

# Cuba's aid to Africa helps spur interest in 'Militant'

BY MAGGIE TROWE

*Militant* supporters have put Cuba's volunteer medical mission to fight Ebola in Africa; the battle by Kurdish fighters in Kobani, Syria; examples of labor resistance; and the fight against police brutality at the center of their discussions as they knock on workers' doors and join in labor and social protests.

The drive to win 2,400 new and re-  
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— See page 9

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# Uranium workers win solidarity in lockout fight

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

METROPOLIS, ILL. — “Stand up! Fightback!” and “We don’t have a contract. Shut it down!” chanted hundreds of workers as they marched down a main street here on Saturday, Oct. 11.

Members of the United Steelworkers and other unionists came to this town of 6,500 in southern Illinois for a march and rally to support members of Steelworkers Local 7-669, who have been locked out by Honeywell at the company’s uranium conversion facility here since they voted Aug. 1 to reject the bosses’ union-busting contract. Participants came from towns and cities in Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska and Kentucky.

“We are not going to win this contract by talk,” Stephen Lech, president of United Steelworkers Local 7-669, told the crowd of more than 300 people. “We got unprecedented support in the last lockout. That’s what it is going to take now. Honeywell tried to destroy the union in 2011 and we survived. What the company is proposing would chop the knees out of our local and make a home for sub-  
Continued on page 9

# Cuba's 'army of white coats' leads the fight against Ebola



Bohemia/Antonio Pons

Cuban volunteers for combat against Ebola trained rigorously for weeks at Pedro Kouri Tropical Medicine Institute (above) before heading to Sierra Leone and other parts of West Africa.

BY SETH GALINSKY

A Cuban “army of white coats” is leading the battle against Ebola in West Africa. Their example of internationalist solidarity is gaining

worldwide attention and challenging the values of capitalist society.

The revolutionary Cuban government selected 461 doctors and nurses out of more than 15,000 volunteers to go to Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guin-  
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# Four days of actions in Missouri protest brutality, killings by cops



Militant/Dan Fein

Just days before weekend protests in Missouri to demand arrest of officer who killed Michael Brown in Ferguson, cop shot Vonderrit Myers Jr. in nearby St. Louis. Above, contingent of Coalition of Black Trade Unionists at Oct. 11 march in St. Louis against killings by cops.

BY JOHN HAWKINS

ST. LOUIS — Chanting “Hands up, don’t shoot” and “Mike Brown, we know your name, we won’t let you die in vain,” some 3,000 people demonstrated here Oct. 11 to demand the arrest and prosecution of police officer Darren Wilson, who gunned down the unarmed Black teenager Aug. 9 in nearby Ferguson. The action was part of four days of national protests and  
Continued on page 2

# Back Kurds in battle of Kobani and war against Islamic State!

Kurdish fighters defending Kobani, a city in northern Syria along the Turkish border, are putting up heroic resistance against Islamic State and have inspired demonstrations of

## EDITORIAL

solidarity worldwide — from cities in Turkey and a rally of 20,000 in Dusseldorf, Germany, to actions in Britain, France, Afghanistan and the U.S.

The battle for Kobani has shone  
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- Dockworkers lockout in Washington and Oregon ends
- Striking teachers in Waukegan, Illinois, march for contract



# Actions protest cop brutality

**Continued from front page**  
other activities against police brutality that drew participants from around the country.

On Oct. 8 a cop here killed 18-year-old Vonderrit Myers Jr. He was struck by seven of the 17 bullets fired at him by a yet unnamed St. Louis police officer moonlighting for a private security firm.

Myers’ killing sparked an immediate response from residents in Shaw, the predominantly Black community where he lived.

In addition to Black rights organizations, church groups and youth groups, contingents joined the march from the United Food and Commercial Workers, Communications Workers of America, Chicago Teachers Union, Service Employees International Union, Nurses United, United Electrical Workers, UNITE HERE, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and A. Philip Randolph Institute. The largest labor group was fast-food workers organizing for \$15 an hour and a union. The action was promoted by an ad by Richard Trumka, president of the AFL-CIO.

“We brought two buses from Chicago, that’s how important we think this is,” Damien Mack, a 22-year-old African-American worker at McDonald’s in Chicago, told the *Militant*. “If we bring the fight against police brutality together with the fight for \$15 and a union it will help make both more effective.”

While African-Americans made up more than half of the demonstrators, they were joined by large numbers of Caucasians, Asians and Latinos.

“Both immigrants and Blacks are targeted by local law enforcement,” Maru Mora of Latino Advocacy in Seattle said. She was marching with a group op-

posing deportation of workers and youth without papers.

“I live in Ferguson, I saw what was going on and wanted to get involved, both to express my outrage at what happened to Mike Brown and to help the young people organize peaceful, legal protests,” said John Caradine, a member of SEIU Local 1 at St. Louis-area plastics manufacturer Contico. “So I raised it with the officials of our union, others were doing the same thing. They heard us and decided to act on it.”

“In Chicago we’re fighting the same thing,” said Katie Osgood, an elementary school teacher who is Caucasian and works on Chicago’s South Side, an overwhelmingly African-American area. She was marching with fellow members of the Chicago Teachers Union. “We’re fighting for the kind of world where my students’ parents don’t have to worry about their kid not coming home alive from school because they are people of color. That’s why we’re here.”

“It’s important for organized labor to support the Black community’s call for justice for Mike Brown,” Lou Moye, president of the St. Louis Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, said. “My group sponsored the march for the same reason we joined coal miners campaigning against Peabody’s attack on union pensions a year ago — solidarity.”

Ashley Yates of Millennial Activists United and St. Louis rapper Tef Poe of the Organization for Black Struggle and Hands Up United co-chaired the Kiener Plaza rally. “A new generation is standing up and saying no matter what you do we will not bow down!” Rev. Osagyefo Sekou of the Fellowship of Reconciliation told the crowd.

Organizers of the FergusonOctober

## Cuban diplomat: We are repaying our debt to Africa



Franklin Curbelo

MINNEAPOLIS — José Ramón Cabañas, Chief of Mission of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., spoke to some 100 people Oct. 6 at St. Thomas University here as part of a four-day tour of the Twin Cities sponsored by the Minnesota International Center.

“Why are we fighting Ebola? Why are we in Africa?” asked Cabañas. “We have to offer help to the countries of Africa to repay Africa’s contribution to our culture,” he said,

referring to Cuba’s volunteer medical mission to combat Ebola in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea-Conakry. When the 2010 earthquake hit Haiti, Cabañas said, Cuban medical volunteers had already been there for years. U.S. relief workers responding to the quake left after one month, but Cuban doctors remain there today. Cabañas also spoke about economic challenges Cuba faces and the effects of the more than five-decade-long U.S. embargo, designed to impose hardship on the Cuban population.

The tour was kicked off a day earlier when Cabañas attended an Ordway Theater concert by world-renowned pianist Nachito Herrera and his orchestra. Artwork by Antonio Guerrero was featured in the lobby. Guerrero is one of five Cuban revolutionaries, known as the Cuban Five, who were framed up and jailed in 1998 by the U.S. government for the “crime” of monitoring Florida-based rightist paramilitary groups with a long history of provocations and murderous attacks against Cuba. Showings of Guerrero’s paintings depicting the Five’s experiences in prison have been used to gain support for the fight to win their freedom around the world.

During his time in Minnesota, Cabañas met with business leaders, politicians, the editorial board of the Minneapolis *Star Tribune* and addressed a group of high school students.

