

Workers fight boss attacks on jobs, pay, work conditions

BY ROY LANDERSEN

From airlines to auto plants, oil companies to food packing, bosses around the world are pushing to crank up production as governments lift onerous lockdowns, opening the door for the employers to ratchet up cut-throat capitalist competition for markets and profits.

As an essential part of doing this, they’re discarding “excess” workers and pressing wages down, while simultaneously trying to force remaining workers to work longer and harder, and turning a blind eye to increasingly dangerous working conditions.

Workers are responding. Actions defending jobs, pay and safety are breaking out — from fruit packers in Yakima Valley, Washington, to sanitation workers in New Orleans and from autoworkers in France and Spain to sacked Debenhams store workers in Ireland.

Scores of immigrant blueberry
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French auto workers strike over Renault plant closures

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Facing plant closings by the bosses at Renault, autoworkers in France are organizing strikes and protest rallies against company plans to eliminate 4,600 jobs nationwide. These actions have forced the company to back off from some of the plant closings for now.

Some 8,000 union workers rallied at Renault’s Maubeuge plant in northern France May 30 after bosses said they would close that factory and shift some production to another plant. The 2,000 workers there went on strike, returning to work June 3 after bosses “reassured” them and union officials that a deal is being worked out to keep the plant open.

The day before that strike ended, Renault Chairman Jean-Dominique Senard announced that the Choisy-le-Roi plant near Paris would be closed. This will be the first of the company’s plants in France to be shuttered. In response, the 262 workers there went on
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Worldwide protests say, ‘End police brutality!’



Militant/Candace Wagner

Old Bridge, New Jersey, June 4, one of hundreds — perhaps thousands — of protests that have exploded in small towns across U.S. after Minneapolis cops brutally killed George Floyd.

Cops and their violence are an essential part of capitalist rule

Alyson Kennedy, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, issued the following statement June 9. Malcolm Jarrett is the party’s candidate for vice president.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

The explosion of demonstrations against the Minneapolis cop killing of George Floyd that have swept the country — from big cities to small rural towns — and spread around the world give a picture of what work-
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Workers, youth march in cities, towns, rural areas across US

BY SETH GALINSKY

More than two weeks after Minneapolis cops brutally killed George Floyd, protests on an unprecedented scale continue to sweep the world. From big cities to rural towns in the U.S. and elsewhere, hundreds of thousands, if not millions, have joined the protests — most for the first time in their lives — and have focused attention on countless other cases of police brutality.

The widespread protests forced prosecutors to indict the four cops involved in killing Floyd and to lodge more weighty charges against Derek
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Planned Parenthood wins fight to keep Missouri abortion clinic open



Robert Cohen/St. Louis Post-Dispatch via AP

St. Louis Planned Parenthood, only clinic open in Missouri for women who choose to have an abortion, hangs huge banner May 29 after defeat of state officials’ move to shut it down.

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Supporters of women’s right to choose whether to have an abortion registered an important victory May 29 when the state government’s attempt to shut down Missouri’s only remaining abortion clinic was blocked. The Planned Parenthood clinic in St. Louis now has its annual license to operate. Their office is festooned with a giant banner reading, “Still here.”

This victory ends — at least for now — a yearlong battle between the

clinic and Gov. Mike Parson’s administration. When the clinic’s operators filed to renew their license last year, the state’s health department refused, claiming to have uncovered “serious and extensive” problems during its annual inspection. After seizing the medical records of over 4,000 women who had abortions at the clinic since 2018, the state inspectors claimed they had turned up four instances of what they called “failed abortions.”
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Protests, workers’ resistance to bosses spur interest in the ‘Militant,’ books

BY SETH GALINSKY

The protests against police brutality that are sweeping the U.S. and the world — combined with resistance to the bosses’ attacks as the capitalist economic crisis unfolds — have boosted interest in the *Militant* newspaper, books by Socialist Workers Party leaders and other revolutionists, and the Socialist Workers Party election campaigns.

Over the last week more than 250 working people and youth have subscribed to the *Militant* and purchased at least that number of books. This is a reflection of the thirst to understand why cop brutality and other oppressive conditions exist and to learn more about what working people can do to chart a road forward to end them.

Socialist Workers Party members have been joining the actions, introducing the *Militant* and books and encouraging others to do the same. At the same time, they continue talking

to working people on their doorsteps in big cities, small towns and farming areas and find the same interest.

Participants in June 5 and 6 rallies
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Marches in cities, rural areas

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Chauvin, who pressed his knee down on the handcuffed man’s neck for nearly nine minutes, from third-degree to second-degree murder.

The actions boosted the fight to prosecute the cops who shot dead Breonna Taylor, an emergency room technician, during a midnight no-knock raid on her apartment in Louisville, Kentucky, March 13. The cops who burst into Taylor’s home, spraying the bed where she slept with bullets, are still on paid desk duty, while an “investigation” is under-way.

On June 5, which would have been Taylor’s 27th birthday, calls for the prosecution of the cops who killed her were heard at many of the actions.

Hundreds rallied at the Brunswick courthouse in Georgia June 4, following a hearing for the three white vigilantes charged with the February killing of Ahmaud Arbery, a Black youth slain while he was jogging.

In a sign of the depth of the outrage over police killings, several hundred demonstrations have taken place in small towns and rural areas across the U.S. This shows the ongoing impact of the fight for Black rights in the 1950s and ’60s that overturned Jim Crow segregation in the South and advanced the fight against racism across the country and around the world. That fight, led by Black workers, transformed social relations in the country, making it more possible for workers of all nationalities to work, live and fight together.

Protesters at today’s actions are young and old, Black, Latino, Caucasian and Asian — proof that there is less racism than ever among working people. The real source of racist discrimination and cop brutality is the functioning of capi-

talism, which seeks to foster divisions among working people, to pit them against each other and divert them from their real enemy.

Throughout the day on June 8 people attended a wake for Floyd at the Fountain of Praise Church in Houston, where he was brought up. “I owe my condolences to George Floyd,” Martin Dailey told Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, at the event. “I am fighting a firing from my job as an operator from a PVC chemical plant in Freeport, Texas, because of discrimination.”

The massive protests take place as working people also confront growing assaults on our jobs, wages and working conditions.

Rural Kentucky an ‘ally’

More than 100 mostly young workers joined a protest in Harlan, Kentucky, June 2, organized by high school student and Arby’s worker Bree Carr. Harlan County, which is 96% Caucasian, has a long history of strikes and protests by coal miners.

Carr told the *Harlan Enterprise* that she’d “been thinking how much I want to do something.” So she put out a flyer and recruited others she met at Walmart to help organize the protest.

The turnout was better than she expected, and passing cars honked in support. “Deep within rural Appalachia, especially in southeastern Kentucky, people look upon us like we ignore issues that are happening and like we’re uneducated,” Carr told the press. “My idea was to show people of color who are struggling right now all over the country that there are people in this rural place that are allies.”

There have been similar protests in



Hazard, Pikeville, Paintsville and other smaller towns across Kentucky.

Over 100 people joined a rally in Havre, Montana, a farm town of 9,700. The protest was organized by Melody Bernard, a Chippewa Creek tribal member. One participant was Dorian Miles, a young Black man, who moved there just five months ago to play football for Montana State University.

He was blown away. “A SMALL town of predominantly older white Americans stood with me to protest the wrongdoings at the hands of police EVERYWHERE,” he wrote to friends on Facebook.

Two young Black women, Ande Green and Essence Blue, put out a flyer announcing a protest in Alliance, Ohio, population 21,616, 80% Caucasian. “We didn’t know what to expect,” Green told The Associated Press. “But over 300 people showed up.”

Green also put her finger on the reality of the working class in the U.S. “These small towns matter because it’s a *lot* of small towns,” she said. “All of these small towns coming together, it’s what we need to make a change.”

