

Beijing, Tehran form alliance to fight harsh US sanctions

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The rulers in Iran and China reached a draft agreement in June that would expand their economic and military cooperation. Facing an unprecedented international economic crisis, governments in both countries are looking for ways to offset the impact of their conflicts with Washington.

In 2018, President Donald Trump reimposed restrictions on international trade and financial transactions with Iran — measures that fall hardest on working people. These especially target Tehran’s oil exports, which are key to its economy.

Washington seeks to force the Iranian government to withdraw armed forces it has expanded in Iraq, Syria and elsewhere in the Mideast, as the U.S. rulers seek to defend their interests amid the bloody wars inflicted on working people in the region. It also aims to block Tehran’s development of nuclear weapons.

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Join campaign to get Socialist Workers Party on the ballot

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The Socialist Workers Party is campaigning to get Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett, its candidates for president and vice president, on the ballot in Washington state, Tennessee and elsewhere. The party has run a presidential slate in every election since 1948. It was on the ballot in Washington in all of those elections, except two in the 1950s.

Campaign supporters will be campaigning widely, introducing the candidates, action program, books and the *Militant*, and collecting signatures, winning working-class support for the fight to be placed on the ballot. Henry Dennison, the party’s candidate for governor of Washington, is already on the ballot.

Campaigning in Renton, a suburb of Seattle, July 19, SWP members Jeanne Fitzmaurice and Rebecca Williamson, a party candidate for U.S. Congress, spoke with Denise Olson, who’s currently on disability. “I used

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Build solidarity with the strikers at Bath shipyard!



AP photo/Robert F. Bukaty

First day of shipyard strike June 22. Solidarity rally is set for July 25 at union hall in Bath, Maine.

Put SWP on the ballot! Fight for workers control of production

Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, issued the following statement July 22. Malcolm Jarrett is the party’s candidate for vice president.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

Join the campaign to put the Socialist Workers Party presidential ticket, Malcolm Jarrett and myself, on the ballot in 2020!

Campaign volunteers are introduced
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Strikers say No! to bosses’ union-busting demands

BY VED DOOKHUN

BATH, Maine — Some 4,300 shipbuilding workers here are fighting union busting by the bosses at Bath Iron Works as they enter their fifth week on strike. Local S6 of the Machinists union is organizing a rally in front of the union hall this Saturday, July 25, at 9 a.m.

The union calls on “strikers, family, friends and supporters” to send “a strong message of solidarity to our members and tell Bath Iron Works to negotiate a fair contract NOW!”

The company’s “last, best and final” offer further expands the use of non-
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Workers worldwide fight twin threat of bosses attacks, ongoing pandemic



IndustriALL union federation

Miners in Orkney, South Africa, demand back wages in July 16 protest. Some 1,500 mostly immigrant workers have not been paid since start of government-imposed lockdown in March.

BY SETH GALINSKY

Bosses everywhere are looking for ways to squeeze more profits from the labor of working people by worsening our working conditions and cutting jobs and wages. In response, working people are finding ways to carry out job actions to defend ourselves, go on strike and organize street protests against the impact of government policies in the U.S. and other countries.

Government-ordered lockdowns on production and trade, the toll of

coronavirus under the disaster of the U.S. for-profit “health care” system, and the workings of the capitalist market itself have deepened the social crisis already bearing down on working people well before the pandemic appeared.

Workers are learning through their own experience that the bosses don’t care about anything but maximizing their profits.

Los Angeles Apparel owner Dov
Continued on page 6

Protests continue in Louisville: ‘Indict the cops who killed Breonna Taylor!’

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

“Say her name — Breonna Taylor” demonstrators chanted at protests in Louisville, Kentucky, and cities and towns around the country. They were expressing the determination of thousands nationwide to prevent authorities from sweeping Taylor’s killing by Louisville cops under the rug. In Louisville there have been actions every day for over 45 straight days.

“There’s no way it should take three months to charge a police officer,” Undra Cameron, an army veteran living in Radcliff, a town of 22,000 in western Kentucky, told the *Militant* July 18. “If I had killed someone I would be arrested right away.”

Three police officers used a “no-knock” warrant to smash their way into Taylor’s apartment shortly after midnight March 13, guns drawn. Her boyfriend, Kenneth Walker, thought they faced a break-in and fired one bullet that hit one of the cops in the leg. The cops then fired over 20 rounds into

the apartment, killing the 26-year-old emergency room technician. Walker said Taylor was still alive for at least five minutes after the shooting, coughing as she struggled to breathe.

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—On the picket line, p. 5—

Nurses in Joliet ratify contract, plan return to work

Cubans mobilize to fight virus, show living power of revolution

BY SETH GALINSKY

Revolutionary Cuba has virtually stopped the spread of COVID-19 on the island, has the highest success rate in the world in treating those sickened by the virus and the lowest death rate. This is a powerful example of the difference a socialist revolution makes.

Most of the island has been free of the disease for more than a month. An outbreak of 12 people who tested positive in one town in Artemisa province July 22, and one case in Villa Clara, stand out precisely because of the overall success in controlling the disease.

In Cuba, with 11.3 million inhabitants, 87 people have died from the virus over the last several months. Compare that to New York City, with a population of almost 8.4 million where at least 23,000 have died. In the U.S. there have been some 42 deaths per 100,000. In the Dominican Republic the figure is 9 per 100,000. In Cuba it's 0.8!

The reason for the difference is not complicated. In the U.S. and the rest of the capitalist world health care is a commodity sold for profit, and access to doctors, clinics and drugs are dependent on what class you belong to. In Cuba health care is a right.

But it's not just that Cuba has a free health care system — no small accomplishment in itself. Doctors, nurses and thousands of volunteers in every neighborhood and throughout the countryside make daily home visits. In the face of the dangers presented by COVID-19, the revolutionary gov-

ernment and mass organizations mobilized working people and youth to confront the challenge.

This is only possible because in 1959 workers and farmers in Cuba, led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement, took power out of the hands of U.S. imperialism and the native capitalist class, and brought to power a workers and farmers government. Under dog-eat-dog capitalism the watchword is every man for himself. In revolutionary Cuba it's no one is left on their own.

Factories — where workers have control of all aspects of the organization of production — were reorganized to limit the spread of the disease, including spreading out work stations and improving hygiene. In some cases what was produced was changed, to meet people's needs. Staffing at facilities for senior citizens, who are the most vulnerable to the virus, was beefed up. The opposite happened in the U.S., where nursing homes became a deathtrap.

Volunteers — medical students and members of mass organizations, including the unions, the women's federation and others — were mobilized to visit as many homes as possible every single day to check on everyone, help anyone who didn't feel well, and find those with symptoms of the disease and make sure they were getting the medical care they needed.

In fact, despite few new cases of the virus today, some 3 million visits are still being organized daily.

Unlike in the U.S., where thousands



Vanguardia/Idalia Vázquez Zerquera

Celebration of end of coronavirus quarantine at senior citizens home in Santa Clara in early June. Cuban government took special measures to protect those most vulnerable to virus.

are still told to stay home when they get sick and not come to the hospital unless they can't breathe — guaranteeing that many of those they live with get sick as well and increasing the chance the disease will be fatal — in Cuba everyone who was sick got immediate medical attention and was sent to specialized medical facilities. That made a huge difference in Cuba's high survival rate.

At the same time, more than 2,000 volunteer Cuban doctors and nurses have gone to 37 countries in response to government requests for Cuban help — from imperialist Italy to An-

dorra, one of the smallest countries in Europe, and a couple dozen semicolonial countries. The latest internationalist brigade just left for Monserrat, a British "overseas territory" in the Caribbean. Despite a vicious propaganda campaign by Washington seeking to slander these missions, they are winning respect for the revolution across the globe.