— HELEN MEYERS

weekend included Organization for Black Struggle, Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment, Hands Up United, CWA, American Federation of Government Employees Local 3354, Korean American Resource and Cultural Center, United for Peace and Justice and Missouri/Kansas State Council SEIU.

Later Saturday evening about 400 people marched from Canfield Drive, where the memorial marking the spot where Brown was killed still stands, to the Ferguson police headquarters, led by his mother Lesley McFadden.

Some 1,000 protesters attended an interfaith church service at St. Louis University Sunday night. Later hundreds more marched from the spot where My-

ers was killed in the Shaw neighborhood to the university, where they staged a sit-in overnight.

The national actions took place against the backdrop of continuing local protests, including an Oct. 5 action in Ferguson pressing for the arrest of Wilson, led by Brown’s father Michael Brown Sr.

Protesters and defenders of democratic rights won an important victory Oct. 6 when U.S. District Judge Catherine Perry overturned a Ferguson cop decision to force demonstrators standing on city sidewalks to move every five seconds or face arrest. Police began charging protesters Aug. 18 along West Florissant Avenue in an effort to dampen protests following the killing of Brown.

## THE MILITANT

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AP/Mitsuru Tamura

Hong Kong protest for political rights Oct. 6.

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## The Militant

Vol. 78/No. 38

Closing news date: October 15, 2014

Editor: Doug Nelson

On the Picket Line Editor: Maggie Trowe

**Editorial volunteers:** Róger Calero, Naomi Craine, Frank Forrestal, Seth Galinsky, Emma Johnson, Gerardo Sánchez, John Studer, Maggie Trowe, Brian Williams, Rebecca Williamson.

Published weekly except for one week in January, one week in June, one week in July, one week in August and one week in September.

**Business manager:** Lea Sherman  
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018. **Telephone:** (212) 244-4899  
**Fax:** (212) 244-4947  
**E-mail:** [themilitant@mac.com](mailto:themilitant@mac.com)  
**Website:** [www.themilitant.com](http://www.themilitant.com)

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

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# ‘Militant’ drive gets boost

Continued from front page

newing readers is doing well, with 1,769 subscriptions at the end of the fifth week of the seven-week drive. Workers behind bars who support the *Militant* have already surpassed their quota for the drive, with 23 subscriptions.

“Cuban doctors going to Africa are like the ones who staff the free clinics in Haiti,” Mirlande Jean-Baptiste, a Haitian-born school bus driver who is unemployed, told *Militant* supporters as they picked up a subscription after knocking on her door in Brooklyn.

Workers from across Illinois, Iowa and elsewhere joined a rally in Metropolis, Illinois, Oct. 11 to support uranium processing workers locked out by Honeywell. (See article on front page.) Eighteen people picked up subscriptions to the *Militant* from unionists there who brought the paper and helped build the

action.

“I’ve been going from work to Ferguson to protest Michael Brown’s killing since the day he was killed,” Abrahama Keys, 30, a St. Louis office worker, told Ruth Robinett, one of several *Militant* supporters from Chicago and Omaha, Nebraska, who took part in a weekend of marches and rallies in St. Louis and Ferguson, Missouri. The actions demanded the arrest and prosecution of Darren Wilson, the Ferguson cop who killed Michael Brown Aug. 9, and protested the cop killing in St. Louis of 18-year-old Vonderrit Myers, Jr. Oct. 8. (See article on front page). Keys housed five people who came to protest.

“If you return to St. Louis I’ll put you up,” Keys told Robinett, as she subscribed to the *Militant* and purchased a copy of *Voices From Prison: The Cuban Five*, one of nine books on revolutionary working-class politics on discount for subscribers. A total of 26 subscriptions and several dozen single copies of the paper, as well as six Pathfinder books, were sold at actions in Missouri over the weekend.

“We took part in the ‘Kobani Is Not Alone’ pro-Kurdish rally in front of City Hall here Oct. 12,” wrote Katy LeRougetel from Calgary, Alberta. Noting the prominent role of women fighters on the front line in Kobani, LeRougetel said, “One woman told me, ‘I’m so proud to be a woman when I see the



Leroy Watson shows *Militant* to vocational high school teacher Carolina Policarpo in Chicago Sept. 29.

Militant/Dan Fein

## Socialist candidates build, join union struggles



Militant photos: Above, Alyson Kennedy; inset, Sara Lobman

Above, John Benson, left, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Georgia, went to Metropolis, Illinois, Oct. 11-12 to join rally in support of uranium workers locked out by Honeywell and talk with workers in the area. Benson met Leonard Childress, a retired worker who spent 20 years in auto and steel plants in Chicago, and his daughter Anne Marie when he visited their neighborhood. “Somebody’s greedy,” Childress told Benson. “I think it’s probably Honeywell.”

Inset, John Studer, left, SWP candidate for governor of New York, spoke with Derwin Behling, a member of Transport Workers Union Local 101 at Brooklyn, N.Y., rally Oct. 9 organized by union against National Grid gas company’s demands for five-year wage freeze and jump in health care costs.

— ALYSON KENNEDY AND SARA LOBMAN

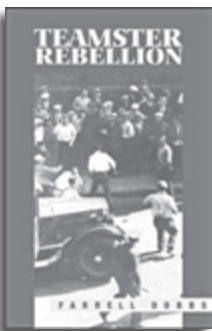
Kurds standing up!” Two people at the rally subscribed to the *Militant*.

“I’m so glad I opened my door,” Henry Shaw Jr., a unionist who works at the Philadelphia Energy Solutions chemical plant, told *Militant* supporter Chris Hoepfner. Shaw bought a subscription to the paper and a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. “Let me take some pa-

pers in to work for other guys to see,” he said.

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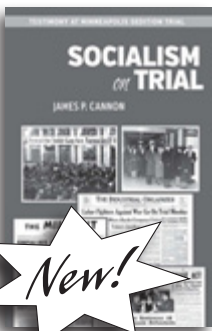


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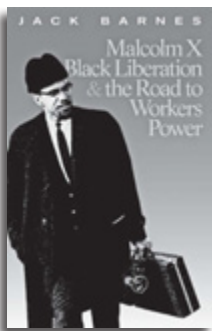
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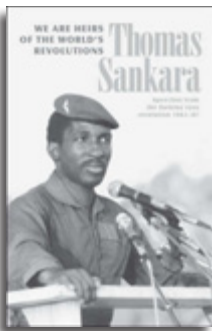
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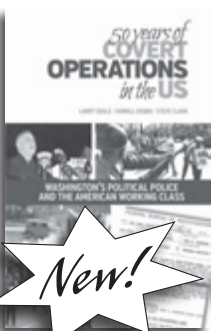
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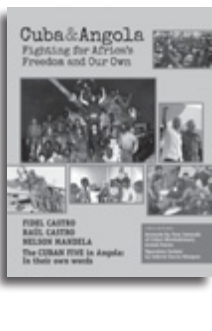
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# —ON THE PICKET LINE—

MAGGIE TROWE, EDITOR

## Editor's comments

This week's column reports on fights of bus drivers in Atlanta and Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and dockworkers in the Pacific Northwest and in Mogadishu, Somalia. These are two categories of workers the rulers have targeted for union busting, not only in the U.S. but around the world.

The *Militant* defends the interests of the working class, which has no country. It's an internationalist paper, and so is its "On the Picket Line" column, which covers workers' growing resistance, and has overflowed into a second page this week.

— Maggie Trowe

## Lockout against dockworkers in Oregon, Washington, ends

PORTLAND, Ore. — Lockouts against dockworkers at two Northwest grain terminals ended when members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union returned to work Aug. 27, after signing an agreement with the Pacific Northwest Grain Handlers Association.

