

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuban workers, youth help lead fight to increase food supply
— PAGE 3

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 84/NO. 18 MAY 11, 2020

‘The *Militant* is being banned, yet again, in a Florida prison’

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

“The *Militant* newspaper is being suppressed, yet again, in a Florida prison,” National Lawyers Guild President Elena Cohen wrote to the state’s Department of Corrections Literature Review Committee — urging it to overturn the latest ban on the paper. “The NLG stands in solidarity with those incarcerated and their right to read the *Militant*, and against this blatant violation of the Bill of Rights,” she said.

On April 6 the Jefferson Correctional Institution in Monticello, Florida, impounded *Militant* issue no. 13, claiming photos of workers organizing to defend their rights, safety and dignity on the job, and to build unions, are “gang signs.”

The pictures show striking meatpackers at a Perdue chicken processing plant in Kathleen, Georgia, and nurses protesting work conditions

Continued on page 5

Calif. caravan says, ‘Charge cops who shot Steven Taylor’

BY ANDREA MORELL

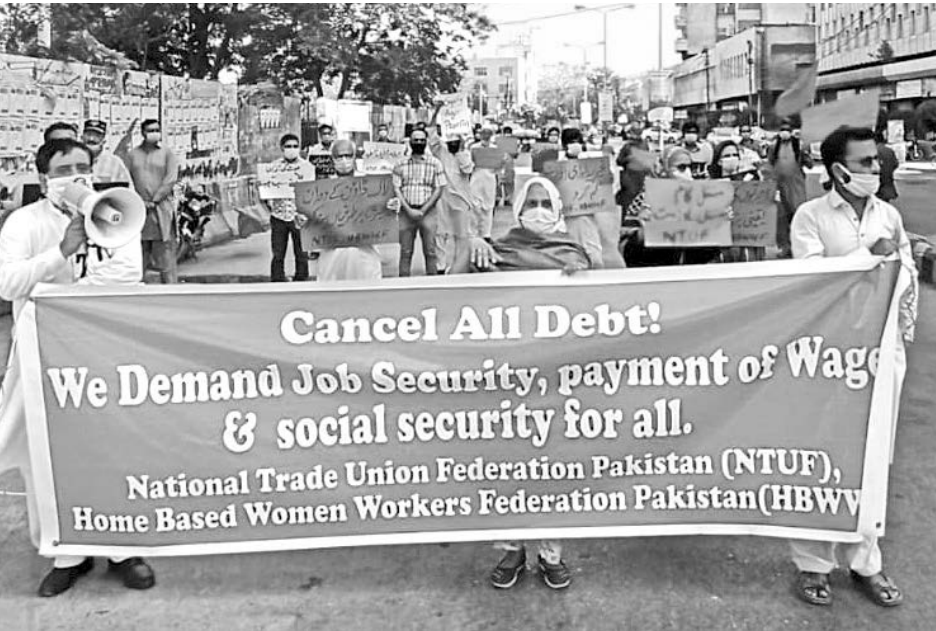
OAKLAND, Calif. — Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party campaign of Joel Britton for U.S. Congress here are widely circulating his statement demanding the arrest and prosecution of the San Leandro cops who shot and killed Steven Taylor inside the Hesperian Blvd. Walmart store April 18.

According to his family, Taylor, who was known by workers to shop at the store, was suffering a mental health crisis that day. He was stunned by a Taser and shot dead by the cops for refusing to drop a baseball bat as dozens of workers and shoppers called for them to stop.

Britton’s statement has been well-received by many workers at the store and customers who campaign supporters — including this worker-correspondent, who works there — have been talking with in the parking lot.

Continued on page 9

Fight for jobs! Organize to defend wages, job safety!



IndustriALL Global Union

Factory, textile and garment workers demonstrate in Karachi, Pakistan, April 18, demanding end to firings by bosses, for payment of wages for workers at plants that are shut down.

Demand gov’t-funded public works program to create jobs

Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, released the following call to action April 28. Malcolm Jarrett is the party’s candidate for vice president.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

Tens of millions of workers have been thrown out of work in the U.S., robbed of the ability to make a living. Many simply don’t know how they and their families will survive,

Continued on page 9

Workers main problem today is capitalism, not ‘the virus’

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Tens of millions of working people in the U.S. and many millions worldwide have been thrown out of work through lockdowns imposed by capitalist governments, shutting factories, transportation, retail outlets, hotels, restaurants and more. The key problem facing workers today is capitalism, not “the virus.”

Working people are looking at an unprecedented economic depression and social crisis. In the U.S., government debt is soaring to levels not seen since the second imperialist world war, as trillions of dollars are printed and poured

Continued on page 6

Protests challenge Polish gov’t moves to outlaw all abortions



Reuters/Kacper Pempel

April 16 action in Warsaw against bill that would ban women’s ability to choose an abortion.

BY EMMA JOHNSON

The protest line was long across the street from the parliament building in Warsaw, Poland’s capital, April 15. Most of those lined up were women dressed in black from head to foot. They all wore face masks and stood six feet apart. Some carried posters and held banners. On their clothing, bags, banners and posters they sported lightning bolts, clothes hangers, umbrellas and clenched fists, all symbols familiar from actions in defense of women’s right to choose abortion.

On the opposite side of the street

the parliament was debating a law that would totally ban abortion. This was the legislators’ third attempt to adopt the bill. They failed in both 2016 and 2018 when tens of thousands took to the streets in protest. With the country in a lockdown blamed on the coronavirus, they thought they could get away with it this time.

“It’s a draconian law against women,” Krystyna Kacpura, executive director of the Federation for Women and Family Planning, told the *Militant* by phone from Warsaw April 27. “It deprives us

Continued on page 9

Join drive to expand reach of the ‘*Militant*’, SWP 2020 campaign

BY SETH GALINSKY

“Workers joining together to fight — that’s a union,” explained Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate in a discussion April 22 with Otis Bullock at a Pennsylvania Walmart store parking lot where he works.

“Yes, workers need a foundation of solidarity to get what we need,” said Bullock. “Society looks down on people who work with their hands. But we have common sense.” He described how bosses had fired a number of workers at the store.

“They can pick you off when you’re on your own,” Kennedy said, explaining how SWP members look out for opportunities to work together with co-workers to resist the bosses’ attacks on the job. Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett, the party’s vice presidential candidate, are touring across the country discussing how workers can organize to stand up to the bosses and chart a road forward to end the

exploitation we face.

Bullock said he thought President Donald Trump had “bought the election” and is the “biggest problem.”

“No matter which Democratic or

Continued on page 4

Inside

- New titles on working-class politics now out in Arabic 2
- Packinghouse shutdowns deepen crisis for workers, farmers 6
- Anti-government protests sweep Lebanon 7
- Irish department store workers defy lockdown, protest layoffs 7
- First imperialist world war sped Britain’s decline, US rulers’ rise 8

New titles on working-class politics now out in Arabic

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Two books on working-class politics and theory have just been published in Arabic translations.

One is *Are They Rich Because They're Smart: Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism* by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. The other is *Sexism and Science* by Evelyn Reed, a longtime SWP leader and fighter for women's rights who died in 1979.

Both books, originally published in English by Pathfinder Press, were produced earlier this year by Trigraphics Design and Printing. Based in Beirut, Trigraphics sells books in Lebanon, Iraq and other Arabic-speaking countries.

Along with several other Pathfind-

er titles already available in Arabic, these two books will help working people in the Mideast, North Africa and beyond learn about the workings of capitalism, which is today in a deepening world crisis. Both present a working-class course to wrest power from the capitalists and advance the fight to end exploitation, national oppression, women's second-class status and imperialist wars.

