

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Fight against ban on 'Militant' at Attica wins support

— PAGE 7

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 80/NO. 45 NOVEMBER 28, 2016

Moscow, Assad unleash new assault against people of Syria

BY MARK THOMPSON

Moscow and the dictatorial regime of Bashar al-Assad in Damascus began a new wave of murderous airstrikes and a ground offensive in Syria Nov. 15. Assad and his allies seek to crush insurgents who arose after his regime put down in blood popular protests for political rights in 2011.

Syrian jets pounded anti-Assad rebels in the eastern neighborhoods of the city of Aleppo, while Russian jets hit the nearby provinces of Idlib and Homs. The assault included planes from Russia's single aircraft carrier, which arrived earlier this month, part of an eight-ship Russian naval force in the Mediterranean Sea off Syria's coast.

Moscow and Damascus had announced a pause in airstrikes on eastern Aleppo Oct. 18, following a monthlong intense bombardment that killed hundreds and caused massive destruction. The regime warned residents in eastern Aleppo by text message Nov. 13 to flee "within 24 hours" before the "planned strategic offensive" was launched. Unable to sus-

Continued on page 9

NY meetings campaign for freedom for Oscar López

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK — Clarisa López, daughter of Puerto Rican political prisoner and *independentista* Oscar López Rivera, kicked off a four-day tour to New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts Nov. 10. "I need your help to win my father's release from prison," she told students at the largest of three meetings at Hostos Community College here.

Her tour promoted the new book *Cartas a Karina*, a collection of 19 letters by Oscar López to Clarisa's daughter Karina. López, now 73, has been jailed in the United States for more than 35 years.

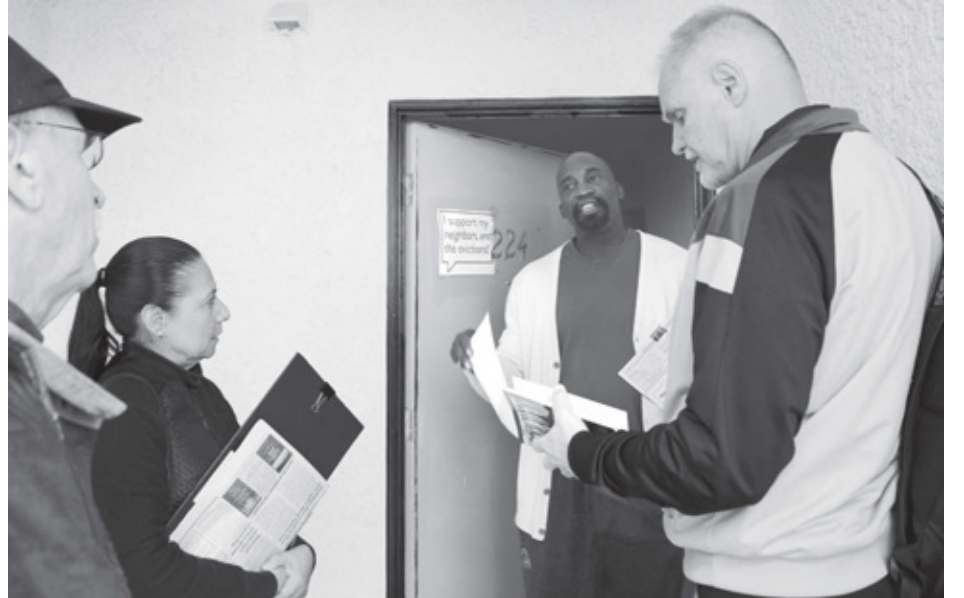
The story of his political awakening after being drafted into the U.S. Army in June 1965 and sent to Vietnam, his steadfast commitment to the fight of the Puerto Rican people against colonial rule, and his outrage over the inhumane treatment of fellow prisoners by the U.S. "justice" system are eloquently captured in the pages of the book.

Nearly 100 people listened as professors and students read several of the letters aloud at the Hostos meeting. Professor Ana López, who chaired, said that now is a good time to step up the pressure on President Barack Obama to commute López's sentence.

Continued on page 9

Socialist Workers Party: 'Our party is your party!'

Trump victory registers crisis of bosses' parties



Militant/Deborah Liatos

Dennis Richter, right, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Los Angeles, talks with Lanardo Conn Nov. 20 at Marmion Royal apartments, where residents are fighting huge rent increases and evictions. From left are fellow SWP members Anthony Dutrow and Ellie García.

SWP launches campaign for mayor of Los Angeles

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

LOS ANGELES — "There are two classes and three parties in this country," Dennis Richter told working people here Nov. 20 as the Socialist Workers Party launched his campaign for mayor. "The propertied ruling families have the Democrats and Republicans. The working class has the Socialist Workers Party."

Richter, 67, is a factory worker and longtime fighter for workers' rights and unionization. He was joined by

Continued on page 4

2016: Most important US election in 100 years

BY NAOMI CRAINE

The November 2016 U.S. presidential election was the most significant in more than a century. It registered the blows that have been dealt since the 2008-09 world capitalist financial crisis to the stability of the two-party system through which the U.S. capitalist class has long governed. Both the Republican and Democratic parties are being deeply shaken.

Underlying the crisis of banking and money capital are decades of

Continued on page 3

Special feature:

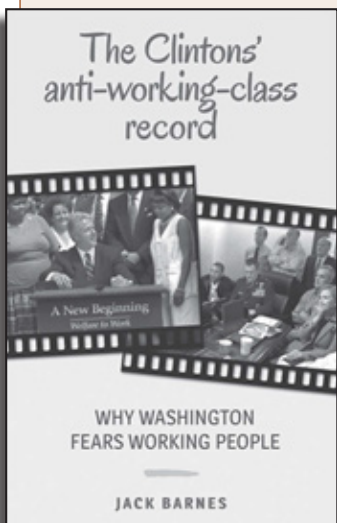
Thomas Sankara 'set example for Africa and the world'

— See pages 6-7

It's their system that's deplorable, not us!

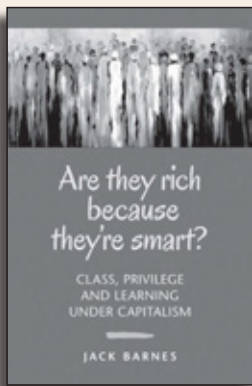
Three books for today's deepening debate among working people looking for a way forward in face of capitalism's global economic crisis, social calamity and spreading wars.

SPECIAL OFFER \$5! The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record

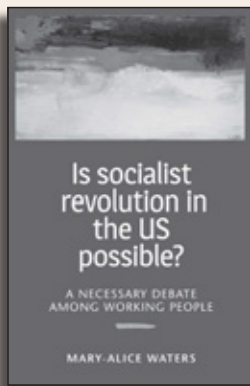


Coming soon in Spanish

Contact Socialist Workers Party or Communist League nearest you. See directory on page 8.



Also in Spanish, French



Also in Spanish

Are They Rich Because They're Smart? and Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible? \$7 each or \$5 each with a subscription to the Militant.

You can join us to make 2016 SWP Party-Building Fund!

BY EMMA JOHNSON

The drive to raise \$100,000 for the Socialist Workers Party-Building Fund is going into its final three weeks with \$54,387 collected so far. The challenge now is to get the final pledges and payments in by the Dec. 7 deadline.

Talking with workers door to door across the country, party members find an eagerness for discussion about how the capitalist crisis is affecting working people, what the outcome of the 2016 presidential elections will mean for the working class and to learn more about the SWP.

Many decide to get books about the party's program and subscriptions to the *Militant* newspaper. And some kick in a donation to help the work of the SWP.

In Seattle, party members picked up several contributions of \$5, \$10 and \$25 on workers' doorsteps over the past few weeks. Colleen Malone and her daughter Kelly both decid-

ed to contribute after inviting party member John Naubert in for a discussion Nov. 9.

Colleen Malone works in a center for homeless people and had signed

Continued on page 3

Inside

Editorial: Join 'Militant' fight against Attica ban! 9

Foes of Brexit use courts to challenge referendum vote 2

Protests in Hong Kong hit Beijing ban on legislators 4

—On the picket line, p. 5—

5,000 protest sentences dealt to French Goodyear tire unionists

Momentive workers strike over concession demands

Foes of Brexit use courts to challenge referendum vote

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — Opponents of the majority vote for Brexit in the June 23 referendum here have decided the courts and the two parliamentary chambers, the House of Commons and House of Lords, should have control of the issue as opposed to the more than 30 million people who took part in the vote.

Taking advantage of a loophole — that the referendum did not contain language specifically denoting the vote as binding — a three-judge panel of the High Court ruled Nov. 3 that the government can’t initiate the process of leaving the EU without parliamentary approval. An appeal by the Conservative Party government, which had planned to trigger Article 50 starting the Brexit process by March 2017, will received an expedited hearing by the Supreme Court next month.

