

Join drive for more readers, *Militant* fund contributors!

BY SETH GALINSKY

The *Militant* is asking its readers to join the drive to expand the reach of the paper and contribute to the \$115,000 Militant Fighting Fund. The paper is more valuable than ever in the capitalist economic and social crisis workers face today. It reports on workers’ resistance against the bosses on the job, defends the interests of all working people and points a road forward to building a fighting union movement.

Unlike the capitalist press, articles in the *Militant* are written by Walmart workers, rail workers and other working people, who are part of struggles being fought out on the job today. And it is working people who distribute the paper.

During the drive several books by Socialist Workers Party leaders and other revolutionaries are on special. The offer includes *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, both by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, and *Tribunes of the People and the*

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Women win right to choose abortion in New Zealand

BY FELICITY COGGAN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — In a victory for the rights of women, a law decriminalizing abortion passed the New Zealand Parliament March 18.

“It’s been a long time coming,” 84-year-old Margaret Sparrow, a doctor and lifelong leader of the fight for reproductive rights for women, told *Time* magazine after hearing the news. “It will be safer for women and better for access.”

Decades earlier Sparrow started helping students get access to contraception and for several years assisted women to go to Australia to obtain an abortion before the first clinic opened here. Having put more than half a century into this fight, she said she still isn’t done.

“The next stage is making sure it is implemented,” she said.

The law establishes women’s right to choose to have an abortion until the 20th week of pregnancy. After that she has to get a health practitioner, in consultation with at least one other colleague, to agree that the procedure is “clinically appropriate.”

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Workers’ job actions lead fight for safety, more pay

Road to build a fighting labor movement



WPXI/Liz Kilmer

Sanitation workers in Pittsburgh protest for safety equipment, higher pay. “Nobody respected the garbage men till we didn’t pick up the garbage,” worker Derrick McClinton told the media.

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Around the country and worldwide, more and more workers are organizing on the job to fight callous insistence by the bosses that they work without protective equipment in hazardous environments. They are also resisting other attacks on their jobs, wages and working conditions.

Thousands of skirmishes are taking place in factories, mines, retail outlets and other workplaces that are open, amid the burgeoning lockdown and curfews being imposed by the rulers. Socialist Workers Party members

have been part of a number of these fights.

And millions more workers have been tossed out of work as the employers prioritize defending their plants, stores and profits above all else.

On March 26 an assistant manager at a sizable Walmart in the northern New Jersey area told Tetri Boodhoo that she had to take off the mask she had decided to wear, saying it was against company policy. The boss said she and any other workers not happy with this could take leave

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No to US economic war on Cuba! No sanctions on Iran, Venezuela, NKorea!



Invasor/Edel Alejandro García Sánchez

Workers pack pineapples in Ciego de Ávila, Cuba. Workers and farmers in Cuba are organizing to increase food production in face of capitalist crisis and stepped-up U.S. economic war.

BY SETH GALINSKY

In the midst of the worldwide capitalist economic and social crisis, the U.S. rulers are not backing off an inch from their sanctions targeting governments they are in conflict with around the world — punishments that fall heaviest on working people in those countries.

Their number one target remains revolutionary Cuba. And they are tightening the screws on Venezuela and Iran and continue to sanction North Korea.

On March 24 the State Department sent out a tweet slandering Cuba, claiming its government sends medical volunteers abroad to help combat the coronavirus only because it is motivated by “money.” In fact Cuba’s selfless internationalist volunteers provide much-needed health care to people in 60 countries, an example Washington seeks to bury.

Despite Washington’s decision to waive some of its moves to punish the

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Copper miners strike against Asarco union busting nears six-month mark

BY BERNIE SENTER

“We still get people swinging by the strike picket lines donating water and food,” Lyle Murphy told the *Militant* by phone March 30. Murphy has worked at Asarco’s Ray Mine near Kearny, Arizona, for 16 years and is president of United Steelworkers Local 5252.

Some 1,700 copper miners in Arizona and Texas are heading toward their sixth month on strike against Asarco. They face bosses determined to impose steep concessions in wages and health ben-

efits and to bust the unions.

Union members and their supporters continue to maintain 24-hour picket lines at all Asarco mines and processing facilities. But the United Steelwork-

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UK workers stage walkouts to fight unsafe work conditions

BY HUGO WILS
AND ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

MANCHESTER, England — Workers at three meat and poultry plants in Northern Ireland have staged walkouts to protest bosses’ refusal to implement measures aimed at reducing the spread of coronavirus. Across the U.K., workers in food production, transport and other industries are looking for ways to push back against unsafe conditions and to protect workers who have been told to stay at home.

At the Tulip meat factory in Dukinfield, near Manchester, over 50 workers refused to start production lines for an hour on March 25 until bosses assured that they would look for ways to create more distance between each worker on the line and take other protective measures. After workers pressed for masks, bosses started to provide face visors.

“Normal everyday workers are holding the country together right now,” said Adam Herring, a butcher at the plant. “In my experience bosses have profit at the forefront of their minds, even if it risks the health of their own staff. The only way to ensure that correct measures of safety are adhered to by bosses is to organize and insist on them.”

At the Moy Park poultry plant in Portadown, Northern Ireland, with more than 1,000 employed, hundreds of workers walked out March 25 as bosses ramped up production with no regard for safety. Both Moy Park and Tulip are owned by Pilgrim’s Pride Corporation.

As a result, bosses “have slowed the lines down so you can have two meters between workers,” Sean McKeever, re-

gional officer for the Unite union, told the *Militant* by phone. “It’s because of what workers did that the company is moving. We’ve called on them to pay those who have to stay at home full wages.” The legal minimum bosses have to pay workers who are sick or self-isolating is 94.25 pounds (\$117) per week.

At nearby ABP Meats in Lurgan and Linden Foods in Dungannon, workers also walked out over the same issues.

The U.K. government instructed people to stay at home, with a handful of exceptions, March 23. By then, huge numbers of companies had already shut their doors. They were promised 80% of the wages if bosses decided to “furlough” rather than lay them off. Nevertheless, in the space of nine days up to 477,000 registered as unemployed.

“I feel lucky,” Luke Smith, another Tulip butcher, told the *Militant*. “I’ve got work, while many people are losing their jobs right now.”

Rail workers discuss protections

Workers at Manchester Piccadilly rail station are among those looking for ways to protect their livelihoods and safety. Rail companies are running a skeleton service.

Clayton Clive, a Piccadilly-based train conductor and chairperson of the Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers union Manchester South branch, reported that some of the workers who do the onboard food trolleys for Rail Gourmet won a reprieve after they were laid off March 24.

“At first they were doing extra cleaning tasks but were then laid off,” Clive



Unite union

Workers at Tulip meat factory in U.K. held job action and workers at Linden Foods in Northern Ireland, above, walked out March 27 over bosses’ refusal to provide safe working conditions.

told the *Militant*. “Workers and the RMT pressed on getting them back to work or compensated. The company agreed to take a number of them back on cleaning, while those not working will be paid 80% of their wages.”

Rail bosses have slashed jobs for decades as they impose driver-only operations on some 30% of the network. Workers at Southwestern Railways struck in December against job cuts and attacks on safety.

“Our safety is an afterthought for the bosses. Nothing happens unless we press for it,” said Pete Clifford, a Communist League member and platform

worker at Piccadilly. He said workers at different rail companies there pressed bosses to provide hand sanitizers.

“Government moves make things worse,” Clifford said. “In London, a cut in the underground rail services has led to more overcrowding. Then they blame workers who use public transport for not staying sufficiently distant from each other. Joining the fights being waged by workers today and demanding protection for all workers from the effects of the capitalist crisis is the way forward.”

