

Back Ukraine independence! Protest Putin's war, bombings

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Ukrainian people have stepped up the courageous defense of their homeland as fighting grinds on in the south and east and as Moscow's bombardment of cities across the country continues. Russian President Vladimir Putin's assault on the country's power infrastructure seeks to create enough damage to freeze the civilian population into submission. But Ukrainian working people, the backbone of the resistance, are more determined than ever to defend their country's independence.

"Ukraine is very resourceful," Yevhenia Sontsova told the *Financial Times*. She and her 2-year-old daughter cheered on riders taking turns pedaling an exercise bike hooked to a generator to light up the big Christmas tree inside Kyiv's main train station.

The Kremlin is bogged down in a debilitating war that is fomenting growing opposition at home and widening disagreements within its pro-war camp. But Putin's war aims remain unaltered

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Amnesty for undocumented workers, unify working class!

BY TERRY EVANS

Now halfway through the term of President Joseph Biden, his Border Patrol agents arrested a record 2.2 million immigrants in 2022 at the border with Mexico. Nearly half were deported back under Title 42, a 1944 law invoked in March 2020 by then Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Robert Redfield, with the approval of President Donald Trump.

The goal isn't to expel all immigrants, but to control the flow of immigration to meet demands by the bosses for cheap labor and to reinforce the pariah status of undocumented workers in the U.S.

The capitalist rulers' profit-driven immigration policies are a deadly threat to the working class. Charting a course to overcome the divisions that bosses foster between immigrant and native-born workers is essential to strengthening our unions.

The invocation of Title 42, in the

Continued on page 6

Support Iran protests! End gov't repression!

What's the real history of Iran's 1979 revolution?



March in Zahedan, capital of Baluchistan, Iran, Dec. 30, demands end death penalty, stop arrest of protesters. Region has been a hotbed of resistance to regime's attacks on democratic rights.

BY SETH GALINSKY

The capitalist rulers of the Islamic Republic of Iran are divided on how to face continuing challenges to their regime.

Neither their slanders of anti-government protesters as dupes of U.S. imperialism, or of the "Zionist" Israeli government, nor their brutal attacks on daily protests, nor attempts at appeasement have succeeded in pushing back the movement sparked by the Sept. 16 death of Kurdish woman Mahsa Amini — Gina Amini in the Kurdish language. She died three days after being arrested by the hated "morality" police for allegedly violating the dress code for women.

Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and President Ebrahim Raisi claim that their Islamic Republic represents the anti-

imperialist continuity of the 1979 revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. When President Joseph Biden claimed in November that he wanted to "free" Iran, Raisi replied the country had been freed in 1979.

Claims by any section of the bourgeoisie
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Solidarity with Ingredion workers strike, stop boss takeback demands



Veronica Hopkins

Mike Moore, center, president of BCTGM Local 100G, on strike against Ingredion in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, receives check on picket line for \$1,521 from Dan Fein and Veronica Hopkins (taking picture) Dec. 29 from BCTGM Local 1 collection at Mondelez bakery in Chicago.

BY DAN FEIN

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa — "This is our 151st day on strike and we're still holding the line," Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 100G President Mike Moore told this fellow union member and *Militant* worker-correspondent on the picket line at Ingredion here Dec. 29.

The strike began Aug. 1, after the union's 122 members voted 100%

against the bosses' takeaway contract proposal, which included higher health premiums, eliminating union jobs, imposing a schedule of 14 straight days on 12-hour shifts and ending overtime pay after eight hours.

Ingredion is a food-products conglomerate with 12,000 workers in 26 countries. It reported net sales of \$7 billion in 2021. Ingredion makes sweeteners, starches, nutrition ingre-

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Michigan frame-up, harsh sentences are dangerous attack on constitutional rights

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

In a serious blow to constitutional rights, courts handed down lengthy prison sentences for five of the 14 men entrapped and framed up by the FBI on charges of plotting to kidnap Michigan's Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer in late 2020 to press for change in state government policies. At least 12 FBI informants and three FBI agents worked together in an undercover operation to set them up.

The government's charges centered around a trip by a dozen men, a third of them government informants or undercover FBI agents, that carried out surveillance of the landscape around Whitmer's vacation cottage. Two of

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Help win 'Militant' renewals — Special offer on new book

We are inviting recent *Militant* subscribers to become long-term readers. And we are also asking distributors and partisans of the *Militant* worldwide to join us in the effort to reach out to as many people as possible who subscribed to the working-class paper during last fall's eight-week international campaign by members and supporters of the Socialist Workers Party and Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada and the U.K.

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—On the picket line, p. 5—

UC graduate student workers end strike, make gains

Homeless Delaware poultry plant workers face eviction

Protests hit Scottish rulers’ attacks on women’s rights

BY ANNE HOWIE

EDINBURGH, Scotland — Hundreds gathered outside the Scottish Parliament here Dec. 21 to protest the passage of a bill based on anti-scientific notions that “men” and “women” are merely subjective categories that can be changed at will. Such views undermine recognition of the reality that women’s oppression is fundamental in class society and deal serious blows to the fight for women’s rights.

The Scottish government’s Gender Recognition Reform Bill was adopted the next day, lowering the age that someone can apply for a certificate that provides legal recognition they’ve changed sex from 18 to 16. It reduces the time most applicants must show that they’ve “lived in their acquired gender” to three months and removes a requirement that an applicant get a doctor to sign off on their new gender.

The week before, Scotland’s highest court ruled “‘Sex’ is not limited to biological or birth sex but includes those in possession of a gender recognition certificate.” That ruling and the bill build on other attacks that make it easy for a man who declares he is “living as a woman” to get access to women-only spaces. Since 2014 the Scottish Prison Service has housed prisoners according to their gender identity, not their sex, including men convicted of rape.

Organized by For Women Scotland, the protest drew women from across the country. They held signs that read, “Save our single sex places,” “Women are angry: Ignore us at your peril!” and “I don’t have a gender identity.” There were also signs aimed

at Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, who is also the Scottish National Party leader. One read, “Sturgeon, destroyer of women’s rights,” another, “Sturgeon’s gift to predators.”

“I work at a nursing home,” Catherine Gibson, a member of the Unite union, told the *Militant*. “The elderly women there will want a woman to bathe and clothe them, but what if it’s a man who says he’s a woman. It’s a question of dignity and respect.” Health care authorities in Lothian have already said women patients who request female-only care may be allocated a man who says he is a woman to look after them.

Shereen Benjamin, a lecturer in primary education at Edinburgh University, joined the action. She told the *Militant* she and other defenders of women’s rights at the university face attacks on free speech. Benjamin helped organize a showing of the documentary film “Adult Human Female,” which defends women’s rights. When participants arrived they found a group of opponents of their views blockading the entrance. University security guards told filmgoers they couldn’t guarantee their safety. The showing was cancelled.

“The university should support trans people, but not condone shutting down discussion,” Benjamin told the *Militant*.

Scottish National Party Member of Parliament Ash Regan resigned from the government over the bill. “A woman is not a costume,” Regan said at the rally held during the protest. “It is not a feeling. It is a material reality that is grounded in biology.” The bill creates “a hierarchy of rights in which women’s rights are demoted.”



The Scotsman/Lisa Ferguson

Hundreds have protested Scotland’s “Gender Recognition Reform Bill.” Action outside Parliament in Edinburgh Oct. 6 denounces policies of Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon.

