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Cuban Revolution advances food production despite US embargo

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLI

# 'Help us put the Socialist Workers Party

on the ballot!'

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

DALLAS — Socialist Workers Party campaigners have gotten off to a solid start in the fight to win ballot status for Gerardo Sánchez, the party's candidate for City Council District 1. They are extending the party's reach and finding interest in its program and activity as they knock on doors in working-class neighborhoods and talk to co-workers.

Sánchez, a tire and lube worker at Walmart who grew up in Cuernavaca, Mexico, has also worked as a meatpacker and an underground coal miner. He is part of today's fights for job safety, improved wages and better working conditions and has taken part in protests against police brutality. He built solidarity with Asarco copper miners on strike for months against boss attacks.

Sánchez's supporters are collecting signatures to put him on the ballot for the May 1 election. As of Jan. 25, 62

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# Workers win wage hike in NY produce market strike

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK — "I couldn't be happier," Marco Gonzalez told the *Militant* Jan. 23. "When you beat the owners it's a victory. And my co-workers saw that we accomplish something when we stick together." He was referring to the gains won in their one-week strike by 1,400 members of Teamsters Local 202 at the Hunts Point Terminal Produce Market here in the Bronx.

Workers went on strike Jan. 17 after the bosses' association, representing 30 companies at the wholesale market, one of the largest in the world, refused to increase its offer of a measly 32-cents-an-hour raise in the first year, and similar raises in the final two years of a three-year contract.

"We didn't get the \$1-an-hour raise each year that we wanted," Gonzalez said. "But we got more than the bosses had offered." Under the new contract, approved by over 97% Jan. 23,

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# Fight for workers control of production, job safety



Teamsters Joint Council 16

More than 1,000 Teamsters union members at New York's Hunts Point Produce Market vote overwhelmingly to approve new contract Jan. 23, after one-week strike won wage increase.

# In struggle, workers advance unity, class consciousness

Statement by Willie Cotton, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York City public advocate, released Jan 27.

# **SWP STATEMENT**

Socialist Workers Party candidates here in New York and across the country offer the only campaigns that are part of and champion struggles by workers for jobs, better wages, for increasing workers control of production and safety, and Continued on page 9

# 'Militant' readies fight after officials in Pennsylvania prison bar paper

BY TERRY EVANS

On Jan. 25 the *Militant* received a letter from an inmate at the Camp Hill State Correctional Institution in Pennsylvania saying his subscription to the paper had been impounded. He sent a copy of the prison's Notice of Incoming Publication Denial and said he planned to fight to overturn it.

"The *Militant* will fight this latest ban by prison officials, as we do every time they attack prisoners' rights," John Studer, the paper's editor, said the next day. "He has a right to read the news he wants and we have a right to reach our subscribers without interference."

The form doesn't help understand prison officials' reason for barring the *Militant*. It says something on page 2 of this year's issue no. 1 could "create

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# White House executive orders aim to hold workers in check

**BY TERRY EVANS** 

President Joe Biden spent his first days in office churning out executive orders, avoiding debate or vote by Congress. He aims to put a stamp of "political correctness" on government agencies and much more. These measures are a danger to the working class.

At the same time, nothing has changed **Continued on page 7** 

# US gov't pushes assault on rights, claims target is 'domestic terror'

BY SETH GALINSKY

The new Democratic Party administration of Joe Biden is spearheading an assault on political rights, claiming that a few hundred conspiracy theorists and wannabe paramilitaries, followed by some supporters of Donald Trump, who entered the Capitol Jan. 6 represent a growing proliferation of "domestic terrorists" that must be stopped.

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# Hundreds of thousands of farmers in India protest against gov't attack



AP Photo/Altaf Qadri

Farmers' tractor convoys converge on New Delhi, India, Jan. 26, demanding repeal of farm "reform" bill that would eliminate price supports and drive family farmers off the land.

### BY ROY LANDERSEN

NEW YORK — Hundreds of thousands of farmers on thousands of tractors, on horseback or on foot streamed into India's capital, New Delhi, Jan. 26. The action was part of their monthslong protests demanding the overturn of new farm laws enacted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi that threaten their livelihoods.

The protest overshadowed the government's Republic Day celebrations. And their show of strength was backed by solidarity actions elsewhere in India and around the world.

The laws — drawn up in the interests of large capitalist agricultural profiteers like Reliance Industries and Adani Enterprises — would eliminate government-subsidized crop price supports that benefit working farmers. Over 800 million people in India's countryside rely on agriculture for a living.

Some farmers drove their tractors through police barricades to try to get to

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# Inside

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Minnesota oil workers strike against subcontracting, for safety

# Mass protests across Russia demand 'Free Alexei Navalny'

BY ROY LANDERSON

Despite a brutal police crackdown, tens of thousands rallied in over 100 Russian cities across the country Jan. 23 demanding freedom for Alexei Navalny, the most prominent bourgeois opposition politician in the country, who was arrested days earlier. It was one of the biggest protests in years against the regime of President Vladimir Putin.

The actions also reflect deepening opposition to worsening living conditions, botched vaccination efforts against COVID-19, Russia's involvement in conflicts abroad and attacks on political rights.

Vladimir, 15, who was a member of a group of schoolboys at their first protest in Moscow, told the Jan. 23 *Moscow Times* that demonstrators were there because of "low salaries, low pensions, the fact that the government is stealing and then lying to us."

The day after his arrest, Navalny, who had just returned from Germany after a monthslong recovery from being poisoned with the nerve agent Novichok in Siberia, called on his followers and others to take to the streets. "Don't do it for me, do it for yourselves and for your future," he said. It is widely believed his poisoning was ordered by Putin.

More than 15,000 people joined rallies in Siberia and the Far East, including in Khabarovsk and Vladivostok, despite subfreezing temperatures and a heavy police presence. Khabarovsk has been the site of protests against the Kremlin's removal of a popular local politician there months ago.

The demonstrations — including in provincial cities where such ac-

tions are rare, such as Novosibirsk, Irkutsk and Perm — spread across Russia's 11 time zones.

More than 40,000 demonstrated in Pushkin Square in Moscow, reported Reuters. The action there and in St. Petersburg were the largest protests in about a decade. Over 3,000 people were arrested nationwide, including Maria Alekhina and two other members of the satirical performing group Pussy Riot.

Putin said Navalny was just a "pawn" in western attempts to "destabilize" Russia. In fact, Putin fears the restiveness of working people that Navalny appeals to.



Reuters/Anton Vagano

Protesters in over 100 Russian cities Jan. 23, including St. Petersburg, above, demand freedom for opposition leader Alexei Navalny, protest growing repression by regime of Vladimir Putin.

# Tunisian youth protest lack of jobs, police brutality

BY JANET POST

"The people want the fall of the regime!" chanted hundreds of demonstrators at an anti-government protest in Tunis, the capital of Tunisia, Jan. 23. Discontent over massive unemployment, rising inflation, lack of social services and police brutality have led to protests for over a week across the country, mostly of young people.

The actions began Jan. 14, on the 10th anniversary of the uprising that overthrew the hated capitalist regime of former President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

The youth and other working people are being crushed under brutal economic conditions in the country. Unemployment is officially at 18%, and 36% for youth. "Employment is a right, not a favor," read placards at the protests.

"People are hungry," Yassine, a shopworker in Ettadhamen, told the *Guardian*. "I won't lie about it, they want another revolution."

A slogan of the 2011 revolution — "Employment, freedom, dignity" — is chanted at the rallies today. "The only government we know is the police car coming to arrest people," Mohammed,

an unemployed youth, told the *Arab Weekly*. Some 1,000 people, most between the ages of 15 and 25, have been arrested at protests over the past week.