Wils and Jónsson work at Tulip in Dukinfield.

2020 Socialist Workers Party candidates Alyson Kennedy for president Malcolm Jarrett for vice president

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

THE MILITANT

Back Kurdish fight for national sovereignty

March 16 marked the 30th anniversary of Saddam Hussein’s chemical weapons massacre of Kurds in Halabja, Iraq. The Kurdish people have waged a centurylong fight for national rights and sovereignty against rulers in Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey.



1991 uprising of Kurds in Dohuk, Iraq. This year is 30 years since massacre in Halabja.

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Join *Militant*, fund drive!

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Trade Unions. From different starting points, each of these titles describes the kind of party necessary to lead millions of working people to overturn capitalist rule and establish a workers and farmers government.

Another book on special is *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa* by Enrique Ubieta Gómez. It tells the story of the health workers who volunteered to beat back the Ebola virus, providing an introduction to the Cuban Revolution and what working people everywhere can learn from it.

As SWP members concentrate their efforts to join struggles together with co-workers on the job to fight the bosses' attacks, they gain the interest of co-workers to subscribe to the *Militant*, get books on revolutionary politics and contribute to the fund. And they look out for any opportunities to get the paper into the hands of other working people they speak with.

Fight for protective equipment

Denise Ortiz, a nursing student at Valparaiso University, told SWP member Dan Fein in Chicago that with "the university closed, I am taking my courses online. I don't agree with this lockdown," she said. "I support the nurses fighting for personal protective equipment like in the Bronx," referring to a public protest by nurses in front of Jacobi hospital in New York City.

Fein said, "The *Militant* is the only source of reporting on how working people are fighting the effects of the crisis being taken out on us." Ortiz signed up for a subscription and told Fein, "What you are doing is very important."

"I'm lucky they can't evict me right now," disabled worker Victor Rosario in Chicago told Alyson Kennedy, the SWP's candidate for president. He complained that all President Donald Trump "talks about is money." Kennedy pointed out that none of the capitalist politicians, Democrats or Republicans, are defending the interests of working people.

Kennedy urged Rosario to read the party's statement "Demand Government Act Now to Protect Working People — A Call to Action to Meet Today's Unfolding Crisis." It demands "emergency relief to the working class, farmers, small shop owners, and other exploited producers" and urges "a fight for a government-funded public works program to put millions to work at union-scale wages — building hospitals, housing, and other facilities working people need." (See page 6.)

Kelley Guastella, a member of the teachers union, told Fein that she was "getting paid, even though the schools are closed." Fein pointed to the demands raised in the party's call to action that was printed on the front page of the *Militant*. "Yes, the government should do much more," Guastella said, and got a copy of the paper.

Kennedy joined Willie Cotton, SWP candidate for Congress in the 9th District in Brooklyn, New York, for a live phone interview on New York WBAI radio's "Voices of Resistance" March 29.

Co-host Andréia Vizeu asked Cotton what he tells people who are facing the impact of the coronavirus epidemic.

"This is a crisis of the capitalist system, a social crisis. They failed to do the

most basic things like set aside reserves in case of a catastrophe," Cotton said. "This is what capitalism sows today."

He pointed out that "working people are beginning to fight back."

Kennedy described some of those struggles. She noted that workers at Walmart have been demanding "basic things like gloves, masks, hand sanitizer. Some 50 workers at a Perdue poultry plant walked out and rallied because of dangerous conditions at work. They were demanding cleanliness and higher pay."

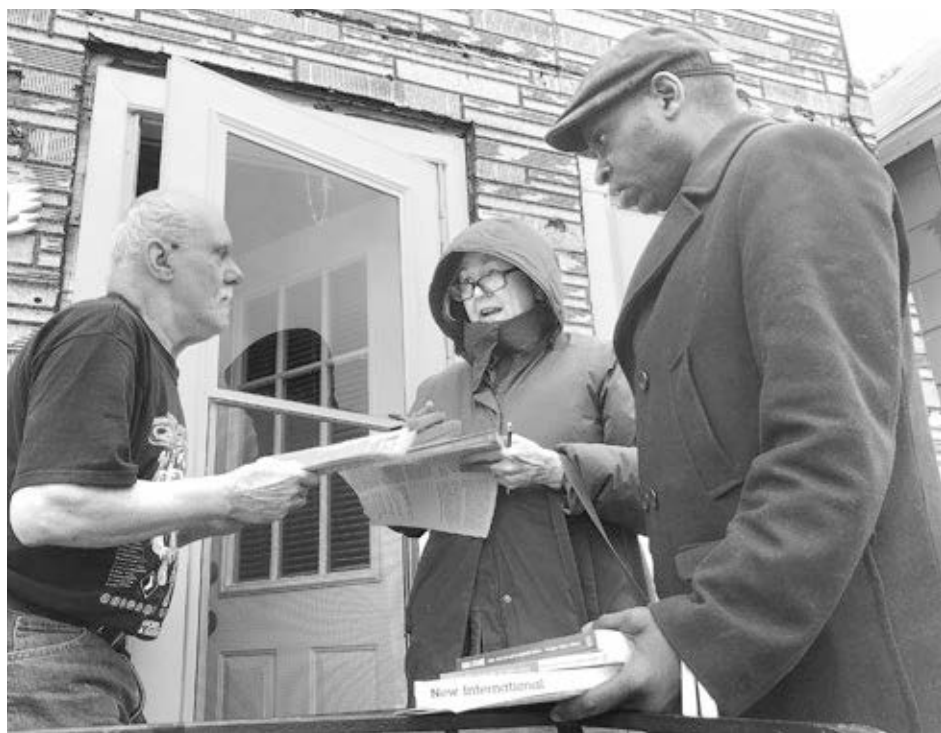
She also pointed to the fight by 1,700 copper workers in Arizona and Texas on strike since Oct. 13, standing up to Asarco's union busting and urged listeners to learn about the strike and offer solidarity.

Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Georgia, Rachele Fruit, and campaign supporters spoke to working people who live in Kathleen and Perry, Georgia, where Perdue workers walked off the job March 23, demanding safer working conditions and an end to the bosses' scorn for their work.

Janice Mack, who used to work at the plant, told Fruit, "I can understand what the workers did in walking out. The only thing Perdue cares about is chicken, not the people who work there." Mack liked the party's demand for weekly unemployment relief for all workers, not just a one-shot check.

Enthusiastic response to fund drive

The enthusiasm of many subscribers about the campaign to expand the readership of the paper, other literature and win contributions to the Militant Fighting Fund was apparent as soon as



Militant/Dan Fein

From right, Socialist Workers Party vice presidential candidate Malcolm Jarrett and campaigner Zena Jasper talk with retired truck driver Jerome Sotak in Whiting, Indiana.

we announced the drive last week. The fund makes it possible to strengthen our coverage of struggles going on today and get the paper into the hands of workers, farmers and youth around the world. The drive runs from April 4 to May 19.

When the \$115,000 fund drive was announced on the paper's website — and before subscribers had received their paper in the mail — hundreds of dollars in contributions were already on the way in!

Reader Kate Rodda in New Zealand wrote that the *Militant* is a "breath of fresh air and sanity. Brilliant 'Call to Action' from Alyson Kennedy."

"The *Militant* shows workers and students how to fight back against the capitalist rulers' continuing assault on people's rights," wrote Roy Hunter Jones from Brantford, Ontario. He urged other

readers to "make an extra effort" to get those they know to subscribe.