Pete Clifford, a leader of the Communist League from Manchester, England, joined the action and spoke with Alex Buchanan, a retired local council worker. Buchanan told Clifford the last time he came to the Scottish Parliament “was when it opened, to celebrate. Now I am here facing a setback. I don’t understand why the SNP and the left are backing this ID gender issue.”

“This is a blow to all workers because gains that have been won for women’s rights have strengthened our unity,” Clifford said. With union struggles beginning to rise, “defending women’s rights will become more vital.”

Edinburgh-based author J.K. Rowling sent a message to a protest vigil outside the Parliament earlier in the week.

“Whether or not this bill passes, the fight isn’t over,” Rowling wrote. “I’m with you all the way. We are the women who will never ‘wheesh [be quiet].”

It’s not clear whether the U.K. government will take legal action to block the bill, which it opposes.

Keen to shift attention from the fact that an attack on women’s rights is at the center of the new law, Shona Robinson, the Scottish government’s social justice secretary, said the issue was a matter of Scotland’s national rights, and that any move by the U.K. government would undermine “the democratic will of the Scottish Parliament.”

Keir Starmer, leader of the U.K.’s opposition Labour Party, said a future Labour government would adopt a similar law to that passed in Scotland.

London Abellio Bus drivers strike against attacks on wages, conditions

BY ANDRÉS MENDOZA

LONDON — “The strike is solid,” Jim Hart, Unite union representative at the Abellio Bus depot in Battersea, told the *Militant* Dec. 31. They’ve carried out 13 days of strike action since November, fighting against boss attacks on their wages and working conditions.

Some 950 drivers across all depots in London voted to strike. But since then “hundreds have joined the union, who weren’t members before,”

striker Banjo Phillip said.

“It’s good, we all need to stick together,” said Zhakir Hussain, who has been a driver for Abellio for three years.

The workers are among the lowest paid bus drivers in London, but the dispute is not only over pay, it’s also about shift schedules and conditions. “It’s not acceptable that we work overtime for the same rate of pay,” Hussain said.

Eight further strike actions are scheduled in January.

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant*’s views. These are expressed in editorials.

THE MILITANT

Mamie Till-Mobley led fight against Jim Crow

The ‘Militant’ explains the truth about Mamie Till-Mobley’s yearslong, determined fight against acquittal of the two racists who lynched her son, Emmett Till. These efforts helped build the massive Black-led working-class movement that tore down Jim Crow.



AP Photo/Hattiesburg American, Barry Beard
Mamie Till-Mobley speaking out against racist injustice in Mississippi, July 8, 2000.

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2 The Militant January 16, 2023

Sutter nurses rally, end 9-day strike, vow to continue fight

BY ERIC SIMPSON

OAKLAND, Calif. — Union nurses at Sutter Alta Bates hospitals here and in Berkeley concluded a nine-day strike on New Year's Day with rallies at both locations. Some 1,800 members of the California Nurses Association had turned down hospital bosses' proposed contract demands because they didn't adequately address key issues of staffing and wages. Nurses at 16 other Sutter units had approved the contract.

"We are overworked and understaffed. And there is a huge turnover of nurses. That's the big issue," nurse David Wong told the *Militant* at the Oakland rally. "Double shifts, after 16 hours of work, what kind of patient care can you give with that?" his wife added.

The nurses were joined by their husbands, wives, children and supporters. They carried out an ambitious schedule of picket line activities, including family days, pet days, musical days and community outreach, despite heavy rain all week. Breakfast and lunch were provided daily. And a union committee was set up to handle requests for emergency medical assistance from hospital staff. But the company hasn't budged on its demands.

Nurses' fight wins respect

"Our fight continues," union representative Mike Hill told participants. "We nurses are respected by the public because we tell the truth."

Among the supporters was a group from Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 125, led by Vice President Bao-Jun Button. She gave strikers a BCTGM union emblem signed by dozens from the Safeway bread factory and a Safeway store. "Go Bakers!" the nurses cheered in appreciation.

Intensive care nurse Nishel Lawrence said many nurses have left Sutter to work at the nearby Kaiser Permanente hospital where wages are higher. Registered nurses there are also members of the California

Nurses Association and recently ratified a contract with wage gains and a company promise to create more than 2,000 new nurse and nurse-practitioner positions systemwide.

Myra Juarez, a part-time nurse at Sutter who also teaches nursing, compared what they are fighting for with the situation of rail workers' unsustainable schedules and hours. "I love nursing," she said. "It's a calling. And I see the young nurses coming up so eager. But the turnover of nurses has been tremendous. It's because of understaffing."

Area hospital closures have added to understaffing. Before coming to Sutter in Oakland, Juarez was a nurse at Doctors Medical Center in Richmond, which closed in 2015. "As a result," she said, "people have died."

Sutter said it plans to close Alta Bates Berkeley campus, with 300 beds. The



Militant/Eric Simpson

Striking nurses and supporters rally Jan. 1 outside a Sutter hospital in Oakland, California. They're fighting for increased staffing, better working conditions, against hospital closures.

union is fighting to keep it open.

"People will now have to travel further through traffic in emergencies to come to Oakland," said Berkeley nurse Ampy Carr at the rally with her

husband and three children. "It's already been a disaster without enough beds, even without Berkeley closing."

Betsey Stone contributed to this article.

Win 'Militant' renewals, special offer on new book

Continued from front page

These renewal efforts will help SWP members get to know workers who have been reading the paper, hear what they think about its coverage and discuss how we can work together in the months to come.

The *Militant* is a powerful tool to use in building solidarity with union and other working-class battles and with struggles like those unfolding in Ukraine and Iran today. It's a forum to discuss crucial political questions facing the working class here and worldwide.

The renewal effort is also an opportunity to introduce readers to Pathfinder's invaluable arsenal, including its newest book, *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward*. The book can be ordered now at a special price of \$7, and for \$5 with a subscription or renewal. It will be available in early February. (See ad on this page.)

"The global order imposed by the victors of the inter-imperialist slaughter of World War II is shattering, with

explosive ramifications for workers and farmers worldwide," the book's back cover explains.

"A decades-long retreat by the working class and unions has come to an end, as owners of capital and their parties shift the burden of their crisis onto working people's backs. More and more workers — of all ages, skin colors, and both sexes — are saying, 'Enough is enough!' They've begun to wield the collective power of the exploited producers in response."

"This book, drawing from the trade union and broad political work of members and followers of the Socialist Workers Party, highlights opportunities ahead for class-conscious workers. It sets the course of action needed to forge a labor party built on fighting unions. And a mass proletarian vanguard able to lead the struggle to end capitalist rule, opening a future for humanity?"

Of the more than 1,300 new readers who recently signed up to receive the weekly newspaper, many took the opportunity to get some of the 1,500 plus books by SWP leaders and other revolutionaries that were sold this fall. Many will now want to get more.

The *Militant* explains — and covers the battles that prove — what the title of the new book says: the low point of labor and working-class resistance is behind us.

The *Militant* is unique. It explains that all political questions today — from labor battles to the growing disasters of wars and social and economic devastation worldwide — are class questions. The *Militant* covers these breaking developments, including working-class actions across the world. It points to the example of Cuba's socialist revolution.

The *Militant* stresses the importance of mobilizing solidarity with union battles, and draws out the class-struggle lessons we can all learn from. As workers fight attacks by the bosses and their government, more and more will draw the

conclusion we need to build our own party, a labor party based on our unions and independent of the bosses' Democratic and Republican parties. That opens the door to chart a working-class road forward, win allies to our side and advance the fight to take political power into our own hands.

