

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Presidential election in Peru reflects rising class tensions
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 85/NO. 32 AUGUST 30, 2021

Defend, emulate Cuba's socialist revolution! End US embargo!

BY SARA LOBMAN

NEW YORK — Why does Cuba's socialist revolution continue to live, fight and set an example worldwide more than 60 years after workers and farmers there took power? What makes class and social relations in Cuba so different from anywhere else in the world today?

Because 62 years ago the working people of Cuba were led by a Marxist leadership to make a socialist revolution, Martin Koppel and Róger Calero told a Militant Labor Forum here Aug. 14. Both are members of the Socialist Workers Party; Calero is the party's candidate for mayor of New York.

"The revolutionary government was a new state power — workers power — that organized workers, farmers, youth and others," Koppel said. "A socialist revolution is marked by a different kind of social relations, based on working-class solidarity, not capitalist competition."

"There were two great socialist revolutions..."
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Massachusetts nurses fight for safety, patients' health

Solidarity crucial as strike enters fifth month



Boston Herald/Chris Christo

Nurses from St. Vincent Hospital picket in Worcester, Mass., July 6. Some 700 nurses have been on strike since March 8. Fight for better nurse/patient ratios is at center of their struggle.

BY JACOB PERASSO

WORCESTER, Mass. — "We are holding strong," Jackie Brosnihan, a nurse on strike here at St. Vincent hospital, told the *Militant* Aug. 14. Brosnihan is one of 700 nurses who walked off the

job March 8 over dangerous conditions facing both staff and patients, as well as for respect, wages and benefits.

She was responding to the "last, best and final" Aug. 5 contract offer from Tenet Healthcare, which owns the hospital, and its threats to permanently replace the nurses. The Massachusetts Nurses Association says the offer "fails to provide the improvements in staffing that nurses need to keep patients safe."

"We are reaching out to everyone possible for support," Brosnihan added. "Just this week Boston Firefighters and Teamsters Local 170 came to bring support, cooking a meal and walking the picket line with us." Strikers say numerous union delegations and others have

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US rulers end 20-year-long imperialist war in Afghanistan

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The U.S. rulers' 20-year war and occupation of Afghanistan, and the carnage it inflicted on working people at home and abroad, ended with further devastation as the Taliban retook the capital, Kabul, Aug. 15.

In the wake of President Joseph Biden's April 13 announcement that all U.S. forces would withdraw by Sept. 11, and Washington's abandonment of its main Bagram airbase without any notice to Afghan government forces, the reactionary Taliban stepped up its military offensive. The Afghan army disintegrated after the withdrawal of U.S. army and air support. President Ashraf Ghani fled the country. Taliban commanders announced the formation of the "Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan."

Biden sent 6,000 troops back to Kabul airport to evacuate remaining U.S. personnel. The airport was flooded by thousands of Afghans desperately seeking to escape the Taliban's clutches, some clinging to departing planes at the cost of their lives.

Of the quarter of a million Afghans...
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Earthquake, decades of US plunder brings social catastrophe in Haiti



Misión Médica en Haití

Cuban medical volunteers treat patients in southwest Haiti after earthquake. Cuba's internationalist medical mission — 253 health care workers strong — has been in Haiti for 22 years.

BY SETH GALINSKY

The capitalist press in the U.S. presents the social catastrophe unfolding in Haiti since a 7.2 magnitude earthquake ravaged its southwest Aug. 14 as a natural disaster. But there is little that is "natural" about the more than 1,900 dead, 6,000 injured and over 37,000 families homeless.

The depth of the destruction is the consequence of over 100 years of imperialist plunder and capitalist

greed that has siphoned billions of dollars in profits into the coffers of foreign corporations and left 60% of Haitians earning less than \$2 a day. Even before the earthquake, some 66% of the population had no access to electricity.

An earthquake in 2010 killed 300,000 people and destroyed 100,000 structures. Nothing has been done since then to prepare for more...
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SWP campaign: 'Workers need to fight to take political power'

BY ROY LANDERSEN

"Working people today are keenly interested in how we can organize to fight to change the disastrous conditions we face worldwide — from Afghanistan, to Haiti, to the Middle East and here in mines, mills and other workplaces across the U.S.," John Studer, Socialist Workers Party national campaign director, told the *Militant*. "We all face a relentless offensive by the capitalist rulers, whose dog-eat-dog profit system drives them to attack working people at home and abroad."

Supporters of SWP campaigns on the West Coast from Los Angeles to Seattle are organizing a coordinated...
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Fight for shorter workweek with no pay cut to put us back to work!

BY TERRY EVANS

Workers today face an ongoing struggle for jobs, safe working conditions and enough pay to survive. Some are locked out or are on strike over boss demands to worsen workers' conditions, including at the Warrior Met coal mine in Alabama, ExxonMobil's big oil refinery in Texas, St. Vincent Hospital in Massachusetts and elsewhere.

Government statistics, which deliberately undercount the real conditions facing working people, still report there are...
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'Fidel belongs to working people of the world' 6

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Quebec strikers need solidarity in fight against Olymel bosses

Social catastrophe hits Haiti

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earthquakes, much less strengthen existing buildings.

"I don't expect any help, we're on our own," Michel Milord, a 66-year-old farmer in Toirac, who lost his wife and his house, told the *New York Times*. "No one trusts the government here."

At one collapsed three-story apartment building in Les Cayes the only help that arrived rapidly to look for survivors and the dead were poorly equipped volunteers.

"All we have are sledgehammers and hands. That's the plan," Canadian volunteer Randy Lodder, director of the Adoration Christian School in Haiti, told The Associated Press.

Haiti has roughly 20 doctors per 100,000 people, a lower percentage than Afghanistan. Some 75% of child-births take place without the presence of any trained health workers. Until July Haiti had not received a single COVID-19 vaccine dose.

Not only are doctors and nurses in short supply, but there are not enough basic items like bandages, anesthesia and antibiotics to treat people injured in the quake.

Haitian working people are justly proud of Haiti's history as the site of the world's first successful slave rebellion, which defeated the French in 1804 and put an end to slavery. However, the French empire was able to keep bleeding Haiti of its wealth, including charging reparations to compensate the French rulers for the "loss" of their slave plantations.

History of working-class struggle

U.S. Marines invaded Haiti in 1915 and occupied the country for the next 19 years, paving the way for continued

plunder and the U.S.-backed dictatorship of the Duvalier family, which lasted from 1957 until 1986.

In 1986 workers and farmers rose up and overthrew the Duvalier regime. They have often taken to the streets since to protest against anti-working-class measures of successive governments.

The capitalist class and its backers in Washington haven't been able to create a stable government. On July 7, Haitian President Jovenel Moise was assassinated in his home under circumstances that remain uncertain. Prior to his killing, Moise had refused to call new elections and was ruling by decree, rejecting opposition party claims that his term had expired.

The terms of almost all the members of Haiti's legislature expired in October 2019, but no new elections have been held. U.S.-backed neurosurgeon Ariel Henry took office July 20 as prime minister, leaving the post of president vacant.

The U.S. Department of Commerce touts Haiti as a great place for capitalist investment, calling it "one of the most open economies in the Caribbean" with "few government controls." Haitian tariffs on rice and chicken were rescinded in the 1990s, at the insistence of President Bill Clinton, devastating the livelihood of thousands of peasants. Most of the country's food is imported today, including 80% of the rice, almost entirely from the U.S.

In the absence of an authoritative government, large swaths of the country are under the control of criminal gangs, including the main road from Port-au-Prince, the capital, to the areas devastated by the earthquake. International organizations negotiated a truce



AP/Joseph Odelyn

People gather outside Petit Pas Hotel, destroyed by Aug. 14 earthquake in Les Cayes, Haiti. Impoverished by U.S. imperialist plunder, thousands were killed, injured or made homeless.

with them to begin transporting relief.

