

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

During 1918 'Spanish flu' outbreak working-class struggle exploded
— PAGE 5

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Social crisis today deepens strains pulling the EU apart

BY TERRY EVANS

European Union finance ministers held an acrimonious summit April 9, trying to cobble together a deal for resurrecting the trading bloc members' crumbling economies. They did finally reach an agreement, but it began to unravel within minutes.

Rival capitalist governments are fighting over whether the strongest among them — led by the German bosses — will further their domination or be saddled with some of the debt of their weaker adversaries. As their divisions sharpen amid an unfolding economic and social crisis marked by government shutdowns, each member ruling class seeks a competitive edge by squeezing harder on workers' wages and working conditions.

The pact adopted extends credit
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How can rail workers unite and meet the bosses attacks?

BY CANDACE WAGNER

Facing what they claimed were coming "labor shortages" due to potential employee coronavirus cases, U.S. rail bosses demanded and were quickly granted waivers on maintenance and safety rules by the pro-employer Federal Railroad Administration.

AS I SEE IT

These include cutting back track and equipment inspections and giving the bosses the right to use crews who are not qualified to work on a given route or yard whenever they "document" a manpower shortage.

I work as a freight conductor out of New Jersey, a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and
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Organize to defend jobs, wages, working conditions

Bosses dump costs of 'recovery' on workers' backs



Above, EPA-EFE/Shutterstock/Cristobal Herrera, Insert, LA Tenants Union
Above, line to file for unemployment in Hialeah, Florida, April 7. Inset, rent protest in Los Angeles April 1.

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The International Monetary Fund forecast April 14 the unfolding global depression conditions facing working people today will be the worst since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The contraction already dwarfs that of the global financial crisis 12 years ago.

The downward arc of capitalism

over decades caused by a declining rate of profit has now burst forth, triggered by far-reaching shutdown measures imposed by capitalist governments worldwide.

Bosses and their governments are demanding "we" must all sacrifice for the greater good, but what they are doing and preparing to do to rescue
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Join us in using the 'Militant' to advance workers' struggles today

Campaign to expand reach of 'Militant,' books, fund

April 4 - May 19 (week one)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	received
UNITED STATES						
Albany	45	6	45		\$5,600	\$145
Atlanta	45	6	45	7	\$9,750	\$300
Chicago	60	29	60	20	\$11,400	\$1,150
Dallas	20	13	20	1	\$2,500	\$0
Lincoln	10	1	10	2	\$250	\$100
Los Angeles	60	15	60	7	\$10,800	\$225
Louisville	40	4	40		\$3,200	\$0
Miami	20	4	20	1	\$3,500	\$175
New Jersey	35	11	40	3	\$3,500	\$1,130
New York	50	12	50		\$13,500	\$1,987
Oakland	50	0	65	8	\$12,000	\$200
Philadelphia	20	3	20	5	\$3,000	\$0
Pittsburgh	20	6	20	1	\$2,250	\$0
Seattle	40	7	40		\$10,000	\$950
Twin Cities	20	11	20	4	\$3,500	\$0
Washington	30	8	30	4	\$5,000	\$1,375
Other		1				
Total U.S.	565	137	585	63	\$99,750	\$7,737
Prisoners	25	8				
UNITED KINGDOM						
London						\$100
Manchester	20	6	20	13	\$1,380	
Total U.K.	20	6	20	13	\$1,380	\$100
Canada	50		65		\$9,000	\$140
New Zealand	10	4	10		\$3,000	\$1,290
Australia	15		15		\$800	\$200
Total	685	155	695	76	\$113,930	\$9,467
SHOULD BE	700	119	700	119	\$115,000	\$19,550

BY SETH GALINSKY

César Moreno told Socialist Workers Party members Martín Koppel and Roy Landersen that after Gov. Andrew Cuomo ordered the shutdown of most construction sites in New York March 27, his boss offered him another job — at \$10 less an hour. Moreno said no thanks.

Koppel and Landersen were talking to Moreno as part of the *Militant's* six-week drive to win new subscribers, get books by working-class revolutionaries into more hands and expand the number of contributors to the \$115,000 Militant Fighting Fund. (See chart below.)

SWP members at retail stores, on the railroads and at other worksites join co-workers in organizing resistance to the kind of attacks that Moreno and millions of other workers across the U.S. face today. They discuss with working people in the countryside, small towns and big cities how we can respond to the bosses' attempts to step up their exploitation. They encourage those

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Demand gov't-funded public works program to provide millions of jobs!

Socialist Workers Party 2020 presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy issued this statement April 15 in Washington, D.C. Malcolm Jarrett is the party's vice presidential candidate.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

As the capitalist rulers debate how fast they can ease up on their shutdown of workplaces and production, they will face fierce competition following similar shutdowns worldwide and a universal sharp contraction in production and trade.

Each of them will fight with all they have to protect their markets and profits against their rivals, doing so by intensifying their assaults on working people. They will step up what they have already been doing — pressing workers to work longer, harder, faster, in less safe conditions, and for lower pay. Any recovery for their class and their system built on exploitation and oppression can only be built on our backs.

This makes every effort by workers today to stand up to the bosses and to fight for dignity important. It means we need to overcome the panic and

dread the rulers try to inculcate in us to get us to acquiesce to being pushed out of work and "socially isolated."

Each time we combine together with fellow workers to fight the bosses we gain much needed experience and advance our self-confidence and trust in each other.

Socialist Workers Party members look for and listen to what's happening to our co-workers where we work and join together with fellow workers
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Bangladesh garment workers protest for jobs, pay 7

—On the picket line, p. 5—

'We still got a job to do in this strike,' Asarco miners say

How can rail workers unite?

Continued from front page

Trainmen. There's a lot of discussion among rail workers about this government gift to our bosses.

I tell my co-workers that our unions' memberships need to organize to demand the return to work today of all furloughed workers; that crews get trained on unfamiliar territory at company expense; and for an increase in inspection and repair of locomotives to protect the safety of both train crews and the public.

For the last several years, North American railroads have been increasing profit margins by laying off mechanical workers and conductors, speeding up operations, running longer and longer trains and squeezing their customers. Over 20 rail workers were killed on the job last year.

"In the last six months, 60% of the rail jobs here in Lincoln have been eliminated, nearly 150 workers have been furloughed," Lance Anton, a conductor and member of the SMART-TD union in Nebraska, told the *Militant*.

"They will definitely use this waiver to further their agenda," Robin Smith, a locomotive engineer and member of the SMART-TD union in Pennsylvania, told me. "Being qualified on the territory is critical for safety. It means knowing where the downgrades are, the signals and road crossings. It also means being able to direct emergency help to your location in the event of a hazardous spill, a fire or a medical emergency."

Travis Zuluaga, a member of the BLET in the Albany, New York, area, explained that maintenance workers "say they don't have time to fix anything. At one point one railroad was telling their workers they had seven minutes to fix each engine that came into

the shop," he said. "It's not uncommon on the railroads for engines in service to have serious safety issues. Sometimes engineers write up engines for needed work, but they are sent right back out without fixing the problems."