The High Court action was brought by Gina Miller, who describes herself as an “ethical” financial services manager working with hedge funds and asset managers. She has said that the 52 percent referendum majority for Brexit made her “physically sick.” Her legal challenge was joined by other actions against invoking Brexit, including a group called the “People’s Challenge to Article 50,” which is organizing “crowd funding” for the action.

Many liberal meritocratic opponents of Brexit — like their counterparts in the U.S. horrified at Donald Trump’s election — blame working people, saying they’re “stupid” and their votes should count less than those of more educated and enlightened people.

Another legal challenge to aspects of Brexit is one brought by Sinn Fein, the Social Democratic and Labour Party, the Alliance Party and the Green Party, seeking to give the Northern Ireland Assembly a veto over the break with the EU in the Six Counties. Rejected by the High Court in Belfast, the plaintiffs are appealing to the Supreme Court. And the Scottish National Party is pushing for similar powers for the Scottish Parliament.

“Seventeen million individuals voted for the U.K. to leave the EU and these people have gone to the courts to blunt the vote. And they call that democracy,” painter Jay Silverstone told Communist League member Ólöf Andra Proppé when she knocked on his door in Croydon, south London, to discuss politics and prospects for the working class Nov. 15.

Former Conservative Party leadership contenders and government ministers Kenneth Clarke and Michael Heseltine have said that they will use any parliamentary channels available to try to reverse Brexit, as has Timothy Farron, leader of the Liberal Democrats. A number of Labour Party leaders, including former Prime Minister Anthony Blair and Owen Smith, a candidate for party leadership, have called for a second referendum to reverse the decision taken in June.

Current Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn said the party will respect the referendum majority. But, he said, it will try and impose restrictions on what the government can do when

Communist League in UK supports Turkish Kurds



Militant/Dag Tirsén

MANCHESTER, England — Some 150 people joined a march here Nov. 12 against the Turkish government’s arrest of Selahattin Demirtas and Figen Yuksekdag, co-chairs of the Kurdish-based Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP), and other party leaders. The action, organized by a coalition of Kurdish groups, ended with a rally. One of the speakers was Pete Clifford, with microphone, Communist League candidate for mayor.

“From Turkey to the U.K. to the U.S. the rulers have no answers to their unprecedented crisis and never-ending wars,” Clifford said. “From Erdogan to May to Trump, all fear working people will find ways to resist their rule.” He called for British imperialist forces to get out of the Mideast. “The Kurds’ fight for their homeland strengthens working people there and here.”

Many at the protest were interested in the U.S. presidential election, and five picked up *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record* by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party in the U.S.

— DAG TIRSÉN

they negotiate terms of withdrawal from the EU.

In the process of the parliamentary and broader political jockeying different forces are seeking to shape the U.K.’s future relations with their capitalist rivals on the continent. At the heart of the debate among bourgeois political figures is how to break from free immigration and other regulatory features of EU membership while maintaining the widest access for British capital and business to the EU market.

U.K. Independence Party leader Nigel Farage — a nationalist opponent of free immigration who says EU membership made the UK a “groveling junior member of a German-dominated club” — says he will lead 100,000 marchers to protest outside the Su-

preme Court when it begins hearings on the challenge to the Brexit vote.

“Brexit or no Brexit, ‘soft Brexit’ or ‘hard Brexit,’ whichever way the propertied rulers lean, they will continue in their drive to make workers pay for the crisis of their system,” Proppé told Silverstone. British capitalists and capitalists in other countries advance their national class interests. They’ll jockey for greater profits both at the expense of their competitors and by continuing to press down on wages, conditions, job security, safety and rights.

“Workers have our own independent class interests,” she said. “That means organizing to defend our interests against the bosses and their government and replace capitalist rule with a workers and farmers government.”

The Militant

Vol. 80/No. 45

Closing news date: November 21, 2016

Editor: John Studer
Managing Editor: Naomi Craine

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Emma Johnson, Jacob Perasso, Maggie Trowe, Brian Williams.

Published weekly except for one week in January, one week in June, one week in July, one week in December.

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
Website: 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.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: For one year send \$35 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Africa, Asia, and the Middle East: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Canada: For one year send Canadian \$45 to the Militant, 7107 St. Denis #204, Montreal, Quebec H2S 2S5.

United Kingdom: Send £26 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, 2nd Floor, 83 Kingsland High St., Dalston, London, E8 2PB, England.

Republic of Ireland and Continental Europe: Send £85 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London at above address.

France: Send 120 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15.

New Zealand: Send NZ\$55 for one year to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland 1140, New Zealand.

Australia: Send A\$70 for one year to P.O. Box 164 Campsie, NSW 2194, Australia.

Pacific Islands: Send NZ\$55 for one year to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland 1140, New Zealand.

Submissions to the Militant may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.

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

THE MILITANT

Support union fights against boss attacks!

The ‘Militant’ tells the truth about workers defending their unions and fighting bosses’ concession demands. The ‘Militant’ gives voice to New Zealand meat workers, Philadelphia transit strikers, UAW members locked out by Honeywell in Indiana and New York and many more.



Philadelphia SEPTA strikers in November.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

☐ \$5 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

☐ \$10 for 12 weeks

☐ \$20 for 6 months

☐ \$35 for 1 year

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

PHONE E-MAIL

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT,
306 W. 37TH ST., 13TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018.

12 weeks of the Militant outside the U.S.: Australia and the Pacific, A\$10 • United Kingdom, £3 • Canada, Can\$7 • Caribbean and Latin America, US\$10 • Continental Europe, £10 • France, 8 euros • New Zealand, NZ\$7 • All other areas, US\$16 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

What US election revealed

Continued from front page
downward-trending profit rates and contracting production, trade and hiring. The competition-driven operations of the capitalist system, and the resulting policies of the employing class and their government, are imposing ever greater burdens on the backs of working people — unemployment, declining real wages, speedup and unsafe conditions on the job, sharply rising medical costs, vanishing pensions and more.

These social and political consequences are explained in a new book by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, that came off the presses just days before the election: *The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record: Why Washington Fears Working People*. “Barnes describes the human toll on working people in the United States,” says SWP leader Steve Clark in the introduction, “including the gutting of the meager ‘social safety net’ won in hard-fought battles by the US working class over decades. He explains what growing numbers of workers already sense is happening to us, no matter how vehemently the wealthy and powerful deny it. We are living through ... a global capitalist crisis like none of us have ever seen before.”

More and more workers and farmers today “are already engaged in a wide-ranging and angry discussion of this capitalist reality,” Clark says. “Although no one can foresee the timing, the financial capitalists and well-paid professionals who serve them sense that mounting struggle — *class struggle* — lies ahead.”

That’s why “for the first time in decades, the US rulers and their government have begun *to fear* the working class.”

Millions voted for ‘a change’

Hillary Clinton acted as if she could win the election while turning her back on working people and the increasingly desperate conditions confronting tens of millions across the U.S. She made little effort to campaign in working-class areas of the Midwest, such as Michigan and Wisconsin. In the name of cleaner energy, she said, “We’re going to put a lot of coal miners and coal companies out of business.” And Clinton contemptuously called workers considering a vote for Trump “deplorable” and “irredeemable.”

Many of the key places that tipped the scales for Trump to win the electoral vote were working-class areas where a majority, including workers who are Caucasian, had voted for Barack Obama in 2012. In Ohio’s coal-mining Monroe County, Obama beat Republican Mitt Romney by 8 points four years ago; this time Trump won by 47 points. In Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, home of the industrial city of Wilkes-Barre, Trump won by 19 points, where Obama had won by 5 percent.

Many fewer workers who are Black turned out to vote for Clinton, too. In Detroit, her winning margin was 90,000 votes less than Obama’s in 2012. In Flint,

Michigan, her edge was less than half of Obama’s four years earlier. In Milwaukee’s District 15 — an area that is 84 percent African-American — turnout fell by 19.5 percent from 2012.

The election results shattered the illusion among Clinton and her machine that they could count on a sweep of African-Americans anywhere comparable to that for the first Democratic Party presidential candidate who was Black. Nor was there any “surge” in voting for Clinton by Latinos and women.

The story was repeated in working-class and rural areas across the country. As conditions got worse for millions of workers under Obama, many looked for something new, for a “change.” And millions more couldn’t stand either candidate and just stayed home — the turnout was the lowest in 20 years.

Blaming ‘stupid white workers’

Many bourgeois liberals, middle-class radicals and much of the big-business media claim Trump won as the result of a racist backlash by what they call “the white working class.” Somehow millions of workers who had voted for an African-American for president in 2008 and again in 2012 had amazingly been transformed into reactionary bigots a few years later!

