

US rulers step up assault on Venezuela's sovereignty

BY RÓGER CALERO

The imperialist rulers in Washington continue to step up their efforts to choke off Venezuela's oil trade, part of their relentless drive to force the government of President Nicolás Maduro out of power and to deal blows to the Cuban Revolution.

The U.S. Treasury Department is targeting for sanctions any international shipping firm or oil tanker that transports Venezuelan crude exports abroad or attempts to deliver directly needed gasoline for domestic consumption.

U.S. federal prosecutors filed suit July 1 to allow Washington to seize four tankers sailing toward Venezuela with gasoline supplied by Tehran. Washington aims both to deter any oil trade with the government in Caracas and to deprive Tehran of any revenue.

As pressure by Washington forces commercial traders to back down from dealing with Venezuela, the Maduro government has increasingly turned to the Iranian rulers for fuel and other supplies. In June — in defiance of Washington's punishing trade and financial sanctions against the two governments — five Iranian tankers delivered fuel supplies expected to temporarily alleviate shortages that have led to dayslong lines at gas stations.

Since 2017 the U.S. rulers have
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Bath shipyard workers' strike gains solidarity



Militant/Laura Anderson

Picket line near entrance to Bath Iron Works in Maine July 3. Bosses want to scuttle seniority rights, step up use of nonunion subcontractors in attack on union, conditions on the job.

Support strikes, protests against police brutality! Fight for jobs!

Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, issued the following statement July 8. Malcolm Jarrett is the party's candidate for vice president.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

Striking shipyard workers in Bath, Maine; nurses walking the picket line for jobs and sick pay in Joliet, Illinois; and protesters across the country de-
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Hundreds rally in face of bosses push to impose attacks on union

BY VED DOOKHUN

BATH, Maine — Some 350 striking shipbuilders, family members and supporters took part in a July 3 "Solidarity Pig Roast" at the Machinists Local S6 union hall here. The event was sponsored by local members, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 567, and three small area businesses. The mood was defiant as the company had announced the day before it was hiring more subcontractors to fill the jobs of Machin-
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Workers fight back against boss attacks on jobs, safety

BY ROY LANDERSEN

From Maine shipyard strikers to food delivery bike and scooter drivers in Brazil, workers are fighting for their jobs, better wages and safer working conditions against the bosses' drive to extract more profits from our labor power.

From autoworkers in Spain and France to garment workers in South Asia, workers are also waging a fight to keep their jobs. These battles show both the potential power of the working class and also the burning need for solidarity.

The bosses and their governments are pushing to crank up production to compete with their rivals worldwide, who are doing the same. They're reorganizing their mines, mills, plants and retail outlets to be "leaner and meaner," cutting jobs and squeezing workers.

Big-business bosses are slashing jobs. Top managers at American Airlines announced July 2 that 20,000 workers have to be laid off to "right-size our team." A quarter of the workforce — pilots, flight attendants, airport agents, mechanics and baggage handlers — are on the firing line.

But signs of a June uptick in manufacturing from the U.S. to China, the world's two largest economies, are clouded by government lockdowns
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Protests demand prosecute cops who shot Breonna Taylor, Elijah McClain



Militant/Aurélie McBrearty

June 27 protest in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada, against the cop killing of Ejaz Choudry.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Following widespread protests worldwide by hundreds of thousands of working people after Minneapolis cops killed George Floyd, demonstra-

tors against police brutality continue taking to the streets. The number and size of these actions are smaller than over past weeks, but families who
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Socialist Workers Party candidates get hearing in Bath, Boston, Albany

BY VED DOOKHUN

BATH, Maine — Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett, Socialist Workers Party candidates for president and vice president, joined striking shipbuilding workers on the picket lines at Bath Iron Works to bring solidarity to their strike, July 1-3.

"Workers everywhere need to support your fight," Kennedy told striking members of Machinists Local S6. "By standing up to the bosses' demand to undermine seniority and to use contract workers, you are setting an example for other workers across the country."

"You can be sure that we will get out the word about your fight everywhere we go," Jarrett added.

On July 2 Jarrett and Kennedy spoke at a house meeting in Boston, a couple hours south, where they reported on their visit to the picket lines and discussed the party's platform and campaign plans. After attending the meeting, Sarah Bustin, a 19-year-old University of Massachusetts student in

Lowell, joined the candidates the next day to go to the strikers' pig roast.

"It was eye opening to hear about the strike, learn about issues the workers face and see them taking action to make real change," Bustin said after the trip.
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US hits Venezuela's sovereignty

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ratcheted up crippling economic sanctions against Caracas, including an oil embargo. They've also imposed a broad ban on dealings by other governments with Venezuelan state enterprises. These moves have aggravated shortages of food, medicine, gasoline and equipment. Gasoline shortages got even worse after Russian oil producer Rosneft suspended operations in Venezuela in March.

Imperialist rulers in the United Kingdom, across Europe and in Canada — as well as some of Washington's allies in Latin America — have joined Washington in declaring the Maduro government illegitimate. They claim the pro-imperialist opposition leader, Juan Guaidó, who proclaimed himself president in January 2019, is the real head of state.

The U.S. government seeks to capitalize on the economic and social crisis facing working people in Venezuela, the result of the sanctions, the COVID-19 outbreak, the worldwide capitalist crisis and collapse of the country's oil industry.

A major target of Washington's oil embargo against the Maduro government is blocking shipments to Cuba.

Washington is tightening its over 60-year-long economic war against the Cuban people and their revolution.

The Cuban government has maintained its solidarity with the Venezuelan people and defense of their sovereignty. Most recently, a special contingent of doctors and nurses arrived in the state of Zulia to help beat back a COVID-19 outbreak in the city of Maracaibo. Cuban medical personnel are also deployed in towns along the border, treating Venezuelans returning from neighboring Colombia and Brazil, two countries where working people are being devastated by the disease.

The stepped-up pressure from Washington was buttressed when a British high court ruled July 2 to deny the Maduro government access to \$1 billion worth of gold the country had placed in the Bank of England's vaults.

The decision upholds the bank, which has refused to transfer 31 tons of Venezuelan gold — part of the patrimony of that country — to the Maduro government. Caracas filed suit after bank directors rejected a request to transfer the funds to a U.N. Development Program to purchase medical supplies and equipment to aid the fight against the coronavirus epidemic.

Oil industry in shambles

Alongside the punishing effects of U.S. sanctions, the state oil company PDVSA is saddled with crippling debt and corruption. Venezuela's oil industry has been in shambles, with the lowest production levels in decades. In the last couple of years the Venezuelan government has increasingly opened the country's nationalized oil fields to foreign exploitation, including Russian



Reuters/Manauere Quintero

Gas line in Caracas June 1 after government cut back subsidy, ended state monopoly on fuel sales. U.S. rulers' stifling economic sanctions are effort to bring down Maduro government.

and Chinese corporations. The Maduro government has floated proposals to reduce taxes and royalties in an effort to attract foreign investment.

