

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Middle East refugees caught up
in EU, Belarus, Moscow conflict
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE VOL. 85/NO. 44 NOVEMBER 29, 2021

SWP pushes to go over 100% in books, fund 'Militant' drive

BY SETH GALINSKY

Less than a week is left in the drive to expand the readership of the *Militant* and books by Socialist Workers Party leaders and other revolutionaries and raise funds for the SWP. Campaigners are organizing to make or surpass the goals of 1,300 subscriptions and 1,300 books, and to raise \$130,000 for the SWP Party-Building Fund.

With no end in sight to the dire impact of rising prices and with a number of strikes continuing against bosses' assaults on our wages and conditions, more working people are discussing what is the way forward.

The shellacking that Democratic Party candidates received in the 2021 elections reflects the refusal of workers to accept being treated as "deplorables" who can't be trusted to think for themselves, as well as their rejection of policies like "defund the police." Bosses' attacks on workers and our unions were at the heart of discussions SWP campaigners Joanne
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Alabama miners fight court injunction by Warrior Met

Strikers also face court attacks at Deere, Kellogg



Miners picket at Warrior Met Coal entrance in Brookwood, Alabama, June 15, as cops press to keep them from hindering production. Judge imposed ban on picketing Oct. 27.

BY SUSAN LAMONT

ATLANTA — "This is a serious attack on the union," Bryan Butler, a United Mine Workers of America member on strike at Warrior Met Coal in Brookwood, Alabama, told the *Militant* by phone Nov. 16. He was referring to the

restraining order, now extended twice, by Tuscaloosa County Circuit Court Judge James Roberts.

The order, first enacted Oct. 27 at the mine operator's request, and now extended until Dec. 5, bans union activity of any kind, including picketing, *within 300 yards* of the mines.

It is an assault on the constitutional rights of free assembly and free speech and on the entire labor movement.

The union had been staffing a dozen picket lines around the clock at the entrances to No. 4 and No. 7 mines, the coal preparation plant, the central shops
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US-organized provocation against Cuba 'fizzles out'

BY SETH GALINSKY

U.S.-government-organized provocations planned in Cuba for Nov. 15 were a failure, as were "sympathy" actions denouncing Cuba's socialist revolution around the world. Opponents of the revolution had hoped to create incidents on the island that would disrupt the re-

'EXAMPLE OF CUBA'S SOCIALIST REVOLUTION'
— SWP statement page 2

opening of schools and businesses and expanded tourism scheduled that day.

Striking a blow to the U.S. rulers' plans, Cubans celebrated the tremendous progress the country has made in confronting the COVID-19 pandemic despite Washington's stepped-up sanctions, which make it difficult to purchase raw materials and even syringes. Tens of thousands of elementary school students returned to classes, bringing to 1.7 million the number studying across the island. The number of flights carry-
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Hundreds rally with Clarks Shoe strikers fighting wage cuts in UK



"They never thought we'd strike. They never thought we'd stay out. And they never thought we'd win this sort of solidarity," striker Pete Darbo says as support comes from across U.K.

BY HUGO WILS
AND JONATHAN SILBERMAN

STREET, England — Hundreds of trade unionists and working people from the local area, and as far away as Wales, London and Manchester, joined a march here Nov. 13 in solidarity with striking Clarks Shoes workers fighting against wage cuts.

"They never thought we'd strike. They never thought we'd stay out. And

they never thought we'd win this sort of solidarity," striker Pete Darbo, who's worked at Clarks for 17 years, told the *Militant*. Over 100 workers at the company's distribution center here in southwest England's Somerset county have been on strike since Oct. 4.

The march, called by the strikers' union, Community, and the Trades Union Congress South West region,
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Rebuff by working people, 2021 losses fuel divisions in Democratic Party

BY TERRY EVANS

Frictions and acrimony roiling the Democratic Party — between so-called moderates like Sen. Joe Manchin from West Virginia, "progressives" like Nancy Pelosi and Hillary Clinton, and liberals and socialist Democrats like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez — are exacerbated by the party's 2021 election defeats.

The outcome of the vote registered a clear rejection by workers and farmers of policies backed by the liberals and middle-class socialist wing of the party, like "defund the police," mandatory school programs teaching that workers are inherently racist, and a variety of "mandates" that order people to get vaccinated.

The main beneficiary of the vote in Virginia, New Jersey and elsewhere
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Kyle Rittenhouse trial in Kenosha poses question of rights workers need

BY NAOMI CRAINE

KENOSHA, Wisc. — The murder trial of Kyle Rittenhouse has drawn renewed attention to events that unfolded here after cop Rusten Sheskey shot Jacob Blake Jr. last year. The trial and debate surrounding it underscore the stakes for working people in opposing the violent actions carried out by antifa anarchists, a layer of Black Lives Matter leaders and other rioters.

Blake Jr., a young Black man, was left partially paralyzed after the Aug. 23, 2020, shooting, which sparked
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—On the picket line, p. 5—

Rally brings solidarity to striking bakery workers in LA County

Myanmar garment workers strike against pay, benefit cuts

US-organized provocation fizzles

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ing international tourists were tripled, with vaccinated travelers now admitted without quarantining.

As of Nov. 15, 78% of the population was fully vaccinated and 90% had received at least one shot of the highly effective vaccines designed and produced in Cuba. The number of deaths has dropped sharply to three or less per day.

This success is possible because working people in Cuba, led by Fidel Castro, overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in 1959 and replaced capitalist rule with a workers and farmers government. The mobilization of mass organizations, youth and working people to make sure everyone in Cuba got the care they needed in the face of the pandemic is one more proof that the socialist revolution remains very much alive today.

Washington and small groups opposed to the revolution in Cuba had hoped they could organize a repeat of protests that took place in Cuba July 11, when they were able to attract some working people and youth who support the revolution but are frustrated over the country’s difficult economic situation.

For more than 60 years Washington has spent hundreds of millions to organize counterrevolutionary operations inside Cuba, with the aim of undermining and overthrowing the socialist revolution.

But the U.S. rulers underestimated — as they always do — the capacity of Cuban working people and their revolutionary government to stand up to the U.S. pressures.

Days before the so-called Civic March for Change, called by the U.S.-backed group Archipelago, its organiz-

ers admitted few would show up. Blaming “repression” in Cuba, they made a shift and called on their supporters to wear white, hang white sheets and bang pots and pans outside their windows, and “boycott” television news. Even longstanding opponents of the revolution — such as the *New York Times* — admitted that their actions had “fizzled.”

Government officials, including President Miguel Díaz-Canel, have been visiting neighborhoods and towns in Cuba where working people face the greatest difficulties in housing and government services. They have been speaking with working people there and organizing to work together to make progress in confronting the challenges they face.

A group of young people began a two-day “Red Bandana Sit-in” Nov. 14-15 at Havana’s Central Park to demonstrate their support for the revolution and as an answer to the U.S.-backed provocations. They camped out in tents and held book discussions, poetry readings and a concert in support of Cuba’s sovereignty that attracted several thousand people.

President Díaz-Canel joined them Nov. 14. “We are seeking to improve our society. We are defending emancipation, defending socialism and denouncing the campaigns to subvert our internal order, the media campaigns against Cuba — just as you are in your action,” he told participants there.

Luis Emilio Aybar, a member of the Saiz Brothers Association, an organization of young artists and writers, told the press that their convictions “include revolutionary criticism. But in the fight for rights, there is no room for terrorists, for imperialists or those who support the U.S. blockade of Cuba.”



Militant/Mike Shur

Supporters of Cuban Revolution rally in New York by Cuban U.N. Mission Nov. 15, as smaller action by opponents of revolution takes place there and threatened protests in Cuba fizzle.

Supporters of Washington’s efforts to overturn the revolution organized protests in a number of cities around the world. None were very large.

In New York City the Cuba Si Coalition brought together 150 opponents of the U.S. embargo Nov. 15, substantially outnumbering a group of counterrevolutionary protesters across from the Cuban U.N. Mission.

The action in solidarity with the Cuban Revolution included Puerto Rico groups that back independence for the U.S. colony, Dominican organizations,

Cuban Americans, Haitian activists and members of several other political groups, including the Socialist Workers Party, Party for Socialism and Liberation, Young Communist League, Workers World Party, and Democratic Socialists of America.

