

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
SWP campaign speaks for working class in California governor election
— PAGE 3

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Join drive to take 'Militant,' books, SWP fund out to working people

The Socialist Workers Party is launching a bold, international communist propaganda campaign to the working class to win 1,300 new subscribers to the paper, sell the same number of books by leaders of the party and other revolutionaries, and to raise \$130,000 needed to finance the work of the SWP. The drive will last through Nov. 23. We're asking our readers to join in!

The party will use the fall drive to go broadly to the toiling population in cities and countryside with its program, its candidates, the *Militant*, books and party-building fund drive. It will build solidarity with the growing number of union struggles and explain why the working class needs to fight to take political power into its own hands as we face the devastating consequences of the imperialist epoch.

The *Militant* has been featuring on-the-spot coverage of a number of class-struggle battles over the last months — like those at the Heaven Hill bourbon distillery in Kentucky reported on in this issue, at Nabisco, the Warrior Met

Continued on page 3

Nabisco strikers go back to work stronger, ready to fight

Workers adopt contract, thank all those who backed strike



Bakery union picket at Nabisco in Richmond, Virginia, Sept. 10. Strikers in five states stayed strong, brought workers together, won support, showed how unions can make a difference.

BY ILONA GERSH

CHICAGO — Members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union at Nabisco plants and distribution centers in Oregon, Colorado, Virginia, Illinois and Georgia voted to

adopt a new four-year contract Sept. 16 and 17. The over 1,000 union members had waged a hard-fought strike battle that began in mid-August.

"We put up a big fight, and appreciate all the help we got," Portia LaBleu, who works at Nabisco's bakery in Portland, Oregon, told the *Militant*. While all the details of the agreement haven't been released yet, it includes a \$5,000 signing bonus, yearly 60 cents an hour wage increases, an increase in the company's matching funds in worker's 401(k) accounts, no reduction of company coverage of health

Continued on page 5

Heaven Hill strikers stand up to Kentucky distillery bosses

BY SAMIR HAZBOUN

BARDSTOWN, Ky. — Four hundred United Food and Commercial Workers members went on strike Sept. 11 against Heaven Hill Brands bourbon distillery here after their five-year union contract expired.

"The biggest issue is what the company calls 'nontraditional' scheduling," Matt Aubrey told the *Militant*. He is president of UFCW amalgamated Local 23-D who works at the nearby Four Roses distillery warehouse. "They want to regularly schedule us for weekend work without extra pay, and pay overtime after 40 hours, not eight. A lot of people have families and kids — it's just not acceptable. The company just wants to increase its slice of the pie, to get to keep even more of the profits."

Heaven Hill Brands is the largest family-owned distillery in the U.S. and produces some of the world's most popular bourbons, including

Continued on page 4

Mexican, Cuban presidents: 'End US economic war against Cuba!'



Oscar Castellano, left, one of more than 260 Cuban medical volunteers in Haiti, gives talk on COVID-19 prevention at Grande Riviera du Nord hospital June 28. Cuba has offered to provide Cuban-developed vaccine, or help produce it, to Latin American and Caribbean governments.

BY SETH GALINSKY

In a blow to Washington's stepped-up attempts to isolate Cuba, Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador invited Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel to serve as guest of honor for Mexico's independence day celebration Sept. 16.

In his speech at the military parade marking the 211th anniversary of the opening of Mexico's war for indepen-

dence — known as the Grito de Dolores — López Obrador lauded the Cuban people. They "have defended with dignity their right to live free and independent, without permitting interference in their internal affairs by any foreign power."

"You can be for or against the Cuban Revolution and its government," the Mexican president said, "but their

Continued on page 6

Washington, UK, Australian rulers form new military bloc, target China

BY ROY LANDERSEN

President Joseph Biden was joined by Scott Morrison and Boris Johnson, the prime ministers of Australia and Britain, Sept. 15 to announce a three-way military alliance — AUKUS. Committing the U.S. rulers and those of the two lesser imperialist powers to closer military collaboration, the pact is aimed at countering the growing capabilities and reach of the Chinese military. As part of the deal, the Australian rulers will acquire nuclear-propelled submarines using U.S. technology.

The new pact was denounced by Beijing, as well as by the government in North Korea.

It was also met with outrage by the French government, an imperial-

Continued on page 7

Liberals plan 2022 race to demonize Trump, not tackle crisis workers face

BY TERRY EVANS

With no end in sight to widespread joblessness, continuing deaths and lockdowns from COVID, inflation eating up our wages and employer attacks on working conditions, growing numbers of workers are looking for ways to use our unions to defend ourselves and strengthen our ability to fight boss attacks on the job. We've made some gains, like in the recently concluded strike at Nabisco.

While both of the bosses' two po-

Continued on page 9

Inside

Barbaric conditions in Rikers built into capitalist 'justice' system 9

Rose Knight: 50-year veteran of communist movement in UK 2

Montreal: 'Workers need to build our own political party' 3

Biden orders mass deportations of Haitians in Texas 7

—On the picket line, p. 5—

Construction workers protest government attacks in Australia

Rose Knight: 50-year veteran of communist movement in UK

BY ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

LONDON — Forty people attended a meeting hosted by the Communist League to celebrate the life and political contributions of Rose Knight here Sept. 4. A 50-year veteran of the communist movement, she died June 26 after a long illness.

Participants came from the U.K., Northern Ireland, France and Belgium, and the meeting would have been bigger but for international travel restrictions. Thirty messages were sent to the gathering, including from leaders of the CL's sister parties in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the U.S. A display of photos and clippings on the wall brought to life different periods of Knight's life.

"We're holding this celebration at a time of crisis-driven assaults on working people," Jonathan Silberman said, welcoming participants on behalf of the CL's Central Committee. "Capitalism's world disorder is accelerating in ways that even two years ago none of us would have predicted. It points to the need for a revolutionary struggle for workers power and the building of a communist party — the task to which Rose Knight dedicated her entire adult life."

Pete Clifford, a CL leader and organizer of its Manchester branch, told participants that Knight moved to Doncaster in South Yorkshire in 1988 to strengthen the League's political work in the coalfields and help build a fraction of the CL in the National Union of Mineworkers. There she worked in the unions supporting the struggle to bring down apartheid rule in South Africa; campaigned against the rulers' war on

Iraq; and organized speaking tours for leaders of Cuba's socialist revolution, strengthened by a trip she made to Cuba in 1992 with her husband Nick Beeton.

As part of the turn of the world communist movement towards industrial unions, Knight became one of the first women to get hired as a freight rail guard. During the 1984-85 coal miners' strike, she was part of a solidarity delegation of National Union of Railwaymen members to Coalville, Leicestershire, where rail workers blocked the movement of coal to support the miners. The delegation helped break "the isolation of the Coalville rail workers," Clifford said, and "pushed back bosses' attempts to sack them."

As communists take advantage of "new openings to join labor battles as part of unions," Paul Mailhot wrote on behalf of the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party in the U.S., "our international movement needs the example of trained cadres like Rose. Comrades who over decades responded to the opportunities to act in the class struggle, stayed firm in the fight to build the party, and forged a communist vanguard internationally."

In a message to the meeting, Paul Davies described working with Knight in a meatpacking plant in 2002, where she confronted a manager with a reputation as a bully and who had sexually harassed her. With support from her workmates she forced him to back down. Bullying of young men by that manager also tailed off.

Knight had joined the Communist League's forerunner, the International



Inset, Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Rose Knight, fourth from left in front row, visiting fellow rail workers in Coalville, part of a solidarity delegation of National Union of Railwaymen members during 1984-85 coal strike. Inset, Knight at 2009 London protest against U.S., U.K. rulers' war in Afghanistan.



