

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuba protests US intervention as it tackles challenges from embargo
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 85/NO. 29 JULY 26, 2021

Protest hits Jew-hatred, backs Israel's right to exist

BY SETH GALINSKY

WASHINGTON — Over 1,000 people joined the July 11 “No Fear: A Rally in Solidarity with the Jewish People” here. The protest was called following a spate of anti-Jewish assaults in May.

There were more than 1,200 incidents of antisemitic acts in the U.S. in 2020, a 10% increase over the year before, the Anti-Defamation League reports, with an even sharper spike following two weeks of military conflict in May after Hamas began raining thousands of rockets from Gaza at civilian targets in Israel. These acts of Jew-hatred ranged from attacks on synagogues and cemeteries to threats and physical assaults.

Several attacks followed rallies held in New York, Los Angeles and other cities under the slogan “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free,” echoing Hamas’ call for the destruction of Israel and the expulsion of Jews who live there.

Speakers at the rally near the Capitol included several of those who had been

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Help take SWP campaign out to working people far and wide

BY ROY LANDERSEN

“The Socialist Workers Party’s International Active Workers Conference July 22-24 will be a springboard for campaigns led by the 20 candidates the party has endorsed in the 2021 elections,” John Studer, SWP national campaign director, told the *Militant*.

“We will be building on the success of the spring circulation drive,” Studer said. “SWP campaigners introduced new readers to the *Militant*, raised funds for its publication and got out books that help explain how we can fight to end the root cause of the problems workers face — capitalist exploitation.”

A panel of candidates endorsed by the party will address the conference.

“They will describe how they have joined with others to organize support for today’s union struggles; built protests against the U.S. rulers’ embargo of Cuba and actions against cop brutality; and discussed with fellow workers and farmers why it’s necessary to build

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Autoworkers stand up to Volvo truck bosses

Fight to close wage, benefit gap for new hires



UAW Local 2069

United Auto Workers members on strike at Volvo truck plant in Dublin, Virginia, June 27.

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

Some 2,900 United Auto Workers Local 2069 members voted down a new tentative agreement with Volvo truck bosses July 9 — the third time angry union members have rejected deals they consider insufficient this year. Since the vote the striking workers continue to picket 24 hours a day.

Bosses responded by announcing they would try to restart production July 12. UAW officials then scheduled a second vote for July 14 on the pact workers had rejected. As the *Militant* goes to press, the outcome of that vote isn’t known.

“We’ve been given absolutely no reason to concede,” striker Travis Wells told WDBJ News, on the picket line July 12. “All we’re asking for is a fair wage

path to the top for everybody, insurance stays the same as it is now. And if we don’t get that we’re going to vote no, until the cows come home.”

More families joined the picket line July 12. Only a handful of workers crossed the line. Nonetheless, bosses boast it will take them only a few days to

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Join July 25 protest in D.C. against U.S. gov’t embargo against Cuba!



Puentes de Amor

Pavo, Georgia, farmer Willie Head, second from left, told Carlos Lazo, second from right, and others on 1,000-mile walk against U.S. embargo of Cuba about challenges Black farmers face.

BY SETH GALINSKY

Led by Seattle school teacher Carlos Lazo, a group of Cuban Americans are walking more than 1,000 miles from Florida to Washington, D.C., to broaden opposition to the U.S. economic war against Cuba. As of July 13, they’re over halfway there.

Lazo founded Puentes de Amor (Bridges of Love), which is dedicated to making links between people in Cuba and the U.S. The walk began in Miami June 27 and will end with a 2

p.m. rally in Lafayette Park in front of the White House July 25.

The day after the rally Lazo plans to turn in over 25,000 signatures on a petition to President Joseph Biden, urging him to end the sanctions on Cuba.

Building and joining the July 25 action is especially important in the face of a provocative call by right-wing Miami commentator Alexander Otaola for a counterprotest in D.C. Otaola hails the recent protests against electricity out-

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Workers need jobs, fighting unions to take on attacks by bosses, the gov’t

BY TERRY EVANS

In recent weeks, large numbers of workers in the U.S. have gotten vaccinated and government lockdown orders have eased, leading to an increase in job offers and hiring, especially in low-paying jobs in the restaurant and hospitality industries. This has drawn many long-term unemployed workers back into the labor pool, and many workers — more confident with expanded hiring — are looking for higher-paying employment with better working conditions.

Official unemployment figures have barely fallen, dropping from 6.3% in January to 5.9% in June. At the same time, bosses are looking to expand production and profits by intensifying the

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Working people in Iran protest effects of social crisis, gov’t wars abroad

BY TERRY EVANS

Protesters marched in several Iranian cities after widespread power outages caused havoc for workers and farmers. The demonstrations follow previous rounds of country-wide mobilizations in 2018 and since by working people fed up with the government’s military adventures abroad, ongoing economic crisis and its refusal to meet their needs.

Blackouts in Tehran, Karaj and other cities July 4-5 hit during a stifling heat

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—On the picket line, p. 5—

Teamsters strike Bellingham Cold Storage in Washington state

Freedom Rides built fight to topple Jim Crow segregation

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Freedom Rides, one of the high points of the Black-led proletarian civil rights struggle that overturned Jim Crow and decisively changed social relations in the U.S.

Despite U.S. Supreme Court rulings in 1946 and 1960 that outlawed segregation in interstate travel, Jim Crow state officials ignored them across the South. So civil rights fighters decided to launch the Freedom Rides to win this themselves. In response to a call by the Congress of Racial Equality, volunteers set out from Washington, D.C., on Greyhound and Trailways buses May 4, 1961, with the goal of reaching New Orleans and desegregating bus station facilities along the way.

They were met by cop and Klan violence. In Rock Hill, South Carolina, segregationists beat Black riders after they attempted to use a “whites only” restroom. In Anniston, Alabama, a mob of white supremacists halted the Greyhound bus May 14, pelted it with rocks and bricks, smashed windows with pipes and axes, and lobbed a firebomb into the bus. The mob tried — unsuccessfully — to block the Freedom Riders from getting off the burning bus.

A few hours later, Freedom Riders on a Trailways bus were brutally beaten after they entered a whites only waiting room and restaurant at the bus terminal in Birmingham, Alabama, as the notorious Sheriff Bull Conner pulled his cops off the scene. They were rescued by Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, who led a force of civil rights fighters to free them.

The liberal *New York Times* blamed the Freedom Riders for their being beaten, saying their trips were a “provocative action.” The John F. Kennedy administration tried mightily to talk them into abandoning their fight.

In response, hundreds more volunteers, including activists from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, signed up to join the Freedom Rides.

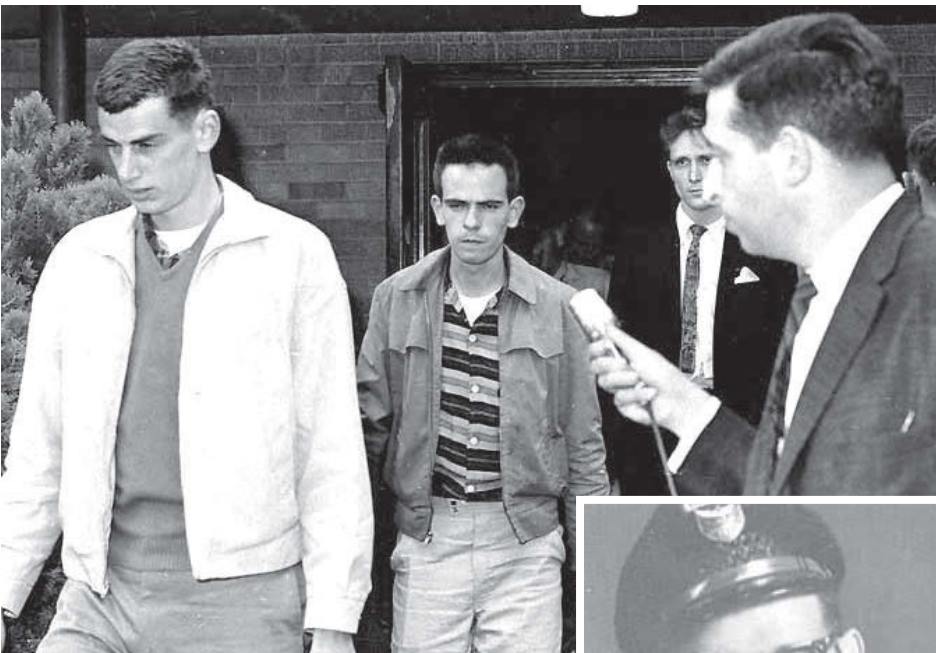
But they faced a problem. As they prepared to lead off from Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, heading to Jackson, Mississippi, every Trailways driver turned down the job. Then Jimmy Allen Ruth, a 23-year-old Caucasian driver from Tennessee, who died last month at 83, volunteered.