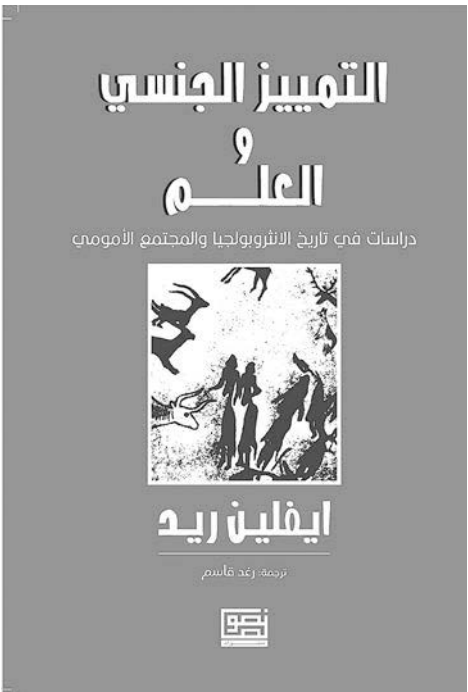
Trigraphics made the agreement with Pathfinder during the February 2019 Baghdad International Book Fair.

Two months later, at the Erbil International Book Fair in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, Trigraphics signed an agreement to publish two more Pathfinder titles — *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed and Mary-Alice Waters; and *Problems of Women's Liberation*, also by Reed.

Are They Rich Because They're Smart? in English was by far Pathfinder's best seller at the two book fairs, with more than 150 copies in Baghdad and 158 in Erbil. Workers and youth there were interested in a book, as its back cover explains, that "takes apart the self-serving rationalizations of a growing layer of well-paid professionals that their schooling and 'brightness' equip them to 'regulate' the lives of working people, who



Are They Rich Because They're Smart, left, by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, and Sexism and Science by Evelyn Reed, have just been released in Arabic by Lebanese publisher Trigraphics Design and Printing. Titles have been big sellers at book fairs in Mideast.



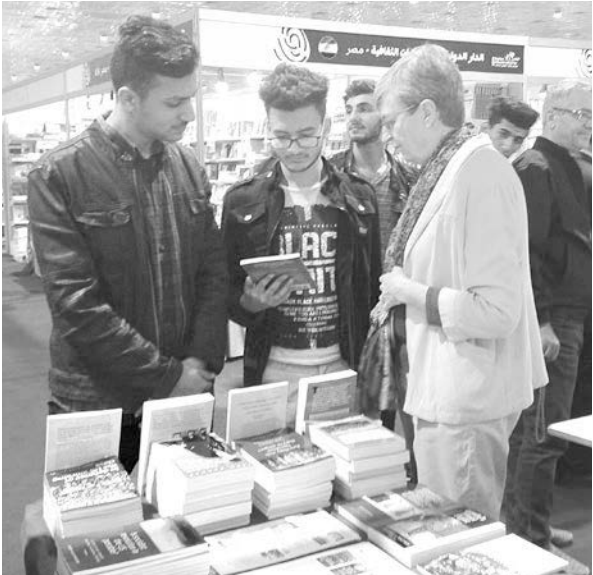
can't be trusted to know what's in our own interests."

What Barnes says in the books is as important for working people in Iraq and Kurdistan as in the U.S.: that it's through "coming battles forced upon us by the capitalist rulers [that] workers will begin to transform ourselves and our attitudes toward life, work, and each other. Only then will we dis-

cover our own worth and learn what we're capable of becoming."

Titles by Reed and other books on women's emancipation were also big sellers in both Baghdad and Erbil.

Pathfinder distributors in the U.S. and U.K. will make these newly produced books available for sale in North America, Europe and worldwide.



Catharina Tirsén discusses books by SWP leaders with Iraqi youth at February 2019 Baghdad International Book Fair.

'Stimulus' payout donations are big boost to SWP

The response to the Socialist Workers Party appeal for contributions from the one-time government "stimulus" payout of \$1,200 is starting to pick up.

In the last week 28 contributors have sent in a total of \$32,200 toward the long-term work of the SWP.

The appeal was made to answer a growing number of requests asking how to make out the check. Lisa Potash, a Walmart worker in Atlanta, captured the spirit at the outset — "Just letting you know 'it's on the way' whenever it comes."

Along with his check, Dan Fein from Chicago sent a note saying he contributed "to help speed the day when we can rid the world of the capitalist system with its war and economic depressions."

Joe Swanson from Lincoln, Nebraska, wrote, "We decided the best use of the 'stimulus' is to build a party to help lead our class and end the rule of the dog-eat-dog capitalist class once and for all."

Other notes, as well, capture the spirit. "Put it to good use to advance the interests of the working class," one said. "Happy to be able to contribute," said another.

Contributors are turning the appeal into a significant boost to the party's ability to respond both to the unfolding deep-going economic and social crisis of capitalism and to the class struggle.

If you'd like to kick in, send a check made out to the Socialist Workers Party to 306 W. 37th Street, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. On the "memo" line write "Special Fund."

— EMMA JOHNSON

THE MILITANT

Back Kurdish fight for independence!

Some 30 million Kurds live in area divided among the rulers of Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey. They are the world's largest nationality without their own country. The Kurds have fought for national rights for a century. The 'Militant' backs and covers their struggle.

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Shop and garage owners rally in Kurdish region of Iraq for right to reopen businesses.

Rudaw

Cuban workers, youth help lead fight to increase food supply

BY SETH GALINSKY

Working people and youth all across Cuba — backed by their government — are organizing to confront the challenges they face from the drop in world trade and the punishing economic war Washington has waged against them for over 60 years. They’re being mobilized to fight to increase food production.

Their ability to do so is grounded in the revolution they made in 1959, a revolution that is very much alive today.

The coronavirus pandemic has exposed the “incapacity of the capitalist health system to effectively respond and safeguard people’s lives,” the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC) said in a statement April 22. Under capitalist rule, “the bosses are prioritizing economic and financial measures without regard for labor rights.”

Unions in Cuba offer their “militant solidarity with the struggles of union organizations in those countries,” the CTC said.

A new generation of Cubans is joining volunteer work brigades to take steps to help provide health care, food and other necessities to working people in face of imperialist pressure and the worldwide COVID-19 outbreak.

The unions, the Federation of Cuban Women, neighborhood Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, student groups, the Union of Young Communists (UJC) and the National Association of Small Farmers are organizing to increase production and to make sure that no one is left on their own.

Work brigades this year’s May Day

As part of measures taken to prevent the spread of the virus, the Cuban government canceled the annual May 1 International Workers Day march, which attracts over a million people in Havana every year.

In place of the parade, the CTC is organizing to make May Day another



front in the battle to increase food production. In Santa Clara, leading up to May 1 the unions are organizing 17 special brigades from area factories and workplaces.

The first one, made up of 30 young workers from the Sugar Workers Union, was inaugurated April 22 at La Riviera urban vegetable farm. They are taking the place of older workers who are more vulnerable to the virus.

The same day the National Energy and Mine Workers Union inaugurated a brigade that will plant boniato, a variety of sweet potato, at the state-owned Valle del Yabú Agricultural Enterprise.

Increasing food production in Cuba is especially important in the face of the effects of the worldwide capitalist economic crisis. Cuba normally imports some 60% of its food supply, as well as fertilizer and pesticides.

Increasing production is not a simple task. In Ciego de Ávila only 20% of farmland is irrigated; in Granma province barely 6%. And much of the island faces a drought.