Marxist Group, in the early 1970s. "Rose and other IMG members were nationally respected leaders of fights for women's rights when I joined," Pamela Holmes, a leader of the CL's London branch, told the meeting, recalling Knight's contribution to the fight to defend women's right to choose abortion. Through this activity she became a seasoned cadre in mass work, which was to stand her in good stead throughout her life.

When declining health no longer allowed her to work in industry, Knight took responsibility for the packing and shipping of books by communist leaders and mailing out the *Militant* to subscribers. She worked closely with Jim Spaul, a CL leader and veteran coal miner. Both "made a strong first impression" on those visiting the CL's headquarters to find books or seek discussion, wrote Socialist Workers Party leader Norton Sandler in a message. Sandler got to know Knight during trips to the U.K. to collaborate with the CL.

Andrés Mendoza, now a leader of the CL's London branch, told the meeting, "What struck me most about Rose, as a new recruit to the League, was her dedication to party-building." Mendoza pointed to her keen interest in the circulation of revolutionary books in Iran,

where she lived briefly in her youth.

Silberman called attention to another time when Knight lived outside the U.K. — as a youth in Brazil. "What had a big impact on Rose was the brutality that followed the 1964 military coup," he said. "This is what the ruling families will resort to, to defend their wealth and power, she would tell others."

If the working class hasn't forged the kind of leadership that can lead millions to take power when the opportunity arises, Silberman said, "the propertied rulers will unleash brutality on a scale much greater than in Brazil. It's to that end that the Communist League, Rose's party, exists," Silberman said in a fund appeal. Participants contributed 3,000 pounds (\$4,080), then stayed to enjoy a spread of food and more discussion.

Commenting on what he had heard at the meeting, bus driver Joe Williams told the *Militant* that Knight's activity "shows that when you say this isn't right, you get others with you." Williams first met CL members when he was on strike earlier this year.

Miriam Palacios, a leader of Cubanos en U.K., got to learn about Knight's life for the first time at the meeting. She "showed how you need to be part of different fights to build a movement against capitalist rule," Palacios said.

THE MILITANT

Defend women's right to choose abortion!

Nationwide protests supporting a woman's right to choose abortion are planned Oct. 2 to protest a new anti-abortion so-called "heartbeat" law in Texas. The *'Militant'* defends a woman's fundamental right to family planning, including the right to safe and secure abortions.



Militant/Seth Galinsky

Women's rights supporters at Sept. 9 New York protest against Texas anti-abortion law.

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SWP speaks for working class in California governor election

BY NORTON SANDLER

LOS ANGELES — “We urged workers and farmers to ignore the first question on the ballot — whether Gov. Gavin Newsom is recalled or not, but to cast a vote for the Socialist Workers Party on the second ballot question,” Dennis Richter the SWP’s candidate for governor, told a group of campaign supporters Sept. 14, the day of the election. “We know that switching one pro-capitalist candidate for another will accomplish nothing. The same problems will exist.”

“The course the SWP charted during this campaign will continue post-election,” Richter said. “We urged working people to break from the capitalist parties and rely on our own power to fight in our interests. To build a labor party, based on the trade unions, as a step toward taking power out of the hands of ruling capitalist families and establishing a workers and farmers government.”

Newsom defeated the Republican-organized attempt to recall him. “SWP campaigners found little interest from workers in whether Newsom was recalled,” Richter said. State officials report Richter got 8,815 votes, including 2,466 in Los Angeles County.

“But our campaign got a serious hearing as we addressed the real questions workers, small proprietors and working farmers face, and interest in learning about ongoing union battles like the strike by coal miners at Warrior Met in Alabama,” Richter said.

This election night SWP event was the culmination of widespread campaigning across the state. On Sept. 11 Richter and supporters spoke with working people on the border crosswalk between San Ysidro in southern California and Tijuana in Mexico.

Mario Herrera was returning to Mexico after a day of work at a maintenance job at a San Diego area hospital. In his early 20s, Herrera said he has to allow a couple hours to get across the border in the morning and often ends up working well beyond eight hours.

“The only way to get from the bottom is for workers to get educated,” Herrera told Richter.

“We should all have the same opportunities,” Richter said. “But we can only accomplish this by fighting as a class. If we don’t, the rich will take more and more from us.” Herrera purchased a copy of the *Militant* and the book *In Defense of the US Working Class* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters.

On Sept. 13 SWP campaigners were at Los Angeles Apparel, a large garment plant. Earlier in the pandemic, this factory was shut down for two weeks by Los Angeles County health officials, after bosses turned a blind eye to dangerous conditions that led to a rampant spread of COVID-19 in the plant resulting in 300 infections and four deaths.

Leaving work, Maria Pascual Simon told campaign supporters she didn’t want to talk to Richter if he was in favor of forcing workers to get the vaccine. “I don’t like the governor telling me I have to get the vaccine. Because it is my body, I decide,” she said.

But she did stop when SWP campaign supporters explained the party was opposed to the capitalist government being able to force workers to do things or face being fired from their jobs.

“Vaccinations are the only way we can get thousands more back to work and use our power to fight in our interests,” Richter said. “The trade union movement should be organizing to campaign for this in factories, at union halls and in working-class neighborhoods.”

“She had doubts, not confident in the



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Dennis Richter, Socialist Workers Party candidate for California governor, talked with Eustolia Guerrero at border crosswalk between San Diego and Tijuana, Mexico, Sept. 11. Response to SWP campaign “shows how hungry workers are to debate a road forward,” Richter said.

medical information she was getting. I don’t know if I convinced her but it was important to debate this, to answer questions from those who have doubts about getting vaccinated,” Richter told the *Militant*. Simon purchased a subscription to the paper.

Over the past six weeks, the SWP campaigned at porches and doorsteps in working-class neighborhoods, at a

Bay Area oil refinery, the large Farmer John meatpacking plant, at a number of Walmart stores and other plant gates.

“The response we got shows how hungry workers are to debate a road forward for the working-class,” Richter said.

Josefina Otero contributed to this article.

Montreal: ‘Workers need to build our own political party’

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL — “More workers here in Canada, the U.S. and elsewhere are using their unions to defend what we have won, against the drive of the bosses who are attacking our wages and working conditions,” Michel Prairie, Communist League candidate for Parliament in the Bourassa constituency here, told over 20 people at a campaign meeting two days before the Sept. 20 Canadian federal election.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will have to form a minority government. He had called the election hoping to win a parliamentary majority for his government, but failed. His Liberal Party received only 31.8% of the vote, the smallest amount of any winning party in Canadian history. Less than 59% of eligible voters bothered to vote, down 8% since 2019.

“Building solidarity with workers who are fighting back is the necessary place to start,” Prairie told the meeting, “like striking hotel workers at Doubletree and Marriott here,” members of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN). He described how Olymel meat-

packers strengthened their union, the CSN, through a recent four-month strike for better wages and against the bosses’ attempts to impose a 10-hour workday.

“Working people need to build our own party that can organize millions to replace the power of the ruling billionaires with a workers and farmers government so we can begin to reorganize society to end exploitation and oppression once and for all,” he said.

Also speaking was Gerald Symington, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist League in the U.K.

The meeting was chaired by Beverly Bernardo, the CL candidate for mayor of

Montreal. To applause, she announced that Radio-Canada carried reports confirming she would be on the ballot. The CL is also running Philippe Tessier for mayor of the Montreal borough of Ville Saint-Laurent.

Prairie said fighting workers need to discuss what we can do to emulate the two great socialist revolutions of the 20th century — the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and the 1959 Cuban Revolution “where working-class parties with Marxist leadership were built and led millions to overturn capitalist rule, establish workers power, and

Continued on page 4

Join ‘Militant,’ books, fund drive!

