

# THE MILITANT

EDITORIAL

A working-class road to expand rights for *all* the oppressed

— PAGE 5

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 84/NO. 27 JULY 13, 2020

## Hong Kong protests defy Beijing's drive to tighten grip

BY TERRY EVANS

Defying a ban by Hong Kong authorities thousands joined the biggest demonstration in the city in many months, on the July 1 anniversary of the end of British colonial rule and the territory's return to Chinese sovereignty in 1997.

They voiced opposition to a national security law imposed days earlier by Beijing that widens its authority to jail working people and others who have organized strikes and taken to the streets to fight for greater political rights.

Cops arrested over 300 at the action, including nine people they accuse of violating the new law, which prohibits calls for "secession." At least two of those arrested carried signs urging Hong Kong's independence from China.

"We demanded the same things we have been calling for over the past year," Daniel Chan told the *Militant*.

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## Amid layoffs, workers resist attacks from bosses, gov't

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The unity and fighting spirit of thousands of striking shipbuilding workers at Bath Iron Works in Maine is an example for workers everywhere as we seek ways to resist growing boss attacks on our jobs, wages and conditions.

Backed by the government, bosses are pushing to reopen factories, warehouses, retail stores and restaurants, while at the same time seeking to pare away "excess" workers to better be able to compete with their rivals and rebuild profits. Many are dumping workers, speeding up work for those who remain and showing utter disdain for workers' safety on the job.

Workers are standing up and saying "No!" In addition to the Bath strikers, thousands of Amazon workers in Germany struck for two days beginning June 29 for a union contract, better pay and safer working conditions. Hundreds of Indian women garment workers laid off by Euro Clothing Company in Sri-

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## Shipyard strike is a fight for all working people!



AP photo/Robert F. Bukaty

Over 4,300 shipbuilding workers on strike in Bath, Maine, since June 22 on the picket line.

### Demand jobs program to put millions back to work!

Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, issued the following statement July 1. Malcolm Jarrett is the party's candidate for vice president.

### SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

Workers today confront rising competition among our class for jobs amid massive unemployment, a result of the capitalist rulers' lockdowns that

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### Union strikes to defend jobs, a future against boss attacks

BY VED DOOKHUN

BATH, Maine — Over 4,300 members of Machinists Local S6 have entered the second week on strike against Bath Iron Works, a subsidiary of General Dynamics that builds destroyers and other ships for the Navy and is Maine's largest private employer. The bosses are trying to force workers to accept increased use of contract workers and weakened union protection of seniority that together deal blows to job security and pay for union workers and future generations.

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## Protests demand: 'Charge cops who killed Breonna Taylor, and others!'



Above, *Militant*/Doug Nelson; inset, Diana Chuffe  
Above, June 26 protest in Minneapolis against police brutality. Inset, protesters kneel for 14 minutes — symbolizing time cops held Carlos Ingram Lopez face down April 21 causing his death — during June 24 march in Tucson to demand prosecution of cops who killed him.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Protests against cop brutality and police killings are continuing in cities and small towns across the country, as well as worldwide. They've remained strongest and most determined where new cases of police violence have been forced into public view, or where longstanding fights by families whose loved ones have been

slain by police have gained new publicity. These fights revolve around demands for the arrest and prosecution of the cops responsible.

"These protests have helped bring a light to our fight," Jimmy Hill, father of Jimmy Atchison who was shot and killed by cops in Atlanta last year, told the *Militant* at a June 27 rally of sever-

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## SWP 2020 campaign presents fighting working-class program

BY SETH GALINSKY

Outrage at the impact of the crisis of capitalism on the lives of working people — from police brutality to bosses' assaults on wages and working conditions, and workers' resistance to these attacks — is increasing interest in the Socialist Workers Party, the only working-class party in the 2020 elections. There's also growing interest in the *Militant* newspaper and books by party leaders and other revolutionists.

SWP candidates and campaign supporters are marching with signs and banners calling for the cops who killed Breonna Taylor and others to be indicted; backing solidarity with striking workers at the Bath, Maine, shipyard; and urging a fight for a government-funded public works program to put millions to work at union-scale pay, building hospitals, housing and other things working people need.

SWP campaigners discuss their program and activities with workers,

farmers and small proprietors they meet when they campaign on doorsteps from small towns and big cities to farms and rural areas.

Socialist Workers Party presidential  
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# Cuban medical missions face US gov't slander and threats

BY SETH GALINSKY

Revolutionary Cuba has sent more than 2,000 doctors and other health care workers to 30 countries over the last few months in response to governments' requests for help in treating patients during the COVID-19 worldwide outbreak.

The Cuban volunteers have treated some 110,000 patients, saving lives and slowing the spread of the disease. The COVID-19 missions come on top of the more than 28,000 health workers who were already volunteering in 59 countries.

Worried that these internationalist medical missions are bolstering the prestige of the Cuban Revolution, Washington is stepping up its slander campaign.

In June the State Department released its annual "Trafficking in Persons Report," which rates nations on their alleged violations. In fact, the ratings reflect how the U.S. rulers rate government's subservience to Washington's imperialist objectives. This year's "ratings" are full of lies that the Cuban health workers are victims of "forced labor."

The State Department claims that the medical missions bring in some \$7 billion as a "for-profit activity of the Cuban regime" and tries to make that sound insidious.

Whatever money Cuba gets for the aid — and some governments pay little or nothing — goes to keep the program going. In addition it helps to pay for the country's health system, which provides medical care free of charge for ev-

eryone on the island, and to cover other programs that involve and benefit workers and farmers. Health care in Cuba is a social right for everyone.

## Committed to international solidarity

Cuban medical workers volunteer as an expression of their commitment to international working-class solidarity. "I didn't hesitate for a minute," intensive care nurse Eduardo Brito Pérez told *Granma*, recalling when he was asked to join the mission to Lombardy, Italy.

Brito said he doesn't agree with those who call him and other volunteers heroes. "A man should be where he is most useful, where duty calls him," he said. "I am proud to say that I returned to my country with my mission accomplished."

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Cuba and Venezuela Carrie Filipetti charged in December that the medical volunteers are "sowing political and social discord throughout the world." She alleged that Cuban doctors in Venezuela threatened to withhold treatment from anyone who didn't support Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro.

But the Cubans don't provide aid based on the politics of the requesting government. They went to serve in imperialist Italy. They are in Martinique, a French colony, and serve in two British "overseas territories," Anguilla and the Turks and Caicos Islands. The Cuban volunteers scrupulously respect the sovereignty of the nations they aid.

Cuba offered to send 1,600 medical volunteers, field hospitals and 83 tons of medical supplies to New Orleans



Radio Guantánamo

Dr. Leonardo Fernández greeted by neighbors, family and representatives of Federation of Cuban Women, the association of small farmers and other mass organizations June 21 on his return to Guantánamo, Cuba, after two months treating COVID-19 patients in Lombardy, Italy.

one day after Hurricane Katrina devastated neighborhoods there in 2005 — a request that was rejected out of hand by Washington.

On June 17, Sens. Rick Scott, Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio introduced a "Cut Profits to the Cuban Regime Act." Ronald Sanders, the ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to the United States, responded the next day. He said the three senators "disregard the sovereign right of other countries to enter arrangements with Cuba."