“Ruth was willing to aid in the cause for freedom and justice at all cost,” his family members wrote in their obituary. He considered it “one of his greatest accomplishments.”

“If they were going to die, I was going to die with them,” Ruth told them. “He agreed to drive the students and never asked any questions although he was aware of the risks involved,” his brother, Bobby Ruth, and friend Blondell Strong Kimbrough, told the press.

Freedom Rides grow

Dozens of youth across the country responded to the call to resume the Freedom Rides. One of them was 18-year-old Ken Shilman, and another his best friend, Joseph McDonald, both recent graduates of Oceanside High School on Long Island, New York. They made their way to Montgomery,



Above, Associated Press; inset, courtesy of NAACP
Freedom Riders Ken Shilman, left, and Joe McDonald being escorted by authorities out of “colored waiting room” at Trailways bus station under arrest in Jackson, Mississippi, June 2, 1961. They were among hundreds thrown in jail. Inset, Jimmy Allen Ruth, who died last month at 83, was Trailways driver who volunteered to take Freedom Riders from Nashville, Tennessee, to Jackson.



Alabama, and got on one of the buses.

When the Freedom Riders’ buses reached Jackson, the cops arrested them, on charges of violating a recently passed breach-of-the-peace statute. They were convicted, fined \$200 each, and, when they refused to pay, sentenced to 90 days in jail. Through the summer months over 300 women and men were arrested — many incarcerated in Mississippi’s notorious state penitentiary in Parchman Parish, where jailers attempted to humiliate and harass them.

Shilman was among the first arrested, on June 2. He and McDonald were escorted by authorities out of the “colored waiting room” at the Trailways station. They were imprisoned for three weeks at Parchman. Then the Freedom Riders decided some of their prisoners should get out and go home to get the word out about conditions in the prison.

Shilman and McDonald were two of those chosen. In Oceanside they were able to get an interview with The Associated Press June 21, speaking out about the “indescribable” conditions the prisoners faced. AP reported Shilman’s description of two fellow Freedom Riders, “dragged naked along 60 yards of concrete corridor after they refused to strip and walk in their cells.”

Shilman went on to join the Young

Socialist Alliance and became a National Committee member and leader of the Socialist Workers Party and its work in the trade unions. He died in 1989.

From the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1956, through the Freedom Rides, to the 1963 Battle of Birmingham, led by Shuttlesworth, to the 1965 voting rights fight in Selma and Montgomery, Alabama, this historic social struggle would continue, changing the potential for working-class unity and the U.S. class struggle forever.

Malcolm X: February 1965 The Final Speeches

Includes Malcolm’s talk “The House Negro and the Field Negro” given in Selma, Alabama, Feb. 4, 1965. A Klan segregationist hiding behind white sheets “is nothing but a coward” and “the time will come when that sheet will be ripped off. If the federal government doesn’t take it off, we’ll take it off,” Malcolm said. \$17



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THE MILITANT

US forces quit Afghanistan in haste and defeat

Washington’s rapid withdrawal from Afghanistan after 20 years signals the U.S. rulers’ defeat in their longest war ever. Its occupation did nothing to eradicate the wretched living conditions working people face there. Now the reactionary Taliban is driving to retake power.



Single Afghan soldier on guard after U.S. departure from giant Bagram air base July 2.

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Help take SWP campaigns out

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a communist party that is prepared and capable of leading millions in future battles to make a socialist revolution,” Studer said.

“New supporters of SWP campaigns are being won among working people looking to resist what the bosses and their governments are doing to us today, and who are interested in studying the crucial lessons of previous working-class struggles. Some join in introducing the SWP-endorsed candidates to fellow workers and family members.”

Workers ‘need to stand up together’

Ned Measel, Dave Perry and other SWP campaigners spoke with Ralph Robinson Jr., on his porch in Cincinnati, Ohio, July 10. The 68-year-old third shift stocker works at Kroger and is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union.

The SWP builds support for struggles by workers, Measel told Robinson, “no matter how big or small, against the attacks of the capitalist rulers and their system of exploitation and oppression.” He said solidarity is crucial for the current strike by miners at Warrior Met in Alabama and other labor battles.

Perry described the attacks he and fellow blind workers face at the factory where he works and how they use union power to defend themselves. “Workers have to stand together,” Measel said.

“Yes we do,” replied Robinson. “All

the time!” He told the SWP campaigners that a few weeks ago “Kroger workers in Arkansas threatened to go on strike.” The bosses “took managers from all over to try to stop the strike, including from the store where I work.”

“We can transform ourselves through our struggles and forge a leadership like working people did in Cuba, where millions overturned capitalist rule and made a socialist revolution,” said Measel.

“Malcolm X told the truth when he said it was necessary to wake people up to their own worth, their history of struggle and their ability to change the world,” he added.

“My parents used to tell me about the things you are talking about today,” Robinson said. “I didn’t want to hear it then, but now I realize they were right.”

“I’m getting this book,” he said, referring to *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes, the SWP national secretary, after Measel showed it to him. Robinson then described his more than four decades of experiences standing up for workers’ rights.

“People who understand what you raise have a responsibility,” said Measel.

“Yes, to the world!” replied Robinson. “I’m going to read this book because what you say is true. And I want you to come back again soon.”

To find out more about the SWP and its campaigns, contact the branch closest to you listed on page 8.



Militant/Jacque Henderson

SWP campaigners, from left, Dave Perry, Ned Measel and Samir Hazboun talk politics with Ralph Robinson Jr., a Kroger store worker and member of UFCW union, in Cincinnati July 10.

Autoworkers stand up to Volvo

Continued from front page

get assembly lines back up and running.

The company made \$1 billion in profits in the first quarter of 2021. Sales are surging so fast that bosses say they can’t keep up with orders.

“The ongoing strike — which we continue to believe is unnecessary — is hurting our customers,” NRV Vice President and General Manager Frank Marchand told the press.

“Basically, they are trying to break our union, telling people to cross the line,” replied UAW President Matt Blondino in a video on the union’s website.

Before the July 9 vote, the company released “highlights” of its offer, claiming it eliminates the two-tier system.

The reason so many strikers voted no “was because we’ve been fighting to get rid of this tier system,” Wells said. Under the current contract, new hires make \$16.77 an hour while a “core group” with the most years in the plant make \$27.47.

Under the proposed contract new hires will have to wait six years to reach top pay. Workers hired after 2015, would get top pay upon ratification. Even the lump sum signing bribe is different based on which tier you are in.

Volvo has not commented on the issue of health care for retired workers. When this worker-correspondent visited the picket line last month, I met strikers with decades working at Volvo who said they can’t afford to retire because of health care costs up to \$900 a month.

Samantha Taylor, SMART Local 1933 chairperson, sent a July 2 message of support to the strikers on behalf of the 250 rail workers at Amtrak and the Keolis Virginia Rail Express commuter line. It commended autoworkers for taking actions to address “the multiple wage tiers.” Rail crews in Fredericksburg and Manassas, Virginia, at Keolis VRE collected 22 signatures on a letter for the strikers and \$175 in donations.

“As a fifth generation railroader, one thing I’ve learned is that companies watch other companies,” Taylor told the *Militant* July 13. “This strike is a big deal. The workers are laying a foundation for all of us. I’m with them, as far as they want to take it.”

Send solidarity messages to UAW Local 2069, P.O. Box 306, Dublin, VA 24084 or UAWLocal2069@gmail.com.

Women’s rights at stake in fight over men in female spa area

BY LAURA GARZA

LOS ANGELES — A widely viewed video of a woman complaining about a man being in the women’s section of a spa in Los Angeles has deepened a debate here. The question is whether women have rights to privacy in spaces designated for them, such as women’s locker rooms, hot tubs, etc.

The customers in the spa were nude, and included children, and the man, who said he was a transgender woman, also was nude, with his penis exposed. The spa personnel told the women who complained that they have to abide by whatever a customer says they are, because a recent California law forbids discrimination against transgender people.