"Even the possibility of opening up completely to private capital" by the Maduro government, Dolores Dobarro, a Venezuelan oil law professor, told investment service Standard & Poors Global, "is more aggressive than the proposals from the political opposition."

Presented by the Maduro government as a first step toward stabilizing gasoline supplies, a new distribution and pricing regime went into effect June 1 that puts an end to a long-standing policy to heavily subsidize fuel to the country's population. The goal, said Maduro, is to bring prices more in line with those internationally. Venezuelans will now have to buy either a fixed quota of gas per month, at a price that is 75 percent subsidized, or have access to an unlimited amount at a price of 50 cents per liter, payable in U.S. dollars.

The "dollarized" stations run by private companies will also be permitted to import fuel, effectively ending a 50-year-long state monopoly on gasoline supply.

"There is no doubt the

new scheme widens the gap between those who have access to dollars and those who don't," Luis Salas, a former vice president in Maduro's government who opposes the measure, told Venezuelanalysis. This means greater difficulties for workers and farmers.

"Internationalizing" prices in a country where the minimum wage is around \$5 per month and most public employees make around \$10, "is not the way to go," Salas argued. Cooking gas distribution, previously handled by PDVSA, is already in private hands in parts of the country, and the same thing is happening with electricity, he said.

"We still have to see what impact the price hike will have on prices of other goods and services," he added.

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Radio Guantánamo

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Demand cops be prosecuted

Continued from front page

have had loved ones killed gained renewed confidence to press forward the struggle to get the cops responsible prosecuted.

The family of Breonna Taylor, shot dead in her apartment March 13 by cops with a “no-knock warrant,” have made the fight to get the cops charged for her killing a prominent part of demonstrations around the country.

As a result of the determination of working people and youth to join protest actions, the cover-up of the cop killing of Elijah McClain last August in Aurora, Colorado, is now coming apart. McClain, 23, was walking home from a convenience store when three cops stopped him after receiving a complaint about a young Black man acting “suspicious.” McClain was wearing a mask and waving his arms, which he routinely did outside because he had anemia — a blood condition — and became cold easily.

According to a police body camera, McClain tells the officers, “I am going home. ... Leave me alone.” But instead they handcuff him and put him in a chokehold. He repeatedly tells them, “I just can’t breathe.” They have him injected with ketamine, a powerful sedative, at a dose high enough to put down a 220-pound person. McClain weighed 140 pounds. He suffered cardiac arrest on the way to a hospital.

The killing was promptly swept under the rug, with District Attorney Dave Young announcing that no criminal charges would be filed. The police department upheld the officers’ actions as “consistent with training.”

Thousands demonstrated against the killing in Aurora June 27. Musicians traveled from all over the U.S. for a violin-concert vigil in a park near the Aurora Municipal Center. McClain, a violin player himself, often played for animals at local shelters. Police using pepper spray and batons tried to break up the gathering that evening.

Similar solidarity violin vigils were organized in Washington Square Park in New York City June 29, in Maplewood, New Jersey, July 4 attended by more than 100 people, and elsewhere.

Cops fired for mocking killing

Photos showing three Aurora cops mocking the killing of McClain over eight months ago were released July 3. Showing utter contempt for the lives of those they claim to serve and protect, the cops pretended to put chokeholds on each other near a memorial for the slain young man.

One of them, Jaron Jones, resigned shortly before the photos were released. In an effort to quell growing outrage, the police chief then fired the other two,

Erica Marrero and Kyle Dittich. Another cop who was involved in killing McClain, Jason Rosenblatt, was terminated for replying “ha, ha” after receiving copies of the photos by text messaging.

Hundreds of demonstrators marched from the McClain memorial to the Aurora police station July 3. McClain “did nothing wrong,” Pamela Howard, one of the protesters, told the *Denver Post*. “I wish we would have done this a long time ago.”

Since the killing, McClain’s family has fought for the prosecution of the officers involved.

Dozens of protesters took to the streets July 5 after cops in Phoenix killed James Garcia the previous day as he sat in a parked car.

Four cops, with weapons drawn, surrounded the stationary vehicle in a driveway of a friend Garcia was visiting. One cop shouted, “Hey, stop f----- moving. I will f----- shoot you,” a video by a bystander shows. The cops told Garcia to get out. He refused, so they shot and killed him.

The cops say they were responding to a complaint about a man suspected of an aggravated assault the week before. A second action to protest the killing was held July 6.

Killing of Ejaz Choudry

In Mississauga, Ontario, hundreds of people rallied at the headquarters of the Peel Regional Police June 27 to protest the cop killing of 62-year-old Ejaz Choudry a week earlier.

“It’s been seven days and those officers are still out there,” Khizar Shahzad, a nephew of Choudry, told the protesters, saying pressure needs to be put on authorities to “do something about it.”

The rally was organized by the National Council of Canadian Muslims. Mustafa Farooq, chief executive officer of the group, called for an end to police brutality so that we have “no more names” that we have to say of people beaten or killed by the cops.

“Unions need to get involved in these kinds of fights,” school teacher Felipe Pareja told the *Militant* at the rally. “We’re more powerful as we act together.”

According to his family, Choudry, who suffered from schizophrenia, was having a mental health crisis when police barged into his apartment for a “wellness check” and shot him. Choudry, a father of four, was originally from Pakistan.

Fighting for authorities to indict cops responsible for these killings helps educate millions about the real role of po-



Inset: Reuters/Kevin Mohatt

Above, protest in Aurora, Colorado, July 3 against cop killing of Elijah McClain last August. Inset, June 27 action included musicians who came to Aurora for violin vigil to honor McClain, who himself played violin, often making music for animals in local shelters. As police formed a line to confront protesters and deployed pepper spray, violinists kept playing music.



lice under capitalist rule. The breadth of recent protests also provides a powerful example of the capacities of working people to stand up to the brutality the cops unleash.

At the same time that several of these fights are drawing increased attention, Democratic Party politicians and middle-class radicals prominent at many protests perpetuate the illusion that the brutality cops inflict on working people can be brought to an end by various reforms and by voting Democrats into office. They call for “defunding” or “abolishing” the police. When the cops are under fire liberals always offer ways to “improve” their conduct. But cops are an integral part of an inherently brutal social system based on the exploitation of working people.

As long as capitalism exists, the bosses and their government will use the police to mete out punishment to protect the profits, property and power of the ruling class.

In Seattle in early June, middle-class radicals took over a six-block area that included a police precinct building — with acquiescence of city authorities. They renamed the area CHOP — the Capital Hill Occupation Protest — proclaimed it a “no cop co-op” and appointed their own armed thugs to do the policing. Their actions had nothing to do with the steps the working class will take in the course of deepening mass

struggles to defend ourselves from the cops’ assaults on our picket lines in a disciplined way, led by proven fighters from our own ranks.

Inevitably the CHOP led to disaster. Over nine days two Black teenagers were shot and killed in the occupied area and others were wounded. No one has been charged with the killings.