All our readers are welcome to help. A prisoner-subscriber in Florida wrote that he has been "passing the paper around, hoping to get you guys more readers and subscribers." The *Militant* acts on our firm belief that whatever side of the prison wall workers happen to be on, the *Militant* is your paper.

Send in reports of your discussions with fellow workers about what they face, their struggles and their responses to the paper's reporting for publication in this column.

See page 8 to find the distributors nearest you to join in the campaigns. Or contact us at themilitant@mac.com. Send contributions to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

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. 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 disproportion-

ately 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 Republicans 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!

NZ abortion rights victory

Continued from front page

“It’s been such a long fight to get here,” Ella Shepherd, chair of the Auckland University Campus Feminist Collective, told the *Militant*. “This is an issue that has mobilized and united generations.”

The 1977 law that the new bill amends said that abortion was a criminal offense. Protests and shifting attitudes across society in decades since forced a loosening in its application, allowing abortions on the grounds of a threat to a woman’s mental or physical health — if they could get the approval of two certifying medical consultants.

“It’s important that women can now get an abortion without lying about it or having to cross their fingers the doctor will play along,” student Barbara Sharrock said. She participated in a nationwide day of action Feb. 18 that drew hundreds demanding legalization and pressing the Labour-led government to fulfill a campaign pledge to change the law.

“Young people have been waking up to how outrageous the situation is, and really stepped up” in recent years, said Alison McCulloch, a longtime member of the Women’s National Abortion Action Campaign and author of *Fighting to Choose — The Abortion Rights Struggle in New Zealand*. “My book is now out of date, I’m very happy about that.”

The fight continues

“But if enough facilities and health practitioners aren’t available,” she said, “there will just be more restrictions.” Up until now many public hospitals, especially outside the big cities, have refused to provide abortions.

Opponents of women’s rights protested inside and outside Parliament against the new law. Agnes Loheni, a National Party legislator, claimed in a report to Parliament that the law would lead to more abortions just for sex selection, and that it “removes the human rights of the unborn child completely.”

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

dreds of thousands into the streets. In Ireland a sustained campaign won a national referendum that pushed the government to legalize abortion for the first time in 2019.

But capitalist politicians opposing abortion rights are using every opening they find to attack and restrict women’s access to the procedure. Their latest moves include state governments in Ohio, Mississippi and Texas that are using the coronavirus outbreak to justify banning abortions. Officials claim they aren’t “medically essential” and that the personal protective equipment is needed for treating patients with COVID-19.

Women’s right to unrestricted access to family planning services, including the right to safe, secure abortions, is a necessity for women. It is also a life-and-death question for advancing the unity of the working class.

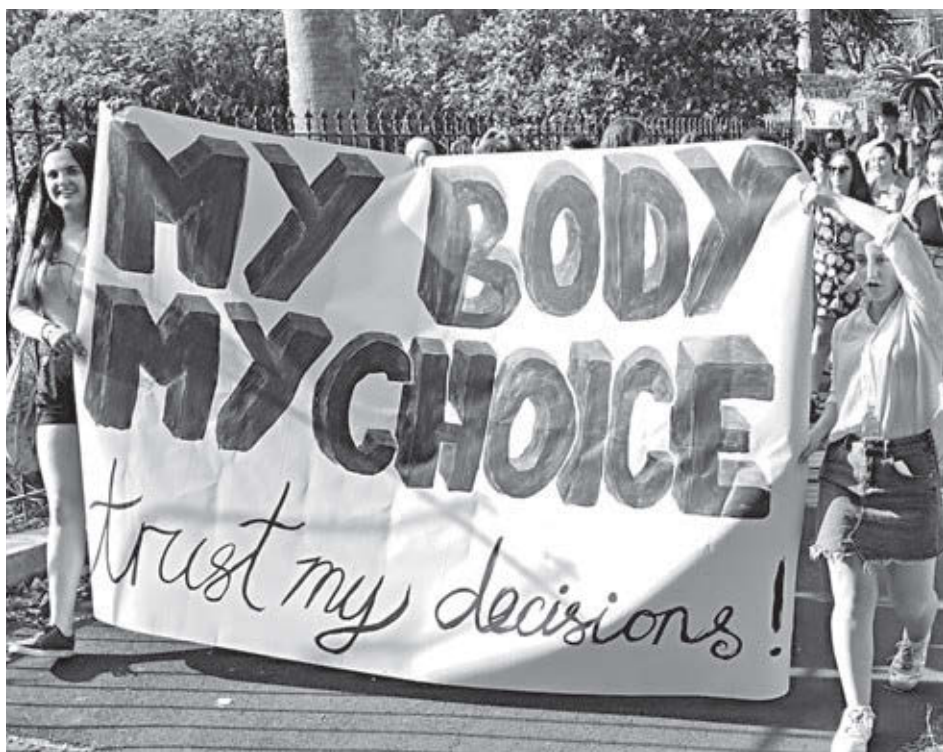
Oberlin College pays off anti-Semitic professor

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Oberlin College settled a federal lawsuit by paying off Joy Karega, a professor fired after she broadcast on Facebook virulent Jew-hating slurs. At the same time, college officials refuse to settle with the family that owns Gibson’s Bakery, a small business in the Ohio college town, despite a unanimous jury verdict against the college after it slandered the Gibsons as “racist” and attempted to drive them out of business.

The college at the end of January agreed to pay Karega an undisclosed amount after she demanded \$885,000 along with punitive damages, interest and attorney fees. Karega, who is Black, claimed discrimination “on the basis of race and gender,” after she was fired in November 2016.

She disseminated her anti-Semitic views while an assistant professor of rhetoric and composition at the college. In her posts she urged a revolt against what she alleges is “the real power” — the family of Jewish banker Jacob Rothschild that owns “the media, your oil and your government” and effectively controls the world. To bolster these false-



Militant/Mike Tucker

Holly Wakelin, left, and Lucy Mackenzie, right, two young women who helped lead recent actions for women’s right to abortion, hold banner at Auckland Feb. 18 march. After decades of mobilizations, New Zealand’s parliament adopted law legalizing abortion March 18.

hoods Karega claims Islamic State is really an arm of Israeli and U.S. intelligence agencies, and that Israel was behind the 9/11 New York terrorist attacks, as well as those in Paris in 2015 against the *Charlie Hebdo* comic magazine.

Such views attempt to scapegoat Jews for the devastation inflicted on working people as the crisis of capitalism deepens. They aim to divert us from fighting the capitalist class, whose great majority is non-Jewish, and whose system of exploitation is above all responsible for the conditions we face. When the rulers’ hold on power is threatened by rising working-class struggle they increasingly turn to rightist forces that unleash violence against both Jews and working-class fighters.

Karega also hosted campus meetings of the anti-Semitic Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, which calls for the destruction of Israel and treats its Jewish population as a monolithic reactionary mass.

In response to her Jew-hating rants, Oberlin College officials initially defended Karega, issuing a statement saying that she has the right to hold whatever views she wants. But in August 2016 they suspended her on paid leave while the college administration conducted an investigation of

her comments. Among those backing Karega were the Black Student Union and the Oberlin College Student Senate.

The Oberlin College Board of Trustees on Nov. 15, 2016, dismissed her citing her “repeated refusal to acknowledge and remedy her misconduct.”

While coming to a settlement with the anti-Semitic professor, Oberlin College officials continue their efforts to crush Gibson’s Bakery. They defamed the small business, which has provided goods to the college for decades, as “racist,” cutting off its contract. They are now attempting to bleed it dry by appealing the June 2019 unanimous jury verdict in favor of the bakery owners and the \$31.5 million in damages awarded to the Gibsons and their lawyers.