Federico Hernández, president of the Bayamo Provincial Defense Council, which brings together both government officials and leaders of mass organiza-



Cuba’s Union of Young Communists is leading 150 contingents, with 2,700 members, to work on farms, left and above, and take on other tasks. Volunteer union brigades are joining effort, strengthening the revolution in face of U.S. economic war, worldwide capitalist depression.

tions, told the press, “We have to re-double our efforts to organize in an equitable way what we have so that no one is left on their own.”

More than 9,000 workers whose workplaces are on hiatus are being organized to work in agriculture across the island.

The Union of Young Communists is leading 150 contingents, with more than 2,700 young people, who are working the fields, helping out at quarantine centers and other key tasks.

Diosvany Acosta Abrahantes, second secretary of the National Committee of the UJC, told *Juventud Rebelde* that all the necessary health precautions are being taken. “Everyone together and well-informed are helping responsibly, with conviction and discipline,” he said.

In Santiago de Cuba workers at workplaces closed down for now prepared 4,400 bags of food to deliver to those most in need. This was done in consultation with the neighborhood family doctors, who systematically visit people in their area. They “told us where to find senior citizens who live alone, pregnant women and patients with complex diseases,” said Frank Hierrezuelo Betancourt, who heads up food storage in the city.

‘It’s not titles or posts that matter’

Juventud Rebelde interviewed two students and a university professor from Artemisa province who had volunteered to do whatever is needed. Their daily job now is cleaning and sterilizing rooms of people in isolation centers, under observation to see if they have the virus.

Law professor Yuliesky Amador Echevarría said they are no different than other workers. “Scientific degrees, academic categories, or posts within the university don’t matter.” What matters, he said, “is showing everything that is human and sensitive that we possess.”

Maikel Manuel Barrios Pérez, a physical education student, said that until the pandemic began he liked to hang out with friends and “enjoy life.” He had never done this kind of cleaning before, he said, but joining in the volunteer effort has changed his outlook.

In capitalist countries bosses are jacking up food prices to increase their profits in the face of food shortages. They force farmers to dump milk or plow under fruits and vegetables they can’t package and sell profitably. In contrast, in Cuba the government is organizing to minimize food shortages for working people.

Reuters headlined an article April 23 on steps Cuba’s revolutionary leadership is taking along these lines, “Cuba’s

Ration Book Stages Comeback Due to Coronavirus Pandemic.” The capitalist press usually presents the ration book as a harsh restriction imposed by a heartless dictatorship.

In fact, rationing is popular among working people because it helps ensure that everyone, regardless of their situation, including whether they have relatives in the U.S. who send them dollars, can obtain essential food and hygiene products, often at very low prices.

The government has recently added more items to the ration book — called the *libreta* — including laundry soap and extra allotments of chicken.

Havana resident and retiree Esperanza Moreno told Reuters that the *libreta* is “like a lifeline in these times of virus.”

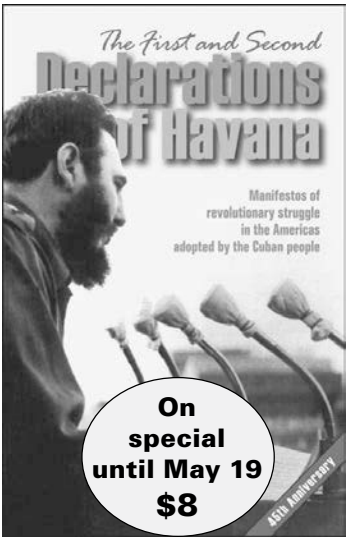
Volunteer brigades are also visiting millions of homes daily to make sure anyone who is sick gets the health care they need.

Unlike overcrowded and dehumanizing U.S. prisons where coronavirus is running rampant, in Cuba not one prisoner has gotten the disease.

Another reflection of the moral values that underlie the Cuban Revolution is the more than 1,400 volunteer doctors and nurses now serving in 22 countries at the request of governments there, treating COVID-19 patients. These internationalists say that a principle of the revolution is that “we don’t give what is left over, we share what we have.”

This is only possible because working people in Cuba — led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement — overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959, initiating the first socialist revolution in the Americas. They were transformed in the process, and they’ve used the workers and farmers government they created to offer their example — and help — to working people worldwide. U.S. imperialism has never forgiven the working people of Cuba for this.

Further reading on the Cuban Revolution



Available from
pathfinderpress.com

Protest hits US sanctions on Cuba, Iran, NKorea, Venezuela



Venezuela Solidarity Coalition of Western Massachusetts

Protesters organized a car caravan April 20 in Northampton, Massachusetts, demanding the U.S. government end punitive sanctions against Venezuela, Cuba, North Korea and Iran. The action was organized by the Latin America Solidarity Coalition of Western Massachusetts.

Washington has stepped up its economic and financial sanctions against peoples and governments the capitalist rulers disagree with — especially targeting Cuba and Venezuela, which provides needed oil to Cuba. Its long-standing goal is to bring down both governments.

Because of Washington’s far-reaching financial and trade restrictions, Cuba and Venezuela find themselves unable to obtain medicine, medical devices and other resources that could help strengthen health care.

The U.S. economic war also means that many medicines and treatments created in Cuba — whose health system reflects the values of the socialist revolution made by workers and peasants there — are not available in the U.S. This includes Interferon Alfa 2b and several other drugs that have been proven to aid patients in Cuba and numerous other countries resisting COVID-19.

— S.G.

Expand reach of the ‘Militant’

Continued from front page

Republican candidate wins the election, they all defend the capitalist system,” Kennedy said. “What working people need is to fight together and build a movement that can replace their rule and take power into our own hands.”

Outside another Walmart store Jarrett spoke to auto mechanic Jose Santiago, who is originally from Puerto Rico. He told Jarrett that the capitalist politicians “act just the same” in both the U.S. and Puerto Rico, a U.S. colony. “They treat us like we’re not worth anything, like we’re disposable.”

Jarrett explained that’s why working people need to organize independently of the capitalist parties and build their own party, a labor party. Looking to learn more, Santiago subscribed to the *Militant*.

Kennedy and Jarrett are using their tour to boost the six-week international drive to expand the readership of the *Militant* and books by SWP and other revolutionary leaders and to raise \$115,000 for the Militant Fighting Fund. The paper relies on contributions from its readers who value the indispensable coverage of working-class struggles and the road forward it presents to workers and our allies. The drive ends May 19.

“A lot of workers agree that the two capitalist parties, the Democrats and Republicans, don’t represent working people,” Kennedy told the *Militant* by phone April 28. A labor party, she explained, “would organize and give voice to the fights of millions of working people — for better wages and working conditions to the fight against police brutality, for amnesty for undocumented immigrants and defending women’s right to choose abortion.”

SWP congressional candidate Osborne Hart, Kennedy and Jarrett spoke with farmers Gerald and Tina Carlin in Meshoppen, Pennsylvania, at the couple’s 4 Seasons Farm Market on their farm. The Carlins used to be dairy farmers but couldn’t make ends meet. Now they farm vegetables, which they sell at the store, and slaughter some beef cattle. They have been active in fights to defend the interests of working farmers.

Farm crisis began before the virus

“The politicians say a lot of farmers are going out of business just because of the coronavirus, but this has been going on for years,” Gerald Carlin said. “In this area, Auburn Township, there were 65 dairy farmers in 1970. Today there are four. For the last several years the prices farmers get for milk, beef and grain are way down and farm debt is staggering.”

Both Carlins voted for President Trump and sell “Make America Great Again” hats in the market. “Don’t hold that against us,” Gerald Carlin said, laughing. “Socialists, conservatives and liberals do have things we can discuss and fight around.”

