Revolution in Cuba opened door to today’s int’l solidarity

BY TERRY EVANS

“...I will always say yes,” Cuban nurse Héctor César González López told Juventud Rebelde, “for whatever, whenever, wherever” our medical missions are needed. González is one of the country’s volunteers fighting the outbreak of coronavirus in Italy. Cuba’s government has mobilized over 1,000 health care workers to 18 countries worldwide since the outbreak of COVID-19.

González pointed with pride to the experience he gained previously as part of Cuba’s volunteer medical mission to eradicate the spread of Ebola in Sierra Leone, West Africa. Earlier this month the Cuban government sent 473 doctors and nurses to eight Caribbean countries—one of the largest and fastest deployments of health care workers it has ever organized.

“...Even facing the challenge of containing COVID-19 in national territory, Cuba considers it essential to contribute to the necessary increase in solidarity,” José Carlos Rodríguez Ruiz, Cuban ambassador to Italy, said.

Protest cop killing of Steven Taylor in Northern California Walmart

BY ANDREA MORELL

SAN LEANDRO, Calif. — “It was disgusting,” Cynthia Pratt said of the April 18 cop slaying of Steven Taylor inside the Hesperian Blvd. Walmart here. She was talking to Joel Britton, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in the 13th District, outside the store days after the killing.

A widely viewed video shows cops shooting Taylor, who is Black, with both live ammunition and a Taser, including at least once while he was lying motionless, bleeding profusely, on the floor of the store. When cops confronted him he was holding a baseball bat. His family says the 33-year-old father of three children was home alone.

Continued on page 3

Florida prison bans ‘Militant’ for photos of worker protests

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In an outrageous effort to ban photographs of workers raising their fists in labor and other battles, Florida prison authorities have banned issue no. 13 of the Militant. This is the first time in eight months the paper has been suppressed.

A letter received April 17 from officials at the Jefferson Correctional Institution in Monticello, Florida, informed the Militant that issue had been impounded.

The reason? “Gang signs: pgs. 1, 5, 14 and 16.” But what the photos show are workers organizing to defend their rights, safety, dignity on the job and to build unions. The only common element is workers raising their fists in the air as part of their protests.

One photo appears twice—from page 1 and on page 16, the first page of the Spanish-language section of the issue. It shows a worker at the Perdue chicken processing plant in Kathleen, Georgia, raising his fist in the air as he and his fellow workers walk off the job March 23 to protest work and safety conditions there.

Continued on page 3

Put workers back to work! Fight for jobs, no wage cuts!

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Growing numbers of workers and farmers are facing conditions that make it crystal clear our main problem today is the rulers’ deep shutdown of the economy and the massive loss of jobs it has caused. Tens of millions are thrown out of work, with no resources to get by for much longer. Those still working are facing a drive by the bosses—in a desperate effort to boost profits—to push them to work faster, less safely and for less pay.

Their actions are provoking pro-

Demand massive gov’t public works program to provide jobs

Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party 2020 candidate for president, issued the following fighting program April 22. Malcolm Jarrett is the party’s vice presidential candidate.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

The Socialist Workers Party demands the federal government immediately fund a massive public works program to provide jobs at union wages for the millions tossed out of work.

Continued on page 9

Inside

‘Lift US sanctions on North Korea, sign a peace treaty’

Contribute ‘stimulus’ payroll checks to build the SWP

Workers, vendors in Kurdish Iraq fight for right to work

Reply to a reader: Workers’ struggles don’t stop during virus

On the picket line, p. 3–

“Copper strikers ‘holding the line’ against Asarco union busting
Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un have reportedly exchanged “personal letters.” At stake are talks over eliminating nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula, an end to U.S. sanctions that fell heaviest on working people in North Korea, and a long overdue peace treaty the U.S. rulers have refused to sign since 1953.

Since Trump agreed to the first-ever U.S.-DPRK government summit meeting with Kim in June 2018, the U.S. rulers have combined reducing military provocations — like large-scale joint military exercises with South Korean forces — with enforcing their punishing sanctions. Little concrete progress has been registered in talks since then, while contacts continue.