Oberlin’s smear campaign against Gibson’s began in November 2016 when top college officials helped organize student protests and a boycott of the bakery. They claimed the store owners were racists after a college student who is African American, with the aid of two other students, attempted to shoplift wine from the store and the three were arrested. The students later pled guilty to misdemeanor charges of attempted theft and admitted in court that no racism was involved.

Celebrate life of veteran communist leader Alan Harris

LONDON — Alan Harris, a decadeslong leader of the communist movement in the U.K. and internationally, died here March 26, just short of his 87th birthday. He contracted coronavirus while hospitalized after suffering a major stroke.

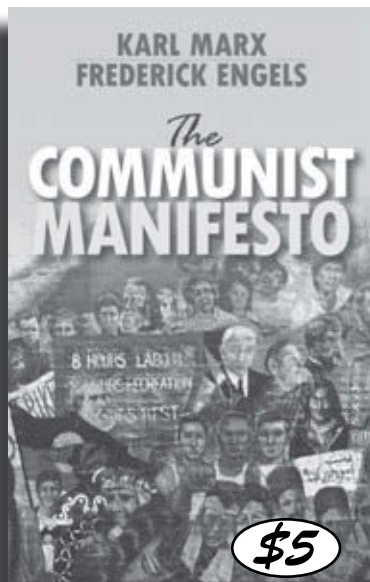
Harris served for many years on the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. He was a leader of the Communist League in the U.K. and a founding member and leader of its forerunner, the International Marxist Group. In the 1960s, while living in Vancouver, British Columbia, where he worked as a truck driver, Harris was part of the leadership of the League for Socialist Action.

Restrictions on travel and meetings in the U.K. and internationally mean it is not possible at this time to organize a meeting to celebrate Harris’ political life and contributions. The Communist League is preparing such an appreciation for a coming issue of the *Militant*.

— JONATHAN SILBERMAN



Militant/Betsy Stone



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

—Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

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

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Morality of capitalist rulers reflected in shutdown of AA

BY RÓGER CALERO

NEW YORK — The responses of the capitalist bosses and their governments to the spread of coronavirus — both what they have not done to prepare and what they *are* doing to defend their profit-driven system — is taking a heavy toll on working people in many ways.

Essential needs like 12-step program meetings — the regular, face-to-face peer gatherings key to recovery for alcoholics and addicts, as well as their spouses and families — have been forced to close by shelter-in-place and lockdown edicts, and bans on even small gatherings, here and elsewhere.

“The worst thing for an alcoholic is isolation,” Reagan Reed, director of New York’s Inter-Group Association of Alcoholics Anonymous, told the *Daily News* March 20. “Having your butt in that chair, listening to others share their experiences, is really what’s so necessary.”

Tens of thousands of group meetings in church basements, YMCAs, and community rooms across the country have had to shut down — even though they had been following “social distancing” and other precautions. Now, their members have been scrambling to hold “meetings” by video or telephone conferencing, for many of which have become a lifeline.

But, as with all social questions under capitalism, this one also has a differentiated impact on working-class members who don’t have access to internet, webcams, or a quiet and private place to join in from. And, of course, if you’re a drinking alcoholic you very well might have lost everything already.

The efforts of 12-step programs to reach active alcoholics and addicts include telephone interaction and mailings. But almost without exception, everyone involved in them will tell you there is no substitute for face-to-face meetings either in a group or with a sponsor — someone with more experience who can help a newcomer.

“I am not hip to that web stuff,” an AA member who asked to remain anonymous told me. “I’ll do it if I have to, but online is just not the same.”

Simultaneously with online “meetings” some smaller groups have continued to gather at parks and open places while maintaining recommended precautions. “Fellowship” — groups going out for a meal or just hanging out together after meetings — is as important as attending meetings, but has become almost impossible to do.

Social isolation and depression are also big concerns for families whose spouses and relatives have been sequestered in senior living centers and denied all visitors by industry bosses and federal government mandates. They are being denied company, love and friendly faces, and vital monitoring and the essential care relatives provide.

As part of their drive to maximize profits, the owners of the health care system have pushed everything from “telemedicine” to “teletherapy” down our throats as acceptable replacements for live medical or mental

health care for workers.

Such restrictions mean nothing to the Wall Street brokers and others who produce nothing of social value, as they flee the city for second or third homes in the Hamptons and elsewhere. These are the zip codes best stocked with doctors and hospitals with the most up-to-date gear for those with the money to pony up.

For working people struggling to keep working, producing everything from food to medical equipment, our morality is built on community solidarity, and joint actions in defense of fellow workers. We far prefer face-to-face human interactions and neighborliness.

Rulers use workers’ smartphones to spy on them

BY EMMA JOHNSON

The main method the bosses and their governments around the world are using to “fight” the coronavirus pandemic is to impose lockdowns, quarantines, curfews and job furloughs on working people. And they are expanding spying and surveillance as well. They’re fine-tuning tools they have plans to deploy against workers’ struggles to come.

The rulers’ main asset is the smartphones many of us carry. They track your every movement, and if you seem to evade a government quarantine, the authorities get an alert and “big brother” will come after you.

The South Korean government maintains an up-to-the-minute digital map of everyone’s movements built on tracking data from mobile phones, credit card records and other information. The government says it has the right to use the spy map to publicly target people it deems to be dangerous.

One South Korean woman, who declined to give her name, told the *Washington Post* that she had stopped attending a popular bar for lesbians. “If I unknowingly contract the virus,” she said, “that record will be released to the whole country.”

Taiwan has activated an “electronic fence,” which tracks mobile data and



Reuters/Jason Redmond

Lori Spencer waves to her 81-year-old mother through window at Seattle aged care facility March 11. Capitalist rulers’ “social distancing” restrictions increase isolation by shutting down sorely needed meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous and visits to elderly in care homes.

alerts authorities when someone who is supposed to be at home leaves the house.

The head of Taiwan’s Department of Cyber Security brags that cops there should be able to track down anyone they choose within 15 minutes.

And you’d better keep your phone on. A U.S. student living in Taiwan wrote to the BBC that he was visited by two cops at 8:15 a.m. because his phone battery had run down 45 minutes earlier and the government lost track of him. He was in quarantine after arriving from Europe.

Authorities in Austria, China, Belgium, Israel, Poland, Singapore and elsewhere admit they are ramping up their new cyber spy agencies.

This allocation of state resources by the capitalist rulers is a profit-driven investment for their future efforts against working-class fighters. Pouring money into spying is a stark indication of the bosses’ morality, as medical personnel everywhere face sharp deficiencies in sorely needed equipment and steps toward critical expansion of testing for the disease languish.

In the U.S., \$500 million of the Senate’s \$2 trillion stimulus bill for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are set aside for a new “surveillance and data collection system” to track people. In Italy, 40,000 citizens as of March 18

had been charged by the cops with violating the lockdown laws.

Bosses making people work from home are panic-buying spy software to make sure their employees are not “taking unfair advantage of flexible work arrangements,” Axos Financial CEO Gregory Garrabrants wrote March 16.

His workers got the email. “We’re watching you. We’re capturing your keystrokes. We’re logging the websites you visit. Every 10 minutes or so we’re taking a screen shot.”

The capitalist rulers are taking other steps to expand use of state power to restrict the rights of working people. In March New York state legislators with bipartisan support passed a law giving Gov. Andrew Cuomo unlimited authority to rule by executive order during any state-declared crisis, from pandemics to hurricanes.