ILWU members had been locked out by Columbia Grain here since April 2013. At United Grain's terminal in Vancouver, Washington, they had been locked out since February 2013 — 18 months.

The contract dispute involved four companies covered under a collective bargaining agreement between the ILWU and Pacific Northwest Grain Handlers Association. One of the companies, Temco, broke ranks with the bosses' group in 2012 and signed a separate agreement at their grain elevators in Portland and Tacoma, Washington.

The ILWU has organized work at all West Coast terminals since it won hard-fought battles in the 1930s. The union hiring halls dispatch workers to fill bosses' requests.

In the latest contract, workers pushed back the companies' demand to hire by "pre-approved lists," ILWU spokesperson Jennifer Sargent told the *Columbian*, which would have allowed bosses to essentially blacklist union fighters.

Such a list was imposed on members of ILWU Local 21 by bosses in 2011-12 during an eight-month lockout by the Export Grain Terminal in Longview, Washington. Local 21 members fought company and cop violence and frame-ups as they pushed back EGT's drive to operate its new terminal without ILWU workers.

"These multinational corporations want more and more power and must be

fought," Dan Coffman, former president of ILWU Local 21 and one of those EGT chose not to select, told the *Militant* Oct. 1. Coffman said Local 21 wants to end the list when the contract with EGT expires in two years.

The four-year contract includes a \$2 per hour wage increase. But it allows two jobs previously under union jurisdiction — the master console operator, who directs the grain flow from the ship to the terminal, and supercargos, who supervise loading and unloading of ships — to be done by company managers.

"The most important thing to me was that we retained the grievance procedures which the companies wanted to make inroads into," Cager Claybill, president of ILWU Local 4 in Vancouver, said in an interview.

The new contract was approved by 88 percent of members of five ILWU locals. These included the locals at Columbia River terminals in Portland, Vancouver and Longview, as well as those at Puget Sound terminals in Seattle and Tacoma. More than a quarter of U.S. grain exports go through those terminals.

The International Transport Workers' Federation, which includes maritime unions in a number of countries, supported the locked-out dockworkers. The captain and crew of the Ramada Queen, members of the Japanese Seamen's Union, honored the ILWU picket lines in 2013.

— Mary Martin

## Striking teachers in Waukegan, Illinois, march, gain support

WAUKEGAN, Ill. — More than 400 striking teachers, students and others marched here Oct. 8 to school administrative offices to demand a contract.

The 1,200 teachers, members of Lake County Federation of Teachers Local 504, went on strike Oct. 2 demanding a pay increase, protection of health benefits, clear anti-bullying procedures and compensation for longer workdays. Some 17,000 students attend schools affected by the strike.

"It's a shame it had to come to this, but it's awesome to be here today. It's nice to see lots of support from the community," said Tasia Fields, a teacher at Carman-Buckner Elementary School.

"Teachers are not getting a fair share," said Trishell Bardwell, the parent of an elementary school-aged student, as she held a sign supporting the strike in front of her house along the march route.

"We want a salary in-



Militant/François Bradette

**Locked-out transit workers and supporters in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, hold solidarity picket line and barbecue in front of City Hall Oct. 6, opposing lockout and bosses' attack on pensions.**

crease, better health insurance and compensation if they increase the length of the school day," said Sofia Garcia, who has been teaching for 10 years in the district.

Dozens of high school students joined the march. "Teachers are like a second family," said Brandi Armstrong, a senior at Waukegan High School Washington Campus. "I stand up for my teachers."

Mike McGue, president of the union, told the Lake County *News-Sun* that he felt "honored and humbled" by the support from parents and the community. "There's a tremendous support for teachers and I've never seen that out on the picket line. Never in my career, and I've been at this for 25 years," he said.

— Dan Fein

## Atlanta transit workers rally for contract, against outsourcing

ATLANTA — "Who moves the city? We move the city!" chanted some 150 members and retirees of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 732 as they picketed in front of the law office of Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority Chairman Robbie Ashe Oct. 6.

"We're tired of getting run over," Kenneth Clark, a 14-year city bus driver, told the *Militant*. "We haven't had a raise in years and our health care costs keep going up."

The transit workers' contract expired in June 2013. They have not had a raise since 2006, which has meant a 15 percent pay cut, according to the union.

Workers were also protesting MARTA's plans to outsource paratransit service for seniors and those with disabilities, as well as cleaning, payroll and other operations.

"They're taking, but giving nothing in return," mechanic Kimberly Hill told the *Militant*. "They always go to arbitration and it's never a win for us," she added. Hill started at MARTA as a car cleaner 21 years ago.

"MARTA plays by their own rules," said Harvey Smith, who has worked in bus maintenance for 28 years. "They feel they can do whatever, whenever. That's why I'm out here."

The workers rallied in front of a giant inflatable camel, which is used by ATU locals around the country to call attention to the workers' protests.

— Janice Lynn and Rachele Fruit

## Canadian bus drivers win solidarity in wage, pension fight

SASKATOON, Saskatchewan — City transit workers, members of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 615, held a picket line and barbecue in front of City Hall here Oct. 6. Some 300 people took part in the event, supporting the 330 locked-out workers.

Workers carried picket signs as well as union banners representing the Canadian Union of Public Employees, United Food and Commercial Workers, Firefighters and Service Employees International Union.

"Our fight is part of the fight going on across Canada and North America to defend defined benefits pension plans," said Jim Yakubowski, ATU Local 615 president. Among participants was a contingent of transit workers from Edmonton who have been working without a contract since December 2013. "Our brothers from Edmonton donated all the nourishment received today," Yakubowski said. "We certainly support everything our UFCW brothers in Martensville are going through." Thirty-four UFCW members at the oat mill there were locked out Sept. 10 in a contract dispute over wages.

Bus drivers here top out at \$23.85 per hour, less than their counterparts across the country. The union is fighting to close the gap with other western Canada transit operators, seeking raises above what the other eight Saskatoon municipal unions settled for in recent contracts.

The fight is "good bonding for us," said bus driver Daryl Strugnell, "because normally you don't get to know your co-workers that well. It's amazing what you can learn in one loop on the picket line. On Thursday, this bus shelter was packed with food. It was potluck for everybody. It was really good for morale."

The lockout began when dispatchers called in drivers from their routes at 8:30 p.m. Sept. 20, stranding passengers waiting at stops, bus driver Joji Joseph said. "We're OK to keep working and keep negotiating but the city doesn't want that."

On Sept. 22, the city council unilaterally increased the pension contributions required from ATU members, citing a deficit in the fund. The union is challenging this move in court.

Picket lines are up seven days a week in front of city hall and the downtown bus terminal.

— Katy LeRougetel

## NY gas workers prepare to battle wage freeze, health cost hike

BROOKLYN, N.Y. — Hundreds of members of Transport Workers Union Local 101 and supporters rallied for three hours in front of the National Grid gas company building in downtown Brooklyn Oct. 9. Carrying placards that read "National Greed puts profits over people" and "More work, less pay? No way," they were protesting the utility company's demand that workers agree to increase out-of-pocket expenses for

**Continued on page 5**



Militant/Janice Lynn

**Striking members of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 732 picket Oct. 6 in front of office of Robbie Ashe, chairman of Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority.**



## — ON THE PICKET LINE CONT'D —

Continued from page 4

medical, pharmacy, dental and optical services, or take a five-year wage freeze.

“Our number one issue is they want us to pay a higher deductible and then pay 40 percent of medical bills,” said William Gorman, 49.