"We know that work can be performed safely," Anton said. "But only when workers have control over job conditions."

Last week an engine caught fire in western New Jersey on route to Pennsylvania. Then the following day, at the same location, sparks from a train burned vegetation on both sides of the track for close to five miles. It was just luck that no one was injured or greater damage done.

The Federal Railroad Administration reported more than 1,200 derailments in 2019, with over half of those blamed on equipment or track failures. And that was before the rail bosses get the government's OK to further cut back on inspections.

Attack on crew size, work conditions

For years rail bosses have been on a drive to cut crew size to boost profits. The Class 1 railroads are on a major campaign today to eliminate the conductor, claiming that the conductors' duties can be taken over by computer programs. A section of the FRA waiver grants permission for a train operated by a qualified engineer to run at full speed with no restrictions, even though being worked by a conductor not qualified on the territory. This waiver shows the sympathies of the FRA are on the side of the bosses' drive to eliminate conductors.

I say, let's use our union power to fight to limit the length of the trains and double the crew size, have an en-



Militant/John Steele

Canadian National workers waged eight-day "strike for safety" last November. Rail bosses across North America are laying off workers, speeding up work and running longer trains.

gine or caboose on the rear.

The rail bosses — like all bosses — are using the current social and economic crisis to further their effort to maximize profits at the expense of workers' jobs and working conditions.

We need to recognize this and work to undercut the divisions promoted by the bosses and learn to use union power to fight for workers control of production and transport.

"Engineers and conductors work together but have been divided by the company," Zuluaga explains. "We need a single union to represent both." I add that we need one union for all rail workers industrywide, including crew transport workers. In the meantime, we can all fight together.

Last year conductors and engineers in Framingham, Massachusetts, organized a work-to-rule campaign at the CSX yard there because management was pushing to speed up their work. Last fall Local 1409 of the SMART union organized an informational picket in downtown Kansas City, Missouri, to tell people how Union Pacific rail bosses are laying off workers and threatening rail safety in the area.

We can learn from examples like these, and organize to use our union power to fight back. We need to learn the truth that the union is the membership. Union is when we stand up together and say "no."

A dead-end strategy is putting union

resources into electing "friends of labor" politicians, who supposedly will promote legislation to "help us." This includes efforts to get state legislatures to pass laws requiring two-person crews on trains in their states. This effort continues months after the Federal Railroad Administration reaffirmed that states have no jurisdiction over the railroads. The working class has never won anything this way. The dwindling numbers in our unions and the growing attacks on our wages and working conditions has been the result of this dead-end perspective.

For our own party, a labor party

I support the call for a labor party that would organize workers, union and nonunion alike, to defend the interests of all the exploited and oppressed. We need to fight for workers control of production. These are the key planks of the campaign of Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett, Socialist Workers Party candidates for president and vice president, and all the SWP candidates in 2020.

Today we need to build solidarity with workers wherever they are organizing a fight to defend conditions and wages on the job. "An injury to one is an injury to all."

Candace Wagner is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress in New Jersey's 8th District.

THE MILITANT

Cuban Revolution shows road forward

For over six decades Cuba's socialist revolution has mobilized working people to deal collectively with natural disasters from hurricanes to epidemics. The *'Militant'* points to the revolution as an example for all workers and campaigns against the U.S. rulers' efforts to overthrow it.



Trabajadores/Heriberto González Brito Workers in Havana soap factory. Cuba is increasing production in face of world crisis.

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

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Telephone: (212) 244-4899

Fax: (212) 244-4947

E-mail: themilitant@mac.com

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Join us in using the ‘Militant’

Continued from front page they talk with to read the *Militant* — a crucial and unique source of information about working-class struggles.

The construction site where Moreno worked is nonunion and many of his co-workers are immigrants who don't have papers the government considers legitimate. “The bosses use the virus as an excuse to gut workers’ wages and conditions,” Koppel said. “They try to pit workers without papers against those with papers.” The biggest division today is between employed and unemployed workers, Landersen added.

The Socialist Workers Party calls for amnesty for undocumented workers as a key demand to unite working people as we stand up to the bosses.

“In the Dominican Republic they discriminate against Haitians,” said Moreno’s wife, Diopleslyn. “In Puerto Rico they discriminate against Dominicans. In Miami they discriminate against Puerto Ricans.”

“The only ones who benefit are the bosses,” added Moreno. They bought a subscription.

In Kent, a small town south of Seattle, former truck driver Dorothy Boon, who grew up on a farm in eastern

Washington, bought a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions*, after talking to Rebecca Williamson, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in the 9th District in Washington.

It’s one of several books on special during the drive with a *Militant* subscription. These books provide those interested the chance to learn more about the kind of party workers need to make our struggles effective. Others are *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, both by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. See the ad on page 6 for other special book offers.

Radio show with SWP candidates

Minnesota’s KFAI radio’s Catalyst program, hosted by Lydia Howell, broadcast a segment on the Socialist Workers Party 2020 election campaign April 10, featuring interviews with candidates Alyson Kennedy for president, Malcolm Jarrett for vice president and David Rosenfeld for U.S. Senate.

Howell said that the SWP candidates “don’t have a snowball’s chance in hell” of winning, “but their ideas



Militant/Rachele Fruit

Due to rising fuel and maintenance costs, “we’ve been dying for last four years,” owner-operator Jimmy Calloway told SWP presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy, at Georgia truck stop.

are important.” She encouraged her audience “to broaden your world view of what’s possible.”

“More than 10 million people are out of work,” said Kennedy, a Walmart cashier. “We need to fight for a government-funded public works program to build hospitals” and other things people need.

“There’s a reason there are not enough hospital beds,” she pointed out. “Bosses

have made cuts over the last decade, including closing hospitals. It’s been mean and lean for years.” Kennedy added that the capitalist government never stockpiled needed medical supplies like ventilators or masks because that’s not profitable to the bosses.

Howell said she was glad that Kennedy raised that. “I have worked in the service industry my whole life. Now it’s not

Continued on page 4

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Help show the *Militant* and books to co-workers, neighbors, friends and relatives. See page 8 for a distributor near you. Or contact themilitant@mac.com.

Send contributions to the fighting fund to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

Truckers discuss crisis, ‘There’s almost no work’

BY RACHELE FRUIT

ELLENWOOD, Ga. — “You see all these trucks? They haven’t moved for weeks,” Jimmy Calloway, an independent owner-operator working on his rig at a truck stop here in early April, told Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, and this worker-correspondent. “There’s almost no work, and what there is we can’t afford to move.”

Calloway has been trucking for 20 years. He showed us the log on his phone that lists available freight runs. A trip from Athens, Georgia, to Rochester, New York, offered \$600. “That trip costs \$700 in fuel,” he said. “Insurance on this truck alone is \$1,400 a month.”

“We’ve been dying for the last four years,” Calloway said, as truckers have faced rising fuel and maintenance costs. Federal rules, imposed on the pretext of

defending safety, make life more difficult for independent owner-operators.