The 70-year-plus division of Korea into two separate countries was the result of the U.S. rulers’ occupation of the South at the end of the second imperialist world war. They aimed to deal blows to the revolutionary struggle waged by the Korean people for national rights, as well as land reform, women’s suffrage and the expropriation of the factories and other workplaces. During the subsequent Korean War the North Korean people successfully prevented Washington from reimposing the dictatorship of capital there. It was the first-ever military defeat for U.S. imperialism.

The U.S. rulers have over 28,000 troops stationed in South Korea, along with hundreds of tanks, artillery and warplanes, including nuclear-capable jets.

“We champion the decades-long struggle to reunify Korea, which Washington, in collusion with Moscow, brutally partitioned,” Steve Clark wrote in a message on behalf of the Socialist Workers Party to the people of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea on the occasion of their April 15 national holiday.

The party demands, Clark writes, that the U.S. government: “Lift all sanctions against the DPRK; Live up to its pledge to halt military exercises with Seoul; End its ‘nuclear umbrel-la’ over South Korea and Japan”; and “Sign a peace treaty ending the bloody war the US rulers waged against the DPRK from 1950 to 1953.”

These steps would advance talks by Washington and the DPRK to end the deployment of nuclear weapons in Korea and its air and waters by any government,” Clark said. “A world without massively destructive arms is the aspiration of working people in Asia and the world over.”

**Capitalist social catastrophe**

Today sanctions imposed by Washington and the United Nations are making it more difficult for the government in Pyongyang to import medicines and medical equipment to use in treatment of COVID-19.

In the midst of the “social calamity of unemployment and economic depression” in the U.S. today, Clark explained, “the aspirations of working people in Korea are campaigning — at work, in workers’ neighborhoods, and in small towns and rural areas — for a massive public works program to provide jobs at union-scale wages.”

“If you’d like to join in donating your government payout to the party; send a check to the Socialist Workers Party at 306 W. 37th Street, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018, marked ‘Special Fund.’”

“The Militant will report on the progress of the effort.”

— EMMA JOHNSON

---

**Condemn Jew-hatred, anti-Semitic attacks**

Recent attempts to blame Jews for being responsible for the spread of COVID-19 is just one more example of how Jew-hatred is used in times of social crisis to divert the fight from the real enemy — the capitalist rulers. Working people need to speak out against all such attacks.

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Florida prison bans ‘Militant’ for photos of protests

Continued from front page

with racism from his experiences with the Australian rulers “White Australia” policies and their discriminatory treat-

ment of Aboriginal peoples. He wore the badge of the Olympic Project for Human Rights around his neck on the podium, a group Smith and Carlos had helped organize months before.

Anytime authorities at any Florida prison seize a copy of the Militant, the issue is taken from all 84 subscribers in prisons across the state.

‘We will fight to reverse this’

The Militant’s attorney, David Gold-

stein, informed Florida’s Department of Corrections Literature Review Committee — which reviews all suppressions of newspapers and other literature — that the paper is preparing to appeal this im-
poundment, and that it is obviously im-

proper. The Militant has appealed every instance when the paper has been banned, the vast ma-

jority successfully.

He was told the commit-
tee has already scheduled a review of the paper for April 23. If the committee refuses to overturn it, the paper will 

appeal.

Last year 14 out of 16 is-

sues of the Militant were im-
pounded over three months. Florida authorities, who received dozens of protest letters from the Florida American Civil Liberties Union, American Library Association, PEN America and many other organizations, overturned most of these bans and stopped seizing fur-

ther issues in mid-August — until now. “The prison authorities’ ban is a clear violation of freedom of press and of the right of our subscribers behind bars to read the paper,” said Militant editor John Stader: “We will fight to reverse this. “If they think they can ban every symbol of workers’ struggles, they’re in for a surprise,” he said. “Workers behind bars are part of the world. They have the right to consider different views and to form their own opinions. They have the right to read about workers’ actions to defend jobs, wages and working condi-
tions, against racist discrimination and violence, and to defend their rights in the midst of today’s economic and social crisis caused by the capitalist system.”