So far aid from major capitalist powers and "nonprofits" has been slow and inadequate, like it has been every time Haiti has been hit by earthquakes, hurricanes or other disasters. The United Nations has allocated only \$8 million.

Cuban volunteers set an example

As in past disasters, Cuban medical volunteers are setting an example for the entire world. In the first day after the quake, 253 Cuban doctors, nurses and other health care workers volunteering in Haiti had already treated more than 600 people who had been injured.

Because many hospitals were damaged, "Cubans together with Haitian personnel are treating people outside the buildings," reported Eugenio Martínez, a spokesperson for Cuba's Foreign Ministry.

"Our volunteers are ready to go anywhere we are needed," Luis Orlando Olivero, head of the Cuban medical mission in Haiti, told the press. "It's a question of principles, of commitment, not philanthropy."

The Cuban volunteers work in 18 public hospitals in 10 departments of Haiti.

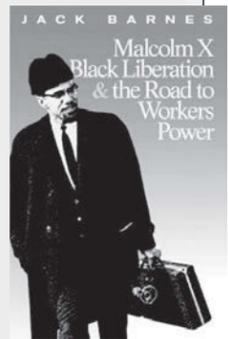
"We didn't arrive with the earthquake, we've been here for 22 years," Olivero said. "We were here during previous quakes, during the cholera epidemic, and most recently the COVID-19 pandemic and we will continue

here as long as the country needs us."

In addition to the internationalist mission, the Cuban government has provided university education to 1,583 Haitian students since 1998, including more than 1,100 medical students. Currently 127 Haitians are studying in Cuba.

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, & the Road to Workers Power

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— Jack Barnes

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THE MILITANT

Solidarity with striking miners at Warrior Met!

Supporters of the 1,100 union miners who have been on strike over wages, working conditions and safety at Warrior Met Coal in Alabama since April 1 are spreading the word about their fight. The 'Militant' makes sure that the voice of these miners, and their allies, can be heard.



Reuters/Dustin Chambers

UMWA miners on strike at Warrior Met Coal in Brookwood, Alabama, rally Aug. 4.

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SWP: 'Fight for political power'

Continued from front page
campaign push Aug. 19-23 across California. Joel Britton, SWP candidate for State Assembly District 18 in the Bay Area, joined the speakers platform at a Los Angeles campaign forum Aug. 14. Dennis Richter, SWP candidate on the ballot in the recently ordered special recall election for governor of California, will be joining the forum platform in Oakland Aug. 21.

Teams will visit with workers in northern California in the region being devastated by the huge Dixie Fire, as well as to Salinas, where 19-year-old Gerardo Martinez, an indigenous Mexican immigrant, was killed by cops July 16. The tour, and response to the campaign, will be covered in the next issue of the *Militant*.

"Workers want to discuss how we can chart a road out of the catastrophes prepared by capitalist exploitation and oppression," Studer said.

"They look to learn about any fight being carried out by workers and farmers and to seek ways to help," he said. "The 20 Socialist Workers Party-endorsed candidates across the country are getting out the word and building solidarity with coal miners fighting attacks by bosses at the Warrior Met mine complex in Alabama and other labor battles.

"We're knocking on doors in cities, towns and rural areas, on picket lines and protests, discussing the roots of today's crisis in capitalist exploitation," he said, "and how we can organize to build a working-class movement to take political power into our own hands."

In Atlanta, Susan LaMont reports that Rachele Fruit, SWP candidate for mayor, and Sam Manuel, for City Council president, successfully filed

to get on the ballot Aug. 17 for the Nov. 2 elections there.

Valerie Edwards, a stationary engineer at a university in Atlanta, joined other campaign supporters when the two candidates filed.

"The Socialist Workers Party candidates present a new perspective, one that concentrates on the working class and what we need to do," she told the *Militant*. The capitalist political parties aren't getting working people anywhere, she said, so she has been "explaining that we have to look in a different direction as workers."

To find out more or to join the SWP or Communist League campaigns, or to make a contribution, contact the party branch nearest you in the directory on page 8.



Militant/Carole Lesnick
"I lost everything I valued in the Camp Fire," Richard Reed told Jeff Powers, left, and Joel Britton, right, Socialist Workers Party candidate for State Assembly, in Paradise, California, Aug. 7. SWP campaigners are returning to visit with workers in area devastated by Dixie Fire.

Sydney families fight gov't eviction for parking lot

BY LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY — Sam Charan and his family are leading a fight to save their home and two others on Webb Street in Riverwood, a working-class

district in this city's southwest, from being demolished to make way for a commuter parking garage.

Placards outside the three houses say "Save our family homes" and encourage people to sign an online petition against the car park.



Chris Lane
Sam and Monika Charan leading fight against government eviction from their home in Riverwood neighborhood in Sydney.

at the end of June, Charan distributed flyers in the neighborhood to win support.

The petition, signed by 1,596 people, was presented to the New South Wales state

government July 24. It called on the government to prevent the compulsory acquisition of the properties and allow time for community consultation to reconsider the location of the car park.

The first the Charan family knew of the car-park proposal was an early morning "loud banging" on their door Feb. 16. They were handed documents giving 90 days' notice of compulsory sale of their house.

Sam and his wife Monika are Fijian Indians who fled Fiji following the 1987 military coup. Now in their 70s, they have lived in their house for 28 years.

"We will not budge," Sam Charan told the *Militant* when Robert Aiken, Communist League candidate for Georges River Council, and his supporters visited June 19. "I will stand in front of the bulldozers when they come." The council district includes the Riverwood neighborhood.

"The government has no interest in working people's livelihoods," Aiken responded. "They only act to shore up the interests of big business." They discussed how winning the support of neighbors and workers in the area was key to winning the fight. "Working people need to act independently of the bosses and their parties," Aiken said.

Sam Charan said that residents from the south Sydney suburb of Jannali had come by to lend support to the fight. The Jannali families had been involved in a successful campaign earlier in the year to stop their houses being demolished for a similar car park.

Channel 9 interviewed the Charans and neighbor Jing He on "Current Affair" Aug. 3. The families had received notice that compulsory acquisition of their houses would take place in 30 days.

The Riverwood car park is just one of many government schemes nationwide that have come under public scrutiny for the way they were selected and funded. The federal government allocated 660 million Australian dollars (\$478 million) to a project to seize properties and build car parks near suburban train stations.

The cost of building the planned car park at the Riverwood station is \$41 million, "Current Affair" reported. The Charan family received a below-market price bid for their property while housing prices in Sydney have continued to surge. "We couldn't find a similar house for that amount in this neighborhood," Sam Charan told the *Militant*.

Va. teacher fired for view on sex vs gender back on job

BY MIKE GALATI

SPOTSYLVANIA, Va. — In an important victory for the right to free speech and for science, Circuit Court Judge James Plowman ordered Loudoun County Public Schools officials on June 8 to reinstate physical education teacher Byron Tanner Cross to his job. Cross, an elementary school gym teacher, had been suspended less than 48 hours after speaking at a public school board meeting against a proposed policy that would require school employees to address students with their chosen pronouns as well as to guarantee them access to restrooms and locker rooms that correspond to their "gender identity" rather than their biological sex.

"I will not affirm that a biological

boy can be a girl and vice versa because it's against my religion," Cross told the county's school board. "It's lying to a child; it's abuse to a child."

After being suspended and barred from Leesburg Elementary School grounds, Cross filed a civil suit against the county school system. "Public schools have no right to suspend someone simply for respectfully providing their opinion at a public meeting," argued Tyson Langhofer, one of Cross' lawyers, in a statement. "The school district wants to force Tanner to endorse its ideals and shut down any opposing views. That violates the Constitution and laws of Virginia, and so did the school's move to place Tanner on leave."