Calloway showed us a device that, he said, “made someone a millionaire” — the Electronic Driver Log, a little white box that uses GPS to let shipping bosses keep track of the truckers’ time and movements. “They give us 14 hours to accept a job, pick it up, eat or do whatever you have to do, and get to the destination. If we run out of time, they shut us down for 10 hours. That’s why you see trucks parked along the side of the highway.”

The SWP 2020 campaign platform starts with the need for all workers to fight against the attacks of the bosses. The trucking bosses want owner-operators to see themselves as aspiring capitalists. But they are fellow workers who need to organize together to have control over their work conditions and to fight for adequate wages.

Calloway got a copy of the *Militant* and introduced us to fellow driver Oneil Grant, who used to own seven trucks but now has two. He and his wife sold the others and opened a small restaurant down the street, where business has plummeted under the government’s current “social isolation” restrictions.

“They call it a stimulus. I call it a bailout for the biggest companies,” Grant said, pointing to the \$2 trillion package Congress and President Donald Trump recently put together for the airlines, hotel bosses and other big-business tycoons. “The separation between the poor and the rich is just getting bigger. And look how the Trump administration treats immigrants. Immigrants labored and built this country.”

“Working people must break from the capitalist two-party system,” Kennedy said. “It doesn’t matter which of the bosses’ parties is in the White House. We need a labor party. We call for amnesty for all workers in this country, so all workers have equal rights and we can organize together.”

Rachele Fruit is Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Georgia.

Socialist Workers Party 2020 campaign platform

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 capi-

talist 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 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.

‘Speak out against blaming Jews for COVID-19 spread’

BY JOE YOUNG

MONTREAL — Jews in the Montreal area — and in other areas in Canada, the U.S. and beyond — are being attacked and scapegoated on anti-Semitic charges of spreading the COVID-19 epidemic. The Quebec government has put the province on lockdown, including banning all gatherings.

Hasidic Jewish congregations located in the Outremont neighborhood have been accused of violating the order. In the last week police raided three synagogues there based on telephone reports that people were inside.

The Montreal cops sent eight squad cars to one of the synagogues, as if they were dealing with a major threat.

“In each case it was false,” Alain Picard, a spokesman for the Council of Hasidic Jews of Quebec, told the *Montreal Gazette*. “Police came and found there was no one in the synagogues.” All synagogues in Montreal are closed, he pointed out.

The supposed gathering was likely people lined up at a nearby Jewish grocery store, Picard said. He denounced any “tendency to associate Jews with the disease,” saying to all who do so, and especially to the police, “You have to stop stigmatizing us.”

The disease, Picard said, “strikes everyone regardless of religion, color, language or age.”

However, the *Journal de Montréal*, a major French-language daily, continues to push the anti-Semitic canard that the reports of secret meetings are true.

“We must refuse to let the crank members of religious groups defy the directives imposed by this confinement that is so painful, so stressful, but so necessary,” Denise Bombardier, a major columnist for the *Journal*, wrote of the Hasidic Jews April 3.

“Jews were blamed for the Black Death and other epidemics” going back to the Middle Ages, Alexander Werzberger of the Coalition of Outremont Hasidic Organizations told the *Militant*. “They claimed that Jews poisoned the wells to spread disease.” He pointed out that the Chinese people have also been slandered and blamed for the spread of COVID-19.

Picard said that in Boisbriand the Hasidic Tosh Jewish community of 4,000 people was forcibly quarantined by the government March 29 after 27 members tested positive for COVID-19. Jews there are now compelled by police to

stay inside their homes and can’t go out to shop or for walks, even if they aren’t symptomatic. Anyone seeking to go in and out of the neighborhood is forced to show identification to the police and guards posted around it.

Some 200 members of the Tosh community gathered April 7 when a food truck bringing supplies for Passover was barred from entering Boisbriand. They protested their forced confinement.

Pierre-Luc Filion and Steve Penner, who stood as Communist League candidates in last October’s federal election, issued a statement April 8 condemning the anti-Jewish campaign.

“We urge all working people, their unions, and all supporters of democratic rights to join us in speaking out against blaming Jews for spreading the COVID-19 epidemic,” they say. “The fight against Jew-hatred and anti-Semitism is a life-and-death question for the working class.”

“The scapegoating of Jews for economic and social problems and the violence it breeds is centuries old — including the claim that Jews spread disease,” the statement says. “Jew-hatred lives on under capitalism, flaring up much more strongly in times of economic and social crisis, as class tensions sharpen.”

The goal of this Jew-hatred “is to provide a scapegoat to divert us from seeing the real enemy — the capitalist system itself.”

“We are not on the verge of a mass fascist movement today,” the statement continues. “But bigger crises

Neighbors, churches condemn anti-Semitic attack



As soon as word got out that two synagogues in Huntsville, Alabama, had been defaced with threatening anti-Semitic graffiti, nearby residents and members of area churches sprang into action. They spoke out about the attack and joined in cleaning up or painting over the Jew-hating scrawls, above.

The first attack took place at the Etz Chayim Synagogue April 8 on the first night of Passover, a major Jewish holiday. Vandals painted “F---k Kikes,” “Gas Em All,” “White Power,” “Jew Rats” and swastikas on its walls.

The next night the Chabad center, which is both a house of worship and a private home, was also vandalized with similar anti-Semitic filth.

We “condemn this horrendous act of hatred in our community,” said The Dwelling Place, one of numerous statements of solidarity from local churches. “We love you and are standing with you.”

“Such attacks must not be tolerated,” said Pastor Timothy Cox, president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention.

Tobias Mendelson, president of the Jewish Federation of Huntsville and North Alabama, said that the attack is “meant to terrify us. Make no mistake, we will not be scared out of this wonderful place we call home.”

Earlier in the week a similar vandal attack was aimed at Ahavat Shalom, an Orthodox Persian synagogue in Los Angeles.

— SETH GALINSKY

and class battles are coming.”

“The only way to end Jew-hatred for all time is to eliminate capitalism,” Filion and Penner conclude. “That can only

be done by a self-confident working class, in alliance with farmers, wresting power from the capitalist class and joining the fight for a socialist world.”

Join in using ‘Militant’ to advance workers struggles

Continued from page 3

just supplies on demand, it’s people on demand,” she said. “You go to work at a warehouse or a fast-food restaurant and the manager can say, ‘I don’t need you right now, come back in three hours.’”

The SWP candidates pointed to struggles by workers at Walmart for better conditions on the job. Such struggles “increase the solidarity of these workers and their understanding of what is needed,” Jarrett explained.

The interview is available at kfai.org.

‘Militant tells the truth’

Supporters of the *Militant* in Washington, D.C., have won new contributors to the fighting fund. After pledging

\$250, Maurice Peret, a disability rights advocate in Baltimore, thanked the paper “for so faithfully telling the truth and continuing the struggle against the barbaric capitalist class.” A first time contributor, a high school teacher from Chesterfield, Virginia, sent in \$250. As a result of the new pledges Washington campaigners raised their goal by \$500.

While weekly papers across the country are being forced to stop publication after losing advertising revenue, the *Militant* is going strong. The paper doesn’t accept any paid advertising. It relies on contributions from its readers and other workers who value its uncompromising defense of working-class interests and who are interested in finding out more about the road forward the SWP presents — the transformation of millions of

working people in the course of revolutionary struggle that makes possible the replacement of capitalist rule with workers power.