A growing number of liberals go even further, saying the outcome of the election shows that workers are a mass of stupid, uneducated people, whose right to vote poses mounting dangers.

The president-elect received “massive support from uneducated, low-information white people,” wrote Jason Brennan in *Foreign Policy* magazine. It was a “dance of the dunces.” Brennan, a professor at Georgetown University, argues that the right to vote should be limited to those who pass a “political knowledge” test. Or, “high-information” people (like himself) should be given extra votes.

Such contempt for — and above all fear of — the working class is typical of what SWP leader Jack Barnes calls the “meritocracy” in his recent book, *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism*. Many among this expand-



Militant/Jacque Henderson

Chris Steffen explains Socialist Workers Party program to painter Tammy Lawyer, left, in Lincoln, Nebraska, Nov. 12. Opening to SWP perspective among workers is unprecedented.

ing middle-class layer, heavily based in universities, foundations, the media and the “tech” industry, Barnes says, “truly believe that their ‘brightness,’ their ‘quickness,’ ... give them the right to make decisions, to administer and ‘regulate’ society for the bourgeoisie — on behalf of what they claim to be the interests of ‘the people.’”

The petty-bourgeois left reacted to Trump’s election with similar anti-working-class hysteria. “For the most part, those who attend and cheer at Trump rallies are deplorable,” wrote Workers World Party leader Teresa Gutierrez, embracing the smear coined by Clinton. “Most have crossed a line” and “reflect a danger.”

Shakeup in capitalist parties

Leading up to the elections, Trump faced widespread opposition within the top rungs of the Republican Party. Far from being housebroken by such figures, however, Trump is setting out to remake the Republican Party in his own image.

The Democratic Party is in shambles. The wing around Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, whose primary campaign was blocked by the blatant rigging of Clinton and the national Democratic machine, is seeking to take over the party.

“I’m not here to blame anybody,” Sanders said disingenuously at a Wash-

ington, D.C., rally Nov. 17. “But facts are facts,” he said. “When you lose the White House to the least popular candidate in the history of America, when you lose the Senate, when you lose the House and when two-thirds of governors in this country are Republican, it is time for a new direction for the Democratic party!”

Coming apart of ‘globalization’

The 2016 election was a further registration of the coming apart of “globalization.” That’s the classless term pro-capitalist commentators use to describe the international expansion over the last several decades of world trade, capital flows and labor migration, as well as the accelerated (and risky) interconnection of capitalist banking and bond trading.

Some among the world’s ruling classes and professionals who do their bidding dreamed this could lead to super-national economic and political bodies, like the European Union, transcending nation states (and thus both trade wars and shooting wars) as the wave of the future.

But the European Union ran aground on the reality that dog-eat-dog capitalist relations, especially under the pressure of economic and social breakdowns, depend on nation states, national currencies, national armies — and the handful of propertied ruling families of each

Continued on page 4

Join us to make 2016 SWP Party-Building Fund!

Continued from front page
up for a one-year *Militant* subscription when SWP members went door to door in her neighborhood in Kent, Washington, earlier this year.

“We were just talking about the election,” she told Naubert. “It was shocking. How could people vote for Trump after his offensive statements about women and immigrants?”

“Both Clinton and Trump represent the ruling rich,” Naubert said. “What is most offensive is what is happening to the working class. They try to divert us from seeing that it’s the working people of the world who carry the burdens of capitalism’s global economic and social disasters and spreading wars.”

“So what can we do about it?” asked Kelly Malone, who said she has to work two jobs to pay the bills.

“We have to build a movement capable of replacing their system with a workers and farmers government,” Naubert said. “It will take a deep-going social revolution and to get there we need a program in the interests of working people and a working-class party that will fight for it. We think it’s very important to talk with

workers about all these issues and to introduce the SWP as that kind of party.”

In addition to contributing to the party-building fund, Colleen and Kelly decided to get *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters, and *The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record: Why Washington Fears Working People* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, to learn more about the SWP and its program.

Joel Britton in Oakland, California, reported Nov. 15 that the party there has set a goal of getting \$150 in contributions going door to door. Most of the \$57 they have gotten so far has come at the initiative of the workers they’ve met.

“I’m talking about it more myself now. Yesterday refinery worker Ben Fields and I talked for some time with an industrial worker on his porch in Concord,” Britton said. “He appreciated the discussion and said, ‘Thanks for listening to what I had to say.’ I asked if he would like to make a contribution to the work of the SWP. He went right back inside and returned with \$8 ‘for the cause.’”

Along with weekly voluntary sustainer pledges from members, the annual party-building fund is a cornerstone in meeting the party’s budget. To join in getting contributions to the fund or to give a donation yourself, contact the SWP in your area, listed on page 8.

Socialist Workers Party-Building Fund			
Sept. 24 - Dec. 7 - Week 7			
Area	Quota	Collected	%
Atlanta	\$11,000	\$7,446	68%
Chicago	\$11,500	\$7,011	61%
Lincoln	\$300	\$177	59%
Los Angeles	\$9,000	\$4,873	54%
Miami	\$3,500	\$1,495	43%
New York	\$22,500	\$11,219	50%
Oakland	\$15,000	\$10,273	68%
Philadelphia	\$4,500	\$1,400	31%
Seattle	\$8,000	\$4,174	52%
Twin Cities	\$4,500	\$1,858	41%
Wash., DC	\$8,500	\$3,961	47%
Other		\$500	
Total	\$98,300	\$54,387	55%
Should be	\$100,000	\$70,000	70%

Correction

The article “US Shifts UN Vote on Cuba, Still Targets Revolution” in the Nov. 14 issue identified Bruno Rodríguez incorrectly. He is Cuba’s foreign minister.

What 2016 election revealed

Continued from page 3

country whose class interests these national institutions serve and protect.

The richer, stronger European imperialist powers in the north, led by Berlin, grew fat at the expense of the weaker south (and, since 1989, east). The fantasy of an “ever-greater union” shattered when the Greek government was forced into bankruptcy, leading to deep assaults on working people there. Italy could well be next.

Likewise Obama’s plans for massive “trade” agreements (with their maze of bureaucracies and regulations) like the Trans-Pacific Partnership — which he touted as a signal achievement of his presidency — are now dead in the water.

These developments, too, help explain the outcome of the 2016 U.S. election, as well as Brexit — the referendum passed in Britain earlier this year to leave the European Union.

What’s more, the U.S. rulers are carrying out seemingly endless wars and bringing catastrophe to working people — from Afghanistan to Iraq and Syria, as well as to working-class and farm families offered up as cannon fodder in the United States and elsewhere.

Their ‘solution’: take it out on us

The policies the U.S. rulers, in both major capitalist parties, have pursued since the 2008 financial crash, such as holding interest rates near zero and “regulatory” legislation, have failed to generate growth and employment or decrease the concentration and risk of banking capital. The same is true for Washington’s imperialist rivals in Tokyo and more recently Europe.

Even before the 2016 election, a growing number of voices across the spectrum of bourgeois politics began acknowledging this failure and urging greater emphasis on “fiscal policy” — that is, government spending and tax measures — instead of “monetary” remedies.

Trump was among them, pledging to kick start “growth” and “jobs” with \$1 trillion in infrastructure construction and repairs — roads, bridges, airports, water and sewage systems and so on. Some Democratic Party officials, like Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer, have jumped to offer to work with Trump to get such measures through Congress. Long-term interest rates have begun creeping up, and the prospect of rising inflation in the months and years to come is real.

But whatever temporary jobs such government-funded projects might produce, they will not generate the long-term capital investment in expanded industrial plant, equipment, production and hiring that could reverse the worldwide contraction of capitalist production

and trade today.

In fact, there’s no policy the rulers can implement that can resolve the underlying crisis of production and trade, nor the unraveling of their imperialist order, that the capitalists don’t take out of the living standards, job conditions, and *life and limb* of hundreds of millions of working people in the U.S. and the world over. These are all the result of the workings of capitalism itself.

The big majority of the U.S. ruling class mobilized enormous funding and used the newspapers, TV and other institutions in unparalleled ways to elect Hillary Clinton. All pretense of journalistic “objectivity” went by the wayside. CNN became widely known as the “Clinton News Network.”

But the capitalist rulers have quickly put that behind them.

In interviews and statements since the election, Trump backed away from some of his reactionary demagoguery, such as building a wall along the Mexican border (he now says it will feature fencing). On the CBS show “60 Minutes” he said he will prioritize deporting immigrants with “criminal records, gang members, drug dealers” — what the Obama administration is doing.

Gay marriage, Trump said, is a settled question by the Supreme Court. He said he’d keep a couple of the provisions of

Continued on page 9

SWP launches campaign for mayor in LA

Continued from front page

teams of campaign supporters in working-class neighborhoods across the city Nov. 19-20, discussing the deteriorating economic and social conditions workers face, what was revealed by the recent presidential election, and why working people must organize ourselves to fight for our own interests.