Continued from front page

coal mine in Alabama, ExxonMobil refinery in Texas, Olymel packinghouse in Quebec and more. We’ve been helping to break through the media blackout on these struggles and build solidarity. The paper is gaining readers and respect among unionists and others. It’s an invaluable tool to get out the truth.

The drive features a 20% discount on all books published by Pathfinder, which offers hundreds of titles by leaders of the Socialist Workers Party, other revolutionary leaders and working-class fighters like Che Guevara, Thomas Sankara, Maurice Bishop, V.I. Lenin and others. There is no better way to prepare for today’s strikes and struggles than to learn from the lessons of earlier class-struggle battles and how revolutionaries were able to chart a road forward. See the ad on page 7 that shows some of the books that are on special offer.

A key part of the fall propaganda drives is the Socialist Workers Party annual fund drive. The only place the SWP gets funds from is the working class. As we knock on workers’ doors, visit strike picket lines, join in activities to champion and win support for Cuba’s socialist revolution and other social struggles, we will meet workers who

want to learn more about the party and to make sure it has the funds needed to expand its work, here and around the world. You can help!

The drive will also present a significant opportunity to campaign for the Socialist Workers Party-endorsed candidates who explain why the working class needs to — and is able to — rely on itself in struggle. It calls for workers to build and strengthen our unions and build our own political party, a labor party. Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the U.K. will join in the propaganda drive.

The goals the party has set for these drives is higher than in previous efforts. This is built on the growing response we are getting today. The *Militant* will feature weekly coverage of the drive, including charts reporting on progress. Please send reports and photos to the *Militant* of efforts you’re making to advance the drives.

To join in the effort, to invite a party representative to come meet you and your friends, co-workers and associates, to make a contribution to the SWP, contact the party or Communist League branch nearest you listed on page 8.

John Studer
Militant editor

Contribute California ‘stimulus’ checks to build SWP

Working people in California have a special opportunity today to contribute to the Socialist Workers Party — “stimulus” checks being mailed out by the state government, part of a vote-seeking move pushed through by Gov. Gavin Newsom as he headed into a recall election that could have removed him from office.

Under the “California Comeback Plan” some two-thirds of state residents — including immigrant workers without work permits — will get from \$600 to \$1,200. Some families with children will get an additional \$500.

“Barbara Bowman and I received a \$600 ‘stimulus’ check today,” Norton Sandler wrote from Los Angeles Sept. 17. “We are sending it to the party and will encourage all party members and supporters to do the same.”

Contributions are a special addition to the party’s resources. The SWP’s sole source of financing is from workers who see the importance of a party that is fighting in the unions and elsewhere to advance the interests of workers and farmers.

Send in your contribution today to Socialist Workers Party, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

— SETH GALINSKY

Heaven Hill strikers stand up

Continued from front page
ing Evan Williams. Even before the bosses used the pandemic to speed up production, sales of American whiskeys rose more than 37% from 2014 to 2019.

Bettye Jo Boone has worked as a maintenance technician at Heaven Hill for 30 years. “They worked us seven days a week through the pandemic. We were ‘essential workers’ who pumped out bourbon like Niagara Falls,” she said on the picket line. “We also made hand sanitizer. No days off. The company promised they’d ‘take care of us’ at contract time. And now we get this contract, which we voted down by 96%. Houston, we have a problem!”

Pat Boone, Bettye Jo’s husband and a retired printing plant worker, also joins the picket line. “I said, ‘Honey, for 30 years I’ve heard about all the things this company has made you put up with. I wish I could be on strike with you.’ She said, ‘You can!’ and I’ve been here since.

“Really, it boils down to two different classes of people,” he said. “The upper elite own this company. But this place was built by the other class, on the backs of giants. We’re the backbone.”

Margaret Trowe, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Louisville, who came to bring solidarity to the strike, agreed. “You’re right, there are two different classes. What is needed is for the class that produces, the workers and farmers, to build a movement to make strikes like this a battle of all working people, and strong enough to fight to take power away from the billionaire families.”

The company is trying to run production despite the picket lines by bringing in strikebreakers and hired security to escort trucks in and out, leading to some tense incidents on the picket lines. “One picket had a shoulder injured when a truck crossing the picket line took a turn too fast,” Aubrey said. “Some of the trucks have been covering up their Department of Transportation ID labels to avoid being identified. But we’re maintaining our discipline and standing strong.”

Aubrey said he was a part of the successful strike against Four Roses

three years ago, when Local 23-D members fought back against the bosses’ attempt to impose a two-tier system that would have forced new hires into lower pay and worse benefits.

“We’re really anti-tier,” Aubrey said. “You can see how they use it to promote divisions at Ford and GM. It’s terrible. If people are going to work, they should be working as equals.”

Strike boosted by solidarity

Heaven Hill strikers are winning support from unionists and other workers in the area and beyond. United Steelworkers Local 1241 member John Rogers, who works at the nearby Fuji Seal plastic packaging plant with more than 400 union members, came to the picket line with two union brothers to show his support.

“This is a small town, and a lot of us know each other,” he said. “And this strike is all over the news. People coming to support this strike help send a message to the factories in the area that we’re going to support each other. Our contract is up Oct. 3. We might need people here to have our backs.”

Strikers also took advantage of the Sept. 16-19 Kentucky Bourbon Festival, which attracts thousands of tourists to the “Bourbon trail” for a tour of distilleries, including in Bardstown, to get out the word about their fight.

“Us workers here have just taken it for so long,” Paula Clark, a 57-year-old bottle worker who has been at Heaven Hill for 29 years, told the *Militant*. “My grandkids might want a job here someday. I’ve got to fight to make it good for them.”

Heaven Hill cut off strikers’ health insurance, Clark said. “They have no morals. My husband had a leg amputation and needs a prosthetic leg. Now we can’t do that. But we’re going to stand strong and just make do until we win.”

Some local restaurants are taking

Workers need to build our own party

Continued from page 3

begin to forge, as Cuban communist leader Che Guevara explained, the ‘new man and woman,’ with different values,” than those imposed on us by the dog-eat-dog capitalist system.

He pointed to the interest CL campaigners find among working people to get books explaining how Cuba’s social revolution was made.

“I was struck by similar discussions you are having with workers here and those CL members in the U.K. are having,” Symington reported, pointing to discussions with striking bus drivers and other working-class fighters in the U.K. The day before, Symington and campaign supporters attended a rally to support workers at 20 Montreal-area hotels on strike for 23 hours.

The rulers’ drive against our unions is driven by the crisis of the capitalist system, Symington said. It’s rooted in the “long-term decline in their profit rates.”

Workers’ increasing resistance, and efforts to use unions to extend solidarity, offer opportunities for communists to work together with fellow fighters. As we do so we can build the party workers need, one that can “halt imperialism’s march towards fascism and war by taking political power,” Symington said.

“That’s why the Communist Leagues

Chicago: Thirst for books by SWP, revolutionary leaders



Militant/Claudia Hommel

CHICAGO — Participants in this year’s Printers Row book fair here bought 108 books, some \$1,450, at the Pathfinder Books table Sept. 11-12. The top sellers were *Malcolm X*, *Black Liberation*, and *the Road to Workers Power* and *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes; *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters; *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions*; *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels; and *Abortion Is a Woman’s Right!* by Pat Grogan and Evelyn Reed.

The large attractive display of Pathfinder books became a center of political discussion at the fair. There was wide interest in the fight for women’s right to be able to choose abortion and against the draconian new anti-abortion law in Texas. Titles on women’s rights sold out quickly. More have been ordered to be on hand for the Oct. 2 march here against the Texas law.