Socialist Workers Party campaign button



Available for \$1 from campaign offices listed on page 8

2020 Socialist Workers Party candidates

Alyson Kennedy for president
Malcolm Jarrett for vice president

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

South

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

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Southwest and West Coast

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The roots of Jew-hatred and how to fight against it

“The disappearance of Hitler can change nothing fundamental in the situation of the Jews. A transitory improvement of their condition will in no wise alter the profound roots of twentieth-century anti-Semitism.”

The tragic fate of Judaism mirrors with singular sharpness the situation of all humanity. Capitalism bars the road of the past as well as the highway to the future.

Only the destruction of capitalism will make it possible for humanity to benefit from the immense achievements of the industrial era.”

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In 1918 'Spanish flu' outbreak working-class struggle exploded

BY EMMA JOHNSON

"We are all in this together" is the daily chorus pushed by the capitalist rulers in the U.S. and around the world today, attempting to cover over the reality that society is sharply class-divided and they aim to survive on our backs. Their goal is to make working people forego the class struggle and hunker down, atomized under imposed isolation. They claim we all face a virus crisis, not a social crisis whose origins are in the downward arc of the capitalist system.

As part of this campaign, an April 3 article in the *New York Times* argues that the lessons of the 1918-19 "Spanish flu" pandemic — an outbreak far larger and deadly than the one today — proves that social isolation and shutting down the economy is essential.

The fact is that during this time workers worldwide joined in massive class battles amid imperialist war and proletarian revolutions.

When the flu began spreading in the spring of 1918, the first imperialist world war was still raging. Workers refused to turn off the class struggle. The Bolsheviks had just led workers and farmers to

power in Russia and were beating back a multisided assault from counterrevolutionary forces backed by eight invading imperialist armies.

Workers and farmers in Germany rose up in the millions in 1919 seeking to emulate the revolution in Russia. A strike wave spread across the U.S., with hundreds of thousands of workers fighting in the streets, including a general strike in Seattle.

That pandemic started in the U.S., Europe and parts of Asia and swiftly spread around the world. A highly contagious wave appeared in the fall of 1918 and successive waves continued in early 1920. Estimates of deaths vary between 20 million and 50 million, and the number of infected up to 500 million.

It first hit the U.S. in August at military bases. To fight their imperialist war, the rulers turned workers in uniform not just into cannon fodder but also incubators of the virus. Forty percent of the Navy and 36% of the Army caught it, and spread it as they trained and were transported to fight abroad.

A shortage of workers during the war had forced concessions from the bosses,



Courtesy Museum of History & Industry



In February 1919 more than 60,000 union members in Seattle walked out in first general strike in the U.S. City was hard hit by "Spanish flu," but workers did not put the class struggle on hold.

improving wages and working conditions. When millions of soldiers came back to join the workforce, the capitalists tried to take all this back.

In 1919, workers responded with a strike wave involving 4 million people, one-fifth of the workforce. Hundreds of thousands of steelworkers and coal miners struck. Tens of thousands of garment workers were out for 13 weeks.

Seattle was hard hit by the flu with

some 1,400 deaths. The local government closed schools, theaters, dance halls, restaurants, most public spaces and put all military bases in quarantine. This didn't stop 60,000 union members from shutting down the city for a week. It was the country's first general strike.

Eugene V. Debs, a leader of the Socialist Party in the U.S. and supporter of the Bolshevik Revolution, delivered a scathing indictment of the U.S. rulers' imperialist war policy at a public rally of 1,000 people in Canton, Ohio, in June 1918. He was indicted and sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. Debs ran as the SP candidate for president in 1920 from his prison cell.

Sizable public mobilizations by women took place throughout this period demanding the right to vote. Victory was won with passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1920.

Bolshevik Revolution

Led by the Bolsheviks, workers, farmers and soldiers formed soviets — workers councils — and seized power in the October 1917 Russian Revolution.

The flu pandemic didn't lead Russian workers to turn their back on the class struggle and turn to social isolation. Led by their new government, they began to reorganize society in the interests of

Continued on page 9

'We still got a job to do in this strike,' Asarco miners say

BY BERNIE SENTER

"We're still hanging in there — rolling with the punches," Kevin Chiquete, chairman of United Steelworkers Local 915's hardship committee and a diesel electric mechanic at the Ray Mine in Kearny, Arizona, told the *Militant* April 11. "We've still got a job to do in this strike and we keep our spirits up."

For six months, 1,700 miners in Arizona and Amarillo, Texas, members of the Steelworkers, Teamsters and five other unions, have been standing up to copper giant Asarco's drive to bust their unions.

The bosses are determined to extend the decadelong wage freeze for most workers, more than double health care premiums, and restrict the unions' right to protect workers on the job.

Across the country the bosses and their government are taking advantage of the spread of coronavirus to atomize many workers, telling them they have to stay home. But copper mining is considered an "essential" industry.

"There's a lot of people out of work in the area and the community has rallied around us. People still come by the picket line or the union hall and bring out food or lunch for us," Chiquete said. "We help pay the bills for members on strike but we had to close down the food pantry for the time being because it was just too difficult to get grocery supplies."

"We've limited the number of people on the picket line and at the union hall at any one time" at the Ray Mine, Chiquete said. And at the Hayden smelter pickets are also still up, but with less workers on the line.

"We're still on strike, staying faithful to the union," Debora Hewitt agreed in a phone interview April 11. Hewitt is a forklift operator at Asarco's refinery in Amarillo, and a member of United Steelworkers Local 5613. "We have to stay strong."

Hewitt said that picketing there has been suspended for a while in response

to the Amarillo city government's March 31 lockdown order, but "the union's still getting out our food cards at the union hall or the picket shack."

A similar decision to suspend picketing for now was made by the unions at the Mission and Silver Bell mines near Tucson.

Asarco has maintained some production with workers who crossed the picket line, replacement workers, nonunion contractors, and supervisors.

The company is owned by Grupo Mexico, one of the four largest copper producers in the world. It boasts having the "lowest extraction costs in the industry." Their union-busting drive in the U.S. is designed to keep that competitive edge.

Send solidarity 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.

Deborah Liatos contributed to this article.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 1, 1995

WASHINGTON, D.C. — "The struggle the Cuban people are waging is a struggle for dignity, sovereignty, and the independence of our nation," stated Cuban youth leader Kenia Serrano to an audience of some 95 people April 5 at George Washington University.

Working people feel the effects of the economic crisis in Cuba the most, explained Serrano, "but it is working people who accept the challenge to defend the social benefits" of the revolution. She pointed out that daily life is marked by "intense discussions."

Members of the International Association of Machinists were able to meet Serrano in the break room at Washington's National Airport. "Why are so many people leaving Cuba?" one young worker asked. Serrano responded, "People leave because conditions can get very hard. While 30,000 Cubans left, more than 9 million fighters for socialism remain."