The Cuban internationalists who are currently treating COVID-19 patients in 15 Caribbean countries have "made a huge and beneficial difference," Sanders said. Without them, "the medical system of several Caribbean countries would have collapsed."

Internationalism has always been a hallmark of the Cuban Revolution, which overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959. In the first few years of the revolution the Cuban government aided the National Liberation Front of Algeria, which was fighting for independence from French colonial rule. After independence was won it sent 57 doctors and other health care workers.

Like all Cuban internationalist missions — contrary to the lies of the State Department — health workers went to Algeria as volunteers. "Nobody was pressured or required to participate," Pablo Resik Habid, who

headed up the first medical brigade to Algeria in 1963, told Cuban journalist Hedelberto López Blanch.

Cuba's medical situation was challenging for the young revolution, Resik said, because half of the island's 6,000 doctors emigrated to the United States after 1959. At the same time, Washington was organizing economic warfare and military aggression against the new workers and farmers government.

## Revolutionary morality

Sending doctors to Algeria "was like a beggar offering his help," said 89-year-old José Ramón Machado Ventura, who joined the revolutionary war against Batista as a doctor. He helped establish the mission, and remains a leading member of Cuba's revolutionary government today. "But we knew the Algerian people needed it even more than we did and that they deserved it."

This is proletarian morality — the opposite of the dog-eat-dog morality of capitalism. It's possible only because Cuba's workers and farmers took power out of the hands of the landlords and transformed themselves in the process. They are determined to continue to defend their revolution, as they are doing today against Washington's slanders.

The U.S. rulers fear that if more working people elsewhere learn the truth about Cuba's revolution, they will want to emulate its example.

## THE MILITANT

### Solidarity with working-class battles worldwide

The 'Militant' covers fights for higher wages and better working conditions around the world, with articles written by participants in those fights. The paper opposes attempts by the capitalist class to pit workers from different countries against each other.

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Militant/Terry Coggan

Auckland, New Zealand, workers' protest.

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# Arrest cops who killed Breonna

Continued from front page

al hundred organized by the NAACP. “We have been waiting on a grand jury indictment for 1½ years, we’re never going to give up,” Hill said. Atchison was shot dead by now-retired cop Sung Kim in January 2019 as he tried to surrender to cops who were chasing him. He was unarmed.

Elsewhere in Georgia, a Glynn County grand jury finally indicted three white vigilantes June 24 on murder charges in the death of Ahmaud Arbery, a 25-year-old Black man who was shot as he jogged in Brunswick Feb. 23. Ex-cop Gregory McMichael, his son Travis McMichael, who fired the shots, and William Bryan Jr., who videotaped the killing and worked with the McMichaels to trap Arbery, were each charged with malice murder, felony murder and aggravated assault.

“The indictment means a big accomplishment,” Arbery’s mother, Wanda Cooper-Jones, told CBS46 News. But “it’s not time for celebration yet because we want to get them sentenced properly.”

For more than two months no arrests were made and facts about the case were swept under the rug by local cops and prosecutors. Finally, with the public release of the video and the outcry that ensued, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation arrested the McMichaels May 7 and Bryan May 21.

The June 24 indictment of the vigilantes came after Arbery’s name and countless others became widely known from protests around the country, putting growing pressure on Georgia officials.

## Breonna Taylor killing

Other fights continue. More than 500 people rallied on the steps of Kentucky’s Capitol in Frankfort June 25, demanding that the three cops who shot and killed emergency room technician Breonna Taylor in her apartment in Louisville be charged.

“We wanted to keep it peaceful but make some noise and let the government know, enough is enough,” Kayla Schnell, a 24-year-old restaurant server who came on one of several buses from Louisville, told the *Militant* at the rally. “I invited friends to come with me but I also knew I was going to be here no matter what. This fight has been getting international support.”

Armed with a “no-knock” warrant, cops busted down the door to Taylor’s apartment unannounced late at night March 13. In response to the break-in,

Taylor’s boyfriend, Kenneth Walker, fired one shot that hit an officer in the leg. The cops then fired over 20 rounds into the apartment, killing Taylor with eight bullets. Walker was arrested and charged with attempted murder, but as the facts of the raid came out and protests began, charges were dropped.

The officers were placed on administrative leave. Three and a half months later, one of them, Brett Hankison, was fired from the force. But none of the cops have been charged.

## Outrage over killing of Lopez

The cover-up of the April 21 cop killing of Carlos Adrian Ingram Lopez in Tucson, Arizona, is also coming apart. For over two months cops refused to turn the officer’s video of Lopez’s death over to his family. Just before it was made public June 24, the three officers involved all resigned.

Some 400 people attended a vigil for Lopez, a cooking school graduate, at the El Tiradito shrine in Tucson June 25 and marched to the city’s police headquarters.

“Two months ago, Tucson Police Department killed our son, our grandson, our nephew, our brother and a father to a 2-year-old girl,” Lopez’s aunt, Diana Chuffe, told the *Arizona Daily Star* at the protest, speaking for the whole family. “Yesterday, they killed him all over again by smearing him in the media.”

An autopsy report by the Pima County medical examiner’s office had claimed the cause of Lopez’s death was “undetermined.” It said Lopez died of sudden cardiac arrest, with physical restraint by officers and cocaine intoxication “contributing” factors.

In fact, Lopez was killed at his grandmother’s house when cops handcuffed him, put a mesh spit guard over his head and held him face down on the garage floor for 14 minutes, as a cop’s body camera video shows. Lopez kept screaming “Nana ayudame” (grandma help), and pleaded for water more than a dozen times, but the cops wouldn’t let up until he stopped breathing.

Lopez was having a mental health



Militant/Nicole Frame

Hundreds of protesters joined family of Breonna Taylor to rally on steps of Kentucky’s Capitol in Frankfort June 25 demanding cops who shot and killed her in March be arrested and charged.

crisis that day, acting erratically and running around the house naked. So his grandmother called 911 to get medical assistance. Instead, the cops showed up.

City officials paint the police department in Tucson as “progressive,” banning cops from using chokeholds and requiring them to participate in “cultural awareness” training. But for the working people there, many of whom are Latino, these reforms haven’t changed a thing.

In Aurora, Colorado, thousands of people took to the streets June 27 to protest the cop killing of 23-year-old Elijah McClain in August 2019. McClain was walking home from a convenience store when three cops stopped him, saying they had a complaint about a young Black man acting “suspicious.” One officer put the 140-pound youth in a chokehold, although he was already handcuffed on the ground. On a now public body camera video, McClain can be heard saying, “I just can’t breathe.”

McClain’s family said he was always very sensitive. He would go to a local shelter and play his violin to help soothe the animals.

## Will ‘defund police’ stop brutality?

These public protests fighting particular instances of cop brutality are effective in getting the truth out and in more

and more cases forcing authorities to indict the cops. They are educating millions about the real character of the cops under capitalist rule.

But elsewhere, protests have centered on demands to “defund the police” and other reforms aimed at ameliorating the most brutal aspects of the capitalist “justice” system. This takes working people away from identifying and fighting the root cause of the problem. Prominent at these actions are liberals promoting “lesser-evil” Democratic Party candidate Joe Biden to get rid of President Donald Trump.