“The working class is at the center of politics today,” Richter explained as he campaigned door to door in the West Adams neighborhood Nov. 19. Other teams campaigned in the San Pedro, Highland Park and Reseda areas.

“I don’t say vote for me and I’ll fix things for you. It is the capitalist system that is at the heart of the problems working people face, in this country and around the world,” Richter told Jonathan Johnson, who works at the University of Southern California bookstore. “We need to build a working-class movement to overthrow the whole dog-eat-dog system, and replace it with a workers and farmers government.”

In working-class neighborhoods throughout the city, the SWP aims to sell hundreds of three campaign books on special, *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record: Why Washington Fears Working People* and *Are They Rich*

NY transit workers rally for safety, new contract



TWU Local 100

NEW YORK — Several thousand New York transit workers, members of Transport Workers Union Local 100, rallied in front of the Metropolitan Transit Authority’s headquarters here Nov. 15 as negotiations begin two months before the expiration of their contract.

Local 100 represents 38,000 workers who operate a system that provides more than 7.7 million trips on an average weekday.

Safety is a big concern for many MTA workers, as it was in the Philadelphia transit workers’ strike earlier this month. Subway track worker Louis Gray was killed Nov. 3 in Brooklyn when a train struck him. His co-worker Jeffrey Fleming was injured.

“To me safety has gotten worse, for workers and riders,” bus operator Shawndel Adams, 40, told the *Militant*. “We need the newer buses with better ramps, especially for the seniors.”

— MAGGIE TROWE

Because They’re Smart? both by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, and *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible? A Necessary Debate Among Working People* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters. They are also getting subscriptions to the *Militant*, collecting 1,000 signatures — double the requirement — and raising \$300 to put Richter on the ballot.

Richter showed Johnson *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* which contains a graph illustrating how speed-up has boosted the productivity of workers while our wages have gone down. “I need to learn more about your party,” Johnson said as he signed the petition.

At the end of the first two days, SWP campaigners had sold 16 books, six *Militant* subscriptions, gathered 113 signatures and gotten \$36 in contributions. The petitions must be filed by Dec. 7.

Some 21 candidates have filed declarations of intent to run for mayor, with the election set for May 16. The current mayor, Eric Garcetti, a liberal Democrat who got national exposure when he spoke at the Democratic Party National Convention in July, has already turned in his petitions.

Discussing fight for jobs, health care

“The reason we go door to door in working-class neighborhoods is to have discussions about a working-class alternative to the two capitalist parties,” Richter told Ronald Williams, a painter for the Los Angeles Unified School District. “What we need is a real public works program that provides jobs that last and wages that workers can live on. Donald Trump got elected president partly because he promised jobs.

“Many workers voted for someone who said he stood outside the mainstream,” Richter said. “And they voted against Clinton.”

“If you’re a billionaire you’re not an ‘outsider.’ Trump is not outside his class,” Williams said. “I couldn’t accept

him because of his racist comments.”

“We should have universal health care not Obamacare,” he said. “Health care should not be for profit. Trump says he wants to do a jobs program but it’s just to give money to rich corporations.”

“There is less racism among working people today,” Richter told Williams, saying he appreciated the discussion on these issues. “The mass civil rights battles that overthrew Jim Crow segregation had a tremendous impact on all working people. They built upon the accomplishments of the Civil War to overthrow slavery 150 years ago and Radical Reconstruction afterwards.

“The capitalist economic and social crisis of the past several decades is driving workers of all skin colors to come together, in order to defend ourselves,” Richter said.

Williams got a copy of *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record*, gave \$5 to the campaign and signed the petition.

The following day Richter joined a fundraising event organized by tenants at the Marmion Royal apartments in Highland Park. Workers living there have organized a tenants union to fight drastic rent increases and threats of eviction by new building owners.

Richter and other members of the SWP then went door to door in the building. “With the wages people are paid, they can’t afford the increase in rents and prices,” a construction worker who asked that his name not be used to avoid reprisals from the landlord, told Richter. “The landlord wants to increase our rent up to double what it is. How are we going to pay that? I got a 25-cent raise this year. The owner wants to divide us up and negotiate with individuals, but we are organizing together.”

Members and contacts of the party are coming from the Bay Area to campaign for the SWP in Los Angeles. If you would like to join in, contact the SWP at swpla@att.net or (323) 643-4968.

IN THE MAGAZINE ‘NEW INTERNATIONAL’



Capitalism’s Long Hot Winter Has Begun

“One of capitalism’s infrequent long winters has begun. Accompanied by imperialism’s accelerating drive toward war, it’s going to be a long, hot winter.”

— Jack Barnes, in *New International* no. 12

\$16. Also in Spanish, French, Farsi, Swedish, Greek, Arabic

US Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War

by Jack Barnes, in *New International* no. 11

\$16. Also in Spanish, French, Farsi, Swedish, Greek, Icelandic



PATHFINDERPRESS.COM

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

MAGGIE TROWE, EDITOR

Help the *Militant* cover labor struggles around the world!

This column gives a voice to those engaged in battle and building solidarity today — including workers on strike at Momentive, California port truckers fighting to be classified as workers, not owners, and construction workers demanding safe conditions. I invite those involved in workers' battles to contact me at 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018; or (212) 244-4899; or themilitant@mac.com. We'll work together to ensure your story is told.

— Maggie Trowe

5,000 protest stiff sentences dealt to French Goodyear tire unionists

AMIENS, France — More than 5,000 unionists — including delegations from Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Luxembourg and across France, as well as Philippe Martinez, general secretary of the General Confederation of Workers (CGT) — rallied here Oct. 19 against the prison sentences of eight unionists at the local Goodyear tire plant.

They were convicted of holding the production manager and the head of human resources in the plant for 30 hours in January 2014 after management announced the factory would close.

The protest took place during the appeals trial of the workers, who were sentenced in January to nine months in prison and a suspended sentence of 15 months.

The same day several hundred unionists protested at the local affiliate of the main bosses association MEDEF in Marseille.

When Goodyear closed the Amiens plant 1,143 workers lost their jobs. Three of them have since committed suicide. More than 75 percent are still unemployed or working temporary jobs.

Although the two executives and Goodyear declined to press charges, the prosecutor continued with the trial. The ruling Socialist Party has led the charge. The sentences were “undeniably heavy,” Prime Minister Manuel Valls told the Senate Jan. 14, but workers shouldn't “plunge into violence.”

“I love business,” Valls told a meeting of MEDEF in August 2014. “It's business that creates jobs. How many of you fight to keep jobs, to motivate, and to reassure?”

The decision on the appeal will be announced Jan. 11. The prosecutor has asked for a suspended sentence of 24 months and no jail time.

On Nov. 30, a verdict will come in the trial against 15 Air France workers accused of assaulting two com-

pany executives whose shirts were ripped off after they announced cuts of 2,900 jobs in October 2015.

— Claude Bleton

Pa. professors' strike, supported by students, pushes back attacks

WEST CHESTER, Pa. — Over 5,000 members of the Association of Pennsylvania State College and University Faculties carried out a three-day strike that shut down 14 universities across the state and pushed back some of the administration's attacks.

“They wanted to do more classes online instead of in the classroom and increase the class load of adjunct professors,” said Mark Rimple, a music professor and president of the associa-



Militant/Claude Bleton

Workers protest in Amiens, France, Oct. 19 against sentences dealt to eight unionists at Goodyear, convicted of holding bosses hostage during 2014 protest against plans to close plant.

tion at West Chester University.

“I'm completely supporting the faculty,” said Ryan Susko, 19, a sophomore from Allentown, one of dozens of students on the picket lines. “That's why I'm not going to class. I don't want more online classes — I want to talk to a human being and discuss the issues.”

“I feel like I would be betraying the teachers if I crossed the picket line,” said Tori Evert, 17, a freshman from

Bethlehem. The administration attempted to keep classes, dining halls and residences open, but the support for the strike brought everything to a halt.

As Oct. 22 homecoming approached, the union organized to picket the events. The day before the administration agreed to a settlement. Unionists will vote on the contract in the next few weeks.

— Chris Hoepfner

Momentive workers strike over concession demands

BY JACOB PERASSO

WATERFORD, N.Y. — Over 700 members of International Union of Electrical Workers-Communications Workers of America Local 81359 went on strike against Momentive Performance Materials here Nov. 2 after voting down several concession contract offers.

As they set up picket lines, the strikers confronted busloads of what the bosses called “contingency” workers brought in to keep the plant running. Strikers carried picket signs reading, “Robber barons are alive and well” and “Justice for Local 81359.”