In his ruling reinstating Cross, the judge wrote: "Plaintiff has been suspended due to his speech, barred from further speech, and similarly situated employees have been chilled from speech because of Defendants' actions." The judge issued a temporary injunction until a full trial can be held on the suit in the fall.

A spokesman for Loudoun County Public Schools said the district plans to appeal this decision to the Virginia Supreme Court. "Many students and parents at Leesburg Elementary have expressed fear, hurt and disappointment about coming to school," school system officials claimed in a public statement in response to having to reinstate Cross. "Addressing those concerns is paramount to the school division's goal to provide a safe, welcoming and affirm-

ing learning environment for all students. While LCPS respects the rights of public-school employees to free speech and free exercise of religion, those rights do not outweigh the rights of students to be educated in a supportive and nurturing environment."

After several contentious school board meetings, where many parents tried to get their point of view heard, the Loudoun County School Board voted 7-2 Aug. 11 to adopt Policy 8040, allowing transgender students to use school locker rooms and bathrooms and to participate in sports based on their "gender identity."

Loudoun County is in suburban Virginia close to Washington, D.C. *Forbes* magazine ranks it as the wealthiest county in the state.

In a related development, the Loudoun Education Association, the county's teachers' union, last fall objected to a proposed "speech code" policy that the school system was considering adopting that would have forbidden school employees from criticizing the teaching of "critical race theory." This curriculum claims racism is inherent to all Caucasians and is the dominant factor in U.S. history. It denies teaching that a mighty proletarian movement led by Blacks overthrew Jim Crow segregation and transformed social relations and working-class unity in the U.S.

After the teachers' union publicized its objections, the school board said it would revise its speech code proposals, but to date no change has been made.

The Fight for Women's Emancipation

Why are women oppressed?
How did that oppression begin?
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Presidential election in Peru reflects rising class tensions

BY RÓGER CALERO

Pedro Castillo, Peru's newly elected president, took office July 28 in the midst of sharp political polarization and rising class tensions fed by a deepening economic and social crisis. Castillo, the candidate of Peru Libre (Free Peru), a party on the left of capitalist politics, defeated conservative Keiko Fujimori in a run-off by a razor-thin margin of 44,000 votes.

Fujimori and her ruling-class allies sought unsuccessfully to get the election results overturned. They and their imperialist allies in Washington claimed Castillo's government was Marxist.

The change in government follows the deaths of more than 187,000 people from coronavirus, the world's worst per capita death toll. Protests broke out in February after revelations that politicians and their relatives were given the COVID-19 vaccine months before the government began a public vaccination program.

Cuts on spending and the privatization of health care by previous governments have left working people with little or no access to medical care. In a country with a population of 32 million, there are only 276 mechanical ventilators, which are key to treating seriously ill coronavirus patients.

A quarter of Peru's population lacks running water. Three out of four workers are self-employed in the "informal economy." Many lost their family's only source of income during strict COVID-related government lockdowns. While these forced many workers out of their jobs, it failed to contain infections. Some 10% more Peruvians now live in poverty than before the pandemic.

Castillo claims to be an 'outsider'

Castillo, a former schoolteacher, union activist and small farmer, capitalized on long-simmering anger among working people. His campaign slogan, "No more poor people in a rich country," helped him win votes, especially in the resource-rich southern Andes, where his promises to nationalize gas deposits and the mining industry got support.

Peru is one of the world's top producers of copper, zinc, silver and gold, and has significant oil and natural gas resources. Around the world, mining companies are having some of the most profitable years on record, according to the *Wall Street Journal*. Profits for

the top 40 mining companies are projected to be \$118 billion in 2021 — up from \$70 billion in 2020 and \$61 billion in 2019. Meanwhile, governments in semicolonial countries like Peru, where mining is a key industry, face mounting debts to imperialist banks.

Under the government of Alberto Fujimori, conditions more favorable for capitalist investors in mining, oil, and logging operations were put in place in the 1990s. His regime suspended the constitution, tossed aside civil liberties and used brutal repression against its rivals. It also carried out widespread privatizations of banking and health care, cut subsidies and lifted price controls on basic necessities, ravaging the living standards of working people. These economic policies have been continued.

Top officials from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund lavished praise on Fujimori and every Peruvian government until now for managing the growth of the country's capitalist economy at the expense of working people.

These policies also helped spawn a terrorist Maoist guerrilla force known as Sendero Luminoso, or Shining Path. This counterrevolutionary group was responsible for 12,000 killings, leading to brutal repression by the regime and further impoverishment of workers and peasants.

Alberto Fujimori, the father of Keiko Fujimori, is currently in prison after being convicted on corruption and murder charges. Largely supported by record high prices of commodities, Peru's gross domestic product grew at an average annual rate of 5.6% between 2001 and 2016. But conditions for the majority of working people have been devastating.



Associated Press

Hundreds wait in long lines attempting to get a COVID-19 vaccine in San Martín de Porres district in Lima, Peru, July 4. Peru has the world's worst per capita death toll from the virus.

Castillo is not the first bourgeois presidential candidate to run as an "outsider." Nor is he the first to tap the hopes of working people, including indigenous populations long subject to discrimination, for greater control of the country's resources. Ollanta Humala, elected in 2011, vowed to nationalize some industries, fight endemic corruption and exoriated the "neo-liberal model."

Castillo's campaign claims — touted in the capitalist media as a radical "socialist" agenda — rattled national and foreign investors. The value of the country's currency, the sol, plunged after the election and inflation has risen. Since then, Castillo has reassured mining bosses that their interests are safe. He says he now favors "prudent" tax reforms instead.

"We are not Chavistas, we are not communists, we are not extremists," Castillo said last month.

His government has taken Peru out of the Lima group of Latin American nations over that group's calls for intervention to overturn the government of

Venezuela. Peruvian Foreign Minister Héctor Béjar called July 30 for an end to Washington's sanctions targeting the Nicolás Maduro government.

Castillo has backed off from his campaign call for a constitutional assembly to rewrite the 1993 charter written under Alberto Fujimori.

The need to replace the current constitution is presented by those on the left of capitalist politics in Peru as the main task ahead. They offer no program for mobilizing working people to fight for jobs, universal health care, greater control of production to protect land and labor, and other demands that can improve conditions.

These are the kinds of struggles, organized against the employers and their capitalist government, through which workers and farmers can chart a course forward. The best guide is the example of the Cuban Revolution, where Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement led working people to take political power into their own hands and carry through a socialist revolution.

Protests demand end to US colonial rule in Puerto Rico

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK — A hundred people marched here Aug. 15 to protest U.S. colonial rule in Puerto Rico. Similar actions were held in Chicago; Detroit; Miami; Oakland, California; Orlando, Florida; and Washington, D.C., under the banner of "No to statehood, march for decolonization."

Puerto Rico has been a U.S. colony since 1898, when U.S. troops wrested control of the island from Spanish rule. For decades Washington claimed Puerto Rico was a "self-governing" commonwealth, while exercising de-

cisive control over the economy and political life. The imposition of the Fiscal Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico by the U.S. Congress in 2016 — whose seven members were appointed by President Barack Obama — placed dictatorial power over the financial affairs and legislation of the country, puncturing any myth of self-rule.

Julio Pabón, who chaired the pre-march rally, told the crowd that there are now nearly 6 million people of Puerto Rican descent in the United States, well more than the 3.3 million who live on the island.

"The last 15 years have been ones of uninterrupted economic decline in Puerto Rico," said Eric Ramos, a leader of the New York chapter of the Puerto Rican Independence Party. "The only solution is independence."

The New York action was initiated by the Frente Independentista Boricua, a coalition of organizations backing the fight for independence for Puerto Rico.

The march was held to answer forces that call for making Puerto Rico

the 51st U.S. state, which the coalition says would be the final "annexation of our homeland."