There is no way to “improve” the conduct of the cops, whose function under capitalism is to mete out punishment to working people to protect the profits, property and power of the ruling capitalist class. The only road to get rid of police brutality is to put an end to the social system that breeds it, by organizing working people in our millions to take political power into our own hands. Workers and farmers in Cuba demonstrated this is possible when they made a socialist revolution in 1959, a revolution they have continued to defend for over six decades.

Amy Husk in Louisville, Kentucky, and Janice Lynn in Atlanta contributed to this article.

# Destruction of statues seeks to erase history we need to know

BY TERRY EVANS

Worldwide protests against police killings in recent weeks reflect the depth of opposition to cop brutality and racist discrimination among working people today. The protests have made some gains, leading to charges against cops and racist vigilantes and strengthening the unity of the working class. But some middle-class radicals and antifa groups have tried to divert these fights into destroying statues and other symbols of figures from past history they call “oppressive.”

In fact, these forces try to use the cover of large protests elsewhere to organize small bands to try and tear down the statues, with backing from the liberal “woke” press, like the *New York Times*. They threaten to silence anyone who disagrees, and aim to rewrite history and obscure the development of the class struggle that has marked social evolution. Without this working people can’t understand the class roots of historical development and find a road forward to overthrow class exploitation and oppression once and for all.

The editors of the *Washington Post*

pontificate that those who object to destroying monuments “we don’t like” in effect endorse the “atrocities” carried out by the figures depicted in the statues — a form of race-baiting. If the statues have to remain, the *Post* editors say, working people can’t be trusted to know anything about them, and the statues should be covered with warnings and tracts to enlighten people about the evil they depict.

Some arguments go far beyond objections to statues of historical figures whose families owned slaves or held other views now discredited. Laura Brodie writes in the *New York Times* that all statues of historical figures on horseback portray “toxic masculinity” and are candidates for destruction.

These calls follow the destruction of statues in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park June 19 of former President Ulysses S. Grant — the commanding general of the Union army that defeated the slavocracy in the Civil War and was elected president to enforce postwar Radical Reconstruction — and other figures in U.S. history. Even a statue of Miguel Cervantes, who had been held as

a slave and was author of *Don Quixote*, was vandalized. A number of nearby structures were marked with the symbol of area antifa groups.

The American Museum of Natural History, backed by New York City authorities, decided to remove the statue of former President Theodore Roosevelt.

## You can’t ‘cancel’ history, we need it

Behind the destruction and removal of monuments lies the notion that by erasing symbols from the past, reflecting different stages of class development, you can “cancel” them and pretend they didn’t happen.

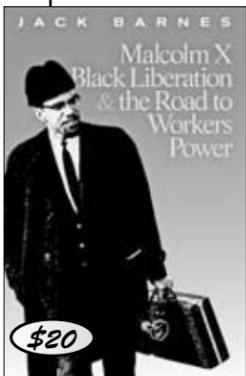
Eradicating the record of slavery, a historical epoch that was key to the development of capitalism, and with it the development of the modern working class, in order to avoid something that is “hurtful,” does nothing to help working people learn how historical changes are made nor from seeing ourselves as the makers of history.

Frederick Engels, a founder of the modern working-class movement, took these questions up in his criticism *Anti-*

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## Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power

by Jack Barnes



Why revolutionary conquest of power by the working class will make possible the final battle for Black freedom and open the way to a socialist world.

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# SWP presents working-class program

**Continued from front page**  
candidate Alyson Kennedy, her running mate Malcolm Jarrett, and supporters campaigned at the Knollwood Court Mobile Home Park in Faribault, Minnesota, a town of some 23,000 people an hour south of Minneapolis June 27.

"I haven't voted for president since Bill Clinton," Minnie DeLuna told Kennedy. "Maybe all the presidents are the same. I would love to see a woman president though."

"It's not the sex of the president that matters," Kennedy replied. "It's which class is in power. The SWP says we need to build a labor party that will organize our class to defend its interests."

DeLuna, a Mexican American originally from Texas, said, "I'm not a Democrat or Republican, but all this racism seems to have come once Donald Trump became president."

"The cops have brutalized Black and other working people for decades — no matter who's in the White House," Kennedy said. "The protests involving hundreds of thousands show that there is less racism in the working class today than ever. That builds on what was gained in the mass Black rights struggles in the 1950s and '60s."

"I'm on Medicaid," DeLuna said. "Now it is hard to see the doctor. I applied for food stamps, but they told me they were too swamped to get to my application. I had to ask my family for help feeding my 5 year old."

## Emulate the Cuban Revolution

Health insurance exists to provide profits for the capitalist owners of the hospital, pharmaceutical and insurance companies, not to provide health care for working people. But in Cuba health care is a right, Kennedy said. Working people, led by their mass organizations, mobilized to make sure that everyone who needed medical attention has gotten it, limiting deaths from the coronavirus pandemic.

"It's the only country where that is true," Kennedy said. "They could do that because they made a revolution that brought to power a government that represents the workers and farmers. We need to do the same."

During their five-day tour of Minnesota, Kennedy and Jarrett joined two protests against police brutality, including one of several thousand June 26 demanding prosecution of the cops who killed Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky. The candidates joined other protesters and carried a large banner demanding prosecution of the cops, for a government-financed public works program for jobs, and for a labor party.

At a Militant Labor Forum the candidates addressed, much of the discussion focused on what can be done to put an end to police brutality.

Kennedy explained in her talk that "reforms" of the police under capitalism — from civilian review boards to the "licensing" of cops — don't change their purpose to "serve and protect" the interests of the capitalist class against the struggles of working people.

"You say the police can't be reformed," Becca Young said at the meeting. "But isn't calling for police who kill to be jailed just a reform that will perpetuate a system we want to dismantle?"

"Prosecuting the cops and winning some convictions would send a message that cops can't just get away with brutalizing people," Kennedy said. "That

can force the rulers to reel them in and strengthen the confidence of working people that it's possible to win victories."

Minnesota is one of the states where the SWP is organizing to put its presidential ticket on the ballot. They've been certified for the ballot in Colorado and have fulfilled all the necessary requirements in Vermont. Supporters are organizing to get on the ballot in Louisiana.

In Minnesota and other states — New Jersey, Washington and Tennessee — government lockdowns are still in effect and petitioning requirements are a challenge. The party has petitioned the state governments to put the SWP on the ballot directly and is fighting for this right.

## Black on Black crime?

Omari Musa, SWP candidate for District of Columbia Delegate to Congress, talked with retired Safeway worker James Cunningham on his porch June 27. Cunningham expressed frustration about the level of crime in neighborhoods where African Americans live.

Musa described how the fight for Black rights in the 1950s and '60s strengthened solidarity as working people began to see what they could accomplish together in struggle. When youth and working people had something to fight for, the crime rate went down.

"I had two full-time jobs, which made it possible for me to sustain my family and buy this house. It is possible for young people today to do likewise," said Cunningham.

