

Some 1,200 people in the Uighur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang are suspected to have contracted the virus. An estimated 1 million Uighurs detained in "reeducation" camps are at risk. The contagion is especially virulent among clusters of human beings in close proximity to each other.

The regime's brutality repressing the largely Muslim Uighurs is well-known around the world even though Beijing claims the camps are just to help them get jobs. When Wang Xining, a Chinese diplomat posted in Australia, went on ABC TV there Feb. 24 and repeated this claim, the audience laughed at him.

## Jail speak out

### Continued from page 5

ing were banned. This was challenged by the ACLU.

Fruit told several of the participants after the meeting about the successful fight waged by the *Militant* that overturned suppression of the paper in prisons in Florida, Indiana and other states.

"We call for an end to solitary confinement, for abolishing the death penalty, and for the right to vote for ex-prisoners and all workers behind bars," she said, pointing to her campaign program. "We oppose the entire capitalist injustice system, and are for building a movement of millions to fight for these demands."

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### WASHINGTON, D.C.

Join the Socialist Workers Party Election Campaign. Meet James Harris, SWP candidate for D.C. delegate to U.S. Congress. Sat., March 7. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5. 7603 Georgia Ave., NW Suite 300. Tel.: (202) 536-5080.

### In New International no. 10

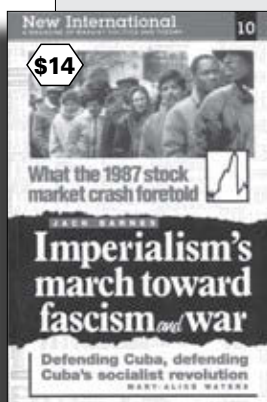
## 'What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold'

Resolution adopted by SWP 1988 convention

*"The October 1987 crash on the world's stock markets signaled the consequences: no longer can the exploiters be confident that a major bankruptcy, loan default, crop failure, bank collapse, deflationary slump, stock market dive, or other partial crisis will be buffered and absorbed by the strength of production, investment and trade in the broader capitalist economy."*

*"Today, at this advanced point in the stagnation of capital accumulation, any of these partial crises has the growing potential to spiral out of control and trigger a worldwide depression and generalized social crisis."*

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# Syrians flee regime's offensive

Continued from front page

Turkey is already home to some 3.7 million Syrian refugees and its regime has closed the border to those fleeing Assad's current offensive. Thousands trying to escape the onslaught have no shelter and are sleeping with little protection from freezing winter conditions. Whole villages and towns in the province are being abandoned before the regime's airstrikes turn them into ruins. Assad's forces target hospitals, forcing seven to close in the last week.

The Syrian government is attempting to crush all opponents, including reactionary Islamist forces that seized control of Idlib in the course of the country's civil war. Since 2018 the province has been the last remaining part of Syria west of the Euphrates River beyond government control. Assad claims his offensive is the "prelude for complete victory."

He neglects to mention a wide region in the country's northeast, which is under the control of the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, backed by U.S. ground and air power. Much of this territory was conquered from Islamic State occupation.

Syria's civil war followed a mass political uprising in 2011 that was inspired by the "Arab Spring" mobilizations for political rights in Tunisia and Egypt that brought down widely hated regimes. Working people and others across Syria mobilized to demand an end to Assad's rule.

Their uprising turned into a civil war after his regime moved to crush the protests in blood. In the fighting that followed Assad lost control of most of the country. And rival capitalist powers — Washington, Moscow, Ankara and Tehran — intervened to advance their own predatory interests. Islamic State and its oppressive military also made gains in both Syria and Iraq.

In 2015 Moscow intervened on behalf of its Syrian ally, mounting airstrikes alongside the intervention of militias organized by the rulers in Iran. These were decisive in shoring up Assad's crumbling regime and his demoralized army. Over 400,000 people have been killed in the course of the civil war and over half the country's

population has been forced to flee their homes. Many escaped to opposition-held Idlib, hoping it would be safe, and that they could relaunch an offensive against Assad from there.

## 'We hate the regime'

"We have a hatred against the regime and we won't back down," Naeem Uthman told the *Wall Street Journal* in Idlib Feb. 20. Uthman had fled there with his family in 2018, after government forces retook the suburb of eastern Ghouta in Damascus where they had lived and fought.

The Russian government intervened in Syria's civil war to secure its political reach in the Middle East and maintain its only naval base on the Mediterranean Sea at Tartus. The rulers in Tehran have also extended the military bases they operate across Syria.

The Turkish government, which finances and backs some Syrian opposition forces, is a bitter foe of both Assad and the Kurds. Ankara deployed 5,000 troops to Idlib in early February to try and slow the Syrian regime's advance. In the province of Aleppo its forces are preventing further progress by Assad's forces and their allies, and in Idlib they provided cover artillery fire Feb. 20 to rebel attacks on Syrian government positions.