The union has accepted concessions in two previous contracts, Local Vice President Darryl Houshower told Socialist Workers Party members who

came to show solidarity and join strikers on their picket lines Nov. 4.

“In 2013 we lost pensions,” Houshower said. “This current proposal attacks our health care and offers no raise the first year, with 2 percent raises the following two years. The company is using unskilled replacement workers to handle dangerous chemicals.”

A few days after the strike began, the unionists voted 469-75 against another version of the three-year offer. “Truly, the vast majority of our members have spoken and do not like what we put in front of them,” union President Dom Patrignani told the Albany *Times Union*.

The new offer is worse than what was already voted down, commented Laurence Case, who works in packaging.

“Most of the workers here are tired of

struggling while a small number of rich are doing well,” Houshower said.

“This is not just for ourselves. We are out here fighting for the middle working-class,” said Brandon Gulneck, 23.

“This company does nothing but lie. I don't foresee this strike being quick,” said Joe Farone, 33, who has worked in the plant for five years. “They are trying to take 1 percent of wages in retirement contributions. Over the course of my working life, it will add up to three quarters of a million dollars. They already took everyone's pensions.”

The strikers are seeking and extending solidarity. “We sent a delegation of workers to Honeywell, where United Auto Workers members have been locked out,” Case said. The Green Island Honeywell plant is a short drive away.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



November 29, 1991

The November 15 plunge in the stock market followed a string of announcements indicating serious economic problems: retail sales are down, average earnings fell in the previous period, while the number of people applying for unemployment rose and auto sales declined.

The news is particularly bad for working people. One out of 10 people living in the United States now relies on food stamps to put food on the table. This meager allowance is a mere 65 cents per meal for a person eating three meals a day. Families with young children now make up at least one third of all workers who are homeless.

The relentless employer offensive against the standard of living and union organization begun during the 1974-75 recession has driven many working people one paycheck away from being able to provide for themselves or their families.



November 28, 1966

NEW YORK — Demonstrators attempted to present petitions today to the Peruvian Mission to the United Nations, demanding amnesty for Hugo Blanco, jailed Peruvian peasant leader now facing the threat of execution.

Hugo Blanco, a revolutionary Marxist, became a legendary figure in Peru after organizing the fiercely oppressed, landless peasants in the remote Cuzco region of the country. The peasants established a militant union that fought with the battle cry, *Tierra o Muerte!* Land or Death!

Blanco was captured by the Peruvian government a little over three years ago, when severe illness compelled him to come down from the mountains to seek medical treatment. Along with 28 others, he was charged with murder. The charge was based on the death of three rural policemen who died during an attack on Blanco and his supporters.



November 29, 1941

December 12 is the date set for the execution of Odell Waller, 24 years old Negro sharecropper sentenced to die for the self-defense shooting of his white landlord.

A stay of execution is being asked so that the defense may have time to file a petition for habeas corpus on sworn evidence that nonpayers of poll tax are systematically excluded from Jury duty in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, where Waller was tried. Waller was deprived of a jury of his peers because of the poll tax.

Waller felt himself involved in a web of oppression, unjustly evicted from his home and deprived of his family's share in the crop which they had worked to raise.

All workers organizations should get behind the movement to free Waller, abolish the poll tax and end the system of Jim Crowism, which is the real guilty party in this case.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CANADA

Montreal

The Assault on Mosul, Raqqa and Aleppo: Canada, U.S., and All Foreign Troops Out of the Middle East! Speaker: Annette Kouri, Communist League. Fri., Nov. 25, 7:30 p.m. 7107 St. Denis, Room 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

UNITED KINGDOM

Manchester

A Revolutionary Working-Class Party — Why Building It Is Decisive Today. Speaker: Catharina, Tirsén, Communist League. Fri., Nov. 25, 7 p.m. Donation £2.50. Room 301, Hilton House, 26-28 Hilton St. M1 2EH. Tel.: (016) 1478-2496.

Thomas Sankara ‘set example for Africa and world’

Meeting debates lessons of Burkina Faso leader’s ideas for worker, peasant struggles today

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

WASHINGTON — “The words of Thomas Sankara survive. You can read them and learn about what he achieved,” said Gnaka Lagoke, welcoming participants to the fifth annual conference on Thomas Sankara here. Sankara was the leader of the popular revolutionary government in the West African country of Burkina Faso from 1983 to 1987. (See box below.)

The Nov. 5 meeting was entitled “Thomas Sankara Legacy, Democracy in the Global South, and Black Lives.” It attracted more than 120 participants to a discussion and debate on how Sankara’s example and ideas can be used to advance popular struggles today — from Burkina Faso to Brazil, from Venezuela and Cuba to the United States.

Lagoke, the event’s main organizer and founder of the Revival of Pan-Africanism Forum, introduced the panel: Shelley Green of Pan-African Community Action in Washington, D.C.; Dr. Msia Clark, professor of African Studies at Howard University; Aline Piva, of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs; and Mary-Alice Waters, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and president of Pathfinder Press. Lagoke, who teaches African and world history at Montgomery College, also welcomed Armand Tientoré, who brought greetings from the embassy of Burkina Faso.

The majority of participants were from West African countries, including members of Balai Citoyen, a Burkinabe group from New York that helped organize the meeting. Others were from Pan-Africanist groups and other political organizations in the D.C. metro area.

Different class courses

Two different class courses were presented by panelists: one placing Sankara as part of currents in Africa and the Americas that over the past half century have sought to reform (even radically reform) capitalism; the other pointing to Sankara’s communist course and the revolutionary internationalist and Pan-Africanist alternative he posed to the dismemberment of Africa by imperialist powers in order to oppress and exploit its toilers.

“Community control is true democra-



cy at work,” said Green of Pan-African Community Action. Sankara’s legacy is linked to control of local economies, education, health care and the police, she said.

“The legacy of Sankara is through Pan-African activism,” said Clark from Howard University. “The ways people mobilize have shifted, due in part to social media and how activists engage the state. Instead of one single leader, leadership is dispersed.”

Piva of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs, who is Brazilian, compared the achievements in Burkina Faso during Sankara’s years to “the goals of the Workers Party of Brazil’s ‘alternative project’ — to regain sovereignty and rebuild our country into a more equal and democratic society.” She called the impeachment and removal of Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff earlier this year “a coup against the Workers Party.”

“Thomas Sankara understood that to be free from imperialist domination, you must rely on local and natural resources as opposed to foreign aid,” Piva said. “His revolution promoted self-sufficiency and social programs that directly empowered the people.”

SWP leader Waters, who wrote prefaces to *Thomas Sankara Speaks* and two other collections of his speeches, pointed to sharply different reasons why his course “set an example not only for Africa but the entire world.”

Waters’ talk “sharpened the meaning of the legacy of Thomas Sankara in the



21st century and reminds us that democracy is not a classless content,” said Mwiza Munthali, host of the radio show “Africa Now,” during his broadcast of the program, and “that the guiding ideology of Sankara was communism.”

“The capitalist rulers and their apologists,” Waters said, “try to convince us that democracy and capitalism are synonymous. But the course Sankara charted was *proletarian democracy*, proving that even in one of the poorest countries, it was possible to mobilize millions to take their destiny into their own hands and change themselves as they changed their conditions and the world.”

“What distinguished Sankara,” Waters said, “is that everything he did was aimed at raising the consciousness, confidence and combativity of the people of Burkina Faso. He was a Marxist, a communist, who had confidence in the revolutionary capacities of ordinary men and women, who are so arrogantly dismissed by the imperialist rulers and leaders of capitalist countries worldwide.

“Sankara was unique among African leaders in refusing to reject Marxism on the pretext that it’s a ‘European idea’ alien to Africa and the struggles of its people. He understood that communism isn’t an ‘idea,’ but a course of class struggle drawing on lessons from centuries of revolutionary battles by working people. Those lessons apply to struggles by working people in Africa like anywhere else in the world.”

From the American and French revolutions, to the 1917 Bolshevik-led revolution in Russia, to the Cuban Revolution, with whose leaders he closely collaborated, Sankara said, we are “the heirs of all the world’s revolutions and all the liberation struggles of the peoples of the

Left, Gnaka Lagoke, founder of the Revival of Pan-Africanism Forum, introduces panelists at Nov. 5 meeting in Washington, D.C., discussing legacy of Thomas Sankara. Seated from left are Howard University Prof. Msia Clark, Socialist Workers Party leader Mary-Alice Waters, Aline Piva of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs and Shelley Green of Pan-African Community Action.

Below, Sankara with other participants in tree-planting mobilization in Burkina Faso, August 1985. Popular revolutionary government he led from 1983 to 1987 organized millions to begin to fight hunger, disease, illiteracy and economic backwardness imposed by imperialism in the former French colony.

Third World.”

“It may be a little controversial to say so,” Waters added, but “what’s sometimes called Sankarism, as well as Pan-Africanism, only point a way forward for toilers if they’re grounded in those historical materialist foundations.”

That’s the basis on which Sankara led Burkina’s working people to become part of the fight to bring down the racist regime in South Africa and struggles by the oppressed in Angola, Western Sahara, Palestine, Nicaragua, Grenada and the United States, she said.

Lively discussion period

There was a lively discussion period, including questions directed to each panelist by the chair, Gnaka Lagoke.

“What were the weaknesses of the Workers Party of Brazil?” he asked Piva. “It distanced itself from the working class,” she replied, “and didn’t put in the

time to change consciousness. You see a difference between Brazil and Venezuela — Brazil was never a revolution. We did make progress, but now we are taking blows.”

Piva reported that Michel Temer, who replaced Rousseff as president, is escalating state repression. “Yesterday, 14 warrants were issued against members of Brazil’s Landless Rural Workers Movement,” she said, “and police stormed their school in Sao Paulo.”

Earlier in the meeting, Carlos Ron, a consul at the Venezuelan Embassy, reported on efforts by pro-imperialist opposition parties in Venezuela to force the government of President Nicolás Maduro out of office. “The opposition is divided,” he said. “We must preserve the integrity of our country, and we seek a dialogue to turn away violence.”

Lagoke asked Waters how she would compare the strengths of Sankara, Fidel Castro and Hugo Chávez, the late Venezuelan president.

“What’s in common to the three of them,” Waters said, “is their qualities as leaders able to win the confidence of workers and rural toilers, to have rapport with them, as they fight to change the conditions of their lives.

“But the differences are very important,” she said. “The Cuban leadership built a proletarian cadre through the revolutionary war and struggles after the victory over the U.S.-backed dictatorship in 1959. That’s how they were able to chart a course toward socialist revolution. Without that, imperialism’s efforts to overturn what Cuba’s working people had won would have succeeded over time.”

The capitalists always counterattack, said Waters. “For them, there’s never a ‘hopeless situation.’ They fear workers and farmers when we go into action, recognizing we’re capable of making a revolution that can end their class rule, as toilers did in Cuba.”

Gains won by working people in Venezuela after Chávez became president in 1999 were made within the framework of a capitalist state and property relations, Waters said. “There was no revolution. Chávez said in a widely read 2008 interview that, ‘Fidel is a communist. I am not. I am a social democrat.’ He thought some kind of radical reform of capitalism was possible, that there was a road other than that of Cuba’s socialist revolution.

“Like Fidel, Sankara was a communist,” Waters added. “He made every effort to start down the road charted politically by the leadership of the Cuban Revolution,” but with no illusions



Nov. 5 meeting drew 120 people to discussion of how Sankara’s example can be used to advance struggles of working people today, from Burkina Faso to Brazil, Venezuela and U.S.

a socialist revolution was yet possible in Burkina Faso due to economic and social conditions there and in much of Africa.

But Sankara’s murder and the counterrevolution led by Blaise Compaoré weren’t evidence that the course workers and peasants had begun under Sankara’s leadership was “premature,” Waters said. Sankara “had a more difficult load to carry. He was starting from scratch to build a leadership when he and other revolutionary-minded young people and

junior officers came into control of the government. There wasn’t enough time for Sankara and those closest to him politically to forge that kind of leadership from among Burkina’s most selfless working people before the landowners, bourgeoisie and imperialist powers, especially France, mobilized to crush the revolution, as they always will.”

Sankara and Burkina’s working people set an example that continues to spread in Africa and beyond. Waters held up the newly released South Afri-

Fight against ban on ‘Militant’ at Attica wins support

BY SETH GALINSKY

The fight against censorship of the *Militant* at Attica state prison in New York is winning new support after prison authorities banned the Oct. 3 issue that was sent to a subscriber there. Attica’s Media Review Committee falsely claims that some articles in the issue “incite rebellion against government authority.”

The Oct. 3 *Militant* included a feature on the 45th anniversary of the Attica prison rebellion and an article on recent protests in various states against prison conditions, from inadequate food to low or nonexistent wages.

The *Militant*’s attorney, David Goldstein, of the law firm of Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky & Lieberman — well-known for its defense of civil rights and liberties — filed an appeal Nov. 3. He notes that dozens of mainstream media carried articles on the Attica rebellion anniversary over the last several months.

“No reasonable, fair minded reading” of any of the articles in the *Militant* could conclude that the paper “advocates” rebellion against government authority, much less “presents a clear and immediate risk” of rebellion, Goldstein pointed out.

“I spent seven years in prison for a crime I did not commit,” wrote Yusef Salaam in a statement opposing the ban. One of the Central Park Five, who were railroaded to prison in 1990 falsely accused of raping and beating a woman the year before, Salaam said he “learned firsthand the reality of the so-called justice system in the United States.”

“Being found ‘guilty’ does not mean you lose the right to think for yourself and to know what is going on in the world,” he wrote. “The censorship of the

Militant is a violation of the prison’s own rules, of the U.S. Constitution, and of the standards of basic human decency.”

“The *Militant*’s socialist leaning and critical viewpoint is clear in the discussion of these events, but censorship is not justified merely by differences of opinion,” wrote Karin Deutsch Karlekar, director of Free Expression at Risk Programs for PEN America, the U.S. chapter of the prominent literary and human rights organization. The banning of the issue of the *Militant* “is an uncalled-for restriction on the freedom of the press and prisoners’ rights.”

The National Lawyers Guild, New York Civil Liberties Union, Justice League and *San Francisco Bay View* have also called on the prison to reverse its impoundment of the *Militant*.

After receiving notice that Attica had impounded the Oct. 3 issue, the *Militant* learned that prison authorities have also been violating the right of a prisoner there, Anthony Bottom, who now uses the name Jalil Muntaqim, to correspond with others and to receive literature. Last year they banned four books that were sent to him, including one of poems Muntaqim himself wrote.

Muntaqim is a co-founder of the Jericho Movement, which was organized in 1998 to back the fight for amnesty for political prisoners in the United States and to demand that they receive adequate medical care.

On Oct. 7, Muntaqim informed his supporters that prison authorities had placed him in keeplock status on Sept. 23. He reported that “my correspondence is being censored; some mail is not being sent out of the facility, some has been sent out opened after I had sealed them, and I have not received mail from correspondents.”

can edition of *Thomas Sankara Speaks*, published by Kwela Books, which will circulate across that country and Africa-wide.

“Capitalism forces people into struggle,” Waters said. “It is the great subversive. As the crisis of their worldwide system grows, working people will organize and resist, and from those struggles new leaders like Thomas Sankara and communist organizations led by them will be forged. That’s the opportunity ahead of all of us.”



Following the hour-long exchange, many continued discussion over a delicious dinner. Participants picked up speeches by Sankara, including *Thomas Sankara Speaks: The Burkina Faso Revolution, 1983-1987; We Are Heirs of the World’s Revolutions; and Women’s Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*. Many also left the meeting with *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record: Why Washington Fears Working People* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes and other books.

The meeting was endorsed by the All-African People’s Revolutionary Party, All-African People’s Revolutionary Party-GC, ANSWER Coalition, DC Metro Coalition in Solidarity with the Cuban Revolution, Friends of the Congo, Institute for Policy Studies, Pan-African Community Action, Party for Socialism and Liberation, Revival of Pan-Africanism Forum and the Socialist Workers Party.

Prison authorities issued Muntaqim an “inmate misbehavior report” Sept. 24, for writing a letter to the I Am We Prison Advocacy Network, which officials said is “not an authorized group.” The report stated he is on mail watch.

Anne Lamb sent a letter to Acting Prison Commissioner Anthony Annucci protesting the interference with Muntaqim’s mail. Lamb said that since mid-September she has not received mail that Muntaqim told her he had sent.

“These mailings were never returned to Mr. Bottom at Attica,” she wrote.

Muntaqim, a former member of the Black Panther Party and the Black Liberation Army, has been in prison since he was 19 years old, accused of killing two police officers in 1971, and sentenced to 25 years to life. He has repeatedly been denied parole.

“The constitutional rights to free speech and freedom of the press do not stop at the prison gates,” *Militant* editor John Studer said Nov. 15. “The *Militant* reports the conditions workers and farmers face in the United States and around the world. Our fight to overturn the censorship of the *Militant* will also help push back other undemocratic and arbitrary actions by prison authorities.”

Fight prison censorship

Help get out the word. Print out copies of this article and get them around.

Get statements of support for the *Militant*’s appeal from defenders of workers rights and free speech. Send to themilitant@mac.com

Send a check to *The Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018, earmarked “Prisoners Rights Fight.”

Communist Manifesto: ‘Workers of all countries, unite!’