Many at the fair were interested in hearing about the strike picket lines of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union at Nabisco and the strike of hundreds of auto mechanics throughout Chicago by International Association of Machinists Local 701.

A number of young people signed up to keep in touch with the Socialist Workers Party. Twenty-seven got subscriptions to the *Militant*, and dozens signed up to get more information on the party’s activities. The next week, five people who had met the SWP at the book table came to a Militant Labor Forum on “Afghanistan: The Weakening of U.S. Imperialism, Why the Working Class Needs Its Own Foreign Policy.”

— ILONA GERSH

a stand to back the striking workers. Buffalo Wings and Rings took all Heaven Hill products off their shelves until the company reaches an agreement with the union. “It’s about doing

what you believe in,” Buffalo Wings and Rings District Manager Jessica Raikes told WHAS-11 News Sept. 15. She said that the bar was filled with strikers and their supporters after the announcement, showing their appreciation for the solidarity.

Aubrey said the support the strikers have received so far has been a real boost. “We’ve had people bring by ponchos when it rains. A local restaurant brought us 100 boxed lunches. The Teamsters have come by. Some people have even cut down their own trees to make us more firewood.”

The union picket lines are up 24/7 and strikers welcome all who want to help. Contributions to the strike fund can be sent electronically via Venmo to @ufcwlocal23d and messages of support can be emailed to mattaubrey.ufcw23d@yahoo.com.

SWP candidate for mayor on Miami ballot



Militant/Chuck Guerra

Anthony Dutrow, SWP candidate for mayor of Miami, submits affidavits and documents Sept. 18 qualifying for a place on the ballot in this November’s election.

Mobilize to Defend Reproductive Rights

Sat., Oct. 2

Join march, protest in every state for women’s unconditional right to family planning, including the right to abortion.

For information and protest locations, contact

www.womensmarch.com

Bakery workers, union stronger

Continued from front page
insurance, and creation of a new, 36-hour weekend shift at 40 hours pay. Probation is set at 60 calendar days.

Exactly how some of the strike issues work out, LeBleu said, “depends on what we do with our co-workers on the floor to set the pace of work and the way it’s going to be. The fight continues to be worked out on the job.”

After Bakery Workers union Local 1 members here in Chicago voted on the proposed agreement, workers returned to the picket lines, which stayed up until the results of the overall vote were counted at the union headquarters in Washington, D.C. Honking and whistling sometimes drowns out the conversation. Signs say, “No contract, no cookies!” “The real cookie monster is here!” and “On strike for the union and our families!”

“The company called the union with an offer, not the other way around,” said Daniel Karpowicz, chief union steward. “They are hurting. They want us back.” Nabisco is owned by international snack behemoth Mondelez.

“We’ll go back stronger,” said James Walsh, a 41-year veteran utility worker. “We banded together better out here on the picket line than we ever did in the factory, where it’s hard to have discussions. I’ve gotten to know my co-workers and fellow fighters. And we have more confidence. The company thought we were going to roll over. They thought we were pussycats. But now we’re lions.”

The contract says the company can set up a weekend crew that works 12-hour shifts on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, he said. “They will work 36 hours and get paid for 40. At least half of them will be new hires, but current workers can bid onto the crew. But once you get onto the weekend shift, you have to stay there for a year.” He added that this should substantially reduce mandatory overtime on the weekends, which was a big issue in the strike.

There also are issues with the two different shifts, he said. “It can divide us, and that’s not good. We’ll have to fight against this next time.”

Ofelia Ballinger, who works on the main table in packing, said, “The union is stronger because of the strike. In 2016 we lost the pension. They moved production of Oreos, Ritz, Chip Ahoy, and Fig Newtons to Mexico. Six hundred of us were laid off. They laid off the quality control workers, and then they said that we had to do the quality control checks ourselves at the same time we worked on the production line. They make us do more work with less people.”

Mirjana Loncar is a relief worker on line 9. She said that when she was hired in 1984, there were 4,000 workers in the plant. “We hand-packed everything. One by one the lines were automated, and the majority lost their jobs. And then we had to keep up with the line speed.” Now there are 350-400 working in the factory.

“The company always tries to make it harder for us to work,” she said. “Before the strike, they took our chairs away so we had to stand on the line. If the chairs aren’t there when we go back, we’ll just put them back.”

Solidarity needed here, worldwide

Strikers got a lot of solidarity from other unions and working people. There was a lot of discussion on the picket line about other strikes going on. “A lot of eyes have been on us to see what we could do,” said Walsh. “We should do something to support the auto mechanics,” who went out on strike in the Chicago area Aug. 2. Loncar agreed, saying, “I went past one of their picket lines yesterday. I told them, we are on strike too! Be strong! Stand up for your rights!”

A discussion broke out about U.S. bosses that move their plants to Mexico. Ballinger asked, “Why does the U.S. government let companies move to Mexico? That makes unemployment worse here.” This worker-correspondent replied the U.S. is a capitalist country, and the government supports everything that big business needs to make more profits. Workers in Mexico are more exploited than workers here, they get much lower wages for doing the same production

Construction workers protest gov’t attacks in Australia



SYDNEY — Construction workers in Melbourne, Australia, have long considered the tea rooms set up for eating and smoking on breaks a key part of their working conditions at building sites. Hundreds protested when the bosses shut them down on Victorian state government orders Sept. 16.

In Melbourne’s city center and in a number of suburbs, workers took chairs out and sat in the street for their breaks, disrupting traffic. “They’ve got nowhere else to have smoko [tea break],” John Setka, Victorian secretary of the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union, told 3AW News Talk radio.

The order to close all the lunch rooms was one of the stepped-up restrictions that the Victorian state government imposed on construction workers in response to a growing number of coronavirus cases. Other measures included a 25% cap on the number of workers at each site, a ban on travel from Melbourne to other areas in Victoria for work, and mandatory vaccination for all construction workers.

A coalition of building trades unions issued a joint statement calling the orders “unworkable and too heavy-handed,” adding “we will continue to campaign against them.”

On Sept. 20 the government ordered all construction sites in Melbourne, Ballarat, Geelong, Surf Coast Shire and Mitchell Shire shut down for two weeks, blaming the workers for further spread of the virus.

“My campaign joins construction workers and their unions in protesting these anti-working-class restrictions that place control over jobs and conditions in the hands of the government and bosses,” said Robert Aiken, Communist League candidate for Georges River Council here in Sydney. “Our unions should campaign to convince all workers to get vaccinated, to get back on the job to work together to fight attacks on our wages and work conditions.”

— LINDA HARRIS

that used to be done here.

“That’s true,” said Ballinger, who is originally from Mexico, like a sizable number of workers at the plant and in the neighborhood. “We need to fight together for the unions. They try to

divide us. Unity is the only way we can all win.”

Loncar, who is Croatian, said she recently went home to visit relatives. “The prices in the stores are much higher than they are here,” she said. “And wages are very low. They need to fight for better wages and working conditions like us.”

“We’re going back much stronger,” said Karpowicz. “There’s a lot of solidarity between us. When we have a grievance, we’ll put up a fight. My message to other workers is, ‘Don’t be afraid. If it comes to a strike, then strike!’ We don’t have to take blows on our chins.”

After the contract was approved, the company said workers will be recalled starting this week. “What about the maintenance workers?” one worker asked. The electricians, equipment mechanics and other maintenance workers who are members of other unions honored the Bakery Workers strike, and many joined the picket lines.

“We need to be ready to be out here helping them next spring when their contracts expire!” said Karpowicz.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



October 7, 1996

WATSONVILLE, California — Carrying United Farm Workers flags, thousands marched through this predominantly Mexican and Chicano city Sept. 15. They were demanding a union contract and improved wages and working conditions for farm workers who pick strawberries.