“Our starting point is not who you voted for in the last election, although we think both the Democratic and Republican parties are an obstacle to working people,” Kennedy said. “I used to be a coal miner and was involved in miners strikes for wages, safer conditions. Our strikes were stronger because of the aid of farmers.”

“Farmers as debt slaves and workers as wage slaves must fight together



Militant/Janet Post
Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy, left, and vice presidential candidate Malcolm Jarrett, right, speak with Walmart worker Otis Bullock in Philadelphia.

to win our struggles,” Jarrett added.

The party’s 2020 platform calls for a halt to farm foreclosures and for nationalizing the land. This would allow farmers to work the land without worry that the banks and landlords will take it away from them. It also demands the government guarantee farmers their costs of production, including their living expenses and urges support for farmworkers’ efforts to organize unions.

‘We’re not all in this together’

“I like what you say about the necessity of a national jobs program at union wages and the unions should lead the effort. But the unions are

very weak today,” Tory Brunkow told Socialist Workers Party campaigners Dean Hazlewood and Dan Fein in Beloit, Wisconsin. Brunkow works in a cement plant and is a member of Laborers International Union Local 464.

“The biggest reason the unions are weak is their continued support to the capitalist parties,” Fein replied. He explained why workers need to build a labor party and what it would fight for.

“The two major parties do not represent us, that’s for sure,” Brunkow said. To learn more he subscribed to the *Militant* and purchased *Tribunes of the People* and the *Trade Unions*,

Continued on page 5

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 co-

lonial rule in Puerto Rico.

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

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

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

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

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

“JUSTICE” SYSTEM Fight against po-

lice 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.

Campaign to expand reach of ‘Militant,’ books, fund
April 4 - May 19 (week three)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	received
UNITED STATES						
Albany	45	14	45	5	\$5,600	\$1,460
Atlanta	45	20	45	18	\$9,750	\$4,330
Chicago*	75	61	60	24	\$11,400	\$6,169
Dallas	20	16	20	8	\$2,500	\$1,200
Lincoln	10	3	10	6	\$250	\$100
Los Angeles	60	31	60	16	\$10,800	\$3,570
Louisville	40	13	40	13	\$3,200	\$2,000
Miami	20	7	20	2	\$3,500	\$1,752
N. New Jersey	35	25	40	8	\$3,500	\$2,007
New York	50	28	50	18	\$13,500	\$6,834
Oakland	50	31	65	20	\$12,000	\$5,155
Philadelphia	20	13	20	13	\$3,000	\$675
Pittsburgh	20	14	20	1	\$2,250	\$450
Seattle	40	12	40	10	\$10,000	\$3,613
Twin Cities	20	15	20	8	\$3,500	\$1,665
Washington*	30	20	30	15	\$5,500	\$4,150
Other		1				\$100
Total U.S.	580	324	585	185	\$100,250	\$45,230
Prisoners	25	15				
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	30	7	30	8	\$3,000	\$100
Manchester*	20	12	35	27	\$1,380	\$500
Total U.K.	50	19	65	35	\$4,380	\$600
Canada	50	24	65	21	\$9,000	\$1,440
New Zealand	10	5	10	7	\$3,000	\$2,400
Australia	15	6	15	5	\$800	\$450
Total	730	393	740	253	\$117,430	\$50,120
SHOULD BE	700	350	700	350	\$115,000	\$57,500
*Raised goal						

Join in expanding reach of the ‘Militant’

Continued from page 4

which features articles by Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Farrell Dobbs and Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. It's one of several books on special for subscribers (see ad on page 7).

Members of Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the U.K. are also participating in the six-week drive.

“There is no money coming in,” subscriber Nureni Adebiyi told Communist League members Catharina Tirsén and Dag Tirsén in London. Adebiyi, who worked replacing rails for the public transit system, was furloughed because the bosses claimed they could not organize work “to keep social distance.”

“The bosses are using the virus to go after workers and solve the social crisis by making workers pay,” Catharina Tirsén said. If workers had control of production, she pointed out, they would organize to make sure all work is done safely.

Adebiyi looked at a *Militant* article describing the fight of laid-off garment workers in Bangladesh for back wages and another piece about the massive working-class struggles that took place in the U.S. and around the

world during the 1918 “Spanish flu” epidemic. He decided he needed to renew his subscription.

Communist League member Katy LeRougetel and Amélie Lanteigne, a laid-off truck driver and longtime *Militant* subscriber, met up in Longueuil, Quebec, with Julie Therrien, a unionized nurse, at the end of April.

“This isn’t a virus crisis, it’s a monetary crisis,” Therrien said. “It started

a long time ago.”

“That’s why it’s so important to build solidarity with workers who are standing up for their rights,” said LeRougetel. “Like the Montreal transit mechanics who walked off the job for several hours last week after their union president was suspended.”

“We can only rely on ourselves, not the bosses or the government,” Lanteigne said.

Therrien renewed her subscription, bought *Socialism on Trial* in French by James P. Cannon, a founding leader of the SWP, and contributed to the Militant Fighting Fund.



Militant/Helen Meyers

David Rosenfeld, left, SWP candidate for Senate in Minnesota, and Darin Von Ruden, president of Wisconsin Farmers Union, on Ruden's farm. Von Ruden subscribed to *Militant*, purchased *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa*. “Capitalism doesn’t work well for health care, food,” he said.

Contribute to the *Militant*, help win new readers

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 for the fund to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Online at: www.themilitant.com

‘Militant’ being banned, again, in Florida prison

Continued from front page

outside a medical facility in Richmond, California, raising their fists in the air — a well-known expression of determination and pride in the justice of their fight.

Also cited is a photo of United Steelworkers Local 8888 members during their successful fight to organize a union at the Newport News, Virginia,

shipyard in 1979, a strike that registered the strengthening of the working class as a result of the fight for Black rights in the South.

This is the first time in eight months that the *Militant* has been impounded by Florida prison authorities, after years of skirmishes over numerous issues. Most of these were reversed on appeal after organizations and individuals who

backed the rights of the *Militant*, and of prisoners to read what they want, wrote letters protesting the bans.

In response to the latest blatant attack on rights, the Literature Review Committee has been getting letters protesting the banning. “We urge the Committee to reverse the impoundment at its next meeting and permit Florida prisoners to receive

these issues of the *Militant*,” wrote Benjamin Stevenson for the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida April 23. Objecting to workers “holding a fist in the air,” he said, “appears to be a pretext to prohibit current concerns about safety and health.”

Stevenson added, “We urge the Committee to comply with the constitution.”

When authorities seize a copy of the *Militant* at any Florida prison, the issue is removed from all 48 subscribers in prisons across that state, and countless others who read the paper as it’s passed around.

“Officials from Florida DOC institutions have repeatedly attempted to censor issues of this publication over the past three years,” wrote Justin Mazzola, deputy director of research for Amnesty International USA, April 23. He urged prison authorities to overturn the impoundment and “cease the arbitrary impoundment of the publication by Florida DOC institutions in the future.”

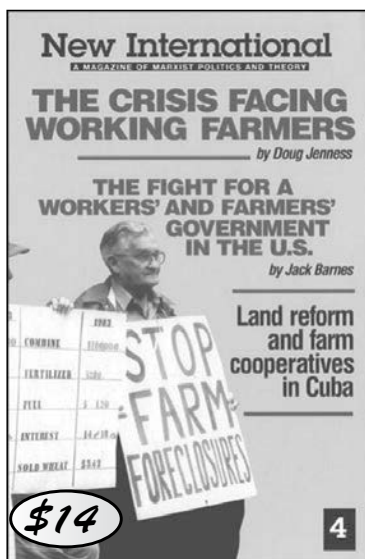
“The act of informing subscribers about events of the outside world in and of itself should not be means to violate prisoners’ freedom of expression,” he wrote.