Over the next month or so, we want to take this appeal to new and recent subscribers — and anyone else we can — as widely as possible. We are looking not only for longer-term readers but for collaborators in political and union activity and partisans of the next steps to expand the *Militant's* readership in the spring. We'll cover our progress here each week. Join us!

John Studer

John Studer,
Militant editor

New staff writer joins 'Militant'

BY JANET POST

Joining the full-time *Militant* writing staff is Vivian Sahner, a member of the Socialist Workers Party branch in Northern New Jersey. Sahner was the 2021 SWP candidate for lieutenant governor in New Jersey while part of the party's national trade union fraction at Walmart.

Sahner joined the Young Socialist Alliance in 1972 in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, then moved to Atlanta in 1973 with her

three children and joined the party.

In the late 1970s Sahner worked at the Metuchen, New Jersey, Ford plant as a member of the United Auto Workers. She served previously on the *Militant* staff in 1980-81, reporting on the successful 15-year political and legal battle waged by the SWP and YSA against decades of FBI spying, harassment and disruption.

Sahner has also worked in the oil and steel industries, and for a number of years in garment. She volunteered in the SWP's print shop in New York from 1994-2001. From 2006-2016 she served on the organizing committee of the party's Print Project, which helps produce Pathfinder books.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

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The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us. Speaker: Laura Garza, union rail conductor and member of Socialist Workers Party. Sun., Jan. 15. Reception, 4:30 p.m.; program, 5 p.m. Donation \$5. 675 Hegenberger Rd., Suite 250. Tel: (510) 686-1351.

'Militant' publishing schedule

This is a two-week issue. The next issue, dated Jan. 30, will be mailed out Jan. 19.

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What is behind the rising tensions in the Balkans?

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

As the nearly yearlong invasion of Ukraine by Moscow continues, rising tensions between Serbia, backed by Russian President Vladimir Putin, and Kosovo could lead to new fighting in the Balkans. The attempt by Russian President Vladimir Putin to stamp out Ukraine's sovereignty has exacerbated the worldwide capitalist economic and social crisis and propelled capitalist powers worldwide to look for new ways to protect and advance their interests.

Following months of rising conflict, Serbs living in northern Kosovo set up barricades in the city of Mitrovica and other areas for three weeks in December. At issue was a decision by the Kosovan government to replace Serbian-issued car license plates with ones issued by Pristina and its threats to fine anyone who didn't comply. Serb mayors in northern Kosovan municipalities, local judges and hundreds of cops resigned in protest.

The Kosovo government asked the imperialist-led NATO alliance to use its troops to break up the barricades. The government of Serbia then placed its army and police on high alert Dec. 26, claiming Kosovan government forces were preparing to attack Serbs. Tensions eased when the roadblocks were taken down and Pristina reopened its border crossing with Serbia.

Kosovo declared independence from Serbia in 2008. Around 50,000 Serbs live in northern Kosovo. Some refuse to recognize Kosovan independence, as do the Serbian government and Putin. Russian forces conducted several military exercises with Serbian forces in 2021 and Moscow is pushing Belgrade to back its war in Ukraine. Putin uses the U.S.-imperialist bombardment of the former Yugoslavia in 1998-99 and its deployment of NATO forces to Kosovo to cynically justify his invasion of Ukraine.

Commentators in the capitalist press argue that such hostilities are rooted in national, religious, or ethnic strife that have gripped this part of the world for centuries. And, they claim, there's not much that can be done about this except through intervention by U.S. and other imperialist forces.

Workers and peasants forge unity

But the actual history of the class struggle in the Balkans shows this is not true. Advances in forging unity were made by workers and peasants of every nationality who carried out a socialist revolution in Yugoslavia in the 1940s,

overturning the rule of the landlords and capitalists. The gains they made pointed the road forward, despite the fact that a Stalinist leadership stood at the head of the revolution and acted to undermine its conquests. The Stalinist regime in Yugoslavia subsequently fragmented into rival gangs of would-be capitalists in the 1990s.

Yugoslavia was united as a country at the end of World War I under the domination of the Serbian monarchy, which enshrined the second-class status of Kosovo and other republics. The country was invaded and occupied in April 1941 by the German Nazi regime.

Opposition to the occupying forces was organized through the armed Partisans, led by the Yugoslav Communist Party headed by Josip Broz Tito. The Partisans grew rapidly, involving hundreds of thousands of workers and peasants who defeated the German imperialist army and then the native capitalist exploiters.

They established a workers and farmers government. The monarchy was abolished, capitalist industry and banks nationalized and a massive land reform instituted.

In the following years workers and peasants began narrowing some of the extreme regional disparities in industrial development, agricultural productivity and living standards in the country. But over time, the Stalinist misleaders eroded these gains, exacerbating social and regional inequalities, paving the way for the explosion of conflicts in the 1990s.

In 1989-91 Stalinist regimes and ruling parties crumbled across Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. To maximize their drive to take control of territory and resources, Yugoslavia's aspiring capitalists fomented nationalist conflicts paid



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Ramiz Beshlija, a shepherd living on the outskirts of Sarajevo, Bosnia, points to destruction from the bombardment by Belgrade in 1992. "Tell the world this is not an ethnic war," he said.

in blood by workers and farmers. By the end of 1992, murderous assaults killed tens of thousands and created some 3 million refugees.

"This is not a war between Serbs and Muslims," Haris Halilovic, a hotel worker, told a 1992 *Militant* reporting team in Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the midst of the war. "You can see it here," he said, pointing to families of Serbian and Croatian origin, and of the Muslim and Christian faith, crammed into a basement shelter together.

The most aggressive force in these wars was led by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic. In addition to waging a war to seize territory from Croatia, he was determined to maintain control over Kosovo.

A southern province of Serbia, Kosovo was granted autonomous status in 1974. This was revoked in 1989 by the Milosevic regime, which put in place an emergency rule in retaliation after widespread protests against the denial of national rights of Albanians, who comprise 93% of Kosovo's popu-

lation of 1.9 million.

In 1999 the U.S.-led NATO military alliance conducted a massive bombing campaign, destroying factories, refineries and more in Serbia. Hundreds of civilians were killed and thousands injured. Washington's aim, in what was then the biggest war in Europe since World War II, was to pressure Belgrade into accepting a partition of Kosovo to be enforced with an imperialist occupation army. Some 4,000 NATO troops are still in Kosovo today.

"Since the 1990s, both Democratic and Republican administrations and Congresses have acted to reinforce U.S. imperialism's post-World War II position as the dominant 'European' military power," wrote Jack Barnes, Socialist Workers Party national secretary in a March 3, 2022, statement for the party's National Committee. Tensions fostered by capitalist competition, clashes between Washington and Moscow, and Moscow's war in Ukraine underlie conflicts in the Balkans today.

Michigan frame-up is attack on constitutional rights

Continued from front page

them allegedly discussed how a nearby bridge could be blown up. No one was harmed, no property was damaged, and no future attack organized.

Prosecutors said the plot was precipitated by the opposition of right-wing militia groups to restrictive mandates Whitmer imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Barry Croft, a long-haul truck driver, was sentenced to 19½ years in prison Dec. 28 by U.S. District Court Judge Robert Jonker. In August, Croft was convicted of "conspiracy," a thought-

control charge, for what he thought and said, not anything he did. He was also convicted of attempting to obtain and use a weapon of mass destruction after he practiced detonating explosives, but he never used them.

On Dec. 27 Adam Fox, an unemployed vacuum repairman with no prior criminal record, was sentenced to 16 years in prison after being convicted on the same charges as Croft.