Below are excerpts from The Communist Manifesto by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. The Spanish edition is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for November. In 1847 workers from Germany, Britain and elsewhere formed the Communist League. They recruited two young revolutionaries, Marx and Engels, and asked them to draft the founding program. It was first published in February 1848 as a wave of revolutionary struggles swept Europe. Copyright © 1987 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

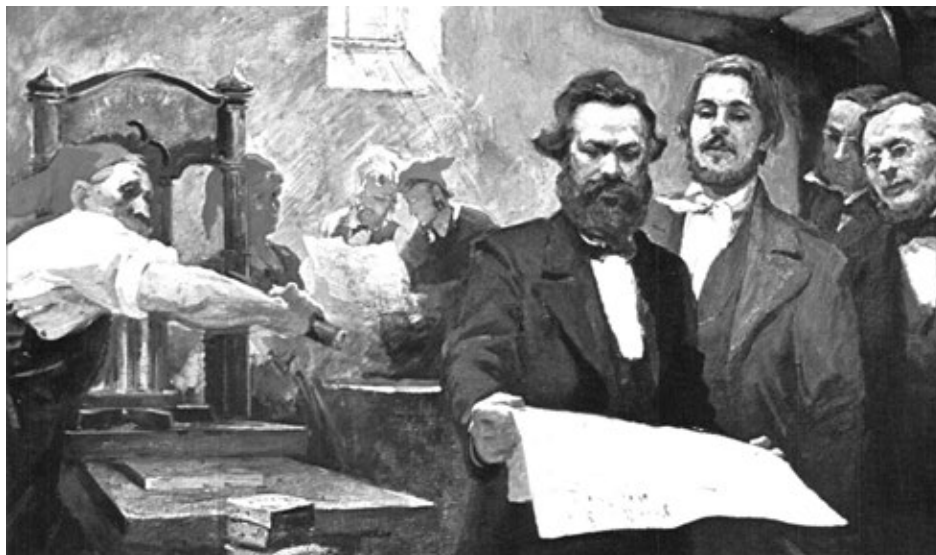
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY KARL MARX
AND FREDERICK ENGELS

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guildmaster and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

In the earlier epochs of history, we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social



Karl Marx and Frederick Engels review issue of *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* as it comes off the press during the revolutionary upsurge in Germany in 1848. The two young revolutionaries had joined the Communist League a year earlier and wrote *The Communist Manifesto*, its program. “Proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains,” it said.

rank. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages, feudal lords, vassals, guildmasters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations.

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinctive feature: it has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: bourgeoisie and proletariat. ...

In what relation do the communists stand to the proletarians as a whole?

The communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working-class parties.

They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole.

They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mold the proletarian movement. The communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only: (1) In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality. (2) In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working

class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.

The communists, therefore, are on the one hand, practically, the most advanced and resolute section of the working-class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement.

The immediate aim of the communists is the same as that of all the other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat.

The theoretical conclusions of the communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer.

They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes. The abolition of existing property relations is not at all a distinctive feature of communism.

All property relations in the past have continually been subject to historical change consequent upon the change in historical conditions.

The French Revolution, for example, abolished feudal property in favor of bourgeois property.

The distinguishing feature of communism is not the abolition of property generally, but the abolition of bourgeois property. But modern bourgeois private property is the final and most complete expression of the system of producing and appropriating products, that is based on class antagonisms, on the exploitation of the many by the few.

In this sense, the theory of the communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property.

We communists have been reproached with the desire of abolishing the right of personally acquiring property as the fruit of a man's own labor, which property is alleged to be the groundwork of all personal freedom, activity, and independence.

Hard-won, self-acquired, self-earned property! Do you mean the property of the petty artisan and of the small peasant, a form of property that preceded the bourgeois form? There is no need to abolish that; the development of industry has to a great extent already destroyed it and is still destroying it daily.

Or do you mean modern bourgeois private property?

But does wage labor create any property for the laborer? Not a bit. It creates capital, i.e., that kind of property which exploits wage labor and which cannot increase except upon conditions of begetting a new supply of wage labor for fresh exploitation. Property, in its present form, is based on the antagonism of capital and wage labor. ...

In short, the communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things.

In all these movements they bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time.

Finally, they labor everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries.

The communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

Workingmen of all countries, unite!

IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

Where to find distributors of the *Militant*, *New International*, and a full display of Pathfinder books.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: **Oakland:** 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Zip: 94621. Tel: (510) 686-1351. Email: swpoak@sbcglobal.net **Los Angeles:** 2826 S. Vermont. Suite 1. Zip: 90007. Tel: (323) 643-4968. Email: swpla@att.net

FLORIDA: **Miami:** 7911 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 2. Zip: 33138. Tel: (305) 390-8310. Email: swpmiami@att.net

GEORGIA: **Atlanta:** 777 Cleveland Ave. SW Suite 103. Zip: 30315. Tel: (678) 528-7828. Email: swpatlanta@bellsouth.net

ILLINOIS: **Chicago:** 2018 S. Ashland Ave. Zip: 60608. Tel: (312) 455-0111. Email: SWPChicago@fastmail.fm

MINNESOTA: **Minneapolis:** 416 E. Hennepin Ave., Suite 214. Zip: 55414. Tel: (612) 729-1205. Email: tcswp@qwestoffice.net

NEBRASKA: **Lincoln:** Tel: (402) 217-4906. Email: swplincn@windstream.net.

NEW YORK: **New York:** 227 W. 29th St., 6th Floor. Zip: 10001. Tel: (646) 964-4793. Email: newyorkswp@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA: **Philadelphia:** 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite 20. Zip: 19149. Tel: (215) 708-1270. Email: philaswp@verizon.net

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 7603 Georgia Ave. NW, Suite 300. Zip: 20011. Tel: (202) 536-5080. Email: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

WASHINGTON: **Seattle:** 5418 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118-2439. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Email: seattleswp@qwestoffice.net

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 1st Flr, 3/281-287 Beamish St., Campsie, NSW 2194. Mailing address: P.O. Box 164, Campsie, NSW 2194. Tel: (02) 9718 9698. Email: cl_australia@optusnet.com.au

CANADA

QUEBEC: **Montreal:** 7107 St. Denis #204 H2S 2S5. Tel: (514) 272-5840. Email: clcmontreal@fastmail.com **ALBERTA:** **Calgary:** Dragon City Mall, 328 Centre St. SE, Suite 246. T2G 4X6 Tel: (403) 457-9044. Email: clcalgary@fastmail.fm

FRANCE

Paris: BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15. Email: militant.paris@gmail.com

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: 188a Onehunga Mall, Onehunga. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025, Auckland 1140. Tel: (09) 636-3231. Email: clauack@xtra.co.nz

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND: **London:** 2nd Floor, 83 Kingsland High St., Dalston. Postal code: E8 2PB. Tel: (020) 3583-3553. Email: cllondon@fastmail.fm **Manchester:** Room 301, 3rd floor, Hilton House, 26-28 Hilton St. Postal code: M1 2EH. Tel: (016) 1478-2496. Email: clmanchr@gmail.com

November **BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS

25% DISCOUNT

El manifiesto comunista
(The Communist Manifesto)
by Karl Marx, Frederick Engels
Founding document of the modern revolutionary workers movement published in 1848.
\$5. **Special price: \$3.75**

Leon Trotsky on Britain
\$27. **Special price: \$20.25**

James P. Cannon As We Knew Him
by Farrell Dobbs, George Novack
\$20. **Special price: \$15**

The Founding of the Socialist Workers Party
by James P. Cannon
Minutes and resolutions of the founding meetings of the Socialist Workers Party in the U.S., 1938-39.
\$26. **Special price: \$19.50**

The Truth about Yugoslavia
by Argiris Malapanis, George Fyson
\$10. **Special price: \$7.50**

Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War, 1956-58
by Ernesto Che Guevara
\$30. **Special price: \$22.50**

Join Pathfinder Readers Club for \$10 and receive discounts all year long

ORDER ONLINE AT
WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM
OFFER GOOD UNTIL NOVEMBER 30

Join ‘Militant’ fight against Attica ban!

The fight by the *Militant* and other opponents of prison censorship to reverse Attica prison officials’ ban on the paper’s Oct. 3 issue containing articles on the 1971 Attica rebellion deserves the support of workers and democratic-minded people everywhere.

Combating efforts of the propertied rulers to restrict the political space and rights of workers behind bars is part of advancing human solidarity and the unity of the working class.

Incarcerated workers’ access to books, newspapers and other cultural and political material is vital to their capacity to maintain their dignity, defend their rights and to be part of the world and take part in the unfolding class struggle. It is part of the broader fight to end solitary confinement, denial of adequate health care and other abuses inflicted on prisoners.

The *Militant* is proud to have dozens of subscribers in prisons across the country — 140 in 19 states at last count. Readers get the paper around to many more fellow inmates. The *Militant* has successfully pushed back prison censorship for decades, including a string of attempts to impound it in recent years.

One victory in this struggle — won by protests following the Attica rebellion — is registered in the New York State Department of Correction’s own regulations, which name the *Militant* as one of the publications that “shall generally be approved.” However, Attica officials impounded the Oct. 3 issue, claiming articles in it “incite rebellion against government authority.”

Other publications, individuals and organizations that defend the right of the *Militant* to reach its subscribers and the rights of our brothers and sisters behind bars have joined in appealing this act of censorship. These include the National Lawyers Guild, the Gathering for Justice and Justice League NYC, the New York Civil Liberties Union, the *San Francisco Bay View*, Karin Deutsch Karlekar of PEN America and Yusef Salaam, one of the Central Park Five defendants railroaded to prison in 1990 on frame-up rape and assault charges.

Tell your union, political group, friends and co-workers about this important fight. Send a letter of support. Make a financial contribution to help defend the rights of workers behind bars and the *Militant*.

NY meetings campaign to free Oscar López

Continued from front page

Born in Puerto Rico, the son of a small farmer, Oscar López moved to Chicago when he was 14. After his father abandoned the family, he dropped out of community college and went to work.

In one of the letters López recalls how he was drafted and sent to Vietnam, where his squad was ordered to occupy a small village. One day, a young peasant approached him “put his arm next to mine, and said, ‘same thing,’” he writes. “We had the same arms, sinewy from hard work.”

A few nights later the squad commander ordered them to open fire after some noise was heard outside their camp. The next day they learned they had killed the villagers’ only water buffalo, crucial for working the rice fields. The young man who had showed López his arm was crying over it. Experiences like this turned López into an opponent of U.S. imperialism.

When he returned to Chicago in 1967, López joined fights against substandard housing, racist discrimination and police brutality. In another letter he describes how Charles Brown, president of what was then Illinois Bell, had refused to meet with protesters demanding the company hire Latinos and open bilingual offices in the Mexican and Puerto Rican communities.

They went to Brown’s church and made a presentation about their fight. Later they got a call from one of the parishioners giving them Brown’s address. Buses of Latino workers and their families headed to Brown’s home and held a picnic protest around his pool. In the end Illinois Bell agreed to their demands.

López was arrested in May 1981. Prosecutors

claimed that he, and 11 others arrested the year before, were members of the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN), a group that took credit for a series of bombings protesting U.S. colonial rule in Puerto Rico. They had no physical evidence that López was involved in any act of violence. Instead, he was found guilty of “seditious conspiracy” and interstate transport of weapons. He was sentenced to 55 years in jail.

Five years later López was framed on new charges of conspiring to escape. For the next 12 years he was kept in solitary confinement at federal prisons in Marion, Illinois, and Florence, Colorado.

Clarisa López read from one of her letters in the book, describing those 12 years. “Our visits were through a glass, a cubicle with two telephones and two chairs,” she said. “They would escort you, handcuffed, with 6 or 8 guards.”

She wrote that when she was a teenager she asked her father why he dedicated his life to the struggle for independence of Puerto Rico as opposed to being with his family. But she said she grew to understand that “you desired that my generation and those to come would have a better and a more just world” and that “for you it is not, nor was it, a sacrifice.”

Supporters of the fight to release Oscar López are stepping up efforts to win his release. To get involved, visit freeoscarlopeznow.com or www.boricuahumanrights.org.

You can order the book at bit.ly/cartas-a-karina.

You can write to Oscar López Rivera, #87651-024, FCI Terre Haute, P.O. Box 33, Terre Haute, IN 47808.

What the 2016 US elections revealed

Continued from page 4

Obamacare, including barring denial of coverage to those with pre-existing conditions, and only repeal it when Congress adopts something to replace it. The one thing he pointedly wouldn’t back off on was opposition to women’s right to choose abortion.

All these social and political questions and more, the product of bipartisan attacks over years, remain important fights for the working class. That includes defending Muslims and mosques whenever and wherever they come under attack.

Independent working-class alternative

Trump’s demagoguery about the problems facing working people did absolutely nothing to advance class consciousness. To the contrary, everything he stands for aims to keep workers divided and weak — a danger to the working-class and labor movement. Like Obama, Clinton and the Democratic Party, he talks about the classless “we” in order to paper over the irreconcilable conflict between the

interests of working people and those of the capitalist rulers.

Not just during the election campaign, but day in and day out, year round, the Socialist Workers Party explains that there are “three parties and two classes” in U.S. politics. Two are the parties of the bosses and war makers, the Democrats and Republicans.

And there is the SWP, whose support for struggles and demands of workers and the oppressed and working class program and activity point a way toward the fight for workers power.

As the president-elect puts together his cabinet and the rulers try to find a new road to stabilize capitalism in crisis — including their two-party system — the SWP is deepening its political activity in the working class. Party members knock on workers’ doors and join the discussion and debate, which remains as open and broad-ranging after the election as before, explaining why workers need to unite in solidarity against the attacks of the bosses and their government and build our own political party.

New assault in Syria

Continued from front page

tain an army capable of dislodging the insurgents, Assad’s forces are backed by Iran’s Revolutionary Guards, Lebanese Hezbollah and Iraqi Shiite militias and Russian troops and air power.

Conflicting national interests among Washington, Moscow, Tehran, Ankara and other Mideast capitalist regimes keep scuttling any effort to bring about a cease-fire in Syria.

No aid has reached the 275,000 people in eastern Aleppo since the pro-Assad forces surrounded it in July. United Nations officials said the besieged district was on the brink of starvation. Medical supplies are scarce and hospitals have been hit by airstrikes.

Across Syria, food production has dropped to an all-time low, and many civilians, including 7 million who are internally displaced, lack adequate food and clothing as they enter their sixth winter in a war zone. The World Food Program is already distributing rations to more than 4 million people in Syria each month.

Moscow says its attacks are aimed at Islamic State and Jabhat Fateh al-Sham (JFS), formerly known as al-Nusra Front. The *Washington Post* reported Nov. 10 that President Barack Obama had ordered the Pentagon to begin bombing JFS, which Washington labels a terrorist group linked to al-Qaeda. On the ground, the JFS often fights alongside groups backed by Washington battling the Assad regime.

Washington — whose power and influence has been weakened by its unending wars from Iraq to Afghanistan — sees a bloc with Moscow as the only road to achieve some variant of stability in Syria to preserve its imperialist interests. For months the Obama administration unsuccessfully sought to cut a deal with Moscow, offering a joint U.S.-Russian air campaign targeting JFS in exchange for Moscow reining in Syrian airstrikes. Russian President Vladimir Putin refused. Moscow’s air-defense systems and warplanes have not interfered with Washington’s operations against JFS.

The White House says this course is consistent with its drone strikes against those it labels al-Qaeda affiliates in Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen. Washington portrays these strikes as having precision accuracy, but civilians and others are also killed and maimed. The Pentagon admitted Nov. 10 that a September drone strike aimed at al-Shabab in Somalia had killed 10 soldiers of a local militia allied with Washington.

Ankara targets Kurds in Syria

The Turkish government resumed airstrikes in northern Syria Nov. 13, hitting Islamic State forces near the town of al Bab, just 20 miles north of Aleppo. Ankara had halted the strikes Oct. 22 after the Assad government threatened to shoot down any Turkish warplanes entering Syrian territory.

A Turkish-led Syrian rebel force backed by Ankara’s tanks, artillery and airstrikes is advancing on al Bab. Ankara’s real target is the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG). The Turkish regime of Recep Tayyip Erdogan aims to prevent any YPG advance that would link Kurdish territory in the east and west, fearing this would advance the formation of an autonomous Kurdish region along Syria’s border with Turkey.

Ankara’s offensive brings Turkish troops close to Syrian and Iranian forces on the outskirts of Aleppo. These groups warned they will act “decisively and with force” if Turkish troops approach their positions.

The YPG announced Nov. 16 that its units had withdrawn from Manbij, northeast of al Bab, and handed control of the city to local forces. Both Washington and Ankara had demanded the YPG leave that city, and the Turkish government had threatened military attacks to drive YPG units back. YPG-led forces liberated Manbij from Islamic State in August.

The YPG, together with Arab and Turkmen militias in the Syrian Democratic Forces, is the main force in a U.S.-organized offensive to drive Islamic State from Raqqa, the reactionary outfit’s headquarters in Syria. A major attack by Ankara on Kurds would jeopardize that plan. Turkish artillery continues to fire across the border, hitting Kurdish fighters and civilians in Syria.

‘Militant’ vacation schedule

This is a two-week issue. *Militant* no. 46 will be mailed out December 1.