The blows of today’s capitalist social crisis hit hard on the countryside with hospitals closing, jobs gone and social aid programs slashed.

‘People’s thinking has evolved’

What happened to George Floyd can’t be accepted as the “status quo,” Emma Boateng told a protest of 800 in Old

Bridge, New Jersey, a majority Caucasian town of 24,000. She was part of a contingent of Black high school students on the march. “We are here to build our community, not burn it,” she said.

“My grandmother grew up in the South and had to sit on the back of the bus,” high school student Zora Dancy told Candace Wagner, the SWP’s candidate for U.S. Congress in New Jersey’s 8th District, at the march. “She joined the fight to change that. And now here I am still fighting.”

During the first week after Floyd was killed, many of the U.S. protests — especially in larger cities — were marred by looting and in some cases violent attacks on police stations. Some were carried out by provocateurs on the march. Most were organized by gangs or frustrated youth, targeting jewelry, electronics, shoe as well as grocery stores and other large and small businesses, many already reeling from the government-imposed coronavirus shutdowns.

Many of the attacks on cops and police stations were carried out by antifa groups and other middle-class radicals. All of these weakened the protests, putting barriers in the way of involving more working people who backed the aims of the actions.

Government authorities took advantage of the violent acts to go after democratic and political rights.

In New York, Mayor Bill de Blasio imposed a weeklong 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew. Some 2,000 people had been

THE MILITANT

Back fights to defend wages, jobs, work conditions

From fruit packers in Washington state to auto-workers in Spain and France to lumber workers in Chile — working people are finding ways to stand up to bosses’ speedup and attacks on wages and safety. The ‘Militant’ reports on these fights and builds solidarity.

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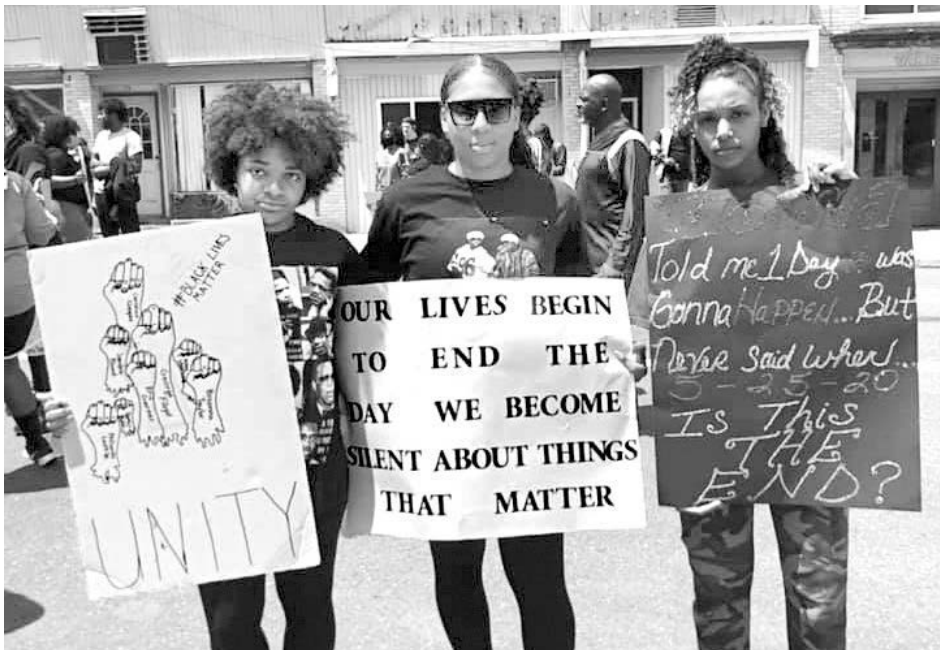
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Facing page: Instagram; above, Ande Green

Facing page, Atlanta June 5. Above, May 31 action in Alliance, Ohio. “These small towns coming together, is what we need to make a change,” said Ande Green, protest organizer there.

arrested as of June 5 for curfew violations, “unlawful assembly,” disorderly conduct and resisting arrest. But with large peaceful demonstrations continuing past curfew every day, it was lifted.

‘New York Times’ defends looting

While most working people oppose the pillaging, the *New York Times* took the lead in justifying it. “Violence is when an agent of the state kneels on a man’s neck until all of the life is leached out of his body. Destroying property, which can be replaced, is not violence,” Pulitzer Prize winning *Times* reporter Nikole Hannah-Jones claimed on CBS News June 2. “To use the same language to describe those two things is not moral.”

To Hannah-Jones, the people who own now-destroyed small businesses, the workers out of a job because the stores they worked at lie in ruins, and the working people who depend on them to shop — often their only source of basic necessities — are of no concern. She just sees “property.”

Areas hard hit by looting include the Minneapolis neighborhoods near where Floyd was killed, with many stores destroyed.

A two-block area there has been roped off and become a center of discussion and protest. More than a dozen volunteer stands — organized by individuals and church groups — provide free hot meals and water all day and late into the evening to neighborhood residents and thousands streaming in to visit the memorial set up to Floyd.

Several places donate food, diapers and other supplies that are now harder to get because of shuttered or destroyed stores.

Postal workers union joins protests

On June 7, 75 members of the postal workers union and some bus drivers marched into the area carrying a banner that read “Postal Workers Demand Justice for George Floyd.” They had started out at the remains of the nearby post office that was gutted by fire during looting the week before.

Many unions and national farmers organizations have spoken out against the killing. More organized labor participation would significantly strengthen the fight against police brutality. But even in its absence, many protesters successfully pushed back looters and provocateurs. Protesters in Spokane, Washington — like in many other cities — formed a human chain to prevent the looting of a Nike store June 1.

Organizers of many of the thousands of protests around the country also made clear that looting and violence

would not be tolerated, helping reduce provocative actions.

The protests have a deep impact. Todd Winn, a U.S. Marine, joined a June 5 protest in Salt Lake City in uniform for three hours holding a sign that said, “Justice for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tamir Rice, Countless Others.” Unlike the cops, workers and farmers in the armed forces can and are being won to the side of working-class struggles.

International protests

Protests against police brutality and racism have spread to more than 40 countries, often centered around cases of brutality perpetrated by the cops there, including in Australia (see article on this page), Canada, France, Iran, Israel, Italy, Kenya, Germany, Spain, Thailand, the U.K. and many more.

At June 6 protests in major cities across Brazil, marches carried “Black Lives Matter” banners emblazoned with the name of João Pedro Matos Pinto, 14, who was gunned down by cops in a suburb of Rio de Janeiro. After storming the youth’s home, throwing a grenade inside and spraying it with bullets, the police claimed it was an accident.

“Now is the time to stand up and

Thousands defy Australia gov’t, protest brutality



Militant/Baskaran Appu

SYDNEY — Tens of thousands protested across Australia June 5-6, including more than 20,000 here, in solidarity with U.S. demonstrations against the police killing of George Floyd as well as against Aboriginal deaths in police custody. The cops in New South Wales appealed to a Supreme Court judge for a ban on the protest, ostensibly because of the government’s ban on social gatherings due to coronavirus, and got it. Just before the action began, the Court of Appeals voided the ban.

Outrage had been further fueled after a Sydney cop was caught on camera just a week before, slamming an Aboriginal teenager face first into the ground. The rally in Melbourne also went ahead despite government demands to cancel it. The authorities say organizers still face fines for disobeying public health orders.

Many carried handmade signs saying, “Aboriginal lives matter” and “432 deaths — No convictions.” That’s the number of Aboriginal people a government inquiry said have died at the hands of police or prison guards since 1991. Not one of those responsible has been convicted.

In Wollongong, a city of about 300,000 just south of Sydney, several thousand marched through the city center.