Fellow defendants Joseph Morrison; his father-in-law, Pete Musico; and Paul Bellar were sentenced to prison Dec. 15. Morrison and Musico were convicted in October of firearm violations after allowing people, including Fox, to conduct target practice on their property. Bellar was convicted on charges of providing ammunition, along with devising tactical possibilities and codes.

All three were convicted of belonging to the Wolverine Watchmen, which the prosecution claimed was an "illegal gang" that had discussed taking action against politicians and police officers to force changes in public policy.

Whitmer urged the court to impose steep sentences.

The men's defense attorneys argued they had been entrapped by the FBI, and their actions were protected by the First and Second amendments to the Constitution — protecting freedom of speech

and the right to bear arms. But these arguments were tossed aside by the judge.

The three men were sentenced to serve minimum stints of seven to 12 years in prison. Morrison and Musico could each serve a maximum of 42 years in prison after the judge ruled sentences would be served consecutively. Bellar faces as much as 22 years behind bars.

The FBI played a central leadership role in inciting and facilitating this "plot," from urging the men go forward, offering money and ammunition, and paying \$54,000 to FBI informer "Big Dan" for leading discussions on abducting Whitmer. But defense arguments explaining this was entrapment were swept under the rug.

On Dec. 7 five more men charged with being part of the "conspiracy" were ordered to stand trial. Michael Null, William Null, Eric Molitor and Shawn Fix face charges of providing material support for terrorist acts for carrying out surveillance of the landscape around Whitmer's cottage. Brian Higgins was charged with providing material support.

Regardless of the politics of the defendants, these prosecutions, conviction and long sentences stand as dangerous precedents for future attacks against unionists, vanguard fighters and others in class-struggle battles to come.

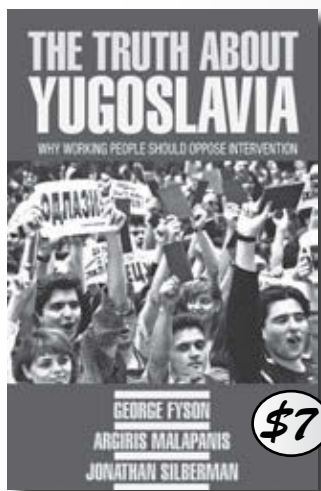
THE TRUTH ABOUT YUGOSLAVIA

Why Working People Should Oppose Intervention

Examines the roots of the carnage and European war that developed in the wake of the collapse of Yugoslavia during the 1990s. Washington and its imperialist rivals in Europe competed with each other for influence and control, as well as moving to reimpose capitalist relations.

by Argiris Malapanis, George Fyson and Jonathan Silberman

pathfinderpress.com



Support Ingredion strikers

Continued from front page
dients and biomaterials used in products from foods and beverages to paper and pharmaceuticals.

“The outstanding issues are amnesty for five union members who the company wants to discipline, maintenance schedules which contract out maintenance work on the second and third shifts, and vacation pay,” Moore said. “We are willing to negotiate anytime.”

“We appreciate the support for our strike from all over the country, not just from BCTGM locals,” he added. “It is overwhelming.”

Veronica Hopkins, BCTGM Local 1 business agent in Chicago, visited the picket line with me. She is part of the negotiating team for Local 100G. We gave Moore a check for \$1,521 from a recent collection organized by BCTGM Local 1 shop stewards and others at Mondelez International (Nabisco) where I work. “You never know the support that’s out there until you get into a fight like this one,” she said.

In September, workers from two Alpha Bakeries in Chicago, also members of BCTGM Local 1, delivered contributions they raised totaling \$916 to the strikers.

“Originally over 20 strikers got a letter in the mail indicating they were subject to discipline. Now it’s four or five they want to fire,” striker Kasey Klein said. “We went out together and we will return together.”

‘Not one member has crossed line’

“They’re trying to get production from scabs they’ve hired and by bringing in salaried people from other Ingredion plants,” striker Jim Kersten said. “Bosses from other Ingredion plants are watching what happens here with the strike. Not one union member has crossed the line.”

Ray Taber, vice president of Local

100G, told us, “Many of our members have gotten other jobs but do picket duty before or after work or on weekends. The company tried unsuccessfully to get a judge to limit picketing. We need work schedules that allow for family life, not working 14 days in a row.”

Their long strike has gotten broad support, and needs more. They ask unionists to join the picket line or drop off food/drinks/supplies; send a solidarity letter; donate to the strike fund; help spread the word.

Send contributions to BCTGM Local 100G, 500 J St. SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404. Donate at: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/bctgm-100g-strike-assistance/donate>. Messages can be sent to: bctgm100gpmez@gmail.com.



Ingredion strikers, members of BCTGM Local 100G, picket plant in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Dec. 29. Veronica Hopkins, center, BCTGM Local 1 representative from Chicago, brought \$1,521.

ON THE PICKET LINE

UC graduate student workers end strike, make gains

LOS ANGELES — Some 36,000 University of California graduate student workers across the state organized by the United Auto Workers ratified a new union contract Dec. 23, ending their strike. It was the nation’s largest strike to date of academic workers. About 12,000 striking workers settled earlier.

The 17,000 members of the union’s Student Researchers United unit backed the agreement by 68.4%, winning their first U.C. contract after forming a union last year. UAW Local 2865, which represents 19,000 teaching assistants, tutors and other student academic workers, approved the agreement by 61.6%.

At the same time, there was a division in the vote on different state campuses. Teaching assistants and other academic workers overwhelmingly voted against the proposed contract at U.C. Merced, U.C. Santa Cruz and U.C. Santa Barbara while those at the other seven campuses approved it. The majority of graduate student researchers at Merced and Santa Cruz also voted no.

“The dramatic improvements to our salaries and working conditions are the result of tens of thousands of workers

striking together in unity,” said Rafael Jaime, UAW Local 2865 president.

The debate over whether to ratify included opposition to a higher pay raise being given to those at Bay Area and Los Angeles campuses as well different assessments of what could be won by holding out longer.

For academic student employees the new contract will raise minimum pay from about \$23,250 to about \$34,000 for nine months of part-time work by Oct. 1, 2024. The rate at U.C. campuses in Berkeley, San Francisco and Los Angeles would be \$36,500.

They also won improvements in financial support for child care.

Union members who voted against the contract opposed the two-tier wage structure. “That’s not something a union should stand for,” Claudia Madrigal Johnson, a first-year PhD student at U.C. Merced told the *Los Angeles Times*.

Strikers explain that many had been paying over 50% of their income in rent and they work many more hours than are scheduled without getting additional pay.

Enrique Olivares Pesante, a UCLA Ph.D. student in English and teaching assistant, told the *Times* that he voted

in favor of the agreement even though the workers didn’t win everything they wanted.

He said the strike has energized student academic workers across the U.C. system who plan to prepare for the next round of negotiations when the new contract expires in 2025. “Getting this contract wasn’t the end of it,” Olivares Pesante said.

— Deborah Liatos

Homeless Delaware poultry plant workers face eviction

MILLSBORO, Del. — In a statement printed in the Jan. 2 *Militant*, Ilona Gersh, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Chicago mayor, points to the need for conditions that allow young workers to begin families, including affordable housing.

This is an urgent plank in the party’s program. The lack of affordable housing during an icy winter will mean real hardship for some workers in this area’s poultry industry. This was clear from a Dec. 22 Delaware Public Media story. “Milford’s largest homeless encampment will be cleared in January,” it said.