Mothers of some of those detained rallied Jan. 20 in Tunis. "The policeman shoved the door of my building and arrested my son," said garment worker Meriem Ben Salem.

## 'Stimulus' fund for 'Militant' over \$55,000!

The special "stimulus" fund appeal to readers by the *Militant* has taken another step upward. We're now at \$55,037 from 112 donations to the working-class newsweekly.

"It is with great pleasure I send this 'stimulus' money to the *Militant*," Helen Meyers wrote from St. Paul, Minnesota, "to be used in advancing the interests of the working class."

"Enclosed is my 'stimulus' donation to the *Militant*," John Cotman from Frederick, Maryland, wrote Jan. 18. "As a *Militant* reader since 1972, I know it will go to good use."

This fund helps make it possible for the *Militant* to respond to opportunities that develop in the class struggle, to be able to bring news on working-class fights against attacks by the bosses and their governments worldwide, and to advance solidarity with them.

It explains that the answer to all the main questions facing workers today is a class-against-class fighting course. It points to the example the revolution made by Cuba's workers and farmers, and the importance of its principled revolutionary leadership for 62 years, that shows a road forward worldwide.

Please give as generously as you can. Send your contribution to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018, or online at themilitant. com.

— JOHN STUDER

# THE MILITANT

# Support the fight against Jew-hatred!

Acts of anti-Semitic violence today show that Jewhatred must be combated and eradicated by working people worldwide. The 'Militant' explains why Jew-hatred persists and why the only road to end anti-Semitism is the fight for the working class to overthrow capitalist rule.



Striking textile workers in New York, 1913. Signs in Yiddish, Russian, English, Italian.

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**Canada:** For one year send Canadian \$45 to the Militant, 7107 St. Denis #204, Montreal, Quebec H2S 2S5.

**United Kingdom:** Send £30 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, 5 Norman Road (first floor), Seven Sisters, London, N15 4ND, England.

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Submissions to the *Militant* may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant*'s views. These are expressed in editorials.

# Help put SWP on the ballot!

Continued from front page

workers and young people had signed petitions, including 18 co-workers of campaign supporters. The goal is to collect 200 signatures.

"Everywhere I go I explain the need to fight for a federal government-financed public works program to put millions to work," Sánchez told the *Militant*. "We need to fight to cut the workweek with no cut in pay, and demand cost-of-living clauses in every contract that raise pay and retirement benefits to offset all increases in prices."

The Dallas Morning News reported, "Texas is on pace to lose 680,000 jobs this year, the biggest annual decline on record." Almost one in five adults in Dallas are in households that don't have enough to eat, it said.

"Working people have no voice," Sánchez told Maria Elena Alfaro while campaigning in the Lake Cliff neighborhood. "The Democrats and Republicans represent the rich. Workers need our own party, a labor party, to organize us to fight in the interest of all working people."

Alfaro agreed, saying she quit her job at a book warehouse because bosses were not taking necessary measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

'Workers need to be at work. This is what my campaign stands for," Sánchez said, handing her a copy of the SWP action program. "We must organize to fight growing employer attacks on our jobs, wages and working conditions. We can fight for workers control of production to ensure that we have health and safety on the job. The bosses care about profits, not the dangerous conditions we are forced to work under."

"They told us to social distance, but there were not enough masks or sanitizers," Alfaro said. "If there had been protests against these conditions at work, I would have joined them."

On the first night of campaigning for Sánchez, George Chalmers knocked on the door of Andrea Jenkins. "I supported Bernie Sanders and I saw how the election was rigged to keep him from winning," she said.

They discussed the events at the Capitol Jan. 6 where conspiracy theorists, would-be paramilitaries and some supporters of Donald Trump briefly occupied the building. Since then more than 100 of those accused of being in the Capitol have been arrested and may have been fired from their jobs.

Under the guise of going after "domestic terrorists," the U.S. government and the FBI are attacking political rights the working class needs to defend its interests.

"Jenkins signed to get the SWP on the ballot and got a six-month subscription to the *Militant* newspaper," Chalmers said. "At the same time, another campaign supporter was talking to one of her neighbors across the street who signed, got a copy of the Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa, and gave a contribution to the campaign."

Claudia Acosta, who had been laid



Gerardo Sánchez, SWP candidate for Dallas City Council, talks with Valerie Pinales Jan. 20 on her doorstep about the party's program. She signed the petition to put the party on the ballot.

off from a recycling plant, signed up at a Dallas grocery store to help put Sánchez on the ballot after hearing what he fights and stands for. "There have been many years of bad conditions for us and violations of our rights," she pointed out.

Hilda Cuzco contributed to this ar-

# Fight 'Militant' ban in Penn. prison

Continued from front page

a danger within the context of the cortice" system.

Later the notice lists a "brief description" that the problem is "Socialist Workers Party Action, speaks on social unrest and standing against law enforcement." the 2020 presidential election and in 2021 races across the country.

It says, "The Socialist Workers Party presents a fighting working-class program. We need to organize to fight growing employer attacks on our jobs, wages and working conditions."

This platform was printed in dozens of *Militant* issues over the last year, and mailed to over two dozen subscribers in Pennsylvania prisons without complaint. One section, entitled "Fight Police Brutality!" urges readers to join in demanding cops be held accountable for brutality they visit on working people and against racist discrimination. It says, "The entire capitalist injustice system, with its frame-ups, 'plea bargains,' onerous bail and 'three strike' prison sentences, all of which disproportionately hit workers who are Black."

The subscriber at Camp Hill also writes that the same day he got notice of the ban of the Militant he was asked by a prison counselor about his political

The Militant was banned by authori-

The Militant's attorney, David Goldstein, is in the process of contacting state prison officials to let them know

speech and political rights to send letters to prison authorities urging them to reverse this ban," Studer said. "And send

# This may be a reference to "The Socialist Workers Party action program," the platform of the SWP candidates in both

# views "as a communist and anti-fascist."

ties at Camp Hill once before last July, involving a different subscriber. This ban was rapidly reversed after it was brought to the attention of state officials in the Department of Corrections.

the paper is going to appeal to overturn the impoundment, unless they reject the ban themselves. "The *Militant* urges defenders of free

copies to the Militant."

rectional facility." But the only article on page 2 is "Workers in Scotland Speak Out Against Economic, Health Crisis," a news report on political developments there, with no mention of prisons or the capitalist criminal "jus-

# SWP campaign helps win long-term readers to 'Militant'

**BY MAGGIE TROWE** 

Socialist Workers Party candidates in the 2021 elections are discussing the party's action program with working people coast to coast. As they do so they are visiting many of the 3,000 plus people who have subscribed to the *Militant* over the last year to discuss what they think of the paper, urge them to renew their subscriptions and encourage them to campaign to get the party's candidates on the ballot.

Many subscribers will want to get books by leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and other revolutionaries offered at reduced prices. They provide a deeper understanding of what workers face and the road toward organizing to replace the rule of the capitalist class with a government of workers and farmers.

Calvin Hogue wasn't planning to renew his subscription to the Militant when SWP campaigners Terry Evans and Craig Honts called at his home in Rochelle Park, New Jersey, Jan. 24.

"I don't need to know what the problem is, I want solutions," the musician and former retail worker said. "Before the election, Democrats were 'Stop Trump, stop Trump.' Now they're in office — what are they going to do?"

Evans pointed to the Militant's coverage of the just-concluded strike by Teamsters at the Hunts Point Produce Market in New York. "Out of struggles like this, workers begin to gain confidence we can change our conditions," he said. Hogue, who had been a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union for many years, said he had been following the strike.

"Working people need to build our own party," Honts said, "to use to make a revolution and overturn capitalist rule."