At the rally here messages were read out from family members of indigenous people who have died in custody. One was from Leetona Dungay, the mother of David Dungay, a 26-year-old man killed by prison guards at Long Bay jail in Sydney in December 2015.

Dungay, like Floyd, had repeatedly told guards, “I can’t breathe” before he died. “I am determined to continue to fight to see justice for my son,” she said.

— LINDA HARRIS

take part,” Will Goodlake told *Militant* worker-correspondents at a protest of thousands marching to the U.S. Embassy in London.

These actions show the potential for

working people in their millions to unite and organize against police brutality, acts of racist discrimination, and all the iniquities rooted in capitalist exploitation and oppression.

Supreme Court upholds attack on right to worship

BY TERRY EVANS

In a dangerous violation of constitutional rights, the U.S. Supreme Court May 29 in a 5-4 vote upheld restrictions on freedom of worship imposed by California Gov. Gavin Newsom.

Claiming to safeguard public health from coronavirus, Newsom compromised protections enshrined in the Bill of Rights that are needed and used by workers and farmers to defend ourselves from government interference in our lives and in our struggles. Those voting to back government limits on religious freedom included all four so-called liberal justices, along with Chief Justice John Roberts.

The court rejected a challenge by the South Bay United Pentecostal Church in Chula Vista, which sought to overturn Newsom’s executive order banning people from worshipping together once a church had reached 25% of its capacity or 100 congregants, whichever was less.

The church had argued that under Newsom’s order many secular establishments — including retail outlets — weren’t saddled with such restrictions, making the executive order discriminatory.

The same day, the court upheld a now-lapsed limit imposed by Illinois Gov. Jay Pritzker restricting religious

gatherings in that state to no more than 10 people.

Both decisions strike blows at the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which forbids the government from establishing a state religion or prohibiting anyone from free exercise of the religion of their choice. The same amendment forbids the government from abridging freedom of speech, or of the press, or “the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

Pastor Jim Franklin at Cornerstone Church in Fresno, California, says he will defy the court’s ruling. His church has a 1,400 capacity and he will allow 350 people into its services — in line with the 25% capacity ruling but well over the 100 limit Newsom says is legal.

No justice stood for the principle that the government of California is barred from interfering with the free exercise of religion. They all voted for or against backing Newsom’s order by comparing it to bans that California imposes on other activity. Chief Justice Roberts voted for the ruling, arguing the governor’s restriction on church gatherings was not as severe as the state government’s complete bans on what Roberts claimed were “comparable secular gatherings,” such as the outright ban

on concerts and sports events.

Regardless of the severity or laxness of other restrictions, the working class has an unequivocal stake in safeguarding the right to freedom of worship. It is a central conquest of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in the U.S., barring the government from interfering with our rights.

Restrictions enforced by governments in the name of “combating the virus” have been used to attack free speech and the right to protest, from Hong Kong to Chile. Bans that have hit the working class especially hard include constraints on visiting relatives in nursing homes and participating in face-to-face first-step meetings like Alcoholics Anonymous.

This type of abrogation of the Bill of Rights will be used by the capitalist rulers to justify curbs on rights we need to organize today. It will increasingly be relied upon as battles against the employers, their governments and other social struggles pick up.

Legal challenges are still pending against executive orders restricting the right to worship in other states. In Oregon, Gov. Katherine Brown threatens to jail people for up to 30 days if they attend a church service of more than 25 people.

Interest in ‘Militant,’ books

Continued from front page

in Louisville, Kentucky, calling for prosecution of the cops who killed Breonna Taylor, bought 20 subscriptions to the *Militant* and 17 books.

At one protest SWP member Jacquie Henderson showed union carpenter William Martin the article written in 1866 by Karl Marx in the book *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions*. Marx wrote that the unions “must convince the world at large that their efforts, far from being narrow and selfish, aim at the emancipation of the downtrodden millions.”

“That’s what I’m talking about!” said Martin. He subscribed and purchased the book along with *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. In that title Barnes describes “the working-class program, composition and course of conduct” of the party, and why its members strive to join the struggles against the bosses’ attacks on our wages and working conditions today at the places where they work.

In New York City, participants in demonstrations purchased some 30 subscriptions to the *Militant* and well over 30 books, including *The Jewish Question* by Abram Leon, a vital account of the causes of Jew-hatred in the imperialist epoch; titles by leaders of the Cuban Revolution; and numerous books of speeches by Malcolm X.

Reform the cops?

“We’ve been discussing and debating with people whether the police can be reformed, what kind of movement we need to build to defend the interests of the working class,” David Rosenfeld, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Minnesota, told the *Militant* June 8. He has participated in many protests in the Twin Cities since George Floyd was killed.

Rosenfeld explains it’s possible to push back police brutality by winning indictments and prosecutions. But the only way to put an end to their brutality once and for all is for the working class to replace capitalist rule with a workers and farmers government.

“In the last week we’ve sold 24 subscriptions and 47 books,” he said, “mostly at literature tables we’ve set up near the memorial site for George Floyd.”

Strength in numbers

“Our strength is in our numbers,” Demartin Taylor told Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett, the SWP candidates for U.S. president and vice president, at the June 8 viewing for George Floyd in his hometown of Houston.

Taylor was impressed with the participation of working people and youth of many different nationalities. “There are many races out here today,” he said. “This shows we can make a difference.”

The SWP candidates showed Taylor the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. It describes how the entire working class was strengthened by the explosive rise of the fight for Black liberation from the mid-1950s, and why the conquest of power by the working class will make the final battle for Black freedom possible. Taylor got the book and a subscription.

While Kennedy and Jarrett were campaigning on doorsteps in rural West Texas a few days before, workers they met told them about protests that took place in several small towns in the area.

Christine Oles in Weatherford told Kennedy she had been falsely arrested by cops twice in Dallas. “The police thought I had been drinking, even though I told them I have a disease that makes it hard for me to walk,” she said. “They wouldn’t listen and refused to give me a breathalyzer test.”

Oles subscribed to the *Militant* and purchased *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa* and *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?*

Campaigning in Vermont

During the first week of June, SWP vice presidential candidate Jarrett campaigned in Vermont, where the SWP’s presidential ticket will be on the ballot.

“I am fed up with both parties in Washington,” Chris Brezizicki, a baker in Barre, told Jarrett.

In Rutland, Jarrett and Jacob Per-



Militant photos: Above, Hilda Cuzco; inset, Alyson Kennedy Above, SWP presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy and Senate candidate Gerardo Sánchez march in June 2 Dallas protest against cop killing of George Floyd. Inset, Sánchez talks to Blanca Reyes at her door in Strawn, June 8.

asso, SWP candidate for Congress in New York’s 21st District, met Paul Plouffe, one of just 10 remaining small dairy farmers in the Champlain Valley. The big milk-processing companies, banks and feed suppliers, combined with government regulations that favor the big capitalist dairies, are driving many working farmers out of business.

“I need a price between \$26 and \$30 per hundred weight to meet my costs,” Plouffe said, explaining he is only getting \$15. “Prices have been too low for five years.” At the same time the prices of seed and other inputs have gone up.

“Our campaign calls for an end to farm foreclosures,” Perasso said. “And

demands a price guarantee for small farmers to ensure enough income to cover costs.”

“In Cuba they made a socialist revolution,” Jarrett said, “and one of their first acts was guaranteeing farmers would not lose their land, in addition to distributing land from the largest landholders to those who wanted to farm.”

“People will fight when they are pushed over the edge,” Plouffe said. “Fifteen small farmers getting together could begin to have an impact.”

To join the ongoing effort to introduce workers and youth to the *Militant* and books on revolutionary program and history, contact distributors nearest you listed on page 8.