May 1, 1970

Before signing the New York abortion bill into law, Gov. [Nelson] Rockefeller was heard to comment, "Women's liberation played an important part in the passage of this bill." For once what Rockefeller said was true. Women in New York have built the strongest and most visible abortion repeal movement in the country.

The New York legislature repeatedly has voted down the most timid abortion reform measures. Now New York has one of the most liberal abortion laws in the country. Direct action by the movement in the form of demonstrations, legal suits, rallies, and a broad educational campaign will be necessary if we are to win facilities for the estimated 100,000 women who will want abortions (in New York alone) each year.

We must reject any concept that the struggle is over, or that this is merely a side issue in the overall struggle for liberation.



April 28, 1945

May Day in Europe this year has approached to the accompaniment of growing mass rebellion of the war-tortured peoples. In Germany and France, the workers are beginning to rise against capitalism and assert once more their determination to end the system which plunged them into the insane holocaust of misery and death.

On April 20 the Luxembourg radio reported that Germany was torn by civil war marked by "gigantic peace demonstrations" in Berlin and Munich. In Stuttgart, anti-Nazi groups were said to have seized control of the city administration.

Meanwhile, unrest is mounting in France. The General Federation of Labor's call for a general strike on May Day asks the workers to protest against the new increase in the price of bread, the inadequate wages and the failure of the de Gaulle regime to carry out a real purge of fascist elements.

Organize to defend jobs, wages, conditions

Continued from front page
their crisis-ridden capitalist system directly targets working people and our jobs, wages, working conditions and political rights.

Increasingly workers are looking for ways to organize to defend ourselves.

The owners of ArcelorMittal, far and away the world's largest steel company, have already slashed workers' jobs and wages by as much as 45% in South Africa.

In the U.S., ArcelorMittal bosses plan to lay off all employees with less than two years seniority at the Indiana Harbor steel mill in East Chicago, a direct violation of the union contract there. They claim this is needed to protect corporate profits as the business has lost almost half its orders because of the shutdown of the U.S. auto industry.

U.S. coal bosses are pushing the government to let them stop paying special taxes that finance the federal Black Lung Disability Trust Fund. This fund — which already faces underfunding from the government's refusal to increase it — supports some 25,000 retired miners who suffer from the debilitating effects of black lung. The fund is key to miners getting medical care because the bosses have carefully engineered contrived bankruptcies to get out of responsibility for health care and pensions for the miners they exploited.

"They're crooks," Harold Sturgill, an underground West Virginia coal miner for 35 years who suffers from black lung, told the *Washington Post*, referring to the coal bosses. "They're going to try to use this virus thing to

stop paying benefits."

This is "kind of scary. Miners rely on that funding," Teresa Blackwell, director of the Tug River black lung clinic, told the *Militant* April 13. "We see miners who go without medicines to feed their families."

"The burden should be laid on the coal operators," 72-year-old former West Virginia miner David Bounds, who also has black lung, told the *Post*. "They come in our state, they mine our coal, they fill their pockets up, they declare bankruptcy. They leave with all the cash and all the money, and there's no money to pay the miners."

Joblessness hits depression levels

Tens of millions of workers have lost their jobs in the past few weeks in the U.S. And that's the government's official figures, which don't count contract workers, temps or workers without papers. It leaves out all those who haven't been able to file claims, as government websites and phone lines are swamped and repeatedly crash.

At least a third of all economic output in the U.S. has been shut down by government-imposed measures. Family farmers, small business people and other exploited layers have been devastated as the worldwide crisis of capitalism deepens.

The unprecedented surge of official jobless claims — nearly 17 million in three weeks — understates the unemployment level.

With a majority of small businesses closed, only 1% have been successful filing applications for emergency gov-

ernment loans so far. Many say they'll have to close permanently. About 30 million small firms employ almost 60 million workers, some 47.5% of the total U.S. workforce.

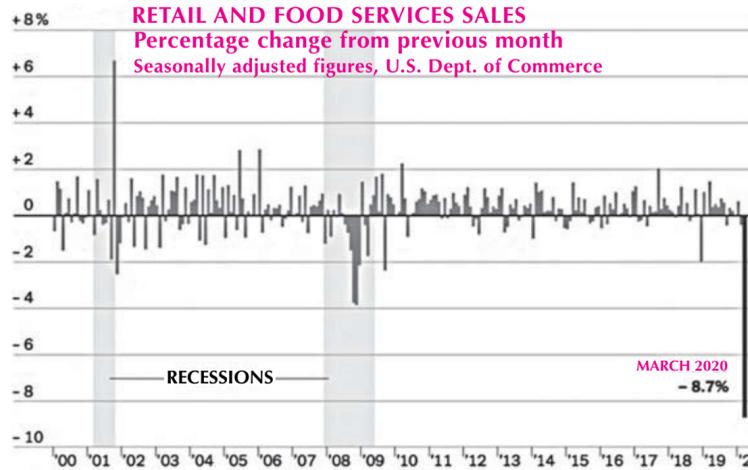
Farmers across the country are being forced to destroy precious perishable produce, while millions go short of food. From South Florida to Arizona, bean, cabbage and other vegetable fields are being plowed under, while in Idaho and elsewhere huge quantities of onions are being buried.

Bosses in Mississippi poultry plants, whose production and packaging lines are set up to supply restaurants rather than stores, are destroying eggs by the millions, rather than raise chickens they can't profit from. Milk processing bosses are telling dairy farmers to dump truckloads of raw milk, even to cull their herds.

Meanwhile, slaughterhouse shutdowns are increasing as packinghouse bosses, who have cut working conditions to the bone, claim they can't produce meat profitably under the sanitary conditions required. Smithfield Foods, the world's biggest pork processor, is shutting one of its largest plants in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, which eliminates 5% of U.S. production.

The country's rail bosses came together to demand, and got, the Federal Railroad Administration to give them a waiver from having to do track and rolling equipment maintenance — a direct threat to the safety of rail workers and those who live along the nation's rail tracks (see article on front page).

Another deepening crisis everywhere



Historic rise in small businesses being closed due to government-imposed shutdowns is shown in above graph. Almost half of workers employed there, as well as millions of shopkeepers, face a crisis. International Monetary Fund says job losses are approaching levels of the 1930s Great Depression.

is in government services won by past working-class struggles that the bosses don't want to bear the burden for today. Moves are underway to slash the U.S. Postal Service and its workers as well as many public transit systems.

Shutter mass transit, postal service

Even before the current collapse in passenger numbers, transit fares cover less and less of the costs of operation. The capitalist rulers have reorganized mass transit to increasingly rely on funds from sales taxes, payroll taxes, parking fees and fines, highway tolls, or lottery revenues — all different means of putting the burden on working people.

Democrats and Republicans in the House of Representatives have joined to back Postal Service bosses, who

have skipped out of paying nearly \$50 billion in mandated retiree health benefits since 2018. They propose instead that these workers be required to enroll in Medicare.

Plans have also been floated to lift the requirement that the Postal Service deliver anywhere within the U.S. This is aimed at eliminating deliveries to already poorly serviced rural areas.

