

# Drive builds readership of ‘Militant’ in working class

BY MARY MARTIN

The Socialist Workers Party’s nine-week fall circulation drive to increase readership of the *Militant* and books by party leaders is a little ahead of schedule going into its third week. At the heart of the effort is knocking on workers’ doors to discuss the social

## SWP FALL ‘MILITANT,’ BOOK, FUND DRIVE

disaster that workers, ranchers and farmers are living through, imposed by the bosses and their government as they try to place the cost of the deepening crisis of their capitalist system on our back. We find that workers want to discuss the SWP’s perspectives for how workers can meet these attacks and chart a course for the working class to take political power.

In addition to branches of the SWP, members and supporters of Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the U.K. are using the drive, which runs to Nov. 21, to

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## Fall campaign to sell Militant subscriptions and books

Sept. 16 - Nov 21(Week 2)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold
UNITED STATES				
Albany	95	22	95	23
Atlanta	85	20	85	15
Chicago	115	29	115	18
Colorado	30	4	30	5
Lincoln	30	5	30	3
Los Angeles	135	28	135	25
Miami	45	11	45	5
New York	180	51	180	51
Oakland	125	49	135	34
Philadelphia	70	29	70	20
Seattle	105	22	105	19
Twin Cities	75	15	75	23
Washington	80	21	80	12
Total U.S.	1,170	306	1,180	253
Prisoners	20	4		
UNITED KINGDOM				
London	65	27	65	15
Manchester	60	20	60	11
Total U.K.	125	47	125	26
CANADA				
Montreal	60	20	60	13
Vancouver	45	13	45	12
Total Canada	105	33	105	25
New Zealand	50	15	50	8
Australia	45	10	45	9
Total	1,515	415	1,505	321
SHOULD BE	1,500	333	1,500	333

# Kurdish freedom struggle in interests of all workers



Rudaw

Sept. 29 protest at Sulaimani airport in Kurdish region against Iraqi government attempt to ban international flights to punish Kurds for Sept. 25 independence referendum.

## Kurds stand up to threats from Mideast regimes

BY JIM BRADLEY

The Kurdish Regional Government in northern Iraq, backed by overwhelming support for an independent Kurdistan registered in the Sept. 25 referendum there, is standing firm in face of opposition and threats from the capitalist rulers in Baghdad, Ankara and Tehran, as well as the impe-

Continued on page 4

# Sept. election results reflect political crisis of German rulers

BY TERRY EVANS

The Sept. 24 German election saw Chancellor Angela Merkel’s governing coalition — the Christian Democratic Union and the Social Democratic Party (SPD) — lose seats to the recently formed Alternative for Germany (AfD.) The CDU and SPD, which have shared or alternated in every government since the division of the country in 1949, received their lowest vote ever.

AfD took 13 percent of the vote, and will get 94 seats in the Bundestag, the German parliament, making it the third largest party. Merkel’s CDU vote declined from 41 to 33 percent.

Liberal media pundits and politicians falsely claim the AfD is a fascist party. “For the first time since the end of the Second World War, real Nazis will sit in the German parliament,” former SPD leader Sigmar Gabriel said.

And, as in the case of President Donald Trump, they claim the AfD

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## Support the fight for an independent Kurdistan!

The Kurds’ fight for independence is an inspiration for working people worldwide. Despite the opposition of Washington, Moscow and almost ev-

## EDITORIAL

ery capitalist regime in the region millions of people in the Kurdish areas of Iraq voted overwhelmingly in favor of an independent Kurdistan Sept. 25.

It’s no surprise that thousands of

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# US rulers’ sanctions on NKorea hit workers, farmers hardest

BY SETH GALINSKY

While his rhetoric sometimes sounds bombastic, President Donald Trump and his administration’s policy toward North Korea is largely the same approach promoted when Barack Obama, George W. Bush and Bill Clinton occupied the White House — slapping economic sanctions against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. The goal is to force Pyongyang to give up its nuclear arsenal.

If “forced to,” Trump told the United Nations General Assembly Sept. 19, “we will have no choice but to totally destroy North Korea.” He demeaned North Korean leader Kim Jung Un as a “rocket man” who is “on a suicide mission.”

In 1994, President Bill Clinton said that he wouldn’t allow the DPRK to produce enriched plutonium to make nuclear weapons and that he was prepared to use military force to stop it.

“I will surely and definitely tame

# Puerto Rico: ‘Colonialism causes the most damage’

BY SETH GALINSKY

“The hurricanes caused a lot of damage, but not as much as colonialism has,” longtime independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda said by phone from San Juan, Puerto Rico, Sept. 28. “We’ve been suffering under the hurricane of Yankee colonialism for more than 100 years.”

The former political prisoner was referring to Washington’s exploitation of the natural resources and labor power of working people in the U.S. colony, transferring the wealth to U.S. corporations, and squeezing even more out now to pay the colonial regime’s \$74 billion debt to bondholders.

Although Washington has sent thousands of troops and Federal Emergency Management Agency personnel, the pace of restoring services, opening roads, and providing food, water, electricity and fuel has been painfully slow.