Governors in a growing number of states are pushing executive orders mandating state cops and National Guard troops to stop people on turnpikes and at bus, train and airport locations coming from out of state. They order them to lock themselves up for 14 days or face fines or prison.

The rulers’ so-called war on the pandemic incorporates growing features of a war against working people.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



April 17, 1995

A wave of class outrage swept the Philippines in response to the execution of Flor Contemplacion, a Filipino maid hanged to death by the government of Singapore March 17. The Philippines is the world’s largest exporter of human labor.

Contemplacion had been framed for the 1991 deaths of another Filipino maid and a four-year-old Singaporean boy. Contemplacion’s funeral turned into an angry demonstration against the execution and Manila’s indifference to the plight of millions of migrant workers.

“More than 40 percent of Filipinos are either unemployed or underemployed,” said Amante Jimenez, chairperson of the League of Filipino Students. Jimenez reported that 30,000 people daily attended Contemplacion’s wake, with more than 50,000 turning out for the funeral.



April 17, 1970

Significant developments are occurring as Washington presses its efforts to establish a permanent, stable power base in Indochina. The most ominous are moves leading toward direct U.S. troop involvement in Laos and Cambodia.

The steps have sharpened rifts among those sections of the ruling class who are fearful that U.S. imperialism may be overreaching itself in Vietnam. These circles are particularly fearful that a new escalation could detonate a massive new explosion of antiwar sentiment at home.

The crisis of the U.S. puppet regime in Saigon was given added dimension in recent days as university students struck in behalf of their political freedom, and disabled South Vietnamese war veterans demanded relief from their miserable existence, battling Saigon cops and troops with bricks, pipes and hammers.



April 14, 1945

[During the war] the nation’s fighting soft-coal miners weren’t fooling when they voted two weeks ago by an eight to one majority to authorize strike action if they didn’t obtain an acceptable contract. Following termination of their old contract and despite a 30-day extension, an estimated 100,000 miners in some 300 mines throughout eight states engaged in spontaneous strike actions.

With 200 mines closed, the operators announced that a “tentative agreement” had been reached with the UMW.

The WLB [War Labor Board] intervened to declare that it has certified the mine dispute to Roosevelt, recommending “seizure” of the 200 closed mines. During the strikes two years ago, such “seizures” meant making the mine operators government officials and running the mines still under their control.

Workers job actions fight for safety, more pay

Continued from front page
without any penalty — and without any pay.

Two days later, Boodhoo and fellow worker Joanne Kuniansky went to the store manager with a letter signed by a number of co-workers saying the company had the responsibility to make available not just masks, but gloves and sanitizer as well.

After rejecting their demands, the boss consulted with higher-ups and backed down. Many workers — and customers too — considered this a victory. “You see, when we speak out together we can win,” Boodhoo told the *Militant*.

Walmart bosses nationally have now reversed their position. They told the press March 31 that they intend to make available “high-quality masks” for any employee who wishes to wear them.

There have been a series of similar actions at workplaces across the country. About 100 sanitation workers in Pittsburgh, largely African American, stopped work March 25 to demand protective gloves and masks. After parking their garbage trucks in front of the city’s Bureau of Environmental Services, scores rallied outside for two hours. We made our point about “how important our job is,” Derrick McClinton told the *Militant*. “Nobody respected the garbage men till we didn’t pick up the garbage.”

Nurses across the country have been demonstrating to demand hospital bosses provide them with masks and other life-saving equipment. At the large Kaiser Medical Center in Antioch, California, nurses couldn’t get enough N95 masks from management, so they began to bring in masks they collected themselves. But the bosses took them away, saying they weren’t “official.” After the public protest, the hospital reversed its decision.

“Absolutely, it was the protest that got the policy reversed,” hospital lab worker Glenda Carreira told the *Militant*. After the victory, workers at a nearby power plant made a collection of masks that the nurses were able to use.

In fact, working people have shown themselves to be the only truly “essential” class, as we produce everything needed today.

In Oakland, California, dockworkers organized by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union in-

sisted — and threatened a strike — that the bosses clean the equipment before they have to use it. SSA Marine Inc., which runs one of the terminals on the dock, tried to force workers to do the cleaning themselves. The union protested and won.

“It’s not good what they wanted us to do,” ILWU member Warren Robinson told the *Militant* on his lunch break, “wipe everything down while we do our regular jobs.”

Other workers there are fighting similar challenges. The boss “told me to wipe down my whole truck,” port trucker Razah Kahn said. “With handwipes?”

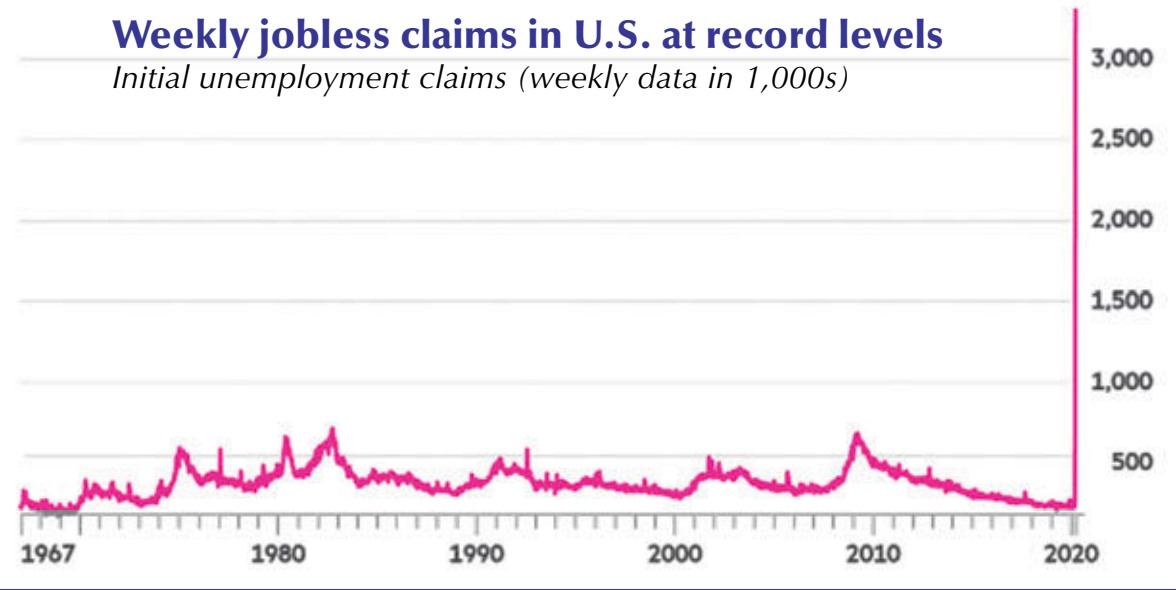
Many of these fights tie into workers’ treatment by the bosses, who for decades have fought wage increase demands, pushed speedup that makes workplaces less safe, and cut health care, all in order to boost their profits at the expense of the workers. The eco-

nomie crisis facing the capitalist bosses today, kicked into high gear by the outbreak of coronavirus, just drives them to attack workers harder. This builds the pressure for broader battles.

Some bosses profit, others crushed

Business is booming for Walmart, Amazon, and other retail behemoths, designated as “essential” businesses, while many of their competitors are not. As workers rush to buy home essentials, food and other goods, these capitalists smell profits. Walmart says it is taking on 150,000 new workers — all temporary so they can be shed when things are “normal.” Amazon says it needs 100,000 more hands for its warehouses, also temps.