"I am aware of the position of the United States," Andorran Foreign Minister Maria Ubach said, "but we are a sovereign people and we can choose the partners with which we are going to cooperate."

Contributions to SWP 'stimulus' appeal at \$138,600

The IRS announced the final batches of government "stimulus" payments, which were first sent out in April, will be issued through the end of the year.

As these late and delayed payments arrive, the Socialist Workers Party's special "stimulus" appeal has continued to increase.

Over the last two weeks three new contributors brought the appeal to \$138,600, from a growing total of 125 contributors!

The contributions have made possible a special and leveraged stake for the SWP. The funds are dedicated toward the long-term 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." We'll keep readers informed of the appeal's progress.

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

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Telephone: (212) 244-4899

Fax: (212) 244-4947

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Indict cops who killed Breonna

Continued from front page

Instead of providing her medical assistance, the cops concentrated on getting Walker out of the apartment to arrest him. They charged him with assault and attempted murder, which were subsequently dropped.

One of the three cops involved was fired, but none of them have been arrested. Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron, who is now in charge of “investigating” the killing, says there is no timetable for making a decision whether to prosecute the cops.

More than 100 protesters marched to Cameron’s house July 14, rallying on his front lawn. The cops arrested 87 of them on the charge of “intimidating a participant in a legal process,” a felony punishable by one to five years in prison. The rapid filing of such serious charges against the protesters was in sharp contrast to the lack of any charges against the cops who killed Taylor.

Amid public outcry, Jefferson County Attorney Mike O’Connell dismissed the felony charges against all the protesters July 17.

Efforts to press this fight for arrest and prosecution of the cops who killed Taylor continues to win widespread support from working people of all colors and nationalities across the country, including from prominent entertainment and sports figures. On July 15 Jerami Grant, of the Denver Nuggets basketball team, dedicated a news conference to the memory of Breonna Taylor. “What’s really important in the world,” he said, is that her “killers still are roaming around free.”

“Now’s the time to keep up pressure on authorities to get the cops charged,” said Samir Hazboun, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress in Louisville’s 3rd District. Hazboun has been winning support for the protests from his co-workers at Walmart and as he campaigns across the state.

Cops ‘tase’ Oklahoma man 50 times

In the small town of Wilson, Oklahoma, 20 miles north of the Texas

border, two police officers fired their Tasers more than 50 times into Jared Lakey, a 28-year-old Caucasian, on July 4, 2019. A Carter County deputy sheriff also appeared on the scene and put Lakey in a chokehold, knocking him out. He stopped breathing shortly afterward. Officers did nothing to provide any medical assistance. Lakey died two days later.

Responding to a call that Lakey was “acting in a disorderly way,” former acting police chief Joshua Taylor and Brandon Dingman insisted that Lakey, who was lying naked on the ground, put his hands behind his back. When he didn’t comply, they started shooting their stun guns, ignoring his pleas for help.

Facing demands from Lakey’s family for justice, and under the impact of protests against police brutality nationwide, the two officers were charged with second-degree murder and put on paid administrative leave a year later. If convicted they face a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison.

People in Wilson organized a public protest July 17 to press demands that the cops who killed Lakey be brought to justice. Some 70 people rallied outside City Hall, yelling, “His name is Jared Lakey and we are his voice today.”

“Being down here in Wilson, normally people don’t hear about this town, so they (the cops) just kind of swept it under the rug like his life didn’t matter,” Shannon Smith, one of the protest organizers, told the *Daily Ardmoreite*. “And it did — everybody’s life matters.”

She said that when Lakey’s family tried to press for action against the cops, they were met with slander.

Protesters also called for charges to be filed against the county deputy who put Lakey in the chokehold, whose name has not been released.

“Now that all the facts are out, that



Protesters march on home of Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron in Louisville July 14, to oppose lack of charges against cops who killed Breonna Taylor. Inset, some 70 people protest in Wilson, Oklahoma, July 17, to honor Jared Lakey and demand cops who shocked him with Taser gun over 50 times be prosecuted for his death.

he was not doing anything wrong and he had no drugs in his system,” Erika Graham, another protest organizer and friend of his family, said, “his family just wants justice as far as, ‘Hey look how you slandered my son, much less killed him.’”

Cops killed Steven Taylor

Fighters against police brutality are demanding prosecution of the cops who killed Steven Taylor April 18 inside a Walmart store in San Leandro, California.

Taylor, 33, who was known by workers at the store, was suffering a mental health crisis that day. He was stunned by a Taser and shot dead by the cops for refusing to drop a baseball bat as dozens of workers and shoppers called for the cops to stop.

“The cops need to be more observant of people having mental problems,” Walmart worker Rosa-Lynn Lovett told the *Militant*. “They are trigger happy. They’re shooting to kill.”

Prisoners demand release from overcrowded jails

BY JEFF POWERS

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Over 100 people drove past Gov. Gavin Newsom’s house and rallied in nearby Banister Park here July 5 to demand the state government respond to the increasingly dangerous conditions facing inmates in California’s prisons. Some 5,800 inmates have contracted COVID-19 in the state’s overcrowded prisons and 31 have died.

Similar conditions exist in state prisons and local jails across the country.

The disease has spread across the state as a result of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation transferring infected inmates from prison to prison. On May 30, for instance, the department shipped 121 inmates from Chino prison, after an extensive outbreak there, to San Quentin, where no prisoner was known to have the disease. Today there are over 1,600 confirmed cases and seven deaths in the San Quentin prison.

For years California prisoners have fought to better conditions in the state’s institutions through hunger strikes, lawsuits and other protests. In 2006 medical care in the California prison system was placed into receivership after a federal court ruled that health care conditions were unconstitutionally inadequate.

In 2011 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled

that California had to slash its overcrowded prison population by 33,000 because of the extreme suffering and even deaths it caused.

In 2013 over 28,000 California prisoners organized a hunger strike that forced the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to curtail its use of solitary confinement.

A representative of the Prison Human Rights Movement, a group of prisoners who participated in the hunger strike, addressed the Sacramento rally by hookup. He said they were fighting for three demands: “Release all prisoners who are medically fragile and over 60; release all prisoners who have served 25 consecutive years in prison and are over 60; and release all prisoners who have only a few more months of their sentences left to serve.”

Dolores Gonzalez, a bus driver from San Jose whose husband Armando has been incarcerated at San Quentin for 18 years, told this *Militant* worker-correspondent at the rally that he and other prisoners weren’t getting adequate medical care.

In a phone interview afterwards, she read to me a letter Gonzalez wrote her June 23.

“There is no electrical power and no hot water. We can’t take showers and we can’t watch TV. We are kept

in the cell pretty much 24/7. There is no sunlight and no fresh air,” he said. “The back light in my cell is full of insects. When I asked the CO to bring a bottle of disinfectant he said he would but never did.” San Quentin authorities are “deliberately indifferent and negligent,” he said.

On July 1, 20 San Quentin prisoners, all of whom tested positive for COVID-19, announced a hunger strike. Their demands include access to showers, fresh air and electrical power. They say medical care is inadequate and men deemed asymptomatic are forced to double up in a single small cell.

Under pressure from the protests, Gov. Newsom announced July 10 that he will release another 8,000 prisoners by the end of August, after having released 3,500 others a month earlier. Like the earlier releases, the state will only free inmates with a short time left on their sentence, or medical conditions that put them at high risk of getting coronavirus. Tens of thousands of prisoners like Armando Gonzalez, who was sentenced to life in prison, will not qualify.

And it would take releasing 20,000 inmates — at least 12,000 more than Newsom plans — to get down to what prison authorities admit is 100% of the state prison system’s capacity.

More protests are planned.



Militant/Eric Simpson

Addie Kitchen, Steven Taylor’s grandmother, speaks at protest July 10 in San Leandro, California, demanding cops who killed him April 18 inside Walmart store be prosecuted.