A protest called by women against the stance of the spa’s owners July 3 was met by a countermobilization of dozens of antifa supporters. They planted a sign in front of the spa saying “Trans women are women,” and moved to surround and push around anyone they deemed to be “transphobe.”

Gaye Chapman, who went to meet up with some women she’d met on social media, told the *Militant*, “I think women and girls have the right to shower and dress outside the presence of male people, regardless of how they identify.” Chapman is a city electrical inspector and runs a lesbian-themed podcast. Not knowing who had called the protest, she didn’t bring a sign and walked around at first watching. She saw a few people being harassed by the antifa people, including someone taking a video.

Amie Ichikawa, one of the women who met up with Chapman, was targeted by antifa thugs because she was wearing a T-shirt featuring the dictionary definition of a woman — “Woman: a female adult human.”

Chapman said she was quickly sur-

rounded by around 20 people shouting, “We don’t talk to Terfs,” an acronym for trans-exclusionary radical feminists. It is used to denigrate women’s rights supporters they disagree with. “They hit me with a piece of cardboard,” she said, “and tried to prevent me filming.

“They were shouting ‘get out transphobe,’ and they pulled my glasses off and knocked my phone out of my hand, pushed me, threw water at me. It was nasty,” Chapman said. She reported on Twitter that she has since been threatened with being “doxed,” that is, having her personal information, including her home address, widely publicized to encourage further harassment.

Ichikawa said she came to meet up with some women’s rights activists and wasn’t expecting the level of vitriol directed against them. She’s the founder of WomanIIWoman, which aids women getting out of prison find jobs and housing.

She explained the new state law is having an effect on women behind bars, as growing numbers of men have requested transfers to women’s prisons based on changed self-identity. Women have written to her fearing they won’t be able to avoid being housed with a male in cells designated for eight women, with communal toilets and showers.

In the wake of the protests, the “woke” *Los Angeles Times* ran an editorial backing the spa owners’ actions. “Even though the sight of male-appearing genitalia discomfited at least one female customer,” the editors opined, “no one has an absolute right to feel comfortable all the time.”

“What’s at stake is women’s rights, not transphobia,” Dennis Richter, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor in California’s upcoming special election, told the press. “Women have fought to

close the pay gap, including the right to access a range of nontraditional jobs, from coal mining to the railroad. They have joined labor battles, defended abortion clinics, and fought rightist assaults aimed at shutting them down. These are the kinds of fights we need today.

“But the state law, adopted under the guise of opposing transgender discrimination, demands that women and girls surrender their right to privacy. It denies the facts of biology and has nothing to do with advancing rights.

“I oppose discrimination in housing and jobs based on sexual preference or how one identifies. Earlier struggles for women’s rights helped advance the fight for the rights of gays and lesbians,” Richter said. “But efforts today to dissolve sex into gender, and the idea that your sex can be ‘chosen,’ deal blows to women. They open the door to new attacks on women’s rights and set back the fight against discrimination against gays.”

Rose Knight, 50-year-long builder of communist movement in UK

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — Rose Knight, a 50-year veteran of the communist movement, died June 26 after a yearslong illness. She was 76. Knight was a founding member of the Communist League in 1988 and served on the party’s Central Committee in its early years.

She had joined the League’s forerunner, the International Marxist Group, in the early ’70s, while she was active in the movement for women’s liberation, Nick Beeton, her husband and lifelong companion, told the *Militant*.

Knight was part of the successful

struggle to build communist parties in the U.K. and internationally that are working class in program, course of conduct, and composition, taking jobs in rail and in meatpacking.

When declining health prevented her from continuing to sustain work in industry, Knight shouldered responsibility for distributing the *Militant* and getting books on revolutionary working-class politics into commercial outlets around the U.K.

A full appreciation of her life and political contributions will be run in a forthcoming issue.

Quebec laws divide French, English-speaking workers

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE

MONTREAL — Under the pretext of defending “Quebec’s values,” the government of the Coalition for the Future of Quebec here introduced a bill in the National Assembly May 13 that attacks workers’ rights.

Bill 96 claims to “curb the decline of French in Quebec.” In fact, it limits access to public pre-university education in English for French-speaking youth. It also orders French to be used as the sole language of communication in government matters. English is the first language of close to 15% of the population, and many immigrants speak English as their second language.

The bill follows the passage of the discriminatory Law 21 in 2019. It prohibits public employees of the Quebec government, teachers and others, from wearing religious symbols while performing their jobs, targeting especially female Muslim teachers who wear headscarves and Jewish men who wear a kippa.

An increase in bilingualism

Historically, francophones in Canada were victims of discrimination and oppression based on their language, fostered by the country’s capitalist rulers to divide the working class, deepen exploitation and reap superprofits.

This linchpin of the rulers’ divide-and-rule strategy was dealt major blows by a series of mass struggles, mostly concentrated in Quebec, during the 1960s and ’70s. These struggles, and the support they received from working people across Canada, helped push back inequalities and strengthen the unity of the working class from one end of the country to the other.

While francophones earned 35% less than anglophones in 1961, today their wages are similar. French has become the common language of communication in Quebec.

Supporters of Bill 96 say it is necessary to combat the “decline of French” in Quebec, an assertion that isn’t confirmed by the government’s own data.

In 2016, French was the first language of nearly 80% of the population, but 94.4% were able to converse in French. In 2018, French was the language most often used at work for 90.4%.

In reality, the use of French has not declined, but French-English bilingualism has increased.

From 1961 to 2016, the percentage of people who were bilingual in Quebec went from 26% to 45%. In 2016, 40% of francophones and 69% of anglophones were bilingual.

Across Quebec in 2018, 55.4% of workers regularly used English or a language other than French at work.

The growing bilingualism among workers is the context for the government’s moves to limit access to studies in English in pre-university education. It is an attack on young people

who want to improve their English.

In Quebec, only children whose parents or siblings had attended English-language schools in Canada are permitted to attend these schools.

But this restriction does not apply to the CEGEPs (pre-university colleges.) More than 6% of young francophones attend English-language CEGEPs and a little more than 11% of Anglophones attend French-language CEGEPs.

“Ten years ago, I decided to attend English CEGEP,” Philippe Tessier told the *Militant*. Tessier is the Communist League candidate for mayor in the Montreal borough of Saint-Laurent. “I wanted to improve my knowledge of the language. But it also allowed me to make many anglophone friends from different family backgrounds than mine.

“It’s good for workers to learn as many languages as possible. It helps us communicate with each other,” Tessier said. “This also strengthens the unity we need to wage a fight to establish a workers and farmers government and build a world based on solidarity, not capitalist oppression and exploitation.”

A weapon aimed at working people

In order to protect Law 21 and Bill 96 from inevitable legal challenges, the ruling Coalition for the Future of Quebec is using Section 33 of the Canadian



Militant/Jim Upton

Protest against Law 21 in Montreal, 2019, that bans public sector workers from wearing religious symbols at work. New Bill 96 introduced in National Assembly in May would limit access to English in schools, government matters, at a time French-English bilingualism has increased.

Constitution. This allows federal and provincial governments to suspend the application of rights enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, including freedom of expression, assembly, association and worship.

Since its adoption in 1982, several provincial governments have used Section 33 of the Charter to outlaw strikes and even marriages of same sex couples.

The National Council of Canadian Muslims, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, and the Autonomous Federation of Teaching (FAE),

which represents 50,000 teachers in Quebec, have challenged Law 21 in the courts. The FAE says the law is discriminatory because it infringes on the right of its members who wear an Islamic headscarf.

On April 20, Judge Marc-André Blanchard of the Quebec Superior Court concluded that even if this law violates several “fundamental rights,” the government is “legally unassailable given the current state of the laws.”

Michel Dugre contributed to this article.

Join July 25 protest against US embargo on Cuba!

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ages, high prices and shortages in Cuba, and claims the majority of Cubans in the U.S. support the embargo. But that’s simply not true.

In a July 11 statement, Lazo commented on the actions of a few thousand people that took place July 11 in Havana and other parts of Cuba expressing discontent with the difficulties and challenges there, which were manipulated by U.S.-backed opponents of the revolution. (See article page 7.) Supporters of the revolution also took to the streets across the country.