“I’m a single parent working and raising three children,” said Eleanor Pettway, 40, a customer service representative who came out to the rally on her lunch break. “The increase in my health care annual deductible the company is proposing — from \$500 to \$2,000 — will price me out of health care.”

National Grid workers from Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island attended. Others came from Long Island, upstate New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, as well as from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Machinists and other unions, to show solidarity.

“I came out to support my brothers and sisters at National Grid because they supported us when we were locked out in 2012,” said Bob Lewis, 55, a member of Utility Workers Union of America Local 1-2, who has worked for Con Edison electric company for 30 years. The utility locked out some 8,000 workers for more than three weeks in July 2012.

Four days later a meeting attended by several hundred members voted to authorize a strike. “I hope National Grid comes to their senses,” Dave Chandler, 48, a meter reader, told the *Militant* as he came out of the meeting. “They’re making huge profits and it doesn’t trickle down.”

On Oct. 14 union officials announced that a tentative agreement had been reached.

— Maggie Trowe

### Dockworkers in Somalia fight to keep jobs

After a monthlong strike and two demonstrations of thousands of dockworkers, the Somali Stevedoring Union has won a 30-day temporary agreement from Turkish firm Al Beyrak and the Somali government that none of its 5,000 members will be laid off or have their pay slashed while negotiations continue for a permanent settlement, the union reported Oct. 9. The protest actions were the largest in Somalia in more than 23 years.

Turkish firms have contracted to rebuild and expand the Mogadishu airport and to modernize and manage the port there. Al Beyrak was awarded management rights of the port and negotiated a contract with the federal government of Somalia that unconsti-

tutionally bypassed parliament. The federal government controls Mogadishu and parts of the central and southern areas of the country, which has been embroiled in a civil war for more than two decades.

“Before this new company we earned \$6.60 for a 50-kilogram [110-lb.] load,” Yusuf Warsame Afrah, chairman of the union, told Sabahionline Oct. 2. “The company has now proposed that we should earn \$1.80, which is a rate so low that we cannot live on it.”

Al Beyrak plans to install new cranes and mechanize dock work, which would sharply reduce the labor force. Their 20-year deal grants 45 percent of profits to the Turkish bosses and 55 percent to the government. After taking control of the port Sept. 21, Beyrak bosses started to implement job and pay cuts.

“We have to unite and be a force that moves together,” Mohamed Osman, chairman of the Somali Congress of Trade Unions, told the crowd at a Sept. 23 demonstration in Mogadishu. “Turkey’s intervention and exploitation will



Thousands of port workers in Mogadishu, Somalia, march Sept. 11, one of two actions that month, to protest proposed firings and wage cuts by Turkish company managing port.

result in thousands of our port workers losing their livelihoods, and that is simply unacceptable.”

The Mogadishu port is the largest employer in Somalia, which has virtually no modern industry.

“The Somali Congress of Trade

Unions would welcome any agreement between the government and foreign firms that enhance the living standards of Somali workers, but we are against the planned job cuts because they will harm the working class,” Osman said.

— John Studer

## UK farmers fight price cuts by dairy bosses

BY PAUL DAVIES

MARKET DRAYTON, SHROPSHIRE, England — Farmers protested Oct. 6 against the squeeze on their incomes following price cuts by the big capitalist dairies. Around 400 took part, blockading the Muller Wiseman dairy plant here for three hours.

Among the participants were dairy farmers from around the Midlands and the west of England, as well as a few workers from large cattle breeding farms and some young people from the area. The action came out of a round of meetings last month called by Farmers for Action in Somerset, South Wales and Shropshire.

“Since April the price I get has fallen from 35p a liter to 28p [56 cents to 45 cents],” said Luke Neville, who owns 150 cows and some arable land he works with his father. “It means we can’t afford the necessary maintenance jobs, can’t afford to hire anyone

and are under more pressure to borrow money, and it’s even worse for other farmers that are renting land.”

Muller Wiseman has cut the price farmers receive for milk four times since April. Other major processors have also cut their prices.

“They have us under their thumbs and we have to take whatever prices they give. That’s why we’re here,” said Neville.

“I’ve had a price drop of 20 percent in the past six months,” said Stafford dairy farmer Phil Green, who has a herd of 160 cows. “When I left school [in the 1990s] there were 40,000 dairy farmers, now there’s 10,000 of us left.”

Some 400 farmers attended a Sept. 18 meeting at the Market Drayton Agricultural Centre. “Production costs have gone down slightly but nothing like the cut we’ve faced for what we produce,” Neal Sadler, who owns a

70-cow farm in Bridge Farm, Shrewsbury, told the *Militant* at the meeting. “You’re pressed to continually expand the scale of production and to take out more debt.”

“I’m here because farmers’ livelihoods are at stake,” said Alex Littler, a Shropshire veterinarian, at the meeting. “If supermarkets want to sell milk at a loss that is up to them but don’t pass that price cut onto the producers — the farmers.”

Farmers for Action leader Paul Rowbottom addressed farmers at the end of the protest at the Muller plant. “It’s good to see so many new faces. We need to keep doing this and bring others with us.”

Two nights later Farmers for Action organized a further blockade at the Morrisons distribution depot in Somerset. Farmers credit similar protests in 2012 with reversing some of the price cuts processors imposed then.

## — 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO —



October 27, 1989

SAN FRANCISCO — Tens of thousands of protesters gathered here October 15 to march and rally in support of abortion rights. Contingents came from campuses and towns throughout northern California. Buses brought marchers from Fresno, Santa Cruz, Davis and Sacramento. Others came by train from San Jose and Oakland. Some marchers came from as far away as Oregon and Washington State.

Nearly 30,000 people participated in the rally, and march organizers estimate that total participation during the day may have been higher.

In the broadest labor endorsement for an abortion rights march in this area, all seven of the San Francisco Bay Area central labor councils backed the action. One-fourth of all the endorsements came from labor organizations, including local chapters of the Coalition of Labor Union Women.



Militant/Maggie Trowe

Members of Transport Workers Union Local 101 rallied Oct. 9 in front of National Grid gas company Brooklyn office against wage freeze, proposed hike in health care costs.



October 26, 1964

As the Nov. 3 election draws near it is clearer than ever that those concerned with social progress in this country should vote for the Socialist Workers Party ticket of Clifton DeBerry for President and Edward Shaw for Vice President.

A vote for DeBerry and Shaw is a vote to end the cold war. It is a vote for an end to the arms race. It is a vote for full equality. It is a vote against the witch hunt and for civil liberties. It is a vote for U.S. friendship with the Soviet Union, China, Cuba. It is a vote of support to the colonial revolution. It is a vote for social progress. In addition, it is a vote for the great liberating ideal of socialism, for an end to the exploitation of man by man. If you believe in these things, or even in only some of them, don’t waste your vote on the Democrats & Republicans. Make your vote count. Vote DeBerry-Shaw.



October 27, 1939

Franklin Roosevelt jailed Earl Browder and it has nothing to do with passports. It is a political act.

First of all, no class-conscious workers anywhere, and least of all the revolutionary socialists, the Trotskyists, want to see Franklin Roosevelt jailing any members of a working class organization. The Communist Party is a working class organization. The Stalinists have thousands of good workers in their ranks, honest, sincere, devoted. They still have some Negroes who think that by working in the Communist Party they are working for the down-trodden.

We stand for the principle that all workers’ leaders, right or wrong, honest or corrupt, are responsible to the workers alone. And we call upon the workers to oppose Roosevelt and his capitalist gang, in any interference with the working class, even though they try to disguise it with a smoke-screen about false passports.