"Many do have two, maybe three jobs," Musa replied, "mostly low-paying and part time, making it impossible for youth today to do what you did. This is why the Socialist Workers Party proposes a federally funded jobs program with union-scale wages and benefits," to lessen the competition among workers for jobs. Cunningham purchased a copy of the *Militant*. SWP campaigners plan to drop by again soon.

Campaigners have collected some 150 signatures on petitions to put Musa on the ballot. They plan to get 500 — double the requirement — by the filing deadline of July 20. Five who signed picked up a subscription to the *Militant*, eight bought books, and 25 got single

copies of the paper.

On June 28 Musa and campaign supporters set up a literature table in Lincoln Park, near the Emancipation Memorial, a statue of President Abraham Lincoln and a freed slave. It was installed in 1876 with funds donated by former slaves. Middle-class radicals and liberal politicians have called for the monument to be taken down. The campaigners joined the debate about whether the monument should stay up.

A steady stream of people has been visiting the monument to judge it for themselves.

"History in D.C. is dying on the vine," Don Folden told Musa. Folden is well known for his Black history tours in D.C. He defends keeping the statue up. "Black history is covered up," he said "You have to ask why. We have some very painful, ugly history. It's easier to forget it than to explain it."

"It was Lincoln who organized to defeat the slavocracy during the



Militant/Glova Scott  
**Omari Musa, right, SWP candidate for D.C. Congress delegate, speaks with retired worker James Cunningham June 27.**

Civil War," Omari told Folden "That was good! It doesn't matter what he thought in his head. Some 250,000 Blacks served in the Union Army that ensured the slavocracy's defeat. Those are the things that count."

*David Rosenfeld in Minneapolis and Arlene Rubinstein, Glova Scott and Arrin Hawkins in Washington, D.C., contributed to this article.*

## Vote Socialist Workers Party in 2020! Alyson Kennedy for president Malcolm Jarrett for vice president

### SWP candidates coast to coast:

#### New York/New Jersey

Lea Sherman, US Senate, New Jersey  
Willie Cotton, 9th CD, New York  
Seth Galinsky, 10th CD, New York  
Abby Tilsner, 20th CD, Albany  
Jacob Perasso, 21st CD, Albany  
Candace Wagner, 8th CD, Union City, NJ

#### Mid-Atlantic Region

Omari Musa, delegate to Congress, D.C.  
Osborne Hart, 3rd CD, Philadelphia  
Ruth Robinett, 14th CD, Washington, PA  
Dave Ferguson, 18th CD, Pittsburgh

#### South

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

#### Midwest

Naomi Craine, US Senate, Illinois  
Maggie Trowe, US Senate, Kentucky  
David Rosenfeld, US Senate, Minnesota  
Samir Hazboun, 3rd CD, Louisville  
Helen Meyers, 4th CD, St. Paul

#### Southwest and West Coast

Henry Dennison, Governor, Washington  
Rebecca Williamson, 9th CD, Seattle  
Gerardo Sánchez, US Senate, Texas  
Joel Britton, 13th CD, Oakland  
Dennis Richter, 37th CD, Los Angeles  
Deborah Liatos, 40th CD, Los Angeles

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



July 24, 1995

DECATUR, Illinois — Members of the United Auto Workers on strike against Caterpillar took advantage of the one-year anniversary of their walkout to show their determination to continue the fight. Several days of expanded picket-line activity were followed by a march and rally of 3,000-4,000 in this city June 25.

UAW member Gary Garner was happy to see fellow strikers and other unionists turn out for the march. "Money is not the important thing. It's treating people like people," he said.

Garner responded to recent speculation that the election of Stephen Yokich as president of the UAW might bring a quick end to the strike. "The people are giving them a pretty strong message. Yokich announced the need to settle. But the people said we 'won't go in without a contract. Don't tell us to go in without it. We'll go as long as it takes.'"



July 17, 1970

SAN FRANCISCO — The commanding officer of the aircraft carrier Hancock has received a petition opposing the Vietnam war, signed by half the junior officers on the ship. News media have termed the petition "unprecedented in Navy history."

The public affairs officer Lt. j.g. Allen P. Cox told the press more officers would have signed, if they had not been afraid of reprisals. Cox said one reason he came to oppose the war was the dehumanizing effects it has on the pilots.

The petition reads: "We are concerned over the prolongation of the Vietnam war, and its effects upon our country, and the country of the Vietnamese people. ... We do not counsel libel, sedition, or mutinous action. We intend no further action as a group. We only wish to express our objection to the Vietnam war, and record our fervent hope that it may soon end."



July 14, 1945

"Down with capitalism!" was prominently displayed in a demonstration of thousands of Milan workers July 5. American tanks, ordered out by the Allied Military Government, pointed their guns at the parade but did not fire.

The Workers' Council called the work stoppage when tram fares were suddenly raised. Placards called for "lower prices" and "higher wages."

An 11-point program was drawn up, in which immediate institution of the emergency pay system headed the list. The food problem and distribution of goods were also included. The representatives of the paraders did not bother to send their demands to the Italian government, but presented it to the Allied Military Government, which they recognize as the real power in Italy.

The order for the use of Allied tanks to intimidate the paraders originated with the American Fourth Corps.

# A working-class road to expand rights for *all* the oppressed

Court ruling muddying biological sex and ‘gender identity’ endangers gains won in struggle

An article in last week’s issue of the *Militant* — under the headline “Supreme Court: Job Discrimination for Being Gay, Transgender Is Illegal. Ruling Includes ‘Poison Pill’ Against Women’s Rights Fight” — was wrong.

## EDITORIAL

It erroneously implied that the June 15 court decision, though flawed, should be welcomed by the working class and others fighting to eradicate prejudice, bigotry and discrimination in employment and other areas.

The stakes for the working class and our allies in opposing each of the three separate firings at issue in the court case are indisputable. The bosses themselves readily acknowledged they had fired the workers only upon learning they were gay or transsexual, without the pretense of any work-related reason. If employers get away with arbitrarily singling out a worker for firing or other penalties, then any fighting capacity of the workforce and unions for unity in protecting one another is set back, irreparably so if not combated and reversed.

Building such class solidarity is the central task of all class-conscious workers today. It starts with fights on the job over wages and working conditions, including the health and safety of all. This is how we begin rebuilding a fighting labor movement, a fighting trade union movement.

### Advancing rights of all workers

The recent Supreme Court decision, however, has nothing to do with strengthening class consciousness or class solidarity.

To the contrary, the ruling laid the basis for further eroding hard-fought gains conquered by the working class and our allies — including those won over centuries of struggle for women’s equality — by consciously muddying the fundamental difference between an individual’s biological sex and matters of “gender identity” or “sexual orientation.”



1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, part of powerful Black-led working-class movement that overthrew Jim Crow segregation. Another product of this struggle was new Civil Rights Act passed the following year that outlawed employer discrimination in hiring, firing or promotion based on “race, color, religion, sex or national origin.”

What’s worse, it deceptively called on the authority of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 while making a travesty of that law’s Title VII, which outlaws job discrimination on the basis of “race, color, religion, sex or national origin.”