US embargo: create hunger, despair

Lazo quoted from an April 1960 memorandum by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Lester Mallory that recognized “the majority of Cubans support [Fidel] Castro.” It said the only realistic policy to overthrow the revolution was to create “economic dissatisfaction and hardship.” It advocated attempts to make “the greatest inroads in denying money and supplies to Cuba, to decrease monetary and real wages, to bring about hunger, desperation” and hopefully “overthrow of government.”

This began the over 60-year-long embargo, maintained and expanded by every U.S. president since, Democrat or Republican.

“That’s right there. That’s no secret to anyone,” Lazo said. “We will continue to advocate that the sanctions that weigh

on the Cuban people are lifted.”

Cars and vans are being organized by the New York-New Jersey Cuba Sí Coalition to participate in the rally outside the White House. They will also join a 12:30 p.m. car and bike caravan against the embargo prior to the rally, organized by the DC Metro Coalition in Solidarity with the Cuban Revolution and others.

The embargo of Cuba aims to overturn the first, and so far only, socialist revolution in the Americas. Washington has never forgiven workers and farmers for overthrowing the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista on Jan. 1, 1959, and going on to take power into their own hands, led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement.

The Biden administration has so far maintained the more than 243 measures imposed by his predecessor, Donald Trump, that deepened the impact of the embargo — despite Biden’s promise during the 2020 campaign that he would lift some of them. On July 12 Biden cynically proclaimed,

“We stand with the Cuban people,” but said not one word about lifting a single U.S. economic sanction.

Lazo and his fellow marchers are talking to everyone they meet along the way — from workers and farmers and small-business people to religious leaders and elected officials, regardless of their party affiliation or view of the Cuban Revolution — about why they should call for ending the embargo. They invite them to join the walk, to set up meetings where the group can speak and to come to the rally in Washington.

Learning about struggles in U.S.

On July 7 they were welcomed at the Federation of Southern Cooperatives by Executive Assistant Eboni Thomas and Terence Courtney, director of Cooperative Development and Strategic Partnership.

The federation was founded in 1967 out of the struggles by farmers in the rural South, part of the civil rights

Continued on page 7

Steelworkers at ATI ratify contract, end 3-month strike

LOUISVILLE, Ohio — The United Steelworkers union announced July 13 that striking workers had ratified a new four-year contract with Allegheny Technologies Inc. The union said it “raises wages, provides lump-sum payments and protects affordable, high-quality health care for current and future workers.”

Some 1,300 workers at nine plants have been on strike since March 30. Union members will begin returning to their jobs July 19, the company said.

Workers are expecting overtime when they return. “For the first 90 days, it’ll be 84 hours a week, no days off,” striker Dave Burgess told the *Militant*.

The union said “the new contract preserves premium-free health insurance coverage without the second, lower tier of health care for new hires the company wanted.”

A summary of the contract released by the union said workers entitled to early pensions will get them, which affects workers at the No. 3 finishing mill in Brackenridge, Pennsylvania; the Waterbury, Connecticut, plant; and the Louisville plant, which ATI says they will shut down.

— TONY LANE

— CALENDAR —

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Celebrate July 26: Opening Guns of Cuba’s Socialist Revolution. Sponsor: Chicago Cuba Coalition. Speakers and musical performances. Sat., July 31, 6 p.m. University Church, 5655 S. University Ave. Tel.: (630) 915-0654.

‘Militant’ publishing schedule

This is a three-week issue. The next one will be mailed August 5.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Teamsters strike Bellingham Cold Storage in Washington state

BELLINGHAM, Wash. — Some 110 forklift drivers, members of Teamsters Local 231, went on strike July 1 at the Bellingham Cold Storage and processing facility here near the Canadian border. The company forced the walkout by making an insulting “offer” to jack up workers’ health insurance costs.

“They said they want their workers to consider using the state health insurance,” and get off the company-contributed one altogether, Heather Ewing, Local 231 business representative, told the *Militant* on the picket line July 6.

Although the bosses have since modified their medical proposal, Local 231 says on its website that the bosses’ demands on pension and wage increases also “demonstrated a complete lack of respect.”

Strikers maintain round-the-clock pickets at two facilities, on Roeder Avenue and Orchard Street. We joined picketing at the larger location on Roeder, as strikers received a steady-stream of thumbs-up, waves and honks from big-rigs, cars and bicyclists.

“The company wanted us to go on strike to try to bust the union,” said Teamster Local Secretary-Treasurer Rich Ewing. But he pointed to the empty parking lot across the street that strikers say is normally full, and said, “They’re hurting.”

Bellingham Cold Storage claims to be “the largest private deep-water terminal and portside cold storage warehouse center on the West Coast.” It was taken over by Seattle-based Joshua Green Corp. three years ago. Since then workers report conditions have gotten worse. “It’s hard for them to keep people because of how they treat them,” said forklift driver Mike Moore.

One of the company’s biggest customers is Walmart, with its Great Value brand frozen fruit and smoothie mixes. Bellingham Cold Storage handles a lot of locally grown berries. They also service Costco, Trident Seafoods, Clark’s Berry Farm and others.

When striking workers at the Orchard Street picket learned three of us work at

Walmart, they said that on the first day of the strike one of the Walmart truck drivers wouldn’t cross their picket line. “He called his dispatcher, was there for about 20 minutes, then left,” said striker John Damon.

The strikers were also interested that Williamson is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for City Council in Seattle. We told them we’ll work to build support for their strike in the Seattle area.

They’ve gotten solidarity on their picket lines from local berry union Familias Unidas por la Justicia (Families United for Justice) members and from workers at Whatcom County Community College, who helped make their picket signs.

Join the picket lines! Send messages of support and contributions to Teamsters Local 231, P.O. Box H, Bellingham, WA 98227.

— Rebecca Williamson
and Barry Fatland

After 10 weeks on strike, Olymel meatpackers seek new talks

MONTREAL — Over 250 striking meatpackers, members of the Union of Olymel Workers at Vallee-Jonction, marched to the Labour Ministry in Quebec City July 7 to demand the arbitrator take steps to end the bosses’ refusal to negotiate. More than 1,000 workers have been on strike since April 28. Olymel is the biggest pork producing chain in Canada.

Signs on the march read, “Respect doesn’t go on holidays, we want to negotiate.”

When the last negotiation session took place July 1 and 2, the union put forward a proposal for a settlement, but the bosses demanded more concessions and then announced they wouldn’t be available for further talks before July 19.

Under pressure from the workers’ action, bosses said they would now agree to meet for talks July 12-13. “We expect that Olymel will restart the negotiations in a serious manner,” union President Martin Maurice told the press.

A central issue is wages. In 2007 the bosses imposed a 38% wage cut when Olymel threatened to close the plant. Little progress has been made since.



Union of Olymel Workers at Vallee-Jonction

Olymel meatpackers carry “on strike” banner in Quebec City march July 7 demanding bosses negotiate a new contract. Bosses seek to keep steep wage cuts imposed on workers in 2007.

Close to 106,000 hogs are in holding, waiting to be slaughtered. Because of the strike the bosses are redirecting hogs to other Olymel facilities. David Duval, president of Les Eleveurs de Porcs du Quebec (Quebec Pork Producers), threatens that in three to four weeks they may begin killing pigs if they can’t be processed. Their aim is to try and turn public opinion against the strikers.

Help prevent this. Send solidarity messages and contributions for strikers to Syndicat des Travailleurs d’Olymel, Vallee-Jonction, 243 Rue Principale, Vallee-Jonction, QC G0S 3J0.

—Joe Young

Kansas: Frito-Lay strikers win community support

Over 600 members of Local 218 of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union, who went on strike at the Topeka, Kansas, Frito-Lay plant July 5, are winning widespread solidarity in the area.

The bosses there are notorious for the inhuman schedules, low pay and rotten working conditions they impose on workers. Frito-Lay is owned by the staunchly anti-union Pepsi-Cola Co. It’s the first time workers have gone on strike at the plant in nearly 50 years.

Workers have reported in the *Topeka Capital-Journal* how over years the bosses lowered wages for new hires, refused to give workers cost-of-living

benefits and regularly force workers to work what they call the “suicide shift.” That means having to work four hours overtime after your eight-hour shift and then being ordered to return in eight hours to do it again and again. Failure to report means attendance points that quickly lead to being fired. Workers say they’ve had to sleep in their car to make it on time.

“Why can’t I get a day off?” Charles Taylor, who runs machines that make Doritos and Tostitos, said on KCUR Radio July 10. “We can’t even get one day off, how does that make sense? A machine shouldn’t be treated better than their employees.”