Contingents of agricultural workers in their early 20s and teens were noticeable in the crowd. Other workers marched with their entire families.

Miguel, a picker, described the challenges facing the union in trying to organize the workers. “They [the bosses] try to disorganize us, they pick favorites, they give different pay to those they like, to get them to oppose the union,” he said. “They make threats to union workers that we will be fired or deported. We need to be united.”

In 1970 the UFW had 80,000 members. It’s now in the range of 25,000, up 5,000 from a few years ago.



October 8, 1971

DETROIT — A picket line of 7,000 angry citizens protesting the Vietnam war and the wage freeze greeted [President] Nixon when he arrived in Detroit Sept. 23. The action, which was called by the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO Council, drew a large turnout from local unions.

There was a sizable contingent from a number of locals of the UAW, despite pleas from UAW President Leonard Woodcock for workers not to attend. It was the first such action initiated by a section of the labor movement, and the Detroit AFL-CIO itself took the political initiative in linking the wage freeze with the war.

The success of this action will encourage further and deeper labor participation in antiwar activities, even if certain sectors of the bureaucracy oppose it. The participation of UAW members, against the direct instructions of Woodcock, makes this clear.



October 5, 1946

TROY, N.Y. — The State Supreme Court hearing here on the Democratic Party’s appeal to rule minority parties off the ballot is one of the foulest conspiracies against democratic rights in New York history. One has to go back 25 years for anything resembling it. At that time, after World War I, Democrats and Republicans ganged up on nine duly elected Socialists and kicked them out of the State Assembly.

The proceedings are conducted in strictly kangaroo court style. The four parties [SWP, CP, SLP and SP] have about as much chance for justice here as a Negro on trumped-up rape charges would have before a Mississippi court.

Action and protest by trade unions and workers’ organizations is imperative. This case must become the springboard of a powerful campaign to revise the reactionary election laws of this state. It is deliberately written to keep minority parties off the ballot.

Correction

In the article “Back Locked-Out Oil Workers Standing Up to Exxon-Mobil” in issue no. 35, the name of the secretary-treasurer of USW Local 13-243 was incorrectly spelled. It should say Karla Konning.

End US economic war on Cuba!

Continued from front page
resistance for 62 years without yielding is an undeniable historic feat.” He was referring to how the Cuban people have stood up to the U.S. government’s economic assaults and other acts aimed at overthrowing the Cuban government and overturning the socialist revolution.

“The government I represent respectfully calls on the U.S. government to lift the blockade against Cuba,” he added, “because no state has the right to subjugate another people, another country.”

Díaz-Canel gave the main speech, the first time a foreign dignitary has addressed the annual celebration.

The Cuban president detailed the historic ties between the peoples of Mexico and Cuba. He noted that the fight against Spanish colonial rule in Mexico in the 1800s was an inspiration to Cubans, who took up arms against the Spanish government later in the century.

More than a few Cubans fought in battles in Mexico to defend the new nation’s sovereignty against foreign intervention and dictatorial regimes at home, he said. Mexican freedom fighters also joined Cuba’s wars for independence, he noted, including some who gave their lives fighting Spanish rule there.

José Martí, the best known leader of the fight against Spanish colonial rule in Cuba, spent part of his exile in Mexico from 1875 to 1877, where

he continued to campaign for Cuban independence. “Through the independence of Cuba,” Martí said, the U.S. rulers can be forestalled “from spreading over the West Indies and falling with added weight upon other lands of Our America.”

That tradition of solidarity continued during Cuba’s revolution. Many Mexicans helped make it possible for Fidel Castro and the men he led to organize, train and travel to Cuba in the Granma yacht in 1956 and launch the revolutionary struggle that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista three years later.

After the revolution triumphed, and the U.S. rulers realized this wasn’t just a change in the faces at the top, but a deepgoing social revolution, they turned on it, launching the embargo — maintained by every administration, both Democrats and Republicans, since — and a failed invasion at the Bay of Pigs.

They pressed governments, especially in Latin America, to back U.S. aggression. “Loyal to its best traditions, Mexico was the only country of Latin America that did not break relations with revolutionary Cuba when we were expelled from the OAS [Organization of American States] by imperial mandate” in 1962, Díaz-Canel said.

That year Fidel Castro called the OAS the “Yankee Ministry of Colonies.”

Díaz-Canel noted that whatever differences they have had over the years,



From left, Lis Cuesta Peraza and her husband, Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel; Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador and his wife Beatriz Gutiérrez Muller. Díaz-Canel was guest of honor at Mexico’s independence day event, a blow to U.S. drive to isolate Cuba.

the Cuban and Mexican governments treated each other with respect.

López Obrador thanked Cuba for the assistance that more than 190 Cuban medical volunteers provided in Mexico at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic earlier this year. On top of decades of volunteer medical missions Cuba has sent around the world, nearly 5,000 Cuban volunteers have gone to 40 countries to aid in combating the pandemic.

In return, Mexico sent three shiploads of medical supplies and food to Cuba in July. The Cuban president thanked López Obrador. As for the Cuban volunteers, “we’ll come back anytime you think it’s necessary,” he said.

CELAC denounces US embargo

Some 17 heads of state from Latin America and the Caribbean, including Díaz-Canel and López Obrador, participated in the Sept. 18 meeting in Mexico City of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. While CELAC was formed in 2010 as a counter to the U.S.-dominated Organization of American States, most Latin American and Caribbean governments participate in both.

CELAC includes the governments of Nicaragua, Venezuela and Argentina — which frequently draw the ire of Washington for taking positions not to the imperialist rulers’ liking. Also present were recently elected capitalist regimes in other countries, including Pedro Castillo, president

of Peru since June, and Evo Morales supporter Luis Arce, president of Bolivia since November 2020.

Díaz-Canel told the meeting about Cuba’s pride in producing three highly successful vaccines for COVID-19, despite the U.S. economic war and its punishing effects in Cuba. As of Sept. 18 close to half of Cubans were fully vaccinated and the Ministry of Health expects that nearly 100% will be by the end of November.

Díaz-Canel announced that Cuba wanted to reach agreements with any interested government in the distribution and production of the vaccines “as a modest contribution to rapidly achieving universal immunization” in Latin America and the Caribbean.

When Uruguayan President Luis Lacalle, an ally of Washington, spoke, he attacked the Cuban Revolution as well as the governments of Nicaragua and Venezuela, claiming that they don’t have “full democracy.”

Díaz-Canel answered Lacalle, noting there are many countries “where Latin Americans are repressed, murdered or disappeared” for opposing the government, “but it’s not in Cuba.” He added that “the courage and freedom of the Cuban people has been demonstrated in the face of six decades of U.S. aggression.”

In its final declaration the group rejected “unilateral coercive measures,” a reference to the U.S. embargo of Cuba and other U.S. coercion in the region.

Mexico’s fight against colonial rule launched in 1810



Detail with Miguel Hidalgo in mural by Juan O’Gorman

El Grito de Dolores is celebrated Sept. 16 as a national holiday in Mexico and by Mexicans around the world. It marks the opening of the independence struggle against Spanish colonial rule in 1810. On that day Catholic priest Miguel Hidalgo called together his parishioners in the town of Dolores and urged them to revolt, to fight for racial equality and redistribution of the land.

Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés and his forces invaded Mexico in 1517, 25 years after Christopher Columbus first opened the possibility of interaction between Europe and the Americas. As former Cuban Minister of Culture Armando Hart explained, Columbus’ discovery was “historic” and opened the door for culture and progress, but at the same time was blighted as “the Spanish feudal classes took control of the discovery and began to loot, steal and violently carry out the conquest.”