Hogue liked Honts' forthright response and renewed his subscription for three months. Hogue also hosts a radio talk show. When he found out about the campaign of Joanne Kuniansky, the SWP candidate for New Jersey governor, he said he would like to interview her on his program and get her views on protecting the environment.

### **SWP** campaigns in New York

In Brooklyn, Jan. 24, Willie Cotton, SWP candidate for New York City public advocate, and campaigner Seth Galinsky knocked on the doors of a half-dozen subscribers.

One subscriber, an Uber driver. was not at home. But his brother was interested in talking with the SWP campaigners. He had just returned from Haiti.

Cotton pointed to the devastation inflicted on the Haitian people by the U.S. rulers under both Democratic and Republican presidencies. Former President Bill Clinton sent thousands of troops to the island to impose Washington's will in 1994. When an earthquake struck years later, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton promised aid, houses and jobs. Little of what she pledged ever arrived.

The brother said he was well aware of what the Clintons had perpetrated against working people in Haiti and bought a copy of the The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record: Why Washington Fears Working People.

A few days earlier, Cotton and Galinsky joined a picket line of the 1,400 striking members of the Teamsters union at the Hunts Point market. Cotton told strikers that they were setting an example for workers around the country that it's possible to stand up to the bosses' attempt to put the capitalist crisis on our backs.

After meeting Cotton, striker Marco Gonzalez subscribed to the Militant and bought Teamster Rebellion, Farrell Dobbs' account of the massive organizing battles he helped lead that paved the way for the rise of the CIO.

The book "teaches you about how the union started. I want to learn more," Gonzalez told others visiting the picket line. They then posted his comments online. "I want more people to have a union. Without a union we don't have enough power," said Gonzalez.

From Seattle, Edwin Fruit reported that "the Socialist Workers Party launched its 2021 candidates - rail worker Henry Dennison for mayor and Walmart worker Rebecca Williamson for City Council at-Large at a spirited meeting Jan. 22."

"The rail bosses have attacked our unions and imposed dangerous conditions," Dennison told the meeting. "My campaign demands workers take control of safety as well as production, and we demand trains be no longer than 50 cars. We're also for doubling the crew size and requiring a caboose or engine with crew members working at the end of these trains."

For more information, contact the SWP campaign headquarters nearest you, listed on page 8.

#### **Send letters protesting** Pennsylvania prison ban on the 'Militant' to:

Diana Woodside, director of Policy, Grants and Legislative Affairs, Department of Corrections, 1920 Technology Parkway, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050.

# **Cuban Revolution advances food** production despite US embargo

BY RÓGER CALERO

Stepped-up measures imposed by the U.S. imperialist rulers as part of its economic war against the Cuban people and their socialist revolution are having a serious impact on the country's agricultural production.

Sanctions on Venezuelan shipments of oil to Cuba, tighter restrictions on travel to the island from the U.S., limits on family remittances, and other obstacles to Cuba's access to hard currency have reduced the government's ability to import fuel, machinery parts, fertilizers and other agricultural inputs necessary for food production. The coronavirus pandemic has also sharply disrupted tourism, one of its top sources of hard currency.

"People could say that Cuba is an island with land, and has good weather, and can grow a lot of food," Gerardo Hernández, one of the Cuban Five revolutionaries who had been imprisoned in the U.S. and is currently the national coordinator of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, explained in an interview with the Cuba Solidarity Campaign in the U.K. in December.

"But remember, to grow food you need a lot of chemicals, fuel, machinery, and all of that is very hard for Cuba to get because of the U.S. blockade."

Rice and bean production has plunged, causing shortages of these two main staples of the Cuban diet.

The rice harvest fell back to 246,700 tons in 2019 — from a record high of 300,000 tons the year before. The goal for 2020 had to be adjusted further down to 163,000 as use of airplanes for seeding and fumigation, harvesters, and irrigation systems was cut back due to shortages.

Cuba needs 700,000 tons of rice every year to meet the nation's needs. What they can't grow has to be imported at world market prices, and then is sold at subsidized prices.

Since 2010 the Cuban government has dedicated major economic resources to working with farmers through their organization — the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP) to increase rice production in order to reduce imports. But the sanctions imposed by the Donald Trump administration reversed the upward production trend in the country's rice industry.

These measures are likely to remain in place for the foreseeable future under the Democratic Party administration of Joe Biden, which is committed to continuing economic pressure against the revolution.

U.S. companies are prohibited from offering credit to Cuban entities. This means agricultural sales must be made on a cash-on-delivery basis, rather than

# MILITANT **LABOR** FORUMS-

**PENNSYLVANIA** Philadelphia

Abolish the Death Penalty: A Tool of Capitalist Oppression. Speaker: Janet Post, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 12, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5. 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite no. 16. Tel.: (215) 708-1270.

the normal terms of international trade.

Cuba is forced to purchase products and equipment at a much higher cost, often from sources far afield. For example, it takes 36 days for rice purchased from Vietnam to travel to Cuba, while it only takes 36 hours if purchased in the U.S. This means having to use much-needed foreign currency that could have been allocated to the country's development.

Bean production has also taken a serious blow. The Cuban press reported last August that only 58,000 acres were cultivated because of lack of fuel. There was enough fertilizer to cover only 8% of the total area sown, and only 16% was treated with chemical pesticides.

To make matters worse, a plague hit the bean fields last year, which did substantial damage. The country's yearly consumption is 70,000 tons. Average production in the last three years had been around 51,000 tons.

#### Power of Cuban peoples' revolution

The U.S. economic war against Cuba has no parallel. It began in 1960, less than a year after the Cuban people, led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement, overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. They mobilized millions of workers and peasants to take political power and build a new society based on the needs of the producing classes.

Before working people took power in Cuba, an enormous percentage of the Cuban economy was under the control of U.S. corporations. This was broken when the revolution nationalized the land and workers and farmers carried out an agrarian reform. U.S. companies had controlled a significant portion of the country's natural resources, including sugar, cattle, tobacco, timber, oil, mining and farm industries.

The nationalization guaranteed the

## Minneapolis protest: 'Defend the Cuban Revolution!'



MINNEAPOLIS — More than two dozen people joined a picket here Jan. 17 in defense of the Cuban Revolution, an emergency response to the U.S. government's decision a few days earlier to once again place Cuba on its "state sponsors of terrorism" sanctions list. The protest was called by the Minnesota Cuba Committee and Women Against Military Madness.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo cited Cuba's support for the Venezuelan government of Nicolás Maduro and its refusal to extradite people granted political asylum, like former Black Panther Assata Shakur, as justification.

"Placing Cuba on the list is yet another attack against the 62-year-old victorious revolution of the workers and peasants," Socialist Workers Party leader Helen Meyers said at the event.

**— KEVIN DWIRE** 

land to the tillers and the land reform guaranteed jobs for hundreds of thousands of agricultural workers. The crushing debt slavery that farmers suffered under capitalism was abolished by the revolution. This meant farmers can't be subject to foreclosure.

Since then ANAP and other Cuban mass organizations like the CDRs have played a key role in opening possibilities for farmers to increase production. As with all questions Cuba's revolutionary government looks to the country's workers and farmers for solutions to the challenges they face.

Simultaneously with the efforts to increase national food production, working people and youth in Cuba are organizing a campaign for neighborhoods and work centers to grow their own food.

"If the U.S. imperialists have been trying to kill us of hunger for more than 60 years — without a pandemic — well, now they are going to try to do it even more," CDR leader Hernández explained on Cuban television last June.

"So we're asking everyone to grow food everywhere possible, to make the most of every little plot of land," he said. "So that everyone can contribute not only to their own consumption but also everyone's consumption."