“This doesn’t look like a protest to me no more,” Horace Lorenzo Anderson, whose son was shot to death there, told the media.

After three weeks, Mayor Jenny Durkan changed her stance and ordered the cops to move in and dismantle the occupation.

As long as the capitalist social system exists, calls to abolish the police take working people away from eradicating the root of the problem. Large numbers of working people prefer some kind of police presence hoping it will deter criminal gangs operating in the neighborhoods where our families live, at the same time that growing numbers are also determined to join fights against cop brutality.

The road forward is to end the social system that breeds cop brutality by organizing working people in their millions to take political power. Workers and farmers in Cuba showed that this is possible through the socialist revolution they made in 1959 and have defended ever since.

Over \$134,000 donated to SWP ‘stimulus’ appeal

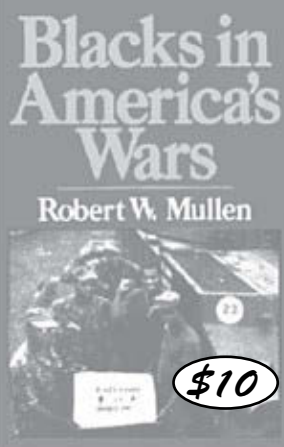
The enthusiastic response over the last nearly four months to the Socialist Workers Party special “stimulus” appeal has greatly augmented the resources of the party. The total now stands at \$134,700, from 122 contributors!

As payouts continue to be sent out from Washington, contributions continue to come to the party.

The funds are dedicated to building a financial stake for the SWP — earmarked toward the long-term historic work of building a proletarian party as the crisis of capitalism and the class struggle unfold. A party that will organize workers and their allies in their tens of millions to end capitalist exploitation and rule, and its brutal consequences, 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



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* Of the 300,000 soldiers who served in George Washington’s Continental Army during the War of Independence, 5,000 were Black.

* During the War of 1812, Gen. Andrew Jackson issued a proclamation “To the Free Colored Inhabitants of Louisiana” urging them to join the armed forces against the British. He went on to praise their courage in combat.

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SWP campaign gets hearing

Continued from front page

She has begun telling other young people about the strike. In helping organize an anti-police brutality demonstration in the Boston area, Bustin is working with fellow protesters to raise money for the union's strike fund.

Evelyn Sweet, 26, a worker in Albany, New York, who met SWP campaigners during protests there against police brutality, also joined in going to the strike. Sweet was impressed with the support strikers were receiving.

"Everyone who drove by honked their horns," she said. "The fact that 87% of the workers voted against the contract shows how unified the workers are and the strength and power of the union."

At the pig roast, welder Aaron Towle, who has worked at the shipyard for five years, told Kennedy, "This is my first strike."

"I can refuse to do jobs if they are unsafe," he said. "I had to call the union safety guy because the boss wanted me to weld while standing on a plywood board several stories high above the ground without proper protection. The bosses are always in a hurry."

"You're right, they don't care about our safety," Kennedy said. "My campaign supports building a labor party and fighting for workers control of production. A labor party would mobilize working people all over the country to support your strike."

Strikers appreciate that Bath protesters against police brutality have joined the picket line in solidarity. "We are down with Black Lives Matter here," Justin Johansen, a shipbuilder electrician for six years, told Jarrett.

"That's great," Jarrett said. "We need the unions to join the fight to demand

that cops who commit brutality are prosecuted."

Five strikers bought subscriptions to the *Militant* and 27 picked up single copies.

'A party trying to do things'

"I was unaware of the many struggles that are going on today," Amanda Plott, a 22-year-old worker at a Target warehouse, said after hearing Kennedy and Jarrett speak at a campaign forum in Albany. Plott described learning about the strikes of copper workers at Asarco and fruit packers in Washington state. "This is encouraging," she said. Plott had met SWP campaigners at a recent protest against cop brutality.

"This is a party trying to do things on the ground, not just trying to get votes. I have never heard that from a party before," she said.

"We need more of this," Gregory Rose told Kennedy, when she described the shipyard strike to him as she campaigned at a Bath Walmart. "How working people are treated in the U.S., especially since COVID-19, is not right," he added.

"Health care in the U.S. is for profit," Kennedy said. "That is why Cuba is an example for workers. Cuban workers and farmers made a revolution and established health care as a right. They mobilized students and working people to go into the neighborhoods to find out who might have COVID to make sure they receive needed care."

"As a communist country Cuba takes a different approach," Rose said. He



Top, SWP presidential candidates Alyson Kennedy, right, and Malcolm Jarrett, back center, join Bath, Maine, shipyard strikers on picket line July 2. Inset, congressional candidate Willie Cotton, right, marches in New York City July 4 protest.

got a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*.

Socialist Workers

Party campaigners across the country encourage those they meet to join them in supporting labor battles, marching against police brutality, and campaigning among fellow workers on their doorsteps in cities, towns and rural areas.

Fight for jobs program

How to combat the impact of rising unemployment is a frequent question that comes up in these discussions. Maggie Trowe, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Kentucky, told Wayne Clarkson in Louisville's Newburg neighborhood July 3, that the party urges a fight for a

government-funded jobs program to put millions to work at union-scale wages. "That sounds good. But how do we get that?" Clarkson, a laid-off dental appliance worker, asked.

"We have to fight for it," replied Trowe. "The way we have won things in the past — that's how we can build a united movement today."

Trowe showed him *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. The book describes the leadership role of Black workers in social and political struggles in the U.S. and explains why the fight for a workers and farmers government opens the road to the fight to end all exploitation and oppression. Clarkson subscribed to the *Militant* and bought the book.

Janine Johnson subscribed at a July 5 picket line of striking nurses in Joliet, Illinois, saying she wanted to read about "other unions, standing up for their rights around the country and the world. We need to share our experiences."

To get involved in the SWP campaign, contact the party campaign offices nearest you, listed on page 8.

Jacquie Henderson in Louisville, Kentucky, Laura Anderson in Albany, New York, and Dan Fein in Chicago contributed to this article.

Socialist Workers Party 2020 campaign platform

This is the SWP's fighting campaign platform to confront the economic, social and moral crisis caused by capitalism:

UNIONS/FOR A LABOR PARTY Support workers' struggles to organize to defend themselves, to use union power on behalf of ourselves and all working people. Workers need their own party, a labor party. *One* union for *all* drivers — taxi, Uber, Lyft, other app-based and car service drivers! Support farmworkers in their fight to organize unions and for safe working conditions.

AMNESTY FOR ALL UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS in the US, a life-and-death question for the unions to unite workers and cut across divisions the bosses use to drive down wages. For access to driver's licenses for all.

JOBS Fight for a federal government-financed public works program to put millions to work at union-scale wages building roads, bridges, hospitals, child care centers, mass transportation and quality affordable housing workers need. Set the minimum wage to allow workers to have a home and support a family.