For anyone who lived through that period of American history marked by the proletarian-based civil rights battles of the 1950s and 1960s, much less participated in them, the significance for the entire working class of its conquests in toppling Jim Crow segregation and tearing down employment barriers for workers who are Black, female or foreign-born are beyond dispute.

Rights that truly register progress for working people expand and strengthen the rights of all the oppressed, as well as their political space for fighting. That has been true for every advance in combating the denial of rights under capitalism based on “race, color, religion, sex or national origin.”

In the 1970s, for instance, as women fought their way into industrial jobs from which they had traditionally been barred, they often demanded and won contract terms guaranteeing that the difficulty or danger of particular tasks was not grounds to deny women employment. To the contrary, they insisted, work rules should be adjusted to protect *all* workers from such harmful job conditions. The unions and many co-workers who were male were won to these fights, which led to victories for the entire working class and labor movement.

Another example was the union contract fought for and won in 1974 by members of the United Steelworkers union at the Kaiser Aluminum plant in Gramercy, Louisiana. Some 40% of workers there were Black, but prior to the new agreement fewer than 2% of better paying “skilled jobs” had been held by workers who were Black, and none by women. Most workers at the Gramercy plant — Caucasian as well as Black, both male and female — were convinced at that time that all workers in the plant would benefit from a job-training program that reserved half the spots for Blacks and women, thus strengthening the unity

and fighting capacity of the workforce and their union.

When lab technician Brian Weber, who was Caucasian, filed suit against the union, claiming “reverse discrimination,” the fight to defend the new trainee program was championed not only by the USW but more broadly in the labor movement and beyond. In June 1979 the U.S. Supreme Court rejected Weber’s challenge — a victory for working people.

That is the kind of working-class action needed to defeat arbitrary and discriminatory hiring, firing or promotion practices of any kind by private or government employers. Changing attitudes about countless forms of discrimination and bigotry are not the product of either legislation or court rulings but of unity forged in struggle by working people, the oppressed, and our class organizations.

That’s what we can celebrate. Such actions, and others like them to come, point the way forward.

### Working class: defender of science

The court’s contorted ruling as to what constitutes discrimination based on “race, color, religion, sex or national origin” is a blow to working people and the oppressed. It lends credence to

the utterly anti-scientific notion promoted by many who consider themselves enlightened, progressive, that human beings (unlike almost all other animal species) are not born as either female or male.

According to proponents of this anti-materialist outlook, whether a baby bears two x chromosomes or an x and y chromosome, they don’t come into the world with a pre-established sex, but are instead arbitrarily “assigned” one based on physical appearance at time of birth.

Those holding this unscientific view demand that “gender” — solely a grammatical term until only several decades ago — instead be left open at birth, to be “chosen” by the individual sometime later in life from literally dozens of possible options. Anyone can supposedly be a woman or a man, or virtually any variant in between, merely by declaring themselves so.

“The only difference between a trans woman and a cisgender woman” — that is, a woman — “is the sex assigned to her at birth,” according to a June 23 op-ed column in the *New York Times* by Devin Michelle Bunten, an assistant professor of urban economics at M.I.T. (Perhaps a professor of “rural economics” might be more acquainted with sexual reproduction among mammals than this PhD-certified “teacher”!)

What is seen by some as a revolutionary advance in the understanding of “gender” is in fact a counterrevolution. The oppression of women as a sex throughout millennia of class-divided society is simply erased. The gains for women’s emancipation won through centuries of struggle by the working class, often led by women, since the consolidation of industrial capitalism in the 1800s — all this disappears with the wave of the same magic wand that allegedly turns a man into a woman, or vice versa.

### Silencing speech, climate of fear

Millions of working people and others in the U.S. and elsewhere oppose employment or housing discrimination, indignities, or bullying and violence against any person who has chosen to live as a sex different from that of their biology. That’s a funda-

Continued on page 9



Pamphlet socialist workers campaigned with to respond to lawsuit by lab technician Brian Weber claiming new trainee program championed by United Steelworkers was “reverse discrimination.” Supreme Court ruling against Weber in 1979 was an important victory for *all* workers in the plant — Blacks, Caucasians, men and women.

### SWP ‘stimulus’ appeal now stands at \$132,300

Over the past week five new contributors increased the total of the Socialist Workers Party special “stimulus” appeal to \$132,300. The number of contributors stands at 120.

“My check finally came,” wrote Greg McCartan, an early partisan of the appeal. “I’m sending my contribution gladly to help ‘stimulate’ the SWP’s work to organize, educate and lead tens of millions of working people to take power.”

The appeal was launched in late March when Congress announced the special “stimulus payout,” after an initiative from several party supporters who asked how to make out their check when they got their payment. That put the appeal on its way. It has steadily grown over the last three months and continues to do so.

The funds are dedicated to building a financial long-term stake for the SWP — to build a proletarian party as the crisis of capitalism and the class struggle unfolds. A party that will organize workers and their allies to end capitalist exploitation and rule, and join hands with toilers worldwide to build a new social order based on human solidarity.

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, earmarked “Special Fund”.

— EMMA JOHNSON

# Workers resist amid layoffs

**Continued from front page**  
rangapatna have been carrying out daily sit-ins in front of the factory since June 6 demanding their jobs back.

The protests against cop brutality that have swept across the U.S. and around the world both draw strength from, and help reinforce, workers' determination to fight back.

Unemployment remains at levels unseen since the 1930s Great Depression. Some 1.5 million workers in the U.S. filed for unemployment last week, according to official figures, the 14th week in a row that figure has topped 1 million. An additional 728,000 filed for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, a special federally funded program providing aid for self-employed workers, independent contractors and others.

The government says there are 19.5 million workers collecting unemployment and 11 million on the pandemic assistance rolls. These figures undercut the real numbers. Many have struggled to get through to unemployment office phone numbers and numerous others have gotten "discouraged" and given up. Some of the government's payouts are on the verge of drying up. The unemployment "stimulus" bonuses of \$600 a week run out July 31. This will be another blow for millions.

## Bosses getting 'leaner and meaner'

Airline bosses — like those in many other industries — are reorganizing, shedding workers. Qantas management announced plans to lay off 6,000 workers and furlough another 15,000. Delta will furlough 2,558 pilots. Bosses at American Airlines cut jobs. At the same time they intend to redraw their flight schedule to assure every plane is "booked to capacity" starting July 1.

Airline manufacturers are following suit. Airbus bosses announced July 1 that they aim to cut 15,000 jobs. Unions in Germany — where 900 jobs have already been cut and 5,100 more are targeted — pledged to fight the layoffs and local protests have broken out.

"It's going to be a mighty battle to save jobs," said Francoise Vallin of the CFE-CGC, one of the unions organizing Airbus workers in France, where bosses say 5,000 workers have to go.

Macy's bosses announced June 25 they are slashing 3,900 more jobs, this time largely from their white-collar staff. Smaller businesses, which employ half the U.S. workforce, are cutting jobs at the same time as they fight to reopen.

Competition between the bosses — and conflicts between rival capitalist governments that represent them — is intensified by decades of falling rates of industrial profit. The capitalist system is in decline and its sharpening antagonisms are undermining the "global world order" put in place after the U.S. rulers emerged as the victor from the second world imperialist slaughter.

Government debts are soaring to new heights as capitalist rulers everywhere try to "stimulate" their way out of the catastrophic effects of prolonged shutdowns. Political crises among them are sharpening worldwide as they seek partisan advantage.

Democratic Party politicians in state and city governments and their liberal supporters in the big-business press argue for more caution in reopening, maneuvering to pin blame for the effects of coronavirus on their rival, President Donald Trump. Republicans push for faster reopening, hoping an uptick in the economy will boost their chances in the November elections. Neither has the interests of working people in mind.

New York Mayor Bill de Blasio announced a new budget June 30 that slashes 22,000 jobs by Oct. 1 unless federal or state funds are forthcoming. Similar cuts are being announced in city halls and statehouses across the country.

While governments are accumulating debts, working people face threats over credit card, home, car, college tuition and other loans that they have no way to pay. Ditto for rents and mortgages.

The captains of industry are trying to reopen under the most favorable conditions to resume profitable operations — at workers' expense.

Working people need to escape the demoralizing social isolation and get back to work under safe conditions. We need to link up in solidarity on the job to stand up to the bosses' profit drive, aimed to get fewer workers to work harder for longer hours at less pay.

In face of massive unemployment,



Since June 6 hundreds of Indian women garment workers have blocked entrance of Euro Clothing Company in Srirangapatna, demanding the reinstatement of 1,300 sacked workers.

workers need to fight to build a labor-led movement to demand a government-funded public works program to create jobs at union pay, to build housing, hospitals, schools, child care centers, and rebuild crumbling infrastructure — all the things that toilers need.

Over 2,000 warehouse workers went out on a two-day strike at six Amazon facilities in Germany June 29. The e-commerce giant employs 13,000 workers there, its largest operation outside North America. Members of the Verdi union have been fighting for a contract to win better work conditions, including health precautions, and higher pay.

Amazon bosses — notoriously anti-union everywhere, like bosses at Walmart and most retail chains and the whole social media "industry" — continue their yearslong refusal to negotiate. Measures to offer more protection for workers, especially amid a spike in COVID-19 cases, such as slowing the line speed and giving each worker more space, would eat into the surge in their profits under government lockdowns.

Amazon bosses have also faced protests and job actions in France, Italy, the U.S., and elsewhere.

## Deepening crisis in Latin America

In Latin America and the Caribbean, tens of millions face a deep crisis from the collapse of production and trade under lockdowns. A brutal sharpening of class inequalities is underway.

The countries there are still semicolonial, despite growing urbanization, and are heavily dependent on the export of mostly agricultural products as well as oil and other raw materials. According to the World Bank, they face the "worst crisis" in 120 years. The International Monetary Fund predicts an economic contraction in South America of 9.4% this year, sharper than projections for Africa, the Middle East or Asia. The major grain-exporting economy of Argentina contracted 26.4% in April, the worst monthly fall on record.

Two decades of economic growth has been lauded by defenders of capitalism as a new flowering of "emerging markets" — and a new investment opportunity for bankers, hedge funds and others with fat bank accounts. But this all began to contract years before the current crisis. For the ruling families in the region, 2015 to 2025 looms as a "lost decade." For working people it's a disaster driven by capitalism.

A wave of mass demonstrations has swept the region, from Chile to Colombia, fueled by anger at increasing government and employer attacks on working people. Protests demanded government action to reverse poor-quality public ser-

VICES, vanishing employment prospects and declining living standards.

Across South America and the Caribbean, 40% of the gross domestic product comes from street vendors and others in the so-called informal sector. With the absence of street life due to government lockdowns, many are in dire straits. No government "aid" reaches them. Among the Caribbean nations the halt of tourism is devastating.

In Chile, protests broke out in May on the outskirts of Santiago over inadequate food relief for the people hardest hit. In Brazil, protesters from Sao Paulo's favelas marched on the state governor's mansion demanding aid. In many cities across the region working people facing hardship have taken to banging pots and pans from their windows in protest.

Workers and farmers from the U.S. and Europe to the semi-colonial world have common interests and a common enemy — the bosses and their governments, especially in Washington and other imperialist centers. International solidarity is crucial.

# Shipyard strike is a fight for all working people!

## Continued from front page

The bosses claim they need to streamline operations to lower prices and remain competitive. The bosses also insist on increasing health care costs.

"From what I see, everyone is on board with the strike," Nate Bartlett, who has worked in the shipyard for five years, told this *Militant* worker-correspondent, who was on the picket line July 1 to extend solidarity, along with Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett, the Socialist Workers Party candidates for president and vice president. "With this contract they could move you wherever they want outside of seniority."

John Rodriguez came to Bath from Seattle, where he worked as a baggage handler at the airport and was part of the fight for a \$15 minimum wage. "The key issue in the strike is that the company wants to use cheaper subcontractors to be able to lay us off," he said.

"We needed the strike, we took too many concessions in the last negotiations in 2015. I'm very glad that 87% of the union voted to go out," said Justin Combs, who has worked five years in the electric shop. "I was one of the 20 workers the company tried to discipline for participating in the hourly 'hammer' protests in the two weeks before the strike deadline."

Workers stopped work every hour for one minute and hammered on steel around them, making a racket. "The

# Defiant Hong Kong protests

## Continued from front page

He had joined a thousands-strong protest at Hong Kong's Causeway Bay that day. They chanted, "Fight for freedom, stand with Hong Kong," and "Five demands, not one less."

Voiced by hundreds of thousands during the yearlong protests, those demands include calls for direct elections of the city's chief executive officer and to its legislature and the release of all those arrested at demonstrations.

"The government wants to shut us up," Roy Chan told Reuters at a protest of several hundred in the city days earlier on June 28, "We must stand up."

That demonstration had also been banned by Hong Kong police.

On June 30 the top decision-making body of the Chinese parliament adopted the security law, which echoes restrictions imposed by Beijing to suppress political opposition elsewhere in the country. Beijing's Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office claimed the new law is a "guardian angel" to protect freedom and ensure peace. It went on to say that Beijing will now decide how to "generate the necessary deterrent force" to enforce the measure.

The Chinese government has already said it would establish a Hong Kong-based security bureau tasked with rooting out violations, including political "crimes" like "subversion" and "separatism." Over the course of the last year, more protesters have raised demands for Hong Kong independence.

For more than 20 years, working people have turned out in large numbers for annual July 1 marches. Last year over half a million attended the event, many protesting the city government's now withdrawn bill that would have authorized Beijing to extradite

political activists for trial.

Cops claim the ban they imposed on this year's march was necessary because of the coronavirus outbreak.

In fact, there has been no epidemic of COVID-19 in Hong Kong, largely due to measures carried out by the political opposition, writes Zeynep Tufekci in *The Atlantic* magazine. She says protest groups set up brigades to distribute masks, especially to those with little resources and to the elderly, and delivered free sanitizer in crowded working-class tenement buildings. The government had in fact banned wearing masks, a measure aimed at the demonstrators. Only seven people have died from COVID-19 in Hong Kong.

The government has rescinded many of the restrictions it imposed earlier. Museums, libraries and schools are opening up. But protests remain banned.