Hernández reported five months later, "I am happy to tell you the initiative is very popular."

# New Zealand home workers protest boss attacks

## BY PATRICK BROWN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Dozens of home-care workers and their supporters picketed Lifewise services here Jan. 23 against the employer's attacks on hours and wages and in support of the workers' demand for a union contract.

The E Tu union action helped kick off a three-day strike. The workers are protesting the bosses' notice of a twoweek February lockout, targeting the 78 union members who took part in six days of strike action in December and earlier this month.

Lifewise services, a division of the Methodist Church, employs 100 workers who provide care for the elderly and disabled in their homes.

The lockout threat is an attempt to "stop us from being in the union," Anita Apa told this Militant worker-correspondent. Like many on the picket line, Apa has worked for the company for over a decade.

The workers are fighting to restore full-time working hours, which they say the company took an ax to after being forced to increase their pay in 2017. This followed the victory of the union's national "pay equity" claim that compelled the government to increase wages by 15% to 49% for 55,000 care workers, depending on a worker's skill and experience.

Union workers at Lifewise have seen their clients and hours decline, as the company "hires newer workers at a lower rate," Rose Fusimalohi told the Militant. Shop steward Helen Taufa said, "They hire people at a starting rate of \$19 an hour" (\$13.57). Then they strip hours from workers who are entitled to NZ\$25.90. Some members of the allwomen workforce, which is made up largely of Pacific Islanders, are "only guaranteed 10 hours a week," she said. Union fighters only found out about this through discussions with new hires during the current dispute.

"And whoever was hired after pay

equity gets 50 cents per kilometer petrol money [58 cents a mile], when those of us hired before are paid 70."

"I signed up for a full-time job, but that's not what I am getting now," said Christine Faga. "It's hard to manage your bills like that."

"There is no time to spend with the clients as human beings, and we are not allowed to have a cup of tea or lunch with them," Debbie Savage said. "I have to sit on the side of the road and have lunch while I'm waiting to see if I get called to another job."

"I feel good about striking," she said.

## Read about the battles that forged the US labor movement



# -CALENDAR-

# **NEW YORK**

**New York** 

End U.S. Blockade of Cuba! Solidarity rally and car caravan. Sun., Jan. 31, 12 p.m. Meet in front of José Martí statue at Central Park, 59th St. and 6th Ave.

## WASHINGTON

Seattle

End U.S. Blockade Against Cuba. Sun., Jan. 31. Picket line at Ballard Farmers Market, 11 a.m.; car caravan, 12 p.m. 22nd Ave. NW and Market Street. Information: seattlecuba@gmail.com.

# ON THE PICKET LINE—

#### Oil workers strike against subcontracting, for safety

ST. PAUL PARK, Minn. — Two hundred members of Teamsters Local 120 went on strike against the Marathon Petroleum refinery here Jan. 21 over subcontracting their jobs and unsafe working conditions.

Marathon bosses own the majority of oil refineries in the U.S.

"The company only offered us an economic package. We refused and told them the issues were subcontracting and safety, not money," Scott Kroona, business agent for the Teamsters, told the Militant two days later. "We had no choice but to strike after we went through 22 meetings trying to get them to negotiate a contract we could agree to."

He explained that the St. Paul Park refinery "utilizes hydrofluoric acid, the same chemical which necessitated the evacuation of Superior, Wisconsin, after the explosion at the Husky refinery there in 2018. Hydrofluoric acid is deadly, plain and simple."

Several dozen union members and their supporters were picketing at six entrances to the refinery. Workers told the Militant that since Jan. 1 when the contract expired the company had assigned planned replacement workers to shadow them and watch them work. Many had been brought in from Marathon refineries elsewhere.

Father and son Max and Jason Lundusky, who live close to the refinery, came to show solidarity. "We're here to support these workers for better conditions and safety for them and for the neighborhood," Max said.

Also joining the striking pickets were members of the St. Paul Federation of Teachers; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; Minnesota Nurses Association; Socialist Workers Party; and Democratic Socialists of America.

— Nick Neeser

#### Rolls-Royce bosses back off plan to cut jobs at Barnoldswick plant

BARNOLDSWICK, England — After nine weeks on the picket line, the Unite union Jan. 8 suspended strike action by Rolls-Royce workers here after the company backed off threatened job cuts. Mark Porter, Unite union convener at the plant, told the Militant that the bosses have agreed to keep at least 350 jobs at the factory here and pledged there will be no compulsory redundancies for two years.

"Through hard work and determination we have saved jobs," Porter said. Their fight gained needed solidarity when a union delegation from Rolls-Royce's main U.K. plant in Derby joined more than 70 strikers on the picket line Dec. 16. "If there is no progress," Mahf Khan, deputy union convener from the Derby plant, said, "this fight will become a national issue for all Rolls-Royce workers."

— Pete Clifford



Teamsters Local 120 members and supporters picket road to Marathon Petroleum refinery Jan. 23 in St. Paul Park, Minnesota. The union struck over unsafe conditions, subcontracting jobs.

# Workers win wage hike in NY produce market strike

#### **Continued from front page**

all workers get a 70-cent raise the first year and 50 cents the second. In the final year of the contract the lowestpaid workers get a 65-cent increase and the highest-paid get a \$1,300 bonus instead. Most workers are currently paid an average of between \$18 and \$21 an hour. Under the new contract, new hires start at \$16.75.

The agreement narrows a little the gap between the highest- and lowestpaid workers. "I wished we had never accepted the two tiers about 10 years ago," Gonzalez said. "The economy wasn't doing good then and the bosses said they needed some concessions."

Gonzalez, who has worked more than 20 years at the market, said he was surprised by the solidarity the strike won. "I couldn't believe it. I thought we were going to be all alone."

At the picket line Jan. 21, Local 202 President Dan Kane Jr. told strikers and supporters, "We got all kinds of support — including more food than we could possibly eat." Members of other Teamsters locals and several United Food and Commercial Workers locals came to the picket line, as well as many students and some area politicians.

The bosses tried to maintain production despite the strike, hiring strike-

breakers. And some union members crossed the line. "The company offered workers \$200 extra a day or more to cross the picket line," said striker José Lora. But even with that the owners were feeling the impact of the strike. "At one company there were trailers full of produce that was going bad they could not unload," he said.

#### Solidarity from workers, farmers

Solidarity increased after cops, some dressed in riot gear, arrested six strikers Jan. 18, charging them with blocking trucks trying to enter the market. Later in the week, workers succeeded without cop interference in slowing down the entry of trucks for 15 minutes to half an hour at a time.

A rail crew on a CSX train pulling cars loaded with produce refused to cross the picket line Jan. 20 and turned back. And a group of farmers from Massachusetts and Rhode Island whose produce shipments to the market were disrupted by the strike — brought food to the picket line, Lora said.

The Hunts Point Produce Market Cooperative Association issued a statement at the start of the strike implying that union members would lose their jobs. "The Bronx has seen an unemployment rate of 40%," the bosses said. and argued business was down due to the coronavirus pandemic. They claimed to have spent \$3 million on virus protection, although workers say they don't even give out masks.

The statement made many workers more determined. "I don't believe the bosses," Miguel Mejia said on the picket line Jan. 21. "Before the pandemic I was working eight hours a day. Just before the strike I was working 10 hours a day. The bosses can talk about 40% unemployment, but there's plenty of work in the market."

Diego Castro, who works at A&J Produce, said, "The strike was 90% effective where I work." But the number of workers who crossed the picket line at some other companies had an impact, he said. "If we had been more united, we would have won even more."