While union members don’t get any cost-of-living adjustments to help cope with rising prices, Local 218 President Brent Hall said, workers at other Topeka-area plants, like Goodyear, Mars Wrigley, Target and big warehouses do.

“Milk’s gone up. Meat has gone up. Everything has gone up,” Tracy Johnson, who’s worked at Frito-Lay for 30 years, told the station. “But our wages have stayed the same.”

The bosses say they intend to keep production going regardless of the strike and they don’t plan to participate in any negotiations.

A fund was started by 785 Magazine after the strike started, with a goal of raising over \$24,000 by July 23 to cover strikers’ utility bills. Other area businesses, like the Brass Rail Tavern, Topeka’s oldest bar, are organizing a boycott of Frito-Lay and Pepsi products.

Workers told the *Capital-Journal* that people have been bringing food and water to the picket line, and Victoria’s Bar has brought tacos. “It’s great to see community members and other area unions coming together in solidarity,” striker Derek Johnson told the paper.

Send messages of support and donations to the relief fund at BCTGM Local 218, 1100 Admiral Blvd., Kansas City, MO 64106.

—John Studer

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



August 5, 1996

BELFAST — The crisis of British rule in Northern Ireland intensified as nationalists staunchly resisted rightist marches through their streets and the intimidation of their communities.

On July 12 in Derry, the police fired 1,000 plastic bullets at Catholic protesters, injuring 200. In 1969 resistance to pogroms like these led to the British Army being sent to Northern Ireland, beginning 27 years of direct occupation.

The nationalist demonstration was in protest to the police decision to allow Orange Order marches through Catholic areas July 12. Signs held by the protesters here July 14 included, “Stand up for nationalists against Orange bigotry,” “End the nationalist nightmare in the six counties,” referring to the part of Ireland ruled by Britain, “We are not second-class citizens,” and “Reroute sectarian marches.”



July 30, 1971

President Nixon’s decision to visit China and meet with its leaders marks a new stage in U. S. imperialism’s relations with China. Those who have defended the Chinese revolution against its imperialist foes, as the *Militant* has done, will welcome the fact that Washington has finally been compelled to recognize the People’s Republic of China.

Nixon has been feeling sharp effects from the combined blows of the Indochinese people and the U.S. anti-war movement. Negotiations between Washington and Peking will likely lead to agreements at the expense of the Indochinese revolution.

The Vietnamese had bitter experience with such a “compromise between the big powers” in 1954 when the Geneva conference divided their country after they had defeated the French. Mass actions around “Out Now!” is the best reply to all schemes to prolong the war.



July 27, 1946

DETROIT, July 16 — Answering the call of the United Automobile Workers for a protest against rising prices, more than 100,000 workers flowed into the streets in the largest mass rally in Detroit’s history. Despite the threats of the bosses to discipline workers who quit their plants before closing time, tens of thousands of workers downed tools at 2 p.m. to take their place in the march.

The most enthusiasm was shown when UAW Secretary Treasurer George Addes hinted that the auto union at its next Executive Board meeting would ask for a wage increase unless prices were stabilized.

The Socialist Workers Party placards stood out in the great mass of signs. Among the slogans were: “For A Labor Party Now!” “For Automatic Wage Increases To Meet Price Increases.” “For A United National Labor Conference To Fight The Anti-Labor Drive.”

Striking Alabama miners take fight to New York City hedge fund owners

Over 1,000 members of United Mine Workers have been on strike against Warrior Met Coal since April 1. Join picket at BlackRock Fund Advisors, one of Warrior Met’s largest shareholders, to protest company takeback demands.

Wed. July 28, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
40 E. 52nd St., Manhattan, N.Y.

Cuba's working people rose up, carried out a socialist revolution

BY ROY LANDERSEN

“What the imperialists cannot forgive,” Fidel Castro told the Cuban people at a rally in Havana April 16, 1961, on the eve of Washington’s attempted Bay of Pigs invasion, was “that we have made a socialist revolution right under their noses, under the nose of the United States itself.” He was describing what Cuban workers and farmers had accomplished in making and consolidating their revolution under the Marxist leadership of the July 26 Movement.

Castro, Che Guevara and the other leaders of the July 26 Movement led working people to make deeper and deeper inroads against capitalist exploitation and property relations, alongside steps to overcome racial discrimination and the oppression of women.

The revolution deepened as workers “intervened” and backed government takeovers of imperialist and native capitalist holdings; the nationalizing of the land enabled peasants to take over plots to farm; the mass literacy drive transformed both the students — whatever their age — and the teachers; and the popular militias and revolutionary armed forces defeated the U.S.-organized mercenaries at Playa Girón.

Cuba’s working people transformed themselves as they recognized the socialist character of their accomplishments and the Marxist character of their leadership. Through these mass proletarian mobilizations, they carried through the first — and so far the only — socialist revolution in the Americas.

Castro’s defiant statement in April 1961 simply described what the working people of Cuba had accomplished. But Blas Roca, general secretary of the Popular Socialist Party, the long-standing Stalinist party there, had fought for a different course.

Roca says revolution is not socialist

Roca explained in a report to the party’s August 1960 National Assembly that the Cuban Revolution was not — and should not be — socialist. An article based on that report was featured in the October 1960 issue of *Political Affairs*, the magazine of the Communist Party USA.

Roca claimed the Cuban Revolution could only be “anti-imperialist and anti-feudal,” that is, “bourgeois democratic,” and that the class forces carrying it out were “the workers, the peasants, the urban middle classes, and the national bourgeoisie.” The Popular Socialist Party and other Stalinist parties, from China to Spain, had long argued that socialist revolution was impossible in backward countries. They subordinated revolutionary struggle to the needs of the counterrevolutionary Stalinist rulers in Moscow, who sought “peaceful coexistence” with Washington.

Roca said communism “viewed from the correct angle constitutes a body of principles and practice of a universal character.” Universal principles that the Cuban Revolution “is not applying.”

In making that statement Roca, perhaps unwittingly, echoed what Karl Heinzen, a German petty-bourgeois socialist, had argued in 1847. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels explicitly rejected Heinzen’s view that commu-

nism was merely a “doctrine.”

“Herr Heinzen is very much mistaken,” Engels wrote. “Communism is not a doctrine but a *movement*; it proceeds not from principles but from *facts*.”

This central concept lay at the very heart of the *Communist Manifesto*, which Marx and Engels completed after the founding congress of the Communist League in London that year, the world’s first modern revolutionary workers organization.

“The theoretical conclusions of the communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer,” they wrote. They express “actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes.”

Guevara explains Cuba’s revolution

Che Guevara explicitly answered Blas Roca. In *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, Jack Barnes, today national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, describes how he went to Cuba in mid-1960 to learn from and help advance the revolution. He and other young people from the U.S. and elsewhere in the Americas spent “many long hours there debating among ourselves the political and theoretical issues” posed by the “onrushing struggle we were part of and thinking through the questions addressed by Che Guevara” at the First Latin American Youth Congress in Havana July 28.

Guevara raised the question at the center of the debate: “Is this revolu-

Workers need jobs, fighting unions to take on attacks

Continued from front page

pace of work and holding down wages, while prices rise.

More than 40 million workers were let go by bosses in the first 10 weeks of the pandemic last year. Many have gone back to work, but over 7 million more workers do not have jobs today than before the pandemic.

The bosses are looking to boost profits and strengthen their position against dog-eat-dog competitors at home and abroad. This means stepped-up attacks on our wages and working conditions. In their fight against workers, bosses have provoked strikes at ATI steel, Volvo Trucks, Warrior Met Coal and the Frito-Lay plant in Topeka, Kansas; and locked out workers at Marathon Petroleum and ExxonMobil refineries.

“Workers and our unions cannot let a layer of the working class stay out of work. This strengthens the bosses’ hands, dividing our class,” Malcolm Jarrett, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Pittsburgh mayor, told the *Militant*.

“SWP-endorsed candidates say we need to back fellow workers on the picket line today. We need to unify employed and unemployed workers, to fight for a government-funded public works program to put millions back into jobs, at union-scale pay and under workers control, to build the houses, hospitals and other things workers need.