Meanwhile, not-so-lucky competitors, like Macy’s, Kohl’s and others, face disaster. Already just skirting closure from the big boys’ pressures, the future is grim. Macy’s furloughed



March 21 chart shows one-week explosion in U.S. workers thrown out onto the street. As whole sections of industry, transport and commerce shut down, 3.4 million applied for jobless benefits.

125,000 workers from stores already closed March 18. Overall, some 630,000 retail outlets — big and especially small — have been shuttered nationwide by government edicts.

And the retail closures ripple back,

idling workers in garment and other industries. The number of workers tossed out on the street in the week ending March 21 is estimated to be some 3.4 million, an unprecedented number for one week. And that doesn’t count many more, including immigrant workers without papers, temporary workers and others. Most live paycheck to paycheck and no longer have a paycheck.

Family farmers face calamity

“It’s been a tumultuous period these four or five years in agriculture. It has pushed many smaller farmers to the brink of bankruptcy,” Bob Thompson, a farmer and head of the Michigan Farmers Union, told the *New Republic* magazine. This year, he said, “will be the straw that broke the camel’s back.”

Fruit and vegetable production in the U.S. is highly dependent on immigrant workers, most from Mexico, many on restrictive short-term H-2A visas. But all U.S. consulates are shut in Mexico and the border is sealed.

Many farmers depend on contracts with city school lunch programs, and the schools are all closed. Res-

taurants are shuttered. If you don’t already have a contract with a grocery chain, it’s hard to break in. And 17% of all U.S. farmers’ meat and poultry sales were abroad last year, with borders now closed.

School closures also mean a crisis for milk producers. Dairy farmers in Wisconsin and the Upper Midwest have begun getting letters from dairy co-ops warning them they may have to dump all their milk.

Thompson explained that he had been helping organize a program for local farmers — some of whom he knows struggle with depression, drugs or questions about the future

— to do a relaxed monthly lunch together. With government restrictions on meetings, he said, “Now we can’t provide that human touch physically that some desperately need.”

Reserves unprofitable for capital

The working of the bosses’ dog-eat-dog capitalist system and their government means there is no preparation for depressions or other social crises like the one unfolding today. The state government in California had built up medical reserves in the wake of the avian flu threat in 2006, including three 200-bed football-field-sized mobile hospitals, transportable on flatbed trucks, with a surgery ward, intensive care unit and X-ray equipment. Stockpiles included 50 million N95 respirators, 2,400 portable ventilators, other medicines and gear, as well as 21,000 extra hospital beds.

Yet as time wore on, and the global financial crisis exploded two years later, these stockpiles were simply dismantled. Other states with reserves did likewise. No capitalist likes to keep reserves — it means their capital isn’t working to rake in more profits. That’s why every major

Las Vegas gov’t ‘houses’ homeless in parking lot



Reuters/Steve Marcus

The moral bankruptcy of the capitalist profit system is on sharp display in the priorities set by the bosses and their government in dealing with the social effects of the coronavirus outbreak on working people. It comes through very starkly in the gambling center of the country, Las Vegas, where the casinos are deserted and closed. Thousands of comfortable hotel rooms sit empty.

On March 28 the Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada closed its shelter after one employee and one homeless man staying there tested positive for COVID-19.

The city government’s solution for the more than 500 men who suddenly lost their place to go at night? The Cashman Field Center’s upper parking lot! No walls to shield from cold winds, no roof to shield from rain. People do as best they can to get some sleep lying inside little boxes painted on the concrete floor, above.

The Courtyard shelter, less than a mile away, is packed like a sardine can. “Here, if you move, you’re going to bump someone. But we have mats,” 63-year-old Johnny Wingo told the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. “There, there’s no tent. What if the rain comes?”

As depression conditions loom, and tens of millions of workers find themselves unexpectedly out of work — and a paycheck — the capitalist rulers could have similar accommodations for many more of us in the future. Unless we fight back.

— EMMA JOHNSON

capitalist believes deeply in a globalist system of “just-in-time” deliveries, a disaster today.

This law of capitalism applies to hospital bosses and their approach to supplies of medical equipment and gear. Anything that can’t be used today to turn a profit is dead weight.

The coronavirus is rapidly spreading through the jails and prisons across the country. Inmate Sean Hernandez told Reuters that conditions in New York’s notorious Rikers Island jail mean no access to gloves or masks and no hot water for hand washing,

critical to avoid coronavirus. Pointing to prison authorities’ disregard for their lives, Hernandez said, “We are like livestock.”

Just like job actions spreading in the plants and retail outlets, the conditions for protest are growing for all those who are exploited and oppressed by the rule of capital.

Tony Lane from Pittsburgh; Betsey Stone and Eric Simpson from Oakland, California; and Joanne Kuniansky from northern New Jersey contributed to this article.



IUE-CWA

Workers, members of Communications Workers of America, protest outside General Electric jet engine plant in Lynn, Massachusetts, March 30, demanding GE urgently convert production to life-saving ventilators, not lay off thousands of assembly line and maintenance workers.

1959 revolution opened door to Cuba’s int’l solidarity

BY TERRY EVANS

The Cuban government continues to respond to any requests to send medical workers to countries around the world to combat the coronavirus epidemic. And Washington is stepping up its slander of the unstinting work of Cuba’s medical volunteers. It seeks to bury the truth about the working-class solidarity offered by Cuba’s revolutionary government — one the U.S. rulers have been determined to overthrow for decades.

In the past two weeks brigades of Cuban volunteer health workers have traveled to Italy and Andorra in Europe and to Grenada, Suriname, Jamaica, Belize, Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica, and Saint Lucia.

The State Department urged the governments in these countries to “scrutinize agreements” with the Cuban government, baselessly charging Havana is guilty of “labor abuses” of its doctors.

Additional medical personnel have also gone to reinforce thousands of Cuban doctors and nurses already in Venezuela, and those in Nicaragua.

Even media usually partisan to Washington’s propaganda against the Cuban Revolution have noted its internationalist missions. CNN pointed to “Cuba’s growing contributions to the battle against the pandemic.” But the liberal outlet tries to explain Cuba’s

“extremely effective ... disaster relief” not as a product of the revolutionary transformation of its people, instead crediting the country’s “hyper centralization” of government.

In fact, the response of the Cuban government to the coronavirus pandemic is a result of the transformation of millions of working people in the course of a revolutionary struggle. Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement led workers and farmers to overthrow U.S.-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista in 1959 and go on to bring down capitalist rule and establish their own government.

Ernesto Che Guevara, a leader of the revolution who had trained as a doctor, told medical students in Cuba in August 1960 how he was won to revolutionary struggle. He explained that he had joined with others to oppose the CIA’s operation to overthrow the government of Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala in 1954. Then “I realized a fundamental thing. To be a revolutionary doctor,” Guevara

said, “there must first be a revolution.”

In the course of the revolutionary war in areas liberated from Batista’s forces, workers and farmers were organized by the Rebel Army to take control of land reform, education, justice and health care. They established clinics and field hospitals treating combatants, including Batista’s wounded soldiers, as well as peasants.

The foundation of the health care that exists in Cuba today and the internationalism of the 28,000 medical volunteers it has serving around the world is a product of what was conquered in the course of that struggle. This cannot be inserted into other nations whose social relations reflect the immorality of capitalist exploitation.