Some workers are discussing what they've learned in the course of the strike. "It's unjust that the owners can bring in people to work during the strike, but the police don't let workers block the trucks," said Benito Cohato. "The bosses can do what they want, but not us.

"I think a lot of people are getting tired of the politicians and the way the country is being governed," he said. "They want to see changes."

# - 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

### February 12, 1996

RAÚL CASTRO: The first literacy brigade carried out in the Second Front was a mass campaign involving both Rebel Army fighters and local men and women who until then had lived in complete ignorance.

The rebel leaders played a vitally important role, not just in improving the education of the fighters and peasantry but also in helping them understand more clearly why we were fighting and the urgent need for deep-going political, economic, and social changes.

Many teachers participated in military operations after school. The image of the future conveyed by our fighting teachers, with a rifle in one hand and textbooks in the other, proved highly encouraging for our peasants. This largescale political and social work showed very graphically what the triumph of the revolution would signify.

### February 12, 1971

LOS ANGELES — A Chicano demonstration and rally of over 10,000 here Jan. 31 was followed by brutal police attacks on the Chicano community. It was a legal, orderly protest against the policies of the government — in this case the policy of systematic police brutality practiced upon the barrio to stop independent organization and mobilization.

The ruling powers of Los Angeles made it clear that they do not want the Chicano community to exercise its right to assemble. By the end of the day, Gustav Montag, 24, an East Los Angeles resident, was dead and many more were injured victims of the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department.

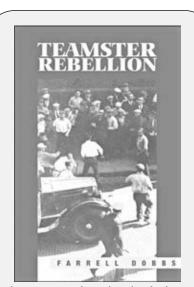
The ruling class is using its police to attempt to beat Chicanos into submission. This attack on the right to organize, demonstrate, march, and rally must be exposed and vigorously fought by all.

### **February 9, 1946**

The gigantic strike struggles being waged by America's industrial workers have demonstrated that the organized labor movement is capable of rallying the overwhelming portion of the population behind it and of providing leadership to every oppressed layer of the people.

The struggle has also disclosed dangerous weaknesses and shortcomings. In every instance where the struggle has had to be waged on the political plane, the unions have been helpless.

A new and different kind of labor leadership is required if the workers are to triumph in the stormy conflicts that lie ahead. With such a leadership and program, and with their own party, the workers will then have the major requisites for success in the struggle for real labor political power against the rule of Big Business and its Democratic and Republican machines.



The 1934 strikes that built the industrial union movement in Minneapolis and helped pave the way for the CIO, as recounted by Farrell Dobbs, a central leader of that battle.

Other books in four-part series: Teamster Power **Teamster Politics** Teamster Bureaucracy \$16 each or all four for \$50

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# Gov't pushes assault on rights

**Continued from front page** 

To justify these moves, the FBI, liberal media, Democratic Party politicians and middle-class radicals are united in smearing working people who supported Trump as possible "terrorists."

"Don't dare call them protesters," President Biden said of those who went into the Capitol. "They were a riotous mob, insurrectionists, domestic terrorists."

Measures the administration and its backers are pushing include stepped-up FBI spying, having people driven out of their jobs, "deplatforming" them by closing their social media accounts, public "shaming," and getting individuals kicked out of their unions. Some propose "deprogramming" Trump supporters.

One hundred twenty-five people so far have been charged with trespassing or disorderly conduct for entering the Capitol. Prosecutors admit many could face more serious charges. At least three have been charged with "conspiracy" to interfere with the operation of the government. Prosecutors say they're planning to use charges of "sedition" as well.

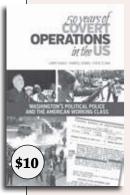
These moves have nothing to do with combating what liberals and most of the left say is a growing white supremacist movement or rising "fascist" movement. Their fire is aimed at working people — the ones who Hillary Clinton famously called the "deplorables" — and driving them out of politics, starting with the more than 74 million who voted for Donald Trump or the 80 million who didn't vote at all.

Interviewed by CNN's Christiane Amanpour Jan. 12, Juliette Kayyem, an assistant secretary in the Department of Homeland Security under Barack Obama, called Trump "the operational leader" of a domestic terrorist movement.

Trump's been "deplatformed," she said. "He can't get onto social media." This "isolation" and "sort of shaming of Donald Trump" is aimed at the "people who are supporting him," she brazenly states, and at making sure "he does not have a second act."

Liberal journalists from Eugene Robinson of the *Washington Post*, Nikole Hannah-Jones of the *New York Times*, and former "Today" show host Katie Couric, as well as Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez,





of spying and disruption by FBI targeting working-class organizations and other opponents of government policies. How expansion of "national security" state used to protect

Describes decades

capitalist rule had bipartisan backing.
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have called for finding a way to "deprogram" Trump supporters.

Some anti-Trump activists are doing their own "investigations," including some allied with antifa, revealing personal information of people they accuse of having been at the Capitol Jan. 6, in hopes they'll come under fire.

Many of the identifications by the self-appointed liberal sleuths have turned out to be wrong, resulting in workers being harassed and threatened anyway.

#### Harassment and firings

The Washington Post reported Jan. 16 that some of those targeted by such "investigations" weren't even in Washington. For example, retired Chicago firefighter David Quintavalle was 700 miles away, getting ready to celebrate his wife's birthday, but the "sleuths" posted his address and phone number on the internet. He received threatening phone calls as well as people staking out his home.

Several workers who attended the large Jan. 6 rally outside the Capitol have already been suspended or fired from their jobs. Long Island Rail Road assistant conductor Steven Rosati was suspended without pay by the MTA, which runs the passenger line. According to the *New York Daily News*, there is a photo of him outside on the Capitol steps.

MTA chairman Pat Foye announced at a press conference that what Rosati has said "on social media is outrageous, despicable and a sign he's a jackass." He's being victimized because of his political ideas, nothing else. To class-conscious workers, that's what's outrageous and dangerous. Whatever you may think of Rosati's views, when witch hunts get whipped up history shows they always end up targeting the working class and its communist vanguard.

The national board of the SAG-AFTRA actors and "media artists" union voted Jan. 19 to take steps to expel Trump from the union. Trump's membership dates back to his work on "The Apprentice" TV show and some cameo appearances in films.

The idea that an entertainment industry union officialdom would try to witch hunt one of its own members out of the union and destroy his right to work is appalling. The members of these unions were among the most visible targets of the anti-communist witch hunt in the 1950s.

### **Domestic Terrorism Act**

Meanwhile, supporters of Biden and some Never-Trump Republicans just introduced the "Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act of 2021" in the House of Representatives and the Senate. If passed, it would authorize the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice and the FBI to step up spying, use of undercover informers and other violations of political rights if they say you're suspected of "domestic terrorism"

suspected of "domestic terrorism."

Some liberal Democrats and civil rights groups say they oppose the bill.

A letter sent to the Democratic and Republican leaders of both Houses of Congress by Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar, Ayanna Pressley and six oth-



Library of Congress

Washington used the FBI, the capitalist rulers' political police, to spy on and try to disrupt the Black liberation movement, including targeting both Malcom X, right, and Martin Luther King Jr., left. Democrats claim greater police powers are needed to counter "domestic terrorism."

er representatives said they were in "strong opposition to the expansion of the domestic national security and surveillance powers" proposed in the bill.

But don't mistake this position as opposition to the new attacks on democratic rights. They say the existing laws "are more than sufficient" to go after anyone the government deems a threat.

The Biden administration is moving rapidly to take advantage of the hysteria being whipped up around "insurrection" and an "attempted coup" to unleash its political police, using those "more than sufficient" tools.

The *New York Times* reported Jan. 21 that the government is already using

"more sophisticated investigative techniques." One example: "A confidential paid informant who has been working for the FBI for more than a year."