The encampment roughly doubled in size over the past year, with nearly 40 people now living in tents spread across a few acres of forest at the end of a dirt road on the outskirts of Milford. The article explains that the encampment’s residents include a significant number of people who work at the Perdue poultry processing plant in Milford. The plant employs 1,500 workers and processes 100,000 birds a day.

The land was recently bought by a new owner who wants the encampment closed. There are few alternatives for those living there. As the only shelter in the city, it has only 10 open beds and is closed during the day, meaning you can’t store anything there.

Martha Gery, director of Milford Advocacy for the Homeless, was able to delay the clearance until mid-January. Finding new places to live and store belongings for the encampment’s residents will be difficult, especially for those who have work schedules that leave them limited time to pack up their tents, as well as for those with disabilities.

“We have a larger number than ever of people who are working,” Gery said. “They will only have nights to do these tasks — in the dark — or the weekends, if they don’t work weekends. But many of them do.”

— David Salner

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



January 19, 1998

PARIS — Three thousand people marched here January 7 demanding government relief for unemployed workers. Some of the demonstrators carried signs reading “jobs!” Workers have been occupying 26 unemployment offices throughout France with the protests spreading rapidly.

Protesters are demanding a special year-end bonus of 3,000 francs for all unemployed, and increase of 1,500 francs a month in the special payments for jobless workers who no longer receive benefits, and access to special benefits for youth under 25.

“While immigrant workers are blamed for unemployment, the unemployed and undocumented are demonstrating together in the streets,” Doro Taoré, a spokesperson for a group of undocumented workers, told protesters, “so they won’t be able to divide us and pick us off one by one.”



January 19, 1973

The U.S. government is attempting to hide the horrible effects of the December bombing campaign of Hanoi and Haiphong. The Pentagon has refused to make public an official report describing the extent of the raids and damage they caused.

On Jan. 4 the North Vietnamese government released a preliminary survey of the death and destruction in Hanoi. It stated that 40,000 tons of bombs were dropped by U.S. planes on Hanoi alone in the 10 days beginning Dec. 18, killing 1,318 people and wounding 1,261. Social, economic, educational, and cultural establishments were bombed in 353 places, some as many as 10 times.

The destruction in Haiphong was described to journalists by North Vietnamese officials on Jan. 5. Fifteen thousand tons of bombs razed the city, leaving 305 dead, 882 wounded, and 5,800 homes and buildings destroyed.



January 19, 1948

DETROIT — 1,000 tenants and property holders attended the Detroit Area Rent Advisory Board hearings on its proposal to lift all rent controls in the Detroit area. The Board was considering landlord-inspired proposals which would either lift controls entirely or else provide for a flat 15% increase.

The hearing was the climax of many months of struggle between Detroit’s realty corporations and the organized tenants. This contest brought picket lines before the meetings of the landlord-controlled Advisory Board. It saw the resignation of the three UAW-CIO members from the Board, and the march of several hundred tenants on Lansing, the state capital.

Contrary to the original expectation of the real-estate interests, the Advisory Board was forced to postpone its decision to decontrol. The tenants won this first round in the battle.

Amnesty for immigrant workers

Continued from front page

name of preventing the spread of COVID-19, suspended laws permitting asylum-seekers to stay in the country while their claims are reviewed. It gave Border Patrol agents authority to capture and return them to Mexico immediately. It has accelerated deportations, and the number of people attempting repeated border crossings exploded. Biden continued the policy when he took office.

Up to 8,000 people crossing the border were arrested every day last month. Tens of thousands more — many from Nicaragua and Haiti — remain in squalid conditions in Mexico waiting to cross. They had hoped Title 42 would be revoked, making it easier to get in and stay.

In fact the Biden administration moved in April to end the use of Title 42, and replace it with other measures to limit immigration, including expanding facilities at the border to hold 18,000 immigrants. But the move was challenged in court and Title 42 remains in place.

Today there is no rising, fighting labor movement to unite and organize workers and farmers to resist joblessness, high prices and government repression nor are there revolutionary struggles in the countries these toilers come from. As a result, growing numbers look to the U.S. in the hope they can find work here and make a better life for themselves and their families.

The number of Venezuelan and Haitian immigrants crossing the southern border has fallen after Washington adopted some programs allowing more people from these countries to apply for legal entry. But this has done nothing to dent the overall surge of immigrants, including from Mexico, to the U.S. border, nor the rulers' use of Title 42 to expel them.

In November federal Judge Emmet Sullivan ruled that Title 42 should be overturned as "arbitrary and capricious," but the Biden administration appealed. On Dec. 27 the U.S. Supreme Court temporarily put a hold on Sullivan's ruling.

Blow to constitutional freedoms

Democrats spent years denouncing Trump for his immigration policies, saying they led to children being locked in cages. Biden postures as more humane and as an opponent of Title 42. But, because of the Supreme Court decision, he says, "we have to enforce it," even though the Supreme Court doesn't actually mandate him to do so. The justices will review Title 42 in a couple months. And if they end it, Biden's administration says it will increase its use of "expedited removal" — allowing cops to deport immigrants without access to a lawyer or a court hearing.

The Supreme Court's decision, like Sullivan's ruling overturning Title 42, is an example of unelected judges acting as if they were legislators. Pressure on courts to act this way will mount, especially from Democrats, as neither the Democratic nor Republican Party — the two main parties of the capitalist rulers — are able to win enough votes to get their policies adopted in a divided Congress.

But each time a court usurps the

authority of Congress, it deals blows to the division of powers between the three branches of government — the legislature, executive and judiciary — set by the Constitution. It sets a precedent that the rulers can and will use to weaken the political reach of working people.

Justice Neil Gorsuch, a Trump appointee, voted with the three liberal judges against the ruling. In a dissenting opinion, he notes that the 19 state governments that filed suit to assure continued use of Title 42 argue that "policymakers have failed to agree on adequate measures to address" the crisis at the border.

But "courts should not be in the business of perpetuating administrative edicts designed for one emergency" — the pandemic — "because elected officials have failed to address a different emergency," he says "We are a court of law, not policymakers of the last resort."

Course to unify working people

The deepening crisis of capitalism worldwide and absence of any revolutionary leaderships that present a road forward for working people in the semicolonial world means many toilers will look for ways to get into the U.S. to escape from economic misery and state repression. In fact these fellow workers face similar challenges

'We pushed back FBI harassment in Puerto Rico, but they still want to block Cuba solidarity'

BY SETH GALINSKY

"Puerto Rico has always had activities in solidarity with Cuba and the Cuban Revolution," Milagros Rivera, president of the Cuba Solidarity Committee in Puerto Rico, told the *Militant* Jan. 2. "It's our right to travel there."

That's why the committee "decided to take the offensive" when FBI agents began visiting or calling more than 70 of its supporters at the end of August, mostly participants in last July's Juan Rius Rivera Brigade from Puerto Rico to Cuba, to harass them and attempt to dig up something they can use to target the group.

The committee sounded the alarm and let brigadistas and others know there is no reason you have to talk to FBI agents. They called a well-attended press conference to denounce the harassment. In October, Rivera was the featured speaker on a panel attended by 120 people at the People's Church in New York to denounce the FBI's moves.

Many in Puerto Rico are well aware of the FBI's history of spying on and attempting to disrupt pro-independence



Reuters/Kevin Lamarque
Immigrant rights march April 2021 near the White House. Fighting for amnesty for undocumented workers in the U.S. is key to working-class unity, strengthening our unions.

as working people do in the U.S. — the need to organize independently of the bosses and to fight to defend our class interests.