“Have the people of this country made a revolution because that’s just the way they are?” Guevara asked an international volunteer work brigade in 1960. “Absolutely not,” he said. “The people

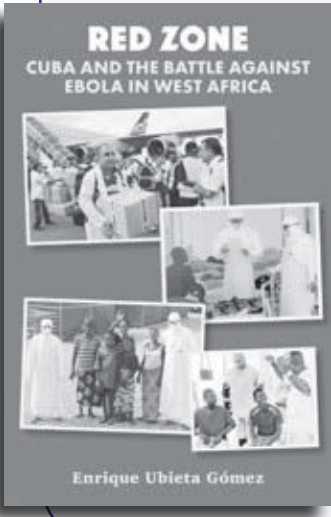
Continued on page 9

Socialist Workers Party demands government action now against capitalist economic and social crises

The Socialist Workers Party urges workers to fight for the government to take immediate action to protect working people. The complete March 18 statement by Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, is available at www.themilitant.com.

- We must demand emergency relief for the working class, farmers, small shop owners, and other exploited producers under the hammer blows of lockdowns and layoffs struck by the bosses, their government, and their Democratic and Republican parties.
- Call on the government to construct emergency hospitals, provide beds and expand the production of medical equipment and supplies — *now!* Increase the training of workers to treat those infected and massively expand testing for the virus — *now!*
- Demand that the government provide immediate jobless benefits for all workers, farmers and other exploited producers — whether or not they have “papers” the rulers demand in order to be “legal” for as long as they need it! *Weekly unemployment relief* that working people can depend on — not just a one-time check in the mail that falls far short of what is needed.
- The working class and unions need to fight for a government-funded public works program to put millions to work at union-scale wages — building hospitals, housing, and other facilities working people need.
- We need to demand a crash government program to greatly expand the resources to produce a coronavirus vaccine, as well as medicines to ameliorate the conditions and cure those infected. Such vital work can’t be left to profit-driven decisions and priorities by the owners of giant drug companies, nor to billion-dollar federal bonanzas for their coffers.

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



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—Fidel Castro, October 2014

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The US Civil War was Second American Revolution

America's Revolutionary Heritage: Marxist Essays by George Novack is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for April. Novack joined the communist movement in the United States in 1933 and remained a member and leader of the Socialist Workers Party until his death in 1992. He wrote a series of valuable books on questions of Marxist politics, history and philosophy available from Pathfinder. This excerpt from the chapter "The Civil War — Its Place in History" is a powerful answer to some liberal or radical political views current today that belittle or deny the revolutionary character of both the 1776 War of Independence and the 1861-65 Civil War. Copyright © 1976 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Alexander Gardner/Library of Congress

President Abraham Lincoln meets with officers of Union army in 1862. Second American Revolution abolished chattel slavery, also marked the end of progressive political role of U.S. bourgeoisie, wrote Novack.

contradictory effects upon American social development. The interaction of these two fundamental factors, the first rooted in national soil and the second stemming from world conditions, constituted the principal driving force in American history between the close of the first revolutionary struggle and the outbreak of the second.

It is impossible to understand the necessity for a Second American Revolution without grasping the dynamics of these two interpenetrating processes out of which it emerged. The First American Revolution took place in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The second unfolded in the middle of the nineteenth century. Separated by an interval of almost seventy-five years, these two revolutions are customarily regarded as totally different and completely disconnected events. This view is superficial and false. In reality the First American Revolution and the Civil War form two parts of an indivisible whole. They comprised distinct yet interlinked stages in the development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in the United States.

The bourgeois-national revolutionary movement in North America had five main tasks to fulfill. These were: (1) to free the American people from foreign domination; (2) to consolidate the separate colonies or states into one nation; (3) to set up a democratic republic; (4) to place state power in the hands of the bourgeoisie; and (5) most important of all, to rid American society of its pre-capitalist encumbrances (Indian tribal-

ism, feudalism, slavery) in order to permit the full and free expansion of capitalist forces of production and exchange. These five tasks were all bound together, the solution of one preparing the conditions for the solution of the rest. ...

The social structure of the United States at the end of the eighteenth century was a composite of slave and free labor, of precapitalist and capitalist forms of production. To complete the reconstruction of society along bourgeois lines, it would have been necessary to break up the soil in which slavery was rooted. This proved impossible under the prevailing conditions. The slave interests were sufficiently powerful at the time of the Revolution to prevent any tampering with the institution in its southern strongholds and even to obtain constitutional warrant for its perpetuation. The opponents of slavery could do no more than restrict its scope by providing for the abolition of the foreign slave trade at the end of twenty years, for emancipation in certain northern states where slavery was of slight economic importance, and for its prohibition within the unsettled northwestern territories. ...

The victory of the Republican Party in the presidential elections of 1860 and the ensuing departure of the slave states brought to a head the struggle between the southern planters and northern bourgeoisie, the proslavery and antislavery camps, the counterrevolution and the revolution. The secessionist coup d'état revived all the problems

of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, including those which had presumably been forever settled. ...

The bourgeois Republicans, who had taken power on a program of restricting the slave power, found that they could hold it against the assaults of the Confederacy only by resorting to increasingly revolutionary measures leading to the overthrow and abolition of the slave power. *In order to conserve the conquests of the First American Revolution, it was found necessary to extend them through another.* A supplementary upheaval of social-economic relations was required to support the political overturn in 1860.

In the course of this Second Revolution, the most radical representatives of industrial capital and their plebeian allies completed the tasks initiated by their predecessors in the first. Placing themselves at the head of the antislavery forces, the Radicals took complete control of the federal government and concentrated its apparatus in their hands. They defeated the armies of the Confederacy on the battlefields of the Civil War; shattered the political and economic power of the slave oligarchy; consolidated the bourgeois dictatorship set up during the war; and remodeled the Republic into conformity with their own class aims and interests.

This Second American Revolution not only installed a new governing class in office but, by abolishing chattel slavery, scrapped the principal form of property and labor in the South. The great political and social problem which had agitated the United States ever since the birth of the republic — how to dispose of the slave power and its "peculiar institution" — was definitively settled.

The Second Revolution also concluded the progressive political role of the American bourgeoisie. After it helped annihilate the slave power and slavery, its political usefulness was utterly exhausted. Like the plantation aristocracy before it, the new ruling capitalist oligarchy rapidly transformed itself into a thoroughly reactionary force, until it came to constitute the main obstacle to social progress not only within the United States but throughout the world.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY GEORGE NOVACK

The Civil War had deep historical roots. It was the inevitable product of two interlacing processes. One was the degeneration of the First American Revolution, which unfolded by slow stages until it culminated in open counterrevolution. The other was the rise of capitalist industrialism with its

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Go to work and join shop floor struggles!

The *Militant* urges its readers to join on-the-job actions for safer working conditions and higher wages being organized on shop floors around the country. And to join with your co-workers to emulate the initiative and example set by those standing up to the bosses today.

Such fights are the only road for workers to protect themselves from the profit-driven speedup, disregard of safety and disdain pushed by the bosses, and to gain the self-confidence and class consciousness to advance. Send in reports of the workplace actions and protests you are involved in to the *Militant*. And join us to help get the *Militant* around.

Only by extending the struggles that take place now can we build the fighting labor movement we need — one that demands protection for all workers against the conditions we face.

The bosses, their parties and government have responded to the spread of coronavirus in the only way their system knows — by stepping up their exploitation of workers and our allies and leaving those thrown out of work to fend for themselves.

They say “we” have to work together to overcome a crisis they blame entirely on the outbreak of the virus. Their efforts to hide the real source of the crises we face — their capitalist system — aims to deter us from fighting to take back from the bosses the wealth that our labor alone produces. There is no “we” that unites workers and the propertied families that exploit us. The real crisis workers face is brought on by the workings of capitalism.