On Jan. 22, the White House announced it had ordered intelligence agencies to conduct a "comprehensive threat assessment" of "domestic violent extremism."

Sound familiar? That was the rationale behind the Cointelpro operations against Black liberation groups, the Socialist Workers Party, supporters of independence for Puerto Rico, the American Indian Movement and others in the 1950s, '60s and '70s. These attacks were beaten back by the successful political campaign and lawsuit waged by the SWP and won in 1986.

# White House executive orders aim to hold workers in check

**Employment to population ratio** 

Continued from front page

about the disaster of widespread joblessness afflicting working people. His administration, as Trump's did, governs over a crisis of the capitalist class that bosses are offloading onto the backs of working people.

Monthslong lockdowns on production and commerce, on the pretext of fighting COVID-19, are fueling job cuts, especially among restaurant, retail, airline and hotel workers. The employment to population ratio — the percentage of working-age people who actually have a job — was down to 57.4% in December, from 61% a year earlier. And that doesn't include the growing millions who are forced to work part time.

Some 29% of small businesses closed down last year. The government reported that over 960,000 workers filed for initial state unemployment benefits for the week ending Jan. 16, with nearly 16 million workers on unemployment rolls. Millions more have lost their jobs but aren't eligible for relief.

City workers in Mount Vernon, New York, were told by Mayor Shawyn Patterson-Howard to "choose" between 60 being laid off or 15 days of furloughs for all of them. Other bosses say their workers' "choice" is between job cuts or wage cuts. Many impose both.

"Workers and our unions need to fight for a shorter workweek with no cut in take-home pay," Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New Jersey governor, told a Jan. 23 meeting at the campaign headquarters in Union City. "And to fight for a governmentfunded public works program to put Feb. 2020: 61.1%

Feb. 2020: 57.4%

Dec. 2020: 57.4%

Chart shows steep fall in employment in 2020, even with partial recovery. Rate is falling again now. Workers need to be at work, alongside fellow workers, to fight attacks by bosses, gov't.

Dec 2000 Dec 2002 Dec 2004 Dec 2006 Dec 2008 Dec 2010 Dec 2012 Dec 2014

millions back to work at union scale, building schools, hospitals, day care centers and other things workers need."

52.5

Kuniansky, a Walmart worker, visited the picket line of striking workers at the Hunts Point Produce Market and then used her campaign to build solidarity with their fight.

"Only struggles by workers as a class against the capitalist rulers offers a way forward," she said. "Workers need to organize their own party, a labor party. The SWP campaign is an example of what a labor party could do, to lead millions to overturn capitalist rule and form a workers and farmers government."

#### Biden builds 'administrative state'

Biden's administration is the political continuation of the presidencies of Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, including many of the same people back in government. They seek to regulate, browbeat and control workers, saying they will "take care" of working people, who they hold in contempt.

Under Obama, "woke" liberals extended mandatory racial sensitivity programs to government workers and others to "correct" them from being inherently "racist." These programs are grounded in "critical race" theory, which says history isn't rooted in the conflict of classes, but is defined by race. One such indoctrination program said, "The validity of your ideas is dependent on the color of your skin." These programs are the opposite of the mighty mass movement that mobilized workers to overthrow Jim Crow segregation.

One of Biden's first executive orders on Jan. 20 reinstated mandatory "critical race"-based training programs for government workers.

This spate of edicts by Biden can "rebuild a fortified 'administrative state," said Neil Eggleston and Alexa Kissinger in the Jan. 25 *New York Times*.

In sharp contrast, "the SWP's campaign acts on the fact that the working class must rely on itself to speak and act for all those exploited and oppressed by capitalism," Kuniansky said. "A stronger capitalist state, with more bureaucracy, regulations and power over our lives is dangerous."

Thousands of National Guard troops and other armed forces were mobilized for Biden's inauguration and at state Capitols, justified by unsubstantiated "threats" of assault by would-be paramilitaries and conspiracy theorists.

In fact the only violent actions that took place Jan. 20 were organized by antifa and other middle-class radicals in Seattle and Portland, Oregon. Carrying a banner reading, "We don't want Biden

Apr. 2020: 51.3% ->

Dec 2016 Dec 2018 Dec 2020

— We want revenge!" Black-clad forces led attacks on the Democratic Party headquarters in Portland. These middle-class groups glorify violence and resentment, holding a lot in common with fascist groups they claim to oppose.

#### Liberals target 'deplorables'

These beefed-up security measures were aimed at boosting their impeachment drive against Trump for allegedly "inciting insurrection" at the Capitol building Jan. 6. Democrats, and some Never-Trump Republicans, are determined to convict him in a Senate trial, then pass a motion to prevent Trump from holding office again. They want to stop him — or anyone like him — from running in 2024. And they're calling for legal charges and other steps to bankrupt him, his family and political associates, and to seek vengeance against those who supported him.

Their problem is that a Biden government, like that of Obama and Clinton, will continue to breed alienation among workers and set the groundwork for a candidate to challenge the swamp in Washington again.

Their real target is not the former president, but the millions who couldn't bring themselves to vote for the Biden/Harris ticket. In fact, some 80 million eligible voters decided not to vote at all in 2020, many repelled by *both* the Democratic and Republican candidates.

From the time Trump was elected in 2016, liberal media and politicians campaigned to bring him down. Their vitriol and hysteria spawned violent assaults.

In 2017 James Hodgkinson, a supporter of Democrat Bernie Sanders, used a semi-automatic weapon to try to kill as many Republican congressmen as possible at a baseball game in Washington. He seriously wounded House Republican Whip Steve Scalise before Capitol cops shot Hodgkinson.

The liberals turned to the FBI — Washington's political police — to pursue a frame-up of Trump that led to his first impeachment trial. But they failed to present evidence for their bogus charges that Trump colluded with Moscow to win the election.

Now they are using an FBI probe of "domestic terrorists," who they say were behind the Capitol building intrusion, to go after rights workers need. The *New York Times* ran an opinion column Jan. 21 insisting that the constitutional right to free speech and assembly is an "obstacle" today, making it harder "for the FBI to pursue investigations."

"These rights, which took a revolution to win, are critical for working people and our ability to fight to defend ourselves," Kuniansky said. "The SWP ran its own presidential ticket in 2020 — Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett — explaining that the two-party shell game is a central obstacle for working people. We have to organize ourselves."

# New Biden directive is blow to fight for women's rights

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Under the banner of "gender inclusiveness" President Joe Biden issued an executive order on his first day in office to force schools to let boys who decide they are girls participate in girls' sports events. This is a frontal attack on the fight for women's rights.

Declaring "children should be able to learn without worrying about whether they will be denied access to the rest room, the locker room, or school sports," the directive says any school receiving federal funding, which includes nearly every public high school, must allow boys who identify as girls onto girls' sports teams or face federal retaliation.

Biden's order ignores the real biological differences between men and women. If implemented it would rig sports events against girls by forcing schools to let boys — who develop larger muscle mass and bigger hearts, lungs and bones as they go through puberty — compete alongside them.

"This order opens the door to setting back gains won through hard-fought struggles for women's rights, including for women athletes," Candace Wagner, Socialist Workers Party candidate for lieutenant governor in New Jersey, told the *Militant*. "All working people have a stake in opposing the measure."

The order undermines federal protection for women's sports guaranteed by Title IX legislation passed by Congress in 1972. The implementation of that law reflected the broader impact of the rise of the movement for women's liberation and helped pave the way for the creation

of many women's athletic teams.

In 1972 only 90 of the 428 U.S. athletes competing in that year's Olympics were women. By 2016 the team consisted of 292 women and 263 men.