The Socialist Workers Party endorsed and joined the action. "We discussed with marchers that independence has to be fought for and taken; it won't be given to the Puerto Rican people by U.S. imperialism," Róger Calero, SWP candidate for New York mayor, said. The SWP contingent carried signs stating, "Workers in the U.S. and Puerto Rico fight together."

As the two-mile march made its way through working-class neighborhoods from the Bronx to Harlem, many onlookers applauded or put their fists in the air in support.

After a rally in Harlem at the end of the march, some participants headed to the nearby mural that depicts both Che Guevara, a leader of the Cuban Revolution, and Pedro Albizu Campos, who led the fight for independence for Puerto Rico in the 1950s. The image of Che had been defaced with red paint two days before the march by opponents of the Cuban Revolution. The mural, created in 1999, includes a quote from a poem by Lola Rodríguez de Tió that says Cuba and Puerto Rico are "two wings of the same bird."

Supporters of independence for Puerto Rico rapidly repaired the damage to the mural.



Andrew Padilla

New York City march Aug. 15 protests U.S. colonial rule in Puerto Rico. Actions also took place in several other cities.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Afghanistan: The Weakening of U.S. Imperialism. The Working Class Needs Its Own Foreign Policy. Speaker: Norton Sandler. Sun., Aug. 29, 5 p.m. Donation: \$5. 2826 S. Vermont Ave., Suite 1. Tel.: (323) 643-4968.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

The Cuban Revolution: An Example for Working People Today. Speaker: Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for district attorney. Sat., Aug. 28, 6 p.m. Donation \$5. 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite 16. Tel.: (215) 708-1270.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Quebec strikers need solidarity in fight against Olymel bosses

VALLEE-JONCTION, Quebec — In the most important union fight taking place in the province, union officials and bosses at the Olymel hog slaughterhouse here announced another tentative agreement Aug. 14. Five days earlier, 1,050 workers who've been on strike since April 28 rejected a proposed contract containing the bosses' demand to impose a 10-hour workday. Workers, members of the Confederation of National Trade Unions, voted "no" by 82%.

Olymel brags that it's the largest pork producer in Canada, able to slaughter 185,000 hogs a week — as well as 2.4 million turkeys and chickens — with annual revenues of 4.5 billion Canadian dollars (\$3.6 billion).

Another key issue is wages. Workers took a 38% pay cut in 2007 when the company threatened to close down operations. "Our members have only seen an increase of \$1.13 in 14 years" since then, Martin Maurice, union president, told CNW Telbec Aug. 3. "The job is very demanding, and there are more than 400 work accidents a year."

Going door to door in the area to build solidarity with the strike — including explaining the need for small working farmers and workers to stand together — *Militant* correspondents met Dave Dufour, whose shoulder was injured while working at the plant. Even a shorter shift is difficult, Dufour said. "We do repetitive movements. It's not human. Workers should continue to fight" against a 10-hour shift.

On the picket line we met several strikers who are immigrants with work permits that allow them to work only at Olymel.

With production shut down tight, Olymel bosses put public pressure on strikers to return to work by threatening to euthanize 130,000 hogs that the company has been unable to process. The strike has impacted both small family hog farmers and larger capitalist ones who are unable to sell their pigs with the plant shut down.

Send solidarity messages and finan-

cial contributions to Syndicat des Travailleurs d'Olymel, Vallee-Jonction, 243 Rue Principale, Vallee-Jonction, QC G0S 3J0 Canada.

—Francois Bradette

Chicago auto mechanics strike car dealers to defend union, pay

CHICAGO — More than 800 auto mechanics at 56 new car dealerships have been walking picket lines around the Chicago metro area since Aug. 2. The day before, International Association of Machinists Automobile Mechanics Union Local 701 members rejected contract demands from the bosses' New Car Dealership Committee that would substantially undermine the power of their union.

One of the central issues is the bosses' demand for a "most favored nation" clause in the contract. "That means if they find language in any other automotive contract that they find more favorable, they can pull it out and impose it without any negotiations," Ronnie Gonzalez, Local 701 business representative, told the *Militant*. "This undermines the entire bargaining process."

The bosses' association also wants to make it easier to reduce the weekly pay guarantee for journeymen mechanics, who currently get 34 hours pay for being at work 40 hours a week. The workers, who get paid by the job, receive at least this much weekly, regardless of whether work is slow or they're assigned jobs that take longer than the "standard."

Also at stake are contributions to the union's health and welfare fund. The bosses claim it's "overfunded," so they shouldn't have to continue paying into it as much.

"They want to wait us out, but we'll wait them out," Mike Burton told the *Militant* while picketing Webb Chevrolet in the Oak Lawn suburb Aug. 10. "We struck for seven weeks last time, and we're willing to do it again."

Most of the strikers are veterans of that fight four years ago, when Local 701 fought to shorten apprenticeships from eight years to four. The contract they finally ratified in 2017 included a



Louise Leblanc

Members of CSN union on strike against Olymel hog slaughterhouse in Vallee-Jonction, Quebec, meet, discuss and vote down arbitrator's proposal Aug. 3. Company demanded union officials recommend the arbitrator's offer to members. They refused and workers rejected it.

five-year apprenticeship program.

Unlike during the last strike, about half of the dealerships with unionized mechanics have broken from the New Car Dealership Committee and already signed a contract that includes neither the "most favored nation" clause nor the attack on the weekly guarantee. "Fifty-five dealers have signed, and we're working on more," Gonzalez said.

Lube techs and "semiskilled" workers are also on strike. Matt Power, who works as a semiskilled technician, said the managers keep giving him more tasks that are usually done by journeymen, at less than half the pay. This is an attempt to divide workers, he said, one that needs to be combated.

"I understand what the union fights for," he said, noting it's his first time on strike. "I'm fighting for my future."

—Naomi Craine

Canada nickel strikers defeat Vale takeback drive

Some 2,400 striking nickel miners, and mill and smelter workers returned to work at Vale International S.A. in Sudbury, Ontario, Aug. 9 after pushing back the bosses' attempt to eliminate retiree health benefits for new hires. Under the slogan "Local 6500 standing up for future generations," the strikers had won wide support from working

people in the mine basin region.

United Steelworkers Local 6500 members went on strike June 1 after rejecting an agreement recommended by their negotiating committee. They turned down a second contract proposal by Vale bosses during the strike. On Aug. 3 they voted up by an 85% majority a third offer that had the unanimous backing of their union leadership.

During the five-year contract, workers will receive a 6% wage increase and cost-of-living adjustments, plus \$2,500 pandemic and \$3,500 signing bonuses. Some health care costs will go up.

"We do believe the union did extremely well in bargaining a contract that protects the workers as far as retiree benefits," Tammy Lanktree, who helped organize community support for the strike, told the *Militant* Aug. 7. Lanktree's companion was one of the workers on strike.

"The minimal raise is better than nothing. For a company that pays out great amounts to its shareholders, the raise to their hard-working employees didn't reflect that," she said.

During a solidarity visit to picket lines last month, both young and older workers told *Militant* correspondents that maintaining retiree health benefits for new hires had become the central issue of the strike — and key to preventing the company from creating divisions in the union. Many of the workers have long-term health problems because of the rock dust in the nickel mines and chemicals used in the refining process.

Vale bosses insisted they needed major concessions because of increasing international competition. But the company reported income up 600% during the second quarter this year compared to the same period in 2020. Vale, based in Brazil, is one of the largest mining companies in the world.

—Katy LeRougetel and John Steele

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



September 2, 1996

Leading the bipartisan assault against a half century of social gains by working people, President William Clinton announced July 31 that he will sign the new "welfare reform" bill adopted by the U.S. Congress. By eliminating federally guaranteed Aid for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and cutting off food stamps and Medicaid to many working people, Clinton is opening the battle to take back concessions codified in the Social Security Act.