In Defense of the US Working Class

by Mary-Alice Waters

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



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Help get SWP on the ballot

Continued from front page

to be liberal, now I'm a conservative," she said. "I defend freedom of speech. We must be tolerant of others."

"Defending freedom of speech is necessary for building a working-class movement of millions that speaks and fights for all the oppressed," said Williamson. "Workers need debate and discussion to get the political clarity needed to unite our class."

"I'd be pleased to sign your petition," Olson said.

The party's presidential ticket is on the ballot in Colorado and Vermont. It has met all the requirements to file in the next week or so in Louisiana. In Tennessee — like in Washington — the SWP is organizing to campaign and gather signatures to get on the ballot in that state. The party is also campaigning in Minnesota and New Jersey, demanding state authorities put the party on the ballot given the obstacles caused by government-imposed coronavirus restrictions.

The SWP is the only party running in the 2020 election that campaigns to unite working people to defend our own interests.

Washington, D.C., campaigning

Supporters of the campaign of Omari Musa, Socialist Workers Party candidate for D.C. delegate to U.S. Congress, are finding widespread interest in the party's platform as they talk to workers on their doorsteps, at protests against police brutality and with co-workers on the job and ask for help in putting him on the ballot.

The effort to get 500 signatures, double the requirement, to place Musa on the ballot received a boost July 18-19 when campaigners were joined by Kennedy and Jarrett. By the end of that weekend, volunteers had pushed the number of people signing up to over 430.

District officials lowered the requirement for ballot status in the delegate race from 3,000 to 250 signatures because of coronavirus restrictions.

James Harris, who helped organize the campaigners, told the *Militant* they got an especially good response to the party's demand for a government-financed public works program to provide jobs thousands of workers sorely need. And that workers should fight for workers' control over conditions on those jobs, so they can be done safely.

Campaign supporter Arrin Hawkins and Seth Galinsky, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in New York, met child care worker Maria

Beal after knocking on her door in Southeast Washington July 19.

"The Democrats and Republicans are two wings of the same party and though they have differences, they both defend the interests of the capitalist class," said Galinsky. That's why we need to build a labor party, Hawkins added.

Beal said she agrees, "but I dislike the Republicans most."

The capitalists try to convince us to hold our nose and vote for the lesser evil, Galinsky said. But no matter which of the capitalist candidates wins, working people lose.

Beal welcomed the recent protests against police brutality, but rejected the looting. She believes that cops need to be licensed. "They will think twice before they brutalize someone if they might lose their license," she said.

"The capitalist class pays the cops to protect and serve the rich against working people, and no license or reform will fundamentally change that," Galinsky said.

"It's not all or mostly about color," Beal added. "It's all about the dollars."

"To end police brutality will require taking power out of the hands of the capitalist class," Galinsky said.

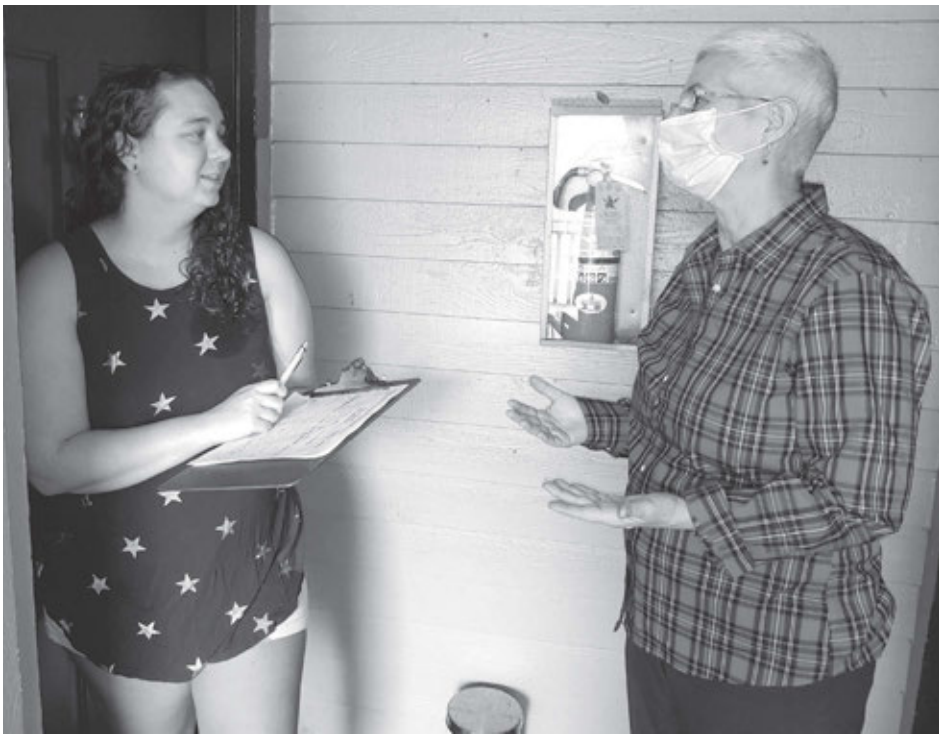
Beal told him she wasn't totally convinced, "But I *am* interested." She signed the petition, bought a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. She also volunteered to organize a meeting for Musa at a nearby park where her friends and relatives often gather.

At an apartment complex in the city's Northeast, Jarrett met 19-year-old Joseph Smith, who had recently attended his first protest, against the killing of George Floyd. He told Jarrett that on June 1, during a citywide curfew, he was one of a group of protesters boxed in by dozens of police in riot gear on a residential street. When police started to pepper spray them, a resident opened his door and let several dozen escape inside. They spent the night there.

"Many working people have experienced some form or another of police violence," said Jarrett. "Malcolm X wanted to show us that our fights are part of the international fight by oppressed people against a common oppressor. I joined the SWP to get rid of capitalism. That's what's open to you."

Smith added his name to the petition.

Campaigners also set up tables outside two area Walgreens over the weekend. "A number of people, including taxi drivers, customers and workers having



Militant/Barry Fatland

Mary Martin, right, campaigns for SWP candidates in Kent, Washington. Cruise ship worker Kathleen Jones was stuck at sea for two months due to quarantine. "I'll sign for the candidates," she said after hearing that SWP is for public works program to put people back to work.

lunch, came over to find out what we were doing," said Walmart worker and SWP campaigner Glova Scott. Many signed to put Musa on the ballot.

"One worker ran up to the table to look at the books, and purchased *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa*, and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*," she said.

Kennedy, Jarrett and Musa all spoke at the Militant Labor Forum July 18.

"From Bath, Maine, where shipyard workers are on strike against the bosses' union busting to the Yakima Valley in Washington state where farmworkers walked out and won a contract at several fruit-packing plants, to sanitation workers in New Orleans fighting for improved wages and better working conditions, our campaign stands in solidarity with all these struggles," Kennedy said.

"Our campaign explains the most important thing workers need to see is that all the problems we face today are the result of the fact that there are sharply counterposed class interests between the capitalist rulers and working people. You can't 'reform' an exploiting class. You can't reform the capitalist rulers' state.

"The SWP stands against violence and looting. The entire block in Minneapolis where the George Floyd mural is painted is totally devastated and boarded up. The liberal *New York Times* editors say this is OK, because 'property can be replaced and thus it's not violence to destroy it.'" Kennedy said, "We say no! We look to the example of the Bolsheviks' conduct during the Russian Revolution. They said 'Comrades, we are not thieves,' and convinced workers to stop the looting of the palaces, to defend the

patrimony, history and resources of the country they were taking power in."