Univisión, the Spanish-language TV network, sent reporters who interviewed participants from the two competing protests. But their news broadcast reported only on the small counterrevolutionary action, never showing on TV or

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‘Cuban socialist revolution’s example is due to its working people’s strength’

The remarks below by Mary-Alice Waters, on behalf of the Socialist Workers Party, were made at a Nov. 10 meeting of opponents of the U.S. government embargo of Cuba held at the Cuban Mission to the United Nations in New York City. Pedro Pedroso, Cuba’s ambassador to the U.N., addressed the event, followed by Waters and several other participants.

First of all, I’d like to thank Ambassador Pedroso, Ambassador [Yuri] Gala, and all the compañeros here at the Cuban Mission to the United Nations.

To thank you for this opportunity to share our determination to stand together in face of this phase of Washington’s

more than six-decade-long, unrelenting drive to crush Cuba’s socialist revolution. An attempt that has failed miserably in face of Cuba’s popular mass refusal to put its sovereign future in the hands of the Yankee imperialists.

Through you, we especially want to thank the Cuban people for their strength. They have once again confronted unprecedented challenges, with the devastating costs — both human and financial — of the COVID pandemic these last two years, on top of the draconian new economic and financial squeeze applied by the strongest imperialist power in the world. These measures prolong and intensify Washington’s un-

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THE MILITANT

Defense of land and labor falls to the working class

After U.N. summit’s climate change alarmism, corporations are cashing in on booming trade in carbon emissions credits. The ‘Militant’ explains that working class and exploited farmers have stake in, and power to alter, transformation of nature in interests of humanity.

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SWP pushes to go over top

Continued from front page

Murphy and Gabby Prosser had with Tyler Lewis at his apartment door in Brooklyn Park, just north of Minneapolis, Nov. 13. He is a cleaner for Metro Transit and a member of the Amalgamated Transit Union.

Lewis supports workers at Kellogg’s and other companies who are striking to get rid of wage tiers that have newer hires making less money for the same work as workers with more years on the job.

“Anything they say goes,” he said of the bosses. “It’s sickening.” Prices are rising so fast that “pay needs to be scaled. The amount we make needs to increase with the cost of living.”

Prosser agreed, and showed Lewis the book *Teamster Rebellion*, one of four volumes by Farrell Dobbs. They describe the forging of the class-

struggle leadership in union battles of the 1930s that transformed the Teamsters in the Midwest into a fighting social movement and pointed the road toward workers organizing independently of the bosses’ parties.

Dobbs, a coal-yard worker in his 20s when the Minneapolis strikes began, emerged from the ranks as a leader of the Teamsters and then of the Socialist Workers Party.

The transformation of the Teamsters into a fighting union, “shows what is possible for our future,” Prosser said. She explained that in the course of working-class struggles, “leaders like Malcolm X will come forward.”

Lewis subscribed to the *Militant* and bought *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*. In it the revolutionary leader addresses the capitalist roots of racism and what can be done to eliminate exploitation and oppression. Lewis also got *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, and Dobbs’ *Teamster Rebellion*.

Michel Prairie and Steve Penner, members of the Communist League in Canada, visited *Militant* subscriber Cam Hardy, a butcher in Toronto, Nov. 14.

“What I appreciate about the *Militant* is that it looks to working people as the key force in the fight for social change,” Hardy said. He has already read the four-volume Teamsters series by Dobbs.

This time he purchased *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions* by Dobbs, Barnes, Karl Marx, Leon Trotsky, and V.I. Lenin and two other books by Barnes, *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* and *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*.

“I’m interested in learning more about your strategy that ties together socialist ideas with the experiences and struggles of working people,” he said.

In New York City, Rôger Calero and Tamar Rosenfeld talked to taxi drivers waiting for fares Nov. 16, and showed them an article in the *Militant*



Dag Tirsén, right, and Lillian Julius, far left, introduce the *Militant*, books on revolutionary politics to participants at London protest in solidarity with fight against military coup in Sudan.

about the recently concluded hunger strike by yellow cab medallion owners, demanding debt relief. A medallion is the license required to operate a yellow cab in the city.

New York cab drivers

While most drivers lease their cabs, thousands paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to purchase medallions, which were presented as a guaranteed investment, until their price plunged on the market. Drivers found themselves unable to pay off their loans nor resell the medallion for anywhere near what they paid for it.

A driver from Egypt, “agreed with the perspective we put forward of the need for a union of all drivers,” Calero said.

“He told us the cost of leasing a yellow cab is going up as owners put fewer cabs in circulation. He had recently returned from Egypt and lit up when we told him that Socialist Workers Party members had gone to Egypt just after the 2011 uprising there and found much interest in the working-class politics the party presented.” The driver got a subscription to the *Militant*.

Along with subscribing to the paper and getting books, many workers are contributing \$5, \$20 or more for

the Party-Building Fund when they meet the SWP. Many new readers will want to sit down with party members to continue the discussion on what is needed to build a party that can lead the working class to power and will want to make additional contributions to funding the party’s work.

Help the international drives go over the top!

To find the branch of the party nearest you see the directory on page 8. You can send a check or money order with your contribution directly to the Socialist Workers Party, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Earmark it for the Party-Building Fund.

US provocation

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even mentioning the much larger protest against the embargo and the U.S.-organized provocations.

Similar counterposed actions took place in several other U.S. cities and around the world. In Buenos Aires, Argentina, a coalition of pro-Cuban Revolution unionists and political activists brought out 1,000 people in front of the Cuban Embassy.

In London, about 150 people, chanting “Hands off Cuba — End the Blockade,” rallied outside the Cuban Embassy Nov. 14, in response to calls by the Cuba Solidarity Campaign, Cubans in the U.K., Rock Around the Blockade, the Communist League and others. They far outnumbered a small protest in favor of the U.S. embargo.

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

October 2 - November 23 (week six)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	Fund received
UNITED STATES						
Albany*	80	61	90	65	\$8,200	\$1,877
Atlanta	80	62	80	71	\$11,200	\$7,940
Chicago*	115	112	100	66	\$13,500	\$11,003
Cincinnati	60	34	60	29	\$5,000	\$2,753
Dallas*	45	38	40	34	\$3,100	\$1,476
Lincoln	12	11	12	12	\$350	\$307
Los Angeles	85	82	85	78	\$13,700	\$9,325
Miami	30	30	30	23	\$4,200	\$3,785
Minneapolis*	55	50	60	57	\$5,000	\$4,248
N. New Jersey	75	71	75	66	\$6,600	\$4,243
New York*	105	95	125	135	\$16,300	\$11,409
Oakland	85	76	85	84	\$13,100	\$12,405
Philadelphia	30	30	30	25	\$4,000	\$2,400
Pittsburgh*	50	46	50	43	\$4,700	\$3,414
Seattle	65	61	65	91	\$12,000	\$8,029
Washington	50	50	50	40	\$5,800	\$3,940
Other		1				\$5,063
Total U.S.	1022	910	1037	919	\$126,750	\$93,617
Prisoners	25	37				
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	40	41	40	43		
Manchester	40	39	40	39		
Total U.K.	80	80	80	82		
Canada	90	76	90	107		
New Zealand	25	14	25	23		
Australia	25	19	25	18		
Total	1,267	1,136	1,257	1,149	\$126,750	\$93,617
SHOULD BE	1,300	1,118	1,300	1,118	\$130,000	\$111,800
*Raised goal						

Pathfinder titles a big hit at Oregon book festival

BY REBECCA WILLIAMSON

PORTLAND, Ore. — Hundreds of people attended the Portland Book Festival here Nov. 13, where publishers and booksellers set up showcases of their featured titles. After almost two years of pandemic-justified government lockdowns, many were eager to get out to a book fair. Pathfinder Press books and the *Militant* newspaper were a hit with many attendees, who got books on special discounts that deal with the most pressing class questions today. Twenty people decided to subscribe to the *Militant*.

Top sellers were *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning under Capitalism*, and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road*

to Workers Power, both by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes; *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation* by Abram Leon; and books of speeches by Thomas Sankara, leader of the 1983-87 popular revolution in Burkina Faso.