Working people won the concessions in the Social Security Act — which encompassed guaranteed pension, disability, and unemployment benefit floors, as well as AFDC — through hard-fought battles in the 1930s. In the wake of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s, these gains were consolidated and extended by the addition of Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, and cost-of-living protections.



September 3, 1971

AUG. 24 — The decision in Northern Ireland to invoke emergency powers of detention without trial has provoked the most intense fighting and resistance since Ireland was partitioned 50 years ago. The reaction demonstrated a mounting opposition to the presence of British troops whom some had welcomed as protectors when they were first sent in 1969.

The response to the latest British assault on the Catholic population has consisted of work stoppages, rent strikes, and the withholding of income and real estate taxes.

The issue is not religion but a combination of economic and political factors. The British have continued to maintain control by assuring Protestant ascendancy and have thereby helped to intensify the religious divisions. Besides job discrimination, the Catholic minority is discriminated against in housing and voting rights.



August 31, 1946

SAN FRANCISCO — Solemn-faced pall bearers marching to the roll of muffled drums and carrying shrouded caskets symbolizing the death of "Freedom, Equality, Justice and Democracy," on August 11 led a "silent parade" of 5,000 Negro and white workers in protest against lynch terror in the South.

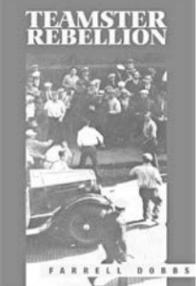
The protest was sponsored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Among the organizations that marched were the CIO National Maritime Union; AFL Miscellaneous Employees union; CIO Longshoremen's Local 10; Socialist Workers Party; Communist Party; and American Veterans Committee.

Edwin Elber, trade union director of the California Labor School, said, "These lynchings are manifestations of a south that is beginning to stir. Negroes are demanding the right to vote. Labor, both black and white, is beginning to organize."

Teamster Rebellion

by Farrell Dobbs

The 1934 strikes that built the industrial union movement in Minneapolis and helped pave the way for the CIO, as recounted by a central leader of that battle. — \$16



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Cuba's socialist revolution

Continued from front page

lutions in the 20th century, one in Russia, the other in Cuba," Koppel said, quoting from a letter sent by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes to Cuban President Raúl Castro in November 2016 after the death of Fidel Castro (reprinted below). In it Barnes noted that Castro's "highest achievement was forging in struggle a revolutionary cadre, a communist cadre, capable of leading the workers and farmers of Cuba to establish the first free territory of the Americas and successfully defend it for more than five and a half decades" — now more than six! — "against the determination to destroy it by the mightiest and most brutal empire the world has known."

The Cuban Revolution has been distinguished from the start by its proletarian internationalist record — sending volunteer combatants to aid anti-imperialist struggles, or doctors and nurses to respond to earthquakes and hurricanes, and to combat Ebola and COVID-19.

"The U.S. rulers fear that workers and farmers around the world, including here in the United States, will follow the living example of Cuba's socialist revolution," Koppel said.

Transformation of social relations

The leadership of the Cuban Revolution instilled in working people confidence in their own capacities to transform and lead society, Koppel said. This transformation began during the revolutionary war itself, as the Rebel Army began to organize working people in liberated regions to take charge of health care, education, justice and agriculture.

In the days following the Jan. 1, 1959, popular insurrection that toppled the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, the Rebel Army crossed the island and in every town along the way Castro spoke with crowds of workers and peasants to explain what they were fighting for.

Peasants were led to carry out a sweeping land reform. Workers "took more and more control of job condi-

tions. They expropriated the capitalists' factories, banks and big landholdings, and began to organize the economy to meet the needs of the majority, not the profits for a small exploiting class," Koppel said. "Decisive steps were taken to outlaw racist discrimination, and to draw millions of women into economic, social and political activity."

In 1961 an army of volunteer teachers, largely teenagers, spread across the countryside and wiped out illiteracy in a year, which also helped break down divisions between working people in city and country, Koppel said. That April the Cuban people defeated a U.S.-organized mercenary invasion in less than 72 hours.

As they were doing this, Koppel said, the Cuban leadership set out to "lend support to those around the world who were fighting to be free of imperialist oppression — from Algeria to Angola, a course of international solidarity that continues to this day."

It's these class relations, based on the expropriation of the capitalist exploiters and built over decades of promoting working-class consciousness, that make Cuba's revolution different. This is why the U.S. rulers are determined to destroy it. And why it's so important for working people the world over to defend it.

Cuba, like the rest of the world, is affected by the world capitalist economic crisis, Koppel said. The embargo imposed by Washington, and enforced on other countries, sharply limits Cuba's access to the hard currency needed to buy food, fertilizer, fuel, medicine, spare parts, and other necessities. The embargo is compounded by the pandemic, which has decimated tourism, a major source of hard currency.

"Despite these challenges the Cuban government has sought to guarantee medical care and basic necessities to the population and to involve it in the process," Calero said.

In response to a question from the audience, Koppel noted the collective response of the Cuban people to the



"Building socialism is based on the capacities of the masses to organize themselves and to better guide industry, agriculture and the country's economy," said Che Guevara in August 1962. Guevara, above center, visits factory in Cuba's Pinar del Río province.

pandemic. "No one has been left to fend for themselves," he said. "And Cuba has now fully vaccinated a quarter of the population with their own extremely effective vaccine. They've done this while maintaining nearly 30,000 volunteer medical personnel around the world."

On Jan. 11 protests took place in Cuba "orchestrated by groups and individuals opposed to the revolution that receive funds from the U.S. government," Calero said. "These groups took advantage of the hardships and effects of Washington's sanctions that have been building up. Many people, including some who support the government, were drawn into the protests because they see no end to the difficulties they face."

This is compounded by shattered illusions among some Cubans who had hoped that President Joseph Biden would reverse some of the most draconian restrictions of Washington's punishing embargo.

But seeing the pressures in Cuba that are building up, the U.S. rulers have no intention of backing off their bipartisan effort to tighten the economic squeeze aimed at overthrowing the Cuban Revolution — an effort carried out by the previous 12 U.S. administrations since 1959.

Both open enemies of the revolution as well as liberals and "socialists" are part of the current political offensive against the Cuban Revolution, Calero said. He gave the example of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the Democratic Party socialist congresswoman from New York, who calls for an end to the embargo while backing the recent U.S.-provoked protests in Cuba, repeating "the timeworn slanders that the Cuban government is a dictatorship that violates human rights."

In the discussion one participant noted that among many in the U.S. who oppose the embargo there are those who say we should downplay the socialist revolution. They say this is the best way to win "progressive" politicians and businesses who might join in calling for ending aspects of the embargo for their own reasons, a strategy they argue is more likely to succeed. Behind this is their prejudice that "backward U.S. workers" can never be won to support a socialist revolution.

"The stronger the revolution is, the better the chances to force the U.S. rulers to back off their attacks on it," Koppel said. "That's the lesson of history."

Defense of the Cuban Revolution is part of advancing the class struggle here, he said. "The best aid we can give to the Cuban people is to advance working-class struggles in the U.S.," Calero said. "The lessons of the Cuban Revolution and its Marxist leadership can't be separated from the task of building a communist party here to lead the working class to power in the United States."

Continued on facing page

Socialism and Man in Cuba

by Che Guevara and Fidel Castro

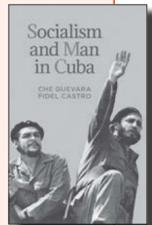
Guevara explains why the revolutionary transformation of social relations necessarily involves the transformation of the working people organizing and leading that process. \$5

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes

"There will be a victorious revolution in the United States before a victorious counterrevolution in Cuba," Fidel Castro said in March 1961, an assertion that's as timely today. \$10

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US rulers end 20-year-long imperialist war in Afghanistan

Continued from front page

who fled ahead of the Taliban advance, 80% are women and girls, fearing a repeat of the brutal assault on women's rights enforced during the Taliban's previous time in power.