Copper strikers are ‘holding the line’ against Asarco union busting

BY BERNIE SENTER

“Everyone is still into the strike and holding the line,” copper miner Rob-

ert Perez told the Militant by phone April 19. “We’re going to keep it up and hang in there.” Perez has worked for Asarco for 40 years and has been on strike along with 1,700 others for over six months. He is a crusher op-

erator at the Ray Mine near Kearny, Arizona, and a member of United Steelworkers Local 915. “The bosses and five other unions are facing off against Asarco, which seeks to bust the unions. The company is owned by Grupo Mexico, one of the largest copper barons in the world. With mines and production facili-
ties in Arizona and Aamarillo, Texas, Asarco is determined to extend a dec-
daed long wage freeze for most workers, more than double health care costs, freeze pensions and restrict the unions’ right to protect workers on the job.”

Nationwide the bosses and their government are taking advantage of the spread of coronavirus to atom-

ize many workers and weaken their unions, telling them they have to stay home. But copper mining continues as an “essential” industry.

“How’s it going right now? We’re still picketing,” Perez said. “Now with the virus thing we’re doing some so-
cial distancing.” Pickets are also up at the Hayden, Arizona, smelter but with less workers on the line.

While picket lines have been sus-
pended for the time being at the Missi-

on and Silver Bell mines and at Asar-

co’s refinery in Aamarillo, “our guys are staying out on strike and the food pantry is open,” Alex Terrazas, presi-
dent of Steelworkers Local 19 and a utility worker at the Mission Mine, told the Militant April 18. “Asarco is still hiring people right now, continuing to ramp up production.”

The worldwide capitalist economic crisis has reduced demand for copper and depressed prices, forcing other mining companies to reduce opera-
tions and lay off workers. But Asar-

co’s push on production is based on its drive to bust the unions.

Contended on page 9

Protest cop killing of Steven Taylor in Calif. Walmart

Continued from front page

during was going through a mental health crisis.

One witness can be heard on the vid-

eo telling the cops, “Don’t shoot him no more.”

The Alameda County coroner’s office said the preliminary cause of death was a gunshot wound to Taylor’s chest.

“It’s time to force accountability. Young Black men have targets on their backs,” Pratt told Britton. She described her own experience of cop harassment when she lived at Menlo Park and her fears that her three sons could be brutal-

ized or worse at the hands of the police. Britton and campaign supporters were talking with people in the Walmart parking lot April 21 near the memo-

rial site the family has set up for Taylor. Campaigners distributed Britton’s state-
mate attorney S. Lee Merritt said

that the service of the capitalist class acting as judge, jury and executioner. Such use of deadly force.”

A movement of millions of working people needs to be built that can fight to def-

end working people from the attacks of the bosses and their government. We need our own party, a labor party, that fights on the shop floor and in the streets 365 days a year. To oppose cop brutality, to revitalize and strengthen our unions, to demand an end to Wash-

ington’s wars abroad. And to fight to replace dog-eat-dog capitalist rule with a government of workers and farmers.

Peter Norman, a racer from Australia

to the Olympic Games in Mexico City to protest apartheid and shooting Taylor, 33, for refus-

ing to obey their command to drop a

box he held on the podium, which con-

tained an olive branch, as well as the

shoes he raced in.

This iconic photo was splashed on front pages all across the country. Stand-

ing with the silver medal winner Peter Norman, a racer from Australia from a working-class background.

Norman told the press he was familiar

Joe Britton, SWP candidate for Congress, pays respects to Steven Taylor at memorial site set up by his family near Walmart in San Leandro, Calif. Cops banned him down in store April 18.