Florida gov’t restrictions on former prisoners’ right to vote pushed back

BY STEVE WARSHALL
AND ANTHONY DUTROW

MIAMI — An important victory for working people was registered in Florida May 24 when U.S. District Judge Robert Hinkle overturned some of the

restrictions imposed by Gov. Ron DeSantis and the state legislature on the newly won right of ex-felons to vote. The decision will have a direct impact on tens of thousands of workers with convictions here.

Over a million people signed petitions to put Amendment 4 on the ballot in 2018 to overturn Florida’s longstanding prohibition on former prisoners’ right to vote. The state constitution was amended after more than 64% voted yes.

But the governor and state legislature passed a vindictive law last year making it illegal for those with felony convictions to vote if they hadn’t paid off all outstanding fines, court costs and victim compensation awards. This would bar some 775,000 ex-prisoners, over half of those who would be able to vote from the passage of Amendment 4, from doing so.

The judge ruled that the requirement is unconstitutional. The plaintiffs — former inmates — argued the state had essentially imposed a new poll tax.

Ex-felons need to get a court order acknowledging they are unable to pay before they can register, which “will still deter at least some eligible citizens from registering and voting,” Judge Hinkle said.

DeSantis gave notice in court May 29 that he intends to appeal. He requested the ruling be stayed while the appeal is considered, which would again bar former felons from registering.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



June 26, 1995

REYKJAVIK, Iceland — Five thousand workers on more than 300 trawlers and fishing ships in Iceland walked off the job May 26, demanding higher and more uniform wages. The fishermen’s strike is the biggest of many labor struggles that have developed here recently.

The main daily newspaper in Iceland complained about the unrest, saying, “Most fishing ships are in the harbors. Trade unions prepare a strike in Straumsvik aluminum plant. Bankers are planning a strike in mid-June. Tour bus drivers are on strike. Bakers are just about to strike. This is the picture we have in front of us.”

Fishermen receive payment proportional to their catch and operating expenses. The captain receives two “shares,” an engineer and the cook one and a half, and the workers one “share.” Workers on the fleets can be laid off on one week’s notice.



June 26, 1970

When President [Richard] Nixon ordered the U.S. invasion of Cambodia April 30, he maintained that the purpose was to “destroy North Vietnamese sanctuaries.” Nixon promised to withdraw all U.S. forces by June 30.

But it is now evident that neither Nixon’s promises nor Senate bills can prevent the war in Cambodia from developing into a full-scale civil war. The Pnom Penh government, like the government in Saigon, has no popular base.

As the civil war has deepened in Cambodia, there are indications of a new domestic crisis facing the regime in Saigon. Popular hatred for the war has been heightened in recent months by intensification of war-primed inflation.

On June 15, more than 60 of Saigon’s 124 unions began a 24-hour strike in sympathy with government workers who have been fired. The workers were supported by student demonstrators.



June 23, 1945

[Though the second imperialist world war was winding down] Wall Street’s spokesmen continued this week to press for peace-time conscription. The capitalists want huge “peace-time” armies to put down working-class revolutions and colonial rebellions.

The fat-headed proposals of the AFL and CIO bureaucrats deserve nothing but condemnation by class-conscious workers. The militarists cannot be answered by Utopian proposals to reduce arms, give up military training. They want armies to maintain Wall Street’s plunder and profits.

In order to achieve emancipation the working class needs military training. It is the duty of labor’s representatives to demand that training — at government expense — be placed under control of the trade unions. The unions need control to make sure military training does not become training against unionism.

Frank Gorton built communist movement in Canada, UK, US

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL — The political activity and contributions of Frank Gorton, a 56-year cadre of the world communist movement, were celebrated here at a May 31 event sponsored by the Communist League.

Gorton dedicated his life to building communist parties in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the U.S. He died in Toronto March 30 at age 79.

The 33 participants came from Montreal, Hamilton and Toronto. They included Frank's lifelong companion, Toni Gorton, also for many decades a party member and now active supporter of the communist movement. Others who would have liked to come from the U.S., the U.K., or elsewhere were denied the opportunity by a ban on foreign travelers imposed by Canada's rulers.

Many sent messages, including Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party in the U.S., Jonathan Silberman for the Communist League in the U.K., and the leaderships of Communist Leagues in Australia and New Zealand.

The messages were bound together under the title, "Frank Gorton — proletarian internationalist." This fact was exemplified by a photo of Gorton from the Facebook page of The Greater Toronto Kurdish House showing him participating in a Toronto demonstration supporting the Kurdish people's historic struggle for a homeland.

"The man was always there with us and supporting our Nation's cause by participating in our protesting and marching activities," the group wrote.

This was also stressed by Silberman in his message on behalf of the CL in the U.K., who worked with Gorton for years there. "That's how I remember Frank: as a political worker-Bolshevik and internationalist," Silberman said,

"deeply immersed in proletarian party-building at home, a course which he carried out inseparably with collaborating with forces to forge parties around the world and the international communist movement."

Speaking at the meeting, chaired by Michel Prairie and conducted in both French and English, were Communist League executive committee members Beverly Bernardo, Félix Vincent Ardea and CL organizer Steve Penner. Excerpts from messages were read throughout the program.

Joining the communist movement

When Gorton was born in a working-class district of London in 1940 during the second imperialist war, Penner said, Britain was being hit daily by bombing runs from Berlin. "He and his mother were placed under the delivery table by nurses to protect them. Frank, with his well-known sense of humor, always said that experience marked his personality for the rest of his life."

Gorton began his political activity when he was in school, initiating a fund campaign for refugees from Hungary after the Stalinist regime in Moscow sent troops to crush the 1956 revolutionary uprising by workers there. After graduating and apprenticing as an engineer for five years, he emigrated to Canada in 1964.

"Frank met the League for Socialist Action, then the section of the Fourth International in Canada and a predecessor of the Communist League, at a large anti-Vietnam War meeting at Massey Hall in downtown Toronto," Bernardo told the meeting.

"LSA member Toni Foster (now Gorton) sold him a copy of the party's paper, *Workers Vanguard*. He joined soon after and became involved in party work in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee defending the Cuban Revolution. He was also active in the growing movement against the Vietnam War and Ottawa's complicity with Washington's warmakers, and in other political and union struggles.

Party building in United Kingdom

In 1967 Frank and Toni moved to the U.K. to help build what became the International Marxist Group, the section of the Fourth International there. Frank got a job in Nottingham as a draftsman at the Raleigh bicycle factory.

"There's a photo of Frank in the dis-



Frank Gorton, far right with bullhorn, was union spokesperson in 1969 demonstration for wage parity between skilled, unskilled workers at Raleigh bike factory in Nottingham, England.

play booklet with a bullhorn at a Raleigh workers demonstration during their successful struggle for wage parity for the factory workers," Penner said. "This was the kind of thing Frank loved to do. And he was good at it."

The Gorton house became an organizing center for the anti-Vietnam War movement. "Toni and Frank were members of the National Council of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign, which organized two mass anti-war marches in London, one of 100,000 and another of 200,000, in 1968," said Penner. Gorton also joined in the party's solidarity efforts with the Irish struggle against the U.K.'s ongoing colonial rule in Northern Ireland.

For some two decades, Gorton helped lead a political struggle for a proletarian orientation in the party in the U.K. He and other IMG members advocated a program and course of conduct in continuity with the world communist movement founded at the initiative of V.I. Lenin and the Bolshevik leadership of the October 1917 revolution in Russia.

Among other issues, this involved a political fight against the call on revolutionaries to orient to prolonged guerrilla war in Latin America. This disastrous course, adopted by a majority at a 1969 Fourth International congress, was extended to ultraleft policies by parties in Europe and beyond.