Supporters and members of the Socialist Workers Party, including this *Militant* worker-correspondent, met a number of people who said they are interested in learning about and supporting union struggles today. They told us about the 220 Cascade Behavioral Health workers, members of Service Employees International Union Local 1199NW, who won a strike this week that had begun in August in Tukwila, Washington, outside Seattle.

Bryan Miller, who works at an adult foster care home, described the deplorable working conditions, low pay, and poor treatment of the residents there. “I have been talking to co-workers about getting a union. It’s hard to maintain quality of life of the residents if you don’t have it either.”

“The big strikes today by coal miners at Warrior Met in Alabama, at John

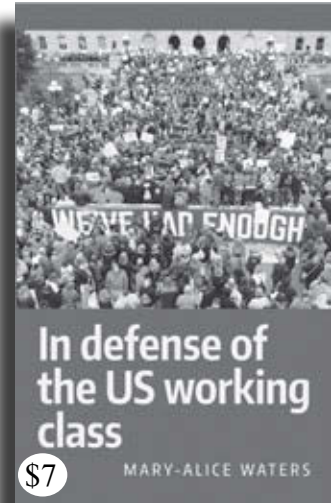
Deere, Kellogg’s and others are showing working people are tired of taking it on the chin, and saying ‘Enough!’” I told him. He subscribed to the paper and picked up *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?*

I also talked to Ashley Jemes, who subscribed to the paper and bought *The Jewish Question*. “I really want to understand this,” Jemes said. “I want to know more about the Marxist interpretation of current events, what’s the perspective, what can I do to reframe what I’ve learned” under capitalism.

“These books are drawing the lessons of the class struggles here and around the world to fight more effectively today,” I told her.

We also knocked on doors in area working-class neighborhoods, selling a couple more *Militant* subscriptions and one more book, as well as getting a contribution to the SWP Party-Building Fund.

Some of those we met told us they want to stay in touch and help introduce the party to people they know, get Pathfinder Books around, and sign up more readers of the *Militant*.



pathfinderpress.com

Defense rebuked in move to ban Black pastors at trial in Georgia

BY SAM MANUEL

ATLANTA — “He was trapped like a rat,” Gregory McMichael, one of three defendants on trial for the vigilante-style killing of Ahmaud Arbery, told investigators just hours after the Black youth had been cornered and shot dead on Feb. 23, 2020, in the Satilla neighborhood near Brunswick, Georgia.

Twenty-five-year-old Arbery was chased and gunned down by Travis McMichael and his father Gregory, a retired Glynn County cop and former investigator in the local prosecutor’s office. They were joined in the fatal assault by William Bryan, a neighbor who captured the killing on his cellphone. When the video was leaked May 18, a two-month-plus effort by cops and prosecutors to cover up the killing and prevent charges exploded. New prosecutors were assigned and the three arrested.

Their trial began Nov. 5. It has been marked by efforts of the defense attorneys to try and introduce race into the proceedings. During jury selection defense attorneys complained that the jury pool didn’t have enough “white males, over 40, born in the South, who do not have a college degree.”

In fact defense attorneys used their allotted “strikes” to prevent all but one Black from getting on the jury. Judge Timothy Walmsley noted this looked like “intentional discrimination,” but seated the jury, saying the defense had given nondiscriminatory reasons for each strike and Georgia law limited his ability to intervene.

Kevin Gough, defense attorney for one of the three men, apologized in court Nov. 12 for remarks he made the day before, protesting the attendance at the trial by Rev. Al Sharpton and other prominent African Americans who were sitting with the Arbery family. “We don’t want any more Black pastors coming in here,” he told the judge, who cut Gough off after he said, “If a bunch of folks came in here dressed like Colonel Sanders with white masks sitting in the back, that would be —.”

Defense attorney Jason Sheffield, who is representing Travis McMichael, distanced his client from Gough’s call to bar Black religious figures from the courtroom.

“My apologies to anyone who might’ve been inadvertently offended,”

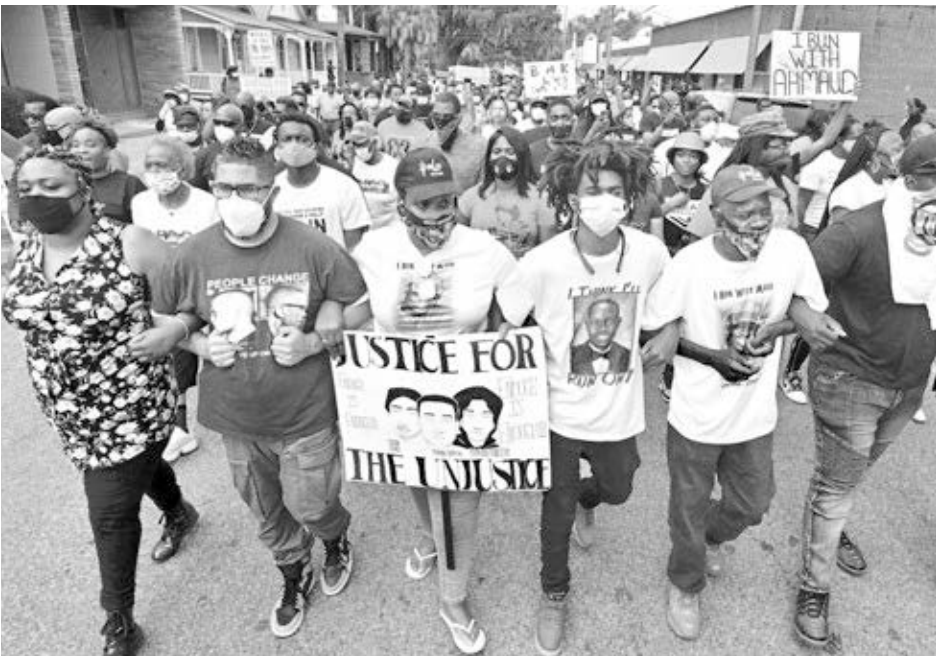
Gough said.

But when the trial resumed Nov. 15, all three defense attorneys asked the judge for a mistrial. Objecting to the presence of Rev. Jesse Jackson, who was sitting with Arbery’s mother, Gough said, “I guess the next question is, ‘Which pastor is next?’” The judge denied the motion to bar Black religious figures. A contingent of Jewish clergy will join clergy from different faiths outside the courthouse Nov. 18 to protest Gough’s remarks.

The defendants pleaded not guilty to charges of malice and felony murder. They also face separate federal hate crime charges. Defense attorneys say their clients believed Arbery had committed burglaries in the neighborhood and acted legally in killing him under the state’s citizen’s arrest law, which was in place at the time. One result of the broad outrage over the killing is that the law was repealed earlier this year.

Trial testimony begins

Matthew Albenze, who lives in the Satilla neighborhood, told the court he saw Arbery enter a construction site on the day he was killed and called a police nonemergency number to report it. Asked by the prosecutor why he called the nonemergency number rather than 911, Albenze said, “I did not see an



Hyosub Shin/AP

Protesters march May 16, 2020, in Brunswick, Georgia, demanding justice for Ahmaud Arbery.

emergency.” Security cameras on the site showed Arbery stopped there, but didn’t take anything.

Larry English, the owner of the home under construction, testified he had shared with cops and neighbors security camera recordings of a Black man and others entering his property. He wanted police to identify those in the video and tell them to stay off the property. Following the shooting English said Arbery had likely stopped at the house for water.

On Feb. 11, 2020, Glynn County cop Robert Rash showed the McMichaels security camera video. Rash sent a text to English suggesting he reach out to Gregory McMichael for help if people continued to enter the property.

From the moment cops arrived at the scene of the shooting, they treated the McMichaels and Bryan like one of their own, accepting their version of what happened without question.

The killing led to protests in Brunswick, where Arbery lived, and across the country, demanding action. It took 74 days, and a number of changes in prosecutors, before charges were brought, following the leak of Bryan’s video of the killing.

Efforts by defense attorneys to minimize public attention to the trial began soon afterwards. The judge denied defense motions to bar the press from the courtroom and to bar protests by Arbery family supporters outside the court.

Kenosha trial poses question of rights workers need

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outrage among working people in the area. Several hundred marched from the shooting site to the Kenosha County Courthouse that day, and hundreds more rallied the following day to protest police abuse.

Both nights anarchists and others seized on the protests to burn down small businesses in working-class and Black neighborhoods and carry out other destruction. Four blocks in Kenosha’s Uptown district were virtually leveled.