Subscrive, contribute to the ‘Militant’ online at themilitant.com

Florida prison bans ‘Militant’ for photos of protests

This cold-blooded killing comes as today’s deepening capitalist economic and social crisis has put tens of millions of workers out of work. Those of us still working face speedups, attacks on our wages and unsafe working conditions. A movement of millions of working people needs to be built that can fight to def-

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Continued on page 9

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Continued on page 9

Joel Britton, SWP candidate for Congress, pays respects to Steven Taylor at memorial site set up by his family near Walmart in San Leandro, Calif. Cops banned him down in store April 18.
Social Worker 2020 campaign platform

UNIONS/FOR A LABOR PARTY Support workers’ struggles to organize to defend jobs, expanding benefits, and fight for higher wages, and to defend the right of all workers to organize on behalf of all workers and all working people. Workers need their own party, a labor party. One union for all workers — the ILWU, UBER, and 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 The Militant and the Militant Fighting Fund demand putting an end to the death question for the unions to unite workers and cut across divisions the bosses use to divide down wages. For access to driver’s licenses for all workers.

JOBS First! 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 systems, and other public services workers need. Set the minimum wage to allow workers to have a home and support a family.

OPPOSE WASHINGTON’S WARS US hands off Venezuela and Cuba US troops out of Afghanistan, Korea, the Middle East. End US colonial role in Puerto Rico.

CUBAN 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 abortion.

ISRAEL & PALESTINE For the recognition of Israel and of a contiguous Palestinian state. End the right of Israel to return as a refuge in the face of capitalist crisis, Jewish-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. They use 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 of all 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, and other newspapers by prison authorities. Abolish the death penalty, an anti-working-class weapon in the hands of the rich.

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.

Workers 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.

Campaign to expand reach of ‘Militant,’ books, fund

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Should be 700 231 700 231 $115,000 $37,550

Militant/Arlene Rubinstein

4 The Militant May 4, 2020

Extend reach of the ‘Militant’ Continued from front page elsewhere. The drive ends May 19.

“...in the face of the deep crisis the bosses have created, millions have thrown out of work and those of us still working facing determined efforts by the bosses to speed up work, sticking together on the job, backing each other up, refusing to allow them to pit us against each other is more important now,” Kennedy said.

“This is my first job,” Branch said, “I did 32 other workers from both sides of the cash register that campaigned at Walmart while storewide parking lots in the area, along with five new subscribers. They also kicked in $10 to the Militant Fighting Fund.”

Workers face low wages,” Branch said, saying he had read that in some countries workers make $32 a day for making shoes that sell for $100.

“The bosses everywhere fight with everything they have to protect their profits today — We have the experience as we resist the bosses’ attacks. We will learn that workers need our own party, a labor party. We have to rely on ourselves to fight for a workers and farmers government.”

Branch got a copy of the Militant, as did 32 other workers from both sides of the cash register that campaigned at Walmart while storewide parking lots in the area, along with five new subscribers. They also kicked in $10 to the Militant Fighting Fund.

Every contribution large and small makes a difference. Unlike capitalist newspapers, which depend on advertising revenues, the Militant depends entirely on the support of its readers — workers, farmers, small proprietors and others who reject the “everyone for themselves” morality of capitalism.

Taxis drivers hard hit At the Fort Totten metro station, taxi driver John Babannds rolled down his window to take the Socialist Workers Party’s “Call to Action to Meet Today’s Unfolding Crises.” He came back to talk, after underlining parts of the flyer.

“I put a star here,” he said, pointing to the section that described how Walmart workers in Chicago refused to work in a tire and lube pit that was contaminated by raw sewage. “When these workers got confident and rebelled, that’s when the boss noticed them, and they won. That’s an example for today.”

Kennedy agreed. Socialist Workers Party members join their co-workers in defending their jobs and working conditions. They also point the way to overcoming the growing division facing workers today — between employed and unemployed.

“The Socialist Workers Party demands a massive government-funded public works program to put millions to work at union-scale wages,” Kennedy said. “We cannot fight if we are not working. When the bosses open the economy, they will try to make us pay as they push to rebuild their profits. They are going to try to lower our pay and make us work harder and faster.”

“This is something for my union to help out,” said Babannds, a member of the D.C. Taxi Operators Association, “I think,” Odubiyi told Kennedy. “This is a capitalist country, you can’t always count on the government.”

Odubiyi said he has “been following this is my first job,” Branch said. “I did 32 other workers from both sides of the cash register that campaigned at Walmart while storewide parking lots in the area, along with five new subscribers. They also kicked in $10 to the Militant Fighting Fund.”

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Odubiyi said he has “been following
Cuban Revolution’s solidarity

Continued from front page as a second contingent of Cuban volunteers arrived there April 13. “We provided what we can and have, not what we have left over.”

These volunteers build on decades of internationalist work by Cuba’s medical missions. “They are going to a place where they will enrich that history,” Jorge Juan Delgado, director of the Central Unit for Medical Cooperation, said at a farewell for 20 volunteers heading to Honduras April 19.

The 30,000 Cuban medical workers on missions in 65 countries are a source of confidence and pride for the country’s working people.

Unlike anywhere else in the world, the Cuban government and people are the product of a socialist revolution, carried out by millions of workers and peasants in 1959. That struggle transformed Cuba’s people — the moral values of a toiling majority shape the government’s priorities. Led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement, working people and students fought the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship and went on to overturn capitalist rule.

Working people shouldered the responsibility of running society themselves. The revolution is “impossible” by capitalist rulers everywhere — deepening their self-confidence, and defending themselves, arms in arm, from Washington.

Cuban Revolution’s solidarity

Continued from page 4

Gordon was one of the thousands of jobs that pay good.” Gordon was one of the thousands of jobs that pay good. “We need to build our own” social relations established in Cuba. The work of regularly sanitizing the streets and squares that was being carried out by workers who came from outside the area is now taken on by volunteers in the town.

Laborers from nearby are covering the work of the town’s farmworkers to ensure food production continues.

In face of the spreading worldwide capitalist social crisis — met by capitalist rulers everywhere with shutdowns and mass layoffs — the revolutionary government has turned to working people to prevent an increase in shortages of basic necessities. As the planting season approaches in Camaguey province, trade union leaders initiated a work brigade for sowing cassava. With the government decision to suspend this year’s May Day parade, where hundreds of thousands march to express their determination to defend their revolution, the Camaguey unionists named their contingent the May 1st Brigade.

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Continued from front page

Bureaucrats like to direct the Puerto Rican government to do what politically suits them at the moment. They have survived from donations distributed by charity organizations. They called on the government to allow them to reopen their garages and resume work. Teachers and other public sector workers protested the government’s failure to pay their salaries out of the extra education funds in Sulaymaniyah April 22.

- ROY LANDEISER

Puerto Rico gov’t uses virus pretext to attack rights

By SETH GALINSKY

Workers, vendors in Kurdish Iraq fight for right to work

Mechanics and vendors held protests in Erbil, Aboue, and Dubai April 18 against a government lockdown across the Kurdistan region of Iraq. They called on the government to allow them to reopen their garages and shops. "How can I make money if I don’t come to work?" said one of the mechanics in Erbil.

The Kurdistan Regional Government lockdown down the country March 14. "We need to work to eat, our children need to go to school." The government has now allowed some employers, the food industry, and public and private schools to reopen.

These protest hit gov’t isolation moves

More than 600 people have been ar rested in Puerto Rico since March 15 for violating the curfew. Over 1,600 have been given tickets requiring them to appear in court, where they face prosecution for up to six months in jail and fines of $5,000.

Vazquez has imposed other restrictions like closing all retail stores except those that sell "immediate." Media that were not happy with the governor’s statement that "immediate" is only allowed for "immediacy” said, " schöne lieben, meine". "Modern’ that transmit the goods to sell, sold barely to customers. Vazquez said, "Vendedores" that sell the goods to customers. Vazquez’s statement that "immediate" is only allowed for "immediacy" is what they should do today. "Modern’ that transmit the goods to sell, sold barely to customers.

During the Easter weekend the Puerto Rican government introduced a curfew, with fines for violating the curfew. Over 1,600 have been given tickets requiring them to appear in court, where they face prosecution for up to six months in jail and fines of $5,000.