The *Militant*’s attorney, David Goldstein, is preparing the paper’s appeal and Literature Review Committee officials say they will take it up at its next meeting, scheduled for the first week of May.

“We will fight to reverse this,” said *Militant* editor John Studer, “as we have done in every instance where officials ban an issue of the *Militant* from workers behind bars.

“We’re fighting to defend our right to have subscribers behind bars and for the right of prisoners to read material of their choosing,” Studer said. “The reason prison officials give for barring the *Militant* is clearly spurious. The *Militant* is being banned for positively portraying working-class struggles.”

Studer urged readers of the paper to get statements from co-workers, unions, churches and defenders of political rights calling for ending the impoundment. They should be sent to Literature Review Committee, Attn: Dean Peterson, 501 South Calhoun St., Tallahassee, FL 32399-2500. Email: Allen.Peterson@fdc.myflorida.com. Send copy to themilitant@mac.com.



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25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 15, 1995

More than 20,000 Cubans detained in concentration camps at the U.S. Naval base in Guantánamo, Cuba, will be allowed entry into the United States under an agreement recently signed between Washington and Havana.

From the beginning the camps were a powder keg. Less than three weeks after the internments began, 650 Cubans began throwing rocks at U.S. soldiers after a dispute during a soccer game.

Cuban newspaper *Granma Internacional* noted that the Cuban prisoners “know what social justice and dignity are, and they are not going to tolerate abuses that they haven’t experienced in Cuba in the last 35 years.”

The prison camps were set up during the “rafters crisis,” which was provoked by U.S. government policy toward Cuba last summer. Following boat hijackings by people wishing to emigrate to the United States, the Cuban government announced last August that it would not attempt to stop anyone from leaving.



May 15, 1970

Allison Krause, Sandra Lee Scheuer, Jeffrey Glenn Miller and William E. Schroeder are dead. [President Richard] Nixon and his cohorts have created the kind of atmosphere where a National Guard commander can order his men to fire into an unarmed assemblage.

The four Kent [State] students fell victim to the same violence being directed against the people of Indochina.

The Nixon administration and the imperialist system it represents are determined to maintain their domination of Southeast Asia — no matter the cost in lives of Vietnamese. And they are entirely capable of attempting the same kind of cold-blooded violence against those in this country who raise their voices to say, “No! Stop it!”

May 30, Memorial Day, must be a day of unprecedented street mobilizations. This will honor the memory of the four martyrs of the Kent State massacre.



May 12, 1945

[After the liberation of] Buchenwald, one of the worst [Nazi] camps, the 15,000 prisoners organized an inspiring celebration of May Day.

Many of these men have been in Fascist jails or camps for 10 years or more. They are the proletariat of many nations and they are magnificent. This is their day and it is fitting that they should have celebrated it here. On the walls of the barracks, great signs in German, English, Russian, Polish, Czech and Serbian read: “This is the Day of the Fight against Fascism.”

Between these signs and beneath the flags of many nations, the survivors marched — a Polish group, a Russian group, a Yugoslav group, a Czechoslovakian group, an Italian group, a Spanish group, and many others. Then came a large German unit and they began singing the Internationale. Other groups picked up the song, each in its own language. The melody rose in a mighty torrent into thin air which but one month ago still stank of Nazi massacres.

Workers problem today is capitalism

Continued from front page
into the coffers of big business to try to alleviate their economic contraction.

A devastating decline is hitting working people in less developed countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Currencies are tottering and export revenues are plummeting, exacerbated by the slump in oil prices. The debt burden to imperialist banks is piling higher. Protests against these conditions are growing.

Workers in Nigeria — a country of 200 million people, Africa's largest economy and the continent's biggest crude oil producer — face a deep crisis. The government there tightened the lockdown April 23, especially in the country's two largest cities. In Lagos, where half the city's 21 million people live on what they can make that day, the restrictions are seen as a possible death sentence. "I'm running out of food," Umar Usman, who pushes a cart to deliver goods, told the press.

Millions in the U.S. have no source of income, no way to buy food. At the same time, farmers are being forced to kill hogs, cows and chickens and plow vegetables under because the rulers' shutdown closed the schools and restaurants that used to buy them.

The UNITE HERE union, which represents some 300,000 mainly restaurant and hotel workers, says 98% of its members are out of work.

Workers are awash in debt accumulated trying to keep above water — debts on credit cards, car loans, housing mortgages, work tools and more.

In the U.S. class polarization is sharpening — between the bosses and the meritocratic professional layers that service them on the one hand and the workers, farmers and other small proprietors on the other. One layer lives in comfort, even luxury, "working at home," while working people without jobs face di-

saster, and those who are at work face speedup and attacks on their wages and working conditions as their employers seek to boost profits. The upper middle class layers form the most vociferous boosters of the lockdown and attacks on workers' rights.

Today's unfolding crisis conditions are just the beginning of an extended depression. Even tentative, partial moves by some bosses and state governments to start things up again, seeing their companies and coffers draining away, won't begin to make the situation "normal."

Workers need to fight for jobs, and for those working to fight to stop bosses from trying to offload their capitalist crisis onto our backs.

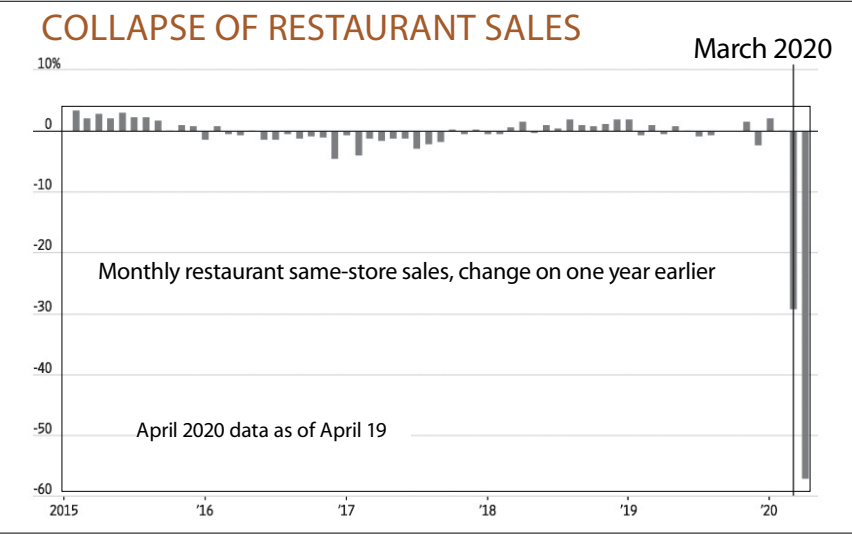
Being at work and joining the struggles breaking out there is the only road forward for working people. Workers at numerous Walmart stores have or-

He said he agreed people need to take "precautions, but doing so at the expense of an economic collapse is not the answer."

Across the world as restaurants closed, the demand for seafood collapsed, particularly for luxury items like lobster and crab. Trawlers are tied up at docks from Hawaii to Massachusetts with thousands of fishermen thrown out of work. Generations of fishing families and whole coastal communities are being devastated.

More than 4.4 million workers across the U.S. filed for unemployment benefits the week ending April 18. Over the past five weeks, 26.5 million people officially became jobless. One poll reports that for every 10 workers who filed for unemployment pay, three or four others tried and couldn't get through, and another two jobless workers never even tried.

Many of the 30 million small-



business owners in the country have also been devastated by official shutdowns. Some were outraged after finding out an additional \$350 billion federal relief fund ran out within minutes of being launched.

At the head of the line were the big banks, from JP Morgan Chase to Bank of America and Wells Fargo, tasked by the government with disbursing the funds. They pocketed almost \$6 billion in fees.

The boss class also wants to see an

end to the lockdowns. They're seeing past profits bleed away and want to revive exploiting workers' labor. They are demanding government protection against being sued over health and safety issues. State governments are setting new deadlines to reopen production and commerce.

As the bosses gear up, they're taking aim at workers' wages and cranking up speedup. Ford is calling in skeleton crews of "volunteers" to prepare for full production. A paint shop worker

at Ford's Dearborn Truck plant, who asked that his name be withheld, told the *Detroit Free Press* April 26 that "all of the jobs have been packed with tasks to reduce the number of employees" and to keep the production line running at "a frenetic pace."

Protests by workers demanding jobs and restarting production have taken place in many states and in Lebanon, Poland, Argentina and beyond. They will spread, as will fights over conditions on the job.

Packinghouse shutdowns deepen crisis for workers, farmers, food supplies

BY DAVID ROSENFELD

ST. PAUL, Minn. — A wave of closures of meatpacking plants around the country is hitting working people hard, including those thrown out of a job, farmers with nowhere to sell their animals, truckers and others across rural communities where many of the plants are located. It's already beginning to cause food shortages and price hikes.

In mid-April, U.S. beef production fell 24% compared to the previous month. Pork fell by 20% and poultry by 10%. Smithfield Foods, JBS, Tyson, Cargill, Pasco and Hormel have shut down plants in Nebraska, South Dakota, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Washington and other states. State officials in Illinois ordered the closure of Hormel's Rochelle plant.

Some meatpacking workers are undocumented and shut off from any government relief to soften the blow of losing a job.

While government officials and company bosses shut down plants in the name of combating the spread of coronavirus, millions of laid-off workers are struggling to provide food for their families.

After bosses closed the giant JBS pork plant in Worthington, Minnesota, Gov. Tim Walz claimed, "The state of Minnesota did not shut down JBS. The company did not shut down JBS. The virus shut down JBS," as if the disease had magical powers.

Bosses at meatpacking plants have long organized production facilities to turn out massive quantities of beef, pork and chickens at the expense of the lives and limbs of the workers. In their insatiable quest for profits, they have no regard for whether the conditions they impose injure those they hire, nor whether these conditions facilitate the spread of diseases among workers who they force to work shoulder to shoulder to maximize line speeds.

The brutal pace of work has above all caused high rates of workplace injuries, many due to repetitive operations for decades before the current crisis. The first step to safer production is not to ask em-

ployers to shut plants down but for workers to organize to fight together against the bosses' intensification of work and to use union power to win and enforce workers control of safety on the job.

Workers need to take control over line speeds and how close workstations should be. Common-sense steps like these, enforced by workers and their unions, are what is called for, not moves by the bosses aimed at maximizing their profits.

Unfortunately, the approach of today's union officialdom is not to organize such a fight, but to join liberal politicians and others who seek to induce dread in workers, calling for the plants to close.

Workers face shortages in stores and the threat of price rises. The number of people visiting food banks has more than doubled in recent weeks, according to Feeding America, a network of charities. The Greater Chicago Food Depository that stores milk and meat for the city's food banks now stands empty. Yet farmers are being forced to plow under crops, dump milk and euthanize the animals they raise.

Bosses at Smithfield shut down their pork plant in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, upon urging of the state's governor, Kristi Noem, who pointed to the number of COVID-19 cases there. She said nothing about the bosses' organization of the work and disdain for workers' safety, which has allowed the disease to spread.

The plant employs 3,700 people, is supplied by more than 500 farmers and slaughters around 20,000 hogs per day.

Shutdowns worsen farm crisis

The bosses shutdowns are also ruining hog farmers, who have to euthanize large numbers of their stock. The hog industry is organized on a just-in-time basis. Young animals are already on their way to take the space in the hog barns of pigs slated to be slaughtered. But with up to 20% of hog production shut down, many farmers have no place to put their livestock.

According to the *Star Tribune*,

Minnesota hog farmers may be forced to euthanize more than 200,000 hogs in April.

Hog farming has become dominated by big meat monopolies, with farmers raising hogs that are the property of the company owners. But farmers are only paid when the hogs go to slaughter. "The farmer gives up controlling every aspect of how the pigs are raised, but they carry all the risk," Nebraska farmer Vern Jantzen told the *Militant* in a phone interview.

Jantzen is president of a council that operates a hotline for farmers in distress. "Some farmers are really backed into a corner. Lenders are telling some that there will be no more loans. Bankruptcies are going up."

Anti-government protests sweep Lebanon

BY TERRY EVANS

Facing increasingly rising hardships that fall most heavily on working people, thousands of anti-government protesters have resumed demonstrations across Lebanon.

Actions involving people of all faiths demanding jobs, an end to crushing living conditions, for political rights and against Tehran's intervention there began last October. They were ended when the government sent security forces to tear down their main camp in Beirut March 27.

The rulers claimed the attack was part of growing restrictions on work and public gatherings justified by coronavirus. The regime has imposed a strict lockdown since March 15, now extended through May 10.

"No one has a job anymore. ... Salaries keep going down. We're in the streets because nothing has changed since we left," Ali Haidar told Reuters during a car caravan protest April 21 from central Beirut to where parliament was meeting. "We either die from



Reuters/Aziz Taher
"We die from hunger or the disease," Beirut protesters said April 21. "Let us die taking a stand."

hunger or we die from the disease. ... Let us at least die taking a stand."

Prices for basic commodities have soared by nearly 60% since October.

Barbers and other store owners in Tripoli organized a sit-in demanding to be able to reopen their shops. "The hungry people of Tripoli could not abide" by the shutdown, protester Michel Mahfouz told Reuters. "Get off our backs, we are hungry," chanted protesters in the town of Aley, as they defied curfew measures. "We want to eat, we want to live."

The protests were supported by the General Confederation of Lebanese Workers, which said that "the political and financial authorities [are] responsible for the current situation" due to "complicity in everything that led to the crisis."

"These are militias, not political parties," a man joining an April 28 protest in Beirut told the *Washington Post*. He said he was fed up with the

country's sectarian political setup in which parties organized along religious lines allocate government jobs and services to their supporters.

The capitalist rulers' lockdown has increased unemployment, as well as sharpened their own crisis. The government is heavily indebted, spending 45% of its revenue on interest payments. Last month it defaulted on payments to holders of government bonds for the first time.

When the country's currency then plunged 50% against the dollar, the government barred people from withdrawing dollars from their accounts April 24, triggering more protests around the country.

"As the currency was going down, the value of my mom's minimum wage salary was also going down," Kholoud Fawaz, who is unemployed, told Middle East Eye news agency at a protest in front of the central bank in Beirut.

Irish department store workers defy lockdown, protest layoffs

BY PETE CLIFFORD

MANCHESTER, England — "We are not just numbers on a sheet, we are going to fight," sacked Debenhams department store worker Valerie Conlon said as she joined a protest outside the store in Cork, Ireland, April 21. Some 2,000 Debenhams workers across the Republic of Ireland were told by email April 19 their jobs had been eliminated after the company went into liquidation. Protests backed by the Mandate union took place at 10 of the 11 stores in the republic, involving some 200 workers.