SWP on ballot in Vermont

The SWP filed to put the party on the ballot in Vermont July 22 and was certified. "A fight by workers and our unions to wrest control of production and safety from the bosses is more sharply posed today as they press to pack more of us into plants shoulder to shoulder and crank up the line speeds," Jarrett said at a press conference in Burlington. "But no worker has to die because of unsafe or unhealthy working conditions. The answer isn't to shut the plants down, but for workers and our unions to take over control of all aspects of production and reorganize them to meet our needs."

Join the campaign! To sign up to go to Washington, Tennessee or elsewhere to get the SWP candidates on the ballot, contact the campaign office nearest you listed on page 8.

Arlene Rubinstein in Washington, D.C., contributed to this article.

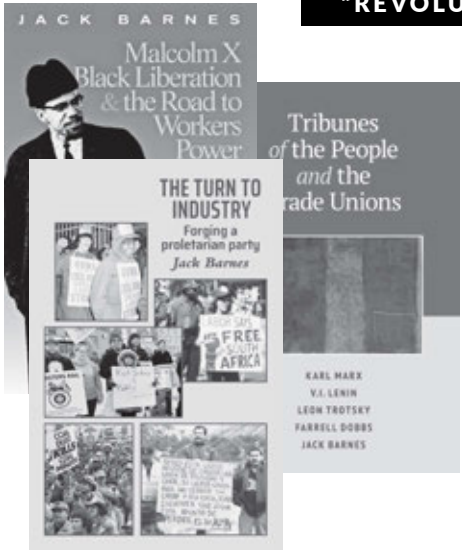
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Solidarity with Bath strikers!

Continued from front page

union contract workers in the shipyard and chips away at gains won in struggle defending seniority rights in job assignments. Giving the company a free hand on contractors and job assignments would be a big blow to workers and their union. Bath Iron Works, which is owned by General Dynamics, builds destroyers for the U.S. Navy.

The bosses are using the Mississippi-based Craft and Technical Solutions company to recruit strikebreakers, luring workers to cross the picket line from Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas for pay of up to \$28 an hour, plus paid lodging, air travel and \$60 a day more for meals.

Starting wages at the shipyard are \$15.97 an hour, workers say. The far higher pay for strikebreakers shows the company's willingness to spend large sums today to break the union to increase their future profits.

Neither Craft and Technical Solutions nor Bath Iron Works had returned the *Militant's* request for comment as of press time.

The company claims it is the Navy that wants them to bring in more contract workers, to speed up work. But, the union says, if they need more workers, just hire them. The union will be happy to take them in.

"We are more together this time round than 20 years ago," the last time the union was forced on strike, Bill Cullivan, a sheet metal mechanic at Bath Iron Works for 34 years, told the *Militant*. He was referring to the strong 87% vote by workers, young and old, rejecting the concession contract.

"A lot of us were skeptical at first," he said, as they feared the newer, younger workers might not back the strike. "But

they did support the union."

Cullivan described how workers hammered on scrap steel daily for a minute every hour on the hour leading up to the contract vote, to show their determination to fight against the bosses' union-busting demands. "The company hated it," he said, smiling.

He pointed to tents inside the shipyard visible from the union hall parking lot. That's where the company sent many workers involved in the "hammer down" actions to "detention" while they waited for disciplinary hearings.

"Lots of people don't realize the jobs we have today are because of the fights by unions," he added.

The company gave out flyers saying workers should be happier with lump-sum contract bonuses rather than a pay raise and urging them to agree to increases in the cost of health insurance.

"They were condescending and assumed we were uneducated," pipe fitter Jeremy Meadows, who is a newer worker with one year at the shipyard, said. "It made me angry enough to want to strike. They underestimated us."

Strike solidarity

Zak Larrabee, 28, a reader of the *Militant* from Boston and his friend, Damon Ely, 20, accompanied this worker-correspondent to the picket line July 18.

"I had been reading the articles in the *Militant* about the Asarco copper miners' strike in Arizona and Texas and the fruit-packers strike in Washington state," said Larrabee. "I realized that we were close to the largest strike action in the country and decided to go."

The two stayed up all night and made dozens of chicken and veggie wrap sandwiches to bring to strikers, and a



Militant/Ved Dookhun

Zak Larrabee, left, and Damon Ely, both from Boston, brought dozens of sandwiches to Bath shipyard strikers July 18, telling *Militant* their solidarity, and sandwiches, "were well received."

handmade sign saying, "Solidarity with the strikers."

"The company wants to starve the workers out, so I decided to make a contribution and did not want to go empty handed," Larrabee said.

"We were well received. And especially the sandwiches," he said. "It opened up a conversation immediately about how the solidarity of young people was so important in the strike."

After hearing about the strike at a recent Militant Labor Forum in Albany, New York, Charlie Murphy, a 35-year-old sign maker, decided he wanted to "join workers who were standing up for what they believed in."

He also visited the strike and walked the picket line. "The strikers are very sensible, hard-working, and obviously being taken advantage of," he said.

At a gas station on the way out of town after walking the picket lines, we ran into William Murray, a maintenance

technician who works at Bath Iron Works' Harding facility.

"The future of coming generations relies on what we fight for today," he said.

Strikers are proud of the solidarity they are winning. Support messages for the strike are posted at the union hall. These include messages or contributions from the United Mine Workers, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, as well as postal workers, actors, musicians and transport workers.

More solidarity is needed. Come take part in the July 25 rally! Walk the picket lines. Send messages and contributions to the strike fund at: IAM Local S6, 722 Washington St., Bath ME 04530, or donations through PayPal at <https://www.paypal.me/LocalLodgeS6>.

Laura Anderson contributed to this article.

Nurses in Joliet ratify contract, plan return to work

BY DAN FEIN

CHICAGO — Striking nurses at AMITA Health Saint Joseph Medical Center in Joliet voted July 20 to accept the bosses' latest contract offer and end their strike, which began July 4. The vote was 57.2% in favor and 42.8% against. A similar contract offer had been voted down July 11. The Illinois Nurses Association represents 720 nurses at the hospital.

The biggest reason nurses walked out was to win better staffing with a higher ratio of nurses to patients. A sticker worn on many strikers' face masks read, "No safe staffing — no contract." They wanted a limit on the maximum number of patients assigned to each nurse at any one time.

Although the hospital backed off its original demand to eliminate sick pay and to impose a three-year wage freeze, the new contract only promises to address the staffing issue later. The new contract calls for a \$500 bonus the first year for full-time and \$250 for part-time nurses, and a 2% raise in the second and third years of the contract.

"We will return to work united, all of us wearing our blue strike T-shirts and our heads held high," Pat Meade, one of the leaders of the strike, told the *Militant*.

The bosses kept the hospital running during the strike by bringing in scabs.

"Although I was saddened by the vote, our strike was worth it," Rosa Marquez, a striking nurse with 20 years seniority, said the day after the new contract was approved. The strike

received "community support. The hospital could have spent the \$5 million per week they spent on scabs on hiring more nurses."

She added, "As some nurses crossed the picket line, there was the danger of losing the union. We are the only union-

organized AMITA hospital, and a victory here would certainly spur union-organizing efforts at other hospitals."

The fight will continue, she said. "The lack of adequate staffing means unsafe conditions for patients and burnout for nurses. We are tired of it."

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



August 7, 1995

On August 5 thousands of youth will gather in Havana for a rally against the U.S. embargo of Cuba. Among those marching will be students, workers, and other opponents of U.S. policy who traveled from the United States to join with youth from around the world in standing with the people of Cuba to defend their sovereignty.

The rally will include all those gathered for the August 1-7 Cuba Lives International Youth Festival. Some 1,400 people from 65 countries had registered to attend by mid-July. As they learn more about the Cuban revolution, participants will also bring their experiences and struggles in the United States and other countries to workers and youth in Cuba.

Young people planning to make the trip have been organizing fund-raising raffles, setting up speaking engagements at campuses for when they return, and making banners.