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Meanwhile, Natalie Jaresko, executive director of the Fiscal Oversight and Management Board “reserves all its rights to nullify laws that are inconsistently with the constitution,” according to the board member who makes the governor’s final decision, and to cancel any executive order. "We’ve talked to our colleagues in Washington state, demonstrated that the government is now allowing certain groups to reopen their garages and resume work. Teachers and other public sector workers protested the government’s failure to pay their salaries out of the extra education funds in Sulaymaniyah April 22.

- ROY LANDEISER

Puto workers back to work! Fight for jobs for all, no wage cuts, safe working conditions!

"Things are even harder for small farmers now"
Che: ‘Cuban Revolution’s first great battle was land reform’

Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War 1956-58 by Ernesto Che Guevara is one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for April. Argentinian-born Guevara joined and fought alongside Fidel Castro, becoming an outstanding leader of the Cuban Revolution that deposed the Batista dictatorship in Cuba in 1959. In this book Che gives a firsthand account of the military battles and political advances that he participated in with the Rebel Army and explains how “the war revolutionized us.” It is one of the best accounts of how Cuba’s workers and farmers made their revolution, which is an example for working people throughout the world. The excerpts below are from “From Batista’s Final Offensive to the Battle of Santa Clara,” and “Military Order No. 1.” Copyright © 1996 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

In address to congress of peasants near Rebel Army’s Second Front headquarters in eastern Cuba, Sept. 21, 1958, Raúl Castro explains July 26 Movement’s revolutionary program — taking land out of hands of big landlords and distributing to all those who work it. Vaclav Havel wrote, “The war is the great measure, the development of the hopeful — are firmly on us. In those of the great oppressors and those of the unredeemed Americas. All eyes — depending on the future stance that we take, on our capacity to resolve many problems. And every step we take is being observed by the ever-watchful eyes of the big creditor [U.S. imperialism] and by the optimistic eyes of our brothers and sisters in Latin America.

With our feet planted firmly on the ground, we are beginning to labor and produce our first revolutionary war, confronting the first difficulties. But what is Cuba’s main problem if not the same as all Latin America, the same as every enormous Brazil with its millions of square kilometers and with its land of marvels that is a whole continent? The one-crop economy. In Cuba, we are slaves to sugarcane, the umbilical cord that binds us to the large northern market. We must diversify our agricultural production, stimulate industry. And we must ensure that our minerals and agricultural products, and — in the near future — our industrial products go to the markets that are best suited for us and by means of our own transport lines.

The government’s first great battle will be the agrarian reform, which will be enormous, though as flexible as it will destroy the landed estates in Cuba, although not Cuba’s means of production. It will be a battle that will absorb a great part of the strength of the people and the government during the coming years. The land will be given to the peasant free of charge. Landowners who have proved that they came by their holdings honestly will be compensated with long-term bonds. But the peasant will also be given technical assistance; there will be guaranteed markets for the products of the soil. And production will be channelled with a broad national sense of development in conjunction with the great banks of the agrarian reform. Within a short time the infant Cuban industries can compete with the monstrous ones of the countries where capitalism has reached its highest level of development. Simultaneously with the creation of the new domestic market that the agrarian reform will bring about, and the production of the country to satisfy a growing market, there will arise the need to export some products and to have the adequate instrument to take them to the other part of the world.

With those elementary weapons, we Cubans will begin the struggle for our territory’s total freedom. We all know that the attainment of this will not be easy, but we are all aware of the enormous historic responsibility of the 26th Movement of the Cuban Revolution, of the nation in general, to be exemplary for all peoples of Latin America, whom we must not disappoint. Our friends of the indomitable continent can be sure that, if need be, we will struggle no matter what the economic consequence of our actions may be.

In this territory an official land register will immediately be undertaken in order to begin the distribution of land to the peasantry of the region. As of this moment, all property, both fixed and movable, subject to the tutelage of the dictatorship is declared confiscated, regardless of how it may have been obtained. The sole exception will be those so-called “time deposits” that demonstrate that they have familiar responsibilities and hold no other possessions in any part of the republic. All properties greater than 30 acres [1800 acres] that are not devoted to intensive agricultural cultivation or animal husbandry are to be subject to investigation being given to the Revolutionary Army. Every peasant who for at least two years has been paying rent, either in cash or in kind, for works of alienated land in the territory covered by this military order is hereby declared free of all payment obligations and is invited to claim his rights on the land he works.