Gorton and other IMG cadres also fought to implement a turn to the industrial unions initiated by the SWP leadership and adopted in 1979 by the Fourth International. This course, presented in the new book *The Turn to Industry*

by Jack Barnes, aims to meet growing opportunities to be part of struggles around wages and job conditions, building the unions and winning workers to the party. To help lead the turn, Gorton quit his draftsman's job and took one on the factory floor.

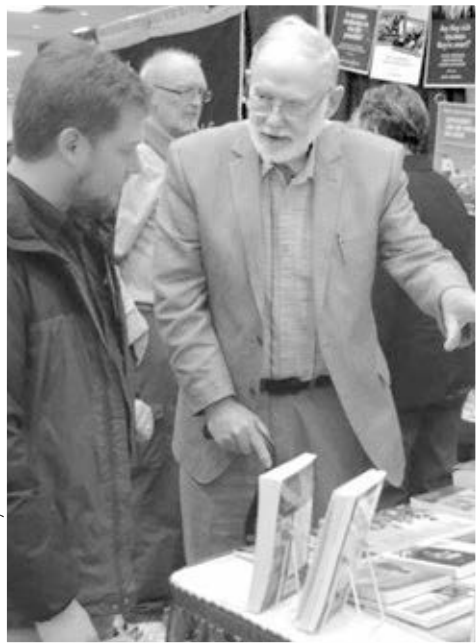
Gorton knew these struggles were accompanied by new openings to expand circulation of revolutionary literature among workers and other exploited producers. During the 1984-85 strike by more than 100,000 coal miners against the drive of the Margaret Thatcher government to bust their union, Penner said, "Frank took the responsibility to organize party book tables at miners' rallies all across the country."

In his message celebrating Gorton's contributions, SWP leader Jack Barnes said that "Frank was a big help to me in understanding more concretely the evolution over the past several decades in the class composition of the Labour Party membership and leadership."

In the 1980s, leaders of the former IMG, renamed the Socialist League, had sent members into the Labour Party on what proved to be a wrong assessment it would be a central arena for working-class political activity.

But Gorton, by then a member of a Labour Party club in a more and more middle-class part of London, told Barnes that Labour was well on the way "to no longer being a party whose members in the main were miners, dock workers, engineers and other wage workers, organized in a structured way through their unions. It was increasingly

Continued on page 9



Militant/Beverly Bernardo



Bottom, Toni and Frank Gorton at mid-1980 action in solidarity with Nicaraguan Revolution and growing fight against apartheid in South Africa. Top, Gorton promotes books by SWP and other revolutionary leaders at Toronto 2017 convention of Association of Asian Studies.

SWP 'stimulus' appeal climbs over \$116,000

In the last week the Socialist Workers Party "stimulus" appeal grew by \$11,200 to a total of \$116,200, from 11 more people, for a total of 105 contributors.

Many contributions come with notes. "Enclosed is my contribution from 'stimulus' payments to help build a new society based on humanity and solidarity," Jean Luc Duval wrote from Detroit.

"It's a great pleasure to join with so many others in helping to transform these so-called economic stabilization payouts into much-needed funds for the long-term work of building the proletarian party!" said Patti Iiyama and Jerry Freiwirth from the San Francisco Bay Area in a note with their contributions.

The appeal is in the long-time tradition of the workers' movement to build its resources on the only reliable foundation — political support and commitment. The result of the continuing response is a significant expansion of the SWP's long-term capital, dedicated to building a proletarian party now and in the future. A party that will organize workers in their millions to end capitalist exploitation and rule, and join hands with toilers worldwide to build a new social order based on solidarity.

"When Washington announced their 'Stimulus Program' nearly three months ago, I knew I wanted to contribute. I received the check only last week. Here is my contribution," wrote Ray Parsons from Delmar, New York.

If you'd like to donate from your government payout, send a check to the Socialist Workers Party at 306 W. 37th Street, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018, marked "Special Fund."

— EMMA JOHNSON

Workers fight boss attacks

Continued from front page
pickers at Durango Farms in Cutler, California, walked out May 25 after their piece rate pay was reduced from \$7 to \$6.50 per bucket. With the help of their union, the United Farm Workers, they won improvements in pay and conditions. They gained cleaner and more accessible bathrooms in the fields and the promise of no retaliation.

Workers at Columbia Reach Pack in Yakima are keeping their picket lines up as their strike nears four weeks. Supporters of the packing plant workers, including Larry Brown, president of the Washington State Labor Council, participated in an 85-car caravan May 30 to bolster the picket lines.

Every one of these fights deserves solidarity. Only through building a fighting working-class movement that unites all of us who are forced to sell our labor power to survive can we push back against the attacks of the bosses and their government.

Under these conditions, millions of workers and youth have flooded into the streets to join unprecedented worldwide mobilizations against police killings and brutality. These actions give workers a sense of our capacity to come together and fight in our own interests, dealing blows to months of social isolation.

The cops and the capitalist rulers' whole oppressive and violent criminal "justice" system exists for only one purpose — to "serve and protect" the tiny handful of billionaire families and their hangers-on who profit off our exploitation. It's part and parcel of controlling our class amid the social crisis we're living through.

Millions of workers have been furloughed, some for months, some permanently. The bosses have more in store as they try to get lean and mean. BP announced June 9 that they will dump 10,000 oil workers. You've got

to look "beyond the clear human tragedy," CEO Bernard Looney said, and focus on the "consequences for our industry and our company."

BMW bosses announced plans to get rid of 5,000 "positions." Renault, Nissan and other auto companies have similar plans.

At the same time, food prices are rising rapidly — the fastest inflation in over four decades. The bosses' answer? They're going to help out by putting less food in smaller packages to cut the price!

When the bosses and their governments tell us over and over that "we're all in this together" — it's a patent lie. *Their* greed to rake in profits on our backs is in direct conflict with *our* need for jobs, pay at union-scale wages and control over every aspect of production. *Their* morals arise from their system of exploitation, *ours* from growing solidarity in struggle.

Shutdowns for the past two months have left depression-era levels of unemployment in the U.S., with 30 million workers getting unemployment benefits. This official figure hides those unable to get any benefits, including immigrant workers, many temps, "self-employed" workers like Uber drivers and many others. Another 6 million have stopped looking for work altogether. But for the first time in two months, with the economy beginning to open up, there is an uptick in jobs, with gains outweighing losses.

This is what workers need — economic expansion and more hiring, that can give them more confidence to fight for higher wages and better conditions.

The government says 2.5 million jobs were "created" in May, largely through the recall of furloughed workers as employers reopened. More than half were jobs in restaurants and bars. Nearly half a million were in construction.

One of the areas where layoffs are

Hong Kong workers mark Tiananmen Square massacre



Reuters/Tyrone Siu

Thousands poured into Victoria Park in Hong Kong June 4 in an annual event to honor those who gave their lives fighting for political rights in 1989 in Beijing's Tiananmen Square. They cast aside metal barriers set up by the cops, defying a ban on the commemoration by the city's pro-Beijing government.

Cops looked on as the 10,000-strong rally went off without interference, while others held vigils elsewhere across the city. Protesters chanted, "Fight for freedom! Stand with Hong Kong!" and "Hong Kong independence! The only way out!"

"We fight for the same things as they did [in Tiananmen Square] 31 years ago," 24-year-old Hammond Tong told the *Washington Post*. "We must not forget, nor can we stop fighting."

"The local and Chinese governments have ignored us," construction worker Daniel Au told the *Wall Street Journal*.

For over a year hundreds of thousands of working people have repeatedly mobilized in the streets of the city to fight a growing raft of restrictions on their rights and to demand more control over the local government.

The Chinese rulers have continued to tighten their grip on the city, most recently bypassing the Hong Kong legislature to impose new repressive "national security" measures. They are determined to deal blows to the movement for political rights in Hong Kong and to minimize its effect on millions of workers and farmers in China itself.