This correspondent joined protests and attended a news conference Aug. 25 organized by Blake’s parents calling for prosecution of the cop who shot their son. His mother spoke, saying she supported continued protests, but opposed looting and destruction. I met workers there who had marched during the pre-

vious days, but left because the “craziness” started. As dusk approached, we saw people gathering who clearly intended to continue the mayhem, some openly carrying knives or guns.

That night Rittenhouse, then 17 and an aspiring cop, was among dozens of armed people who volunteered to defend local businesses from further attack. Though he lives in Illinois, he has family in Kenosha and was working there that day as a lifeguard. He spent the day helping clean up graffiti left from rioting the night before. In the evening he brought his gun and his first-aid kit and went to a business he was asked to help defend. As rioters flooded the area, he was attacked. Rittenhouse then shot and killed two people associated with the violence and wounded a third.

He faces a battery of charges, including reckless, intentional, and attempted homicide. Ironically, he’s being charged as an adult — which means he could face life in prison if convicted of the most serious charge. He was also charged with carrying a weapon while underage, which the judge dismissed.

Rittenhouse says he acted in self-defense. Much of the evidence presented in the trial, including by the prosecution itself, bolsters his argument. In the midst of rioting and destruction, he was chased. Witnesses testified that Joseph Rosenbaum, the first of those Rittenhouse shot, had threatened to kill Rittenhouse if he caught him alone. Video and eyewitnesses confirm Rosenbaum chased the teen, lunged toward him, and was trying to grab the gun away when Rittenhouse fired at him.

Anthony Huber was one of several people, some armed, who chased Rittenhouse. One of them delivered a flying kick to Rittenhouse, who fired but missed. Then video introduced at the trial shows Huber hitting Rittenhouse

on the head and neck with his skateboard after the teen fell to the ground. Rittenhouse shot Huber in the chest, killing him. Gaige Grosskreutz testified he ran toward Rittenhouse, who was still on the pavement. Grosskreutz admitted Rittenhouse shot him in the arm only after he pointed his own Glock handgun at the teen from just a few feet away.

The police did nothing to stop Rittenhouse, the rioters or the fight. They even drove right past Rittenhouse when he walked toward them, with his rifle and hands in the air, after the shooting.

Presumption of innocence

Much of the “left” argues that it will be a great injustice if Rittenhouse is acquitted. They insist he’s a “white supremacist,” though there’s no evidence that’s true and it’s not an issue in the trial. “Rittenhouse was driven by undoubtedly racist motivations to wield a gun against demonstrators taking part in the movement for Black lives,” says a Nov. 11 article on the Party for Socialism and Liberation’s website. “There is no question that Kyle Rittenhouse is guilty.”

But facts do matter, for the working class and our political rights. No one should be convicted without a trial and due process. And, as the liberal *Washington Post* put it, the prosecution in this case faces a lot of “inconvenient facts.” The working class should jealously guard the right to presumption of innocence and constitutional rights, no matter who the defendant is. In this case — in contrast to the Minneapolis trial of cop Derek Chauvin earlier this year — the judge has mostly upheld those rights.

As the prosecution’s case tottered, the judge has come under attack by the middle-class left. He’s been called a “secret Trumpist” and a “racist.”

The case went to the jury Nov. 15.

John Deere strikers vote on third contract offer

Over 10,000 striking members of the United Auto Workers union at John Deere are voting Nov. 17 on a third company contract offer recommended by union officials. Workers struck the company’s 12 plants Oct. 14, rejecting a contract that expanded to three the different tiers of pay and benefits. The divisive two-tier setup was first forced on workers at the company in 1997.

Union officials said this third contract offer contains only “modest modifications” to the one striking workers rejected by 55% Nov. 2. It had included higher wages and other concessions by the bosses, but nothing new on the key issue of tiers of wages and benefits.

One of the company concessions many workers liked in the last offer was restoring the cost-of-living raises to help wages keep up with inflation.

Under the new offer, posted by UAW Local 838, the main change to the offer workers previously rejected is a raise in weekly bonuses. Paid to groups of workers who exceed production goals — by working faster — these will now be capped at 20% rather than 15% of workers’ pay.

Strikers report that they have won significant support in their battle. One supermarket near the East Moline, Illinois, plant is offering \$50 worth of free groceries to everyone with a union card.

The outcome of the vote is unknown as the *Militant* goes to press. Full coverage of the results will be carried in the next issue.

— TERRY EVANS

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Rally brings solidarity to striking bakery workers in LA County

SANTA FE SPRINGS, Calif. — “A raise, a pension, and respect!” chanted some 100 striking workers and their supporters at a Nov. 15 rally in front of the Rich’s/Jon Donaire bakery here. The company makes ice cream cakes that are sold by Baskin Robbins, Cold Stone Creamery and other companies. The 175 workers, members of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 37, went out on strike Nov. 3 and have picketed 24/7 since.

“The production has expanded, for the same money we’re producing more, we feel it,” Maria Palomo, who has worked at the plant 21 years, told the *Militant*. “The speed of the line is faster, but they don’t give us any more than the minimal salary we make.” Workers get in the range of \$16 to \$17 an hour. Most of the workers are women.

“The cost of living has gone up but they only offered us a 50 cents raise,” she added. “There’s a lot of overtime, and we can’t say no — it’s obligatory and if you don’t do it you get points. We want more days off. We’re working hard and we need to rest.”

“A raise is the main thing we want,” said Jessica Cerda, who has worked at the plant since March. She agreed that forced overtime was a problem, especially for people who have to take care of their kids. Workers don’t know what time they will get out, or if they’ll have to work overtime. “They’re supposed to tell us every day, but they don’t. They think we should just expect it.”

Eighteen-year-old Eric Ochoa said, “Sometimes they put you somewhere and they forget about you. You don’t get your third break you’re supposed to have if you’re working 12 hours. Or you have to work too long without a lunch break and they make you sign a paper saying it was your fault, and give you a point, so they don’t get into trouble. But you can’t leave, because if no one is there the cakes would fall to the ground.

“There’s too much overtime. When I started some lines were doing 6,000

cakes, now they’re doing 13,000. People are doing 12 hours work in eight, and the supervisors get mad at new people when they can’t keep pace,” he said. Many new people quit after a few weeks and the company is short-handed.

Strikers were joined by supporters from the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, United Steelworkers Local 675, two Teamsters locals, UTU/SMART rail union Local 1544, SEIU United Healthcare Workers West and people from the community.

“One day longer, one day stronger, we’ll be out here with you in this fight,” Xochitl Cobarruvias, representative of USW Local 675 and of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, told strikers at the rally. People have brought food to the strikers, who have a box for donations in their picket tent across the street from the Jon Donaire plant at 12805 Busch Place here.

— Laura Garza

Chicago regional rail workers rally for wage increase

CHICAGO — Some 250 union members who work for Metra rallied at the regional commuter rail system’s corporate headquarters here Nov. 12 demanding a new contract.

“Our situation is unprecedented, we’ve been three years with no contract. We’ve had no raise since 2018, while management has gotten cost-of-living and merit raises,” Yolanda Tillman, a member of the Transportation Communications Union/International Association of Machinists, told the *Militant*. “The CEO got a raise that puts him over \$300,000. The cost of living is going up, and they propose no raise again.”

The rally was sponsored by the nine unions that represent Metra workers, including the SMART-TD rail union, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Service Employees International Union, Teamsters and the Machinists. They have been negotiating for a new contract since Jan. 1, 2019.

“We worked right through the pandemic. The company’s slogan is ‘My Metra,’ Tillman said. “Where’s the



Militant/Norton Sandler

Bakery Workers union members on strike at Rich’s/Jon Donaire Desserts plant in Santa Fe Springs, California, rally Nov. 15 demanding pay raise, end to forced overtime and for respect.

‘My Metra’ for the employees?”

Mark Kutahl, a locomotive mechanic with 30 years seniority, said, “Our unions are sticking together, we need unity.” Alfonso Arina, a member of IBEW Local 134, said, “Metra calls us ‘essential workers,’ but they sure don’t treat us that way.”