As the press reports, government figures in Washington and statehouses across the country are discussing "exit plans" for their deep-going lockdown on jobs and production. This won't be anything like just turning the lights back on.

Bosses and industrywide associations are meeting behind the scenes to plan for a frenzy of cutthroat competition on a world scale to fight for

markets, raw materials, new supply lines and profits.

That means more class struggle. To carry out this assault on working people, the propertied rulers are using the virus as a pretext to step up spying and attack vital constitutional rights.

Some 68 national governments have declared states of emergency and at least 72 have imposed restrictions on the fundamental right to assemble.

From Hungary to Thailand, heads of government have assumed powers to rule by decree indefinitely. Rodrigo Duterte, president of the Philippines, told security forces to "shoot them dead," referring to anyone violating his oppressive lockdown orders.

In Algeria, Iraq, Bangladesh, Uganda and other countries, regimes have tried to suppress workers' protests and anti-government actions in the name of fighting the virus.

"National security" spokespeople in the U.S. are demanding an extension of surveillance powers granted to the FBI and other state Red Squad agencies to hack records and wiretap phones of businesses and organizations. These were originally passed with bipartisan support in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks.

Working people need to organize to fight all these attacks by the bosses and their governments at every level — attacks already in motion and others that will come. This starts today with fighting for jobs and getting together on the shop floor to defend our wages and working conditions. And extending solidarity to all those fighting back.

Bangladesh garment workers protest for jobs, pay



Courtesy Anisur Rahman

"We want our wages!" and "Break the black hands of the owners!" shouted thousands of garment workers as they protested in Dhaka, Bangladesh, April 13. Actions started April 12 and continued for days. They hit all the major production centers in and around Dhaka and parts of the port city of Chittagong. "We don't have any choice. We are starving," Sajedul Islam, one of the workers, told Agence France-Presse. "If we stay at home, we may save ourselves from the virus. But who will save us from starvation?"

In taking to the streets workers are defying government-imposed isolation orders. The rulers' lockdown is set to last until April 25, maybe further.

When factories started closing after the lockdown was instituted March 26, many workers were sent home without receiving wages for that month. Some say they haven't been paid for several months.

"These workers won't get jobs anywhere else," said Kalpona Akter, from the Bangladesh Center for Workers Solidarity. "The factories must take them back and the government needs to ensure this."

As capitalist bosses in Europe and North America shut down big swaths of their economies, retail bosses rushed to cancel or postpone orders from Bangladesh and elsewhere. Thousands of factories have closed. Four million workers risk losing their livelihoods.

— EMMA JOHNSON

Workers in Iraq defy curfew to maintain protests

BY TERRY EVANS

Hundreds of Iraqi protesters defied a government-imposed curfew in the southern city of Nasiriyah and took to the streets in recent weeks to demand a halt to restrictions on their gatherings. They also condemned the April 5 assassination of Anwar Jassem Mhawwas, a leader of anti-government demonstrations there.

Large numbers of workers and youth have joined protests in Baghdad, the capital, and several other cities since last October, but many suspended their actions at the end of March after the government clamped down on any gath-

erings, using the spread of coronavirus as a pretext. The protesters have been fighting for political rights, the fall of the government, jobs, water and electricity, and a halt to Tehran's and Washington's interference in the country.

A cadre of protesters have maintained encampments in Tahrir Square in Baghdad, in Diwaniyah, Basra and Nasiriyah. They are determined to be well placed to restart their hard-fought struggle, which attracted tens of thousands of working people.

"I will not abandon my dream of a nation that suits us and provides us with a dignified life," student Hassan Ab-

dulkarim told *Asharq Al-Awsat* in Tahrir Square.

Mhawwas regularly led demonstrations in Nasiriyah's Al-Haboubi Square, organizing singing and baking bread for participants. She had issued a call for the resumption of anti-government protests just days before masked gunmen killed her and seriously wounded two of her sons at their home. Relatives told Middle East Eye that further demonstrations were needed now to press the government to provide basic necessities for day laborers and others who have lost their jobs in recent weeks.

The deepening social crisis in the country is falling hardest on working people. The Iraqi government faces a collapse of its revenues, following the worldwide plunge in oil prices. Tens of thousands of public sector workers have already gone months without pay. Many now face layoffs.

The government named former spy chief Mustafa al-Kadhemi as prime minister-designate April 9, the third person appointed to the position in the last 10 weeks. The previous designate, Adnan al-Zurfi, quit after failing to get backing from parties allied with Tehran.

The Iranian rulers have extended their political and military clout in Iraq and elsewhere in the Middle East in relentless wars that have wracked the region in recent years. Militias they back have led violent assaults on anti-government protests in Iraq and Lebanon, as well as fought to stave off challenges to the Bashar al-Assad dictatorship in Syria.



AP/Ameer Al Mohammedaw

Anti-government demonstrators in Baghdad April 9 march against appointment of Mustafa al-Kadhemi, Iraq government's spy master, as prime minister, with his picture crossed out.

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Amnesty for immigrant workers! Unify working class

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The social crisis unfolding today — marked by mass layoffs, attacks on working conditions and skirmishes with the bosses — is hitting hardest on working people. The propertied rulers seek to salvage, off our backs, their profits system and their ability to compete with rivals abroad. And infections and deaths from the coronavirus disease also hit the working class hardest.

Especially impacted have been workers who are immigrants — Latinos, Africans, Asians and others — because of the pressures created by the rulers' use of the fact that many don't have papers to impose the lowest wages and worst jobs on them.

Amid lockdowns and soaring forced unemployment, and the bosses' fear of workers' response, laws and regulations are being put in place that target the political and constitutional rights of workers.

Asian workers have faced taunts and attacks whipped up by racist groups who say the Chinese are responsible for coronavirus.

With less access to quality health care and forced by low wages to live in small apartments holding several generations or numerous roommates, immigrant workers have been dying from COVID-19 at a much higher rate compared to their proportion of the population, especially in New York City.

Some of the hardest hit are in the working-class neighborhoods of Elmhurst and Corona in Queens. This is largely an immigrant area, with workers from some 200 nationalities and over

100 different languages. They work as Uber drivers, home health aides, and delivery people, and in restaurants, hotels and construction.

The New York Taxi Workers Alliance, whose members drive taxis and for-hire cars, says it knows of at least 28 drivers who have died.

Undocumented workers have been excluded from all government aid — in the past and with new government programs.

One 39-year-old construction worker originally from Ecuador, who gave his name as Ángel, told the *New York Times*, "I don't have anyone to help me." He said people like him have been left to fend for themselves.

Ángel had gone to Elmhurst Hospital — which was 80% full before coronavirus hit and is now completely overwhelmed with people seeking care. He was turned away because he didn't display any "life-threatening" symptoms and sent home to the apartment he shares with three other workers.

Many are getting by only because of working-class solidarity. In the nearby Jackson Heights neighborhood, a group of Pakistani drivers organized to deliver meals to people who were sick. And a group of Nepalis are distributing protective gear to workers.

"We demand all those in the U.S. without papers be granted amnesty, a move that would strengthen the unity and fighting power of the entire working class," Seth Galinsky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in New York's 10th District, told the *Militant*. "We de-

mand the government provide immediate jobless benefits for all workers, farmers and other exploited producers — whether or not they have 'papers' — for as long as they need it!"