— TERRY EVANS

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deepening is among government workers. Of the 1.9 million fresh applicants for unemployment benefits in May, over a quarter were government employees, as state and municipal authorities slash jobs to "balance" soaring budget deficits caused by the lockdowns.

Millions of workers face mounting bills, credit card and all kinds of other debts, car payments, and rent or mortgages. The daily papers are full of pictures of miles-long lines of cars full of workers waiting to get some help from food banks all across the country.

Workers fight job cuts, boss attacks

Some 2,000 workers at Debenhams department stores were unceremoniously laid off when the British-based chain shuttered their Irish stores April 19. They've been picketing and protesting since and gaining solidarity for their fight to win their jobs back. Through daily pickets they seek to prevent bosses from removing stock to sell in the U.K. At the main Dublin store, they've gotten support from nearby supermarket workers and customers, Jane Crowe, one of the workers, told the *Militant* June 5.

By putting the Irish wing of the company into liquidation, Debenhams bosses ensured workers also lost severance pay, so some have no income. Since then workers, backed by their union, Mandate, have held weekly protests outside stores and at the Irish parliament.

Meanwhile, Debenhams stores in the U.K. were shut down by the government's lockdown orders. The bosses laid off hundreds of workers before the stores are being allowed to reopen June 15. Like their workmates in Ireland, this means they won't receive

severance pay. "Debenhams think they can walk all over them, like they're trying to do to us," Crowe said. "We all need to stand together."

According to government figures, there are over 40 million jobless workers across Europe. Led by a deep slump in the auto industry, industrial production in Germany — the dominant economic power in the EU — fell by 25% compared to a year ago.

Hundreds of millions across the semi-colonial world in Latin America, Asia and Africa have been thrown out of work by a combination of government shutdowns and the collapse of world production and trade. In contrast to unemployment protections — however inadequate — that workers have won in most imperialist countries, most now face life with little or no social "safety net." Strikes and protests by workers demanding jobs and relief have broken out in India, Chile, Colombia, Nigeria, Ecuador and elsewhere.

Crisis facing workers on the seas

Fifteen Romanian crew members on Royal Caribbean's cruise ship Navigator of the Seas staged a hunger strike in early May after the company postponed their flights home several times over two months. Some 100,000 crew members on cruise ships were left in limbo at sea after the coronavirus shut down the industry. The Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control and Prevention stipulated that foreign crews can only be repatriated by charter flights. Cruise bosses balked at paying for expensive private airlifts.

Government restrictions on air

Continued on page 7

Renault workers fight closures

Continued from front page
strike, taking to the streets. They're backed by the four unions representing Renault workers in France — the CFE-CGC, FO, CFDT and CGT. Several hundred workers rallied outside the plant June 3 and 6.

"A lot of union delegations from nearby plants came to the factory during the week to support us," Nixon Jacquet, a forklift operator at the Choisy plant for seven years, told the *Militant* at the June 6 demonstration, "including from the big Sanofi pharmaceutical plant nearby."

"These attacks by Renault are not because of the virus epidemic," Samir Slim, a worker for 30 years at the Choisy plant and union shop steward, told the *Militant* by phone June 5, "but from years of declining auto production in France and the new technology Renault and other automakers want to install, to go over to electric cars, which will take only half as many workers."

"But they didn't count on the mobilized opposition of workers who defied the government's ban on demonstrations

due to the coronavirus," he said. "We struck the plant for five days." Workers decided to return to work when the bosses said they will announce further details about the plant and its workforce June 16. "We will have daily actions in the plant until then."

Renault bosses have announced plans to cut production by 20% and slash 14,600 jobs worldwide, including 4,600 at its 14 plants in France. These cuts come amid a worldwide decline in production and trade, fueled by capitalist depression conditions. Auto bosses worldwide — and in many other industries — are moving to slash their workforces and take other anti-working-class steps to put themselves in better shape to fight for profits as markets shrink.

French government's Renault stake

The French government is Renault's largest shareholder with just over 15%. Three days before job cuts were announced, the government of French President Emmanuel Macron gave a \$8.8 billion handout to Renault to ease its losses.

Protest in Syria: Down with Assad! Moscow, Tehran out of our country



Rudaw

Mainly youthful protesters in Suweida, southern Syria, June 7, chanted "Get out Bashar," and "Syria is for us, it is not for Assad's family." They called for Russian and Iranian forces, which have propped up Bashar al-Assad's regime during brutal civil conflicts since 2011, to get out.

BY TERRY EVANS

Chanting, "The people want the fall of the regime" and other slogans calling for the toppling of Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad, hundreds of demonstrators marched in Suweida June 7. This is an area in Syria where most people backed Assad and didn't join the popular 2011 uprising for political rights, nor fight against his forces in the country's subsequent civil war.

The action was the second straight day of protests, led primarily by area youth.

Protesters called for Moscow and Tehran to get their forces out of Syria. The Russian and Iranian rulers sent warplanes, weaponry and troops to battle those who rose up to challenge Assad's rule, helping shore up his regime. Their intervention was decisive in the government recapturing most of the country west of the Euphrates

River. It also advanced Moscow and Tehran's military and political influence in the region.

In recent weeks working people have born the brunt of the regime's growing economic crisis, marked by shortages of fuel and other basic necessities, along with rampant inflation. This crisis is also deepening divisions within Assad's ruling family.

Protests in solidarity with demonstrators in Suweida were held in Deraa, the birthplace of the 2011 rebellion, which is now back under Assad's control.

Assad's tyranny is based on capitalist families mainly from Syria's Alawites, a Muslim minority in the country. It has defended their interests against working people from the country's Sunni majority and oppressed Kurdish nationality. Suweida is home to most of Syria's Druze minority, whose leaders had allied with Assad.



Militant/Derek Jeffers

Renault workers lead 1,000 autoworkers and their supporters in June 6 march to plant that bosses say they want to shutter. Lead banner says, "No to the closing of the Renault-Choisy factory after 70 years of existence." Workers chanted, "We won't move! Renault-Choisy is ours!"

Hundreds of workers at Renault's factory in Caudan, France, struck during the last week in May, "protesting at factory gates, anticipating their plant would be shuttered," reported Reuters. In response the bosses announced that the plant's future will be put under "strategic review."

"The hardest part is still to come," Mael Le Goff from the CGT union at the plant, told Reuters.

At the same time, Nissan workers in Spain, who have been on strike since

May 4, continue to organize protest actions against the bosses' plan to shut down all production in the country by the end of December.

Several "slow marches" involving 1,000 vehicles took place June 4, traveling from Nissan's three plants in Catalonia to the Barcelona city center, the Catalan News reported.

Retired autoworkers Nat London and Derek Jeffers in Paris contributed to this article.

Workers fight boss attacks

Continued from page 6

travel, and 14-day or longer quarantine requirements for those who are able to get around, have created a crisis for tens of thousands of workers in the global shipping industry. Shipping bosses have used these restrictions to largely halt any crew changes aboard their vessels. Workers' contracts and union agreements call for limits on the duration of service, but these are being ignored. This affects some 80% of the world trade still taking place today.

Unlike in the cruise ship industry, these workers don't get exposed to coronavirus. They're either at sea or, when they dock to load or unload cargo, they're prevented from going ashore.

More than 150,000 seafarers, large numbers of whom are from the Philippines and India, have been stranded on merchant ships for months beyond their contractual limits. A similar number of workers slated to replace them are instead stuck at home without pay.

Without the opening of borders and air travel to seafarers, said Steve Cotton, general secretary of the International Transport Workers Federation, "the alternative is exhausted crews and the shutting down of global trade."

The crew of at least one ship has already gone on strike, refusing to sail until they are relieved.

Pete Clifford from Manchester, England, contributed to this article.