August 7, 1970

CLEVELAND — July 17 marked the end of a victorious strike by bus drivers, trainmen and other employees of the Cleveland Transit System. The 1,900 members of the Amalgamated Transit Workers Union began a walk-out June 30 after being given just four hours to discuss and approve a new contract. Members refused to ratify it. By the following morning most of the greater Cleveland area was without public transportation.

The settlement consisted of a 70-cent increase spread over two years. Cost-of-living increases are also included. The hospitalization contribution by the company was raised.

Threats were made to institute legal proceedings against the strikers. The capitalist politicians and "mediators" did not initiate such action because it was clear that the majority of working people in Cleveland supported the strike.



August 4, 1945

The British working class has swept the reactionary Tory government of [Winston] Churchill out of office. A labor government is installed in the classic birthplace of capitalism for the first time in history.

The workers are weary of the imperialist war. They are suffering severely under rationing and black markets. Mass unemployment is again on the way. There is a chaotic housing situation with millions of workers living in slum hovels and bomb-blasted tenements. All Churchill could promise the workers was a continuance of this state of affairs. Meanwhile the British capitalists are on the offensive against the labor unions.

The capitalist class is trying to take comfort in the fact that the Labor Government will consist of the old-line labor skates who have demonstrated their love for the capitalist system of "free enterprise."

Workers fight boss attacks, virus

Continued from front page

Charney told the *Los Angeles Times* in early July that the company was “following every directive we’re aware of” to prevent garment workers at the plant from getting COVID-19.

But that’s not how workers there see it. Some 300 of the company’s 1,800 workers tested positive and four died, while the company pressed for production and turned a blind eye to dangerous working conditions.

Two-hour stoppage at L.A. Apparel

As the truth about the spread of the disease in the plant filtered out, dozens stood by their sewing machines and refused to work for nearly two hours in June. “We got up, and we said we’re not going to work until you promise to clean the machines,” said Mariana, who agreed to be identified by the *Times* by her middle name to avoid retaliation by the bosses.

The stoppage forced Charney to meet with the workers and make some changes. They were given more space and cleaning was improved. Since then the plant has been closed by the county health department, until violations of health regulations are corrected. After seeing the improvements their job action won, many workers plan to return when the plant reopens.

At Farmer John meatpacking plant in Vernon, California, where many workers got sick from the virus, delegations of workers from different departments went to the office in April in the face of the bosses’ inaction. “The company didn’t take seriously the need to take preventative steps,” Pedro Albarrán told the *Militant* July 18. Albarrán is a meat cutter and shop steward for United Food and Commercial Workers Local 770.

“We told them we need more protection,” he said. “Our focus was on having more distance between workers,” as well as more frequent cleaning.

The company increased the distance between workers in some parts of the plant but not others. Where Albarrán works “they added plexiglass, but it’s so close that your shoulders and arms bump into it all day, it’s very uncomfortable.”

“We want a committee of workers to monitor this, identify problems and begin to resolve them,” he said. A joint company-union safety committee called for in the contract doesn’t meet. “The company does what it wants to,” he said.

The conditions facing workers at Los Angeles Apparel and Farmer John show that what is needed to ensure that all work is carried out safely under all conditions is to advance a fight for workers control of production. Workers need to fight for the right to determine line speed, how work is organized, as well as what is produced and its quality.

Workers fight boss, gov’t attacks

In Durango, Mexico, more than 200 mine and metal processing workers at the San José Avino mine went on strike July 11 after the company refused to pay the annual profit sharing bonus. In Uruguay, workers went on strike July 8 at the CITA bus company, when bosses unilaterally changed pay, waiting and mileage rates, resulting in a 30% pay cut.

In Israel, for the fourth time in a week,

thousands of angry workers took to the streets July 18 against government attacks. Some 2,000 protested outside Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s official residence in Jerusalem while thousands more protested in Tel Aviv.

The police had refused to grant a permit to a coalition of small and medium-size businesses, including restaurant and bar owners, to protest in Tel Aviv’s Rabin Square demanding more government aid and eased restrictions. The cops said the plaza could only hold 1,800 people under social distancing rules. So organizers took the group to Charles Clore Park, joining another protest in progress organized by the “anti-corruption” Black Flag movement and the recently formed Association of the Unemployed.

“I have not had a pay slip for four months now, and I am receiving unemployment benefits in the amount of 60% of the salary I had,” laid-off hotel receptionist Yoav Haravan, a leader of the Association of the Unemployed, told the press. “My rent remained at 100%, monthly bills remained at 100% and grocery shopping remained at 100%.”

Meanwhile, a one-day national strike in Israel July 20 called by the National Association of Nurses shut down elective surgeries and nonemergency care. The nurses won their central demand, with the government agreeing to provide funds to hire 2,000 more nurses, 400 doctors and 700 support staff.

Compared to the U.S., Europe and China, most of Africa has not yet been as hard hit by COVID-19. Still coronavirus cases have more than doubled over the last month in 22 of the continent’s 54 countries. South Africa is hardest hit.

Eighteen workers, members of the National Union of Mineworkers and the National Union of Metalworkers, were arrested in Orkney, South Africa, July 13 for protesting nonpayment of wages and layoffs at Kopanang and Tau Lekoa gold mines and the West Gold Plant. They were charged with violating COVID-19 lockdown rules and released two days later.

Some 1,500 migrant workers from Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and Mozambique, as well as 146 local workers employed at the sites, have not been paid since the government-imposed lockdown in March, according to the IndustriALL international union federation.

“If the retrenchments were made during the lockdown, why can’t we protest during the lockdown?” picketing Kopanang mine worker Junior Kgoedi told the press.

Deepening social crisis of capitalism

According to the July 16 *Wall Street Journal*, 7.5 million jobs were added in May and June in the U.S., after 21 million were cut in March and April.

The next day the paper reported that in the past two weeks job postings had declined in all 50 states and Washington, D.C. For the week ending July 11, 1.3 million workers filed for unemployment benefits, the 17th straight week that new claims exceeded 1 million. Many of the job losses, especially in small businesses, are permanent. Millions are without jobs.

As a consequence, workers face rising competition to get jobs, a fact

Thai youth protest attacks on rights, defy ban on assembly



Reuters/Chalinee Thirasupa

Defying a ban on public gatherings, thousands of Thai students and other youth protested at the Democracy Monument in Bangkok July 18. They are calling for the resignation of the government, a new constitution, an end to harassment of government critics, and the overturning of laws that punish criticism of King Maha Vajiralongkorn with up to 15 years in prison.

The monument commemorates the mass movement that brought down the absolute monarchy in 1932 in what was then Siam. It was replaced with a “constitutional” regime, largely run by the military. The officer corps has carried out 12 coups since then, the latest in 2014, which brought to power Prayuth Chan-ocha, head of the army.

Prayuth’s party came in second in last year’s election for the lower house of parliament, which supposedly returned Thailand to civilian rule. But he was elected prime minister with the votes from upper house members, who are hand-picked by the army brass.

Protests broke out after a February court ruling dissolved an opposition political party, giving Prayuth a tighter grip on power. But they tapered off in March, after the government imposed an emergency decree and lockdown on the pretext of combatting coronavirus.

The ensuing shutdown of trade and tourism has deepened the crisis for the already battered working people. Suicides are rising and the newly formed charity Covid Thailand Aid has been inundated with requests for help.

“The emergency decree has been used to control people,” Parit Cheewarak, a leader of the Student Unions of Thailand, told protesters. “Lift the decree immediately.”

“Some 500,000 of us are about to lose our jobs” due to the shutdown and growing economic crisis, Tattap Ruangprapaikitseree, secretary general of the Free Youth, said.

“The laws protect the rich and leave the people with nothing,” 18-year-old protester Sang told Agence France-Press.

—S.G.

bosses utilize to their advantage as they press their attacks on the wages and conditions of those still working and try to undermine working-class solidarity.