# Advancing Kurdish struggle rooted in history of resistance

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Over the last decade or so, the Kurds — comprising some 30 million people living in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria — have made historic gains in their fight for a homeland and against centuries of national oppression. Standing against their struggle over the last century are the imperialist powers of America and Europe, as well as the Turkish, Arab and Persian rulers of the Middle East.

The determination and growing confidence of the Kurds are among the progressive developments that mark the unraveling of the imperialist world order in the Middle East today. And the Kurdish struggle is intertwined with the fight by toilers against landlord and capitalist exploitation and imperialist domination.

The Kurds were an oppressed people under the six-century reign of the Ottoman Empire as well as the Persian rulers of modern day Iran. Starting in the mid-1800s, Kurds waged a series of wars for unification and independence from Ottoman rule, all of which were suppressed, at times with aid from European powers.

When the victorious powers of London and Paris carved up the region following World War I, the Kurdish people were denied a homeland.

In May 1916 the British and French governments signed a secret pact, known as the Sykes-Picot Agreement, to divide up the Ottoman Empire following World War I. The French rulers would take control of Syria and Lebanon and the British Iraq and Palestine.

Four years later the Treaty of Sèvres was drawn up to dissolve the Ottoman Empire. While backing the British and French land grab, the treaty promised the creation of a Kurdish state. But it was never implemented.

Instead, London, Paris and Ankara in July 1923 signed the Treaty of Lausanne that carved up the Ottoman Empire, recognized Turkey as an independent nation and kept the Kurds divided within the imperialist-drawn borders of Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Iran.

“The country of the Kurds, known since the XIIth century by the name ‘Kurdistan,’ found itself divided between four states,” wrote Kendal Nezan, president of the Kurdish Institute of Paris. And for the first time, “it was even to be deprived of its cultural au-

tonomy.”

Since the end of World War I, governments in the region imposed laws to brutally suppress Kurdish culture and national identity. Publicly speaking, writing, or conducting classes in the Kurdish language, for example, were banned. Some Kurds were deported or forced to resettle in other areas in an attempt to scatter the Kurdish population. Delegated to second-class status, many were denied citizenship and faced repression and discrimination.

Today, Kurds in much of the region comprise a disproportionate number of workers in the lowest-paid and most arduous jobs, such as agricultural labor and construction.

Following World War I Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was leading a fight for an independent Turkish republic. His forces overthrew the Ottoman Sultanate in 1922 and he became the country’s first president the following year. As these battles were getting underway, Atatürk appealed to and won support from the Kurds. The first forces of Turkey’s war of independence were recruited from the Kurdish provinces.

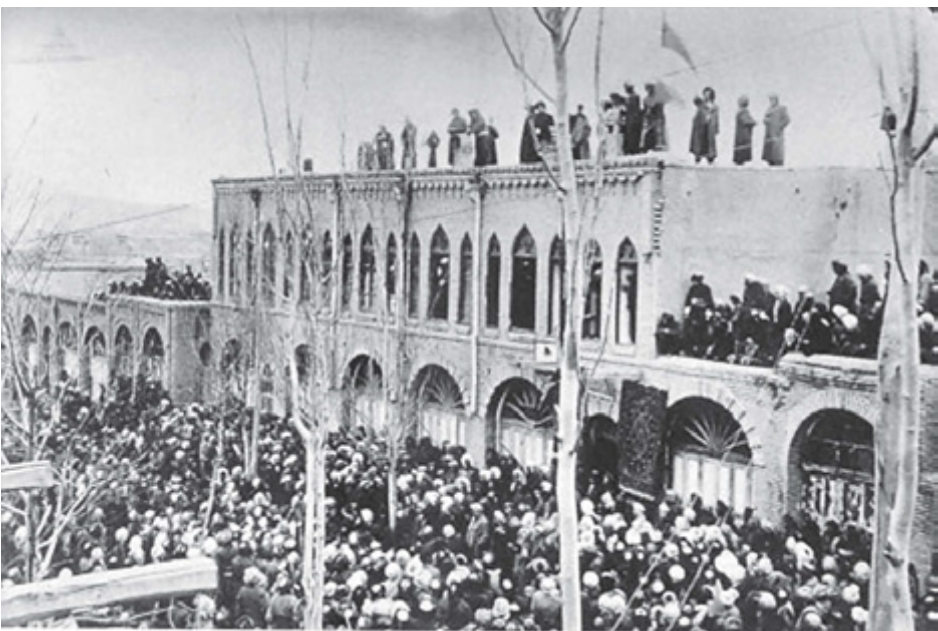
Upon taking power, however, Atatürk turned against the Kurds, denying autonomy and implementing a series of discriminatory measures that included prohibiting the teaching or speaking of the Kurdish language in public places. The Turkish rulers designated them “Mountain Turks,” officially denying their existence as a distinct people.

Rebellions against the Turkish government’s treatment of Kurds continued over the next couple of decades, including a 1925 uprising of 15,000 led by Sheikh Said and a 1937-38 rebellion in the Kurdish district of Dersim (currently called Tunceli) in eastern Turkey. Both were brutally suppressed.

## Kurds revolt in Iraq

In Iraq, where the British in 1921 put in power the pro-imperialist monarchy of King Faisal, Kurds fought battles for their own homeland. In 1923, former Kurdish Gov. Sheikh Mahmud Barzinji led an uprising against British rule, declaring a Kurdish kingdom in Sulaimaniya in northern Iraq. The following year British forces crushed the revolt, retaking Sulaimaniya.

From 1943-45, in the midst of World War II, a Kurdish revolt led by Mustafa



For decades, Kurds have resisted political and cultural repression by capitalist rulers of Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey, as well as efforts by imperialist powers to undermine their fight for a homeland. Above, celebration of short-lived Kurdish state in Mahabad, Iran, January 1946.

Barzani gained control of areas of Erbil and Badinan. The British Royal Air Force assisted the Iraqi Army in defeating the uprising. Kurdish rebels retreated into Iran where they joined Kurds fighting for an independent state.

In 1946 in Iran the Kurdish Republic of Mahabad under the leadership of Qazi Mohammed was established near the Iraqi border. The democratic revolutionary government there sought to implement a program that included a plan for agricultural, industrial and social development, and the right to elect representatives, run their own affairs and study in Kurdish. It proclaimed fraternity with the Azerbaijani people and other oppressed nationalities and called for greater rights for peasants and freedom of political action for all the people of Iran.

## Stalinist betrayal

At the time Soviet forces were occupying the area. The Mahabad Republic lasted for 10 months until the Soviet regime of Joseph Stalin withdrew its troops and refused to provide the Kurds with adequate weapons. Tehran, backed by Washington and London, then overthrew the Kurdish republic and executed its leaders.

In 1958 a mass popular revolution overthrew the British-backed monarchy in Iraq, opening new opportunities for struggle by workers, farmers and oppressed people there. A new Iraqi constitution drawn up that year recognized Kurdish national rights. But the new government continued attacks on the Kurds. Baghdad banned the Kurdish Democratic Party after quelling a Kurdish rebellion in 1961.

In 1970 the Baathist Party government of President Saddam Hussein signed a cease-fire with Kurdish leaders and in 1974 imposed a draft autonomy agreement on the Kurds with the oilfields of Kirkuk left under Iraqi government control. The law was never implemented.