“Our unions need to fight for 30 hours work at 40 hours pay, to share



Osvaldo Salas

Che Guevara at First Latin American Youth Congress in Havana in 1960. He said Cuban revolution was “Marxist” and that “it discovered, by its own methods, the road pointed out by Marx.”

tion communist?” In passing, he rejected the lies and distortions spread by Washington and red-baiting by the bourgeois-minded right wing of the forces that had joined in opposing Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista.

To applause Guevara explained, “If this revolution is Marxist — and listen well that I say ‘Marxist’ — it is because it discovered, by its own methods, the road pointed out by Marx.” He added, “The Cuban Revolution was moving forward, not worrying about labels, not checking what others said about it, but constantly scrutinizing what the Cuban people wanted of it.”

The Socialist Workers Party championed the revolutionary course advanced by Che and Fidel Castro, said SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters in a Chicago forum April 24. “We were part of this debate, defending the Cuban Revolution and what it was accomplishing.”

The task of communists is to raise the

work around and prevent layoffs,” Jarrett said. “And for cost-of-living clauses in all contracts to ensure wages go up to cover all price increases.”

Some employers are complaining they can’t fill vacancies quickly enough. Denny’s now offers anyone filling out an application free pancakes. McDonald’s says if you work for them they might help with your tuition costs. Despite these bribes, the quit rate for restaurant and hotel workers hit the highest level in two decades in May.

“We quit,” eight workers at a Lincoln, Nebraska, Burger King wrote in big letters on the restaurant’s outside sign July 10. Two of the workers told KLNK News they were fed up with dangerous working conditions at the restaurant and a grueling workweek of up to 60 hours. Jobs for a “crew member” there start at \$10.97 an hour.

For Burger King workers, like millions at Amazon, Walmart and elsewhere, organizing and building unions is crucial. We can use them to fight to protect ourselves and our class from the rapacious attacks of the bosses that lie ahead.

Goldman Sachs says “productivity per hour” — that is, speedup and exploitation of workers — has nearly doubled across the U.S. capitalist economy, celebrating what they call the pandemic’s “silver lining.”

The Robotic Industries Association gloated over a 64% jump in bosses’ pur-

working class up to become the leading class through the conquest of political power. That is precisely what the revolutionary cadres within the Rebel Army and July 26 Movement, with Marxist leadership, achieved.

The Cuban Revolution helped renew the prospects of socialist revolution, proletarian internationalism, and Marxist revolutionary working-class leadership worldwide. It inspired a new generation of revolutionaries who dedicated their lives to emulating its example.

When Barnes asked revolutionary fighters in Cuba whether he should stay in Cuba and fight alongside them or return to the U.S., they told him to go back and join whatever party he found that was preparing to do what they did in Cuba. Barnes came back and joined the Socialist Workers Party to help lead in fighting for the working class to take political power and carry through a socialist revolution here.

chase of robots across North America, including to food processors and other manufacturers, as they seek to increase the rate of exploitation of their workers.

The scourge of rising prices

The blight of continuing high unemployment is compounded today by rising prices, especially of necessities for workers and farmers like food and gas. Yearly inflation hit 5.4% in June, while prices for meat, poultry, fish and eggs shot up 2.5% in that month alone.

In some parts of the country workers face soaring rents as landlords look to make a killing. Phoenix is one of a dozen cities where rents have risen over 10% in the past year. Lauren Campos told the *Washington Post* she got a note from the landlord of her two-bedroom apartment there saying she must fork out an extra \$400 a month or get out.

Workers need to find a course forward to take on the profit-driven class of bosses, bankers and landlords.

“The SWP campaign says working people need to break from the Democrats and Republicans — the twin parties of capitalist rule — and chart a course to take political power into their own hands,” Jarrett said. “A workers and farmers government would reorganize society in the interests of the vast majority, not for the profits of the few. It would unleash the mighty potential of workers and farmers to rid humanity of exploitation and oppression once and for all.

Cuba protests US intervention as it tackles challenges from embargo

BY SETH GALINSKY

If you follow the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, Fox News, or virtually any of the U.S. capitalist media, you saw front-page reports that Cuba was convulsed July 11 by a massive, spontaneous anti-government “uprising.” That the Cuban government has “mismanaged” the COVID-19 pandemic. And that police and thugs unleashed unprovoked attacks on peaceful demonstrators.

But these are gross exaggerations and outright lies. It’s true there were marches — some involving hundreds of people — in more than a dozen cities, including Havana, far from an “uprising.” And their composition was mixed, as Cuban leaders publicly explained.

President Miguel Díaz-Canel addressed the Cuban people in a public speech later that day. He said the revolutionary government has been open about the challenges they face. “In the middle of 2019,” he said, “we had to explain that we were heading toward a difficult conjuncture” as a result of Washington’s intensification of its punishing embargo, “whose objective is to asphyxiate the economy of our country.”

There has been a shortage of food, the worst since the Special Period in the early 1990s after the implosion of the Soviet Union, formerly Cuba’s main trading partner; a worldwide downturn in capitalist production and trade that affected Cuba; and a stubborn COVID pandemic with a recent uptick in cases in Cuba.

For lack of supplies and equipment, Cuban workers and farmers have faced a recent series of electrical blackouts and other shortages.

President Joseph Biden has continued the embargo, like every president since 1960 has. The suffering imposed on the Cuban people is a direct result of U.S. government policy, which seeks to use economic pressure to bring Cuba’s socialist revolution down. Biden hailed the protests in Cuba.

Díaz-Canel explained in his address that among those who joined the anti-government actions were people “who are experiencing some of these scarcities; it includes revolutionary



New York Times ran this article in Spanish and English on protests in Cuba with this image, which the paper claimed was of an anti-government protest. In fact, it is a march in Havana in support of the revolution! In the baseball cap behind the Cuban flag is Gerardo Hernández, a well-known leader of the Committees in Defense of the Revolution and one of the Cuban 5, who spent 16 years in prison in the U.S., framed up for his work helping to stop terrorist attacks on Cuba.

people who are confused or who don’t have answers or who are also expressing discontent.”

But “in the leadership” of the protests “was a nucleus of manipulators” who collaborate with U.S. anti-Cuba campaigns, he said, and they had been preparing for disruption for days.

As part of the provocation, opponents of the revolution vandalized stores that sell products in dollars, overturned a police car, and chanted slogans calling for U.S. “humanitarian” intervention or “We want vaccines.” The chant around vaccines was particularly insulting to

many Cubans, given the fact that Cuba is the only country in Latin America to develop its own vaccines, rated as over 90% effective, and has begun massive distribution. However, as a result of the embargo, they have a critical shortage of hypodermic needles for vaccination.

Groups in the U.S. and worldwide have been raising money to donate syringes. The most recent was the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, which voted to contribute \$10,000 to the effort at its convention in June.

Díaz-Canel called on supporters of the revolution to go out into the streets and to take the discussion on the embargo and the efforts of the government to bring relief to every doorstep.

In response, thousands of working people and youth who support the revolution took to the streets and have continued to do so.

On July 12, in the province of Cienfuegos alone, the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions held 171 meetings involving nearly 3,000 workers to show their support for the revolution.

Revolution’s supporters take action

Cuba’s president went to San Antonio de los Baños in Artemisa province, where the first of the protests broke out. He joined a march in defense of the revolution there July 11 and spoke directly with working people in the streets about the challenges they face.

In Ciego de Ávila, three leaders of the Union of Young Communists, Ángel Alberto Álvarez, Elizabeth López Caballero and outgoing UJC Secretary Yulianky Godínez García headed to the anti-government action there, *Juventud Rebelde* reported, to engage participants in discussions.

They joined a march of defenders of the revolution that blocked the way of the counterrevolutionary action. “Despite that today they opposed the revolution, we have to reach out to them, because truly revolutionary positions have always been firm, but also humane,” Godínez said.

The next day Díaz-Canel and other government leaders held an over four-hour televised press conference where they went over in detail what the government is doing to face the challenges from shortages in importing oil, spare parts, food, fertilizer and more because of the U.S.-imposed restrictions.

The Cuban president denounced the cynicism of U.S. officials who claim they support the Cuban people and present themselves as “the big savior” while they have the country blockaded. Cuba gladly accepts all kinds of aid, Díaz-Canel said, but not aid that is aimed at violating the country’s sovereignty and interfering in its affairs.

He noted Washington claims it’s the Cuban Revolution, not the U.S. embargo, that has created the problems Cuban workers and farmers face today. He challenged Washington to prove it.