In addition, government-ordered shutdowns and shelter in place orders are making the yearslong social crisis that falls hardest on the working class even worse. In St. Paul, Minnesota, officials say there are now 84 homeless campsites with 270 people, a tenfold increase from last summer.

With millions across the U.S. late on their rent and mortgage payments no one knows how many will be forced onto the street when coronavirus eviction moratoriums — and the \$600 federal weekly unemployment supplement — end at the end of this month.

Food banks coast to coast have been overwhelmed. Radha Muthiah, president of the Capital Area Food Bank, told WAMU radio in Washington, D.C., that the number of people getting meals at the 450 locations they supply has risen anywhere from 30% to 400% in the last few months.

Suicide and drug overdoses

Well before the lockdowns, which pushed millions to “self-isolate,” drug addiction, alcoholism and suicide were on the rise. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, overdose deaths increased 4.8% in 2019

from the year before.

The *Washington Post* reports that suspected overdoses jumped 18% in March, 29% in April, and 42% in May! In Monroe County in upstate New York, deaths from opioid overdoses have doubled since last year.

But don’t expect help from the government, whether it’s the Democratic or Republican Party that’s in control. In early July New York Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced an immediate 31% cut in funding for substance abuse addiction treatment programs. Whatever the ups and downs, there is no end in sight to the capitalist crisis, and the bosses’ attempts to rebuild their profits at the expense of working people.

That also means there will be no end to working people finding ways to stand up and organize together, as striking shipyard workers in Bath, Maine, are doing. As we do so, workers can learn from each other’s struggles and forge a road to increased resistance and working-class solidarity.

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Democrats, middle-class left find common ground in 2020

BY TERRY EVANS

As the presidential election looms closer, liberals, anarchists and other middle-class radicals are seeking to put their political stamp on the Democratic Party, which they see as their party, and its program and the candidacy of Joe Biden. And they are having substantial success.

This is in sharp contrast to the Socialist Workers Party campaign of Alyson Kennedy for president and Malcolm Jarrett for vice president. The socialist candidates look to unify workers behind struggles taking place today for jobs, higher wages, increasing control of production, working conditions and safety. They present a fighting program to build a working-class movement of millions to replace the capitalist rulers and their state with a workers and farmers government.

These liberal and radical forces are seeking to set the agenda for the Democratic campaign. Their program is one of “revolution,” while leaving the state apparatus and the capitalist rulers who wield political power untouched.

Proposals to “defund the cops,” “cancel rent” and get Congress to adopt the “Green New Deal” is what’s needed to “redistribute power,” writes Amna Akbar in a July 11 *New York Times* article. It’s headlined, “The Left Is Remaking the World.” She says this can be realized by “a state whose primary allegiance is to people’s needs instead of profit.”

These forces deny the existence of a class-based state, urge instead that the focus for “change” should be directed at racist, sexist and anti-gender institutions. Their concept of society is based on denying class divisions as fundamental and reject working-class struggle as a road forward. To them, race, gender and the poor and disenfranchised determine politics. Their enemy is not a class-based state, but bad institutions.

When they do talk about the work-

ing class, it is as an object that must be “helped.” They view workers as backward, racist, xenophobic and reactionary.

This political view makes it impossible to seriously attack the crisis working people face today. Take cop violence.

Fight to end cop brutality

The brutality cops inflict on Blacks and other working people is not an aberration, but an indispensable part of maintaining capitalist rule. Cops exist to “serve and protect” capitalist property relations and mete out arbitrary violence to keep working people in check. Cuts to police spending and other reforms will not prevent the propertied owners from using cops to assault workers’ protests and picket lines when we fight to defend ourselves from the growing attacks of the bosses and their state.

The anti-working-class course of middle-class radicals who act as if a new society can be built while capitalism and its state apparatus remain intact was on show in Seattle in early June. Joined by local gang enforcers, they took over a six-block area of the city, including a police precinct, after cops abandoned the station during a protest against cop brutality.

The groups taking over the area renamed it the Capital Hill Organized Protest and appointed their own armed thugs to enforce order. Jenny Durkan, the city’s liberal Democratic mayor, acquiesced, saying the occupation was “the community’s call for change.” She ensured utilities were provided to the occupiers and ordered the cops to stay out.

Over nine days two Black teenagers were shot dead and others wounded.

Only after the killings did Durkan order cops to dismantle the occupation.

The liberal editors of the *Times* say stripping the names of Confederate officers and renaming U.S. military



Minnesota Historical Society

Strike by hosiery workers at Strutwear Knitting Co. in Minneapolis in 1935-36, one of militant struggles that built industrial unions in 1930s. Middle-class left dismisses as useless lessons of previous working-class battles in which workers transformed their conditions and themselves.

bases after Blacks, women and others who are oppressed would be a “step in the right direction” for ending racism. But cosmetic changes to the armed forces of U.S. imperialism will do nothing to stop the rulers from fighting wars to defend their interests around the world and to use working people — Black, Caucasian and women — as cannon fodder.

The radicals’ proposals for revolution without touching the capitalist state go hand in hand with their efforts to obscure recognition that class divisions are fundamental to the workings of capitalism. They conceal this fact in order to bury the powerful lessons of the massive working-class struggles we have waged — from the fight to build the industrial unions in the 1930s, to the Black-led working-class movement that brought down Jim Crow segregation. To say nothing of the revolutionary struggles that led workers and farmers to power in Cuba in 1959 and in Russia in 1917. It is through such battles that working people transform ourselves, our understanding of the world, and change history.

Biden’s ‘revolution’

Democratic nominee Joe Biden increasingly echoes the radicals’ views. Backed by liberals and radicals who argued getting rid of Donald Trump in November was the decisive issue. He

jenovic told Reuters at one of the protests in Belgrade.

Vucic blamed “foreign intelligence agencies” for the anti-government protests and urged demonstrators to go home to avoid the risk of getting coronavirus. Concern for protesters’ health was not evident when government security forces brutally beat demonstrators with batons and fired tear gas at them.

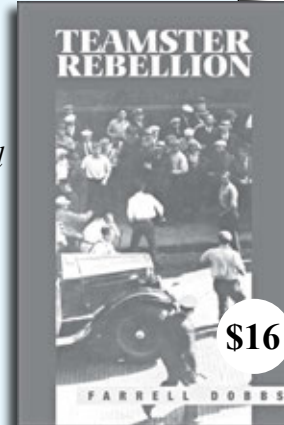
Vucic backed off from shutting down campuses and from the three-day curfew. Instead he ordered more limited constraints, including restricting gatherings to no more than 10 people.

However protests continue, with demonstrators demanding the government resign. They are fed up not only by recent events, but also by the growing crisis for working people of the capitalist system. Unemployment was 12.7% before the current crisis hit, and leaders of the Confederation of Autonomous Trade Unions say over 200,000 more workers face losing their jobs in coming months.

Teamster Rebellion

by Farrell Dobbs

The story of the strikes and organizing drive the men and women of Teamsters Local 574 carried out in Minnesota in 1934, paving the way for the continent-wide rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations as a fighting social movement.



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‘Women in Cuba have always been in front line of struggles’

Marianas in Combat: Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon in Cuba's Revolutionary War, 1956-58 by Teté Puebla is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for July. Puebla was an officer in the victorious Rebel Army and of its first all-women's platoon, founded by Fidel Castro, the central leader of the Cuban Revolution. While helping to lead the fight to transform the social and economic status of women, she rose to become a brigadier general, the highest-ranking woman in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces. The book was edited by Mary-Alice Waters, who also wrote the introduction. Copyright © 2003 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY TETÉ PUEBLA

The first great effort was the literacy drive, which had its roots in the Rebel Army. There was a department for this in the armed forces.