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

CUBA'S REVOLUTION — AN EXAMPLE End the US rulers' economic war against Cuba; US out of Guantánamo. The Cuban Revolution in 1959 showed

it is possible for workers and farmers to transform themselves in struggle, to take political power and uproot capitalist exploitation.

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

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

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

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

"JUSTICE" SYSTEM Fight against police brutality, racist discrimination and the entire capitalist injustice system with its frame-ups, "plea bargains,"

onerous bail and outrageous prison sentences, all of which disproportionately hit workers who are Black. For the right to vote for ex-prisoners and all workers behind bars.

POLITICAL RIGHTS Defend democratic rights — the right to vote, to free speech and assembly and to bear arms, under attack from Democrats and Republicans alike. Stop FBI and other government spying, harassment and disruption.

PRISONER RIGHTS End solitary confinement. End suppression of the *Militant*, books and newspapers by prison authorities. Abolish the death penalty, an anti-working-class weapon in the hands of the rulers.

FARMERS — WORKERS ALLIES ON THE LAND To put a halt to farm foreclosures, bankruptcies and skyrocketing rural debt, we demand nationalization of the land. This puts the soil at the service of the farmers who till it, as opposed to control by the banks and landlords. We demand the government guarantee farmers their costs of production, including their living expenses.

Working people must organize and act independent of the ruling capitalists and break from their political parties — the Democrats and Republicans. For a labor party and a movement of millions to fight for these demands along a course to replace the rule of the exploitative capitalist class with a workers and farmers government.

Join the Socialist Workers Party campaign!

Campaign for what you are for, not who you're against!

— Join in campaigning or host a house meeting for the candidates

— Contribute. (Make checks to Socialist Workers National Campaign)

— Subscribe to the *Militant*, the campaign newspaper. (\$5 for an intro subscription)

See page 8 for campaign office nearest you or contact:

Socialist Workers Party 2020 Campaign, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, NY, NY 10018.

Tel: 347-871-0282 or Email: socialistworkers2020@gmail.com

Demonstrators across Sudan demand end to military rule

BY TERRY EVANS

Determined to remove the military from Sudan's transitional government, tens of thousands of working people joined demonstrations in cities and towns across the country June 30.

After weeks of massive protests and street battles with the military in the spring of last year, an agreement was brokered by the African Union and a number of capitalist governments in the region on July 5, 2019. It established a three-year transitional administration in which army generals were to share office with protest leaders and opposition political parties. That government is headed by Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok.

The widely hated regime of Gen. Omar al-Bashir, which came to power in a coup 30 years earlier, was forced out by mass protests in April 2019, replaced with a new military government. The protests, begun by working people against sharp price hikes, were fueled by decades of political repression and the deadly impact of the civil wars waged by Sudan's capitalist rulers. After weeks of battles against brutal attacks by the new regime, hundreds of thousands took to the streets June 30.

A year later "the army is ruling the country, not civilians," Amged Alzain told Middle East Eye at a protest in the Burri district of the capital, Khartoum. "They are leading the economy and the market through the companies of the army, they are controlling security — we haven't achieved the goals of the revolution and this is why we are protesting again."

Demonstrators also demanded the trial of leading figures from Bashir's regime they hold responsible for the slaughter of hundreds of anti-government protesters during his final months in office. Bashir was convicted of corruption in December and sentenced to two years behind bars.

"Carry out reforms, Hamdok, do not fail those who brought you to power," chanted demonstrators in Dongola, in the north of the country.

In eastern Sudan demonstrators demanded the government take steps to

halt water shortages and condemned its decision to raise bread prices in May.

Economic crisis worsens

An annual inflation rate of over 100% is devastating the lives of Sudanese working people, on top of the effect of the worldwide capitalist social and economic crisis.

In April the government imposed a lockdown in the name of reducing the spread of coronavirus. It pledged to provide aid to some of those thrown out of work. But three months later many people say they have yet to receive promised food baskets.

The June 30 protests spread in all five states in Sudan's Darfur region, where marchers raised additional demands for the disarmament of militias used by the former Bashir regime in its war against the people of Darfur and the removal of state governors, appointed by the military. Days later one of the governors resigned.

"Little has changed in Darfur since last year," Moubarak Sinini, a worker from Darfur now living in the U.K., told the *Militant* by phone July 5. "Militias still operate there and make it hard for farmers to get access to their land or collect firewood."

Bashir sustained his rule by building on national and religious divisions fostered by the British colonial rulers among the country's toiling majority before the country's independence in 1956.

Different black African peoples in Darfur have faced systematic discrimination and brutality for decades, at the hands of governments loyal to the country's ruling capitalist families based among the Arab population.

Beginning in 2003 Bashir's forces killed tens of thousands and forced millions to flee their homes in the region as they fought rebel groups demanding greater autonomy. Negotiations continue today between Hamdok's administration and these groups over their representation in the transitional government.

Darfur had been an independent Islamic Sultanate for centuries until it was

Joliet: Nurses at AMITA strike over staffing, conditions



Illinois Nurses Association

JOLIET, Ill. — Members of the Illinois Nurses Association at AMITA Health Saint Joseph Medical Center here set up strike picket lines July 4 in a fight to win safer staffing levels, keep their sick pay and get a raise. There are 720 nurses on strike.

Picketers were joined the next day by two members of International Association of Fire Fighters Local 44, some neighbors who brought the strikers cold water and this *Militant* worker-correspondent who works at Walmart in Chicago. Many drivers passing by honked their car horns to show solidarity.

"In every contract negotiation we fight for a better patient/nurse ratio. Nurses should be making the ratio decisions, not the administrators," Olga Deschamps, who has worked 25 years as a nurse, told the *Militant*. "We know what's safe. Our strike is for patient safety."

Striker Teresa Mathre has worked 39 years as a nurse. "When the administrators calculate the staffing ratio, they count managers as nurses," she said. "But managers do not do the work of nurses."

The nurses had been working without a contract since May 9. The bosses are now hiring strikebreakers. The next negotiating meeting is scheduled for July 8.

"AMITA owns 220 hospitals in the U.S. We are the only one with a union. It took a 61-day strike in 1993 to win the union here. This is the first strike since then," said nurse Joe Sanchez. "The hospital wants to eliminate our sick pay. The hospital says other hospitals in the area don't have sick pay benefits, so we shouldn't either."

"We answer that nurses at all other hospitals need sick pay also. The outcome of our strike will affect all nurses," he said. "We're also fighting for a pay raise. The company offer has no pay raise for three years."

— DAN FEIN

conquered by the British in 1916 and made part of Sudan.

Just before he was forced from office, Bashir claimed nationwide protests against his rule were incited by people from Darfur. "We are all Darfuris," demonstrators around the country chanted in reply.

The June 30 protests were organized by the Sudanese Professionals Association, a middle-class-led coalition that coordinated the actions that led to the ouster of Bashir.

Dag Tirsén in London contributed to this article.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



July 24, 1995

The unveiling of a black granite monument in Okinawa, June 23, marked the 50th anniversary of the battle that ended with Washington's seizure of the island from Tokyo toward the end of World War II. The markers, engraved with the names of 234,183 people killed, include not only Japanese names but also those of U.S. soldiers who died in combat.

Under direct U.S. occupation from 1945 to 1972 the island was turned into Washington's strongest military bastion in the western Pacific.

Far from serving the interests of workers and farmers in Japan or the United States, the war in the Pacific was a struggle for political and economic domination of the region between the ruling families in those countries.

"I want to see the removal of American bases," Choji Kobashigawa, a survivor, told reporters on the anniversary of the battle.



July 24, 1970

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Louisville's famous "Black Six" won a verdict of acquittal here July 7. Circuit Judge S. Rush Nicholson said the prosecution had failed to prove the charge of conspiracy. The verdict came after a two-year battle that started in the wake of an uprising in Louisville's West End ghetto in late May 1968.

When the case came to trial in June, the prosecution put 22 witnesses on the stand but was unable to produce evidence that the six were ever all together in one place. During the disorders that produced the case, two Black youths were fatally shot. No charges were ever brought in these shootings.

The six had wide support in Louisville's Black community. In the midst of the original hysteria, groups of white citizens also organized to urge the white community to recognize racism and poverty as the real cause of the uprising.

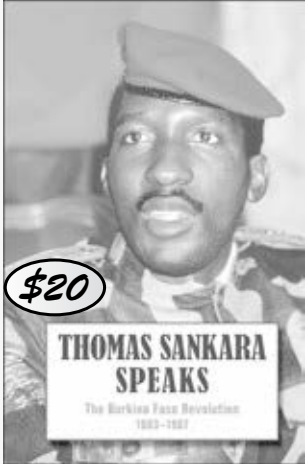


July 21, 1945

NEW YORK — The powerful New York Publishers Association has teamed up with the War Labor Board to try its hand at union-busting. But so far the newspaper-government all-out drive to smash the striking deliverers' union hasn't passed first base. The thousands of newsstands in the area are still empty. The 8,000,000 circulation of 14 metropolitan dailies has been cut to a fraction of normal.

Using the slogan of the fighting coal miners, "No contract, no work," the delivermen, 1,700 strong, walked out June 30. The shutdown was effective.

The publishers made it absolutely clear that they were out for nothing less than the complete smashing of the union. It's the duty of every class-conscious rank and file union member to say to the embattled Newspaper and Mail Deliverers Union, "We are on your side. Your fight is our fight!"



THOMAS SANKARA SPEAKS
The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-1987

"I come from a country whose seven million children, women and men, refuse to die from ignorance, hunger, and thirst any longer.

My aspiration is to speak on behalf of my people, on behalf of the disinherited of the world. And to state the reasons for our revolt."

—Thomas Sankara
U.N. General Assembly 1984

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Ukraine miners march on gov't, demand back wages

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Coal miners from across Ukraine have been organizing growing protests outside government offices in the capital Kyiv since June 30. Their main demand is for the government to pay what is owed them in back wages. “There are workers who haven’t been paid for six months,” Nataliya Levytska told the *Militant* by phone July 6. She is deputy chair of the Independent Trade Unions of Miners of Ukraine and has been taking part in the daily protests. Miners from the Lviv region in the west of the country occupied the square outside the president’s office for two days beginning June 22, demanding payment of back wages. President Volodymyr Zelensky met with them two days later and promised they would get paid. “Give me a couple of days, please,” he told them. “Go home to your families, I’ll figure it out.” After another week of no pay the miners returned June 30 in bigger numbers and from more mines, both from the west and the east of Ukraine. “We assembled at the Maidan and then marched downtown and rallied outside Zelensky’s office,” Levytska said. “We have been as many as 1,000 workers and we expect more joining in during the rest of this week.”

Maidan, the Independence Square, was the center for organizing the popular rebellion that led to the overthrow of the Moscow-backed government of Viktor Yanukovich in 2014. Levytska said miners had tried to move in tents and supplies to set up an encampment in the square. They were stopped by the police, who confiscated their material. This led to a confrontation where cops roughed up union chair Mykhaylo Volynets when he told them they had no right to seize union property. Protesters include both miners and workers in the coal processing plants, many of whom are women. Another delegation of miners met with the deputy head of Zelensky’s office to press their demands. “Our protest pressured the govern-

ment to put some money into paying back wages, but they haven’t met our demands, so we continue,” said Levytska, who was part of the delegation. “Miners are outraged over how the cops and the government treat us.” Shortly after the meeting, Prime Minister Denys Shmygal announced that \$12.7 million had been allocated to pay wage arrears, boasting that “for the first time in a long time the state has no debt to the miners.” The union disputes this, saying workers in state-owned mines are in fact owed \$45 million, some of it dating back to 2018-19, and that there is no money in the state budget for June wages. “They are trying to cover up the real debt to miners and hope it will be forgotten,” Levytska said. “Miners fear they will never get these wages and this adds further to their outrage.” Miners are also demanding that coal imports from Russia and Belarus be prohibited and that the country’s power plants operate only on Ukrainian-mined coal. Ukraine — a country rich in coal deposits — has become a net importer. The miners demand state investment in equipment and in safety measures to stabilize and increase production and jobs. There used to be 33 state-owned



Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Ukraine
Ukrainian women coal processing plant workers bang their hard hats as part of 1,000-strong miners’ protest in Maidan Independence Square, Kyiv, June 30. The rally demanded government pay months, sometimes years, of wages owed, and increase investment in safety and jobs.

mines in Ukraine, today there are 14. A succession of governments have organized to sell off all the profitable mines to private owners — 85% of them to billionaire Rinat Akhmetov — leaving the other mines in state hands, losing money and subsidized by the state budget. In the last 15 years production in the state-owned mines has decreased from 24 million tons a year to 4 million. This is due to the lack of modern equipment, meaning higher production costs and dangerous working conditions. “Soon we’ll have to work like our grandfathers did — with sledgehammers!” one miner in eastern Ukraine told the press. Many workers in Kyiv have visited the protest, asking miners what it’s about and what their demands are. Other unions have offered support. “We hope our protest will serve as an example and will lead to miners getting their wages,” Levytska said. “One important thing is to get out information about what we are doing and why. That’s part of building support for the workers and putting pressure on the government. “We’ll keep you informed of how the action continues and what results we get.”

Hundreds rally in face of Bath shipyard bosses attack on Machinists union

Continued from front page
ists on strike. “They are trying to scare people,” striker Jaimie Bellefleur told me. “They say they’re going to bring in 500 temporary workers, but that won’t fill our 4,300 jobs. We’re going to wait it out.” The bosses’ demand to use more contract workers is one of the central issues in the strike, along with company demands to weaken seniority protection and increase workers’ health care costs. The strike by International Association of Machinists Local S6’s 4,300 members is against Bath Iron Works, a major shipyard with contracts to build 11 Arleigh Burke-class destroyers for the Navy. It is in its third week.

This *Militant* worker-correspondent — a furloughed rail worker — was joined by others from Albany, New York, and Boston, as well as by Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett, the Socialist Workers Party candidates for president and vice president, to bring solidarity to the strikers. “Under the contract the company wanted us to sign, they could assign you to any job related to your trade,” Jerry Roy, who has worked at Bath Iron Works for 39 years, told us at the pig roast. “They could also use this to punish workers for filing grievances.” “I thought a lot of younger workers would vote for the contract. When I heard the vote was 87% against, you could have knocked me over with a feather,” he said. “The company tried to get votes offering a \$1,200 signing bonus, but it failed.” “The company wants it so that they can put you anywhere,” agreed Sean Diaz, who has worked at the shipyard for a year. “They are trying to do this to senior workers, to break the union.” Mike Hill, a pipe fitter who worked at a nonunion paper mill before getting hired at the shipyard, said, “Even today people talk about the 1987 strike, it’s like night and day working here compared to the mill, where the bosses broke the Paperworkers’ union” at the International Paper mill. “I was excited too to see 87% in favor,” he said, “and we’re still standing strong.” Parker Robitaille told us he was 20 and working his first union job. “I’m glad people are standing up for what they believe in, even though they are sacrificing income,” he said. “I feel part of something, it’s more than just a job for me.” Aaron Towle, a welder at Bath Iron

Works for five years, explained his 2 year old had surgery scheduled for June 26 only to be informed by the company that they will be losing health insurance June 30. “We’re looking at having to pay \$2,200 a month for a family,” he said. “They hope we’ll go broke.” “The last time we voted we gave them what they wanted and took no raises,” he said, describing the 2015 contract negotiations. “Not this time.” Among those at the solidarity roast were members of IAM Local S7, which represents 300 clerical workers at the shipyard. They aren’t on strike but members join the picket line. One of them I met was Britni Beaulieu, who works as a packager and said she’s a fourth generation shipyard worker. “Our contract comes up in April, and what happens in this strike will also affect us,” she said. In an effort to try and pit the two unions against each other and weaken the strike, the company announced July 7 that it was going to lay off some members of IAM Local S7, even though they’re hiring contract workers. “The disruption of the strike leaves us no other option,” Bath Iron Works President Dirk Lesko wrote in a letter sent to Local S7 workers. “These layoffs are BIW’s way of putting pressure on Local S6,” George Edwards from Local S7 told the *Portland Press Herald*. “Lesko just wants to break the union. He could easily end the strike by going back to the negotiating table. Our members know what the company is trying to do and we stand behind Local S6.” In an effort to get negotiations restarted, Local S6 asked federal mediators to set up meetings with both the union and the company. The local’s negotiating committee met with the mediators

Workers worldwide fight against boss attacks on jobs, safety

Continued from front page
justified by coronavirus outbreaks in many countries. Governments at the federal, state and local levels in the U.S., as well as abroad, are looking to scale back special unemployment benefits or wage subsidy schemes adopted earlier. The sharpest contraction in world production and trade since the 1930s continues to unfold. Everything the bosses do is calculated to wring more profits from the labor of working people in both cities and the countryside through wage and debt slavery. Government debt crises and corporate bankruptcies are spreading, with dire consequences for workers. Brooks Brothers announced July 8 it was throwing in the towel. Bosses in June had previously told workers at its three garment factories that their jobs were in jeopardy. The 200-year-old clothier joins a growing number of other retail outlets large and small going out of business — from J.C. Penney to J. Crew and Neiman Marcus, along with an untold number of groceries, restaurants and other small businesses. The number of people in the U.S. getting unemployment benefits is still at 19 million. This doesn’t count millions who still don’t qualify or can’t get through.



Reuters/Ricardo Moraes
Thousands of motorcycle workers for Uber and other food delivery app employers protested July 1 in Rio de Janeiro, above, Sao Paulo and other Brazilian cities in the largest action so far to resist bosses’ use of high unemployment to pit workers against each other and drive down their pay and conditions.

In Colorado alone, 40,000 phone calls a week by jobless people desperate to claim benefits go unanswered. Government agencies have cut 1.5 million jobs since March. Georgia slashed school funding by \$950 million, which will hit hardest in rural areas. Dayton, Ohio, cut 8% of its general fund, which pays for the fire department, roads, water and trash collection. Mayor Nan Whaley said layoffs are likely. In Washington, D.C., funding for drug treatment programs got the ax. The capitalist rulers in Australia imposed a new, harsher six-week lockdown in Melbourne July 7, as cases of coronavirus resurfaced. Hundreds of police forced 3,000 people, mainly from East African immigrant families, to stay in a “hard lockdown” in nine apartment towers across the city, with no chance to get out and stock up on supplies. A sign in one window, demanding an end to the imprisonment, said, “Treat us as humans, not caged animals!!”

Worldwide workers’ resistance
The strike by over 4,300 machinists at the Bath Iron Works shipyard in Maine, where bosses are pushing to replace more and more union members with contract workers, is an important battle for U.S. labor (see article on front page). Workers’ resistance to the depredations of capital continues to stir worldwide. In Brazil, over 1,000 food delivery drivers on motorcycles gathered in the largest city, Sao Paulo, July 1, to protest the working conditions imposed by Uber and other bosses. Many drivers also joined protests in other cities, fighting for better pay and health protections. Faced with government quarantines, demand for home food deliveries is up 30%. With half the country’s workers unemployed, many have turned to “app employers” like Uber, Brazil’s iFood or Colombia’s Rappi to try to make a living. The companies are using the increased competition to drive down pay, claiming their drivers aren’t workers, just “freelancers.” In Harare, Zimbabwe, police arrested a dozen nurses from among those demonstrating outside several state hospitals July 6. Holding placards saying, “No U.S. dollar, no work,” they were demanding that salaries be paid in U.S. dollars. Runaway inflation is ravaging the real value of the country’s currency, currently at almost 800%.

with the message, “Our virus is the closure.” These working-class struggles over jobs, wages and working conditions — from shop-floor skirmishes to strike battles — are essential for workers to chart a course to unite the employed and unemployed, win allies and advance our class interests.

Working-class political action

The 2020 U.S. presidential election is reaching new levels of political polarization. The July 2 *New York Times* headlined an opinion piece by Paul Krugman, “Trump’s Virus Is Spreading, and His Economy Is Stalling.” The strategy being advanced by Democratic Party leaders — and their backers in the liberal editorial offices of papers like the *Times* — is to try and prolong government virus-justified lockdowns and the growing number of travel bans, with the job shutdowns they provoke, hoping to pin the blame for both the disease and the economic crisis on the president. The fact that millions of working people will lose their jobs because of this strategy is of no concern to them. Another part of their plan is to keep Democratic nominee Joe Biden sequestered in his basement, where he can do little damage. Leading *Times* columnist Thomas Friedman urged Biden July 7 to refuse to come out and take part in pre-election debates with Trump. The Socialist Workers Party is getting a broader hearing today for their presidential ticket of Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett. The SWP is campaigning for workers to organize their own political party, a labor party. In the face of widespread unemployment, a labor party would organize workers in their millions to fight for a massive government-funded public works program. This would provide jobs at union-scale wages to build things workers need — hospitals, housing, child care centers, schools, and to replace crumbling infrastructure.

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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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Workers will develop a movement of their own, a labor party

Revolutionary Continuity: The Early Years 1848-1917 by Farrell Dobbs is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for July. This is the first of two volumes that document the birth and growth of the communist movement in the U.S. Dobbs emerged as a young leader of the 1934 Minneapolis Teamster strikes and joined the Communist League of America. He was the chief architect and leader of the Teamsters' 11-state campaign that organized over a quarter of a million over-the-road drivers into a powerful union that transformed the Upper Midwest into union territory, the legacy of which is felt to this day. Dobbs was national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party from 1953 to 1972 and the SWP's presidential candidate four times. This excerpt is from Chapter 3: "Gains and Setbacks." Copyright © 1980 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FARRELL DOBBS

During the 1884-86 labor upsurge large numbers of both native-born and foreign-born workers joined trade unions. This widening discontent with existing social conditions led to an expansion of the workers' united struggles as a class, which manifested itself in a series of strikes over economic de-



Workers in Baltimore battle state troopers as 1877 rail workers battle became first nationwide strike in U.S. history. Karl Marx called it "first eruption since the Civil War against the associated oligarchy of capital." Out of 1884-86 struggles, unions took steps to form a labor party.

mands. Then, early in 1886, the conflict assumed political characteristics with a massive strike wave in support of the eight-hour day. While trade unions directed this demand against one or another particular employer in economic struggles, it had broader significance. The workers as a class were pressing a political issue against the capitalists as a class, explicitly so in calling for laws to limit the hours of labor.

The indicated next step for trade unionists was building their own political organization, and they moved instinctively in that direction. By the fall of 1886 labor parties, with platforms that varied from city to city, had again sprung up in several industrial centers and were running candidates for public office. ...

A major campaign was organized in New York City, where the Knights of Labor, the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions, and the Socialist Labor Party acted jointly to launch a mass party in labor's name. A majority chose Henry George to head the new party's slate as its nominee for mayor. He was the leader of a petty-bourgeois sect that advanced a taxation scheme as a cure-all for the evils inflicted by capitalism. It centered on the notion that all social ills were rooted in the private ownership of land. ...

But this strategy left the existing social relations of production untouched. Without the expropriation of the deci-

sive forms of productive property, the industrial and financial bourgeoisie would remain free to exploit the toiling masses, who produce the surplus value that is the source of all rents, interest, and profit. And they would continue to use their ownership of capital to maintain political sway over the nation. Hence, the whole proposal was reformist to the core.

Nevertheless, the "single tax" panacea of Henry George, the main candidate, was included in the New York party's platform. The socialists — who rejected the "single tax" fallacies — backed the campaign organized around the George ticket, because what was decisive was organized labor's stepping forward into the political arena as an independent class force.

Labor party campaigns launched in other cities were supported by the Socialist Labor Party for the same reason. The various platforms for these independent mass political actions focused on issues of immediate concern to the workers in each locality. Little or no attention was given to the "single tax" idea, which remained limited essentially to New York.

The labor slates, taken as a whole, made an impressive showing in the November 1886 elections. Henry George, for example, got almost a third of the total vote cast in New York. Elsewhere, candidates put forward by the organized workers were in a few instances elected,

and the overall results of the balloting maintained interest in the developing independent political action. The workers' mood opened the door to uniting the several local labor parties as the first step in building a national political movement. Engels took up this perspective in the letter of November 29, 1886, to Sorge, cited previously, centering his remarks on the New York situation.

"The first great step of importance for every country newly entering into the movement is always the constitution of the workers as an independent political party," he counseled, "no matter how, so long as it is a distinct workers' party. And this step has been taken, much more rapidly than we had a right to expect, and that is the main thing. That the first program of this party is still confused and extremely deficient, that it has raised the banner of Henry George, these are unavoidable evils but also merely transitory ones. The masses must have time and opportunity to develop, and they can have the opportunity only when they have a movement of their own — no matter in what form so long as it is their own movement — in which they are driven further by their own mistakes and learn through their mistakes. ... If there are people at hand there whose minds are theoretically clear, who can tell them [the workers] the consequences of their own mistakes beforehand and make clear to them that every movement which does not keep the destruction of the wage system constantly in view as the final goal is bound to go astray and fail — then much nonsense can be avoided and the process considerably shortened." ...

To follow this advice the socialist movement needed to act flexibly in collaborating with the existing labor parties, city by city, to help them shape a common program. If the party's initial program dealt with important aspects of labor's interests as a distinct social class; if it set forth aims upon which all concerned were agreed — it could help advance toward a mass nationwide working-class party. At the start the Marxists within the labor party would have to tentatively and partially indicate the course required for the workers' emancipation from capitalist exploitation. Time and experience could then make it possible for the party to develop explicit anticapitalist political goals and strategy.

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ALYSON KENNEDY

MALCOLM JARRETT

Continued from front page

manding the cops who killed Breonna Taylor, Elijah McClain and many others be prosecuted, are fighting to advance the interests of all working people.

In these struggles, workers are setting an example of the power our class has to push back the attacks of the bosses, their government and their criminal “justice” system. Join their fights, and bring support!

Malcolm Jarrett and I have had the pleasure to join these fighters, walking the picket line in Bath, marching against police brutality and being part of dozens of other strikes and working-class protests across the country. We’re using our campaign to tell the truth about these struggles and to build solidarity.

These battles and on-the-job actions workers organize week in and week out in steel mills, auto plants, on the railroad, at Walmart megastores and in other workplaces are the essential starting point for building a fighting working-class movement.

It’s through these fights workers gain confidence in our own capacities and see ourselves as a part of a class with common interests — that can be defended in struggle against the employers and the Democratic and Republican politicians who uphold their system of exploitation and oppression.

The SWP presents a fighting program for working people to wage effective struggles against the bosses’ rapacious drive for profit at our expense:

Workers and our unions need to fight for a government-funded public works program to put millions to work at union-scale wages, to build decent houses, much needed hospitals and many other things the exploiting class doesn’t consider “essential.”

Wherever the bosses say they’re going to lay workers off, we should organize to fight for a shorter work-week with no cut in pay to protect all our jobs.

Keeping workers at work deals blows to the bosses’ efforts to pit employed and unemployed workers against each other and keep us all from taking on the real source of our problems — the capitalist system. It lays the basis for rebuilding fighting unions to use to defend the interests of all working people.

Amnesty for all immigrants in the U.S. without papers. They are fellow workers who face the same crisis confronting all working people — and more, given their precarious condition. Employers use the threat of deportation hanging over millions to superexploit undocumented workers and drive down the wages and conditions of all workers.