Deaths in Latino, Black communities

In New York City, two-thirds of the over 5,200 people who died as of April 8 were Latinos or Blacks. When New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo was given these statistics, his response was to say he would launch a study to investigate this racial disparity.

But the answer isn't a secret.

For years the death rate for Blacks and Latinos — those with papers and without — has been higher than for Caucasians. African Americans die disproportionately from "heart diseases, stroke, cancer, asthma, influenza and pneumonia, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, and homicide," according to a 2017 U.S. Health and Human Services report.

In Chicago, part of Mayor Lori Lightfoot's response to the growing social crisis is "to increase policing and traffic stops in Black neighborhoods," Jawanza Malone, executive director of Kenwood-Oakland Community Organizations, told the *Chicago Sun-Times*. At the same time, health care in working-class areas that the bosses don't consider profitable is being cut back. "We have four hospitals in [Chicago's] Black community planned for closure," Malone said.

The same thing is true in other working-class areas, in New York, other cities, Native American reservations and in rural areas across the country.

Malcolm X: 'We're living at a time of worldwide revolution'

Malcolm X: The Last Speeches is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for April. Malcolm X emerged as the single most outstanding leader of the popular struggle for Black liberation in the U.S. As he evolved politically, especially in the last year of his life, Malcolm increasingly became a revolutionary leader of the whole working class. He was drawn to revolutionary leaders he met in Algeria who were Caucasian. He was attracted by the internationalist example of the Cuban Revolution. The excerpts below are from his speech "There's a Worldwide Revolution Going On," given Feb. 15, 1965, six days before he was assassinated. Reprinted by permission of Pathfinder Press.



Laurence Henry
Malcolm X speaking at Audubon Ballroom in Harlem, New York, Feb. 15, 1965, giving speech that is excerpted here. He was assassinated when he spoke at the ballroom six nights later.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MALCOLM X

You and I are living at a time when there's a revolution going on. A worldwide revolution. It goes beyond Mississippi. It goes beyond Alabama. It goes beyond Harlem. There's a worldwide revolution going on. And it's in two phases.

Number one, what is it revolting against? The power structure. The American power structure? No. The French power structure? No. The English power structure? No. Then what power structure? An international

Western power structure. An international power structure consisting of American interests, French interests, English interests, Belgian interests, European interests. These countries that formerly colonized the dark man formed into a giant international combine. A structure, a house that has ruled the world up until now. And in recent times there has been a revolution taking place in Asia and in Africa, whacking away at the strength or at the foundation of the power structure.

Now, the man was shook up enough when Africa was in revolt and when Asia was in revolt. All of this revolt was actually taking place on the outside of his house, on the outside of his base, or on the outside of his headquarters. But now he's faced with something new. Just as the French and the British and the — the French, and the British, and the Americans formed one huge home or house or power structure, those brothers in Africa and Asia, although they are fighting against it, they also have some brothers on the inside of the house.

And as fast as the brothers in Africa and Asia get their independence, get freedom, get strength, begin to rise up, begin to change their image from negative to positive — this African image that has jumped from negative to positive affects the image that the Black man in the Western Hemisphere has of himself. Whereas in the West Indies and in Latin American coun-

tries and in the United States, you or I used to be ashamed of ourselves, used to look down upon ourselves, used to have no tendency whatsoever or desire whatsoever to stick together. As the African nations become independent and mold a new image — a positive image, a militant image, an upright image, the image of a man, not a boy — how has this affected the Black man in the Western Hemisphere? It has taken the Black man in the Caribbean and given him some pride. It has given pride to the Black man in Latin America and has given pride to the Black man right here in the United States. So that when the Black revolution begins to roll on the African continent it affects the Black man in the United States and affects the relationship between the Black man and the white man in the United States. ...

So this is what you have to understand. And as the brothers on the African continent lead the way, it has an effect and an impact upon the brothers here, upon the brothers here in the Western Hemisphere. So that when you find the Afro-American community in France uniting not only with itself, but for the first time beginning to unite and work in conjunction with the African community, this frightens old de Gaulle to death, because he sees some new problems in front of him.

And when the Afro — and when the West Indian community, which is an Afro-American community in England, begins to unite and then unite also with

the African community in England and reach out and get the Asian community, it's trouble for old John Bull. Trouble that he never foresaw before. And this is something that he has to face up to.

Likewise, here in America, with you and me. For the first time in our history here you find we have a tendency to want to come together. For the first time we have a tendency to want to work together. And, up to now, no organization on the American continent has tried to unite you and me with our brothers and sisters back home. ...

So the first step that has been taken, brothers and sisters, since [Marcus] Garvey died, to actually establish contact between the 22 million Black Americans with our brothers and sisters back home was done by two organizations. Done first by the Muslim Mosque, which gave us direct ties with our brothers and sisters in Asia and Africa who are Muslims. And, you know we've got to unite with them, because there are 700 million Muslims and we surely need to stop being the minority and become part of the majority. So, as Muslims, we united with our Muslim brothers in Asia and Africa. And as members of the Organization of African, or Afro-American Unity, we set out on a program to unite our people on this continent with our people on the mother continent.

And this frightened many power — many interests in this country. Many people in this country who want to see us the minority and who don't want to see us taking too militant or too uncompromising a stand are absolutely against the successful regrouping or organizing of any faction in this country whose thought and whose thinking patterns is international, rather than national. Whose thought patterns, whose hopes and aspirations are worldly rather than just within the context of the United States border or the borderline of the United States.

So this has been the purpose of the OAAU and also the Muslim Mosque — to give us direct links, direct contact, direct communication and cooperation with our brothers and sisters all over the earth. And once we are successful in uniting ourselves with our people all over the world, it puts us in a position where we no longer are a minority who can be abused and walked upon. We become a part of the majority.

April **BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

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Organize to defend jobs, wages, conditions

Continued from front page

to organize resistance to the bosses' attacks. We get word out about these skirmishes to the workers, farmers and other exploited producers we talk to in cities, towns and rural areas, learning about the fights they're involved in. We discuss how we can involve all those attracted to working-class struggle in whatever way possible.

We extend solidarity to all those fighting today — here and around the world. My campaign urges you to join with us to combat the impact of depression conditions inflicted on our class by the workings of capitalism.

The SWP is advancing a fighting program to meet today's social crisis:

We need to wage a fight for a massive federally funded public works program to put millions back to work at union-scale pay, replacing crumbling infrastructure and building clinics, housing, schools, day care centers, mass transit and other things working people desperately need.

- The increasing number of workers without jobs serves the bosses as a reserve army of labor they use to deepen competition among us. The fight for a public works program and jobs is inseparable from advancing the unity of the working class and strengthening the skirmishes workers are organizing on the job.
- To prevent the bosses from producing

dangerous and shoddy goods, or refusing to make what workers need, and lying about their costs, workers need to wrest increasing control over production. This is the only road to control the pace of work and safety on the job and for consumers as well. Organizing control over production will be a school for workers to prepare for taking over and running the whole economy in the interests of the vast majority.