The Spanish rulers savagely suppressed and exploited the native population, introduced slavery and looted Mexico’s vast riches.

Joined by thousands of Indians and mestizos, Hidalgo marched from Dolores and captured the city of Guanajuato and other major cities north and west of Mexico City. The rebels fought their way to the gates of the capital, but then hesitated, giving Spanish Royalists and their supporters time to regroup and suppress the rebellion. Hidalgo was captured and later executed on July 30, 1811.

But the fight for independence continued over the next decade, with Mexico gaining freedom from Spanish colonial rule in 1821.

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

Join Cuba Solidarity Caravans Sept. 26 Halt Washington’s economic war against Cuba! End travel restrictions! U.S. out of Guantánamo!

Chicago

2 p.m. assemble, S. Sacramento Blvd & Roosevelt Rd., north side of Douglass Park

Los Angeles

12:30 p.m. assemble, El Dorado Park Duck Pond, N. Studebaker Rd., Long Beach

Miami

11 a.m. depart from Miami City Hall

Minneapolis

1 p.m. assemble, Mayday Plaza (3rd St. and Cedar Ave.)

New York City

2 p.m. assemble, State Office Building. 163 W. 125th St.

Seattle

11 a.m. picket, Be’er Sheva Park, South Seattle across from Rainier Beach High

Washington, D.C.

3 p.m. assemble, 4700 block of 14th St. NW.

CANADA

Montreal

2 p.m. assemble, Park Lafontaine. Calixa-Lavalée parking lot

Winnipeg

12 noon assemble, parking lot across from Museum for Human rights

Vancouver

12 noon, Killarney Community Centre, Killarney and 49th

UNITED KINGDOM

London

Sat. Sept. 25, 2 p.m. protest, Seven Sisters Station, 218 High Road N15 4NP

Manchester

Sat. Sept. 25, 12 p.m. assemble, Harpurhey Shopping Center car park, adjacent to Moston Lane M9 4DH

For information on other actions visit: nnoc.info

New military bloc targets China

Continued from front page
ist ally sidelined by the pact. Some capitalist governments in East Asia, including in Japan, Taiwan and the Philippines, backed the pact, hoping to see the growth of Beijing's power in the region checked.

The submarines will be armed with Tomahawk missiles, not nuclear weapons. This is only the second time Washington has agreed to share its nuclear submarine technology, after its 1958 agreement with London.

Powered by nuclear reactors, these submarines are stealthier, faster and have far greater range and endurance than conventionally powered vessels. Only six major powers, all nuclear armed, currently have such warships. The opposition Labor Party in Australia backed the deal, after receiving assurance Canberra will not get nuclear weapons, as well as confirming the eight warships will be built in Australia.

"Military pacts signed by the U.S. government, like its entire foreign policy, are designed to defend the interests of the ruling capitalist families and their drive for domination and profits worldwide," Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New Jersey governor, told the *Militant*. "These are the same bosses who are attacking workers' wages, conditions and unions at home."

"Workers need our own foreign policy starting from solidarity with fellow working people, including in China and across Asia," Kuniansky said.

Biden's foreign policy, like Donald Trump's before him, is focused on the U.S. rulers' rivalry with Beijing. Washington's moves come from weakness, not strength. The global world order put together by the U.S. rulers after they emerged victorious over enemies and allies alike from the second imperialist world war is being pulled apart as a result of intensifying competition with its rivals and the rise of Beijing.

Following the collapse of the Stalinist regimes in the Soviet Union and

Eastern Europe, the U.S. rulers have acted on the illusion that they won the Cold War and could impose their authority at will. This pact reflects the fact this assumption was false.

As recently as three years ago, Australian Prime Minister Morrison declared that his government "doesn't have to choose" between Washington, the Australian rulers' long-standing military ally, and friendly relations with their biggest trading partner, Beijing. That has changed.

Now, Morrison said, the Australian rulers must face the "global contest of our age." The new submarines plus cruise missiles will enable Canberra to project military power across the Indo-Pacific as an integral part of U.S.-led forces. The deal increases the long-term presence of U.S. Marines, warships and aircraft at Australian bases, as well as technological collaboration on cyber-warfare and high-tech weaponry.

British nuclear submarines may also use Australian bases in the future to increase their presence in the Indo-Pacific. London's participation in the pact reflects its shift to deepen an alliance with Washington and with Canberra after its departure from the European Union.

Deal sidelines Paris, Europe powers

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian called the decision to form the pact "a knife in the back." A 2016 contract worth tens of billions of dollars between Canberra and Naval Group, a Paris-based firm, to build 12 French-designed diesel-electric submarines, was made null and void when the decision to found AUKUS was announced. It came after six months of secret negotiations that excluded Paris.

Claiming his government was blindsided, Le Drian likened Biden's decision to the treatment of U.S. allies under former President Donald Trump. In protest, the French government recalled its ambassadors to the U.S. and Australia Sept. 17. Paris says it will try to delay trade negotiations due between EU of-

Biden orders mass deportations of Haitians in Texas



AP Photo/Eric Gay

More than 14,000 migrants, the vast majority of them Haitians seeking asylum and jobs in the U.S., have been camped out in squalid conditions in Del Rio, Texas. Most are fenced in under an international bridge over the Rio Grande that connects that town with Ciudad Acuña, Mexico.

Many had left Haiti over the last decade seeking work in Latin America that dried up during the COVID pandemic, as their home country has been wracked by the worldwide capitalist economic and social crisis, compounded by an earthquake just a month ago that killed and injured thousands. They have been joined by some Cubans, Venezuelans and Nicaraguans. Del Rio, a town of 35,000 people surrounded by ranch lands, is 150 miles west of San Antonio.

Little has been done by U.S. authorities to provide desperately needed clean water, food and portable toilets. Hundreds waded through the knee-high Rio Grande over a concrete spillway back into Mexico to pick up food and supplies and then return.

The response of the Joseph Biden administration has been stepped-up moves to deport thousands back to Haiti, with flights out beginning Sept. 19. The deportations are being carried out before the Haitians have any chance to apply for asylum, based on a COVID-19 order put in place by President Donald Trump that deprives them of any right to do so.

As these flights have gotten underway, growing crowds of men, women and children are crossing back through the Rio Grande to Mexico to avoid being deported to Haiti.

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

ficials and the Australian government.

All three governments that signed the pact argued they still consider their alliance with the French rulers important. Paris is the main military power in the European Union and still has colonies in the Pacific, from New Caledonia to French Polynesia.

Even though weakened, the U.S. rulers still rule the roost of the imperialist pecking order.

Le Drian claimed the course of the AUKUS powers was "militarily confrontational." Like other ruling classes in Europe, Paris is lured by profiting from huge markets in China and capital investment from Chinese companies, so it tries to minimize conflicts with Beijing.

A senior EU official told the Sept. 16 *Financial Times* that the announcement of the AUKUS pact was an example of how "Europe might be rich but isn't powerful." The rival ruling classes in Europe lack the military clout to defend their interests amid rising worldwide competition.

Arms race in Pacific

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian accused the AUKUS governments of "intensifying the arms race." Chinese state media warned that Australia was now an "adversary" of the Chinese rulers and threatened that it should "prepare for the worst."

The Australian capitalist rulers benefited greatly from massive industrialization in China on the backs of working people over the past several decades. From 2000 to 2015, Australian exports to China increased twentyfold.

But relations deteriorated after successive Australian governments

placed curbs on Chinese firms' efforts to take over Australian infrastructure, telecommunications and land-owning companies. Beijing complains the Australian government interferes with its policies in Hong Kong. The Chinese government has imposed trade sanctions on Australian coal, beef, barley, lobsters and wine.

Beijing has been steadily expanding its military reach for years. The Chinese navy has a larger number of smaller warships, but the U.S. Navy remains dominant worldwide. The Chinese rulers are building their third aircraft carrier, still a long way from the 11 in U.S. fleets. Chinese navy vessels are making ever-closer forays to Guam, where Washington bases its submarine fleet in the region.

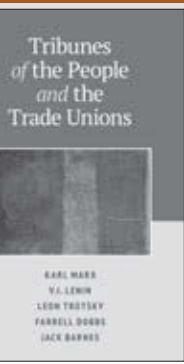
Along with AUKUS, Washington seeks to strengthen its QUAD alliance with the rulers of Japan, India and Australia. Biden is set to host those countries' prime ministers at a Washington summit Sept. 24. The *Times of India* noted that "in the future" AUKUS and QUAD "could merge."

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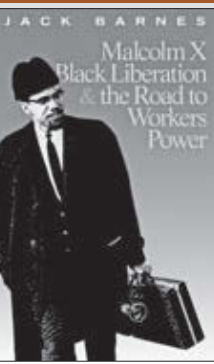


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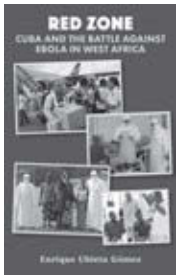
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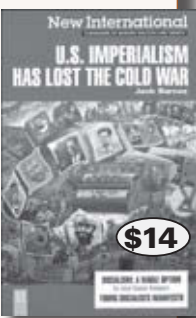
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by Jack Barnes

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in *New International* no. 11



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Thomas Sankara: ‘We are heirs of the world’s revolutions’

The French edition of *We Are Heirs of the World’s Revolutions: Speeches from the Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87* by Thomas Sankara is one of *Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for September*. In August 1983 Sankara led an uprising in the former French colony of Upper Volta, bringing to power a popular revolutionary government, which organized workers, peasants, women and youth to take steps to seize control of their own destiny in one of the poorest countries in the world. Sankara was assassinated in a counterrevolutionary coup in October 1987. An outstanding communist, he set an example like Cuban revolutionary leaders Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, using the platform of the United Nations General Assembly on Oct. 4, 1984, to speak out for the oppressed and exploited of the world. That speech, “Freedom Must Be Conquered in Struggle,” is excerpted here. Copyright © 2007 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY THOMAS SANKARA
Mr. President:

I make no claim to lay out any doctrines here. I am neither a messiah nor a prophet. I possess no truths. My only aspiration is twofold: first, to be able to speak on behalf of my people, the peo-



Augusta Conchiglia/Afrique Asie
Vaccinated children, families gather in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso, in August 1986 to celebrate their revolution. Popular revolutionary government led by Sankara mobilized working people to advance mass health campaigns, women’s equality and other social measures.

ple of Burkina Faso, in simple words, words that are clear and factual. And second, in my own way to also speak on behalf of the “great disinherited people of the world,” those who belong to the world so ironically christened the Third World. And to state, though I may not succeed in making them understood, the reasons for our revolt. ...

This is what we glimpsed — we, the Burkinabè people — during the evening of August 4, 1983, when the first stars began to sparkle in the skies of our homeland. We had to take the leadership of the peasant revolts, signs of which were visible in a countryside that is panic-stricken by the advancing desert, exhausted by hunger and thirst, and abandoned. We had to give meaning to the brewing revolt of the idle urban masses, frustrated and weary of seeing limousines driving the elites around, elites that were out of touch, succeeding one another at the helm of state while offering the urban masses nothing but false solutions elaborated and conceived by the minds of others. We had to give an ideological soul to the just struggles of our popular masses as they mobilized against the monster of imperialism. The passing revolt, the simple brushfire, had to be replaced forever with the revolution, the permanent struggle against all forms of domination.

Others have explained before me, and others will explain after me, the extent to which the chasm has wid-

ened between the affluent peoples and those who aspire only to eat their fill, quench their thirst, survive, and preserve their dignity. But no one can imagine to what extent “the poor man’s grain” in our countries “has fattened the rich man’s cow”! ...

I protest here on behalf of all those who vainly seek a forum in this world where they can make their voice heard and have it genuinely taken into consideration. Many have preceded me at this podium and others will follow. But only a few will make the decisions. Yet we are officially presented as being equals. Well, I am acting as spokesperson for all those who vainly seek a forum in this world where they can make themselves heard. So yes, I wish to speak on behalf of all “those left behind,” for “I am human, nothing that is human is alien to me.”

Our revolution in Burkina Faso embraces the misfortunes of all peoples. It also draws inspiration from all of man’s experiences since his first breath. We wish to be the heirs of all the world’s revolutions and all the liberation struggles of the peoples of the Third World. Our eyes are on the profound upheavals that have transformed the world. We draw the lessons of the American Revolution, the lessons of its victory over colonial domination and the consequences of that victory. We adopt as our own the affirmation of the Doctrine whereby Europeans must not intervene in American affairs, nor

Americans in European affairs. Just as Monroe proclaimed “America to the Americans” in 1823, we echo this today by saying “Africa to the Africans,” “Burkina to the Burkinabè.”

The French Revolution of 1789, which overturned the foundations of absolutism, taught us the connection between the rights of man and the rights of peoples to liberty. The great revolution of October 1917 [in Russia] transformed the world, brought victory to the proletariat, shook the foundations of capitalism, and made possible the Paris Commune’s dreams of justice.

Open to all the winds of the will of the peoples of the world and their revolutions, having also learned from some terrible failures that led to tragic violations of human rights, we wish to retain only the core of purity from each revolution. This prevents us from becoming subservient to the realities of others, even when we share common ground because of our ideas.

Mr. President:

It is no longer possible to keep up the deception. The new international economic order for which we fight and will continue to fight can be achieved only if we succeed in destroying the old order that has ignored us; if we impose our rightful place in the political organization of the world; and if, conscious of our importance in the world, we obtain the right to participate in discussions and decisions on the mechanisms governing trade, the economy, and currencies on a global scale.

The new international economic order should simply be inscribed alongside all the other rights of the people — the right to independence, to the free choice of governmental forms and structures — like the right to development. And like all the peoples’ rights, it is conquered in struggle and by the struggle of the people. It will never be the result of an act of generosity from the powers that be.

I personally maintain unshakable confidence — a confidence shared by the immense community of Non-aligned countries — that, under the pounding blows of the howling anguish of our peoples, our group will maintain its cohesion, strengthen its collective bargaining power, find allies among all nations, and begin, together with those who can still hear us, to organize a genuinely new international system of economic relations.

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—SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT—

Barbaric conditions in Rikers built into capitalist ‘justice’ system

Below is a statement issued Sept. 20 by Róger Calero, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York.

The brutal conditions at Rikers Island are an indictment of the workings of the capitalist system and how the U.S. rulers use their prisons to protect their class interests.

Rikers has been one of the country’s most notorious jails over its 90-year history. The barbaric methods employed there — solitary confinement, overcrowding of inmates in small windowless cells, lack of adequate medical care, mistreatment of mentally ill inmates, general filthy and inhumane conditions, and brutality — are not unique to this jail, however.

Neither is the punishment inflicted upon tens of thousands of workers and working-class youth in this jail and across New York state who languish in prison awaiting trial — often for years — not convicted of committing a crime.

Mayor Bill de Blasio and other liberal politicians, like Gov. Kathy Hochul, are using the crisis at Rikers to push their “vision” of a “more humane” prison system. But, despite “bail reform” measures and calls to end reincarceration for minor parole violations, the numbers imprisoned after an initial drop have been steadily climbing back up to previous levels. Even in the middle of the COVID pandemic, of the 31,000 federal prisoners who applied for compassionate release after the virus began spreading through the prisons, the prison bureau approved a mere 36 in 2020!