Kurds in the mid-1970s secured a large self-governing area in northern Iraq. For a short period of time it was backed by the Shah of Iran, who nonetheless continued to brutally suppress the Kurdish struggle in Iran, and by the governments of Israel and the U.S. In 1975 the three governments reversed their support. The Iraqi army went back in and more than 100,000 Kurds fled the region. Hussein started bombing Kurdish villages that year, destroying an estimated 5,000 by 1980.

In Iran, the massive mobilizations of working people resulting in the 1979 revolution that overthrew the U.S.-

backed monarchy of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi created new openings for Kurds. Kurdish civilians took control of military garrisons, weapons stockpiles and gendarmerie outposts. The Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) held public news conferences for the first time in 30 years, promoting formation of a federal republic of Kurdistan within Iran. But as Ayotollah Khomeini consolidated control over a new capitalist government, repressive measures were again imposed on the Kurds.

Beginning in 1980 the Iraqi regime of Hussein with Washington’s backing launched an eight-year war aimed at rolling back the Iranian revolutionary victory of workers and farmers. Some 1 million Iranians were hit by chemical weapons launched by the Iraqi regime, killing an estimated 10,000 to 20,000 people and sickening 100,000.

In 1988 Washington began supplying Baghdad with detailed targeting information used to bombard Iranian troops with sarin gas, according to an August 2013 *Foreign Policy* magazine article.

That year, Iraqi forces launched Operation Anfal, which targeted Kurdish villages, including Halabja in northern Iraq, with sarin, VX and mustard gas. Tens of thousands of Kurdish civilians and fighters were killed and hundreds of thousands forced into exile. In Halabja alone there were some 5,000 deaths and 10,000 injured.

In Turkey, the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) opened armed struggle in 1984 that lasted nearly three decades. Ankara unleashed brutal repression against the Kurdish population, killing tens of thousands. PKK has been brand-

Continued on next page



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Washington's assault on Iraq  
**OPENING GUNS OF  
WORLD WAR III**  
by Jack Barnes

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1945: WHEN U.S. TROOPS  
SAID 'NO!' by Mary Alice Waters

7 SPECIAL WAR ISSUE

## Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq by Jack Barnes

“The Kurdish people have come to the center stage in world politics as never before, not primarily as victims, but as courageous and determined fighters for national rights. ... The U.S. rulers have alternately doled out aid with an eyedropper to Kurdish nationalist groups, and then abruptly cut off this backing, depending on Washington’s shifting relations with regimes in the area.” — Jack Barnes.

In *New International* no. 7,  
a magazine of Marxist politics and theory

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by Samad Sharif

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# History of Kurds' fight

**Continued from previous page**  
ed a terrorist organization by Washington from 1997 to this day.

In 1990-91 U.S.-led forces carried out a bloody assault on Iraq and expelled Iraqi forces from Kuwait. Following Baghdad's defeat, both Shiites in the south and Kurds in the northeast rebelled. In two weeks Kurdish militias gained control of Iraqi Kurdistan, including the oil-rich city of Kirkuk. Then Washington and its imperialist allies watched as Iraqi troops brutally crushed the uprisings. Turkey closed its border to some 2 million fleeing Kurds, who took refuge in the mountains.

At the same time, a no-fly zone imposed over Kurdish territory by Washington, London and Paris gave some breathing room for the Kurds in Iraq — the most significant unintended consequence of the imperialist war. Over the ensuing years, Kurds consolidated control over their lands and carved out an autonomous Kurdish region with an elected government.

Washington's second invasion of Iraq and overthrow of Hussein in 2003 marked a turning point in advancing the Kurds' struggle for a homeland. The autonomous Kurdish region in northern Iraq under the Kurdish Regional Government increasingly carries out its

own foreign policy and trade independent of Baghdad.

The Kurdish Peshmerga in Iraq has become the best-trained and organized military force in the country. And Peshmerga units — like the PKK and other Kurdish militias in the region — are distinguished by a substantial component of combat troops who are women.

The establishment of an autonomous Kurdistan in Iraq has also laid the basis for economic development, the expansion of a Kurdish capitalist class and an opening of space for workers, farmers and women to organize and advance their interests. This includes a renewed union movement to challenge the bosses and repressive labor laws inherited from the Hussein government, as well as reach out to fellow unionists who are Arab across Iraq.

In 2013 Ankara agreed to a cease-fire with the PKK and began easing repressive anti-Kurdish laws and policies, a concession dubbed the "Kurdish initiative" by the government of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Turkey has also become the main trading partner



Reuters/Osman Orsal

**Growing support for Kurdish rights in Turkey has coincided with an increase in social struggles and working-class resistance in the country. Above, Kurds protest in Diyarbakir, Turkey, Oct. 9 over refusal of Turkish government to allow arms and reinforcements to Kurdish forces defending Kobani from Islamic State in Syria.**

of Iraqi Kurdistan. Some 1,200 Turkish companies are operating there.

A demonstration in Istanbul, Turkey, in June 2013 by thousands of Kurds and other working people protesting the killing of 18-year-old Kurd Medeni Yildirim by police shows the growing confidence of the Kurdish masses and sympathy for their national struggle among workers, farmers and middle class layers in Turkey.

In Syria, where more than 2 million Kurds have been fighting decades of

mistreatment under Baathist party regimes of Hafez al-Assad and Bashar al-Assad, Kurdish forces have taken control of their lands in northeastern Syria, referred to by Kurds as Rojava (Western Kurdistan), and stood their ground against repeated assaults by Islamic State and other reactionary formations.

As this fight unfolds, the growing struggles of millions of Kurdish working people will inspire and open new doors for toilers across the Middle East and beyond.

## Solidarity with Kurds combating Islamic State in Kobani, Syria

**Continued from front page**  
a spotlight on the imperialist character of Washington's escalating war in Iraq and Syria, as well as the capacities of the Kurds, who have a long record of struggle against oppression by the capitalist rulers of Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria.

Islamic State launched its bid to take Kobani Sept. 15, planning a short campaign with boasts of celebrating Eid al-Adha Oct. 4 in the city's mosques. For weeks, U.S. officials and the big-business press have been shedding crocodile tears over the imminent fall of Kobani and coming slaughter of Kurds, including thousands of trapped civilians.

Kurdish forces are outnumbered by more than 3-1. With light arms they are facing down an army outfitted with tanks and heavily artillery. Yet more than a month later Kurdish militias, organized by the Committees for Protection of the Kurdish People (YPG), have

held their own against Islamic State, which is said to control about a third of the city.

Kobani is surrounded by thousands of Islamic State fighters to the east, south and west. To the north, the Turkish government has amassed troops along its border and is preventing thousands of Kurds who are clamoring to join the fight from entering the embattled city. Meanwhile, Islamic State has been reinforcing its position with additional troops and arms.

Ankara's refusal to let Kurds enter Kobani through the Turkish border has led to protests by Kurds in 35 Turkish provinces. Turkish authorities responded with a brutal crackdown. As of Oct. 10, more than three dozen people were killed, hundreds injured and more than 1,000 arrested, according to the Turkish *Hurriyet Daily News*.

On Oct. 14, Turkish warplanes dropped bombs on the southeastern Turkish town of Daglica, targeting members of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), after the group traded gunfire with Turkish troops. The PKK carried out a three-decade armed struggle for Kurdish rights and greater autonomy in Turkey. More than 40,000 people died in the bloody conflict that ended with a cease-fire in 2013. The PKK — which is branded as a "terrorist" organization by Ankara, Washington and European Union governments — has ties to the YPG in Syria.

"There is no tragedy in Kobani," an unnamed deputy chair of the governing Justice and Development Party in Turkey told BBC. "There is war between two terrorist groups."