"When we heard of the jobs going, we got in touch with workers in Debenhams stores around the country and decided to take to the streets," Jane Crowe, a shop steward at the Henry Street store in Dublin, told the *Militant* in a phone interview.

The Gardaí (police) stopped protesters there, ordering them to end the action. "This is nonessential, leave the area. If you fail to do so, this is an offense," the *Irish Times* reported the cops as saying. They cited the government's COVID-19 lockdown to justify their attack on the workers' rights.

"I can't believe the Gardaí are moving us on," Crowe told the *TheJournal*, an Irish news website, as the 30 protesters were forced to leave. "They're saying

it's not essential. To us it is essential. It's our livelihood." She said she felt compelled to attend the action, breaching lockdown rules in Ireland that say you can't travel more than two kilometers (1.2 miles) away from your home. Despite the Gardaí threats, protesters continued to demonstrate on a nearby street.

"I don't think this was an overnight decision, this was a long time coming. I think [the coronavirus] was just an opportunity," Debenhams worker George Cardiff said at the protest in Dublin.

Mandate union representative Dave Gibney told the *Militant* that many workers see the Irish store shutdown as a move to try and save the U.K.-based ones. The U.K.'s largest department store chain, with 166 stores, Debenhams has faced mounting debts for decades. Its owners are planning to shut 50 of these stores.

"Putting their Irish stores up for liquidation means the company won't have to pay the union agreed redundancy terms," Gibney said. "The government payouts will be half that, and those who have worked for less than two years will receive nothing."

"We just want people to understand if this happens, other companies will follow suit," protester Aisling O'Gorman said. "They will do it to everybody."



Militant/Zena Jasper
Charlie Jones, Wisconsin dairy farmer, told April 24 rally in Madison protests are needed because "people are losing their jobs, businesses, farms and life savings" and "their dignity and self-worth" in today's social crisis.

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First imperialist world war sped Britain's decline, US rulers rise

Where Is Britain Going? by *Leon Trotsky* is one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* for May. Trotsky was a central leader of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and the Communist International under V.I. Lenin. The book describes how the working class in Britain radicalized in the wake of the Russian Revolution. In a section written after the powerful 1926 general strike, Trotsky discusses how the misleadership of the trade union officialdom led to its defeat. He explains how class conscious workers fight to make their unions both "militant economic organizations" and "schools of political education" preparing the working class to take political power. The excerpt is from the opening chapter, "England's Decline." Copyright © 1973 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Transit workers march in Manchester, England, during 1926 British general strike. Leon Trotsky explains the rise of "unparalleled class battles" in the U.K. before and after first World War, as British imperialism declined in relation to its rivals in Berlin and especially Washington.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

Capitalist England was launched by the political revolution in the seventeenth century and the so-called industrial revolution at the end of the eighteenth century. England emerged from the epoch of the civil war and [Oliver] Cromwell's dictatorship a little nation, with hardly 1,500,000 families; it entered the imperialist war in 1914 an empire, embracing within its boundar-

ies one-fifth of all mankind.

The English Revolution of the seventeenth century, of the Puritan school, the hard school of Cromwell, prepared the English people, particularly its middle classes, for their approaching world function. After the middle of the eighteenth century, the universal might of England is indisputable. England rules on the seas and on the world market which is its creation. ...

The tremendous industrial preponderance of England over the rest of Europe and over the rest of the world was the basis of its wealth and of its unprecedented world position. The industrial century was simultaneously the century of Great Britain's world hegemony.

From 1850 to 1880, England was the industrial school for Europe and America. But this very fact undermined its special monopolistic position. With the 1880s, England begins perceptibly to weaken. New nations, particularly Germany, enter the world arena. Simultaneously, the capitalist primacy of England begins for the first time to reveal its unfavorable and conservative aspects. Powerful blows are delivered by German competition to the doctrine of free trade.

The crowding out of England from its position of world ruler thus begins to appear clearly as early as the last quarter of the nineteenth century, giving rise, at the beginning of the present century, to a condition of internal uncertainty and ferment in the upper classes, and pro-

found molecular processes, basically of revolutionary character, in the working class. Mighty conflicts of labor and capital played the chief part in these processes. Not only the aristocratic position of English industry in the world was shaken, but also the privileged position of the labor aristocracy in England.

The years 1911-13 were a period of unparalleled class battles waged by mine workers, railroad workers, and the transport workers in general. In August 1911, there developed the general strike on the railroads. In those days the vague specter of revolution hovered over England. The leaders exerted all their strength to paralyze the movement, under the slogan of "patriotism"; this was at the time of the Agadir incident [bomb explosion], menacing war with Germany. The prime minister, as we know now, summoned the labor leaders to a secret conference and called upon them to save the fatherland. And the leaders did all they could to strengthen the bourgeoisie and in this way prepare the imperialist war.

The war of 1914-18 interrupted this revolutionary process and stopped the growth of the strike wave. Ending in the destruction of Germany, it seemed to restore to England the role of world hegemony. But it soon became apparent that instead of retarding the decline of England, the war had actually accelerated this decline.

In the years 1917-20, the English labor movement entered into an extremely stormy phase. Strikes assumed immense

proportions. [Ramsay] MacDonald was signing manifestoes from which he now recoils with shudders. Only after 1920 did this phase terminate with Black Friday, when the leaders of the Triple Alliance of coal miners, railroad and transport workers betrayed the general strike. The energy of the masses, frustrated in the economic field, turned to the political sphere. The Labour Party seemed to spring up overnight.

What is the cause of this shift in the external and internal situation of Great Britain?

During the war, the enormous economic preponderance of the United States was developed and revealed in its full proportions. The emergence of that country from the stage of an overseas provincialism suddenly forced Great Britain into second place.

The "cooperation" of America and Great Britain is the expression, for the moment peaceful, of the increasingly pronounced outdistancing of England by America. ...

The productive forces of England, particularly its living productive force, the proletariat, no longer correspond to the position of England on the world market. Thus the chronic state of unemployment. ...

One of the conditions of "cooperation" between England and America is the repayment of the gigantic British debt to America, while there is no hope of England's ever obtaining a repayment of the debts incurred by the continental states. The economic alignment of forces is thus further shifted in favor of America.

On March 5, 1925, the Bank of England raised its discount rate from four to five percent following the action of the New York Federal Reserve Bank, which had raised its rate from three to three and one-half percent. In the City [London's banking district] this served as a harsh reminder of its financial dependence on its transatlantic cousin. ... This measure reacts to the disadvantage of English trade and industry by rendering more costly its necessary supplies. In this way, America is showing England her place at every step: on the one hand, by the methods of diplomatic pressure; on the other, by measures of a banking nature, always and everywhere a pressure of America's gigantic economic preponderance.

May

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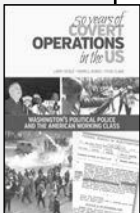
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Fight for jobs! Defend wages, job safety!

Continued from front page

while the government offers nothing but a one-time check that won't even pay the rent.

- The Socialist Workers Party demands workers be put back to work. We call for a massive government-funded public works program to put those without a job to work at union wages building things we need, like hospitals, child care centers, schools, housing and repairing dangerously dilapidated infrastructure.

The economic and social crisis we face is caused by the broad lockdown of the economy imposed by the capitalist rulers that has battered workers, farmers and all other exploited producers. It fosters competition between those of us who have jobs and those who don't. The bosses tell us "we" are all in this together, "we" have to "save our company" or "our country." They want us to submit to working faster, longer and for lower wages or face being forever tossed into the ever-longer clutches of unemployment.

It's a self-serving lie when the bosses and their government say "we" need to do anything together, whether it's to sacrifice for the boss or go to war for their markets and profits. Their dog-eat-dog class interests are sharply counterposed to what workers and farmers need and fight for.