Biden's edict joins other moves by the Democratic Party to enforce "wokeness."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi struck all language not deemed sufficiently "gender inclusive" from official House documents Jan. 4. The terms "father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister" and other family terms were canceled and replaced with "parent, child, sibling, parent's sibling" and so on. Words such as "himself" and "herself" must now be replaced with "themself."

Implementing such changes is aimed at reinforcing anti-scientific notions advanced by liberals who argue that "men" and "women" are merely subjective categories with no biological basis in fact. They argue a person's sex can be freely altered anytime. "None of this has anything to do with fighting prejudices against people who do identify as other than the sex they are born with," Wagner said.

Such is liberals' zealotry in enforcing these codes that Rep. Emanuel Cleaver, a Democrat from Missouri, insisted it was necessary to say "amen and awoman," instead of just "amen" at the House's opening prayer. But the term "amen" has no meaning relating to or derived from the word "men." It translates from Hebrew to mean "so be it." But the alteration of the expression by Cleaver obeys the Democratic Party leadership's "po-

litically correct" language diktats.
Following laws signed by California

Gov. Gavin Newsom last year providing grants to hospitals to carry out "gender reassignment surgeries" on children who request them, the state's insurance commissioner issued a directive reclassifying double mastectomies of healthy breasts this month. Such operations would no longer be considered "cosmetic" surgery when requested by a young woman wishing to change her gender. Instead they are described as procedures intended to "correct" what the commissioner claims are "abnormal structures of the body caused by congenital defects."

Woke doublespeak also includes redefining skin color after Donald Trump garnered the largest share of Asian, Black and Latino votes of any Republican presidential candidate in 60 years. Support for Trump among Black women doubled, despite liberal media hysteria labeling him a "white supremacist."

In response, New York University history professor Cristina Beltrán argues in the *Washington Post* that the term "white" no longer needs to refer to a person's skin color. "To understand Trump's support," among non-Caucasians she writes, "we must think in terms of multiracial Whiteness." This "reflects an understanding of whiteness as a political color and not simply a racial identity." In other words "whiteness" is now an epithet directed at those who don't vote the way you think they should, having nothing to do with the actual color of your skin.



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The Militant February 8, 2021

# 'Building a new society is the work of creative human beings'

One of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for January is In Defense of Socialism: Four Speeches on the 30th Anniversary of the Cuban Revolution by Fidel Castro, its central leader. The triumph of the Cuban people on Jan. 1, 1959, opened the door to the first socialist revolution in the Americas. Castro discussed the "tremendous historical challenge," both inside Cuba and internationally, to defend socialism against the "selfish, chaotic and inhumane capitalist system." He responded to use of bureaucratic methods copied from the USSR by initiating the rectification process, to mobilize working people to strengthen their revolution. The excerpt is from the introduction by Mary-Alice Waters. Copyright © 1989 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

# **BOOKS OF** THE MONTH

#### BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

Our battle is the battle to improve, develop, and defend socialism, [Fidel Castro] told them, "and perhaps the greatest challenge is that this is a battle to improve socialism without resorting to the mechanisms and style of capitalism, without playing at capitalism." That, he insisted, is "what we are trying to do in the process of rectification."

The rectification process, begun in 1986, is the context for much of what is discussed in these pages. As Castro has



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OFFER GOOD UNTIL JANUARY 31 explained in numerous other speeches and interviews over the last three years, the rectification process is a fundamental political reorientation. It was initiated by the leadership of the Communist Party of Cuba in response to evidence of a growing political demobilization and demoralization among Cuba's working people. These dangerous trends were registered by increasing instances of bureaucratic mismanagement, indifference, abuse, declining productivity and work morale, the growth of corruption and fraud, and frustration over attempts to deal with such problems piecemeal. More and more, Cubans began to see money as the solution to all problems - whether providing incentives to work, or juggling the books of a state enterprise to make it appear efficient and productive. ...

As Castro illustrated the problem ... in November 1987, "those who advocated reactionary ideas within the

revolution argued that building a daycare center was a social expense. Social expenses were no good, investing in production was good; as if those who work in the factories were bulls and cows, horses and mares, male and female mules and not human beings, not men and women with their problems, especially women with their problems.

... Whenever they say no day-care center, you can be sure there is a technocratic, bureaucratic, reactionary concept at work. ... It didn't enter the technocrat's head that day-care centers were essential to production and the services, and that housing and day boarding schools were also essential to production and the services, and that housing and day boarding schools were also essential to socioeconomic development." ...

[T]he "construction of socialism and communism," Castro insisted, "is essentially a political task and a revolutionary task, it must be fundamentally the fruit of the development of consciousness and educating people for socialism and communism." Building a new society, based on new property forms, new social relations, and new values cannot be



Cuban women in construction minibrigade in 1988, part of rectification process, as workers from workplaces and communities took part in voluntary labor. They built 100 child care centers in Havana in two years instead of a bureaucratic plan for less than one a year. Rectification ended as tighter U.S. embargo exacerbated shortages.

accomplished by administrative measures overseen by a growing (and relatively privileged) bureaucracy. It is the work of creative and productive human beings, women and men who are conscious of what they are doing, communists who are organizing themselves and leading their fellow workers to discover what they are capable of achieving, transforming themselves in the process.

Two political measures have been central to the steps taken during the first three years of the rectification process, and references to both run through these speeches.

First, the Communist Party of Cuba has led a conscious effort to incorporate a new and younger leadership on all levels and in all organizations and institutions. Under the watchword of "renewal or death," the first session of the third party congress in February 1986 made sweeping changes in the composition of its leadership bodies. Forty percent of those elected to the Central Committee and 50 percent of those elected to the Political Bureau were new members.

Just as important were the guidelines under which the renewal took place, with the conscious promotion of more workers, more Afro-Cubans, more women, more internationalist fighters, and more young communists. The result was a more workingclass leadership, one closer in composition and experience to that of Cuba's working people today, and one more capable of leading the profoundly revolutionary changes posed by the rectification process.

The leadership renewal begun by the party congress has been pressed forward since that time. It was deepened by the discussions around, and response to, the congress of the Union of Young Communists in 1987. It has been advanced by the demonstrated capacities of the Cuban troops and other internationalist Cuban volunteers in Africa, who in their big majority represent Cuba's young generation. It has taken form in the volunteer youth construction contingents and work brigades that have been part of the rectification process.

The second measure central to rectification has been relaunching what in Cuba is called the minibrigade movement. ... Since 1986 these Cuban working people have already put in millions of hours of volunteer labor. This genuine mass response to the minibrigade movement has made it possible to begin making inroads on problems such as the housing crisis and child-care shortage, which had been worsening at an accelerating pace for more than a decade.

In two years' time, for example, more than 100 child-care centers were built in the city of Havana alone — more than would have been built in a century had the previous policies not been changed.

Similarly with regard to housing, progress is not being made by appealing to people to work longer and harder to make more money to meet their own personal needs while others go without decent shelter. Instead, the shortage is being addressed through mass, revolutionary, working-class action. ... As Castro told a rally on July 26, 1987, the minibrigade movement has the capacity to build a new Havana. It could even build a new London or Paris, he said.

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# - SWP STATEMENT -

# For workers control of production, safety

#### Continued from front page

by farmers defending their livelihoods. Joining strike picket lines, protests against cop brutality, actions to defend a woman's right to choose abortion, and other battles by working people, SWP candidates set an example of what workers can do together to defend ourselves and present a program that offers a way forward.

Driven by the crisis of their capitalist system, bosses are cutting jobs, speeding up production lines and cramming workers into confined spaces, where coronavirus spreads, to try and boost sagging profits. Under capitalist rule production is organized with no concern for our lives or limbs; for the safety of those who live near factories, refineries and other workplaces; or the soil, air and water, which is being contaminated.