Liberals and middle-class radicals offer a number of panaceas to resolve this crisis, including a call to throw open U.S. borders, to abolish Immigration and Customs Enforcement or other reforms to the U.S. rulers' immigration setup. None offer a way forward.

Under capitalism workers compete for jobs. Opening the borders would vastly intensify that competition, fueling unemployment and spreading

misery among working people, migrant and native-born alike.

"Fighting for working-class solidarity requires demanding an amnesty for all undocumented workers in the U.S. today," Ilona Gersh, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Chicago mayor, told the *Militant*. "Strike battles for better wages and conditions tend to pull working people together in the face of the bosses' attempts to divide us," Gersh said. "The battle to win the labor movement to defend immigrant rights is inseparable from the fight to build, extend and strengthen our unions."



Militant/Arnold Weissberg
Milagros Rivera at New York event Oct. 28.

groups, unions and other opponents of U.S. domination of the island. This has included frame-ups of Nationalist leaders like Pedro Albizu Campos and giving the green light to rightist thugs to assassinate independence supporters and partisans of the Cuban Revolution in the 1960s and '70s.

In 1985 Rivera saw firsthand the FBI's trampling of constitutional rights there as it carried out raids and arrested alleged members of the Macheteros, a pro-independence group accused of robbing a Wells Fargo shipment in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1983.

'Just a talk over coffee'

This time the FBI agents claimed they just wanted to talk over coffee, falsely claiming the brigade had been infiltrated by Cuban agents or had broken an unnamed federal law. No one fell for it.

The committee received solidarity messages denouncing the FBI harassment from around the world. Rivera said that the reporting by the *Militant*, including sending correspondents to Puerto Rico soon after the bureau's harassment began, strengthened their effort.

All of this had an impact she said, with no known attempts by the FBI to contact people for several months.

"But we can't get overconfident," Rivera said. "They sent a lot of agents here for several days. They spent a good deal of money. Their campaign to criminalize solidarity with Cuba and step up the economic blockade of Cuba continues."

"They think that since we're a U.S. colony we have to follow the rules that they establish and that those of us who live in the colony are also their possession."

Rivera noted that the committee has organized brigades to Cuba for 30 years, but this is the first time the brigades have faced FBI harassment. "We don't have any hidden agenda, everything we do is public," Rivera said. "In that sense we are an open book."

"Because it is a U.S. colony, we see the conditions of our country deteriorate every year. Privatizations, including of the electrical grid, have caused a lot of damage," she said. Rivera, who works at the office of the UTIER electrical workers union office, has been part of the fight against privatization.

In the last few years the FBI has tried to change its image in Puerto Rico, arresting a large number of government officials for corruption. "Some people here have applauded them for that," Rivera said. "But is the FBI acting legally? It's like with Donald Trump. Many people were happy when his home was raided. But we can't applaud the actions of the political police of the empire. They want to do the same thing to us."

"I know some people who voted for Joseph Biden for president," hoping he would ease up the economic war against Cuba, Rivera said. Instead, he's increasing the squeeze. "We see that it's really just one party, the liberalism of the Democrats is cosmetic."

Now the Democrats are pushing a binding referendum to allegedly end

Support Iran protests! End government repression!

Continued from front page

geois-clerical hierarchy that it represents the 1979 revolution is a lie. It was a deepgoing, modern, popular revolution, not a religious jihad. Millions of people took to the streets despite fierce repression by the shah. Striking oil workers played a decisive role in the final battles that brought down that dictatorship.

After forcing out the shah, workers took the lead in setting up shoras — councils — in factories and neighborhoods to fight for workers control over production and job conditions. Farmers fought for land. Oppressed nationalities, including Kurds, Arabs, Baluchs and others, fought for the right to speak their own languages and against discrimination in jobs, education and housing.

When Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini — popular for past opposition to the shah — tried to make the hijab mandatory for female government workers in 1979, tens of thousands took to the streets, standing up to the new regime's thugs and forcing the government to back off.

In 1980 Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein invaded Iran with U.S. backing, hoping to overthrow the revolution. Thousands of Iranian toilers volunteered for the military to defeat the invasion.

Khomeini and his supporters in the capitalist class took advantage of the war to use the newly formed Islamic



AP/Aristotle Sarris
More than 1 million people in Tehran took to the streets on Jan. 19, 1979, after Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi fled the country, during deepgoing, modern, popular revolution.

Revolutionary Guard Corps and its Basij paramilitary force as battering rams against workers and their vanguard, taking aim against gains made in the revolution. By mid-1983, a counterrevolution was consolidated, which included imposing the hijab. Workers and farmers were pushed back, but not crushed.

When the bourgeois-clerical regime's officials say they represent the revolution, it's the counterrevolution that they are looking to.

Today's protests also stand on mass

anti-government actions that exploded in 2018 and 2019, showing the depth of working people's anger toward the regime, including its military adventures abroad. These actions are unfolding amid a deep economic crisis, worsened by U.S.-backed sanctions against Iran.

Farhiktegan, a conservative daily, recently reported that "the number of marriages and births has been decreasing" and "illegal abortions" have risen, as young people face increasing difficulties starting and providing for a family.

The Union of Truckers and Drivers posted videos of lines of vehicles at gas stations Dec. 27 because of a fuel shortage. "Is this the right of the people of Iran? To wait in these long lines for the natural resources of their country," the union wrote. "Were you able to manage this by executing the protesters?" referring to the two people hanged by the regime earlier in the month.

Divisions widen

One example of the divisions caused by more than three months of protests has been statements by prominent Sunni cleric Maulana Abdul-Hamid, based in Zahedan, capital of Sistan-Baluchistan province. One of the most underdeveloped regions and home to the mostly Sunni Baluch nationality, Baluchistan has been a hotbed of opposition to the regime.

"The Iranian people want nothing but justice and freedom. In 1979, the people of Iran made a revolution for these things," Abdul-Hamid told tens of thousands of people at a Dec. 30 prayer service. "There should be no difference in rights between men and women."

While Abdul-Hamid has criticized some of the regime's actions, he was a key backer of Raisi's victory in the June 2021 presidential election. Government supporters have harshly criticized him for speaking out against the death penalty and for freeing political prisoners.

A new bloc of opponents of the Islamic Republic based outside Iran issued a joint New Year's statement for "freedom and justice." This includes the shah's son, Reza Pahlavi; journalist Masih Alinejad, a well-known opponent of imposing the hijab; and Hamed Esmailion, a leader of families of the victims of the downing of Ukrainian Flight 752 who has spearheaded protests around the world.

This coalition, which pretties up the bloody reign of the shah by linking it to today's protests, seeks recognition

from Washington and other imperialist powers as a "democratic" alternative to the current regime. But this is the opposite of what is needed to advance the fight of workers and farmers of Iran to defend their own interests.

Widening divisions in capitalist class

Another example of widening divisions in the capitalist class was when Brig. Gen. Hamid Abazari spoke at an event in Mazandaran province honoring Basij thugs and other agents of the Guard who have died in clashes with protesters over the last few months. The longtime Guard leader denounced unnamed "high-ranking" corps officers who he said were not supporting the government's crackdown.

Then the Guard Corps issued a statement saying that his comments "were his own personal opinion, which does not correspond to the facts."

So far, the division in the Guard Corps has not prevented the regime from stepping up its repression in the Kurdish regions of the country. Kurds have long been denied political and cultural rights. Islamic Guard forces and Basij thugs clashed with demonstrators and occupied the Kurdish town of Javanrud Dec. 31 in an attempt to block a commemoration for those killed in earlier protests.