Many workers who are still on the job are fighting bosses' attacks today — copper miners striking against Asarco's efforts to bust their unions, retail workers in Ireland protesting job cuts, and supporters of women's rights in Poland fighting attacks on the right to choose to have an abortion. My party calls on workers everywhere to back these struggles. Members of the SWP are part of these fights on the

job in Walmart, on the railroads and elsewhere.

We also call for amnesty for all undocumented workers in the U.S., another step critical to unifying working people. We back the fight to prosecute the cops who killed Steven Taylor in a Walmart store in California, and all other instances of police brutality.

As workers extend our struggles we gain experience in battle against the bosses, their parties and their state. We learn to rely only on our own forces, and our self-confidence and class consciousness grows.

- To defend our interests workers need to wrest more and more control of production from the hands of bosses, who lie to us and to their customers to cover up their profit gouging, dangerous working conditions and shoddy products. As we fight we need to set up committees of all the workers in the factory and of consumers to force open the books and facts of the employing classes' exploitation, and take control over the pace of production and to protect the environment.

Through these battles we will learn in practice that it will be necessary for working people to take control of the workings of the whole economy out of the hands of the bosses and bankers.

- To win that battle we need to build our own party, a labor party, that can mobilize the immense power of working people to fight today and to put an end to the capitalist rulers' system of exploitation and oppression. To take political power — as workers and farmers in Cuba have shown is possible — and establish our own government.

This is a future worth fighting for. Join the Socialist Workers Party's 2020 campaign!

‘Charge the cops who shot Steven Taylor’

Continued from front page

Dozens of *Militants*, two subscriptions and a copy of *"It's the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US 'Justice' System": The Cuban Five Talk About Their Lives Within the US Working Class* were sold in area Walmart parking lots.

"All working people should join with the family of Steven Taylor in demanding the arrest and prosecution of the San Leandro police officers who gunned Taylor down," Britton, who is a Walmart worker at a different store, said in an April 20 statement.

"This is another example of cops in the service of the capitalist class acting as judge, jury and executioner. Such police violence is aimed at intimidating working people and falls disproportionately on African Americans such as Taylor."

"This cold-blooded killing comes as today's deepening capitalist economic and social crisis has put tens

of millions of workers out of work," the statement said. "Those of us still working face speedup, attacks on our wages and unsafe working conditions. A movement of millions of working people needs to be built that can fight to defend 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."

On April 25, the one-week anniversary of Taylor's slaying, Britton and his campaign supporters joined a caravan of dozens of cars filled with protesters organized by a coalition of local groups that drove through the Hesperian Walmart parking lot, horns blasting.

The caravan went to the San Leandro police department offices. Some residents of the working-class neighborhood around the cop station came out of their homes, waving in support of the caravaners. Several took copies of the SWP campaign statement.

Today's social crisis rooted in decline of capitalism

Below are interrelated excerpts from "What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold," a Socialist Workers Party resolution published in New International no. 10. It will help readers of the Militant place today's economic and social crisis within the longer arc of decline of the world capitalist system. Copyright © 1994 by New International. Reprinted by permission.

The falling average rate of industrial profit accruing to the ruling capitalist families in the imperialist countries lies behind the evolution of the economic factors that make the initiation of a worldwide depression inevitable in the coming years. ...

Government intervention in this destabilizing process will grow by leaps and bounds. But no alternative economic policies followed by the employing classes or by their states and political parties can avert these consequences of the evolution of the falling average rate of industrial profit. ...

To reenter a road of accelerating and self-feeding capital accumulation, the exploiters must inflict crushing defeats on the working class; drive under giant quantities of the weakest and most outmoded

capitals at home and abroad in a ruthless competition for markets and profits; and invest in new industries and technologies that qualitatively expand their productive capacity.

This course would require the capitalists to jack up the rate of exploitation of the working class to a degree that could only be achieved by longer hours of work and intense speedup. To accomplish this, in turn, would require chronic unemployment and defeats of the unions on a massive enough scale to sap workers' confidence, intensify competition and deepen divisions among them and with their allies, diminish their level of organization, and thus destroy their capacity to fight. ...

These attacks will be met by growing resistance by working people around the world — from fights for jobs and a shorter workweek, to revolutionary national liberation struggles. ...

The mightiest class battles of human history will provide the workers and exploited farmers in the United States and many other countries the opportunity to place revolutionary solutions on the order of the day.

Poland abortion fight

Continued from front page

of abortion rights and they're trying to do it in a time when we are deprived of the right to protest. We would have come out in demonstrations, like we did when they tried before. So we had to find other ways."

The day before the April 15 action, fighters for women's rights headed to the intersection of Warsaw's two main boulevards in cars and on bicycles. At noon drivers stopped their cars, blocking traffic, while shouting slogans and honking horns. Cyclists in black on bikes adorned with banners circled the roundabout. Police shouted that the assembly was illegal, ordering people to go home. Cops issued fines to 100 people.

"We joined the lines outside grocery and other stores. We hung signs and banners in windows and on balconies," Kacpura said. "We sent 2.8 million letters to members of parliament and hundreds of tweets daily leading up to the debate, which was outrageous. They called us murderers and used other hate language. We will protest this."

Legislators didn't vote on the bill. Instead they sent it to a parliamentary commission. Kacpura says that the government will definitely come back and try again.

Abortion was criminalized in 1993 with some exceptions. The new law would ban abortions in cases of fetuses with serious abnormalities, the grounds for 95% of all legal abortions today, which number from 1,000 to 2,000 a year. Back alley abortions are estimated to be anywhere from 10,000 to 150,000.

The "morning after" pill used to be available over the counter. Now it requires a prescription. Doctors can use a legal "conscience clause" to refuse to prescribe birth control, and pharmacists often refuse to dispense contraceptives.

Another proposed new law criminalizes providing information on sex, contraception or abortion to youths under 18, enforced by prison terms of up to three years if convicted. This would effectively ban what little is left of sex education in schools.

Women organize to fight back

When the draconian anti-abortion bill was introduced in 2016, 150,000 people dressed in black hit the streets in "Black Monday" demonstrations that October. There were rallies in 140 cities, towns and villages across Poland. Popular slogans were "A woman is a human being" and "My body, my choice."

"That bill would have meant a total ban, no sexual education, no contraception, no abortion," Kacpura said. "Women were furious. Most of the protests were in small towns and rural areas. We have the support of women there. The government had to back off."

When the bill was raised again in 2018, more mass actions exploded, and the bill died.

When abortion was legalized bureaucratically by Poland's Stalinist rulers in 1956, it wasn't as a right of a woman to control her own body. And it wasn't the result of a big struggle by women. As in the Soviet Union, despite Poland being largely Catholic, abortion became the principal means of birth control in a country with little contraception available. In 1962 alone, some 400,000 abortions were performed.

After the overthrow of the Stalinist regime in a wave of workers' struggles in the late 1980s, pro-capitalist forces became dominant and, along with other social changes, abortion was criminalized.

After 1956, women went to Poland from other countries in Europe where the procedure had been criminalized. Now the travel goes in the opposite direction.

How come Poland went from total access to a nearly total ban in such a short time?

"Women had taken abortion for granted. We were used to thinking only about ourselves and there was no solidarity," Kacpura said. "Then in the early 1990s with the coming down of the Berlin Wall, we won democratic rights, which was very important. But we took this hit. For the next 25 years Polish women were asleep. With 2016 this changed. It showed us what it takes and how it needs to be done. We are now acting on that lesson."

‘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