- Fight for amnesty for all workers without papers in the U.S. Bosses use the threat of deportation hanging over millions of undocumented workers to drive down the wages and working conditions of all working people. These workers — hardest hit by the current crisis — are fellow workers and fellow fighters. This struggle can strengthen the entire working class and advance the prospects for organizing the unorganized.

- Workers need our own party, a labor party. A party that fights on the shop floor and on the streets 365 days a year. A party that organizes working people to lead all the exploited and oppressed to replace the capitalist rulers' government with a government of workers and farmers.

Join in fighting for this perspective as we organize together with fellow workers to push back against the bosses' assaults!

Social crisis today deepens EU coming apart

Continued from front page

and provides for some unemployment insurance, but does nothing to meet the urgent need for jobs for the millions of workers who have been thrown out of work. In Spain alone over 900,000 workers were tossed aside in the last two weeks of March. Many workers and farmers face a serious crisis.

"We are OK at the moment," house cleaner Maritza Lopez told the *Independent* in Barcelona. "But I have a friend with a child who does occasional cleaning work and she is in a desperate situation."

The finance ministers agreed to make half-a-trillion worth of euros available in credit but could not agree on who or how to pay for the loans.

Nine governments saddled by relatively higher debts and steeper borrowing costs — led by Madrid, Paris and Rome — pushed for the EU to issue "coronabonds" to finance the aid package. They hope that by "mutualizing" the debt they will push the cost onto Germany and the other ruling classes with relatively stronger capitalist economies.

When such a method of financing EU credit was proposed in 2012, German Chancellor Angela Merkel responded by saying no such thing would happen "as long as I live." Merkel made a bloc with the governments of Holland and Austria to prevent the proposal from being adopted April 9.

The split is along the same lines that have marked the unraveling of the EU for years. It's been exacerbated by the British rulers pulling out. They had been the bloc's second largest contributor.

Rome has gone from one of the wealthier founding members of what became the EU to one facing crushing debts and demanding aid. "Lack of European solidarity is putting the European Union in mortal danger," former European Commission President Jacques Delors bemoaned.

Berlin, Paris block medical supplies

In reality the EU was doomed from the start. Cut-throat national interests mark all relations between capitalist powers, in Europe and elsewhere. Just one example was the initial response of the French and German rulers to calls for help from Rome and other countries being devastated by depression conditions triggered by the spread of coronavirus. Paris and Berlin blocked the export of medical equipment to their "allies," including in Italy.

Berlin and the other ruling classes were quick to impose tight travel restrictions, discarding the EU's open borders policy.

From its founding the EU was a protectionist trading bloc established to counter the clout of the world's dominant imperialist power in Washington, with some dreaming it would one day become a new all-Europe state. It was supposed to be a model for a globalized world in which the economies of different countries are increasingly integrated and national conflicts and the threat of inter-imperialist war fade away. But under capitalism the rulers are driven by the very workings of their capitalist system to engage in fierce competition for markets and resources or go under.

The attempt to impose this "union" sharpened antagonisms among the rival European ruling classes — and brought ruin on working people, especially in countries with more vulnerable capitalist economies across southern Europe. Following the 2008 financial crash successive Greek governments capitulated to demands by EU officials — speaking for the German and, to a lesser degree, French rulers — that they slash workers' living standards in exchange for receiving any bailouts.

Like other governments, Madrid and Rome gave up their own currencies when they signed onto the euro in 1999, and are unable to defer the crisis or ease its impact on the rulers by devaluing their currency. The euro has simply served as a tool for Berlin to tighten its grip over its rivals.

The Italian government was denounced for signing the April 9 EU proposals by opposition parties there angry that accepting the loans involved accepting demeaning terms dictated by EU bureaucrats, as the Greek government was forced to do following the 2008 financial collapse.

And, as happened in Greece, the results will fall hardest on working people.

As workers and farmers in Italy watch this spectacle unfold, millions are forced to fend for themselves in the face of a spreading social crisis and they are outraged. Polls show 88% of Italians say the EU isn't helping their efforts to face the deadly disease and economic disaster, and 67% say Italy's membership in the EU is the problem.

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

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

Use the bosses' 'blood money' to build SWP

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

"Enclosed is the 'blood money' bribe I got from Walmart for \$489.03," wrote Chris Hoepner from Philadelphia. "Use the money to build the Socialist Workers Party. They cut hours and are increasing the workload to massively increase their profits and they figure we'll keep quiet if they pass us some cash."

"Going to work and discussing with workers and those shopping what we need to do in face of the depression-level layoffs has become intense," Hoepner said. "Sharing experiences with other workers on what we can do to strengthen the bonds of solidarity among workers, farmers and small shopkeepers in the face of this deepening capitalist crisis and the bosses' attempt to isolate us from each other is more and more enjoyable."

"We've discussed, 'Why not put millions of workers back to work building the hospitals, housing and infrastructure we need, instead of billions to bail out the bosses?'" he continued. "Several raised with me the need to reopen Hahnemann Hospital here, which the bosses closed last year because it wasn't profitable enough."

From Montreal, Walmart worker Beverly Bernardo sent in \$4,295.36 in "bonuses" paid by the company to her and eight other Walmart workers there in March and April. "I look forward to being able to put to good use this 'blood money,'" she wrote.

Communists use the term "blood money" to describe production, attendance, safety and other so-called bonuses bosses offer, hoping to get workers to keep quiet about speedup, low pay and unsafe working conditions. These contributions to the SWP turn attempted bribes by the bosses into helping to build a fighting working-class party.

Two Walmart workers from Miami sent contributions totaling \$355.84. "In the store where I am," Cindy Jaquith wrote, "workers are tired of being told we can't take breaks because we're 'too busy.'"

1918 class struggle

Continued from page 5

the vast majority. At the same time, they built the Red Army led by Leon Trotsky to fight the counterrevolutionary assaults organized by the White Army, backed by eight imperialist powers, including Washington, which landed troops in Vladivostok. Some 2.7 million people in Russia fell to the Spanish flu, including Yakov Sverdlov, one of the central leaders of the Bolsheviks.

Throughout 1919 the Red Army battled Washington's forces in Siberia, which were backing the counterrevolutionary troops of Russian Adm. Alexander Kolchak. Kolchak and the U.S. forces were defeated by the revolution and Washington withdrew its troops in January 1920.

One of the factors that led to their defeat was a longshoremen's strike in Seattle in the fall of 1919 that prevented the government from loading arms and munitions for Kolchak.

The lesson is — we aren't "all in this together." The working class needs to prepare to defend itself.

LETTERS

Open the libraries!

Thank you for your excellent coverage of the coronavirus epidemic and how it's being used to attack the working class.

One other institution vital for the working class that has been shut down are the libraries. These are places where people can browse many thousands of books, many no longer in print. Or gather with friends to discuss what they're reading.

Also libraries are the only place people can access computers for email, face time with friends and relatives, or any other reason.

The closure of these vital institutions needs to be protested. It is an assault on our right to read and learn.

Phil Norris

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania