

THE MILITANT

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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SWP campaign builds support for workers’ struggles today

BY SETH GALINSKY

The first week of the international combined drive to expand the readership of the *Militant* and communist literature and raise funds for the Socialist Workers Party shows the growing interest in discussing how workers can win support for union struggles and a working-class road forward.

Along with members of the Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the U.K., SWP members are organizing to sell 1,300 subscriptions to the *Militant* and 1,300 books by SWP leaders and other revolutionaries by Nov. 23. In the U.S. they are raising \$130,000 for the annual Party-Building Fund. As of Oct. 13 we are at 374 subscriptions and 396 books, well ahead of schedule. (See chart on page 3.)

Sam Manuel, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Atlanta City Council president, and campaign supporter Janice Lynn joined the picket line of dozens

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Fight Texas law that attacks a woman’s right to choose abortion

BY JANET POST

Two days after U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman ordered an injunction blocking a Texas law that severely restricts a woman’s right to choose to have an abortion, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals granted a request by the Texas attorney general to suspend Pitman’s ruling Oct. 8.

This reinstates the bill that instructs doctors not to perform abortion if they find a fetal “heartbeat.” This normally occurs around the sixth week of pregnancy — when many women don’t even know if they’re pregnant and an embryo does not have anything resembling a human heart.

The appeals court panel gave the U.S. Justice Department, which filed the initial challenge to the law, until Oct. 12 to respond.

During the two-day reprieve, six of the 21 family planning clinics in Texas scrambled to reschedule some

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Kellogg strike is in the interest of all workers!

Bakery workers: ‘Equal pay for equal work’



Kevin Bradshaw, vice president BCTGM Local 252G

Support rally Oct. 13 at BCTGM picket line at Kellogg’s plant in Memphis, Tennessee. Union is fighting bosses’ push to force permanent two-tier lower wages and benefits on new hires.

BY JANICE LYNN

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Just after midnight Oct. 4 nearly 300 members of Local 252G of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union walked out at Kellogg’s plant here. Some 1,400 workers are on strike nationwide at the company’s cereal plants — in Battle Creek, Michigan; Omaha, Nebraska; Lancaster, Pennsylvania; and here. Their contract expired in October 2020 but was extended while talks with the company continued.

The strikers are fighting bosses’ demands for a two-tier contract that would deepen divisions among workers, among other concessions. They’re

winning much-needed solidarity.

“Everyone should get a fair wage. If you’re working the same job, you should get the exact same thing, and get the same benefits in due time,” Carver Sumter, who has worked at the plant for 20 years, told the *Militant*.

The company’s two-tiered pay and benefit proposal calls for new workers to receive lower pay permanently and get worse benefits than someone like himself, he said.

“They’re also trying to mess with our pensions,” said Sumter, who preps Froot Loops cereal. “I was here when the company locked us out in 2014. We were fighting then against their attempt to introduce temporary, part-time workers at lower pay and fewer benefits.”

After the nine-month lockout in Memphis ended, the union was forced to accept that new workers would be hired at lower pay, but they still had a path to the top rate.

“This time around all four of Kellogg’s plants around the country are

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Workers increasingly turn to our unions to fight assaults by bosses



Communications Workers of America District 1

Striking health care workers picket at Mercy Hospital in Buffalo, New York, Oct. 12, on day 12 of their strike for safe staffing, higher wages, especially for lowest-paid workers.

BY TERRY EVANS

More workers are walking picket lines and using their unions to resist the bosses’ drive to overturn gains won in previous struggles and push for yet more concessions on wages, schedules and working conditions. Building support for each of these fights is crucial to their outcome and to start forging a more united and combative labor movement.

The bosses and their backers in the

Democratic and Republican parties are grappling with a deepening worldwide crisis of the capitalist system. Cutthroat competition among bosses at home and abroad is sharpening. Their answer is “cost cutting,” that is, to make the working class pay.

Bosses at Kellogg’s “just don’t really treat us like people,” said Trevor Bidelman, one of 1,400 members of the Bak-

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Minnesota court uses Chauvin’s appeal to go after rights workers need

BY DAVID ROSENFELD

MINNEAPOLIS — The due process rights of Derek Chauvin, the former Minneapolis cop convicted of killing George Floyd, continue to be trampled on by the courts. His request for a public defender to handle the appeal of his conviction has been denied by the Minnesota Supreme Court. The right to a public defender when needed is important for all working people.

Many of the 14 issues cited in Chauvin’s appeal of his conviction revolve around violations of basic rights that working people need and must defend to protect ourselves from cop frame-ups and the workings of the capitalist “justice” system.

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Cereal maintenance workers in UK fight wage cuts

‘We are fighting for respect,’ say Montreal hotel strikers

To commemorate the 1979-83 Grenada Revolution, which was overthrown by a Stalinist coup led by Bernard Coard in October 1983, we are running excerpts from “The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop” by Steve Clark, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party. Bishop, a central leader of the revolution on this small Caribbean island, was murdered in the coup. The article is from New International no. 6, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory. Copyright © 1987 by New International. Reprinted by permission.

In mid-October 1983 a faction led by Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard in Grenada's army, government, and New Jewel Movement (NJM) overthrew the workers' and farmers' government brought to power by the March 13, 1979, revolution.

Troops loyal to Coard's faction turned their guns on the mass demonstration, killing many participants and wounding others. They assassinated Maurice Bishop and five other revolutionary leaders



—Fitzroy Bain, Norris Bain, Jacqueline Creft, Vincent Noel, and Unison White-man. The working people of Grenada were stunned and demoralized.

Discredited worldwide by these crimes and their disastrous consequences, Bernard Coard and his followers have tried ever since to cover their tracks by conducting a second assassination of Maurice Bishop. Their political targets include all those revolutionaries — in the Caribbean, North America, and elsewhere — who champion and seek to learn from Bishop's political legacy.

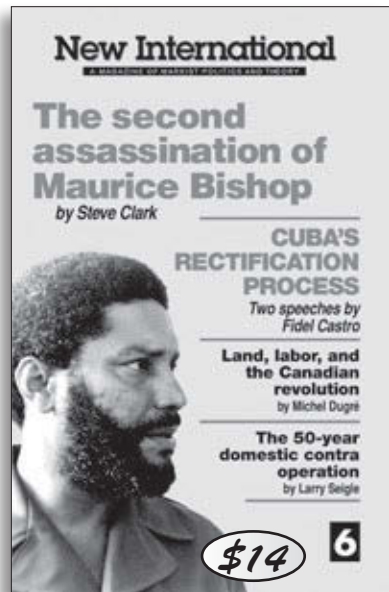
Fidel Castro has aptly characterized Bernard Coard as an “alleged theoretician of the revolution who had been a professor of Marxism in Jamaica.” Coard sought to establish himself and his faction as “a kind of a priesthood of the doctrine, guardian of the doctrine, theoretician of the doctrine, philosopher of the doctrine,” Castro explained.

The Coard group “didn’t work with the masses; it worked among the party members ... and with the cadres of the army and the Ministry of the Interior,” Castro said. Coard “was the scholar of politics, the professor of political science; while Bishop was the man who worked with the masses, worked with the people, worked with the administration, and was active internationally.”

Stalinism destroyed the Grenada revolution. Bernard Coard was trained in its brutality, rigidity, and bureaucratic “decisiveness.” Like all Stalinists, he confused political clarity with dogmatism, centralism with commands, flexibility with softness, discipline with submission, firmness with harshness. The faction he was building in Grenada was truly petty bourgeois — the nucleus of an administrative caste trained in giving orders and wielding authority, not of a political vanguard of the working class relying on the revolutionary organization, mobilization, and political education of the exploited producers.

Although Stalinism remains a powerful obstacle to workers' and peasants' struggles, as shown by the events in Grenada, its hold over the international

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After some 200,000 Jews, as well as Roma, Soviet prisoners and Ukrainian partisans were slaughtered by Nazi troops in 1941-43, working people fought Stalinist authorities to commemorate the Holocaust there. The 'Militant' joined in solidarity with those battles.



Reuters/Anastasia Vlasova
Oct. 3 action at Babyn Yar marks WWII
Nazi massacre of Jews there in 1941.

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SWP campaign builds support

Continued from front page
of striking Kellogg’s workers, members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union Oct. 9 in Memphis, Tennessee.

“I will be using my campaign and the *Militant* newspaper to get out the word about your strike,” Manuel told BCTGM Local 252G Vice President Kevin Bradshaw, who videotaped his remarks as part of documenting the solidarity the strike has been receiving.

“Everything of significance workers have won, has been won on the picket lines and through fights on the job,” Manuel said. “My campaign is about building solidarity with workers’ struggles and explaining the need for the unions to break with the two parties of the bosses and form our own party, a labor party. I will talk about this fight on the radio and press interviews and to workers I meet when we campaign door to door.”

“We appreciate your solidarity,” Bradshaw said. “We will not accept Kellogg’s inhumane conditions. We want equal pay and equal benefits for equal work. We say, ‘One day longer, one day stronger.’”

Bradshaw introduced Manuel and Lynn to strikers and strike supporters, encouraging them “to tell your story so this labor paper can report on our fight.” Bradshaw recalled the accurate reporting provided by the *Militant* during the nine-month lockout workers faced at the plant in 2013-14.

Manuel and Lynn met David Whitson on the picket line. A member of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, Whitson was called to do work in the plant. But when he saw the strikers, he refused to go inside and joined the picket line.

“The bosses and their government try to keep us divided,” Manuel said.

“Your act of solidarity is important.” Manuel gave Whitson a copy of the party’s campaign platform urging workers to use union power to fight employer attacks. Whitson decided to subscribe to the *Militant*.

Winning fund contributions

An important part of making the fall drive a success is recruiting workers to finance the building of the SWP. One aspect of that is winning working people and youth that campaigners have met to continue the discussion and contribute to the fund. Some will want to organize house meetings for SWP candidates, help win solidarity for strikes and locked-out workers and join in campaigning with the SWP.

Militant reader Tyler Perkins, a software engineer, greeted Communist League campaigners Francois Bradette and Katy LeRougetel at his door Oct. 9 in Montreal. “The *Militant* shows more people getting involved” in union struggles, he said.

Bradette invited Perkins to join them at a day care workers’ union rally Oct. 12 during a two-day strike. “I tried to organize a union where I work,” Perkins said. “We didn’t succeed,” he said, but Perkins aims to “get a union eventually.”

He looked at the photos in *Teamster Rebellion*, which show union members facing off against employer-organized thugs in 1934. The book is one of eight on special offer.

Communists in the leadership of that fight led workers to reach out to the unemployed, other unions and farmers as



Militant/John Steele

Beverly Bernardo, left, Communist League candidate for mayor of Montreal, marches with day care workers’ union in Montreal Oct. 12 during two-day strike over wages, working conditions.

they waged the strike battles and organizing drives that made Minneapolis a union town. “That’s how we win,” LeRougetel said. Communist leaders of Teamsters union Local 574 also campaigned against U.S. entry into the second imperialist world war.

Perkins spent a year in China and saw the onerous working and living conditions imposed on factory workers by bosses and the government there. “That’s not communism,” he said.

Perkins gave the campaigners \$50 for his renewal and got *Teamster Rebellion* to learn more about what working people can accomplish with the leadership we deserve. “Put the rest toward whatever you think is useful,” he said.

LeRougetel and CL campaigner Lynda Little met construction worker

Isaac Sutcliffe in Montreal’s Lachine neighborhood Oct. 10.

“I’m vaccinated, but I don’t agree with the government forcing you,” Sutcliffe said. “They’re going to fire nurses who aren’t vaccinated. How does that make sense?”

LeRougetel pointed to the success the Cuban government is having combating the pandemic. This includes mobilizing medical workers and mass organizations to vaccinate the entire population by the end of the year. The government there is a product of the socialist revolution workers and farmers made in 1959. Sutcliffe subscribed to the *Militant*.

You can join the work to expand the reach of the communist movement by contacting the party branch nearest you listed on page 8.

Minnesota court uses Chauvin’s appeal to go after rights

Continued from front page

The video of Floyd’s death after Chauvin brutally pinned him under his knee set off massive demonstrations across the U.S. and around the world. Posturing as “reformers” of the cops, the ruling class determined that Chauvin had to be convicted at all costs.

The former cop was sentenced to 22½ years in prison and says he cannot afford a lawyer to handle his appeal. In filings with the court, Chauvin says his debts outweigh his assets and his only income is prison wages. The police association that covered his earlier trial legal expenses is refusing to do so any longer.

Both the original trial judge and the state Supreme Court denied his request, saying he did not prove his “eligibility” for a public defender. Then a state Court of Appeals judge ruled Oct. 8 that without a lawyer Chauvin cannot present any oral arguments, making a mockery of his right to appeal.

“Government officials working on behalf of the capitalist ruling class generally organize to shield cops from criminal punishment for brutality against working people,” Doug Nelson, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor

of Minneapolis, told the *Militant*. “With the trial of Chauvin, however, everything was organized to ensure a conviction on every charge with a maximum sentence. The rulers run roughshod over due process and constitutional protections when it serves their purpose. The request for a change of venue was rejected precisely because the charged atmosphere in Minneapolis would maximize pressure of all kinds on the jury.

“Our campaign demands the charging and prosecution of cops who brutalize workers. We need to organize the broadest possible demonstrations to achieve this,” Nelson said. “But the ‘justice’ system under capitalism will always be arrayed against working people. We must vigilantly guard the rights workers have won that protect us from the capitalist state, its courts and other anti-working-class institutions. No matter how horrible the crime or disliked the defendant, we must not let the rulers use trials such as these to undermine the rights we have won and that we need.”

Chauvin’s appeal challenges the judge’s refusal to grant a change of venue or more time for the defense to prepare. It also challenges his refusal to sequester the jury during the trial.

The trial itself was organized as a televised spectacle reinforced by a lynch-mob atmosphere that undermined the presumption of innocence. The downtown building where it took place was surrounded by fencing, razor wire and military vehicles. For months beforehand working people were subject to looting, arson and wanton destruction of property in their neighborhoods after anarchists and other anti-working-class forces, including leaders of Black Lives Matter, hijacked initial protests.

Each day jurors were picked up by sheriff’s deputies in secret locations, driven through city streets lined with boarded-up businesses, taken through the fortifications at the government center, where they were greeted by armed National Guardsmen, before being ushered into the courtroom. Before jurors reached their verdict, President Joseph Biden urged them to convict Chauvin.

While Chauvin had only one lawyer, the prosecution, organized by Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison, had a phalanx of high-powered attorneys to prepare and argue the case.

Working people have a stake in the outcome of the challenge to these attacks on constitutional rights.

Celebrate political life of Maurice Williams

Maurice Williams, a former member and longtime friend of the Socialist Workers Party, died Oct. 5 from COVID complications in the UAB Hospital in Birmingham. He worked at U.S. Steel in Fairfield, Alabama, for over a dozen years where he was a member of United Steelworkers Local 1013. Recently, he was active in organizing solidarity with the United Mine Workers strike at Warrior Met Coal in Brookwood.

His funeral service is Saturday, Oct. 16, at 1 p.m. at the Currie-Jefferson Funeral Home, 2701 John Hawkins Pkwy., Hoover, AL 35244. The funeral home’s website, curriejefferson.com, has a page for friends and comrades to post messages. His wife, Amancia Alvarado Carrera, encourages people to make a donation to the Warrior Met strike fund in his honor.

Campaign to expand reach of ‘Militant,’ books, SWP fund

October 2 - November 23 (week one)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	received
UNITED STATES						
Albany	80	16	80	40	\$8,200	
Atlanta	80	19	80	21	\$11,200	
Cincinnati	60		60		\$5,000	
Chicago	100	47	100	35	\$13,500	\$300
Dallas	40	19	40	14	\$3,100	
Lincoln	12	5	12	6	\$350	
Los Angeles	85	29	85	46	\$13,700	
Miami	30	8	30	8	\$4,200	
N. New Jersey	75	20	75	22	\$6,600	\$500
New York	105	46	105	75	\$16,300	
Oakland	85	31	85	35	\$13,100	
Philadelphia	30	8	30	2	\$4,000	
Pittsburgh	45	15	45		\$4,000	
Seattle	65	13	65	21	\$12,000	
Twin Cities	55	17	55	14	\$5,000	
Washington	50	16	50	11	\$5,800	
Other						
Total U.S.	997	309	997	350	\$126,050	\$800
Prisoners	25	15				
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	40	9	40	14		
Manchester	40	12	40	7		
Total U.K.	80	21	80	21		
Canada	90	23	90	13		
New Zealand	25	3	25	8		
Australia	25	3	25	4		
Total	1,242	374	1,217	396	\$126,050	\$800
SHOULD BE	1,300	182	1,300	182	\$130,000	\$18,480

Louisville forum: ‘SWP is on its way to Cincinnati!’

BY NED MEASEL

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky — At a special Militant Labor Forum here Oct. 2, the Socialist Workers Party announced its members in Louisville were moving to Cincinnati to take advantage of opportunities to deepen their involvement in the labor movement and build the party. Eighteen people attended, including four workers from two Walmart stores where members of the SWP had worked. A young woman, who met party members earlier that day at an action to defend a woman’s right to choose an abortion, brought a friend.

Anthony Dutrow, a member of the SWP National Committee and the party’s candidate for mayor in Miami, described how resistance to boss attacks has grown over the last year, pointing to examples like the United Mine Workers strike at Warrior Met Coal in Alabama; United Steelworkers fighting a lockout by ExxonMobil in Texas; distillery workers on strike against Heaven Hill in Bardstown, Kentucky; and the recent walkout by members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union against Nabisco.

“Communists need to be in the unions, especially as our class is reaching to use them to defend ourselves and advance our interests,” Dutrow said.

Opportunities in Cincinnati

“We think in Cincinnati we’ll have greater opportunities to join in union battles and at the same time build a branch of the SWP in a city with a long tradition of class struggle, an industrial center in the Midwest,” Dutrow said. “And where there have been important struggles against racist oppression and police brutality, like those we’ve been part of in Louisville.”

The SWP has built branches in both Cincinnati and Louisville before. In the 1970s and ’80s, the party was part of the successful fight to desegregate Louisville schools when city leaders and the Ku Klux Klan fought federal court-ordered busing. “That victory helped change the working class here and reinforced the fight against racism nationally,” Margaret Trowe, the SWP branch organizer in Louisville and its candidate for mayor, said.

Since 2018, the branch here built solidarity for coal miners who struck against Blackjewel Coal in Harlan County when the company stole their

last paychecks as it declared bankruptcy, she said. And during other strikes and political actions, like the fight against the cop killing of Breonna Taylor, here and throughout the region.

“Moving to Cincinnati to build a branch there will advance the building of the SWP and our involvement in the labor movement,” Trowe said. “And we’ll keep in touch with struggles in Kentucky, and throughout the region.” Meeting participants donated \$315 to help in the move.

“Please tell everyone that I am looking so forward to them moving to the Queen City!” Dave Perry, a Teamster unionist in Cincinnati, said in a message to the meeting.

Kellogg strike is in the interest of all workers

Continued from front page

fighting together so we’re stronger,” he said.

Holding a handmade sign saying, “Honk for higher wages,” Paul Houston said he has been in the plant for only five months. He operates a machine that seals the cereal boxes. “This strike is important for me and for my family for the health care,” Houston said. “The company wants to pay us less and doesn’t want to pay for dental or vision insurance.

“My granddaddy was part of the 1968 sanitation workers strike carrying the sign ‘I Am A Man.’ He brought my daddy to that picket line, and now I’m bringing my sons to this picket line.” During that sanitation workers strike, which was a part of the broader working-class civil rights movement that brought down Jim Crow segregation, Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated as he brought support to the workers.

Ten members of the United Auto Workers union from the General Motors plant here were on the Kellogg’s picket line while this worker-correspondent was there, as well as two unionists from UNITE HERE.

“We stand in solidarity with your fight for fair wages,” Glinder Louis, president of UAW Local 2406, told the strikers. The UAW workers explained that the Bakery Workers union supported their nationwide 40-day strike in 2019, walking the picket lines, and now they were doing the same. “Showing support is so important,” UAW Local 2406 shop chairman Ron Conley said. “What the unions are able to win benefits everyone.”

BCTGM Local 252G Vice President Kevin Bradshaw pointed to some of the



Militant/Amy Husk

Maggie Trowe, at podium, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Louisville, Kentucky, and Anthony Dutrow, right, member of the SWP National Committee, talk about political opportunities ahead as SWP members move to Cincinnati, at Oct. 2 Militant Labor Forum.

support their fight is winning. He said that on Oct. 6 representatives of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and other Black ministers held a press conference backing the strike.

The company put out a statement claiming that in 2020 average earnings for the majority of Kellogg’s employees was \$120,000. But that was at the height of the pandemic, when workers had to work seven days a week, 12 to 16 hours a day. “So they don’t tell you that’s overtime,” Bradshaw said.

Pickets are up around the clock. So far, strikers said, the company hasn’t tried to bring in replacement workers like they did during the lockout.

Kellogg’s reported global sales of \$3.6 billion in the last quarter and profits of some \$380 million.

Michigan strikers fighting two tiers, cuts to COLA, vacation

BY DON FISHER

BATTLE CREEK, Mich. — “When you work for Kellogg’s, you work eight days a week,” said Bill Few, a Kellogg’s worker on strike here, describing the company’s forced overtime policy to this *Militant* worker-correspondent on the picket line Oct. 8. “And you work eight hours per day and hope not more.” Few has worked here for 16 years.

Union members organized by BCTGM Local 3G went on strike at the company’s flagship plant at midnight Oct. 4, keeping up picket lines at three gates plus one railroad crossing.

“We are fighting for future generations by trying to get rid of the two-tier,” said Sonia Hughes, who has worked at the plant for 15 years. “I am thankful for the strike in 1972 that won the gains we have today.”

“The company wants new hires not to get full benefits nor the full pension,” said Mike Cramutolo. “In our old contract we got cost-of-living adjustments, a maximum of \$1.80 per contract. Kellogg’s wants to get rid of that. The company’s proposal is to use vacation instead of Family and Medical Leave,” a federal program that entitles workers unpaid, job-protected leave for family or medical reasons.

“An agency has recruited scabs who enter on buses with police escorts,” Cramutolo said. “Canadian National Railway workers are honoring our picket line.”

“The long hours we are forced to work break up marriages,” said Cher-

ry Crockett, who brought her music to the lively picket line. “We didn’t know our kids, and it interferes with our religious practices.”

Omaha: ‘Longtime and newer workers are standing together’

BY EDWIN FRUIT

OMAHA, Neb. — Striking members of BCTGM Local 50G are staffing six gates at Kellogg’s plant here. Workers are on the picket lines 24 hours a day, each person taking four-hour shifts.

“We’ve been working six and seven 12-hour shifts ever since the pandemic,” said Allan Grzebielski, a 17-year veteran at the plant. Five hundred union workers are at the plant here, he said, but only 350 are full time and 135 are hired as “transitionaries.” He said the turnover rate for the newer workers is around 66%. “People can find other jobs without such a grueling schedule.”

“We are not asking for more wages or benefits,” said Brian Akins. “We want the transitional workers to be on parity with us.” They make \$10 less an hour and are not entitled to benefits. It can take up to six years for a transitory worker to become permanent. The current union contract calls for a cap of new workers at 30%, strikers say. The company wants no limit on the number of workers it hires on these conditions.

“The old timers fought for everything we have today,” Grzebielski said. “We’re doing the same for new workers. If the company gets its way, pensions and benefits will disappear and the wage rate will fall as well. They are basically trying to break the union.”

Parker Nicholls, a 26-year-old construction worker, and Joe Swanson, a retired railroad worker and a member of the SMART-TD union, both came to the picket line from Lincoln to show their support. “This is my first picket line,” Nicholls said. “I am very impressed with the solidarity between the long-standing and newer workers.”

Striking workers reported they had received food, water and other support from the Carpenters, Pipefitters, SMART-TD and United Steelworkers unions.

Organize solidarity with Kellogg’s strikers, whose fight is in the interests of the entire working class! The union’s national website — bctgm.org — has a “Support Kellogg’s Workers” page with ways to send support messages and donations to each of the locals on strike.

Coup killed Grenada revolution

Continued from page 2

working-class movement has been irreversibly weakened by the advance of the world revolution since the closing years of World War II. Above all, a corner was turned in 1959 with the victory of the Cuban revolution under the leadership of a revolutionary internationalist leadership. Revolutionary-minded workers, peasants, and youth throughout Latin America and many other parts of the world have been attracted to and influenced by the example of the Cuban Communist Party. ...

Bernard Coard’s political course was

based on a rejection in practice of what [Russian revolutionary leader V.I.] Lenin called “one of the most profound and at the same time most simple and comprehensible precepts of Marxism.” ...

“In the final analysis,” Lenin said, “the reason our revolution has left all other revolutions far behind is that ... it has aroused tens of millions of people, formerly uninterested in state development, to take an active part in the work of building the state.”

That is the communist perspective that Maurice Bishop died fighting to advance.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Cereal maintenance workers in UK fight wage cuts

BURTON LATIMER, England — Maintenance engineers at Weetabix breakfast cereal manufacturing plants are fighting attacks on their schedules and wages. Members of the Unite union just concluded the third of 11 planned weekly two-day work stoppages Oct. 6.

“The company is moving to consolidate different shift patterns that will leave some workers thousands of pounds out of pocket each year,” Mark Oakley told the *Militant*. Oakley, who has worked at the plant for 17 years, is one of five shop stewards who represent the 60 maintenance workers. “We have to fight back.”

The company has two major plants in Northamptonshire and a smaller one in Manchester — with a combined workforce of 1,000 — as well as operations in North America, South Africa, Germany, Spain and Kenya.

“During the pandemic the company’s sales went through the roof,” Oakley said. “They put on extra shifts, such was the demand. Now we face this!”

The company’s profits soared by 20% in 2020, said Sharon Graham, recently elected Unite general secretary, who joined the picket Sept. 29.

Buoyed by reports that production was being hit by their walkout, workers at a picket line meeting Oct. 6 discussed what demands to place on the company, the establishment of a strike committee and options for escalating the action.

The production workers at the plant are organized by the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers and have a separate contract. Those working on the Alpen cereal bar line walked out for 24 hours in August, forcing bosses to reinstate a 27.5% shift pay premium, said Usdaw regional official Ed Leach.

— Jonathan Silberman
and Pamela Holmes

Michigan auto-parts workers strike, win UAW union

Some 340 workers won union recognition for the United Auto Workers after a weeklong strike in September at auto-parts supplier ZF International

at its Marysville, Michigan, plant. The axle factory was previously owned by Fiat Chrysler and had been under UAW contract.

In 2019 Fiat Chrysler began transferring workers to other union-organized company locations in a planned transition to ZF International’s control. In January 2021 Fiat Chrysler merged with Peugeot to form Stellantis. ZF Marysville took over and began adding workers from other ZF locations as the union-organized Stellantis workers were being transferred.

In July, ZF bosses announced the Marysville plant had secured a nearly \$6 billion contract for delivery of beam axles and axle drives for pickup trucks through 2027, opening up prospects for additional hiring.

The majority of workers made it clear to the company they wanted union representation, and when bosses refused, they walked out.

— Brian Williams

‘We are fighting for respect,’ say Montreal hotel strikers

MONTREAL — To the sound of loud cheers and music, Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN) strikers from the Hilton hotel in Quebec City joined DoubleTree hotel pickets here Oct. 5. The joint action by the workers was called in response to management shutting down the DoubleTree four days earlier after the union took the bosses to court for using scab labor.

“I’ve been out of work since the beginning of the pandemic,” striker Helker Flores, who has been preparing banquets for 10 years at the DoubleTree, told this *Militant* worker-correspondent. The old contract says management can bring in new workers once union members are out of work for two years. “I’m all out of unemployment pay and other benefits, but I don’t want to go back under their conditions.”

“We are fighting for respect,” explained striker Valerie Guillemette, who has worked at the hotel bar for almost seven years. “They are using the pandemic to get rid of those with years of seniority. They hire people from restaurants, where there are practically no

John Deere workers reject contract, set strike



Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier

By a 90% margin, over 10,000 United Auto Workers union members at more than a dozen John Deere plants in Iowa, Illinois and Kansas rejected a contract the agricultural-implements company bosses and union officials had agreed on. The union set a deadline of midnight Oct. 13 to set up strike picket lines, unless a new agreement is reached.

“The worst part is you get a 12% raise over six years. That amounts to 2% a year,” UAW member Paul Ganske in Iowa told the *Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier* as he cast his ballot. “They brought back the cost-of-living clause, but it never kept up with the cost of living. At Fareway this week bacon was \$8.99 a pound. You gotta make more money if you got to pay those prices.”

Ganske, above, said he voted early, then held up a sign in the busy parking lot where ballots were cast, urging fellow unionists to “Vote no.”

Welder Marty Carter told the *Des Moines Register* he voted against the contract because it would deepen divisions between new hires and veteran workers. John Deere workers have already been saddled with a two-tier retirement system. The rejected contract includes a three-tier system, with new hires ineligible for a company pension, only offering a 401(k) savings scheme.

The company has “bullied the UAW around and got away with it. It’s time we stood up,” said Diana Swartz, an assembler for four years. The contract would raise her pay by only 74 cents, to \$21.43 an hour. This year company profits will be at least 61% higher than their previous record year, estimates the *Register*.

Workers had voted for a temporary extension of the current contract when it expired Oct. 1. As the *Militant* goes to press talks between the union and company continue.

— TERRY EVANS

unions. They think they can mold them easily, that they are docile. But seeing the number of new workers on the picket line, I can tell you the atmosphere will be different when we go back in.

“We have people from Bali, Brazil, Algeria, Vietnam and we share our cultures on the line,” she said.

“I was hired at the DoubleTree eight years ago in house cleaning,” said Ma-

ria Ochoa. “I was working for cleaning agencies before, where there are no unions. It is a lot better with a union. We can defend the right of workers.”

Two people joined the action at the DoubleTree after meeting Communist League campaigners at their door during the previous week. “It is my first picket line and I like it. I think all workers should be in a union,” said Mehari Neqassi, who arrived in Canada three years ago from Eritrea and who has been working in a nonunion warehouse.

Negotiations are under way in hotels across Quebec unionized by the CSN. Hotel workers in seven union locals have accepted a contract that includes protection against permanent job losses due to pandemic closings, and a raise of 8% over four years. About 20 locals are still negotiating and two are on strike — at the DoubleTree and the Quebec City Hilton.

There have been a number of other strike actions, including a six-day strike at Quality Hotel and Suites in Sherbrooke ending in victory Sept. 29.

Send solidarity messages to info@csn.qc.ca and checks to CSN, 1601 De Lorimier Ave., Montreal, QC H2K 4M5, Canada.

— Philippe Tessier

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



October 28, 1996

WASHINGTON, D.C. — “No human being is illegal!” appeared on countless hand-lettered signs among the thousands of demonstrators who converged October 12 for the first national demonstration for the rights of immigrants.

Mexican, Chicano, Puerto Rican, and other Latino student groups played a major role in organizing buses, vans, and cars to get to the demonstration. The march marked the increased confidence of many immigrant workers in resisting government and employer attacks.

One speaker who received a particularly warm response was Baldemar Velázquez, president of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee. Describing how farm workers organized FLOC over the years, Velázquez said, “We didn’t wait for the politicians. We didn’t wait for the AFL-CIO. We started organizing the brothers and sisters. We said: We fight now. We can’t wait for later.”



October 29, 1971

The special meeting held in the Colorado State Penitentiary at Canon City Sept. 29, where a dozen candidates and supporters of the Colorado Socialist Workers Party discussed their election platform with several hundred potential supporters, sets an example for prisons throughout the country.

The real issues facing prisoners were discussed, and alternatives were presented. Concrete ideas for how to struggle effectively and win were debated.

However, prison authorities refused to let the candidates bring their campaign newspaper, the *Militant*, to distribute. The right to uncensored mail and reading material, including books, magazines and papers, are among the rights for which prisoners are today courageously fighting. Part of this fight is for the right of the *Militant* to be distributed within prison walls. It is a right we intend to win.



October 26, 1946

NEW YORK — With the refusal of the Supreme Court to hear the case of 217 Indonesian seamen who are incarcerated in a Texas detention camp, these men may be deported within 30 days.

The seamen were arrested almost a year ago, because they walked off Dutch ships in New York harbor. The ships were loading American-made arms and ammunition to be used by the Dutch despots against the Indonesian fighters for freedom. The seamen refused to transport arms designed to shoot down their own countrymen.

After six months’ imprisonment in Ellis Island, the seamen were shipped to San Francisco, together with a score of Indonesian residents, rounded up by the government as reprisal against the seamen’s action. The Indonesia League of America is demanding the men remain here as political refugees pending the outcome of the struggle in Indonesia.

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

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

'Cuban Revolution: a challenge to US imperialism'

Cuban representative speaks on US economic war, campaign of lies against socialist revolution

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL,
MARY-ALICE WATERS,
AND RÓGER CALERO

NEW YORK — Carlos Fernández de Cossío, head of the Cuban foreign ministry's department for U.S. affairs, was in New York at the end of September for the opening session of the United Nations General Assembly. As part of his busy schedule, he made time to sit down and talk with the *Militant*. He spoke about the intensified assault the world's strongest imperialist power is today mounting against the men and women who made and continue to defend Cuba's socialist revolution.

"The most enduring and successful challenge to imperialism in the Western Hemisphere has been the Cuban Revolution," said Fernández de Cossío. "It's a challenge to the U.S. as an imperialist power that they must try to defeat."

For more than six decades, he noted, despite the enormous resources devoted to trying to overturn Cuba's revolutionary government and reestablish capitalist property relations, the U.S. rulers have failed in that goal.

Imperialist efforts and expectations notwithstanding, the revolution didn't collapse in the 1990s after the implosion of the Soviet-bloc regimes and the profound economic crisis that created in Cuba.

Then the imperialist rulers "bet that when Fidel Castro was gone the Cuban Revolution wouldn't survive," said Fernández de Cossío. When that didn't happen, they thought it would all be over when Raúl Castro stepped aside. But the revolution continues.

"For U.S. imperialism and the enemies of Cuba, this continuity is a big challenge," he noted. "They cannot accept the legitimacy of a popular revolutionary government that is no longer led by the historic generation" — the generation that led working people to power in 1959 and established a government that defends their interests.



Militant/Róger Calero
Carlos Fernández de Cossío, head of Cuban foreign ministry's department for U.S. affairs.

"Today this government is led by new generations. Cuba is not capitalist, it doesn't accept capitalism. That represents an obstacle for imperialism in this hemisphere."

That's why over the past several years the U.S. rulers, under the Trump and now Biden administrations, have imposed the most comprehensive economic sanctions ever on Cuba. These measures, more than 200 of these recently enacted, sharply restrict Cuba's access to the international banking system and block foreign investment, vital fuel imports, and remittances from Cuban Americans to their families on the island.

U.S. targets Cuban artists, blacks

That's also why today Washington is waging a political offensive targeting "several pillars of the legitimacy the Cuban Revolution has won internationally," he said.

One of those pillars of moral authority with working people worldwide is how the Cuban Revolution has expanded access to culture and education to millions in city and countryside. The revolutionary government has a powerful, proud record of fostering the widest artistic expression.

"The U.S. government is spending



Artists bring theater and music to El Salvador, a rural town in Cuba's Guantánamo province Jan. 28, 2019. Socialist revolution expanded access to culture and education to millions in countryside and city.

tens of millions to paint the false image of a conflict between the revolutionary government and artists, between the government and youth," Fernández de Cossío noted.

Washington has sought to rally artists in the United States and internationally in support of the so-called San Isidro group, a U.S. government-funded operation that enemies of the revolution cynically portray as a movement of "young, black independent artists."

"This effort goes along with their attempts to discredit Cuba's achievements in eliminating racist discrimination," Fernández de Cossío said. "With a huge dose of demagoguery and hypocrisy, they seek to paint Cuba as being a racist country — because of the revolution."

Cuba before 1959 "was a racist society," he said. "The revolution put an end to institutionalized discrimination."

"Since then, the government and the Cuban Communist Party have led efforts to eliminate racial prejudice. It can't be erased by decree. You can't create an 'anti-racist ministry' to do so. Along with other steps, it requires educational, cultural work."

"I wouldn't be honest if I denied that we still have a ways to go. Even with the huge advances in employment, education, health, and other conditions the revolution has brought about for the Cuban people, it's still a stratified society with different socioeconomic levels. We still haven't eliminated the disparities we see today in urban neighborhoods that were worst-off in social and economic conditions before the revolution."

"A Havana neighborhood that was poor 50 or 60 years ago is likely to still have more crowded housing, poorer ventilation, a population with lower levels of university education, more crime than other areas."

"That's true regardless of skin color. But taking into account the conditions the black population faced before 1959," the disparities remain greater for black Cubans today, he said.

For that reason, "the Cuban government and society continue to wage a fight against racism and its legacy."

Internationalist doctors smeared

Fernández de Cossío highlighted another pillar of the revolution's sup-

port among working people worldwide that is targeted by Washington — Cuba's record of internationalist medical cooperation.

"Our doctors serving in other countries are labeled 'slaves.' The Cuban government's solidarity — the imperialists call it 'human trafficking.'"

"They try to stigmatize the work of Cuban volunteers who are saving lives, providing care to millions in some of the poorest communities of more than 100 countries."

"The U.S. State Department has sent its representatives to pressure other governments that legitimately request Cuban medical assistance, demanding they not accept it."

Fernández de Cossío pointed out that "in the midst of the pandemic, Cuba is the only government in the world — the only one — that has sent medical brigades to help other countries fight COVID. They've gone to 40 countries — from Italy and oil-rich Persian Gulf states to Latin America and Africa."

"And the U.S. government attacks us for that!"

Washington is also waging a concerted effort to undermine the legitimacy of leaders of the new Cuban government, Fernández de Cossío said. "They personally attack President Miguel Díaz-Canel. They say, 'He's no Fidel Castro.' At the same time, they charge he's a dictator, his regime is repressive."



Building housing in Havana's La Güinera barrio this month. Despite severe shortages due to intensified U.S. efforts to strangle Cuba's economy, government is giving priority to neighborhoods with worst conditions.



Left, Granma/Miguel Febles Hernández; above, Museo Municipal de Báguanos
Above: Some of the 100,000 young volunteers who in 1961 helped wipe out illiteracy in Cuba. Left: Havana, February 2021. Medical students go door to door, making sure anyone with COVID symptoms gets needed care. For more than 60 years black Cubans have been a leading force in the socialist revolution, fighting to consolidate social and political gains of working people of all skin colors while uprooting legacy of discrimination against Cubans who are black.

Stepped-up U.S. economic aggression

Addressing the economic situation in Cuba today, Fernández de Cossío said the big-business media asserts that Cuba "is going through its worst moments ever." That's not accurate, he said.

"The most difficult times were the 1960s, when we were engaged in a civil war inside Cuba with counter-revolutionary groups armed, trained, and financed by the U.S."

The 1990s economic crisis, precipitated by Cuba's abrupt loss of more than three-quarters of its foreign trade after the implosion of the Soviet Union, "was a more severe economic crisis than today. That's hard to explain to young people who were only children then, but we had 18-hour blackouts, practically no public transportation. There were such food shortages that people lost weight dramatically." That's not the case today.

"What's the biggest problem today? Unlike the 1990s, there are greater social and economic inequalities in the population. In previous decades, because of the revolution, Cuba was a more egalitarian society. But we've been forced to use economic methods — some call them 'market-friendly' — that have generated inequalities, although Cuba has much less social inequality than any other country in the world."

In recent years ownership of small and medium private businesses has been encouraged, and the number of workers who can be employed has now been increased to 100. Farmers can sell more of their produce on the open market. Families can sell their homes.

The expansion of tourism and other measures to gain hard currency needed for importing essential goods have led to a disparity between those who receive part of their income in dollars and those who don't. Remittances from abroad go disproportionately to better-off families rather than working people, especially those who are black, and that has sharpened racial tensions.

Fernández de Cossío noted that in January 2021 the government implemented a series of economic measures. Among these, subsidies for many basic food items were reduced. Financial assistance was cut back for families receiving benefits for household members who are unemployed but fit to work. A wider range of wages was established for different jobs.

The minimum wage and retirement pensions were increased. Despite that, many Cuban families are having a very hard time. The purchasing power of the peso has dropped with the de facto devaluation that took effect in January through the elimination of a dual currency structure in place for more than two decades. Today Cuba is experiencing sharply rising inflation.

"We've introduced measures such as these in a gradual way, and we expect to introduce more," said Fernández de Cossío. "But we're not heading toward a capitalist economy. Inequalities are greater but Cuba's economic structure doesn't even remotely approach a capitalist economy."

The increased economic and social tensions are magnified "by the social media and digital networks that have entered the mix in Cuba, with the harmful effects they have everywhere, including in the United States," he said.

"The U.S. government is spending millions to bombard Cuba with propaganda" through social media to exacerbate antagonisms and spread lies.

'U.S. uses pandemic against Cuba'

Fernández de Cossío outlined some of the main economic challenges today.

"First is the intensification of the U.S. economic blockade against Cuba," he said. Since mid-2019 Washington has imposed sanctions on foreign shipping companies and other measures to restrict Cuba's imports of oil.

"Imagine if New York City suddenly faced a sharp increase in fuel prices, or part of its supply was cut off. If Canada, which supplies electricity to New York, said: 'From now on New York City will only get 30% of its electrical power.'"

"Or if now, in the midst of this COV-

ID pandemic, you had to buy medicine or medical equipment on the international market and were told, 'No, we can't sell you these products because they contain more than 10% or 12% of U.S. components or U.S. raw materials or intellectual property.'"

"Or if, because of sanctions, you couldn't buy equipment or raw materials from the manufacturer, but had to go through a third party and pay twice the original price."

"That's what they're doing to Cuba."

Another challenge is the economic cost of the COVID pandemic. Washington, he said, "has used the pandemic as an ally in its aggression against Cuba. As a result, we've had difficulty getting medical supplies, not only for COVID but basic medicines: for high blood pressure, diabetes, allergies, cardiovascular disease."

Fernández de Cossío noted that "throughout 2020 Cuba was quite successful in dealing with the pandemic. The numbers of infections and deaths were almost insignificant on the world scale." This was because in Cuba, where access to health care is universal and free of charge, doctors, nurses, and other volunteers were mobilized to visit homes in every neighborhood across the island, making sure those needing medical care received it. No one was left on their own.

"In the first months of this year, however, with the Delta variant, the pandemic began to have a big impact, and the summer was particularly hard. Since August we've reached a plateau, and now there's a downward trend in cases and deaths as a result of the vaccination campaign," Fernández de Cossío said.

"But the economic costs of the pandemic have been high. We've had to close schools and many workplaces. There's been almost no tourism — the main source of income for our country."

"And we have the increased costs of the hospitals and isolation centers. My son was one of the many youth who volunteered at an isolation center. Patients and workers there are fed three meals and a snack a day free of charge. The facilities have air conditioners and fans — that requires fuel to generate the electricity. All that has to be paid for."

Illustrating how tight the economic situation is today, he said, "Every week our government has to review its list of pressing needs and — based on the limited income from foreign tourism and exports — make decisions on what we

can allocate funds for and what we have to postpone.

"The cost of what needs to be done is always higher than the income received. Every necessity that is postponed becomes an additional problem."

"And there's a third list: what we allocate for long-term development."

"Some critics, outside and inside Cuba, ask: if there's a shortage of chicken and other food, why do we keep building tourist hotels? The answer is: we can't consume everything we have today and leave nothing for our children to live on."

Fernández de Cossío explained that during the economic crisis of the 1990s, known in Cuba as

the Special Period, "we developed what today is BioCubaFarma, the state biotechnology and pharmaceutical enterprise that allows Cuba to produce vaccines and other medicines of its own."

"We also began to invest in tourism, which made it possible for Cuba to stop being a country that depended on sugar exports as its main source of income — a legacy of colonialism."

"Those investments required capital, funds that were not used for public transportation or electricity or food. They were invested with an eye to today's generation of Cubans. And that's a challenge we continue to have."

Fernández de Cossío noted that, even after the intensification of U.S. sanctions beginning in 2017, "Cuba registered some economic growth up until mid-2019. That's when the U.S. government took steps to block our fuel imports — a big blow to our economy. Then in 2020 we were hit by the COVID pandemic that has affected the entire world."

"All that has limited our plans to reduce dependence on food imports." For example, he said, Cuba has sought to boost domestic pork production. But raw materials for animal fodder, such as soy and corn, are still largely imported, and Cuba's lack of hard currency limits its ability to buy those components on the world market. Efforts to produce varieties of corn and soybeans suited for Cuba are underway, but cannot yet meet demand.

"So today we sometimes have to choose: do we import chicken or medicine for the population, or do we buy fodder in order to produce more pork?"

"It's like the family that's gathered around the table, deciding how to spend its money for the week. That's the challenge we face in Cuba."

U.S.-orchestrated July 11 events

These acute economic pressures, combined with Washington's political offensive, "came together and were the context for the protests of July 11," said the Cuban official.

He countered the lies by the U.S. government and capitalist media internationally, which claimed a massive anti-government "uprising" swept the island that day.

"The image presented by the international media is one of days or weeks of protests. That's not true. They were on

Continued on page 8

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7

Revolution is challenge to imperialism

Continued from page 7

one day, July 11. They happened in 11 towns and cities. They were not massive demonstrations.

“In fact, the largest numbers in the streets were people who came out to support the revolution.”

The capitalist media “broadcast old photos of big demonstrations in Alexandria, Egypt, or in Buenos Aires, and presented them as if they were pictures taken in Cuba that day. Or they broadcast photos of pro-revolution demonstrations in Havana, claiming they were scenes of counter-revolutionary protests in Cuba!”

Who took to the streets on July 11?

“The majority were people genuinely frustrated by the blackouts, the food shortages, the problems with public transit. They were frustrated because the schools were closed and they had the kids at home all day. Because there was no entertainment — you couldn’t go to parties or the beach. Because there are inadequacies in the administration of community and government services. All these things are true.”

The protests, however, were not spontaneous as claimed in the foreign big-business press and social media.

“Some of those in the streets were incited by social media outlets that had been campaigning for weeks” for such actions, Fernández de Cossío said.

“The first protest on July 11 took place in the town of San Antonio de los Baños, 40 minutes from Havana. When protesters first began to gather at a small park at 11 a.m., two correspondents from major foreign news media were already on the scene.

“These protests were directed by ele-

ments financed by the U.S. government.

“We have evidence that people were offered money, like: \$150 to throw a rock at a police officer, \$200 for a Molotov cocktail, \$500 to set a car on fire. Vandalism and violence were planned and instigated.”

Fernández de Cossío noted that there was one incident the following day in the Havana neighborhood of La Güinera. “A group of people who had firearms tried to attack a police station. One person was killed. They planned to head next to the Havana harbor, where they had been led to believe that boats had arrived from Miami to take them to the U.S.!”

The U.S. capitalist media painted a picture of largely black, working-class La Güinera as a neighborhood in revolt against the revolutionary government.

That image was refuted by local residents, who were joined by Gerardo Hernández, national head of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution. He explained on Cuban TV that most of the protesters there were working people fed up by the daily economic hardships who were drawn into an action instigated by opponents of the government. “There are many revolutionaries in La Güinera,” he pointed out.

Speaking to the Cuban press, Hernández said residents of neighborhoods such as La Güinera — which is in the area of the city where he himself grew up — by organizing collectively to improve conditions, gain confidence in their ability to make a difference. Working together to repair streets and homes, as they involve youth who are not working or going to school into productive activity, they begin to transform not only their surroundings but themselves.

“These experiences help revolutionaries understand that we have to make changes in how we do things,” Fernández de Cossío said. “Historically, Fidel always explained this to us. We have to get out and work more. The answer lies not in use of social media, but our physical presence,” working in communities around the country.

Over the past two months, the Cuban government has given special priority to dozens of Havana neighborhoods with some of the worst

conditions. Work is underway there to repair streets, housing, local stores, doctor’s offices, parks, and other facilities. Backed by national and local government bodies, the Federation of Cuban Women, Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, the Federation of University Students, and other mass organizations are working to involve local residents, including unemployed youth, in this effort.

Fernández de Cossío pointed out that conditions vary from one neighborhood to another. “So the approach used in La Güinera may not be exactly what’s needed in the Chicharrones neighborhood of Santiago de Cuba, or the San Isidro or El Fanguito barrios of Havana.

“And we can’t forget that this is Cuba in 2021, with our shortage of resources, lack of capital, debts to pay and the ever-present U.S. blockade.”

Cuban vaccine: at home and abroad

We asked Fernández de Cossío about how the vaccination campaign against COVID is progressing. Cuba has developed five vaccines and has already begun to use three of them, Soberana II, Soberana Plus, and Abdala.

“Thanks to President Díaz-Canel’s foresight, we began to develop a COVID vaccine very early, in March 2020, when there were still no cases reported in Cuba.

“Our vaccination process takes longer than in some countries because people receive three doses. That also means producing a larger quantity than for a vaccine requiring two doses.

“As of now, nearly 50 percent of the Cuban population is fully vaccinated. We plan to vaccinate practically the entire population by November.”

Cuba is now immunizing children two years and older, the first country to do so, Fernández de Cossío said. This is possible because — drawing on decades of work developing and producing vaccines for a range of illnesses and ages — Cuban researchers designed their COVID vaccines based on biotechnol-



Misión Médica Cubana en Djibouti

Cuban health worker examines child in Djibouti, in Africa. “Cuba is the only government in the world that has sent medical brigades to help other countries fight COVID,” said Fernández de Cossío. Washington tries to discredit Cuba’s internationalist doctors calling them “slaves.”

ogy known to be safe for children.

Cuba’s revolutionary government is also making its vaccines available beyond its borders. The process is currently underway to obtain their approval by the World Health Organization, which many governments rely on before authorizing their use.

“We want to make sure to provide all the documentation and evidence showing that the vaccines are safe and effective,” Fernández de Cossío said.

“Governments such as the U.S. have a lot of influence on international bodies like WHO. And the experts used by WHO to evaluate vaccines are often executives from big corporations like Pfizer, Merck, Johnson & Johnson, and Sanofi Pasteur. So to be sure we exceed the standards of these organizations, we are being especially rigorous in preparing the documentation.”

He said the governments of Iran, Vietnam, Mexico, and Venezuela have already accepted the Cuban vaccine. Iran is now producing Soberana II and Vietnam plans to manufacture Abdala. But many other countries don’t have such capacity, and Cuba plans to produce millions of doses for international distribution.

“Once a large enough part of the Cuban population is vaccinated, we’ll have greater ability to export the vaccine,” said Fernández de Cossío. “Cuba is committed to making it available to other nations that need it.”

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SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

Join Socialist Workers Party campaign!

Statement by Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New Jersey governor, Oct. 13.

In the three weeks left before the 2021 elections, Socialist Workers Party candidates will present a program for the working class to defend our interests and build solidarity for labor and social battles taking place today.

The bosses say “we” have to come together to defend them against competitors, that our jobs depend on their raking in profits. But today’s growing number of strikes put the lie to this claim. Winning solidarity is crucial to their outcome and to strengthen our class, as the bosses and their government drive to put the crisis of their declining system on our backs.

Only the working class is capable of ending the root cause of the problems we confront — the dog-eat-dog capitalist system, built on exploitation and oppression.

We need to strengthen our unions, and *use* them. To break with the capitalist parties, the Democrats and Republicans. Through our struggles we can build our own party, a labor party, led by the most far-seeing class-struggle fighters, and take political power into our own hands. Join the SWP campaign to gather the forces to make the coming American socialist revolution.

2021 Socialist Workers Party candidates

Albany

Ved Dookhun, mayor
Kathie Fitzgerald, Common Council president

Atlanta

Rachele Fruit, mayor
Sam Manuel, City Council president

Minneapolis

Doug Nelson, mayor
David Rosenfeld, City Council Ward 12

New Jersey

Joanne Kuniansky, governor
Vivian Sahner, lieutenant governor

Miami

Anthony Dutrow, mayor

New York City

Róger Calero, mayor
Willie Cotton, public advocate
Sara Lobman, Manhattan Borough president

Philadelphia

Osborne Hart, district attorney

Pittsburgh

Malcolm Jarrett, mayor

Seattle

Henry Dennison, mayor
Rebecca Williamson, City Council at-Large

Fight Texas law that attacks women’s right to choose

Continued from front page

of the patients they had been turning away after passage of the act, reported the Center for Reproductive Rights. The seven Planned Parenthood clinics in the state did not reschedule any of their procedures.

Texas officials are now asking the appeals court for a permanent injunction that would allow the law to stand during further court hearings.

To enforce the law, the state allows any person to go after doctors, nurses, clinic volunteers and counselors, family members or anyone who helped a woman obtain an abortion or raised funds to cover the procedure. Those found guilty could face a fine of at least \$10,000, plus court costs. The law does not make an exception in cases of rape, incest or sexual abuse — only if a woman’s health is in danger.

Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Mississippi, North Dakota, South Dakota and other states are considering introducing similar bills.

“The right to choose whether and when to bear children, including how many, has to be a private, personal matter for all women,” Sara Lobman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Manhattan Borough president, told the *Militant*. “This is fundamental for women being able to control and plan their own lives.”

Amy Hagstrom Miller, director of Whole Woman’s Health in Texas, estimates that 80% of its patients seen since the law was enacted are now turned away after their ultrasound check. Over 56,000 abortions were performed in Texas in 2019.

Women in Texas are forced to turn to out-of-state clinics, especially in Oklahoma and Louisiana. Hope Medical Group for Women in Shreveport, Louisiana, is booked more than three weeks out and has added evening hours. “Because of the delay, they are going to be further along” in their pregnancy, said Kathaleen Pittman, an administrator for that clinic. The Tulsa Women’s Clinic in Oklahoma has tripled its daily appointments. Many poorer working-class women are being prevented from having an abortion.

The nonstop propaganda campaign by opponents of women’s rights and erosion of the right to choose has had an impact on the consciousness of working people. Millions are convinced that life begins at conception or soon after, even if they do not support restricting all abortions.

“Only a mass movement can educate and mobilize the power needed to defend a woman’s right to unrestricted family planning services. This is what it took to overthrow Jim Crow segregation,” SWP candidate Lobman said. “Fighting for that right is essential for winning women’s equality, uniting the working class and building our unions.”

Today there is not an abortion clinic in 90% of U.S. counties. A decade ago Texas had 40 family planning clinics providing abortion, twice as many as today.

On Oct. 2 tens of thousands of working people joined in over 660 demonstrations in cities and small towns across the country, and some overseas, to speak out in favor of women’s right to choose abortion and against the Texas law.

Workers turn to unions

Continued from front page

ery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union currently on strike at the company’s four cereal plants. Millions face similar assaults on dignity on the job. More workers are resisting union busting, draconian schedules and shifts, two- and three-tier contracts with worse wages and benefits for new hires, attacks on wages and overtime pay, and other concessions aimed at dividing workers to better defend the bosses’ profits.

A four-decade decline in the number of workers involved in major strikes was reversed beginning in 2019, reports the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which records strikes of over 1,000 workers. Despite a sharp drop in strikes at the beginning of the pandemic, workers in basic industry are now standing up to employers’ attacks in larger numbers, and turning to our main defensive organizations — our unions — to do so.

Alongside the fight by BCTGM members at Kellogg’s, there are strikes and fights against lockouts at factories, mines, oil refineries and other workplaces. During recent contract negotiations, 60,000 members of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees voted by 98% to authorize a nationwide strike, for the first time in the union’s history. The bosses’ media outlets are taking note. “U.S. Workers Are Realizing It’s the Perfect Time to Go on Strike,” a headline in *Time* magazine said Oct. 8.

Crisis of jobs, wages, rising prices

The government says unemployment dropped last month from 5.2% to 4.8%. But this wasn’t because the unemployed found jobs. More workers “dropped out” of the labor force, concluding it’s not worth taking jobs the bosses are offering at wages so low it’s hard to survive and in wretched conditions.

The media is full of bosses’ complaints that they can’t hire enough workers, even though there are 5 million less workers with jobs than before the pandemic. They say this is causing wages to rise. But real wages, when you take into account rising prices, have *declined* since May 2020. They dropped for every one of the first five months of Joseph Biden’s presidency.

The personal consumption expenditure index, which doesn’t include prices for food and rent, rose 3.6% last month compared to a year ago, to the highest level since 1991. Basic necessities that make up a big proportion of workers’ expenditures are rising faster. Meat, poultry, fish and eggs are up 5.9% over last year, and 15.7% since August 2019.

Fuel and electricity prices are soaring globally, as coal production, which generates 40% of the world’s electricity, remains 5% below pre-pandemic levels, and supply lines are in crisis. Governments allied in OPEC refuse to increase production of crude oil, keeping its price at the highest level in seven years.

Many in the meritocratic middle-class in the U.S. are blind to what workers and farmers face and see inflation as positive. “To see price pressure picking up,” Blerina Uruci, a senior economist at Barclays, claims “it’s progress.”

Increasing fear of working class

Those in the social layer Uruci is part of honeycomb government agencies, “nonprofit” organizations and universities. They are convinced their schooling and “brightness” equip them to regulate the lives of working people, who can’t be trusted to know what’s in our own best interest. They churn out “theories” that are gobbled up in the liberal press to justify why workers are “deplorables” and must be considered dangerous.

Their hatred of working people is captured in the Oct. 7 article “What Killed the Blue-Collar Struggle for Social Justice” by *New York Times* editorial board member Farah Stockman. She fears the “American experiment is unraveling” because of the attitudes of workers, who might elect Donald Trump again in 2024. She says workers she met who lost their jobs at a ball-bearing factory in Indianapolis, and ended up in worse-paying jobs, are unalterably anti-immigrant. They’re a “toxic mix of hope, rage and despair.”

These meritocratic layers — and the ruling class they defend — increasingly fear the working class.

But as today’s strikes show, far from having no capacity to come together to defend ourselves workers are discovering our self-worth as we fight side by side. As we build unions we find ways to overcome the divisions bosses continually use to try to weaken our class.

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