A Taliban spokesman claims the group has changed, and has announced a general amnesty and won't interfere in people's lives if they maintain the ways of Islam. However, there are reports of civilians being brutalized and captured soldiers executed, and of young women forced into marriages with Taliban fighters. Some towns were looted.

In some areas local Taliban commanders are imposing harsh restrictions on social and cultural activity. They have closed girls' schools and pressured young men to take up arms for them. Young people listening to music have been punished.

A small protest by women in Kabul Aug. 17 called on the Taliban to stop trying to "eliminate women" from public life.

Hundreds took to the streets of Jalalabad and Khost Aug. 18 protesting Taliban rule. In Jalalabad, Taliban soldiers fired into the crowd killing two and injuring a dozen.

"Throughout the war the Socialist Workers Party has demanded the unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Afghanistan," Dennis Richter, the SWP's candidate for California governor, told the *Militant*. "The destruction Washington has wreaked in Afghanistan for 20 years is further reason to demand it halt its intervention elsewhere, and for working people here to build a movement to take power out of the hands of the capitalist warmakers."

War devastated working people

The U.S. rulers' Afghan war was launched by President George W. Bush after the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center and Pentagon by al-Qaeda, which the Taliban allowed free range in



Afghan national flag raised again in main square protest in Jalalabad Aug. 18 after its removal by Taliban. Three people were reported killed, 12 wounded as Taliban soldiers fired on crowd.

Afghanistan. The war has cost the lives of over 47,000 civilians and 66,000 Afghan soldiers as well as more than 3,500 U.S. and allied troops. Hundreds of thousands have been displaced internally, with millions more fleeing, especially to neighboring Pakistan and Iran.

Successive U.S. governments claimed the war was needed to prevent another 9/11 attack on the U.S. Throughout its occupation of Afghanistan, Washington fostered the illusion that its foreign policy is "ours," lumping the millions of workers and farmers exploited by the ruling capitalist families and used as cannon fodder in their wars with the exploiting classes and their servants in the government, press and academia.

In fact, the carnage and dispossession of millions resulting from the war was a consequence of the U.S. rulers' ceaseless drive to maximize their profits and extend their domination worldwide. Washington's display of military might in Afghanistan and Iraq was meant to assert its supremacy against rivals and force governments that stood in its way

to submit. Both wars were fought under the illusion that the U.S. rulers had won the Cold War and could impose their sway as they wished.

In the course of both conflicts successive Democratic and Republican governments stepped up attacks on political rights at home in the name of advancing their "war on terror." They expanded phone, email and internet surveillance; tracking of financial transactions; snooping on passenger lists of airlines and other transportation; and spying on political groups and individuals who opposed Washington's policies.

They also used the war in Afghanistan to extend the reach of their military bases and operations into Central Asia.

The forces that became the Taliban emerged after the 1979 invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union, which

aimed to bolster the Stalinist-led People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan government that came to power during a popular revolution the year before.

1978 popular revolution

That revolution awakened the hopes of millions of toilers in one of the most economically underdeveloped countries in the world. The PDPA government legalized unions, canceled peasants' debts to landlords, allowed oppressed nationalities to publish and broadcast in their own languages for the first time and promised to distribute land to peasants.

But the regime looked to Moscow and treated peasants and workers as objects to be administered, as opposed to leading the toilers to become actors in history, defend their interests and take greater control over their lives. It became increasingly isolated.

Moscow sent an invading force to prop up the PDPA government and orchestrated the brutal murder of one wing of its leadership. The U.S. rulers backed a reactionary rebellion of landlord and Islamist forces against the Moscow-dependent PDPA. These forces spanned both the Taliban and al-Qaeda. Moscow was eventually forced to withdraw its troops after a 10-year occupation, which had become increasingly unpopular at home. Its defeat in Afghanistan fueled revulsion toward the regime in Moscow, contributing to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

After years of conflict between rival warlords, the Taliban swept to power in 1996. It enforced reactionary political and cultural conditions on working people. Public beheadings, amputations and stonings were typical of its despotic rule.

NLRB orders union election rerun at Amazon warehouse in Alabama

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

A National Labor Relations Board official recommended Aug. 2 that the April vote against the recognizing of a union at the Amazon fulfillment center in Bessemer, Alabama, earlier this year be thrown out for company malfeasance, and a new election be scheduled.

Of the 5,876 workers eligible to vote, 738 were counted as voting for the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union to be recognized as the union, 1,798 against, and 2,759 didn't cast a ballot.

Amazon bosses went all out in their drive to keep the union out, from holding mandatory anti-union meetings in the warehouse to posting anti-union signs in the bathrooms. The RWDSU immediately filed an appeal challenging the outcome of the vote, saying the company intimidated workers.

The union-organizing drive began a few months after the warehouse opened in March 2020. Several thousand workers, facing difficult work conditions, long hours and constant surveillance and disrespect from the bosses, signed union cards for the RWDSU, resulting in the NLRB election.

This was the first union vote to take place at an Amazon warehouse in the U.S., held in an area of Alabama with a long history of union struggles in coal mining, steel and other industries.

In addition to the anti-union campaign by the bosses, the union's effort to win the vote was routine and lackluster. Union officials relied on social media posts, statements by "friends of labor" in the Democratic Party, and support from celebrity backers. This was largely organized from outside the warehouse, instead of by workers themselves, who are best able to convince those with questions or who were undecided why they should support the fight for a union.

"To win the vote, union supporters need to mobilize all those who would benefit into a broader social movement, like the one that led the rise of the CIO in the 1930s," Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Atlanta, told the *Militant*. "Unionists — from the mines, steel plants, docks and more — need to lead Black rights groups, women's organizations, small farmers and others into action to back the workers. There is broad sympathy for this kind of fight.

"They can start today by organizing as much support as possible for the Warrior Met Coal strikers," Fruit said.

Amazon bosses announced they are appealing the NLRB official's ruling. It will take several weeks before the NLRB regional director in Atlanta issues a decision, and this then may very well be appealed to the full NLRB in Washington.

'Fidel belongs to the working people of the world'

The following letter was sent by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes to Raúl Castro Ruz, first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba, on Nov. 27, 2016, after the death two days earlier of Fidel Castro, his brother and central leader of Cuba's socialist revolution.

There were two great socialist revolutions in the twentieth century, one in Russia, the other in Cuba. Neither was the product of a single individual. Both were the result of the operations of capitalism itself. But without the presence and political leadership of Vladimir Lenin and Fidel Castro Ruz at decisive moments in those historic battles by working people, there is no reason to believe either revolution would have been victorious.

Apart from Lenin and Fidel, the history of the twentieth century — and the twenty-first — is unthinkable. Both of them, Marxist students of science and history, gave their lives to uprooting the dog-eat-dog exploitation, oppression and compulsion on which the capitalist world order depends and replacing

it with a workers state, with new social and economic relations based on the liberating capacities of working people and the youth they inspire.

Fidel belongs to Cuba first and foremost, to the men and women of José Martí and Antonio Maceo. His highest achievement was forging in struggle a revolutionary cadre, a communist cadre, capable of leading the workers and farmers of Cuba to establish the first free territory of the Americas and successfully defend it for more than five and a half decades against the determination to destroy it by the mightiest and most brutal empire the world has known.

But Fidel belongs to the working people of the world as well. From Latin America and the Caribbean, to Africa and Asia, to North America and Europe, he showed us in action what proletarian internationalism means. During Cuba's historic sixteen-year mission aiding the people of Angola and Namibia against apartheid South Africa and its promoters in Washington, Fidel demonstrated his unmatched political leadership on a world scale. He also proved, as the Rebel Army combatants of the Sierra knew

well, that he was one of the toilers' greatest military commanders ever.