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On party's view of pandemic

I've been reading the Militant for over 15 years. Over those years I've disagreed with almost nothing in its pages, but I am not so sure that I'm on board with the views that are being shared regarding COVID-19. This paragraph in Róger Calero’s article on the shutdown of AA really bothered me, and made me question the SWP’s views on the pandemic:

“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 interactions and neighborliness.”

At a time when a brand new unknown disease is spreading to and killing workers at a speed and at numbers that many of us have never seen in our lifetimes, when nurses and health care profession- als are pleading for people to stay home because of the lack of pro- tective equipment and supplies like ventilators and drugs neces- sary to fight the disease, I think that calling for “face-to-face in- teractions and neighborliness” is ridiculous and reckless.

Implying that workers should fight against staying home is like asking workers to fight against traf- fic lights and seatbelts. I agree, as do all workers, that the government would love to use orders like these to curb the rights of workers in the future, so I have no issue with the Militant addressing that.

What are the party’s official views on the pandemic? Do Róger’s views reflect the party’s official stance?

Byron Johnson-Blanchard by email

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on sub- jects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. When necessary, they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Workers’ struggles don’t stop during coronavirus

BY TERRY EVANS

Reader Byron Johnson-Blanchard writes that the article “Morality of Capitalist Reflected in Shutdown of AA” in the April 13 issue of the Militant presents views he considers “ridiculous and reckless” for counterposing “face-to-face human interactions and neighborhood meetings to the necessary social distancing measures.”

The Militant is dedicated to the fight for a socialist world, where workers can exercise their social power over the means of production and distribution, and society is based on the principle of “from each according to ability, to each according to need.”

This is the road to protect the working class from the attacks of the bosses — the foundation for all progress for our class.

Continued from front page

This is one of the reasons more workers are open to discussing why the capitalist class is unfit to rule and needs to be overthrown.

Citing the number of deaths from COVID-19, Johnson- Blanchard says every worker should “stay home safe.” But jobs are the only source of income and sus- tenance for workers and their families and more can see it’s jobs, not the virus, that’s the main problem.

Most important, it is only by being at work that workers have the opportunity to organize together against the cause of the growing social crisis imposed by the bosses and their government. This crisis exist- ed before the epidemic, is growing during it, and will continue afterwards. It is at work where workers are able to exercise our social power against the bosses.

Instead, Johnson-Blanchard urges workers to aban- don the one place where we have any power as a class, and submit to government isolation measures. Over time workers who are cut adrift without a job and left to fend for themselves and to reactionary demagogues.

Bosses and union trustees have already gotten away or are insisting their government let them take steps that shortcut safety, cut wages and speed up produc- tion. They have not and will not put their profit-driven assaults on workers and our allies on hold. “Essential workers” — and the jobs they do — are job combinations, pressure to not take breaks and more.

The class struggle isn’t on hold

The “viral-centric” propaganda bombardment by government figures at all levels and in the capitalist media obscures the reality that the class conflicts that underlie all social relations do not dissipate in times of crisis. They try to convince working people that we’re all in this together. But there is no “we” be- tween workers and bosses.

It is only through collective struggle that workers get in practice the class consciousness and capability and acquire the values that make the working class what it is — a class that out of necessity must combine and fight tenaciously to ensure the survival of ourselves and of all culture.

None of this means workers have to be oblivious to the disease. Keeping a safe distance or wearing a mask if you want to is not the same thing as government- imposed social isolation.

The bosses have slashed jobs to try to defend their capital. The Militant will continue to urge workers to fight for a federally funded public works program to put millions back to work at union-scale pay. And to provide fights for decent pay and living conditions. That is the course to put our class in a stronger position to resist the bosses’ assaults, not staying at home in dread of the virus.