The Turkish rulers' main motivation for intervening is their fear of the impact on Kurds in Turkey of the autonomous region Syrian Kurds have carved out just across the border. Some 30 million Kurds in the region have faced violent repression from the rulers of Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey whenever they have fought against the systematic denial of their national rights and sovereignty.

## Ankara pivots toward Washington

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan had tried to form a bloc with Moscow to enforce a cease fire in Syria to allow Ankara to focus on attacking the Kurds. But Moscow instead has used its air power to back Assad's ongoing assaults. And now more and more Syrians are massed at the Turkish border.

Facing the prospect of intensifying attacks on its forces and allies in Idlib, the

## Women in Iraq say no to segregation of protesters



Hundreds of women took to the streets of Baghdad, Najaf, Nasiriya and Basra Feb. 13 to protest demands by Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr that women and men attending anti-government protests and encampments be segregated.

"We refuse," 20-year-old Ruwayda Khteer told Al Jazeera. "We're protesting for our rights because in Iraq they've been stolen."

Al-Sadr, who heads the country's largest parliamentary bloc and commands his own militia, has demanded his supporters pull out of the protest camps and called for attacks against them. He has urged protesters instead to support the efforts of prime minister-designate Mohammed Al-lawi to form a new government.

Since October hundreds of thousands of working people and youth have taken to the streets across southern Iraq to demand a halt to the political and military intervention in the country by both Tehran and Washington; for jobs and better living conditions; and for the fall of the government and an end to rule by parties that have long dominated the sectarian political system in the country. They insist that includes Allawi.

"We will give our soul and blood to Iraq and only Iraq," sang women in Bagdad's Tahrir Square.

— TERRY EVANS

Turkish government turned to Washington and asked for a Patriot missile defense system to shield its troops. It also requests Washington conduct aerial patrols in airspace Ankara controls in areas neighboring Idlib as a show of support. The U.S. government, which wields by far the strongest air power of the rival forces vying for influence in Syria, has so far not responded publicly to these requests.

Washington wants to use the current conflict to drive a wedge between the Turkish government — its NATO "ally" — and Moscow. In his effort

to get a bloc with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Erdogan had earlier spurned Washington's offer of Patriot missiles, instead agreeing to deploy a Russian-made S-400 defense system inside Turkey.

The Syrian government and its backers retook southwestern parts of the country from rebels in 2018. But to free up troops for the Idlib offensive and to defend these positions from continued insurgent attacks, Assad is dependent on the armed forces of Hezbollah from Lebanon and other militias organized by the Iranian rulers. Both Hezbollah and Tehran are stepping up their recruitment from among the local population there, offering financial inducements to those joining their forces. And they are increasingly integrating their armed units into the Syrian state structure.

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



March 13, 1995

UNION POINT, Georgia — Shouting "No justice, no peace!" more than 300 young people, workers, NAACP members, and other supporters of Black rights marched here February 25. In a victory for democratic rights, a racist ban on 21 Black youths entering downtown businesses had been lifted.

Close to 100 members of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union marched wearing union T-shirts. Workers from the Chipman-Union hosiery plant, who won union certification in 1993, carried signs calling for a decent contract.

ACTWU members Scottie Williams and Mark Tolbert distributed "End Discrimination at Chipman-Union" and End Discrimination in Union Point" stickers. "It's clear to me that the fight in the plant and the city are identical," said Williams.



March 13, 1970

Plans are well under way for the spring antiwar offensive. National Antidraft Week March 16-22 is now off the ground, Carol Lipman, national executive secretary of the Student Mobilization Committee, stated March 3.

"Massive actions will take place during the Antidraft Week. They should be independent of the government's parties and institutions. Our demands should be clear and simple: Abolish the draft. Free all victims of military compulsion. All out for Antidraft week."

Tying in with Vietnam Week April 13-18 will be a national referendum on campuses across the country on the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Vietnam.

In many major cities plans are beginning to take shape for mass actions against the war on April 15.



March 10, 1945

In Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Syria lies a modern capitalist Eden in the form of the world's richest oil deposits. This is why [President Franklin] Roosevelt went from Yalta to Great Bitter Lake where he held court for the three kings of the Orient — King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia, King Farouk of Egypt and Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia.

The lavish arrangements for Roosevelt's reception of these potentates were part of extensive preparations by U.S. imperialism for its drive to dominate the Middle East. Several official missions have recently returned from that area with reports surveying the situation. They have carefully studied the measure of British control and sought ways and means for Wall Street to muscle in on this rich domain that British imperialism has so long exploited.

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

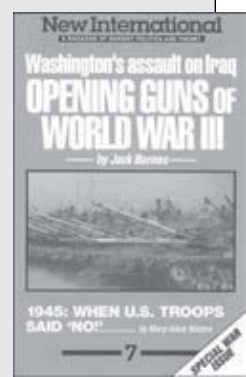
by Jack Barnes

In *New International* no. 7

The devastation of Iraq did not lead to the dawn of a new world order. The Gulf war held a mirror to the declining capitalist world order and accelerated its contradictions.

\$14. Also in Farsi, French, Spanish, Swedish

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# ‘Communism is not a doctrine but a movement’

Below is a chapter from *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes*. It is entitled, “Communism Is Not a Doctrine but a Movement.” Copyright © 2019 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

What is Marxism? What are we all about?

In October 1847, as part of his preparation together with Karl Marx to draft the Communist Manifesto two months later, Engels wrote a couple of editorials responding to a petty-bourgeois German socialist named Karl Heinzen (whose place in history lies in the fact that he served as a foil for Marx and Engels).

“Herr Heinzen imagines communism is a certain *doctrine* which proceeds from a definite theoretical principle as its *core* and draws further conclusions from that,” Engels wrote.

“Herr Heinzen is very much mistaken. Communism is not a doctrine but a *movement*; it proceeds not from principles but from *facts*.” That’s where the proletarian party’s program comes from, Engels said.

Marx and Engels incorporated this central concept at the heart of the Communist Manifesto, which they had been asked to draft at the founding congress of the world’s first modern revolutionary workers organization, the Communist League, held in London in December 1847.

“The theoretical conclusions of the communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer,” they wrote. “They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes.”

Marxism is “simply” the generalized interests, written down, of one of the two major classes involved in that struggle in the modern world — the working class.

Communists “have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole,” Marx and Engels wrote in the Communist Manifesto. “They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mold the proletarian movement.”

Marx and Engels went on to pinpoint the internationalism of the communist movement, and its task in overcoming

the national and other divisions imposed by capitalism on the working class.

“The communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only,” they say: “(1) In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality. (2) In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.”

Marx and Engels conclude: “The communists, therefore, are on the one hand, practically, the most advanced and resolute section of the working-class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement.”

Marxists *are part of* the working class, not something outside of it. The revolutionary Marxist party analyzes *all* classes and their conflicts, all politics, from the point of view of the historic goals of *our* class — the class we are simply the most conscious and organized part of and the most consistent fighter for. The class whose task is to govern, expropriate the exploiters and oppressors, and lead a great social movement to reorganize society to eliminate oppression and lay the foundations of a socialist so-



Militant/Jacob Perasso

Meatpackers march June 12, 2000, from United Food and Commercial Workers union hall in St. Paul, Minnesota, to Dakota Premium plant gate in fight that won union recognition. Communists “have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole,” wrote Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in the Communist Manifesto. “They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mold the proletarian movement.”

ciety — changing ourselves utterly in the process.

The revolutionary working-class leader Malcolm X explained this transformation through struggle with exemplary clarity only a few weeks before his assassination in February 1965. A reporter asked him: Was his goal to “wake [African Americans] up to their exploitation?” Malcolm replied, “No, to their humanity, to their own worth.”

The working class is created by its enemy — the capitalist class, the profit system. Workers don’t *choose* to participate in the class struggle, we are *forced* to by our condition. By the fact that our tools, our use of the land, not only “forty acres” but the “mules” are taken from us.

This is what makes Marxism scientific, not utopian. And more and more workers in this country are becoming conscious of this class struggle as the

rulers’ offensive escalates — every day in the factories, and around the big social and political issues such as unemployment, discrimination, and war.

No wonder Marx and Engels wrote — in one of their earliest works, more than two years before workers recruited them to the world’s first modern communist party — that there comes a stage in capitalist social relations “when productive forces ... are brought into being” that “are no longer productive but destructive forces.”

This communist perspective and strategy for working-class independence and political power — that’s all Marxism is. Of course, that “all” encompasses the future of humanity: the transformation of the great mass of humanity and the salvation of our planet from capitalism’s “forces of destruction” and from the devastation of our conditions of life and work.

## Bosses step up spying on workers — on and off the job

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Bosses across the country are seeking greater control over workers’ lives, both on and off the job. This includes more sophisticated surveillance of employees at work and new rules to force workers to change their health and personal habits, and to boost the bosses’ profits.

“It’s not just emails that are being tallied and analyzed,” reported the *Wall Street Journal* in an article titled “The New Ways Your Boss Is Spying on You.” Companies are “increasingly sifting through texts, Slack chats and, in some cases, recorded and transcribed phone calls on mobile devices.”

“Companies have become far more coercive in their insistence that employees optimize their bodies and behavior on their own time,” *Atlantic* magazine said in January.

Starting Feb. 1, U-Haul, an Arizona-based moving company with about 30,000 employees, stopped hiring workers who smoke or use any “nicotine products.” This includes vaping, gum or patches of those trying to give up the habit. Company bosses claimed this is designed to promote “workplace wellness.”

Employers have been successful in making similar anti-working-class policies legal in 21 states so far, including Texas, Florida and Massachusetts. Seventeen of those states allow bosses to arbitrarily administer drug tests for nicotine. A growing list of companies ban the hiring of smokers, including Alaska Airlines, Cleveland Clinic, Baylor Health Care System, Scotts Miracle-Gro, Union Pacific Railroad, and most recently the city of Dayton, Ohio. In some cases, the laws also allow the bosses to fire workers they find use tobacco products.

“This delights anti-smoking activists,” said a Feb. 20 *Financial Times* article. “However, it has led civil liberties advocates to sound alarms about employers’ creeping control over workers’ lives even when they are off the clock.”

More than 80% of large employers now impose mandatory participation

in wellness programs, where workers are nudged to engage in fitness activities. They wear step-counters or other tracking devices to prove how active they are in exchange for a discount on health insurance. Some plans include punishment for workers who don’t count calories or lose weight. Some go further, imposing fees on workers who don’t maintain a certain waist size.

Some employers track workers’ locations and activities on company-issued mobile phones.

The bosses claim they’re just out to make their workforce more healthy and happy, but profit-driven motives are at work. Bosses are forced to pay health insurance monopolies more as the number of their workers who smoke or gain weight goes higher.

Bosses are also spying on employees’ web browsing history and monitor what workers write and say on company equipment. Some “even turn on workers’ webcams and use facial recognition software to gauge their sentiment about their jobs,” said the *Times*.

Bosses have also victimized workers who use legal and doctor-prescribed medical marijuana. In New Jersey, Amazon fired a warehouse worker who tested positive after being given a random cheek swab drug test in July 2018, his first during his 10 months on the job. The worker, whose name isn’t given in court documents, is suing to overturn his dismissal.

## Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa

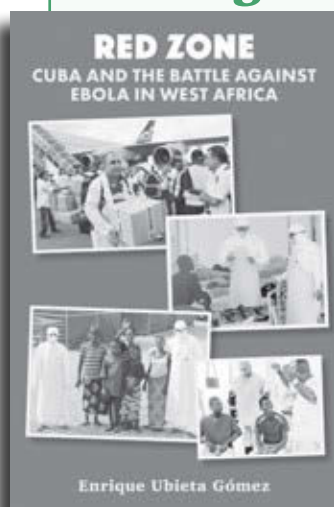
“Just as the Cuban combatants in Angola set an example that can never be erased, the heroic actions of Cuba’s army of white coats will occupy a place of honor.”

—Fidel Castro, October 2014

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# New book on Ebola launched at Cuban tropical medicine school

BY RÓGER CALERO

HAVANA — *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa*, by Cuban writer Enrique Ubieta, published by Pathfinder Press in both English and Spanish, was presented Feb. 18 at the Pedro Kourí Institute of Tropical Medicine here.

The Kourí Institute is the world-renowned research center and hospital where 256 Cuban volunteer doctors and nurses — who were instrumental in ending the deadly Ebola epidemic — underwent rigorous training before going to Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea in 2014. It is also where Ubieta and his two-person TV film crew spent their 21-day quarantine on returning from a reporting trip to those countries, gathering the material that was used in the book.

Dr. Manuel Romero, the institute's director, said *Red Zone* "counters the U.S. disinformation campaign against our internationalist doctors. It tells of the example of our 'army in white coats'" around the world.

The invited speakers were Ubieta and Pathfinder president Mary-Alice Waters and Martín Koppel, the co-editors of the Pathfinder book. Defending Cuba's socialist revolution and its working-class internationalism "is a necessity for us," Waters, a leader of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party, told the meeting. "It's inseparable from helping working people in the United States to learn from and prepare to emulate your example."

After the program many of the 30 medical researchers and workers attending the meeting crowded around the book table to get their copy of *Red Zone*, as well as other books on revolutionary working-class politics. Some of them had been part of Cuba's internationalist medical missions in Africa and elsewhere.

## Proud of how they won Ebola battle

As they browsed through the books, several workers at the institute were eager to tell *Militant* reporters about their participation in the intensive effort to



**Top**, Dr. Manuel Romero, director of Pedro Kourí Institute of Tropical Medicine, welcomes speakers, Feb. 18. Seated from left, Enrique Ubieta, author of *Red Zone*; Martín Koppel, Pathfinder editor; and Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder. **Bottom**, Koppel talks to Didiye Ruiz, part of Cuban health care team to Guinea Conakry during 2014-15 Ebola epidemic. Damayanti Matos, center, discusses books with Philippe Tessier and Malcolm Jarrett, right, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. vice president.

Militant photos by Baskaran Appu

train the Ebola brigade. They noted that the Cuban personnel arrived in West Africa much better prepared than other groups of foreign doctors — and shared their knowledge with those colleagues.

They set up tents at the Kourí Institute

simulating the Ebola treatment centers for brigade members to practice safety procedures. They learned how to put on and remove the specialized protective gear, and how to enter and exit the "red zone" — where the sickest patients were

housed — and other wards to prevent the spread of the virus. They worked in those "space suits" under the hot Cuban sun to prepare for the conditions they would face in Africa.

Most international doctors, following World Health Organization guidelines, worked in the Ebola clinics for stints of no more than four weeks to avoid burn-out. However, the highly prepared and motivated Cuban volunteers decided to stay for six months to maximize use of their cumulative experience.

Marta Castro Peraza, who helped supervise the training program for the Ebola brigade, told the *Militant* that medical personnel from France, United Kingdom and other countries had a policy of avoiding hands-on contact with those sick with Ebola. "But we couldn't do that. In Cuba we're accustomed to touching our patients," she said.

And that's what they did in the Ebola clinics — providing intravenous drips for rehydration, bathing and dressing patients, and assisting them with drinking and eating, without violating any safety procedures. They treated patients as fellow human beings, winning their confidence and that of their families.

The Cubans' approach sharply lowered fatality rates. By mid-2015 the outbreak was virtually eradicated.

## **Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa**

Panel of speakers discuss new book published by Pathfinder Press

Sat., March 7, 6:30 p.m.

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320 W. 37th St.

New York City

## Join 2020 May Day international brigade to Cuba!

BY JANET POST

"I have been wanting to go to Cuba ever since I heard about the May Day brigade. I think it is a great opportunity to exchange culture and check out the political differences between Cuba and the U.S.," Brian Wickman, a member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, told Dan Fein Feb. 17. Fein, a member of the Socialist Workers Party in Chicago, is working to build the April 26 to May 10 May Day International Brigade of Voluntary Work and Solidarity with Cuba.

"I look forward to see a system that works without the dog-eat-dog mentality we so often find here," said Wickman. He lives in Downers Grove, some 20 miles west of Chicago, and works for ComEd, the electric utility.

Wickman is one of hundreds of workers and youth from around the world who are signing up for this year's brigade, which is sponsored by Cuba's Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP).

A highlight will be joining over a million Cubans on the May Day mobilization in Havana in support of their living revolution and to celebrate the 61st anniversary of its triumph. It's a powerful way to tell U.S. imperialism, "Hands off!"

The 1959 victory of the Cuban Revolution — led by Fidel Castro and

the July 26 Movement — overthrew the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship and brought a workers and farmers government to power. It opened the door for the socialist revolution in the Americas.

The brigade takes place as the U.S. rulers are stepping up their economic and political war against the revolution, seeking to isolate Cuba and punish the Cuban people. It provides a unique opportunity for its supporters in the U.S. and elsewhere to meet and talk with Cuban workers, farmers and youth, and to become better armed to return home and counter Washington's lies.

The rulers have launched a worldwide smear campaign against Cuba's over 50,000 internationalist medical volunteers, who serve in more than 60 countries. Washington slanders them as "slave labor" or claims they foment social unrest wherever they go.

A new book from Pathfinder — *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa* — tells the inspiring story of the more than 250 Cuban medical personnel who helped lead the fight to stem that epidemic in 2014-15. "The heroic actions of Cuba's army of white coats will occupy a place of honor," Fidel Castro said in 2014. Brigade members will have an opportunity to meet some of Cuba's medical internationalists.

The brigade is also a real opportu-

nity for participants to describe to Cubans the reality of the class struggle in the U.S., Canada and other capitalist countries, and the political activities they have been part of. Last year 320 people from 21 countries, including 65 from the U.S., joined the brigade. The National Network on Cuba, a coalition of groups in solidarity with the Cuban people, is organizing the U.S. delegation.

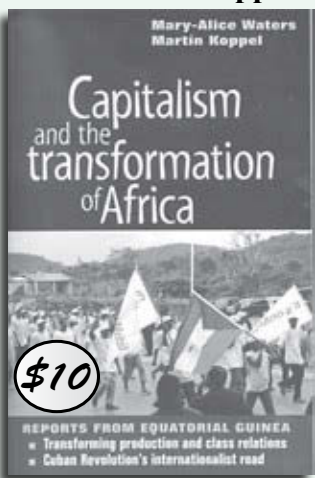
Participants will be based at the Julio Antonio Mella camp in Caimito, outside Havana. They will join in volunteer labor alongside Cuban farmers in the fields and meet leaders of Cuba's women, youth and trade union organizations. Brigadistas will visit health care centers, factories, universities, farm cooperatives, museums and cultural venues in a number of cities to learn more about the revolution.

Some of the events are co-sponsored by the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), Cuba's national labor union. The May Day mobilization will be followed by an international solidarity meeting in Havana.

Travel arrangements are being organized in accordance with U.S. guidelines by Marazul Tours. Applications are due March 27. Total cost, not including airfare to Cuba, is \$725. For the forms and more information go to [www.nnoc.info](http://www.nnoc.info) or email [iCanGoToCuba@nnoc.info](mailto:iCanGoToCuba@nnoc.info).

## **Capitalism and the Transformation of Africa**

by Mary-Alice Waters and Martín Koppel



"In the decades of wars, economic crises and explosive class battles ahead, the weight of the toilers of Africa in shaping the future will be greater than ever."

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# ‘Second-class status of women arose with class society’

The Spanish-language edition of *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed and Mary-Alice Waters is one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month for March*. This Marxist classic on women's liberation began as a 1954 debate in the pages of the *Militant* over the relation of the big-business marketing of cosmetics and fashions to women's oppression. The excerpt is from the preface by Mary-Alice Waters, originally written for the Cuban edition of *Los cosméticos, las modas y la explotación de la mujer* by Ciencias Sociales. Copyright © 1986 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

### BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

Two questions asked by thoughtful readers since the initial publication of *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* are useful to consider.

First, are questions addressed in a debate over cosmetics and fashions more than fifty years ago still relevant? Aren't they long bypassed?

Second, isn't Reed's article on "Anthropology: Marxist or Bourgeois?" outdated? Hasn't knowledge of the earliest human societies moved far beyond what was known in the mid-1950s?

The response to the first question is underscored by Hansen's rhetorical question in "The Fetish of Cosmetics."



Women garment workers in Dhaka fighting for union rights, better wages and conditions, October 2014. Bangladeshi "fashion" industry workforce of 4 million is 80% female. Women in these factories have joined union struggles, advancing their confidence and status.

In the whole history of capitalism, he asks, "has the bourgeoisie ever gone about cultivating the fetish of commodities more cold-bloodedly than American big business?"

The resources devoted by capitalist enterprises to advertising and the creation of markets, far from being a thing of the past, have expanded astronomically in the last half century as the working class has been pushed into "needing" everything from must-have cell phones, to the latest model automobiles, \$500 torn blue jeans, an exploding array of "cosmetic" surgeries, designer handbags, and cosmetics-designed-to-make-you-look-like-you're-not-using-cosmetics. All these and more are pushed on hapless "consumers" without truce. The pressure to be "fashionable" — that is, to be "employable," and attractive to a potential spouse — has penetrated even more deeply into the working class. Television and the internet greatly intensify the all-pervasive intrusions.

The manufactured compulsion to "shop," playing on the emotional insecurities of women and adolescents above all, has only deepened and spread. The "marketing" Hansen pokes such fun at in the 1950s seems amateur by comparison to the sales techniques employed today. "Shop until you drop" has gone from being a humorous exaggeration to a description of an actual social condition pushing increasing numbers of working-class families into more and more debt at usurious rates.

The impact of the twenty-first century capitalist advertising "industry" is, if anything, even more insidious as it spreads into areas of the globe previously buffered to some extent from the imperialist world market. In large areas of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, marked by imperialist-enforced agricultural and industrial underdevelopment, as well as in countries previously part of the now-defunct economic and trading bloc once dominated by the Soviet Union, the siren song of the commodity fetish is an imperialist weapon like none other.

In the eloquent words of the Communist Manifesto, "the cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which [the bourgeoisie] batters down all Chinese walls. ... It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image."

As the not-so-outdated polemic of the 1950s makes clear, in periods of working-class retreat such as we have lived through the last quarter century — a period of retreat far longer and more devastating than the relatively brief post-World War II interlude — the "heavy artillery" of capitalism takes its greatest toll, including among the most politically conscious layers.

The answer to the second question

is equally important.

The articles by Evelyn Reed — "The Woman Question and the Marxist Method" and "Anthropology: Marxist or Bourgeois?" — are two of the earliest she wrote on these subjects. They were, in effect, "first drafts" of work that she continued to edit, expand, write about, and lecture on for another quarter century. This second edition of *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*, in fact, incorporates Reed's editing on "The Woman Question and the Marxist Method" when she prepared portions of it in 1969 for inclusion in *Problems of Women's Liberation*. That title, along with *Sexism and Science, Is Biology Woman's Destiny?* and Reed's widely acclaimed book *Woman's Evolution* have been published in editions around the world in more than a dozen languages.

The focus of the sharp polemic in *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* is what Reed often referred to as the "Hundred-Year War in Anthropology." Here, as elsewhere, Reed defends the historical materialism of nineteenth-century anthropologist Lewis Morgan, whose work Karl Marx and Frederick Engels drew on extensively in their writings on the subject, and Morgan's twentieth-century continuator Robert Briffault.

As Reed points out, one of the major battle lines in this century-plus war over historical materialism has been the question, does something akin to the modern bourgeois "patriarchal system of marriage and family relations [go] all the way back to the animal kingdom"? Or did what is often referred to as "patriarchy," and the second-class status of women, arise in relatively recent times, on the scale of evolution, as a cornerstone of class-divided societies? As private rather than communal property came to dominate all social relations, including those between men and women, didn't a small handful of men emerge for the first time as a ruling class, subjugating other men — and, in the process, women as well? ...

If class society and the accompanying subordinate status of women is only a stage of human history, one that arose at a certain historical juncture for specific reasons, then it can be eliminated at another historical juncture for other specific reasons.

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# Fight for gov't-funded, cradle-to-grave health care!

The U.S. government, the most powerful imperialist power on the planet, like every other capitalist power around the world, is far from prepared for the spread of coronavirus. The virus is new, no one is immune, and it will take time to develop an antidote.

The rulers in China and Iran tried to pretend things weren't so bad and working people are paying for it. The administration in Washington tells us they've got everything in hand and complain the media is trying to make coronavirus "look as bad as possible."

The deadly impact of the virus will fall overwhelmingly on working people in the U.S., as it does elsewhere, exacerbating the broader social, economic and moral crisis of capitalism bearing down on us.

Millions of workers already confront the declining availability of health care. Hospitals have been closing in rural areas and working-class neighborhoods, where the owners decide they aren't making enough profit. The system of health insurance in the U.S. — whether it's "Obamacare," private health insurance or the Medicare-for-all insurance schemes promoted by a wing of the Democrats — is designed to guarantee a profit for hospital bosses and drug and insurance companies, *not* to provide the health care working people need and deserve.

If we can't afford to pay the rising costs they charge for premiums, deductibles or copays, we have to go without something that should be a basic human right.

The capitalist rulers consider the provision of health care to workers a nonproductive expense. Hospital

bosses are notorious for transporting homeless people seeking care out of the city and dumping them. The capitalist rulers seek to impose the responsibility for medical care onto individual workers and our families. And if you don't change your lifestyle — quit smoking, lose weight, etc. — they want to make you pay more. You're on your own.

## Health care is social right

Health care is a social question. The working class and our unions need to fight for government-funded cradle-to-grave health care for all. Our labor produces all the wealth, more than enough to provide care for all, for a lifetime. The problem is the employers expropriate that wealth for themselves. So they don't have to worry about the costs of getting treatment.

Health care as a social right can only be won by class struggle, including breaking from all the capitalists' parties, which insist that the health insurance racket is untouchable. It will take massive struggles by workers and our allies to take the hospitals and drug companies out of the hands of the capitalists who run them for profit and organize to run them under workers control in the interest of all. But it can be done.

Revolutionary Cuba is the one country in the world where health care is not a commodity, where the surplus workers and farmers produce is used to provide lifelong, preventative health care for every person. And where thousands of volunteer medical

workers provide much needed care throughout the world, treating all they look after with dignity and respect. A vivid account is provided in the recently published *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa*. The volunteers' internationalism, author Enrique Ubieta writes, "is an expression of their revolutionary humanism."

As Che Guevara said, to be a revolutionary doctor you have to make a revolution.

## Revolution transformed working people in Cuba

This is only possible because Cuban workers and farmers made a revolution and the government today is in their hands. Making that revolution transformed working people. They simply look at the problems they confront — from the U.S. rulers' economic war against them to the threat of coronavirus — as the responsibility of the whole people.

Whatever they face — a hurricane, a threat of disease, or anything else — they prepare, mobilize the whole people and resources of their government, and take it on.

The Socialist Workers Party campaign is grounded in the conviction that it is possible to emulate that example. We can mobilize in our millions to overthrow the dictatorship of the capitalist class here, take power into our own hands and open the door to working people running society. Join us in campaigning for Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett, the working-class alternative in 2020!

# Capitalist two-party stability won't be restored

## Continued from front page

the road to defend our wages and working conditions from bosses' attacks today and points in the direction of independent working-class political action.

This course of resolute struggle against the bosses and their government is presented in 2020 by the Socialist Workers Party presidential ticket, Alyson Kennedy for president, Malcolm Jarrett for vice president. They are the only candidates that act on the capacities of the working class to advance its interests by building a movement that can take political power into our own hands and put an end to the exploitative social relations bred by capitalism. Sanders and his socialist cohorts push an ideology aimed at reforming dog-eat-dog capitalist rule. It has nothing to do with building a movement of millions to fight for ourselves.

The centrist Democrats are working overtime to attack Sanders, fearing he'll cost the Democratic Party not only the presidency, but any chance of majorities in the House and Senate. James Carville, long-time Democratic operative and former campaign manager to Bill Clinton, argued Sanders' Nevada primary victory meant the race for the party's nomination was "going very well for [Russian President] Vladimir Putin." This is the same smear liberals have used for the past three years against Trump.

In the unabashedly pro-Democratic *Washington Post*, commentator Jennifer Rubin disqualifies Sanders for his "extreme ideology." She demands the other contenders for the nomination stand aside and clear the path for Joe Biden. She says Biden — whose support has been plummeting — can reverse gear, win the nomination and save the party from Sanders, if he puts an "exciting" African American woman on the ticket for vice president.

Some party stalwarts are looking for ways to use the unelected "superdelegates" to rig the nomination against Sanders at the party's convention — just as they did in 2016.

## Sanders calls Cuba 'authoritarian'

Sanders has come under attack in the media and in debates for having visited Cuba in 1989. When pressed on this on CBS' "60 Minutes" TV program, he answered, "We're very opposed to the authoritarian nature of Cuba, but you know it's simply unfair to say everything is bad." He added that Fidel Castro "had a massive literacy program. Is that such a bad thing, even though Fidel Castro did it?"

Sanders has continued to be pressed on this by lib-

eral Democrats and by Republicans alike. And he continues to denounce Cuba as "authoritarian."

Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement led Cuban workers and farmers in a revolutionary struggle to overthrow the brutal U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship, transforming themselves in the process, and going on to take power into their own hands. In the face of Washington's hostility they advanced the interests of the most exploited and put an end to the capitalist ownership of land, the factories and banks.

And they have defended those conquests ever since from bipartisan assaults by Washington. The U.S. rulers' policy — aimed at overturning Cuba's revolutionary government — will remain the same whether Trump, Sanders, Biden or any other Democrat or Republican is in the White House, as it has for 60 years.

Both Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett have been to Cuba and support for Cuba's socialist revolution is part of the SWP's campaign platform. They urge workers and youth to join this year's May Day Brigade to Cuba to learn about the revolution firsthand.

## Ongoing crisis of bosses' two parties

As conflicts leading to the election sharpen, some pundits express fear that this will damage the capitalist two-party political setup. Writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, Charles Lipson says these clashes are "deep and toxic for democracy," and worries that unlike previous disputes they will not end whoever wins in November. Both of the bosses' parties are fractured and will never be the same again.

The roots of the political crisis gripping the Democratic and Republican parties lies in the widespread alienation among working people from parties that haven't lifted a finger against the bosses' relentless efforts to offload the crisis of their system onto our backs. This is why millions of workers helped put Trump, a nonpolitician, in the White House in 2016 when he promised he would "drain the swamp" in Washington and work to halt the American carnage workers face. This year the socialist wing of the Democrats hope they can take over the party and make the same journey. The centrists believe this would mean the death of their party.

The crisis in the capitalist parties and the conditions workers face today also fuel interest in the Socialist Workers Party campaign. The party campaigns in cities large and small, and in rural areas, urging workers to break from the bosses and form our own party, a labor party, in order to find a road forward.

# LETTERS

## Origin of Irish parties

There is an error in the article "Sinn Fein Vote Surge Fueled by Social Crisis, Calls for Irish Unity" in the Feb. 24 issue of the *Militant*. This doesn't detract from the main points of the article, which I agree with, but it's a bit sloppy on history and the *Militant* has a fine reputation for accuracy in its articles. The article mentions that Fianna Fail and Fine Gael dominated Irish governments since a war for independence liberated a majority of the country from British rule in 1921.

Neither party existed at that time. Fianna Fail came into being as a result of a split in the Irish Republican movement after the civil war ended (1923), and Fine Gael can be traced to the amalgam of the even later Irish fascist "Blue Shirt" movement with some other parties in 1933.

Marc Lichtman

Brooklyn, New York

## Asarco pickets face harassment

On the picket line at the Ray Mine gate entrance to Asarco, the company has hired security guards that film our every move. Is that legal? They are on private property. We are on state property. A police officer speeds into their property going the wrong way, on an exit ramp on a blind corner with strikers only 10 feet away.

Buses Asarco has contracted going in and out of the property get very close to picketers. Someone on the picket line is going to get killed. We need filming of this ridiculousness we have to put up with.

James McDaniel

by email

## Correction

The caption for the photo of striking Asarco copper miners on page 10 of *Militant* issue no. 8 incorrectly said the workers were picketing the Mission Mine in Sahuarita, Arizona. The photo was of United Steelworkers Local 5252 members picketing the Ray Mine.

## 'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

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