Meanwhile, strikes by workers fighting for wage hikes to keep up with inflation and better conditions continue.

The arrest of more than a dozen striking oil workers in Asaluyeh last week and the suspension of other workers have not dampened their struggles. Workers at the Azar Mehran oil field in Ilam province Dec. 31 joined the strike by the Abadan refinery workers.

'Dollars in Lebanon, youth in jail'

Like in the protests in 2018 and 2019, the impact of the regime's use of working people as cannon fodder in its military interventions abroad is not far from the surface.

"Our dollars are in Lebanon, our youth are in prison," protesters chanted at an action Dec. 31 in Najafabad, a majority Persian agricultural center in Isfahan province. This reflects growing opposition to the regime's backing of Hezbollah in Lebanon, which controls large parts of the country, and to the Iranian regime's counterrevolutionary military interventions in the region. Tehran's collaboration with the reactionary group has turned Lebanon into a base for manufacturing and launching missiles targeting Israel.

Revolution, Counterrevolution and War in Iran

Social and political roots of workers' protests that swept 90 cities and small towns 2017-18. by Steve Clark — Read online, download file for printing at

www.themilitant.com



The capitalist rulers turn to fascism to smash the working class

The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany by Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for January. The term "fascist" is falsely used by liberals and the middle-class left today as an anti-working-class epithet. Trotsky explains scientifically how the menace of a fascist movement arises out of the failure of working-class leadership to take power during revolutionary crises. The capitalist rulers can then use fascists to incite the disillusioned petty bourgeoisie against the working class and its organizations. The excerpt is from Trotsky's unfinished Aug. 20, 1940, article, "Bonapartism, Fascism and War." Copyright © 1971 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Teamsters Local 544 Union Defense Guard in 1938. Showing road for workers toward taking power, unionists across Minneapolis-St. Paul area swelled its ranks to block mobilization of employer-funded strikebreakers, fascist thugs.

extreme sharpening of the class struggle, fascism would have been impossible. But we pointed out from the very beginning that it was primarily a question of Bonapartism of the epoch of imperialist decline, which is qualitatively different from Bonapartism of the epoch of bourgeois rise. At the next stage we distinguished pure Bonapartism as the prologue to a fascist regime. ...

Insofar as the proletariat proves incapable at a given stage of conquering power, imperialism begins regulating economic life with its own methods; the political mechanism is the fascist party, which becomes the state power. The productive forces are in irreconcilable contradiction not only with private property but also with national boundaries. Imperialism is the very expression of this contradiction. Imperialist capitalism seeks to solve this contradiction through an extension of boundaries, seizure of new territories, and so on. The totalitarian state, subjecting all aspects of economic, political, and cultural life to finance capital, is the instrument for creating a supranationalist state, an imperialist empire, ruling over continents, ruling over the whole world.

All these traits of fascism we have analyzed each one by itself and all of them in their totality to the extent that they became manifest or came to the forefront.

Both theoretical analysis and the rich historical experience of the last quarter of a century have demonstrated with equal force that fascism is each time the final link of a specific political cycle composed of the following: the gravest crisis of capitalist society; the growth of the radicalization of the working class; the growth of sympathy

toward the working class and a yearning for change on the part of the rural and urban petty bourgeoisie; the extreme confusion of the big bourgeoisie; its cowardly and treacherous maneuvers aimed at avoiding the revolutionary climax; the exhaustion of the proletariat; growing confusion and indifference; the aggravation of the social crisis; the despair of the petty bourgeoisie, its yearning for change; the collective neurosis of the petty bourgeoisie, its readiness to believe in miracles, its readiness for violent measures; the growth of hostility towards the proletariat which has deceived its expectations. These are the premises for a swift formation of a fascist party and its victory.

It is quite self-evident that the radicalization of the working class in the United States has passed only through its initial phases, almost exclusively in the sphere of the trade-union movement (the CIO). ... The problem of forming an independent labor party will be put on the order of the day. Our transitional demands will gain great popularity. On the other hand, the fascist, reactionary tendencies will withdraw to the background, assuming a defensive position, awaiting a more favorable moment. ... It is necessary to utilize the opportunities which are opening up and to build the revolutionary party. ...

The old conservative tradition of the democratic state, which was so powerful even during the era of the last imperialist war, exists today only as an extremely unstable survival. On the eve of the last war the European workers had numerically powerful parties. But on the order of the day were put reforms, partial conquests, and not at

all the conquest of power.

The American working class is still without a mass labor party even today. But the objective situation and the experience accumulated by the American workers can within a very brief period of time place on the order of the day the question of the conquest of power. This perspective must be made the basis of our agitation. It is not merely a question of a position on capitalist militarism and of renouncing the defense of the bourgeois state but of directly

preparing for the conquest of power. ...

The irreconcilability of the struggle waged by Marx, Engels, and Lenin against opportunism on the one side and anarchism on the other demonstrates that they did not at all underestimate this danger. In what did it consist? In this, that the opportunism of the summits of the working class, subject to the bourgeoisie's influence, could obstruct, slow down, make more difficult, postpone the fulfillment of the revolutionary task of the proletariat. It is precisely this condition of society that we are now observing. Fascism did not at all come "instead" of socialism. Fascism is the continuation of capitalism, an attempt to perpetuate its existence by means of the most bestial and monstrous measures. Capitalism obtained an opportunity to resort to fascism only because the proletariat did not accomplish the socialist revolution in time. The proletariat was paralyzed in the fulfillment of its task by the opportunist parties. ...

We may set it down as an historical law: fascism was able to conquer only in those countries where the conservative labor parties prevented the proletariat from utilizing the revolutionary situation and seizing power. In Germany, two revolutionary situations were involved: 1918-1919 and 1923-24. Even in 1929 a direct struggle for power on the part of the proletariat was still possible. In all these three cases the Social Democracy and the Comintern criminally and viciously disrupted the conquest of power and thereby placed society in an impasse. Only under these conditions and in this situation did the stormy rise of fascism and its gaining of power prove possible.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

We have analyzed fascism as it developed, throughout the various stages of its development, and advanced to the forefront now one, now another of its aspects. There is an element of Bonapartism in fascism. Without this element, namely, without the raising of state power above society owing to an

January
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Cuba's socialist revolution is an example for all workers

Sixty-four years ago, on Jan. 1, 1959, workers and farmers in Cuba brought down one of the bloodiest tyrannies in the Americas, the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, opening the door to making a socialist revolution. Led by Fidel Castro and the Rebel Army, they proved working people *are* capable of replacing capitalist rule with something better. Their revolution renewed communist leadership, in the Socialist Workers Party and worldwide.

For 64 years the twin parties of U.S. imperialism — the Democrats and Republicans — have waged a relentless economic, trade and financial war, aimed at crushing the Cuban people, overturning their government and burying forever the example their revolution sets throughout the world.

For 64 years working people in Cuba have not faltered in the defense of their conquests, despite the debilitating impact of severe shortages of medicine, fuel and other vital necessities caused by Washington's sanctions. Help win more working people here to join

the fight to bring a halt to Washington's economic war!

The U.S. rulers' assault on Cuba's socialist revolution is an extension of their offensive against working people here at home. Striking bakery workers at Ingredion in Iowa, mine workers at Warrior Met in Alabama, nurses in California and others across the country are fighting for jobs, protection against inflation, control over safety and schedules that are livable, as bosses try to impose the brutal consequences of their crisis-ridden system on our backs. Our struggles here confront the same class enemy attacking working people in Cuba.