New from Pathfinder

The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation

by Abram Leon

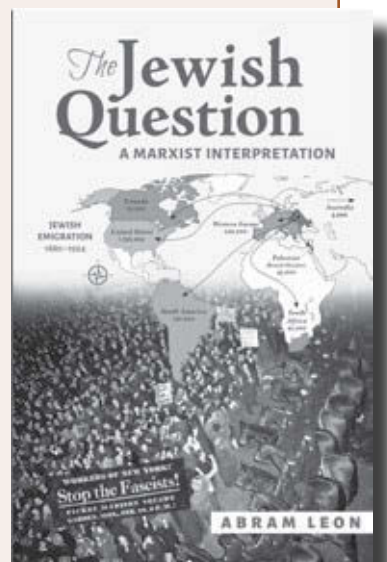
During the opening years of the 21st century, anti-Semitic venom and incidents of violent assault on Jews have begun spreading. They are not a historical aberration. They are fueled by today's capitalist crises and fracturing of the post-World War II imperialist "order," described in recent decades as "globalization."

Why is Jew-hatred still raising its ugly head? What are its class roots? Why is there "no solution to the Jewish question under capitalism, just as there is no solution to other problems before humanity," without revolutionary struggles that transform us as we fight to transform our world?

Abram Leon was killed in October 1944, at age 26, in the Nazi gas chambers at Auschwitz. He left us this book to help answer those questions.

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‘Building socialism is a voluntary task of free men and women’

Cuba’s Internationalist Foreign Policy 1975-80 by Fidel Castro is one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for June. Castro was the central leader of the Cuban Revolution that triumphed in 1959. Excerpted here is his 1980 “Speech to the Fighting People,” given at the May Day rally in Havana. The Cuban government and people were responding to a series of military threats and provocations by the Democratic administration of Jimmy Carter against the 1979 revolution in Nicaragua and rising struggles in the region. Five million people mobilized nationwide May 17 in a March of the Fighting People to stay Washington’s hand. Copyright © 1981 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FIDEL CASTRO

Mariel was opened, and we were rigorously, strictly complying with our watchword that anyone who wanted to go to any other country that would accept them could do so [Shouts of “Good riddance!”] and that the building of socialism, the work of the revolution, was a task for free men and women. Don’t forget this principle; don’t forget this principle; which has tremendous moral value. [Applause] ...

[Washington’s] main concern was over the revolutionary triumph in Ni-



Faced with provocations and war threats from Washington in 1980 as struggles spread across Latin America and the Caribbean, including revolutions by workers and farmers in Nicaragua and Grenada, millions of working people mobilized across Cuba in defense of their revolution.

caragua and the growing upsurge in the revolutionary movement in Central America. It began to prepare a mechanism for intervention. Naturally, it used the pretext of the Soviet military personnel in Cuba to pressure and threaten Cuba, and it carried out small-scale maneuvers at the Guantánamo base at the end of last year. These maneuvers, however, are much larger, on a much greater scale, with more equipment and more soldiers — and something strange about them. And we said, No, no, no; this cannot be. We are not going to sit by passively while the Yankees organize maneuvers like that.

As has already been said, they are a flagrant rehearsal for an invasion of our country, a shameless invasion rehearsal on our own soil. This, really, is what is intolerable, unacceptable: maneuvers for invading Cuba — held on our own soil. ...

The United States has imposed a blockade against Cuba for more than twenty years, a tight economic blockade that even prohibits the sale of foodstuffs and medicines — even medicines! It has been a brutal thing, for twenty-one years.

The United States occupies a part of our territory by means of force, against the will of our people. What doctrine, what principles, what law, and what legality justify its maintenance of a naval base in the territory of another country, against the will of its people? This has no legal, juridical, or moral

basis, absolutely no basis in principles; it is simply an act of force.

The United States sends modern SR-71 planes over Cuba’s territory. They fly between 25,000 and 30,000 meters up, at very high speeds. They are what cause those unusual explosions that can be heard every so often throughout our country, as they break the sound barrier, shaking the walls, the glass, and the windows whenever they fly past. [Someone shouts “Shoot them down!”] It isn’t easy to bring down an SR-71; it isn’t very easy, technically.

Now, is it legal for them to do that? Is it legal to blockade our country? Is it legal to have a naval base on our soil? Is it legal to violate our airspace? [Shouts of “No!”] They do these things. And then, there are the maneuvers.

And that isn’t all imperialism has done over the years. Many of the comrades who have spoken here have mentioned it and also referred to *La Coubre*, Playa Girón, the Escambray, the acts of sabotage, the plans for subversion, the attempts to introduce and the introduction of agricultural blights, the plans to assassinate the leaders of the revolution, the sabotage of the Cubana plane off Barbados. ...

It seems that now they’re saying they’ll restrict the maneuvers to the Florida coast and the East Coast of the United States. We know that these maneuvers are directed against us, Central America, and the Caribbean, but we aren’t going to contest their right to hold

maneuvers there in U.S. territory. What we do contest is their right to hold maneuvers on Cuban soil.

Doubtless, this is a noteworthy victory for our people’s struggle and international solidarity. [Applause] Therefore the Cuban government will suspend the special maneuvers that the Eastern Army was going to hold under the name of Girón 19, which were to have begun on May 7. [Applause]

But the March of the Fighting People is still on; the March of the Fighting People is still on! [Applause] The March of the Fighting People was to be not only against the maneuvers but also against the blockade, against the Guantánamo base, and against the SR-71 spy flights. [Applause] We aren’t going to let the Yankees get an advantage by demobilizing the people in the middle of the battle. [Shouts of “Never!”]

The March of the Fighting People must go on, and it has to be even stronger than the march of April 19. [Applause] It is a people’s mobilization against the blockade; against the Guantánamo base; and against the violation of our airspace. Rather than sit back quietly, we should show world public opinion our rejection of and our militant opposition to all that. ...

The party has issued instructions to the armed forces to create the Territorial Troop Militia as an additional force. [Applause] This militia will be composed of men and women, workers, farmers, students — everyone who is able to fight — to be organized and united so they can defend every bit of our national territory. [Applause] Everyone who can fight and isn’t already a member of the reserve units of the regular troops can belong to the Territorial Troop Militia.

Let our enemies see clearly that, in Cuba — as in Nicaragua, though, logically, Cuba has a much stronger army than Nicaragua, because Cuba has had much more time and has a larger population — let them see that if they attack Cuba they will have to face not only a regular war but also a people’s war. This means two things: resistance by the regular units and resistance by all the people.

Do you know what makes us really strong — us, Nicaragua, and Grenada? The fact that ours are people’s revolutions, revolutions with deep roots and great support among the people.

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Cop violence essential part of capitalist rule

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ing people in action are capable of. They’ve had a broad social impact and paved the way for even more effective actions against cop brutality and racist violence wherever they occur. And they’ve inspired workers everywhere looking to stand up to the bosses’ assaults on our jobs, wages and working conditions we confront today.

The breadth of the outpouring shows the long-term effects wrought by the Black-led proletarian movement in the 1950s, ’60s and ’70s that tore down Jim Crow segregation. It transformed the attitudes and conduct of millions of working people, opening the door to unity in action by workers who are Caucasian and who are Black.

They show that those middle-class radicals who insist racism is gaining ground among workers today are dead wrong. There is more interest in acting together against racist violence and discrimination than ever before. And they confirm that in the big class battles to come, workers who are Black will play a central role.

The protests today send a warning to cops that hundreds of thousands *will* fight and can prevent cops from killing with impunity. And, when they are organized to be large, powerful and disciplined, they can attract and involve millions.

But calls by the liberals, Democrats and Republicans for “reforming” the cops mask the true character of the capitalist “justice” system. More body cams, restrictions on the use of chokeholds and more civilian police review boards will not stop cops from inflicting lethal violence on working people.

As Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes said in a book that is very useful today — *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* — “The historical record gives ample evidence that even the most ‘democratic’ bourgeois state is at bottom a massive and all-pervasive apparatus of violence, dedicated to preserving capitalist rule.”

Growing calls to “defund,” “restructure” or “dis-

band” police departments and set up something “new” will do nothing to alter which class the cops serve, nor the violence they mete out.

“These institutions of class rule, of bourgeois ‘law and order,’ *do* brutally serve and protect the property, profits, and assumed prerogatives of the U.S. capitalist class,” Barnes said, “from the streets, factories, fields, mines, border crossings, and prisons across the United States, to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, and beyond.”

Among those joining today’s protests — and those inspired by them — there is widespread interest in the SWP’s call to action to meet the bosses’ attacks on our wages, jobs and working conditions. Fight for a federally funded public works program to create millions of jobs at union-scale wages to build the hospitals, homes and schools we need. For workers to organize in their millions to rebuild our unions and fight to wrest ever more control over production from the bosses. To build our own political party, a labor party, to fight for workers and farmers to take political power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers and run society ourselves. This is the road to end cop violence and capitalist exploitation once and for all.

This is a perspective worth fighting for! Join today’s protests! Join the SWP campaign to deepen this discussion on the road forward.

In Defense of the US Working Class

by Mary-Alice Waters

“The years that are coming will bring organized resistance — worldwide — by growing vanguards of working people.”

pathfinderpress.com



Frank Gorton built parties in Canada, UK, US

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a party of middle-class professionals, better-off office and ‘tech’ workers, teachers, and so on.”

Barnes continued: “‘The new leaders are simply radicals,’ Frank said. ‘You’ll someday be seeing a new Labour Party leadership unlike anything in the history of the workers movement in the U.K.’” And he was right.

Expelled by Socialist League leaders after winning a majority in the organization, communists who were determined to build a party in the U.K. that was working class in program, composition, and habits, founded the Communist League in 1988. Frank and Toni were among them. Frank was elected to the Central Committee.

The Montreal meeting also paid tribute to two other decadeslong communist workers who recently died: Alan Harris, a cadre since 1955 in both Canada and the U.K., who collaborated with Gorton for many years; and 55-year-long SWP cadre Cheryl Goertz in the U.S.

Joining party print shop in U.S.

In 1990 Frank and Toni Gorton were released by the Communist League to spend time in the U.S., where they helped lead the movement’s print shop in New York.

In her greetings, Holly Harkness, who worked in the shop at the time and now organizes Pathfinder’s book distribution, pointed to the stress of meeting tight deadlines for commercial customers. “Luckily, we had people like Frank, who took it all in stride and never lost sight of the reason for the shop in the first place — a print shop for producing the party’s publications.”

After he left the shop, Gorton helped build SWP branches in Newark and Detroit, joining trade union fractions in auto, garment and meatpacking. He was a worker-correspondent for the *Militant*, covering working-class struggles wherever he lived.

Frank and Toni moved to Toronto in 2000 and became part of the supporters auxiliary of the Communist League. Frank engaged in political activity and took on tasks alongside volunteers the world over who produce Pathfinder books, making it possible for the party to introduce its program to workers and youth.

“As a supporter, Frank continued to be drawn to the League’s participation in union battles,” Bev Bernardo told participants. “He loved being with fighting workers, and they appreciated having him there.”

Félix Vincent Ardea described how he and several others involved in the massive 2012 Quebec student strike were won to the Communist League, the kind of proletarian party Gorton dedicated his life to building.

“Frank set the same example set by Cuban revolutionaries,” said Ardea. “That working people can transform ourselves and accomplish great things, as we organize collectively to fundamentally change the society in which we live.

“If, like me, you are attracted to the political course Frank Gorton followed throughout his life, then join the Communist League and help build the party we need today as we face the deepest capitalist crisis since the 1930s depression.”

“I was happy to be at this celebration,” Ahmed Garbaya, a delivery driver and student, told the *Militant* at the meeting. “The internationalism of the Communist League is very striking to me. And the best thing about it was the number of committed young people here who are ready to pick up the torch and wage the fight against capitalism.”

Chairperson Michel Prairie invited everyone to join with the Communist League in a demonstration to protest the cop killing of George Floyd in the U.S. later that day.

He appealed to participants to celebrate Frank Gorton’s life by contributing to a special party-building fund. A total of 2,060 Canadian dollars was raised (\$1,500).

Abortion clinic open

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Planned Parenthood appealed the decision and a judge allowed the clinic to provide abortions while the case was fought out. This led to an administrative hearing last October followed by a review of records submitted by the clinic. Administrative Hearing Commissioner Sreenivasa Rao Dandamudi issued a ruling May 29 that the St. Louis clinic in fact meets the requirements, and ordered their license renewed.

“We have no concerns with the substance of Planned Parenthood’s quality assurance review, and there are no other indications of deficient practices,” Dandamudi said.

Alexis McGill Johnson, CEO of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, hailed the decision as a “hard-fought victory.”

In addition to having only one provider in the state, laws pushed through the Missouri legislature require women seeking an abortion to undergo in-person compulsory “counseling” aimed at intimidating them, as well as waiting periods, insurance coverage only when the woman’s life is endangered, a ban on using telemedicine for medical abortions, parental consent for minors and more.

“The data shows that many have already paid the price, with the vast majority of Missouri patients forced to cross state lines to get the care they need,” McGill Johnson said. “This is what it looks like when abortion is a right in name only.”

Last year Parson signed a law banning all abortions after eight weeks, with the only exception being if the woman’s life is in danger. A federal judge blocked the law from going into effect, holding it was a violation of the Supreme Court’s 1973 Roe v. Wade decision making abortion legal.

In addition to Missouri, there are five other states where there is only one abortion provider. Opponents of women’s right to choose have been making gains in limiting access to abortion, with the ultimate goal of criminalizing the procedure once again.

At the same time, public support for the right to abortion is at a solid 61%, higher than it’s been over the two and a half decades since the Pew Research Center has conducted polls.

This support was registered in Kentucky, where the clinic in Louisville — the only one in the state — was vandalized and its front smashed May 29. Supporters and clinic escorts put out an appeal to raise \$100,000 for repairs. In only two days more than \$114,000 came in from 3,000 contributors. One donor sent in \$100 “in honor of Breonna Taylor,” an African American health care worker in Louisville who was shot to death in her bed by Louisville cops March 13. Donations came from across the U.S., and from Canada, Denmark, Finland and the United Kingdom.

Growing international support

Growing support for abortion rights has been registered around the world in recent years. They have all been won by broad and sustained public mobilizations in the streets, most of them led by young women.

The movement in Ireland won a national referendum and pushed the government to legalize abortion for the first time ever, in 2019. In March, the New Zealand Parliament decriminalized abortion after many decades of tireless work by women’s rights stalwarts.

In Argentina hundreds of thousands have marched and rallied over the past few years, pushing President Alberto Fernández to promise to introduce a bill in parliament to legalize abortion. He backed off earlier this year, saying the coronavirus outbreak meant it would have to wait, but leaders of the campaign say they will be back in the streets if he doesn’t act quickly.

Hundreds of thousands of young women are getting experience with mass protest today as they join actions against the cop killings of Taylor, George Floyd and many others, and the vigilante killing of Ahmaud Arbery. This bodes well for the fight to defend women’s right to choose abortion.

It also bodes well for the needed political fight to put the movement on the right footing. Women’s right to choose abortion is not a “health issue,” as it’s treated in Roe v. Wade, with provisions that can and are being used to weaken abortion rights around fetal viability and the need for doctors’ consent. Instead, it’s a question of the equal protection for women under the Constitution. “My body, my choice.” Period.