— Dan Fein

Kaiser hospital workers unions reach tentative agreement

LOS ANGELES —Two days before 32,000 Kaiser Permanente hospital workers at 350 facilities in California, Oregon, Washington and Hawaii were set to go on strike, a tentative agreement was reached between the Alliance of Health Care Unions and hospital bosses Nov. 13. The AHCU is a coalition of several different unions representing nurses, cleaning staff, pharmacy workers and others.

A key issue was the bosses’ demands for a divisive two-tier wage setup where all workers hired after Jan. 1, 2023, would receive 26% to 39% less than current workers. Under the pressure of the strike deadline, management dropped the demand.

The agreement includes the same annual wage increases for all union members, regardless of region or date of hire.

Yearly raises effective on Oct. 1 each year are 3% in 2021, 3% in 2022, 2% plus a 2% bonus in 2023, and 2% plus a 2% bonus in 2024.

“We did unimaginable things, put ourselves in harm’s way, worked long hours, took things home to our families. It was very insulting after a pandemic,” registered nurse Kimberly Mullen told the *New York Times*. “We were all feeling — I don’t know any other word — backstabbed.”

The union is still fighting for increased staffing levels.

The agreement now goes to the union memberships for a vote.

— Deborah Liatos

Myanmar garment workers strike against pay, benefit cuts

Some 350 workers at the Gasan Apparel factory in Yangon went on strike Oct. 14 demanding that pay cuts and other reductions in their benefits be reversed. The *Militant* first heard about the strike from Khaing Zar Aung, president of the Industrial Workers Federation of Myanmar, who is currently in Germany.

One worker at the plant, who asked to remain anonymous because of fear of retaliation, told the *Militant* from Yangon Nov. 13 that bosses at the factory cut the daily pay “from 5,100 kyat [\$2.87] to 4,800” and also took away “other allowances such as food and transportation.”

In an attempt to intimidate the workers, “police and soldiers arrived and took pictures of their identification cards,” the worker said. “But as of now no workers have been arrested.”

“We are striking inside the factory,” the worker added, despite the bosses’ attempts to restart production using temporary workers. “If the company restores the wage cuts the strike will end.” Workers first joined the union four years ago.

The strike is taking place despite ongoing repression by the military junta, which seized power Feb. 1. Military forces have killed more than 1,200 people, carried out bloody assaults against anti-coup protests and imprisoned over 7,200 since then.

Several union leaders have been jailed, including Thwin Aung, chair of the union at Gasan, who was arrested in September and sentenced to three years in prison a few weeks ago.

Before the coup and the COVID-19 pandemic there were some 600,000 garment workers in Myanmar. Less than 1% of the workers belonged to a union. Bosses have deepened their attacks on workers’ wages and working conditions.

— Seth Galinsky and James Khyne

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



December 2, 1996

Days after his reelection, William Clinton began preparations to cut Medicare and Social Security under the banner of balancing the federal budget. In doing so, the Democratic president is pushing for a bipartisan agreement with the leaders of the Republican majority in Congress.

“My plan would cut payments to providers and make some other changes,” Clinton said on the ABC news program “This Week.”

Medicare, which covers health care for the elderly and disabled, was enacted in 1965 along with Medicaid, which provides health coverage for low income families. These programs were an extension of concessions working people won through earlier labor battles, registered in the Social Security Act of 1935.

While meddling with federal retirement benefits may take a little more time, preparations to cut Medicare are on the front burner.



December 3, 1971

Now that the Nov. 20 demonstrations for repeal of anti-abortion laws are over, it is important to evaluate the impact of the marches in San Francisco and Washington.

The most important accomplishment was that for the first time the abortion movement was able to reach large numbers of people with the clear message that the women’s movement wants abortion to be a woman’s right to choose and that women want repeal, not just reform, of anti-abortion laws.

Another significant aspect of Nov. 20 was its international character. Actions in Paris, Canada, New Zealand, and England, as well as here, served to inspire the women’s movement around the world. Through building the demonstrations, many new women were involved for the first time in the movement.

And 6,000 women in this country, joined by thousands elsewhere, is a force to be reckoned with.



November 30, 1946

The bitter battle between the nation’s 400,000 striking soft coal miners and Wall Street’s government is rapidly developing into the most crucial struggle ever faced by American labor. Both the AFL and CIO have issued public denunciations of the infamous federal injunction against the mine strike.

The government is threatening savage reprisal against United Mine Workers President John L. Lewis for refusing to comply with the most fantastic strikebreaking injunction from a federal court. This injunction commands Lewis to withdraw the announcement of the termination of the UMW contract with the Truman administration.

The determined miners have made clear their stand: “You can’t mine coal with injunctions!” By the day before the contract termination, more than 127,000 miners had quit the pits in defiance of the capitalist government.

Middle East refugees caught up in EU, Belarus, Moscow conflict

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Thousands of asylum-seekers are trapped between the borders of Belarus and neighboring Poland and Lithuania, in freezing conditions. Fleeing countries in the Mideast, they are trying to enter western Europe via Belarus. The crisis has sharpened disputes between the imperialist governments in the European Union and the dictatorial regime of Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko.

Washington and its European allies are threatening more sanctions against the Belarusian government. They haven't recognized Lukashenko's regime since he flagrantly rigged his presidential reelection in August 2020. Working people across Belarus joined huge protests and strikes demanding Lukashenko step down. He has held onto power by imprisoning and exiling opponents and enforcing a violent crackdown, backed by his longtime ally in Moscow.

Lukashenko is orchestrating the migrant movement, hoping to force the lifting of sanctions. Moscow has backed this to strengthen its hand in increasing gas exports and market share in Europe.

Upwards of 15,000 migrants, many in makeshift camps along Belarus' western borders, are mainly young men. Some are women and children. Many are Kurds from Syria and Iraq. Others are from Yemen or Afghanistan. Along the forested no-man's-land between razor-wire fences, they have little shelter, heat, water or food. So far at least 11 people have died on the Polish side, and an unknown number in Belarus, mainly from hypothermia.

Troop buildup both sides of border

Polish police drive back those who try to break through the fences. The refugees are also prevented from retreating by the Belarusian police who escorted them there. The Polish, Lithuanian

and Latvian governments have fenced off their borders. Some 15,000 Polish troops and thousands more from Lithuania and Latvia have been deployed.

There are about 4,000 U.S. troops and 1,000 other NATO soldiers stationed in Poland and a further 4,000 NATO forces in the Baltic States.

Moscow said it views troop movements in Poland and the Baltic States as a threat. On Nov. 10 it sent heavy bombers, escorted by Belarusian fighters, near the Polish border. A couple of days later, Moscow and Minsk followed this up with joint paratrooper drills in the Grodno border area with Poland.

"We are just a stick that they are beating each other with," Rawand Akram, a 23-year-old Kurd from Iraq, told the *New York Times*. "We are in the middle of their fight."

Belarusian authorities, backed by Moscow, offered visas and the promise of easy passage to western Europe to people from Mideast countries trying to escape the impact of war, government repression and rising hardship. Belarusian police then bused them to the borders of Poland, Lithuania and Latvia, giving them wire cutters and pushing groups to break through. Those stuck on the border had flown to Belarus from Erbil, Iraqi Kurdistan; Baghdad; Amman, Jordan; Beirut; and Istanbul. These flights have doubled in the past year. Some 37,000 Iraqis have left the country this way since January, as many as half of them from Kurdish regions.

Conditions in Iraqi Kurdistan are difficult today. Islamic State-armed forces are functioning in the area and Turkish forces are conducting military raids against Kurdish militias who operate from within Iraq. This is on top of harsh economic and social conditions facing working people.

European governments are threat-



Thousands of emigrants from Mideast seeking to enter Europe are blocked by razor wire and Polish police at Belarus border. Inset, map of region. Refugee border crisis fueled by regime in Belarus and Moscow ally stirs bloody reaction by EU forces and destabilizes capitalist political order in heart of central Europe.

ening to close their airports to airlines that continue flying asylum-seekers to Minsk.

On Nov. 14 the Iraqi government announced it was organizing flights for any Iraqis who volunteer to return to the country from Minsk.

Russia, Ukraine military tensions

Lukashenko threatened Nov. 11 to retaliate against EU sanctions on Belarus by shutting off gas piped from Russia across Belarus to western Europe. Putin rebuked him, saying this would be

"a breach of our gas transit contract." Moscow is using the worsening gas shortages and rising prices in Europe to try to get its new Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline to Germany approved and to increase its leverage in the region.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken gave Washington's backing to Polish authorities in the conflict with Lukashenko. He said the Russian government was using the refugee crisis to distract attention from its recent troop buildup on its Ukrainian border, which has upped tensions there.

Hundreds rally with Clarks Shoes strikers fighting wage cuts

Continued from front page

was greeted by shoppers of all ages who lined the streets applauding as the marchers wound their way through this village of 12,000 people. Shop workers left their posts to join the tribute.

"I've lived here all my life, and I've never seen anything like this," said Theo Simon, a warehouse worker and member of the Unite union, who joined the march.

"This is the first strike in Somerset since 1988," Dave Chapple, a retired postal worker and secretary of Mendip Trades Council, told the marchers. "This rural county is today a center of labor solidarity."

"If it can happen here, it can happen anywhere," said Pete Mayor, a bed manufacturing worker and member of the GMB union.

Postman Mick Mansel joined a contingent of Communication Workers Union members on the march. He told the *Militant*, "Back in the '70s, I thought with a strong union and Labour governments, workers' wages and living conditions would improve. In my 33 years as a 'postie' I've learned something very different."

A warm welcome was extended to three workers from the Pilgrim's meat factory in Ashton, Greater Manchester. Also members of Community, the workers brought a solidarity card signed by 80 workers at the plant.

"For Clarks bosses to cut your wages from 11.16 pounds to 9.50 [\$14.95 to \$12.73 an hour] in times when inflation is rising can only be described as a kick in the teeth!" the meat workers' card reads. "When the pandemic hit, bosses across the country called us 'essential' workers. Now it is becoming clear they meant essential to their profits!"

Striking Actavo scaffolders, members of Unite at the British Steel plant in Scunthorpe, northeast England, sent a solidarity message from their picket line by video.

"The only thing that companies understand is when we stand up and fight," said Paul Elliot, a member of Community at the giant Llanwern steelworks in Port Talbot, South Wales. Two dozen Llanwern steelworkers had joined the picket line Oct. 22. In a letter to the union, Clarks bosses allege the steelworkers' solidarity visit amounted to a revival of outlawed "flying pickets," where groups of striking workers travel to other workplaces to picket and shut down production.

Bosses also claim striking workers have shouted homophobic abuse at strikebreakers, helped to damage their cars and scattered nails across the road. The bosses' allegations were reported in the Nov. 11 *Telegraph*, a national daily.

Speaking at the rally, Community General Secretary Roy Rickhuss responded to the bosses' claims: "Don't let them divide us! Stay solid! Stay strong!" Also on the platform was the Trades Union Congress deputy general secretary, Paul Nowak, and strike leader and shop steward, Trevor Stephens.

"The company says they've raised their offer to 10.03 pounds from 9.50 an hour," Stephens told the *Militant*. "Not only is that offer combined with a no-strike clause, not only does it not remove all the other attacks they're making, it's also not a raise — it's a wage cut of 1 pound 13p an hour! We rejected it out of hand."

Stephens told the rally the company denied threatening workers with what's known here as "fire and rehire," firing

Rebuff by workers, 2021 losses fuel divisions in Democratic Party

Continued from front page

were Republicans who themselves are riven by camps that support or oppose former President Donald Trump.

Despite sharp conflicts between the two main bourgeois parties, on all fundamental questions they act to protect the interests of the ruling capitalist families against those of workers and farmers. Both use the bosses' two-party setup to prevent workers from organizing our own party, a labor party, to fight in our class interest and organize to take political power into our own hands.

Socialist Workers Party candidates in 2021 found widespread interest among fellow workers in discussing why we need to rebuild and use our unions to fight for the interests of all those oppressed and exploited by capital and to build a labor party based on our unions.

Behind all the hot-button political questions at issue in 2021 stood the economic, social and moral crisis of capitalism today, exacerbated by the pandemic, that pushes bosses to try and solve it on the backs of working people.

Exit polls taken in Virginia on election day showed that working people see the economy as the biggest challenge today. Workers confront spiraling inflation, especially on rent, food, gas and other necessities. Across the country workers at John Deere, Kellogg's, Warrior Met Coal, St. Vincent hospital in Massachusetts and elsewhere have



Deepening capitalist crisis is behind increased labor actions. Striking bakery workers, members of BCTGM Local 374G, picket Kellogg's cereal plant in East Hempfield, Pennsylvania, Oct. 30.

gone on strike, fighting against boss attacks on wages, health care, as well as demands for unpaid overtime and divisive two-tier wages and benefits.

SWP candidates found great interest in spreading the word about these workers' battles and building solidarity. It is only when working people see ourselves as a class, with interests sharply counterposed to the bosses and their two parties, that we can make real progress.

In the face of their losses, the liberals hope they can reknit the Democratic Party back together, not on what they're for — their disagreements are too great for that — but on what they hate. That is to double down on their relentless efforts to demonize former President Donald Trump.

In his Nov. 10 column in the *Washington Post*, Paul Waldman says everyone must unite against Trump and the "threat he poses to everything we thought our system stood for."

Liberals say Trump's unprecedented assault on "democracy" — by which they mean their rule on behalf of the capitalist thieves — extends to the entire Republican Party. An opinion column in the Nov. 12 *New York Times* headlined "Menace Enters the Republican Mainstream," argues

"threats of violence are becoming commonplace among a significant segment of the Republican Party."

The liberals are conducting hearings on the Jan. 6 break-in into Congress by a handful of conspiracy mongers and right wingers, as well as some supporters of Trump. The FBI, which has operated as a hired gun for the Democrats since before Trump's election, has carried out an endless "investigation" into the action, and hundreds have been arrested and prosecuted. At one sentencing hearing the prosecutor told the court, "It is just critical that the court's sentence convey to future rioters that there will be very, very serious consequences for those who intend to obstruct the rule of law."

Constitutional rights crucial for the protection of workers and our unions are tossed aside in the anti-Trump witch hunt. The real aim of the attacks are the "deplorable" workers who either voted for Trump or didn't bother to vote at all.

FBI witch hunt

At the same time, there is little ink given to recent revelations that show that the beginning of the liberals' assault on Trump and his supporters — the charge that he was a pawn of Russian

President Vladimir Putin — has now been shown conclusively to have been a fraud from the beginning.

This campaign ran for years, involving partisan use of the FBI, arrests and prosecutions, and other assaults on political rights. It was started with what is now known as the "Steele dossier," a scurrilous concoction of rumor and innuendo dressed up as fact, and paid for by the Hillary Clinton campaign.

One of the chief "sources" for the fraud was Igor Danchenko, who has now been indicted for lying to the FBI.

The Socialist Workers Party knows firsthand about FBI dirty tricks. The party sued the FBI in 1973 over decades of spying, harassment and disruption. The victorious suit, and the widespread political campaign the SWP waged alongside it, educated millions on the class character of the capitalist rulers' political police.

That same FBI has become a hero to today's liberals in its assaults against Trump and political rights.

'Voting rights' scam

Following their defeats in 2021, the Democrats are clamoring for "voting rights." When they say "voting rights," they really mean measures that can strengthen the Democrats' grip on power.

The liberal New York online Gothamist ran an article Nov. 15 entitled, "State Senate Democrat Warns of 'Five-Alarm Fire' Threatening Voting Rights." The article is about how the party in power in Albany needs to resurrect two referenda that were voted down decisively this year. These measures would have allowed voter registration up to the day of the election, as opposed to 10 days before as is the case now, and what the paper calls "no-excuse absentee ballots." That means absentee ballots for those who aren't absent.

To prove what they really mean about "voting rights," last year the Democrats cut petitioning requirements for themselves and the Republicans by 70%, while *tripling* signatures needed by the SWP and other third parties.

After woman's death abortion rights fight heats up in Poland

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Tens of thousands took to the streets in Poland Nov. 5 to protest the government's extreme restrictions on the right to abortion. The actions in Warsaw, the capital, and other cities came after it became public that a 30-year-old pregnant woman identified only as Izabela had died of septic shock in September after doctors refused to end her pregnancy because the fetus still had a heartbeat.

Defenders of a woman's right to choose say her death is the result of the government's restrictions imposed in October last year by the Constitutional Court, Poland's highest judicial body.