“Lift the blockade,” Díaz-Canel said, “and then we will see how we do, how this people will advance.”

Join July 25 protest in DC against US embargo of Cuba

Continued from page 4

movement. Courtney said that the U.S. sanctions on Cuba had made it difficult for the federation to establish the relationships they wanted to with Cuban cooperatives. “It’s immoral to strangle a whole nation in the name of the free market,” Courtney said.

“Through this pilgrimage to Washington, we are meeting many people from civil society who are involved in struggles that we are learning about,” Lazo told them. “In south Georgia, we met a farmer, Willie Head, who taught us how African American farmers have lost their land over generations through denial of loans and credit and outright discrimination by the U.S. government.”

Lazo said that when he was growing up in Cuba, his mother told him about one of the highpoints of the struggle for civil rights. She described how marchers protesting Jim Crow segregation were brutally attacked by cops when they attempted to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, in 1965. “That’s where I got the name for our organization, Bridges of Love,” he said.

About 25 people attended a celebration with marchers campaigning against the U.S. embargo in Atlanta’s Candler Park that evening.

“We have been educating communities about why we are fighting for the lifting of the embargo, but in this journey we also learn about other causes that we were not very familiar with, and we

realize how interconnected we are in this world, and how we have to fight together,” Lazo told the group.

An appeal was made by Bernardo Gomez, one of the event organizers, for contributions to the Syringes for Cuba campaign. This helps to ensure that Cuba can inoculate the entire population against COVID-19 with Cuban-developed vaccines. Over \$425,000 has already been raised.

Some 20 people heard Lazo speak at a meeting hosted by the Peace Church of Christ in Greensboro, North Carolina, July 12. Lazo described his own experience in the U.S. army in Iraq and con-

demned those calling for U.S. military intervention in Cuba.

By July 19, Lazo and the group will be in Richmond, Virginia.

If you would like to organize an event for Lazo and Puentes de Amor on their way to D.C. write him at porcubal@yahoo.com.

For more information on the July 25 events, contact the DC Metro Committee in Solidarity with the Cuban Revolution at dcmetrocoalitionforcuba@gmail.com or (202) 503-9465.

Rachele Fruit in Atlanta contributed to this article.

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes



This is a book about the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary — it can be made. It’s about the class struggle in the U.S., where the potential of workers and farmers are today as

utterly discounted by the ruling powers as were those of the Cuban toilers. And just as wrongly. \$10

Also in Spanish, French, Farsi

pathfinderpress.com

SWP hosts Active Workers Conference in Ohio July 22-24

Under the banner of “Leading the Working Class to Take Power/ Join the Socialist Workers Party/ Build the Communist Vanguard!” the SWP is hosting an International Active Workers Conference at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio, July 22-24. Working-class fighters who’ve been invited will gather for three intensive days of discussions about the road forward.

At the center of the conference will be three talks by Socialist Workers Party leaders Jack Barnes, Dave Prince and Mary-Alice Waters on key questions of world politics, history, culture and the labor movement that working people face today.

A series of classes and displays will supplement the talks, covering lessons from the history of the labor and communist movement.

A special display will feature the coming new Pathfinder title *Labor, Nature, and the Dawn of Humanity: The Long View of History* by Frederick Engels, Karl Marx and George Novack.

The conference will conclude with a panel of SWP and Communist League candidates. The next day, teams will fan out to take the campaign to working people in towns and cities across the country.

— ROY LANDERSEN

Lenin: ‘Oppressed nations have the right to self-determination’

One of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for July is Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite! Proceedings and Documents of the Second Congress of the Communist International, 1920 (Volume 1). This excerpt is from a report to the Congress by V.I. Lenin, the central leader of the Bolshevik Party. The Congress was attended by delegates from 37 countries in Europe, Asia, the Americas and Australia. One reason the Bolsheviks were able to lead working people to power in Russia in October 1917 and defeat attempts by imperialist armies to overthrow the new government was because they championed the rights of peoples who were oppressed under the czarist empire, which was a prison house of nations. In his report, Lenin draws on the lessons of that experience to help guide revolutionary parties around the world. Copyright © 1991 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY V.I. LENIN

First, what is the cardinal idea underlying our theses? It is the distinction between oppressed and oppressor nations. Unlike the Second International and bourgeois democracy, we emphasize this distinction. In this age of imperialism, it is particularly important for the proletariat and the



Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin, center, at Congress of the Communist International in Moscow, 1920. Lenin explained the need to back the fight for national liberation in colonies and semicolonies, for the toilers to organize independent of the imperialists and their capitalist allies there.

Communist International to establish the concrete economic facts and to proceed from concrete realities, not from abstract postulates, in all colonial and national problems.

The characteristic feature of imperialism consists in the whole world, as we now see, being divided into a large number of oppressed nations and an insignificant number of oppressor nations, the latter possessing colossal wealth and powerful armed forces. The vast majority of the world's population, over a billion, perhaps even 1.25 billion people, or, if we take the total population of the world as 1.75 billion, about 70 percent of the world's population, belongs to the oppressed nations, which are either in a state of direct colonial dependence or are semicolonies as, for example, Persia, Turkey, and China, or else, conquered by some big imperialist power, have become greatly dependent on that power by virtue of peace treaties. This idea of a division, of dividing the nations into oppressor and oppressed, runs through the theses, not only the first theses published earlier over my signature but also those submitted by Comrade Roy. The latter were framed chiefly from the standpoint of the situation in India and other big Asian countries oppressed by Britain. Herein lies their great importance to us.

The second basic idea in our theses is that in the present world situation following the imperialist war reciprocal relations between peoples, as

well as the world political system as a whole, are determined by the struggle waged by a small group of imperialist nations against the soviet movement and the soviet states headed by Soviet Russia. Unless we bear that in mind, we shall not be able to pose a single national or colonial problem correctly, even if it concerns a most outlying part of the world. Only by beginning from this standpoint can the Communist parties in civilized and backward countries alike pose and solve political problems correctly.

Third, I should like especially to emphasize the question of the bourgeois-democratic movement in backward countries. ... [W]e have arrived at the unanimous decision to speak of the national-revolutionary movement rather than of the "bourgeois-democratic" movement. It is beyond doubt that any national movement can only be a bourgeois-democratic movement, since the overwhelming mass of the population in the backward countries consists of peasants, who represent bourgeois-capitalist relationships. It would be utopian to believe that proletarian parties in these backward countries, if indeed they can emerge in them, can pursue communist tactics and a communist policy without establishing definite relations with the peasant movement and without giving it effective support.

However, the objection has been raised that if we speak of the bourgeois-democratic movement we shall

be obliterating all distinctions between the reformist and the revolutionary movements. Yet that distinction has been very clearly revealed of late in the backward and colonial countries, since the imperialist bourgeoisie is doing everything in its power to implant a reformist movement among the oppressed nations too. There has been a certain rapprochement between the bourgeoisie of the exploiting countries and that of the colonies, so that very often — perhaps even in most cases — the bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries, while it does support the national movement, is in full accord with the imperialist bourgeoisie, that is, joins forces with it against all revolutionary movements and revolutionary classes. This was irrefutably proven in the commission, and we decided that the only correct attitude was to take this distinction into account and, in nearly all cases, substitute the term *national-revolutionary* for the term *bourgeois-democratic*.

The significance of this change is that we, as Communists, should and will support bourgeois liberation movements in the colonies only when they are genuinely revolutionary, and when their exponents do not hinder our work of educating and organizing in a revolutionary spirit the peasantry and the masses of the exploited. ...

Next, I would like to make a remark on the subject of peasants' soviets. The Russian Communists' practical activities in the former tsarist colonies, in such backward countries as Turkestan, and so forth, have confronted us with the question of how to apply communist tactics and policy in precapitalist conditions. The preponderance of precapitalist relationships is still the main determining feature in these countries, so that there can be no question of a purely proletarian movement in them. There is practically no industrial proletariat in these countries. Nevertheless, we have assumed, we must assume, the role of leader even there. Experience has shown us that tremendous difficulties have to be surmounted in these countries. However, the practical results of our work have also shown that despite these difficulties we are in a position to inspire in the masses an urge for independent political thinking and independent political action, even where a proletariat is practically nonexistent.

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For unconditional recognition of Israel! Protest every time Jew-hatred raises its head!

Message from Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of New Jersey, to July 11 rally in Washington, D.C.