Bosses’ treatment of working people isn’t a “mistake,” it’s the product of their class values. City officials in Las Vegas prefer to “house” homeless workers in outdoor parking lots rather than in the thousands of empty hotel rooms there, which they consider useful only as a source of income for the owners. And the capitalist rulers have no moral compunction from shutting down 12-step programs for former alcoholics and addicts — programs they deem “nonessential” and have ordered closed.

The fight to end the social relations that produce these immoral conditions once and forever begins with the struggles workers are waging today on the shop floor. Go to work and join them!

Miners strike against Asarco union busting

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ers, Teamsters and members of five other unions have thinned the number of picketers in response to government urging during the coronavirus outbreak.

“We limit the picket line to a maximum of 10 people now with what’s going on,” Murphy said. And weekly dinners at the Mission and Silver Bell mines that drew many miners with their families and supporters have been temporarily suspended.

Because of runs on food stores, the union’s food bank in Kearny was closed March 16 and the one in Tucson is short of supplies.

“We’re going to get the food pantry going again soon,” Murphy said. “We got a call a few hours ago from a food bank in Superior. They had 60 boxes of food left over they wanted to contribute. Our members are going to get them.”

Asarco is owned by Grupo Mexico, one of the giant international mining conglomerates that dominate the industry worldwide. The company is seeking to continue its decadelong wage freeze for most workers and to limit the unions’ right to protect workers on the job.

The bosses have continued some production at its three open-pit mines in Arizona — Ray, Mission and Silver Bell — with workers who have crossed the picket lines, replacement workers, nonunion contractors and supervisors.

At the Ray Mine, bosses run two buses of scabs every day from Tucson and Phoenix. “From what we can tell, they’re running six to nine haul trucks and one to two shovels each shift,” Murphy said. “When we were out there we operated 30 trucks and five shovels and loaders.”

The company’s smelter in Hayden has been idle since the beginning of the strike. “They say they want to fire up the smelter in May but we’ll see,” Murphy said. Before the strike the company poured in \$229 million to upgrade the smelter after the Environmental

Protection Agency fined them for pollution.

As part of its effort to bust the union, Asarco petitioned the National Labor Relations Board to decertify USW Local 937 at the Silver Bell Mine. Nearly 150 workers are employed there. The company says over 90% crossed the picket line and only 11 workers on strike are members of the union. This isn’t the case at the other mines where a big majority joined the strike.

The NLRB on March 5 dismissed Asarco’s petition. The company “only establishes that a very small minority of unit employees have made statements about their dissatisfaction with the Union,” the NLRB regional director said. The company appealed the ruling.

Arizona, where most copper mining in the U.S. takes place, has a long history of miners fighting to unionize against stiff resistance by the copper barons backed by the state.

In 1983 Phelps Dodge forced workers at its Morenci mine out on strike. Union picket lines of over 1,000 repulsed company efforts to herd scabs into the mine. Then the governor called up the National Guard and posted sharpshooters at the mine to escort scabs in.

A year after the strike started, the federal government orchestrated a union decertification election without the strikers able to vote. Asarco is seeking to do something similar at the Silver Bell Mine.

These copper miners standing up to Asarco deserve your support and solidarity. Send messages and donations 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 for Tucson-area strikers. Solidarity messages can be sent to 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.

Cuban Revolution opens door to int’l solidarity

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are the way they are because they are in the midst of a revolution.”

Cuban doctors arriving in Antigua March 26 “have a lot of experience working in many other countries,” explained Maria Cabreja, Cuba’s ambassador. The 31 volunteer medics arriving there will work at a center being reorganized for use as a quarantine and isolation facility.

“Maybe their English is not perfect but they can understand. But better than that they have the sensibility and the desire to help people and that’s the most important thing and that’s why I am so proud of them,” Cabreja added.

Dr. Yalier López arrived with other volunteers to

reinforce the Cuban medical mission in Venezuela March 17. He told Cuba Sí that they had undergone vital preparatory training to combat epidemics before leaving the island. “This is another mission for the revolution,” he said, “and to me, it’s an honor to be one of the doctors chosen to bring this to fruition.”

Many of the Cuban doctors and nurses joining these internationalist missions to fight coronavirus had previous experience on missions working with others to push back the Ebola virus in West Africa.

“Medical personnel who will go anywhere to save lives, even at the risk of losing their own, are the greatest example of solidarity a human being can offer, above all because they aren’t motivated by material interest,” Fidel Castro explained in 2014.

End US sanctions!

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Iranian people, because of the virus pandemic, its “maximum pressure campaign” includes a new round of sanctions that have limited Tehran’s ability to purchase needed equipment and medicines.

Sharp anti-Venezuela measures

Escalating its campaign to overthrow the government of Venezuela, the Justice Department March 26 unsealed indictments of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and other government officials, claiming a conspiracy to ship massive amounts of cocaine to the U.S. And the State Department announced a \$15 million reward for information leading to the capture or conviction of Maduro.

Violating Venezuela’s sovereignty, Washington called March 31 for a “transitional” government picked by the National Assembly that is dominated by pro-imperialist opposition parties. It would exclude Maduro and U.S.-backed Juan Guaidó, who claims he is Venezuela’s president and has been trying for over a year to foment a military coup to overthrow Maduro, but could include some members of Maduro’s party, the White House says.

Washington hates the friendly relations and collaboration between the governments and people of Cuba and Venezuela. Thousands of Cuban internationalist volunteers, including doctors, nurses and teachers, have brought health care and culture to the most isolated regions of Venezuela. And Venezuela has been a key source of low-cost oil for Cuba, which has been standing up to a U.S. economic war for more than 60 years.

With major shortages of medical supplies — and many clinics running without water and soap — the Maduro government requested a \$5 billion emergency loan from the International Monetary Fund. The IMF turned the request down on the pretext that there is a dispute over who is the country’s president.

Stepped-up squeeze on Cuba

Over the last year the U.S. government has restored some restrictions on travel to Cuba, stepped up pressure on foreign banks to not handle Cuban financial transactions and sanctioned companies that ship Venezuelan oil to Cuba.

The drop in trade since the start of the pandemic and Washington’s economic war add up to greater hardships in Cuba, José Ramón Machado Ventura, second secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba, explained at three regional meetings held on the island March 28-29. Before the pandemic Cuba had already begun taking measures, including using oxen instead of tractors on many farms. Now there is even less fuel for tractors, less fertilizer and pesticides, and fewer food imports.

The meetings laid out the need for farmers and workers to increase agricultural production. Not through “slogans,” Machado said, but by learning from the farmers who have been most successful in increasing yields, careful planning and convincing more workers to shift to farm work.

A coalition of 11 groups in Miami, including the Alianza Martiana, issued a statement March 27 calling on Washington to end its sanctions against Cuba and Venezuela.

“Now is the time to end the U.S. blockade of Cuba,” said the National Network on Cuba, in a March 28 statement.

The U.S. rulers “try to get us to think that ‘we’re all in this together,’” Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president Alyson Kennedy told the *Militant* March 30. “But their actions prove the opposite. Everything they do is to defend their system and their profits.

“Like revolutionary Cuba, we start with solidarity with working people around the world,” Kennedy said. “We demand an immediate and permanent end to the U.S. embargo of Cuba, and an end to the sanctions on Venezuela, Iran and North Korea.”

The ‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

The fund guarantees reduced rate subscriptions for prisoners. Send a check or money order payable to the ‘Militant’, earmarked “Prisoners’ Fund” to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Or donate online at www.themilitant.com