"Police are using the pandemic to suppress the public's rights to march and rally," July 1 march organizer Jimmy Sham Tsz-kit, of the Civil Human Rights Front, told the *South China Morning*



AP/Vincent Yu

In largest protest in Hong Kong this year, thousands rallied July 1 to commemorate 23rd anniversary of end of British colonial rule and reknitting of ties to China. Defying police attacks, they marched to press demands for political rights in opposition to new "security" law imposed by Beijing.

*Post*. The Chinese rulers are determined to contain the protests in Hong Kong, as well as prevent resistance to their rule from spreading elsewhere in China.

Working people across the country face deepening hardship from rising joblessness, severe limits on unemploy-

ment relief and from bosses' attacks on wages. The Chinese Labor Bulletin reported that in the last week of June workers staged protests demanding bosses pay wage arrears at a coal mine and a construction site in Beijing, and at an auto plant in Nanjing.

# Weekly audio version of 'Militant' available online

## BY LESLIE CRAINE

The *Militant* puts out a regular weekly audio edition of the paper, a special feature directed primarily toward readers who are sight-impaired or who have difficulty reading English. A complete audio version of each issue is available at [www.themilitant.com](http://www.themilitant.com). In addition to listening to the audio version online, individual articles or the entire audio issue can be downloaded to your mobile phone or other portable device.

The *Militant* provides a working-class perspective of what's going on in the world today: the continuing decline of the capitalist system, the havoc it wreaks on working people, and the struggles of our class to resist the depredations of the bosses and their government.

It features the activities of the Socialist Workers Party and its 2020 election campaign ticket of Alyson Kennedy for U.S. president and Malcolm Jarrett for vice president. The campaign poses the perspective of building a mass movement of workers and farmers powerful and confident enough to wrest control from the capitalist class and build a new society based on human solidarity.

The articles from each week's *Militant* are recorded by volunteers trained in the discipline of clear and under-

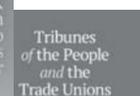
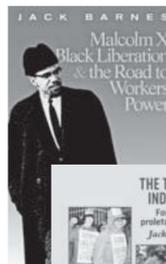
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Abram Leon was killed in October 1944, at age 26, in the Nazi gas chambers at Auschwitz.

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# Malcolm X: You're in revolutionary times, there has to be change

Malcolm X Talks to Young People is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for July. In the last year of his life, Malcolm became the authentic voice of the forces of the coming American revolution. The main excerpt is from his speech "See for Yourself, Listen for Yourself, Think for Yourself" given in Harlem on Jan. 1, 1965. He was speaking to high school youth from McComb, Mississippi, who had been engaged in civil rights battles, including registering people to vote there in 1964. Ku Klux Klan thugs had retaliated by firebombing churches, homes and businesses. The second piece is from "Any Means Necessary to Bring About Freedom," his speech to students at Oxford University in England, Dec. 3, 1964. Copyright © 2002. Reprinted by permission of Pathfinder Press.



Malcolm X speaking to young people in Selma, Alabama, Feb. 4, 1965, during civil rights battle there. A month earlier, he addressed high-school-aged youth from Mississippi in Harlem. See for yourself, listen to what others say, he advised, but think and make your own decisions.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MALCOLM X

[O]ne of the first things I think young people, especially nowadays, should learn how to do is see for yourself and listen for yourself and think for yourself. Then you can come to an intelligent decision for yourself. But if you form the habit of going by what you hear others say about someone, or going by what others think about someone, instead of going and searching that thing out for yourself and seeing

for yourself, you'll be walking west when you think you're going east, and you'll be walking east when you think you're going west. So this generation, especially of our people, have a burden upon themselves, more so than at any other time in history. The most important thing we can learn how to do today is think for ourselves.

It's good to keep wide-open ears and listen to what everybody else has to say, but when you come to make a decision, you have to weigh all of what you've heard on its own, and place it where it belongs, and then come to a decision for yourself. You'll never regret it. But if you form the habit of taking what someone else says about a thing without checking it out for yourself, you'll find that other people will have you hating your own friends and loving your enemies. This is one of the things that our people are beginning to learn today — that it is very important to think out a situation for yourself. If you don't do it, then you'll always be maneuvered into actually — You'll never fight your enemies, but you will find yourself fighting your own self. ...

Now the point that I'm making is this: Never at any time in the history of our people in this country have we made advances or advancement, or made progress in any way just based upon the internal good will of this country, or based upon the internal activity of this country. We have only

made advancement in this country when this country was under pressure from forces above and beyond its control. Because the internal moral consciousness of this country is bankrupt. It hasn't existed since they first brought us over here and made slaves out of us. They trick up on a conversation and make it appear that they have our good interests at heart. But when you study it, every time, no matter how many steps they take us forward, it's like we're standing on a — what do you call that thing? — a treadmill. The treadmill is moving backwards faster than we're able to go forward in this direction. We're not even standing still — we're walking forward, at the same time we're going backward. ...

So when we saw that we were up against a hopeless battle internally, we saw the necessity of getting allies at the world level or from abroad, from all over the world. And so immediately we realized that as long as the struggle was a civil rights struggle, was under the jurisdiction of the United States, we would have no real allies or real support. We decided that the only way to make the problem rise to the level where we could get world support was to take it away from the civil rights label, and put in the human rights label. ...

Now, you've lived in Mississippi long enough to know what the language of the Ku Klux Klan is. They only know one language. If you come

up with another language, you don't communicate. You've got to be able to speak the same language they speak, whether you're in Mississippi, New York City, or Alabama, or California, or anywhere else. When you develop or mature to the point where you can speak another man's language on his level, that man gets the point. That's the only time he gets the point. You can't talk peace to a person who doesn't know what peace means. You can't talk love to a person who doesn't know what love means. And you can't talk any form of nonviolence to a person who doesn't believe in nonviolence. Why, you're wasting your time.

So I think in 1965 — whether you like it, or I like it, or we like it, or they like it, or not — you will see that there is a generation of Black people born in this country who become mature to the point where they feel that they have no more business being asked to take a peaceful approach than anybody else takes, unless everybody's going to take a peaceful approach.

So we here in the Organization of Afro-American Unity, we're with the struggle in Mississippi 1,000 percent. We're with the efforts to register our people in Mississippi to vote 1,000 percent. But we do not go along with anybody telling us to help nonviolently. We think if the government says that Negroes have a right to vote, and then when Negroes go out to vote some kind of Ku Klux Klan is going to put them in the river, and the government doesn't do anything about it, it's time for us to organize and band together and equip ourselves and qualify ourselves to protect ourselves. [Applause] And once you can protect yourself, you don't have to worry about being hurt.



[I]n my opinion the young generation of whites, Blacks, browns, whatever else there is — you're living at a time of extremism, a time of revolution, a time when there's got to be a change. People in power have misused it, and now there has to be a change and a better world has to be built, and the only way it's going to be built is with extreme methods. And I for one will join in with anyone, I don't care what color you are, as long as you want to change this miserable condition that exists on this earth.

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## SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT



# Demand jobs program!

### Continued from front page

shuttered much of production and trade. Now as they move to “reopen” the capitalist economy, the bosses are pushing to make us work longer, harder and for less pay as they fight to return to profitability. Workers’ interests can only be defended by fighting for jobs as well as better wages and conditions, to unify the working class.