All this is why Fidel became the most loved as well as the most hated, the most slandered man of our lifetimes.

As Fidel said in his farewell words to the Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba in April, "We all reach our turn." He cannot be replaced, but his life work, Cuba's socialist revolution — its example, and above all its ongoing march — stand as his monument. He needs no other.

For our part, members of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists will continue to do everything in our power to publish and spread the truth about the Cuban Revolution and Fidel's leadership, to make it known to working people in the United States and throughout the world. With unshakable confidence in the working class and its allies, we will continue to organize and act on the course Fidel uncompromisingly presented to the world in 1961, a month before the victorious battle of Playa Girón: "There will be a victorious revolution in the United States before a victorious counterrevolution in Cuba."

Stalin school of falsification led attack against Bolshevism

The Stalin School of Falsification by Leon Trotsky is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for August. Trotsky was part of the central leadership of the mighty Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution of 1917 that transformed world history. He was part of Lenin's leadership team in the Soviet government and the new Communist International, as well as commander of the Red Army. This book documents the "theoretical forgeries and historical frame-ups" cobbled together by a rising bureaucratic caste in the late 1920s and '30s to consolidate a political counterrevolution against the legacy of Lenin led by Joseph Stalin that led to a series of show trials and executions. Trotsky led the fight to continue the Bolshevik proletarian internationalist course. The excerpt is from Trotsky's "Foreword to the American Edition," written in March 1937. Copyright © 2004 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



V.I. Lenin, above left, leader of Russian Revolution, pictured alongside Leon Trotsky, commander of Soviet Red Army, Nov. 7, 1919. Inset, Joseph Stalin ordered Trotsky and others crudely airbrushed out of history as his bureaucratic machine prepared purge of those revolutionary leaders fighting for Lenin's proletarian internationalist course.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

The Moscow Trials, which so shocked the world, signify the death agony of Stalinism. A political régime constrained to use such methods is doomed. Depending upon external and internal circumstances, this agony may endure for a longer or shorter

period of time. But no power in the world can any longer save Stalin and his system. The Soviet régime will either rid itself of the bureaucratic shell or be sucked into the abyss. ...

The Moscow juridical amalgams did not, however, fall from the sky, but were the inexorable products of the past, first of all, that is, of the "Stalin school of falsification." The present volume will, I believe, prove of assistance to everyone who seeks to understand the ideological and political genesis of the Moscow trials. Without possessing the knowledge of its genesis, it is in general impossible to understand anything in this world, including a frame-up.

To enter now into a theoretical controversy with the Stalinists would be a complete anachronism. These people — and I have in mind of course the leaders and not the duped and befuddled followers — have completely and decisively broken with Marxism and are veering convulsively from one empirical formula to another, accommodating themselves to the needs of the Soviet ruling caste. But it remains an incontestable historical fact that the preparation of the bloody judicial frame-ups had its inception in the "minor" historical distortions and "innocent" falsification of citations. The bureaucracy found it indispensably necessary to adapt Bol-

shevism to its own needs. This could not be done otherwise than by corroding the soul of Bolshevism. ...

Official "theory" is today transformed into a blank sheet of paper on which the unfortunate theoreticians reverently trace the contours of the Stalinist boot. Retreating with seven league strides from its Bolshevik past, the bureaucracy at first devoured at each successive stage its own theoreticians. Nowadays that is no longer adequate. The bureaucracy cannot be reconciled with anything but the destruction of the entire old generation of Bolsheviks. Such is the consummation of the Soviet Thermidor! ...

Even though in fragmentary form, this book contains numerous authentic documents which serve to characterize the different stages of the subjugation of the party, the corruption of the apparatus and the poisoning of the conscience of the ruling stratum, in the name of a "monolithism" that is false through and through. The innumerable theoretical forgeries and historical frame-ups, referred to in these pages, represent in essence nothing but a series of designs and sketches for those hellish frescoes with which Stalin has shocked the conscience of the entire world. Control Commissions, as far back as 1924, got used to demanding false confessions from former Oppositionists. ...

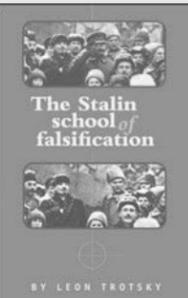
Professors in universities and school teachers are compelled to change written textbooks in a hurry in order to accommodate themselves to the successive stage of the official lie. The spirit of the Inquisition thoroughly impregnating the atmosphere of the country feeds, as we have already said, from profound social sources. To justify their privileges the ruling caste perverts the theory which has as its aim the elimination of all privileges. The lie serves, therefore, as the fundamental ideological cement of the bureaucracy. The more irreconcilable becomes the contradiction between the bureaucracy and the people, all the ruder becomes the lie, all the more brazenly is it converted into criminal falsification and judicial frame-up. Whoever has not understood this inner dialectic of the Stalinist régime will likewise fail to understand the Moscow trials.

The death agony of Stalinism signifies the death agony of the Comintern. This international organization is now the main internal obstacle in the path of the emancipation of the working class. The selection of people without honor and without conscience has reached the same appalling proportions in the Comintern as in the state apparatus of the U.S.S.R. The "leaders" by special appointment change their "convictions" upon instructions by telegraph. ... The functionaries of the Comintern represent in all relations — theoretical, political and moral — a type which is the polar opposite of the revolutionist. They hang on to Stalin, who in turn needs them for the maintenance of his tyranny in the U.S.S.R. The Moscow trials reveal to the very bottom the inner rottenness of the Comintern. After an initial period of bewilderment and vacillation, its swift disintegration is inevitable. It may take place much sooner than the collapse of the Stalinist system in the Soviet Union. ... But this does not mean that the world proletariat will be left without leadership. At the cost of terrible defeats and sacrifices, the main responsibility for which falls upon the Soviet bureaucracy, the proletarian vanguard will find its historic road. Ever more confidently will it rally its ranks under the banner of the Fourth International, which is already rising today on the shoulders of its predecessors.

AUGUST BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Workers need our own foreign policy

Statement by Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New Jersey governor, Aug. 18.

President Joseph Biden claims his foreign policy “is the right one for America.” But there is no “America” that stands above conflicting social classes — the capitalist ruling families, whose wealth and power stands on exploitation and oppression at home and abroad, and working people, who have no power other than our ability to unite in our millions and fight to take political power into our own hands. Today we face an assault at home on our jobs, wages and working conditions, and the capitalist rulers’ wars and plunder abroad.

For 20 years the U.S. rulers used working people as cannon fodder in Afghanistan, in a vain attempt to establish a stable and subservient government that could rule the country for capitalist interests, and to strengthen Washington’s power across Central Asia. Their deadly intervention made it harder, not easier, for working people in Afghanistan to organize to take control of their own destinies, to fight effectively against both capitalist and warlord exploiters and the reactionary Taliban.

The U.S. rulers claimed they were fighting a “war on terror.” Their real goal was to gain markets, deal blows to their rivals, increase profits, and defend their place on top of the imperialist pecking order. In pur-

suing those goals in Afghanistan, Washington helped the creation of the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

Those same rapacious goals lie behind Washington’s colonial rule in Puerto Rico, plunder of Haiti, and the brutal sanctions they enforce on the peoples of Iran, Venezuela, North Korea and Cuba.

In the unions and on the job, Socialist Workers Party members speak for the interests of all those exploited and oppressed by capital and explain we need to fight to defend our class interests, not those of the bosses. The working class needs our own foreign policy, based on the fact we share common oppressors and common class interests with working people worldwide.

A good example is the aid being provided to those battered by last week’s earthquake in Haiti by hundreds of international medical volunteers from revolutionary Cuba, who have been there for decades. The U.S. rulers’ decadeslong intervention in Haiti has aimed to profit off the Haitian people’s labor and natural resources, creating conditions that turned a natural disaster into a social catastrophe.