Under the court ruling abortion is legal only in cases of rape or incest or if the woman's health or life is in danger. The ruling bans the procedure even in the case "of a severe and irreversible fetal defect or incurable illness that threatens the fetus's life." In 2019 — prior to the ruling — those were the grounds for 98% of all legal abortions in Poland.

Those who violate the law face up to three years in prison.

Izabela went into a hospital in Pszczyna in September after her water broke. Previous sonograms showed that the fetus had serious defects. Because of coronavirus restrictions she could not be accompanied by family or friends.

"The baby weighs 485 grams [1.1 lbs]. For now, thanks to the abortion law, I have to lie down. And there is nothing they can do. They'll wait until it dies or something begins, and if not, I can expect sepsis," she wrote from the hospital in a text message to her mother.

"She felt that something was not right. But they kept telling her that as long as the heart is beating this is the way it must be," a woman who shared the hospital room with Izabela told station TVN.

Once a scan showed the fetus was dead, doctors planned to remove it. But Izabela's heart stopped before she made it to the operating room.

The Law and Justice Party-led government claims the new restrictions are not to blame, that the fault was with the doctors. The law allows for abortion "when it comes to the life and

health of the mother," said Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki.

"Izabela's case clearly shows that the ruling of the Constitutional Tribunal has had a chilling effect on doctors," Urszula Grycuk, from the Federation for Women and Family Planning, told Reuters.

Attempts by the Law and Justice Party to pass extreme anti-abortion legislation in parliament had failed in 2016 and 2018 after protests by hundreds of thousands. The government then placed the decision in the hands of the Constitutional Court.

Since then support for women's right to choose abortion has been on the rise.

All Polish Women Strike, one of the main groups demanding women's right to choose whether or not to have an abortion, is on a drive to gather the 100,000 signatures required to get the issue placed on the floor of parliament. They seek to emulate the successful fight to decriminalize abortion in Argentina, even adopting the green bandanas that became the symbol of the fight there.

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Che joined fighters in Bolivia to advance the socialist revolution

Pombo: A Man of Che's guerrilla: With Che Guevara in Bolivia 1966-68 by Harry Villegas is one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* for November. Villegas became a combatant in the Rebel Army of the Cuban Revolution led by Fidel Castro, fighting much of the time in a column commanded by Argentinian-born Guevara. He later served under Che in Cuba's internationalist campaigns in the Congo and Bolivia, where he became known by his nom de guerre, Pombo. The revolutionary fighters in Bolivia were betrayed by the Stalinist Communist Party. The excerpt is from the introduction. Copyright © 1997 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY HARRY VILLEGAS

In his 1966 "Message to the Tricontinental," Che made a thorough and deep-going analysis of this policy of imperialist domination. At the same time he expounded, in all their strategic and continental dimensions, his anti-imperialist ideas and course of action that by then were already being put into practice through his own personal example. In that message, Che proclaimed: "Our every action is a battle cry against imperialism and a call for the unity of the peoples against



Militia during 1952 Bolivian national revolution. Decades of working-class struggles and a deepening prerevolutionary situation in southern countries of Latin America led Guevara to join Bolivian fighters in 1966 in an effort to begin socialist revolution across the continent.

the great enemy of the human race: the United States of North America."

This deep conviction of the Heroic Guerrilla concerning the role played by the United States was rooted in the innumerable acts of imperial aggression that make up the history of contemporary colonialism and neocolonialism in this hemisphere. To mention only a few examples of bloody interventions in our century, there are the cases of Mexico, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Haiti, and Cuba.

The continent as a whole has experienced the varied forms through which this imperialist policy has been systematically implemented. Neocolonialism has left its imprint of economic and political domination and deep social crisis, with its resulting hunger, poverty, unemployment, marginalization, and devastation. An entire region has been ravaged by foreign control over its natural resources and products, the exploitation of its workers, and the sharp impoverishment of its economies. Tribute is exacted in ways that violate the sovereignty of the nations of Latin America, pillage their material and spiritual patrimony, deepen their dependence and subjugation to imperialism, and close off possibilities of development and progress.

Together with a handful of heroic Bolivian, Peruvian, and Cuban combatants who accompanied him to Bolivia, Che fought to change this reality of the 1960s — a reality whose cruel mechanisms of plunder have since been deepened. ...

Che's dream was the dream of [José] Martí and [Simón] Bolívar. In elaborating his strategy, given the struggles already under way in different countries of the continent, Che envisioned the possibility of forming a guerrilla nucleus, a mother column that would pass through the necessary and difficult stage of survival and development. Later on it would give birth to new guerrilla columns extending outward toward the Southern Cone of Latin America, giving continuity to a battle that would become continent-wide in scope. He took into account the experience of the mother column in Cuba's Sierra Maestra mountains, which gave rise to new guerrilla columns and fronts, culminating in the defeat of the Batista dictatorship and the victory of the Cuban revolution.

Totally convinced that the political conditions were ripening and that this perspective was realizable, Commander Che Guevara carried out his plans and initiated actions to open a path toward victory. In his view, victory was certain to the degree that the struggle extended as far as possible throughout Latin America.

Never has such a small group of individuals undertaken an enterprise of such gigantic proportions. That small detachment of heroic combatants was Che's "sling of David." As our commander in chief [Fidel Castro] pointed out, Che did not outlive his ideas, he enriched them with his blood. ...

[G]iven the confrontation unfolding in Latin America at the time, Che chose Bolivia as the place from which to initiate his strategic course in Latin America.

One factor behind Che's selection was his analysis of the Bolivian people's combative traditions going all the way back to the fight of the indigenous peoples against the [Spanish] royalists. ... Students, peasants, miners, and workers all fought heroically, under the noteworthy leadership of the Central Organization of Bolivian Workers (COB), against the new version of the conquistadors, and the growing poverty, misery, and marginalization of the majority of the people. Bolivia's geographic characteristics and continental location figured in the selection. ...

The diary also reflects the firm conviction and internationalist fervor of our efforts for the national liberation of Latin America, as well as the real possibilities that existed for achieving that objective. The diary reflects our conviction that the struggle we were initiating would increasingly widen those possibilities. The precondition for this was to overcome the hard and difficult stage in which the guerrilla unit struggled to survive, in order to develop later on along the lines conceived by Che.

We never envisioned a sectarian undertaking. Such a conception would have been impossible not only on a Bolivian scale, but above all on a continental scale. Our idea was to create a broad revolutionary movement that would draw in all honest individuals prepared to struggle for social justice, together with all revolutionary organizations, parties, and sectors of the people. This was the basis on which the ELN (National Liberation Army) was formed, as is made clear by its five public communiqués, containing information and appeals addressed to the Bolivian people. ...

[I]n Che's Bolivian diary and in my own, one can see how relations were established not only with different political forces within Bolivia and their representatives, but also with leaders and representatives of other political organizations of the continent. These contacts and relations would inexorably lead to an expansion of ties with other progressive forces in the region provided that the struggle intensified and succeeded in surviving the initial phase.

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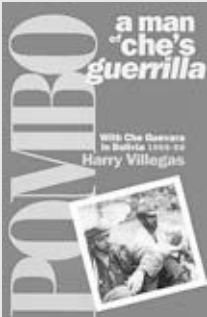
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SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

‘Cuban socialist revolution’s example’

Continued from page 2

relenting attempt to literally choke off all sources of revenue, all access to capitalism’s international banking system, all avenues to secure raw materials, all exports. They prolong and intensify U.S. capital’s determination to impose sanctions against any country or institution, anywhere in the world, that violates the terms dictated by Washington.

In the face of all that and more, what the people of Cuba have accomplished in combating the pandemic stands as a mighty example of the strengths of Cuba’s socialist revolution. Cuba has been the only country to send significant medical assistance to others around the world. The rapid development and production of three highly effective vaccines (with two more in development) — which the bourgeois media tries to belittle as “homegrown” — has now made possible the vaccination of the entire population, including children as young as 2 years old, something no other country has even begun. And now students are returning to schools. Workers are returning to factories and offices. Cuba’s borders are reopening.

We want to say to you that it is the strength of the Cuban people, and above all Cuban workers and farmers who are the heart and soul of the socialist revolution, who give strength to revolutionary working people in the U.S., as well. Who help us see the way forward.