In 1958 I helped Celia [Sánchez] organize elementary schools in the Sierra Maestra, since there were none there, and of course many children were illiterate. The big majority of peasant women were illiterate, and



Members of Cuban Women's Antiaircraft Artillery Defense Regiment leaving for Angola in 1988, to help defeat apartheid South Africa's invasion. Vilma Espín, leader of Federation of Cuban Women, at center in white blouse.

many rebel fighters too.

Cuba was the first in the world to eradicate illiteracy. Women were part of that struggle, young women especially. There was a massive incorporation of youth and children into the literacy effort, with boys and girls aged ten, eleven, and twelve teaching others, including adults, how to read and write. Women made up over half of the literacy volunteers. And, of course, illiteracy was greater among women than men. ...

After the revolution, this changed. Women began to organize massively working to change the conditions of their lives and to free themselves. ...

From the beginning, the Federation [of Cuban Women] worked to incorporate women into the struggle through bringing them into the work force. Because when a woman begins to work outside her home, she organizes her life and she develops. This happened in all stages of the revolution. And among women of all ages and in all occupations.

Before the triumph, many women used to come in from the countryside to work as servants in the homes of the rich. So the federation opened up schools for them. We established the Ana Betancourt schools here in Havana, named after a combatant from the independence war of 1868. Some of the mansions in Miramar, like those in which the women used to work, were turned into schools and dormitories for them.

In the Ana Betancourt schools the women learned to read and write; in addition, they were taught to sew and

embroider. When their studies were over, and they graduated in cutting and sewing, Fidel ordered that each one be given a sewing machine to take home. The commitment was they would use it to teach someone else. You'd see these machines in peasants' homes in the mountains and on the plains.

I was involved in helping to recruit the first campesinas for the Ana Betancourt School.

To get those peasant women to come, to get the men to agree wasn't easy. A lot of machismo existed. Some men would say, "Not my daughter" or "Not my wife." And we had to work hard to bring them into the revolutionary process, to convince the men why we had to teach sewing, that it would be a help to their families.

During the final years of the dictatorship there were also many prostitutes. They were brought into the revolution, too. They were given housing because many were from outside Havana and had no homes here. We built schools for them and found them jobs in workplaces.

An especially big effort was made toward women who had worked as prostitutes in Havana. It was true elsewhere too, but the largest concentration had been in Havana. Before the revolution, it was even considered a privilege for these women to prostitute themselves in Havana, because of the greater possibilities for getting out of the country.

These women had taken the road of prostitution because they couldn't find work under capitalism. But the revolution changed that. The Federation of Cuban Women played a role in this, a

very important one. ...

In the Sierra Maestra the work of incorporating women into schools and jobs was easier. Because the peasants had seen us with them there from the beginning. It was harder in other places; you have to keep in mind the low cultural level of the peasants before the revolution, the isolation and lack of access to education.

These prejudices were still strong a full decade after the revolution's victory.

In March 1969, on the order of the commander in chief, I was named director of the Guaicanamar Cattle Plan in Jaruco, in Havana province. He said he was putting me in charge to demonstrate that women could lead as well as men, to show that women could lead an agricultural project, that women could head up any front and carry out any task of the revolution. ...

Women in Cuba have always been on the front line of the struggle. At Moncada we had Yeyé [Haydée Santamaría] and Melba [Hernández]. With the Granma and November 30, we had Celia, Vilma [Espín], and many other compañeras. There were many women comrades who were tortured and murdered.

From the beginning there were women in the Revolutionary Armed Forces. First they were simple soldiers, later sergeants. Those of us in the Mariana Grajales Platoon were the first officers. The ones who ended the war with officers' ranks stayed in the armed forces.

Today there's a women's regiment in the Border Guard Battalion at the Guantánamo U.S. naval base in Caimanera, commanded by Lt. Col. Victoria Arrauz Caraballo, who was named by the minister of the armed forces to be second in command of the Border Guard Battalion that guards that territory. There are women in all the military units. They're captains, majors, colonels. Women have also carried out internationalist missions. They went to Angola, to Ethiopia and elsewhere. By the time of the Angola mission, we had formed the Women's Antiaircraft Artillery Defense Regiments. The members of the regiment assigned to Angola belonged to various combat units.

July BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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ILLINOIS: **Chicago:** 1858 W. Cermak Road, 2nd floor. Zip: 60608. Tel: (312) 792-6160. Email: SWPChicago@fastmail.fm

KENTUCKY: **Louisville:** 1939 Goldsmith Lane, Suite 134. Zip: 40218. Tel: (502) 882-1041. Email: louisvilleswp@gmail.com

MINNESOTA: **St. Paul:** 1821 University Ave. W Suite S-106A. Zip: 55104. Tel: (651) 340-5586. Email: twincities.swp@gmail.com

NEBRASKA: **Lincoln:** P.O. Box 6811. Zip: 68506. Tel: (402) 217-4906. Email: swplincn@gmail.com

NEW JERSEY: 3600 Bergenline, Suite 205B, Union City. Zip: 07087. Tel: (551) 240-1512. swpnewjersey@gmail.com

NEW YORK: **New York:** 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor. Zip: 10018. Tel: (646) 434-8117. Email: newyorkswp@gmail.com **Albany:** 285 Washington Ave. #1R. Zip: 12206. Tel: (518) 810-1586. Email: albanyswp@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA: **Philadelphia:** 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite 16. Zip: 19149. Tel: (215) 708-1270. Email: philaswp@verizon.net **Pittsburgh:** P.O. Box 79142. Zip: 15216. Tel: (412) 610-2402. Email: swppittsburgh@gmail.com

TEXAS: **Dallas:** 1005 W. Jefferson Blvd., Suite 207. Zip: 75208. Tel: (469) 513-1051. Email: dallasswp@gmail.com

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 7603 Georgia Ave. NW, Suite 300. Zip: 20012. Tel: (202) 536-5080. Email: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

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Sydney: Suite 22, 10 Bridge St., Granville, NSW 2142. Tel: (02) 8677 0108. Email: cl_australia@optusnet.com.au

CANADA

QUEBEC: **Montreal:** 7107 St. Denis #204 H2S 2S5. Tel: (514) 272-5840. Email: clcmontreal@fastmail.com

FRANCE

Paris: BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15. Email: militant.paris@gmail.com

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: 188a Onehunga Mall, Onehunga. Postal address: P.O. Box 13857, Auckland 1643. Tel: (09) 636-3231. Email: clauack@xtra.co.nz

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND: **London:** 5 Norman Road (first floor). Seven Sisters. Post code: N15 4ND. Tel: 020-3538 8900. Email: cllondon@fastmail.fm **Manchester:** 329, Royal Exchange Buildings, 3 Old Bank St. Post code: M2 7PE. Tel: (0161) 312-8119. Email: clmanchr@gmail.com

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The Militant August 3, 2020



SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

Help put the SWP on the ballot!



ALYSON KENNEDY

MALCOLM JARRETT

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ing the party and its program and signing people up, so the only party defending working-class interests will be on the ballot. Supporters are campaigning to win ballot status in Washington state and Tennessee, after meeting requirements in Colorado, Louisiana and Vermont. Ballot fights are taking place in other states as well. The party has been on the ballot for president since 1948.

As they campaign, SWP candidates and supporters are building solidarity with striking shipyard workers in Bath, fights against cop brutality across the country and explaining that through struggle our class has the power to change history.

As bosses start up production and pack working people into mines, mills, plants and retail outlets, looking to bring profits flowing in, my campaign explains why fighting for workers control of production is decisive for *all* working people.

Work *can* be organized safely, but bosses organize production — and all social relations — to maximize profits. To them, workers' lives and livelihoods are expendable. Our starting point is no worker should have to die on the job!