The Socialist Workers Party calls for unconditional recognition of Israel as a homeland for Jews. We urge unions and all organizations of workers and the oppressed to join actions like today's rally to protest growing antisemitic violence and bigotry in the U.S. and elsewhere.

Establishment of the state of Israel was made inevitable by the Holocaust, with the slaughter of some 6 million Jews, and refusal by the capitalist rulers in Washington, London and elsewhere to open their borders to Jews seeking to flee Nazi persecution both before and during the second imperialist world war and then its horrific aftermath. Israel has existed as a refuge for targets of Jew-hatred for almost 75 years.

"There is nothing that compares to the Holocaust," said Cuban revolutionary leader Fidel Castro in a 2010 interview in *Atlantic* magazine. Political

figures across the Middle East should acknowledge "the 'unique' history of antisemitism" and try "to understand why Israelis fear for their existence," he said. We agree with these words by the central leader of Cuba's socialist revolution, which is an example for working people everywhere.

The Socialist Workers Party combats Jew-hatred as we organize to help lead the working class to take political power into our own hands and establish a workers and farmers government. Making a socialist revolution here and worldwide will open the door to fight to end all forms of capitalist exploitation and oppression once and for all.

Today we see acts of Jew-hatred both from right-



Militant/Mike Shur
Joanne Kuniansky, SWP candidate for governor of New Jersey.

ists and middle-class liberals and radicals. On the left there are actions raising the Hamas slogan, "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" — *free of Jews*, they mean. We urge working people to oppose these actions as a deadly danger to advancing the class interests and solidarity of *all* workers and toiling farmers in the Middle East — Jews, Palestinians, Arabs, Kurds and others.

At times of rising economic and social crisis, the capitalist rulers resort to antisemitism to scapegoat Jews and divert ruined middle-class layers and demoralized workers away from the class struggle. As we said in a 1938 resolution, the year we took the name Socialist Workers Party, class-conscious workers have "the duty of exposing the real aims of the capitalists, hidden behind the smoke-screen of anti-Semitism and thereby inoculating the masses against the poison," as well as "mobilizing the real defense of the persecuted Jews, a defense of necessity based on the might of the organized working class."

That remains our guide today.

Working people in Iran protest effects of social crisis, gov't wars abroad

Continued from front page

wave. The outages led to the deaths of hospital patients, the closure of factories and cuts to water supplies and air conditioning.

At first, the bourgeois-clerical regime blamed the people for using too much electricity. But following the protests President Hassan Rouhani apologized July 6, fearful that anti-government actions could spread. While the regime has lavished funds on its counterrevolutionary interventions abroad, it has done little over many years to upgrade rotting infrastructure, including the electric grid.

Protests against the outages occurred in Shahr-e Ray near Tehran, Shiraz, Amol and other cities July 5-6. Some demonstrators shouted "Death to Khomeini," referring to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, a reflection of the depth of the discontent felt by working people.

Just weeks before, his regime held presidential elections marked by the lowest voter turnout since the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Ebrahim Raisi, a close ally of Khamenei, won the vote after most of his competitors — especially those who raised any criticism — were disqualified by the regime's Guardian Council.

In City Council elections, more people spoiled their ballots than actually voted for candidates in three large cities — Karaj, Hamedan and Arak — a further indication of the regime's waning legitimacy.

Workers face hardships

Mounting hardships from rising prices and shortages have been exacerbated by severe U.S. sanctions, and by the drop in world production and trade during the pandemic. Food prices have risen at least 70% in the past year.

Thousands of workers hired on temporary contracts at some 60 oil and petrochemical installations have been on strike since June 20. They are demanding higher wages and more days off each month.

During the past two decades the state-owned Iranian National Oil Company began hiring workers from contractors on short-term contracts at wages half those it pays to workers directly employed by the company. Over 106,000 workers now come from contractors.

Rouhani dismisses the strike, saying it has nothing to do with the oil ministry and is a matter for the subcontractors to work out. The committee of workers organizing the walkout says they will urge workers hired directly by the company to join the strike if their demands aren't granted by August.

Other working people are demanding the authorities take action to defend their livelihoods. Farmers in Fars province demonstrated in front of the governor's office June 27 demanding the government cover the

difference between their rising cost of production and the plummeting prices they receive for milk.

The bourgeois-clerical regime is presented in the U.S. capitalist media as the legitimate successor of the 1979 revolution, a powerful popular mobilization that overthrew the U.S.-backed shah of Iran. In fact, the regime consolidated power out of a counterrevolution in the early 1980s to entrench capitalist rule and deal blows to working people. They tried to stifle workers' councils that were established and set back struggles by farmers for land, gains won for women's rights and struggles by Kurds and other oppressed nationalities.

Key to advancing the rulers' counterrevolution at home is seeking to extend their reach throughout the Middle East. The Iranian rulers have deployed militias and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps into conflicts in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. They established missile sites nearer to Israel and extended their political influence at a deadly cost to working people both in Iran and elsewhere. Their intervention has brought them

into conflict with peoples across the region.

To force the Iraqi government into paying outstanding debts of some \$4 billion to Tehran for providing electricity, the Iranian government cut power supplies to Iraq earlier this month. Tehran provides up to 30% of Iraq's electrical power, especially to the neighboring largely Shiite-populated southern part of the country.

This intensified the impact of power cuts inflicted regularly on working people by Baghdad. Hundreds of Iraqis took to the streets to protest the most recent cuts in Basra. Temperatures there are averaging 122 F.

"Basra has a lot of money, but its not being used for its people," Abbas Hassoun told Al Jazeera.

In 2018 and again the next year, power cuts and other shortages triggered widespread protests across southern Iraq. Among the demands raised by hundreds of thousands of workers and youth were that the government provide jobs, that it end rule by sectarian political parties, and that Tehran and Washington halt their interference and plunder of the country's resources.

Protest hits Jew-hatred, backs Israel's right to exist

Continued from front page

attacked. One was high school student Talia Raab. After she began organizing a May 23 "Walk for Israel" in Naperville, Illinois, Raab got over 1,300 antisemitic responses online. "I refuse to be silent," she said.

Rev. Jimmie Hawkins, an African American minister from the Presbyterian Church, USA, reminded participants about the "Jewish-Black alliance" forged in the fight against Jim Crow segregation in the 1960s. "Now is a time of solidarity," he said, in the face of increased antisemitic attacks.

Organizers of the event said they welcomed participation from everyone who supports the right of Israel to exist as a Jewish state and opposes antisemitism. Anyone who supports expelling Arabs from Israel was told they weren't welcome.

"I see a lot of the antisemitism in the United States being articulated as anti-Zionism," Melissa Landa, director of the Alliance for Israel, which initiated the rally, told the *Forward*. "To me, it's for the most part one and the same."

"I never thought we'd see in our lifetimes the rise in antisemitism," Paula Bienenfeld told the *Militant*. "It is time for Jews to reclaim the public space."

Over 100 mostly Jewish organizations endorsed the rally, including the Anti-Defamation League, American Jewish Committee and B'nai B'rith International.

The Socialist Workers Party supported the action and distributed hundreds of copies of a statement by SWP candidate for New Jersey governor

Joanne Kuniansky, headlined "For Unconditional Recognition of Israel! Protest Every Time Jew-Hatred Raises Its Head!"

The *Jewish Voice* reported that Kuniansky denounced "acts of Jew-hatred both from rightists and middle-class liberals and radicals" and that she urged working people to oppose actions that call for the destruction of Israel as a "deadly danger" to the class interests and solidarity of Jewish, Palestinian, Arab, Kurdish and other workers.

The statement says opposition to Jew-hatred is in the interests of working people in the U.S. and that "at times of rising economic and social crisis, the capitalist rulers resort to antisemitism to scapegoat Jews and divert ruined middle-class layers and demoralized workers away from the class struggle."

Silvan Meliza wanted to talk more when told that the party views opposing Jew-hatred as a key question for the working class.

"I consider myself progressive but I support Israel and all the antisemitism I see is very scary," she said. "The 'woke' atmosphere on campuses is very intolerant and I worry that when my teenagers go to college they'll be under pressure to not identify as Jews."

Gabriel Epstein, who recently moved to the D.C. area from California, said he finds "the events of the past few months disturbing," referring to the vandalism of synagogues with Nazi symbols as well as a physical attack against Jewish diners outdoors at a sushi restaurant in Los Angeles by thugs waving Palestinian flags.