"Kobani does not define the strategy of the coalition," Secretary of State John Kerry told the press in Cairo Oct. 12. "Kobani is one community, and it's a tragedy what is happening there, and we don't diminish that. ... Meanwhile,

ISIL [Islamic State] has the opportunity to take advantage of that particular buildup."

While not a strategic priority, the U.S. rulers would prefer not to see Kobani fall into the hands of Islamic State and U.S. warplanes have recently been stepping up airstrikes against IS positions around the city. But it's hard to see how the Kurds are going to get what they need — more arms and a way for volunteer combatants to join the fight.

The Kurds and their ongoing struggle represent a major obstacle to Islamic State, as well as to the interests of the traditional propertied rulers of the region and the imperialist powers of America and Europe.

This is the source of the dilemma over Kobani. If Islamic State takes the city, it will strengthen their position. A Kurdish victory in Kobani would galvanize the Kurdish struggle. But whether Kobani stands or falls over the coming period,

the fight by Kurds is just beginning.

One dynamic of the Kurds' decades-long struggle and potential impact on the region is obvious to working people who catch footage or photos of Kurdish combatants. You can hardly find one that doesn't include women. Across northern Syria, for example, women comprise more than one-third of Kurdish forces. And this image alone strikes fear into the hearts of many more than the reactionary followers of Islamic State and al-Qaeda groups.

The war being waged by Kurdish combatants against Islamic State, as well as the Kurdish people's fight against discrimination and national oppression, deserves the support of working people the world over. They are part of the broader struggle to strengthen the confidence, solidarity and combativity of workers, farmers, women and oppressed people throughout the region.



### Los Angeles protest calls for solidarity with Kobani



Militant/Nick Castle

LOS ANGELES — Supporters of Kurds defending the embattled city of Kobani from Islamic State protested outside the federal building here Oct. 12. Some 75 participants denounced the Turkish government's refusal to allow aid to reach Kurdish combatants and called for solidarity with the people of Kobani.

— NORTON SANDLER



# ‘Defending environment is above all a political battle’

*The Spanish edition of We Are Heirs of the World’s Revolutions is one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month. The book contains speeches by Thomas Sankara, central leader of the popular democratic revolution in Burkina Faso from 1983 to 1987. This excerpt is from a 1986 speech at the International Conference for the Protection of Trees and Forests, in Paris. Under Sankara’s leadership, the peasants and workers established a popular revolutionary government and began to plant trees, sink wells, build housing, carry out a literacy campaign and immunization drive, fight the oppression of women and eliminate the oppressive class relations on the land. Copyright © 2002 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

### THOMAS SANKARA

My homeland, Burkina Faso, is without question one of the rare countries on this planet justified in calling itself and viewing itself as a distillation of all the natural evils from which mankind still suffers at the end of this twentieth century.

Eight million Burkinabè have painfully internalized this reality for twenty-three years. They have watched their mothers, fathers, daughters, and sons die, with hunger, famine, disease, and



Militant/Marla Puziss

**“Struggle to defend the trees and forests is above all a struggle against imperialism. Because imperialism is the arsonist setting fire to our forests and savannas,” said Thomas Sankara, above, right, leader of 1983-87 revolution in West African country of Burkina Faso.**

ignorance decimating them by the hundreds. With tears in their eyes, they have watched ponds and rivers dry up. Since 1973 they have seen the environment deteriorate, trees die, and the desert invade with giant strides. It is estimated that the desert in the Sahel advances at the rate of seven kilometers per year.

Only by looking at these realities can one understand and accept the legitimate revolt that was born, that matured over a long period of time, and that finally erupted in an organized way the night of August 4, 1983, in the form of a democratic and popular revolution in Burkina Faso.

Here I am merely the humble spokesperson of a people who, having passively watched their natural environment die, refuse to watch themselves die. Since August 4, 1983, water, trees, and lives — if not survival itself — have been fundamental and sacred elements in all action taken by the National Council of the Revolution, which leads Burkina Faso. ...

I have come to join with you in deploring the harshness of nature. But I have also come to denounce the ones whose selfishness is the source of his fellow man’s misfortune. Colonial plunder has

decimated our forests without the slightest thought of replenishing them for our tomorrows.

The unpunished disruption of the biosphere by savage and murderous forays on the land and in the air continues. One cannot say too much about the extent to which all these machines that spew fumes spread carnage. Those who have the technological means to find the culprits have no interest in doing so, and those who have an interest in doing so lack the technological means. They have only their intuition and their innermost conviction.

We are not against progress, but we do not want progress that is anarchic and criminally neglects the rights of others. We therefore wish to affirm that the battle against the encroachment of the desert is a battle to establish a balance between man, nature, and society. As such it is a political battle above all, and not an act of fate.

The creation of a Ministry of Water as a complement to the Ministry of the Environment and Tourism in my country demonstrates our desire to clearly formulate the problems in order to be able to resolve them. We must fight to find the financial means to exploit our

existing water resources — drilling operations, reservoirs, and dams. This is the place to denounce the one-sided contracts and draconian conditions imposed by banks and other financial institutions that doom our projects in this field. It is these prohibitive conditions that lead to our countries’ traumatizing debt and eliminate any meaningful maneuvering room.

Neither fallacious Malthusian arguments — and I assert that Africa remains an underpopulated continent — nor the vacation resorts pompously and demagogically christened “reforestation operations” provide an answer. We and our misery are spurned like bald and mangy dogs whose lamentations and cries disturb the peace and quiet of the manufacturers and merchants of misery.

That is why Burkina has proposed and continues to propose that at least 1 percent of the colossal sums of money sacrificed to the search for cohabitation with other stars and planets be used, by way of compensation, to finance projects to save trees and lives. We have not abandoned hope that a dialogue with the Martians might lead to the reconquest of Eden. But in the meantime, earthlings that we are, we also have the right to reject a choice limited simply to the alternatives of hell or purgatory.

Explained in this way, our struggle for the trees and forests is first and foremost a democratic and popular struggle. Because a handful of forestry engineers and experts getting themselves all worked up in a sterile and costly manner will never accomplish anything! Nor can the worked-up consciences of a multitude of forums and institutions — sincere and praiseworthy though they may be — make the Sahel green again, when we lack the funds to drill wells for drinking water a hundred meters deep, while money abounds to drill oil wells three thousand meters deep!

As Karl Marx said, those who live in a palace do not think about the same things, nor in the same way, as those who live in a hut. This struggle to defend the trees and forests is above all a struggle against imperialism. Because imperialism is the arsonist setting fire to our forests and our savannas.

### October BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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by Thomas Sankara

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# Uranium workers rally

Continued from front page contractors.”

When Local 7-669 refused to accept a union-busting contract in June 2010 they were locked out for 14 months. The uranium workers organized solidarity rallies and reached out to other workers engaged in strikes and lockout battles, and returned to work in August 2011, having beat back most of the bosses’ concession demands and without one worker crossing the picket line.

Honeywell bosses want to contract out 100 jobs, which would leave only 44 union jobs. “The company has said they also want 28 maintenance jobs for us to go back to work,” said Lech. “We told them that these jobs are not for sale.”

“Honeywell is not interested in negotiating or talking. We have to take action,” Carol Landry, Steelworkers international vice president at-large, told the rally.

“I got a long ride from Skokie because I wanted to be here with you guys because I think we are part of the same fight,” Augusto Rafusto, a member of Teamsters Local 705, said at the rally. Local 705 members are on strike against Golan’s Moving and Storage in Skokie, Illinois, about 380 miles from here.

“We have been on strike since July 28,” said Rafusto. “We work for an employer that does not treat us well. We break our backs, legs and arms and there is no medical coverage, nothing. I invite you to come walk the picket line in Skokie. ... Workers at Honeywell you will win.”

A contingent of seven people came from Keokuk, Iowa, including four members of the Steelworkers and a member of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union.

Members of BCTGM Local 48G who work for Roquette America were also locked out in 2010-11. “We found out about the Steelworkers’ lockout on Facebook and invited them to our rally,” said Buddy Howard, who was part of the fight against Roquette America. “They came and we went to their rallies too.”

“When workers need help we’ll come running,” said Tim Wilson, a member of Steelworkers Local 3311 who works at Keokuk Steel Castings.

Other speakers included Steelworkers District Director Mike Millsap; Mayor Billy McDaniel; Eric Thorsland, Democratic Party candidate for 15th Congressional District in Illinois; Rachel Spence, a locked-out Honeywell worker; and Bill Londrigan, president of the Kentucky AFL-CIO.

“I came today because I have always been strong union,” Arvella Swayne a member of Steelworkers Local 1011 and a crane operator at Arcelor Mittal steel mill in northwest Indiana, told the *Militant*. “Benefits, wages all of those things are because of the union. Unity and solidarity are important today.”

“We keep the picket lines up 24/7,” said Richard Mumford, a locked-out member of Local 7-669. “After we went back to work in 2011, they walked everyone out of the plant one day charging that we sabotaged the plant. I was



Militant/Laura Anderson

Hundreds of workers rallied Oct. 11 in Metropolis, Illinois, in solidarity with uranium workers locked out by Honeywell after voting Aug. 1 to reject company’s union-busting contract.

then laid off for another nine months. When we went back, anyone who made the slightest mistake got fired.”

In a grassy area by the road in front of the plant, the workers have placed

83 white hard hats to stand for the jobs lost during the 2010-11 lockout and 100 blue hard hats for the additional union jobs that are now on the chopping block.

## Cuba’s ‘army of white coats’ leads Ebola fight

Continued from front page ea-Conakry to save lives and fight the deadly epidemic. The first contingent of 165 arrived in Sierra Leone Oct. 2.

“The battle is here,” one Cuban health worker told the press when he stepped onto the tarmac.

At a welcoming ceremony with Sierra Leone President Ernest Koroma and other government officials, Cuban Ambassador Jorge Lefebre Nicolás said that the volunteers would stay “as long as it takes to contain the disease.”

Two days later an advance team arrived in Liberia to prepare the way for 50 Cuban doctors and nurses.

Cuba’s medical contingent fighting Ebola is far larger than that of any other country in the world.

The scope and decisive character of Cuba’s response stunned the big-business press in the U.S.

“Cuban Doctors at the Forefront of Ebola Battle in Africa,” a front-page headline in the Oct. 9 *Wall Street Journal* read. The United Nations “is calling for nations to dispatch doctors and nurses to West Africa, where thousands of lives are on the line,” the *Journal* said. “Few have heeded the call, but one country has responded in strength: Cuba.”

“In the Medical Response to Ebola, Cuba Is Punching Far Above Its Weight,” read a *Washington Post* headline Oct. 4.

Cuba’s aid is the opposite of charity.

The Cubans are motivated by a deep sense of solidarity that flows from the moral values of their revolution, which put workers and farmers in power. From the first days of the revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in 1959, Cuban working people have prided themselves on a foreign policy guided by proletarian internationalism — from medical assistance to military aid for liberation movements around the world.

The fight against Ebola “is carried out under the principle that we don’t give what we have left over; we share what we have,” Cuba’s Public Health Minister Roberto Morales said at a Sept. 12 press conference in Geneva that announced Cuba’s plans.

### 4,000 Cuba volunteers in Africa

Even before the arrival of the reinforcements for the fight against Ebola, Cuba had more than 4,000 health workers in 32 African countries

The spread of Ebola in West Africa is largely a consequence of economic and social underdevelopment. Liberia has just 51 doctors for its 4.3 million people and one hospital bed for every five Ebola patients. Sierra Leone has just 120 doctors for 6 million people. Guinea-Conakry, with 1.2 million people, has 120 doctors.

The flood of Ebola cases has overwhelmed the existing hospitals and

clinics, often paralyzing medical treatments for other diseases like cholera, malaria, tuberculosis and AIDS that are epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa.

Shortages of protective equipment and lack of proper sanitation and sewage disposal are widespread. And a combination of border closures, quarantines of working-class neighborhoods and the toll of the disease in agricultural areas has begun to cause food shortages. In Sierra Leone, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that up to 40 percent of farms in the areas hardest hit by Ebola have been abandoned.

While France-based Doctors Without Borders has some 250 international health workers in West Africa, governments with the greatest resources have sent very few medical personnel.

China has 23 health workers at an Ebola treatment ward and blood-testing lab in Liberia and says it will be sending 170 more. Japan is sending \$40 million but no personnel. The French government is planning to operate a 50-bed clinic in Guinea staffed by 15 French medical workers. Washington is sending 4,000 soldiers to ostensibly build clinics, but no doctors or nurses to staff them. London is sending 750 people to build clinics in Liberia and Sierra Leone, but “it isn’t clear who will staff the clinics,” the *Journal* reported.

The number of new Ebola cases continues to increase exponentially, roughly doubling every three to four weeks. As of Oct. 8, the World Health Organization reports there were 8,399 cases of Ebola and more than 4,000 deaths since the outbreak began.

Meanwhile, U.S. investors are mulling over which stocks to buy and which to sell to cash in on the crisis. In Marketwatch.com Oct. 13, Nigam Arora warns that buying “Ebola stocks” in companies developing drugs to treat or prevent the disease are “a bad investment because even if there is a successful drug, after the initial stockpiling the market size is limited.” If investing in personal protection equipment, he says, stick with “well-recognized brand names.”

In a column by Fidel Castro published in the Oct. 7 issue of *Granma*, the Cuban revolutionary leader said “the heroic action of the army of white coats will occupy one of the highest places of honor.”

## Contributions from workers needed to help build communist movement

BY TED LEONARD

Lincoln, Nebraska, joined the weekly scoreboard of the SWP Party-Building Fund this week with a \$150 quota.

“Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party here are joining with others to contribute as more workers and working farmers are getting involved and seeing the interconnections of new labor resistance and social protest,” writes Joe , a leader of the SWP in the Upper Midwest. “The Party-Building Fund is essential to finance the expanding activity of communist workers along with others who look to the *Militant*, involving ourselves in union struggles and social protests that are deeply affecting the labor movement.

Party-Building Fund Week 4			
Area	Quota	Collected	%
Atlanta	\$8,600	\$4,108	48%
Boston*	\$3,750	\$1,485	40%
Chicago*	\$10,000	\$4,180	42%
San Francisco	\$14,000	\$4,825	34%
Los Angeles	\$8,000	\$2,745	34%
Seattle	\$7,600	\$2,225	29%
Miami	\$2,800	\$810	29%
Brooklyn	\$10,000	\$2,255	23%
Nebraska*	\$3,350	\$1,069	32%
Lincoln*	\$150	\$75	50%
Omaha*	\$3,200	\$994	31%
Washington, DC	\$7,800	\$1,565	20%
Philadelphia	\$4,200	\$660	16%
New York	\$10,000	\$990	10%
Twin Cities	\$5,000	\$795	16%
Houston	\$3,300	\$270	8%
Other		\$400	
Total	\$98,400	\$28,382	28%
Should Be	\$100,000	\$500,000	50%
* raised goal			