Workers need to fight to wrest control of production from the bosses. Only when workers control production can it be organized so it is safe both for those on the job and consumers who want to use what we produce. Workers control is the road to producing what working people need, not what maximizes profits.

As workers exercise increasing control over all aspects of production we learn the most important thing about ourselves — our capacities to transform our conditions and ourselves, and our ability to organize the entire economy in the interest of the toilers.

To make that possible, workers need to build our own party, a labor party, to mobilize workers and farmers in their millions to take political power out of the hands of the capitalists and establish a workers and farmers government.

Join SWP candidates participating in strike picket lines, protests against cop brutality and other fights by working people as they campaign in cities, small towns and rural areas. Use the *Militant* to help spread the work and build solidarity with today’s working-class struggles where you live and work. Fight for what you really want, not some wretched “lesser-evil” capitalist politician. This is a life worth living!

EDITORIAL

Class struggle road to women’s emancipation

The fight to defend women’s right to choose whether to have an abortion is a necessity for women’s emancipation and the line of march of the working class as a whole. The majority sentiment for this right, still the case even after decades of assaults, was registered June 29 when the U.S. Supreme Court overturned a Louisiana law that would have required abortion providers to have admitting privileges at a nearby hospital to practice. The 5-4 vote also registered the importance of working people continuing to look for ways to win and mobilize support for the right to choose.

While a similar law in Texas was in effect for three years before being struck down, half that state’s clinics were forced to close. Had the Louisiana law stood, the state would have become the seventh with only one clinic providing abortions.

Decriminalizing abortion was the product of growing working-class struggles in the 1960s and early ’70s. This included the Black-led proletarian movement that overthrew Jim Crow segregation, mobilizations against Washington’s war in Vietnam that changed attitudes in the working class and in the U.S. draftee armed forces, and the beginnings of a new fight for women’s emancipation.

Changing attitudes about rights and against discrimination are not the product of either legislation or rulings by nine black-robed “justices,” but of unity forged in struggle by working people. This is the way all social gains for the working class have been accomplished in the history of the class struggle.

Roe v. Wade was handed down while the political debate over the right of a woman to control her own body — tied to women’s ability to enter the workforce — had not yet been decisively fought out and won. It was an effort by the liberals on the court and beyond to bypass that fight and make new law themselves.

They did so by inventing a “right to privacy” you won’t find in the Constitution and linking it to so-called medical criteria, like the age of fetal viability and the need for a doctor’s consent after the first few

weeks of pregnancy. From the outset, opponents of women’s rights took advantage of this cutoff of debate and the court’s decision to go after access to abortion.

State governments have adopted more than 1,200 laws erecting obstacles to abortion rights in the last 40 years — age restrictions, longer waiting periods, mandatory “counseling” on “alternatives,” and more.

Opponents have enacted state rules covering the size of procedure rooms, width of clinic corridors and other arbitrary requirements. These have nothing to do with a safe procedure. They are all aimed at making it harder for women to actually get an abortion.

These restrictions have taken a heavy toll. In nearly 90% of U.S. counties, with close to 40% of the country’s female population, there are no doctors or clinics that provide abortion. The burden falls hardest on working-class women and women in rural areas.

The political backlash from sections of the ruling class against decriminalization of abortion has been at the center of assaults on the gains of women. It’s an integral part of a broader class battle over the rights and living conditions of all working people.

Roe v. Wade decriminalized abortion, but did not amount to a victory for the right to choose. This political fight is still ahead of us. However, since the 1973 decision, the middle-class leadership of most women’s rights organizations has refused to mobilize the kind of political and educational fight needed. Instead, they tell us to focus on electing Democratic Party politicians who will help us out. This has been an unmitigated disaster.

We *can* win this fight, but it will take a radically different orientation. The fight for women’s emancipation is a crucial part of unifying our class along a working-class line of march to take political power into our own hands.

This will open the road to end every form of exploitation, degradation and bigotry inherent in capitalism, as well as the oppression of women inherited from millennia of class-divided society.

Asarco miners end strike, look to continue to fight

BY BERNIE SENTER
AND DEBORAH LIATOS

After nearly nine months on the picket line in a bitter strike against Asarco copper and its international parent, Grupo Mexico, the United Steelworkers and six other unions representing 1,700 miners in Arizona and Texas ended their strike July 6. Three weeks earlier the regional office of the National Labor Relations Board in Phoenix filed a complaint against the company charging it violated federal labor laws, including failing to bargain in good faith with the unions.

The unions offered to return to work at Asarco’s five mines and processing plants. In a July 5 letter to striking miners, Steelworkers union officials argued they would be in a better position whether they got their jobs back or not. If the NLRB’s charges are adopted, they say, the company is required to give them back their jobs. If the company refuses, workers could be eligible for unemployment and for back pay from the period they were forced out on strike.

The strike began last October after Asarco bosses refused further negotiations over their “last, best and final offer.” They insisted a 10-year-long wage freeze would be extended for most workers in the new contract, health care premiums would be doubled or tripled, and the ability of the union to represent miners on the job would be curtailed. After the strike began, the company hired strikebreakers and some workers crossed the line. Asarco announced in December that it had implemented this contract.

“I hope Asarco calls us back and we can continue negotiations, but Grupo Mexico is hard to deal with,” Leonardo Segura, a long-time worker at the Asarco refinery and vice president of USW Local 5613 in Amarillo, Texas, told the *Militant* July 6 by phone. “We still have the food pantry going. We just got more supplies today.”

“We’re trying to force the company to take us back under the terms of the previous contract,” Lyle Murphy, president of USW Local 5252 at the Ray Mine in Kearny, Arizona, told the *Militant*. He has worked 16 years at the mine. “We’ll keep our strike assistance fund going.”

Asarco bosses have so far refused to comment to the press on the union officials’ decision to end the strike and whether they will offer workers their jobs back. They also have not said whether they will contest the NLRB’s charges.

Strikers maintained round-the-clock picket lines for the duration at many of Asarco’s struck mines and processing facilities. For some periods, they were taken down during COVID-19 outbreaks under pressure from state officials.

In addition to picketing, strikers organized well-attended weekly dinners, movie showings and other activities for miners, their families and supporters in the area. A number of public rallies were organized outside Asarco’s corporate headquarters and a contingent of 70 miners joined the Martin Luther King Day march and rally in Tucson, Arizona, Jan. 20.

While a couple hundred workers ended up crossing the picket lines over the monthslong fight, Murphy said that only 13 people out of 158 members in his local crossed the line.

The strikers won solidarity and contributions from longshoremen in Washington state, Walmart workers in a number of places, and other unions. “I want to thank all the people who assisted us with contributions,” Murphy said. “What you did getting the word out helped a lot. From Maine to Massachusetts and Canada we got help with donations which were greatly appreciated. The *Militant* helped get the word out countrywide.”

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

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