The current crisis at the Rikers Island complex is not about understaffing, nor is the “solution” hiring more guards. Prisons under capitalism are a reproduction of

the social relations of the dog-eat-dog capitalist world. It’s no secret to the millions of working people who have been incarcerated or have a relative, neighbor or friend who was thrown behind bars. As in capitalist society in general, the rulers’ prisons foster violence, gangs, the drug trade and racism. The Socialist Workers Party candidates don’t need “fact-finding” trips to Rikers to learn about this.

The root of these barbaric conditions is found in the very reason prisons exist under capitalism — to defend the prerogatives, private property and profit system of the ruling families. To break the physical, moral and mental integrity of the millions of working people that get snarled up in the rulers’ so-called justice system. To remind working people of what awaits us if we don’t accept their inhuman and irrational system of capitalism. For the capitalist rulers, the working class is a criminal class, whose crime is their willingness to fight for a different kind of social order.

There is no such a thing as a fairer and more humane justice system under capitalism. This month marks the 50th anniversary of the uprising at Attica, where inmates protested conditions that included chronic overcrowding, one shower a week, one roll of toilet paper a month. Their main slogan was, “We are not beasts and we do not intend to be beaten or driven as such.”

They demanded an end to brutality, to racism, to censorship of their mail, as well as wretched and demeaning living conditions. The response of the state was tear gas and a barrage of gunfire. Police fired indiscriminately, killing 29 prisoners and 10 hostages and wounding 89 more.

Only struggles by inmates to bring the conditions they face to light and demand change, backed by

solidarity from workers outside prison bars, can begin to make life more bearable. And to defend hard-won rights like the presumption of innocence and to a speedy trial, as well as protections against being railroaded under the notorious plea bargain system.

The Socialist Workers Party campaign calls for an end to solitary confinement, to overcrowding and abuse, and for medical care and culture. Workers behind bars remain workers, with worth. We demand improved conditions for all.

We join in defending the right of prisoners to have access to books and periodicals of their choosing so they can think for themselves and be part of the struggles to oppose, and ultimately eradicate, this system of exploitation and oppression.

More workers are repelled by the conditions imposed by the capitalist rulers on working people — in and out of prison — and are looking for ways to resist. Many of them will be inspired by revolutionary leaders of the working class like Malcolm X, who turned his back on his youth as a hustler, thief and pimp, and used his time in prison to teach himself the “discipline to read, to study, *to work* at thinking about what he was reading,” wrote Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party in *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. It contributed to him becoming one of “the most truly educated, capable revolutionary politicians of our times.”

The working class as a class is capable of that transformation, as we come together to fight, no matter “what color you are, as long as you want to change this miserable condition that exists on this earth,” as Malcolm X pointed out. This is the only real road to dismantle the capitalist rulers’ criminal “justice” system.

Liberals plan 2022 race to demonize Trump, not tackle crisis workers face

Continued from front page

litical parties — the Democrats and Republicans — posture as defenders of working people, they in fact defend the profits and power of the capitalist rulers both at home and abroad.

The Joseph Biden administration and his Democratic Party are concerned about how they can keep Republicans from making gains in the 2022 midterm elections. Biden’s approval ratings are falling, as workers continue to struggle under today’s capitalist crisis.

The Democrats plan to hang on to congressional control by demonizing former President Donald Trump. They blame the millions of “deplorable” working people who voted for him — in disgust at the disdain shown to them by both the Democratic and Republican parties — for Biden’s problems.

The contempt for working people by the capitalist rulers and their two main parties has grown, as the crisis of their for-profit system has deepened and more workers see the need for deep-going change. Trump ran for office in 2016 presenting himself as an “outsider” out to “drain the swamp” in Washington.

In his campaign against being recalled in California, Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom focused on labeling Republican Larry Elder as a toxic replica of Trump.

With Newsom managing to hang on to power, the liberal media announced attacking Trump has to be their main theme through the 2022 elections, not debating the issues facing working people. The media immediately began a new round of front-page hysteria, claiming that Trump instigated a full-scale “insurrection” on Jan. 6, when a few hundred right-wing militia members, conspiracy theorists and some of his supporters broke into the Capitol Building.

Court probes into Trump’s finances, bans on his use of “social media,” and other attacks are ballyhooed daily in the press by the liberals and middle-class radicals. Further fodder for their salvos was provided by authors Bob Woodward and Robert Costa in their new Trump exposé *Peril*. They say Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, took it upon himself to call Chinese Gen. Li Zuo Cheng last Oct. 30 to “reassure” him that he would be alerted if Trump flipped out and authorized a military attack on Beijing.

Washington Post columnist Jennifer Rubin says

Milley helped prevent “an unstable president from setting off a nuclear war.” No one has been able to present any evidence that Trump or anyone in his administration was considering an attack on China. Milley hasn’t disputed the book’s story.

Milley’s actions had nothing to do with opposition to the massive military armaments and war threats of the U.S. capitalist rulers. Neither he nor anyone else in the Pentagon brass have uttered any concern over the Biden administration’s new alliances against Beijing and spread of nuclear-powered submarines in the Pacific. His call to the generals in Beijing — an unprecedented break with the chain of command — was *political*, an attack on Trump and a threat to anyone who supported him.

Milley told subordinates President Trump was “a classic authoritarian leader with nothing to lose.”

Milley’s decision to put his partisan views above his job became common knowledge among Democratic officials. “You know [Trump’s] crazy,” House Speaker Nancy Pelosi told him two days after Jan. 6, according to the book’s authors. “Madame Speaker. I agree with you on everything,” Milley replied.

Following the November election Milley told his deputies they had to guard against a Trump coup attempt. “You can’t do this without the military,” he allegedly bragged. “We’re the guys with the guns.”

Working people have no interest in the machinations at the Pentagon, one of the capitalist rulers’ central institutions to defend their rule. But any idea that generals are more “normal” or defenders of political rights is dangerous. Side by side with their portrayal of Milley as a hero who saved the country from a “deranged” president, liberals paint Trump supporters as a threat who could launch another “attack” on the Capitol at any moment.

Assault on political rights

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin put the National Guard on standby when a mere 200 people protested outside the U.S. Capitol Sept. 18, demanding those arrested for entering the building on Jan. 6 be released.

Assaults on political rights and due process — rights that workers need for protection from the rulers’ cops and courts — are part and parcel of the prosecutions being carried out against those arrested for entering

the Capitol Building Jan. 6.

The FBI was unable to gather evidence of any “conspiracy” to carry out an insurrection among the 570 plus people arrested, despite a far-reaching probe. Among the 40 who do face thought-control conspiracy charges is Doug Jensen. He only got bail six months after being arrested when he told District Judge Timothy Kelly that he had changed his mind and renounced his political views.

Kelly said he hadn’t granted bail before because Jensen “wanted to be part of a revolution.” And as a condition of bail, Jensen had to consent to not using either the internet or a cellphone. When he was caught by a court officer listening to an online broadcast by Trump supporter Mike Lindell, his bail was revoked.

“All workers have a stake in opposing attacks on due process and the rulers’ use of thought-control laws, no matter who is targeted,” Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Atlanta, told the *Militant*. “The capitalist ‘justice’ system — its FBI, cops, courts and prisons — are used to frame up working people, to target our unions and working-class organizations like the Socialist Workers Party.

“The most important question facing working people today is to break from the dead end of backing one or another of the candidates of the ruling capitalist families,” Fruit said. “We need to form our own party, a labor party, to lead all those oppressed and exploited by capital to fight to take power into our own hands.”

For further reading

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WHY WASHINGTON FEARS WORKING PEOPLE

JACK BARNES