The workers and farmers government brought to power in Cuba carried out far-reaching nationalizations of industry and utilities. It guaranteed land to those who wanted to farm it, abolishing the debt slavery imposed on toilers on the land. Millions of working people were involved, deepening inroads into capitalist property. In the doing, they came to recognize the socialist character of their revolution and the

Marxist character of their leadership.

They outlawed racial segregation. They set out to eradicate the second-class status of women, drawing millions into social, economic and political life for the first time. Working people upended the dog-eat-dog social relations bred by capitalism. As Che Guevara put it, they began being transformed into the "new man."

From the beginning, Cuba's workers and farmers government put the revolution at the service of toiling humanity. Some 400,000 Cuban internationalist fighters helped change the course of history, joining the fight to defeat the invasion of Angola by the apartheid rulers in South Africa. They extended aid to fighting people from Vietnam to Bolivia.

The single biggest contribution working people in the U.S. can make to ending Washington's economic war on Cuba is building a proletarian party here to lead millions to bring to power a workers and farmers government and open up a decisive front in the worldwide struggle for socialism.

Back Ukraine independence! Protest Putin's war, bombings

Continued from front page

— to conquer Ukraine and subjugate its people. In his Dec. 31 New Year's address to the nation, Putin referred to regions of eastern Ukraine seized by Moscow as home to "our people in our historical territories in the new regions of the Russian Federation."

His regime aims to resurrect the czarist prison house of nations. Demanding the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Moscow's forces from all of Ukraine — including Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk, seized by Russian forces in 2014 — is in the interests of working people here and around the world.

Ukraine's air defenses are downing most missiles and drones but those that do strike targets cause severe damage. Maintenance workers are toiling around the clock to repair heating and power services and minimize blackouts. Hundreds of thousands of workers and others, including from the trade unions, work to provide everything from food and medicines to winter camouflage nets.

Workers with a minimum of arms training have joined the Territorial Defense Forces. They guard checkpoints and buildings, freeing up the army, also mainly volunteers, for the front. Other volun-

teers have formed fighting detachments that work with and strengthen the country's forces. In contrast to conscripts who Putin uses as cannon fodder, the conviction by Ukrainian forces that they can win has deepened during the course of the war. Their strength and resilience has drawn admiration and solidarity from working people around the world.

Putin hopes backing for Kyiv weakens

The Kremlin hopes the ongoing costs of the war, from high energy prices to falling production will lead government leaders in Europe and political factions in Washington to call for an end to their aid to Ukraine. French President Emmanuel Macron urges Kyiv to talk with Moscow and prepare to make concessions. In contrast, Czech Foreign Minister Jan Lipavsky urged support for Kyiv to continue until Ukrainian sovereignty is fully restored.

Energy supplies to capitalist powers in Europe have been severely constricted by the Kremlin's decision to cut gas supplies piped from Russia. Higher energy costs have led to cuts in steel and chemical production in Germany and elsewhere. Across much of the continent lights are dimmed and heating turned down.

But the German rulers have also built a liquefied-natural-gas terminal in breakneck speed to receive supplies from the U.S. and Qatar, as they end decades of depending on Moscow for energy sources. Dozens more terminals are slated to be built across Europe.

Rifts among Kremlin supporters

The disastrous course of Moscow's invasion, especially since the September rout in the Kharkiv region and then the ignominious retreat from occupied Kherson, has deepened divisions over the conflict among Putin's supporters.

Ukrainian missiles struck an ammunition store in a barracks housing newly conscripted troops in the Russian-controlled city of Makiivka in Donetsk Dec. 31. A massive explosion destroyed the complex.

"The number of dead and wounded runs into many hundreds," said Igor Girkin, a former Russian commander of the separatist forces in the breakaway Donetsk region of Ukraine. He complained that ammunition should never have been stored in the same building that was accommodating troops. Lawmaker Sergei Mironov demanded the prosecution of Russian authorities responsible for such conditions.

In an unprecedented admission, Moscow said there were 63 deaths. Many senior officials in the Russian military and state apparatus hope for a way out of the conflict to cut Moscow's losses, as do numerous capitalist profiteers, whose wealth has been slashed or jeopardized by the war.

Opposing them are forces demanding an escalation as the way out of the impasse. Yevgeny Prigozhin, leader of the Wagner mercenary group and Putin ally, calls for a much wider new levy of conscripts.

But Putin knows this is politically risky, as it could spark more opposition. Support for the war has already fallen, especially among relatives of conscripted soldiers and oppressed nationalities, who have been disproportionately sent to the front lines.

One obstacle to organizing working-class opposition in Russia to Putin's invasion is the economic and financial embargo imposed on the country by the U.S. and other imperialist ruling classes in Europe. Putin uses these sanctions, which fall most harshly on working people, to try to shore up his support.

"Despite a universally pro-war message on Russia's airwaves," the Moscow Times notes, "and the passage of draconian wartime censorship laws," many people across Russia have risked long jail sentences to express their opposition to the war. Almost 20,000 people were detained for anti-war protests in 2022.

Vladimir Ovchinnikov, an 84-year-old artist, painted memorials of prisoners in the Stalinist-era Gulag in Borovsk, a town 70 miles from Moscow. Now he paints anti-war murals. The authorities paint over them and have fined but not arrested him.

"How many more young people must be killed?" he asked the Moscow Times. "People in Russia used to say 'peace to the world' and 'no to war' but now such statements are punishable by law."

LETTERS

George Bryant

From his early 20s, to his death on Dec. 26 at 91 years old in a Wallaceburg, Ontario, nursing home, George Bryant was a supporter of the international communist movement and the Cuban Revolution.

In the late 1950s, George joined the Socialist Educational League in Toronto (later the League for Socialist Action, a predecessor organization of today's Communist League in Canada). One of his tasks was to collaborate with other party members who were truck drivers in work to strengthen the Teamsters union and to build a revolutionary working-class party rooted in the labor movement.

Like many other workers and youth of his generation, George was inspired by the 1959 Cuban Revolution and the renewal of communist leadership it generated.

In 1961, he and his lifelong companion, Bea Bryant, traveled to Cuba for six weeks to learn about the revolution and bring back accurate information about it to working people and youth in Canada. They were founding members of the Fair Play for Cuba Commit-

tee, which organized to get out the truth about socialist Cuba and build protests challenging Washington and Ottawa's efforts to destroy the revolution.

Bea, also a lifelong supporter of the Communist movement, died in 2016 at the age of 93.

George became a highly skilled carpenter and construction worker. In addition to using his skills to earn a living, he used them to help build the communist movement not only in Canada, but internationally.

In Toronto, Montreal, New York and other U.S. cities, he trained and helped lead teams of volunteers to build and make renovations of party headquarters and book centers, professionally, safely and within budget. When the Socialist Work-

ers Party moved its national headquarters to the Garment District in New York in 2003, George joined the construction brigade. He and his son, Dave, did the entire kitchen and book center cabinetry for the national offices and branch hall.

In 1986 George and Bea moved to Blenheim, Ontario. They often welcomed visiting members of the communist movement who needed bed and breakfast on their political travels, or simply a few days of relaxation in a beautiful setting.

In addition to good food and drink, such visits always included discussion of articles in the *Militant* or Pathfinder books. George loved to talk about his experiences in the class struggle over the years, and in particular his experiences in Cuba.

*John Steele
Montreal, Quebec*

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

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The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.