Workers are taking initiatives to stand up to the bosses, gaining confidence that they can involve co-workers and win solidarity. The SWP campaign helps get out the truth about these struggles.

Thousands of Machinists union members in Maine have gone out on strike against take-it-or-else concession demands by the bosses at the Bath Iron Works shipyard. I’ve visited their picket lines to bring solidarity and they are lively and determined. The strikers are standing up to bosses’ efforts to pit younger and older workers against each other. They definitely know that the bosses lie whenever they say, “We’re all in this together.” Join in building solidarity with their strike!

Contrary to what the bosses tell us, the only “we” that is real is “we” fellow workers here and around the world, alongside our allies among farmers and other exploited producers. The bosses work hard to try and set workers against each other, to take our eyes off our common enemy — them and their capitalist system — to keep us divided and weaken our struggles.

The SWP candidates campaign for a fighting action program to combat the effects of the biggest division workers face — between those of us with jobs and those without. The party urges workers to fight for a government-funded public works program to put millions back to work at union-scale pay, to build the houses, hospitals and schools we need, to repair decaying infrastructure, and to begin to clean up the land, air and waters contaminated by the bosses’

profit-driven plunder of the environment.

Only at work can the working class join together to fight the bosses’ efforts to load the crisis of their system out on our backs. Along that road we learn through common action to rely only on our own fighting capacities, deepen our self-confidence and widen our view of ourselves and the world. This is the opposite of the course offered by Democratic and Republican parties, which say the best we can do is to turn our future over to the “lesser-evil” of the bosses’ two political parties.

As the class struggle sharpens, workers will rise up and fight in their millions to wrest control of production out of the clutches of the bosses. Their sole motivation is profits, ours is radically different. We will reorganize production to ensure working conditions are safe. We will decide how workers are organized and what goods are produced based on the broad social needs of all the toilers as part of a thought-out national plan.

As workers awaken to our own capacities, more of us see the need to act as a class on all political questions, to build our own party, a labor party.

This kind of party would mobilize support for strikes and union-organizing battles, build protests against cop brutality, defend amnesty for all immigrant workers here, and fight against attacks on abortion rights. It would bring solidarity to actions organized by owner-operator truckers, farmers and Uber and taxi drivers fighting to defend their livelihoods. It would speak the unvarnished truth about capitalism, exploitation and oppression, and the immorality of the bosses’ social system.

In struggle working people will increasingly see our own capacities for revolutionary action and chart the road to lead millions to overturn capitalist rule and bring to power a workers and farmers government.

Join the SWP 2020 campaign!

## A working-class road to expand rights for all

### Continued from page 5

mental principle of human solidarity, of which the working class and workers’ movement are intransigent champions and defenders.

But many advocates of the anti-materialist, anti-working-class views described above aren’t really interested in countering discrimination and bigotry. They demand agreement with their views. They seek to deny freedom of speech as well as the right to employment to anyone who disagrees with them, even resorting to thuggish intimidation and physical threats.

One recent target of such abuse is J.K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter books. Her “crime” is publicly defending Maya Forstater, a woman in the U.K. fired for stating the fact that a person’s sex is determined by biology. Forstater’s appeal of her dismissal was rejected in court. Rowling

wrote in a June 10 article that she is concerned about the “climate of fear” stirred up by those “assuming a right to police my speech” and “call me misogynistic slurs.”

Contrary to claims by many liberals and radicals, there is no broad rise today of racist, anti-immigrant, woman-hating, or anti-gay and anti-transsexual prejudice among working people. The opposite is true. Never has large-scale intolerance been pushed back farther than it has today.

But there is still a good distance to travel, and the court decision attempting to short circuit the *political* fight to win broader support on these social issues will cut across this process.

These shifts in attitudes are the product of decades of struggles by working people and our allies. Powerful working-class battles in the 1930s built the industrial unions and began organizing all workers in a particular plant and industry. The Black struggle of the 1950s and 1960s gave renewed impetus to the fight for women’s emancipation. And battles by Blacks and women and their supporters inspired the movement for the rights of gays and lesbians. Not only had homosexuals been subject to reactionary laws pressing them into secret lives and “banning” their sexual activity, but also to persecution in jobs, housing, marriage and threats to their physical security.

From fights over workers’ wages and conditions on the job, to independent working-class political action and organization around social and political questions in our class interests, there is no other way forward for workers and the oppressed. It is by advancing along this working-class line of march toward political power that the toilers and our allies can win concessions and open the road to ending every form of exploitation, degradation, and bigotry inherent to capitalism, as well as those inherited from millennia of class-divided society.

## Defend history we need

### Continued from page 3

*Duhring*, published in 1878, after the U.S. Civil War that overthrew the slavocracy. “It is very easy to inveigh against slavery and similar things in general terms, and to give vent to high moral indignation at such infamies,” he wrote. “Unfortunately all that this conveys is only what everyone knows, namely, that these institutions of antiquity are no longer in accord with our present conditions and our sentiments.”

“Without slavery, no Greek state, no Greek art and science, without slavery, no Roman Empire. But without the basis laid by Hellenism and the Roman Empire, also no modern Europe. We should never forget that our whole economic, political and intellectual development presupposes a state of things in which slavery was as necessary as it was universally recognized,” he said. “In this sense we are entitled to say: Without the slavery of antiquity no modern socialism.”

The working class has an interest in developing a long view of history — understanding how civilization emerged from the earliest toolmakers; how exploitative social systems developed as ruling classes subjugated the toiling majority; and especially how human progress is driven by inevitable rebellions of slaves, serfs, laborers and other oppressed classes throughout history. Through revolutionary struggles more advanced social systems replace outmoded ones.

The bosses and their government want us to believe that people are inherently greedy and capitalism will last forever. But history teaches that the working class and its exploited and oppressed allies are capable of uniting to overthrow dog-eat-dog capitalism, transforming ourselves in the process, and taking political power into our own hands. This will be the mightiest weapon possible for working people to carry forward the battle to end Black oppression and every form of human degradation inherited from millennia of class-divided society.

### The Confederate battle flag came down

There is no broad working-class movement today demanding Confederate symbols be taken down as part of advancing the working-class struggle against racist violence. But there have been times when this has been important. In 2000 some 50,000 people marched in Charleston, South Carolina, demanding that the Confederate battle flag be taken down from the state Capitol Building. They urged that the flag, a symbol not of past slavery but a banner for racist Klan violence, be removed from the Capitol grounds.

At the end of June this year the government in Mississippi voted to take down its flag — the last state symbol flying in the country containing the Confederate battle flag.

This is a blow to any who would seek to organize racist violence today.

Knowing the real history of past class struggles is key to charting a road forward. Along that road working people will decide what statues and other historical monuments we want to keep and where, and what new ones to erect.

We don’t need small self-appointed groups imposing their own will on others tearing down statues, putting barriers in front of working people learning from our history, and gaining confidence in what we can become.



Statue of Ulysses S. Grant before its destruction last month in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. Grant was commander of Union Army that defeated slavocracy in U.S. Civil War.

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