Workers need to break from the Democratic and Republican parties and build a political party of our own, a labor party, based on our unions. The SWP aims to be part of building the leadership needed to organize millions to take political power into our own hands, and unite with fellow toilers worldwide to fight for a socialist future truly worth living.

Fight for shorter work week with no cut in pay

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8.7 million workers unemployed today. In addition, 6.5 million more who want a job but don’t have one aren’t counted as unemployed because they haven’t reported a job search in the last four weeks. A further 4.5 million more who want full-time jobs are forced to work part time. Some 5.2 million more say they couldn’t work or had their hours cut because of pandemic shut-downs. That’s over 25 million workers.

Almost 400,000 workers were laid off last week alone, and over 12 million were getting by on some kind of unemployment benefits. Most “pandemic” benefits are set to run out by Labor Day, Sept. 6, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s partial block on evictions ends at beginning of October.

Bosses say there are 10.1 million jobs available today, but many mean lower wages, speedup and brutal work conditions. Facing competition from fellow bosses, they’re determined to profit at our expense.

On top of persistent joblessness, workers face rising prices for basic necessities month after month, wiping out any gains we make in wage increases. Average real wages have declined every month since January, a total drop of \$8.99, the largest single decline since records began in 2006. Inflation ran at 5.4% last month, while gas prices have risen 41% over the past year.

“Working people must look to each other to defend ourselves, and not the bosses or their Democratic and Republican parties,” Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Atlanta, told the *Militant*. “Getting vaccinated and back to work is crucial. It’s there that workers can join together to stand up to the bosses and fight to get back some of what our labor produces,” she said.

“Workers and our unions need to fight for measures that unify employed and unemployed workers in a common struggle for jobs,” Fruit said. “We cannot allow bosses to protect their profits by throwing millions of fellow workers out of the workforce.”

Periodic spells of massive and debilitating unemployment are built into the way capitalism works. To win protection from this, SWP candidates urge workers to fight for a shorter workweek with no cut in take-home pay to share the work that is available around.

“We need to fight for a government-funded public

works program to put millions back to work at union-scale pay now, to build the houses, hospitals and other things workers need,” Fruit added. “To protect our living standards from price rises, unions must lead a fight for cost-of-living adjustments in every contract and for all unemployment benefits and pensions as well.”

Measures like this would provide workers with immediate protection from the worst effects of the crisis and give us vital experience fighting side by side with fellow working people. “No group of workers must be left to fight the bosses’ attacks alone,” she said. “The road forward for workers is to build our own party, a labor party based on our unions, to fight to take political power into our own hands.”

The government determines its jobs programs, immigration policy, minimum wage levels and more based on the bosses’ drive for profits. Its foreign policy defends U.S. business interests worldwide.

Democrats’ infrastructure, budget bills

The Senate passed a revised so-called infrastructure bill that would shower funds to the bosses for a variety of projects to strengthen their production capacity and competitiveness. But Speaker Nancy Pelosi now says her party will refuse to bring it to the House for a vote unless the Senate also agrees to a \$3.5 trillion budget backed by the socialist wing of her party. Biden and Pelosi know Republicans won’t support these measures, leaving both bills hanging in the wind.

The “infrastructure” bill isn’t really aimed at putting the millions thrown out of work into jobs. At best, the White House admits, it would only create half a million temporary manufacturing jobs over four years.

The budget contains \$765 billion for the Pentagon and the U.S. rulers’ war machine, as well as a series of reforms aimed at preventing workers from organizing to fight for revolutionary change.

Workers continue to face a catastrophe today, the result of an economic, social and moral crisis of capitalist rule. Over 93,330 people died from drug overdoses last year, the sharpest annual increase in three decades. Job losses and isolation as a result of government-imposed lockdowns and physical-distancing measures, contributed to the surging number of deaths.

“The Socialist Workers Party explains the only way to deal with this crisis is in working-class struggle through which we gain confidence in ourselves and discover our own worth,” Fruit said. “We need to build a leadership that can mobilize millions to overturn capitalist rule, bring to power a workers and farmers government, and use it to put an end to the all forms of exploitation and oppression once and for all.”

Back Mass. nurses fight

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joined the picket line and rallies over the course of the strike.

Tenet has been stepping up attempts to pressure nurses to end the strike. On Aug. 8, about three months after first announcing it would replace strikers, the company claimed it has hired 100 permanent replacement workers — a number the union distrusts — and plans to hire more until it replaces all the strikers.

But strikers say that won’t happen because of a shortage of nurses in the region and support they have won from other nurses. “The hospital is a ghost town, not many are left working there,” said Bill Lahey, a member of the union bargaining committee with over 40 years as a nurse at St. Vincent. He said that a nearby hospital is hiring hundreds of nurses and taking in new patients.

Tenet is also on a propaganda offensive, citing a recent article in U.S. News and World Report that claims St. Vincent is the ninth best hospital in the state and rated it “very high” for staffing.

The Nurses Association noted that 1,000 reports of unsafe staffing conditions were filed by nurses in the 18 months preceding the strike, a figure that the hospital bosses dispute. Nurses say a ratio of one nurse for four patients on average is needed, but St. Vincent insists that one for five is enough.

The best source of facts on staffing are the nurses themselves, the union said, noting that one of the most popular signs on the picket line is: “If nurses are out here, there is something wrong in there.”

Department heads at the hospital criticized the strike Aug. 13, accusing nurses of preventing patients from “accessing quality healthcare.” Showing which side they are on, these department heads claimed “smaller nurse to patient ratios have never been proven to provide safer care.” St. Vincent officials did not respond to questions from the *Militant* as of press time.

According to St. Vincent bosses, their final proposal includes some increases in staffing, a wage raise and hospital contribution to medical insurance costs, along with lump sum bonuses, one “for the most senior nurses” and a “3% bonus for hours worked in 2021.”

Nurses on the picket line said they were outraged at the proposed 2021 bonus, which would go mostly to the small number of nurses who crossed the picket line. Lahey called it “a scab bonus!” He said the offer, while still not enough, shows the strike is having an effect, pointing out St. Vincent now says they’ll agree “to cover 80% of our medical insurance. We have been fighting for that for 20 years, since the last strike at the hospital.”

Lahey also said the union has won agreement from the hospital on “some of the patient staffing grids we wanted,” but said the hospital still refuses to address staffing in the infant center critical nursery and the emergency room.

Tenet reported \$120 million in profits for the second quarter of 2021. “The corporations penny pinch and the patients suffer,” said Brosnihan.

She noted that “several nurses who crossed the picket line came back out, because they did not want to be part of giving bad care.”

While this worker-correspondent was on the picket line, a patient pulled up as she went into the hospital and said to the nurses, “I support you! I’m not getting my knee surgery until you are back in the hospital!”

In working-class neighborhoods in Worcester, Socialist Workers Party campaigners found interest in discussing the strike and other issues facing working people.

“I’m 100% union, my parents were union, and I support the nurses,” Richard Johnson told the *Militant* on his doorstep. He added, “I knew the new owner would play hard ball.” Tenet bought the facility in 2013.

Lahey and others on the picket line were picked up by the large turnout at the United Mine Workers rally for striking Warrior Met Coal miners in Brookwood, Alabama, Aug. 4. “That’s what we need to do here,” he said. Lahey had sent a message of solidarity to the miners June 3. “The courage you have shown helps all of us,” he wrote.

Help spread the word to back the strike at St. Vincent! Visit the picket line from 6 a.m. to midnight. Stop by the strike headquarters at 11 E. Central Street in Worcester. Send contributions for the strike fund to MNA Nurses Strike Fund, Massachusetts Nurses Association, 340 Turnpike St., Canton, MA 02021.

‘Militant’ Prisoners Fund

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