Changing administrations in Washington, D.C., has done nothing to halt this. The Democrats and Republicans are both parties of the capitalist rulers committed to protecting the bosses' profits at the expense of workers and farmers, regardless of the consequences to the world we live in.

*All* work can be performed safely. *No* worker has to die on the job. But for that to become a reality workers must organize together to take control of production from the bosses.

Our labor produces all wealth and we are the only force capable of organizing work safely. Fighting for this is the road to end the bosses' production of goods that self-destruct, often with catastrophic consequences, like Boeing's 737 Max, and their waste of precious resources. By taking control of all aspects of production, we can use the full potential of our labor to make food, shelter, vaccines and many other things humanity needs. And we can do so safely.

Under capitalism, moves to confront the CO-VID-19 pandemic are left to Big Pharma and other

medical industry bosses. Their goal is to make profits, not make people healthy. Workers taking control over production and distribution would have sharply different priorities.

Previous working-class struggles show what we are capable of. In the late 1960s coal miners transformed the United Mine Workers union and led a social movement, including strikes and protests, to push back the scourge of black lung, an incurable and often fatal disease. Their determined struggle led to establishing community health clinics throughout mining areas and union safety committees with the power to shut down production in the mine over health and safety issues. Black lung cases plummeted.

These gains were intolerable to the coal bosses, who shifted production to the mostly nonunion Powder River Basin in the West, and the UMW weakened. But the fight miners waged remains a powerful example of what our class can and must do today.

As workers deepen our struggles and take increasing control over production, we begin to see our real capacities, to learn our worth. And we become class conscious. The capitalists try to pound into us the idea we aren't smart enough to do anything important, leave the big questions to them. But the fact is they increasingly fear us. Working people *can* take control and run the entire economy.

That's what working people of Cuba did when they made a revolution in 1959 and have defended it against Washington's ceaseless attacks for 62 years. It's an example to study and emulate.

We need to build a fighting union movement of millions and a leadership capable of charting a course to overturn the rule of the exploiting capitalist class and bring to power a workers and farmers government.

Join the SWP campaign to further this course. Help us get on the ballot. This is a life truly worth living.

# California protesters: 'Free Carlos Harris!'



Militant/Carole Lesnick

Rally at City Hall in San Jose, California, demands freedom for Carlos Harris, framed up and jailed on murder charges.

#### BY JOEL BRITTON

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Several dozen protesters gathered at City Hall here on Martin Luther King Day Jan. 18 to demand "Free Carlos Harris!" and others who have been wrongfully convicted. The march and rally included members of his family. Harris, 50, has served 16 years of an over 28-year sentence on trumped-up attempted murder and other charges.

Harris' cousin, Aisha Hampton, and his mother, Rachel Hampton, are calling on California Gov. Gavin Newsom to pardon or exonerate Harris and release him from the Sierra Conservation Center state prison in Jamestown, 120 miles east of here.

Family members spoke of the many injustices Harris suffered as he was railroaded to prison. He didn't fit the description of the victim's attacker, nor was he picked out in a police lineup. Prosecutors pressed his co-defendants to give perjured testimony to help frame him, offering deals to receive light sentences. Harris refused a plea deal, insisting he wasn't guilty.

He was denied the lawyer of his choice and his court-appointed attorney "withheld evidence that would have proved Carlos' innocence and kept several witnesses from testifying on Carlos' behalf," Aisha Hampton said.

His 14-year sentence was doubled by the judge under the notorious "three strikes" law. So his family points out he's already served more time than the original sentence.

"As we honor Martin Luther King, we want our loved ones to be able to live the dream," said Hampton. She showed a letter that Harris had recently sent her highlighting that 500 of his over 4,000 fellow prisoners have tested positive for COVID-19. He wrote that prisoners who have tested positive are mixed in with the rest of the population and that the virus is spreading. No masks are provided and there is no social distancing.

"Carlos like many, many other people who are incarcerated in this country are incarcerated unfairly in a system that has not brought justice for working people. Never has, never will," Socialist Workers Party member Carole Lesnick said in an interview at the protest broadcast by KRON4-TV.

Readers can learn more and join the effort to win freedom for Harris at FreeCarlosHarris.Wixsite. com/2020.

# Farmers in India protest against gov't attack

# **Continued from front page**

the heart of the capital. Thousands of others occupied the famous 17th century Red Fort. Riot police fired water cannons and tear gas at demonstrators. Cops used bamboo sticks to beat back angry farmers. One farmer died and many were wounded.

Most of the farmers came from nearby states — Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Hundreds of women learned how to drive tractors for the mass protest. Indian women now run 12% of the country's farms.

Hundreds of thousands of farmers and family members have camped on highways on the outskirts of New Delhi for two months. This is the biggest confrontation Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party government has faced in its six years in office.

### Solidarity protests around the world

Thousands of farmers marched into Mumbai, India's largest city, Jan. 25 to stage a sit-in protest. "We are here to support farmers in Delhi, to highlight that farmers across the country are against the farm laws," Ashok Dhawale, a protest leader, told the press.

Here in New York over 100 supporters of the farmers marched from Times Square to a rally outside the United Nations. A rally in Chicago drew 200.

Hundreds rallied in front of Indian consulates in Vancouver, British Columbia, and San Francisco. Protests took place in Seattle and Los Angeles. A car rally was organized in Auckland, New Zealand, after 300 had protested there nine days earlier under the banner, "Repeal anti-farmer laws!" In London, Montreal, and Ottawa, Ontario, actions were cancelled because of government COVID-19 restrictions on the right to protest.

"The Indian government calls farmers uneducated. But look at how over 30 farmer unions are collaborating," Jasvir Kaur Singh from the Sikh Religious Society in Palatine, Illinois, told the *Militant* at the Chicago action. "I've never seen this level of organization — tents, security, entertainment, so much food that farmers are actually feeding the homeless in New Delhi."

"My uncle has six acres," said Gurpreet Singh.

"This new bill takes away the minimum price farmers get. It will lead to a big consolidation of land."

"They say with the new law you'll be able to sell anywhere, but small farmers can't," Hardeep Singh added. "They don't have the transportation or the storage, and will be forced to sell their land. The corporations are pushing the government to pass this law, so they can take over."

"The unions are important," Abinash Kaur told this reporter at the New York action. She described the solidarity action by millions of Indian workers, whose conditions and rights are also under attack.

"It's a life-or-death question. Farmers will be devastated," she added. "The suicide rates will get worse." Over 16,000 farmers took their own lives in Punjab between 2000 and 2015, mostly over unpayable debts.

Farmers' representatives rejected Modi's recent offer to defer imposition of the laws for 18 months, demanding their complete revocation. The government rammed them through last September under cover of the pandemic, completely underestimating the strength of the farmers' response.

Working farmers of Punjab, a majority Sikhs, and of Haryana, in India's northern "breadbasket," have somewhat larger, more productive, plots and more tractors than farmers elsewhere. They stand to lose more from the elimination of state-backed minimum prices and have led the widening rebellion.

Róger Calero, Socialist Workers Party's candidate for mayor of New York, spoke at the rally here, bringing solidarity to the farmers' struggle. He said they "are demonstrating that the only way working people can defend ourselves is by using our organized strength, not depending on capitalist politicians.

"The only way to get rid of the system of capitalist exploitation that robs workers and farmers of their livelihoods," Calero said, "is to fight to bring to power our own workers and farmers government."

Farmers' unions have announced their next big action will be marches on India's parliament Feb. 1, when the government presents its annual budget.

Naomi Crane in Chicago contributed to this article.

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