Only by workers fighting together to wrest ever greater control of production can we be in a position to set line speeds, decide how closely workers should be to each other on the job and what other safety measures are needed to stop coronavirus infections, injuries and deaths.

When workers exercise control of production, we determine how many workers are hired, what should be produced and safety protections while monitoring

quality and design — so never again are aircraft like the deadly 737 Max manufactured.

The fight for workers control of production is tied to the fight to get more workers back to work. Millions have been thrown on the street as governments ordered shutdowns of production and trade, and companies closed down — many for good.

That's why my campaign also says workers and our unions need to fight for a government-funded public works program to put millions back to work at union-scale pay to build the housing, hospitals, public transport and other things working people need. Reducing the competition for jobs forced on workers by massive unemployment puts us in a stronger position. We can come together and fight efforts by the bosses to make us pay for the economic, political and moral crisis of their capitalist system.

To make our workplaces safe will often require construction — more floor space, new facilities and more. This too can create jobs. Where bosses threaten layoffs, we should fight for a shorter workweek with no cut in pay to keep fellow workers on the job.

As workers fight, and begin to gain control over aspects of production and safety, we find more confidence in ourselves and can see that our class and its allies should organize the entire economy. The line of march of the working class toward replacing capitalist rule and taking power into our hands will grow out of the fights we wage today and in the revolutionary struggles in the years ahead.

If this sounds good to you, join SWP members campaigning and fighting to put the party on the ballot in as many states as possible!

US rulers execute 3 prisoners in four days

BY ROY LANDERSEN

A section of the U.S. capitalist rulers has pushed the government to resume use of capital punishment against federal prisoners for the first time in 17 years. Their goal is to threaten and intimidate working people from defending their rights, jobs, wages and working conditions. The Justice Department killed three inmates sentenced to death in just four days last week — as many as the federal government had killed in the last 30 years.

These prisoners had been held on death row in the federal prison in Terre Haute, Indiana, for decades.

Despite the steady growth of opposition among working people to this barbaric punishment, the government is pressing for its use. Another prisoner — Keith Dwayne Nelson — is scheduled to be killed in August.

The first two executions were challenged in court by allies of the inmates and opponents of capital punishment, then given a callous green light by a majority of the Supreme Court. Daniel Lee, convicted for multiple murders, was executed July 14. Wesley Purkey, sentenced to death for the killing of a teenage girl, was executed July 16.

Dustin Honken, convicted for five murders, including two children, in a drug-selling operation gone wrong, was put to death the day after Purkey.

“The death penalty has been upheld by the federal courts, supported on a bipartisan basis by Congress, and approved by attorneys general under both Democratic and Republican administrations,” Department of Justice spokesperson Kerri Kupec said after Purkey was killed, justifying the grisly acts. The federal use of the death penalty has been bipartisan, with President Bill Clinton adding 60 new crimes to be punished by death in his 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act.

One of the legal objections made to the killing of Lee and Purkey was that the barbiturate injections cause people to die by asphyxiation. As the caustic drug fills their lungs with bloody fluid they begin drowning before losing consciousness. The Supreme Court brushed these arguments aside, and Honken gave up trying to object along these lines.

Lawyers for Purkey also explained that his advancing Alzheimer's disease had gotten to the point where he no longer understood why his life was to be ended, even though he had long accepted responsibility for his crime. This too failed to move the black-robed justices.

A few minutes before he was put to death, he told those outside the death chamber, “This sanitized murder really does not serve no purpose whatsoever. Thank you.”

Honken had become deeply religious in prison, mentored by representatives of the Catholic Church. A Catholic priest stood with him in the death chamber as he died. For his last words he recited a poem by Jesuit priest Gerard Manley Hopkins, “Heaven-Haven.”

Observers reported his execution appeared to be painful. After the deadly barbiturate dosage was injected, “Honken began blinking his eyes, his fingers twitching and his lips quivering,” The Associated Press reported. “After several minutes his breathing became more labored. He turned increasingly ashen as blood drained from his face and hands.” It took 30 minutes before he was pronounced dead.

“The Dustin Honken they wanted to kill is long gone,” attorney Shawn Nolan said after the execution. “The man they killed today was a human being, who could have spent the rest of his days helping others and further redeeming himself.”

Beijing, Tehran alliance

Continued from front page

The Chinese rulers — who preside over the second largest capitalist economy and one of the fastest growing — face serious obstacles to expanding their trade, financial and military influence in Asia and beyond. They are trying to counter Washington's control of trade routes in the South China Sea — conquered by the U.S. rulers in their victory in the second imperialist world war. Beijing also faces growing conflicts with the rulers in India and other allies of Washington in the region.

The U.S. military announced at the beginning of July shifts in troop deployments to Guam, Hawaii, Alaska, Japan and Australia. U.S. National Security Adviser Robert O'Brien wrote at the end of June that in the Indo-Pacific theater, with Beijing's rise, “Americans and allies face the most significant geopolitical challenge since the end of the Cold War.”

Tehran's efforts to get EU powers to help it get around Washington's crippling sanctions have failed.

Faced with growing conflicts with Washington, the Chinese and Iranian rulers are seeking relief through joint cooperation.

U.S. sanctions, crisis hit Iranian people

The U.S.-led sanctions on Iran have been choking off revenue-earning oil exports. Earlier this month the Iranian currency, the rial, fell to an all-time low against the dollar. The annual inflation rate is estimated at 34%, with the cost of basic necessities like bread, rice and meat rising daily.

The draft agreement between Beijing and Tehran would allow Beijing to buy discounted oil from Iran. In return, the Chinese government promises to invest up to \$400 billion in oil, gas and other infrastructure projects in Iran.

The pact would allow Chinese companies to finance, and potentially gain control of, port facilities at Jask in southeast Iran. This is just outside the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz at the mouth of the Arab-Persian Gulf, a choke point for a fifth of world crude oil shipments.

The militaries of the two countries would also collaborate more closely with joint exercises and common weapons development. It is this prospect that is setting off most alarm bells in Washington.

“We have been unambiguous about enforcing” sanctions on Iran, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said July 15, in response to the announcement of the draft pact. He reiterated Washington's determination to sanction Chinese businesses that trade with Iran.

Protests in Iran

The Iranian rulers continue to confront protests by working people at home. On July 16, the day after a court upheld the death penalty for three young men arrested during widespread anti-government demonstrations last year, protesters took to the streets in the southwestern city of Behbahan in Khuzestan province to demand a halt to the executions.

Security forces made several arrests. Regime forces also mobilized to prevent protesters from gathering in the capital, Tehran, as well as in Isfahan, Shiraz, Mashhad and Rasht. On July 19 the Iranian judiciary suspended, for now, the three executions.

The Iranian rulers fear a renewal of the massive protests by working people that swept the country last November. The actions were triggered by the impact of the growing international capitalist crisis, plummeting oil prices and by mounting opposition to the Iranian rulers' military interference across the Mideast. The demonstrators drew strength from the large street actions that broke out in Iraq and Lebanon at the same time. Their key demands included a halt to Tehran's intervention.

‘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

— CALENDAR —

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Celebrate 67th Anniversary of Opening Guns of Cuban Revolution — the Attack on Moncada Military Barracks. Sun., July 26, 6 p.m. Donation: \$10. *UE Union hall, 37 S. Ashland Ave. Sponsored by Chicago Cuba Coalition.*

NEW YORK

New York

US Hands off Cuba! Celebrate the beginning of the Cuban Revolution. Sunday, July 26 1-3 pm. Union Square New York City. For more information: www.cubasinynjcoalition.org

Celebrate the Cuban Revolution! Fundraiser to support the ongoing activities of the Socialist Workers Party. Sunday, July 26, 4-6:30 p.m. Social, refreshments, program at 5 p.m. *307 W. 36th St. 13th floor. Tel: (646) 964-4793.*