For all that we thank you.

But we in the United States must never forget that our responsibilities are right here. It is we above all who must educate and organize against the policies of the U.S. government — the *bipartisan* policies of the U.S. ruling families carried out by Democratic and Republican administrations alike. It is *our* responsibility to denounce and expose the new, escalating level of aggression being organized by the liberal Democratic administration in office today. To condemn the *provocation* that is planned for Nov. 15 as an excuse to further tighten the chokehold on the Cuban people.

We all know the reason for the continuity of Washington’s policies over 60 years and counting. It is *fear* of Cuban working people, fear of their socialist revolution, and, above all, fear of the *example* they set for working people around the globe.

That is why we too will be in the streets together with others on Nov. 15 making our voices heard.

We all look forward to the day — and hope it is coming soon — that we can join with millions of Cubans across the island as they pour into the streets in their organized and disciplined masses, as they do each year on May Day, to proclaim to the world that this is their revolution, with all its unfinished tasks as well as all its glories.

They will show the *world* that they are the vast majority of Cubans, and that those in Cuba who are instigating the provocation of Nov. 15 represent little else but their masters and mentors in Washington.

Moderna fights US gov’t over patent and profits

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Profit-driven bosses at Moderna have iced out of the main patent for its COVID-19 vaccine the scientists from the federal government’s National Institutes of Health, which helped pay for and develop it. The fight over this patent exposes the dog-eat-dog morality of capitalism, where all so-called health care is a business organized primarily to maximize profits, not save lives.

Moderna filed for the patent in July, claiming the company invented the mRNA technology used in its vaccine. It entirely excluded the scientists from the federal agency’s Vaccine Research Center who helped develop the genetic sequence that prompts the vaccine to produce an immune response to the virus. Moderna and the research center collaborated on mRNA vaccine development for four years.

Moderna, which prior to its COVID-19 vaccine had never brought any product to market, received nearly \$1.4 billion from the U.S. government to develop and test the vaccine and \$8.1 billion to produce half a billion doses. Moderna is on track this year to bring in up to \$18 billion in revenue, with deals worth up to another \$20 billion set for 2022.

Ownership of the patent guarantees a monopoly on production and superprofits. It enables Moderna, like its chief competitor Pfizer and other pharmaceutical monopolies, to block the manufacture and distribution of these vaccines worldwide.

Moderna is not interested in ramping up production for countries that can’t afford to pay exorbitant prices for the vaccine. Its owners worry that if the U.S. government scientists were included on the patent, the National Institutes for Health could sell the license to others to produce the vaccine, cutting into Moderna’s profits. The agency is considering taking the pharma bosses to court.

The Joseph Biden administration has promised to donate 1.1 billion vaccine doses to other countries, to portray U.S. imperialism as a generous Uncle Sam, bolstering his rhetoric about vaccinating the world. That might sound like a lot, but it’s a drop in the bucket

compared to what’s needed in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Asia. There are 1.3 billion people in Africa alone, some 18% of the world’s population, but only 1% are vaccinated. And the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines both take two shots to be effective, halving the number of people who would be inoculated by the U.S. offer.

At the same time Washington is hoarding unused vaccines. Doctors Without Borders estimates “that 1 million lives could be saved worldwide by mid-2022 if the U.S. and other wealthy nations were to distribute excess stockpile abroad,” reports *New York Magazine*.

Salk: ‘Could you patent the sun?’

A starkly different approach was taken nearly 70 years ago when Jonas Salk developed a vaccine for polio, which saved millions of lives. Instead of seeking a patent, Salk made this scientific advance available to all humanity.

When he was asked who owned the polio vaccine patent, Salk replied, “Well, the people, I would say. There is no patent. Could you patent the sun?”

In 1952 there were 58,000 children in the U.S. paralyzed by polio, and hundreds of thousands more worldwide. Salk’s vaccine was given voluntarily through the schools with parents’ consent, starting in 1955. By 1962 the vaccination reduced polio virus infections by about 95%.

Revolutionary Cuba is advancing steadily in its vaccination program. Over 90% of the population has had at least one shot — of one of three vaccines that medical researchers there have created — and over 70% are fully vaccinated, well ahead of the overwhelming majority of countries. And this is despite the U.S. economic embargo, which makes it hard to import necessary raw materials or even syringes.

This is being done not through vaccine mandates but by convincing people of the need to get the shots, which are free for everyone. The government is organizing to complete vaccination of the entire eligible population by the end of the year.

This is possible because working people in Cuba trust the government and see it as their own, a result of the revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959 and brought the working class to power. And the Cuban government is making its vaccines available to other countries, including Nicaragua, Iran, Venezuela and Vietnam.

Cuba’s success shows what is possible when working people make a socialist revolution and take health care out of the hands of profit-hungry capitalists.

Miners fight injunction

Continued from front page

and several railroad crossings since the strike started April 1.

“We’re having a rally tomorrow at Brookwood ball park to hear what the union is planning in response to what the company and court have done,” said Butler, who has worked at the No. 4 mine for more than five years. While continuing to picket, he is working as a contractor at the nearby UMWA-organized Shoal Creek Mine. “I hope we have a rally in Montgomery to support the strike. We know Gov. Kay Ivey supports Warrior Met and other mine operators.”

The company got the order after organizing a violence-baiting campaign against the union, blaming miners for confronting scabs crossing the picket lines.

The company has been mining coal with scab labor at the No. 7 mine since early in the strike and has now started mining at No. 4, Butler said. Alabama state troopers provide regular escorts for the scabs driving or being bused into the mines.

The strike by 1,100 UMWA members began after Warrior Met refused to reverse massive concessions in wages and benefits made five years earlier, when previous owner Jim Walter Resources went bankrupt.

The UMWA is planning rallies Nov. 18 in New York, Boston, Denver, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., to protest the company’s attacks on the union and its refusal to negotiate seriously. In New York the protest will take place outside the offices of BlackRock, a multibillion hedge fund that is the biggest owner of Warrior Met.

Miners are not alone in confronting court interference aimed at crippling a labor struggle today.

An Iowa judge issued a restraining order against striking United Auto Workers at John Deere’s plant in Davenport, Illinois, limiting pickets to four. Over 10,000 UAW workers are on strike at John Deere.

Douglas County Court Judge Timothy Burns also issued a temporary restraining order against Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers members on strike at Kellogg’s plant in Omaha, Nebraska. Some 480 unionists are on strike there, part of 1,400 Kellogg’s workers who walked out nationwide.

The injunction prevents workers from “impeding movement in and out of the plant” and “picketing in large numbers.” The judge issued the order only hours after Kellogg’s filed a lawsuit against the local union alleging its members were “intimidating” strikebreakers. A hearing on the complaint is due Nov. 17.

Intervention by the courts had to be overcome during the rise of the mass movement that built the industrial unions in the 1930s. Bosses got court orders aimed at getting scabs into plants to run production and crush efforts to establish unions.

In the Toledo Auto-Lite strike, one of the labor battles in 1934 that helped kick off a strike wave that decade, bosses got a compliant judge to issue an order telling workers and their unemployed supporters to stop picketing. They put up effective picket lines of thousands of workers and the police couldn’t stop them.

Despite a court injunction and the mobilization of the National Guard, bosses were unable to break the sit-down strike at the General Motors plant in Flint, Michigan, in 1937. Workers occupying the plant refused to budge. Thousands of fellow unionists from different industries traveled to Flint and formed a huge cordon around the plant to defend those inside. GM bosses caved in and recognized the UAW.

By the end of the year nearly half a million other workers engaged in sit-down strikes establishing unions across many industries. Lessons of those struggles will be sought today by workers seeking to overcome the red tape and court orders bosses find it so easy to get.

Spread the word about the UMWA fight at Warrior Met! Send donations to UMWA 2021 Strike Fund at P.O. Box 513, Dumfries, VA 22026. Send messages of support to District 20, 21922 Hwy. 216 (Miners’ Memorial Parkway), McCalla, AL 35111, Email umwa-district20@bellsouth.net.

Correction

The article in the Nov. 22 *Militant* titled, “What Do the 2021 Election Results Mean for the US Working Class?” should have quoted James Carville as saying, “I mean, this ‘defund the police’ lunacy.”

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

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