“Not far from where I live there’s a 10-story building for retirees. There’s no electricity. They can’t get water,” Cancel Miranda said. It’s worse outside San Juan in towns and rural areas. Two weeks after the storm many rural areas had not received water or food.

“This is a tragedy, especially for workers and for those with few eco-

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# Revoked Obama directive had zero to do with women’s rights

BY SETH GALINSKY

Education Secretary Betsy DeVos issued interim guidelines Sept. 22 to replace an executive order issued by the Barack Obama administration that gutted the constitutional right to the presumption of innocence in the name of fighting sexual harassment on college campuses.

“One rape is one too many,” DeVos said Sept. 7. “One aggressive act of harassment is one too many.” At the same time, DeVos said, “One person denied due process is one too many.”

Obama’s order, imposed in an April 2011 letter issued by the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights, had nothing to do with advancing the fight for women’s equality. Working people and students should celebrate its demise.

The letter reinterpreted Title IX, a 1972 law signed by President Richard Nixon. A by-product of the mass struggle for Black rights and the rise of the women’s liberation movement, Title IX prohibits discrimination “on the basis of sex” in any education program that gets federal funds.

Title IX was aimed at forcing university administrations to expand basic rights, stopping them from denying equal rights to women. The Obama re-interpretation turned it on its head, giving administrators the power to regulate relations between students.

At the heart of the directive was an attack on democratic rights. When investigating allegations, the letters says, “The school must use a preponderance of the evidence standard (i.e., it is more likely than not that sexual harassment or violence occurred).” This is substantial-

ly lower than the “clear and convincing” evidence constitutionally required to find someone guilty in criminal court, an important basic democratic right. It shifts the burden of proof from college administrators onto the accused.

In other words: Guilty until proven innocent.

The letter redefined sexual harassment as “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature” — a definition so broad that almost anything was chargeable. It turned over to school administrators the decision whether or not to allow the accused, and the accuser, to have legal counsel during hearings.

The letter threatened to cut off federal funds to any college that didn’t implement its dictates.

The change accelerated the expansion of a massive bureaucracy to investigate alleged offenses. It fueled the naming of thousands of so-called Title IX “coordinators” and set up review boards that act as judge and jury. It encouraged campus officials to “educate” students on proper sexual conduct.

As all too often happens when liberal meritocrats set out to do “good,” they trampled on people’s rights. These programs became entwined with a push to write political correctness into the guidelines on speech and conduct that have mushroomed on campuses everywhere.

### A case study

In the opening paragraphs of the “The Uncomfortable Truth About Campus Rape Policy,” the first of a three-part se-



Ohio woman coal miner, August 1981. Biggest gains for women’s rights were won as women entered workforce, gaining self-confidence, strengthening unity of working class.

ries in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Emily Yoffe describes one example of this process, looking at what happened when Kwadwo Bonsu, 23, was accused of sexual assault at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in 2014.

His accuser’s written account details in her own words that the entire encounter — in which she did not remove any clothing or have intercourse — was consensual, but that at one point she felt uncomfortable. A resident assistant at a dorm, she said that it was only afterwards that, “as my RA training kicked in, I realized I’d been sexually assaulted.”

She filed a complaint with the Amherst police who investigated and closed the case with no charges. She also filed a complaint with the university, which then banned Bonsu from visiting any dormitory other than his own, forbid him from entering the student union, allowed him to go to only one dining hall and warned him to not talk about the allegation.

Though found not guilty, Bonsu was suspended for a year, permanently banned from living on campus and required to get counseling to address his “decision-making” because the university claims he used the woman’s name in an email and sent her a Facebook friend request.

As Yoffe shows, this is not an aberration. The system is stacked to ensure cases like this happen all too often.

Liberal politicians and middle-class

leftists are up in arms over the rescinding of the Obama directive. They paint DeVos as a tool of President Donald Trump, whose every action must be dark and reactionary. Twenty-nine Democratic Party senators sent a letter to DeVos Sept. 14 demanding she hold off on changes until there is a “transparent process.” But unlike the Obama executive order, which was implemented with no discussion, the Education Department is soliciting public comments before adopting the new guidelines.

The proponents of political correctness often claim that “campus sexual assault is a national scourge,” despite figures that show that women in college are less likely to be victims of sexual assault than nonstudents.

The fight for women’s emancipation is an essential part of the fight to advance the interests of the working class. There is greater support for women’s rights today than ever. One of the key turning points came when women fought their way into the workforce in larger numbers, especially in traditionally male jobs, including in steel mills and coal mines. As the number of working women grew, their self-confidence grew. They won the support and solidarity of their male co-workers, strengthening the unions and the fight to win a woman’s right to choose abortion.

That’s the road forward, not an assault on basic rights, meritocratic “nudges,” or bureaucratic meddling in the private lives of students.



## Defend framed-up Canadian rail workers!

*The Canadian government is attempting to frame up rail workers Thomas Harding and Richard Labrie for the deadly 2013 oil train derailment in Lac-Mégantic. The ‘Militant’ will cover their trial that begins this month, and the fight for union solidarity and to drop the charges.*



Militant/Madhu DurgaSrihari  
DC fundraiser backs framed-up rail workers

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‘Militant’ readership, fund

Continued from front page introduce the communist movement and discuss developments in the class struggle — from the independence votes in Kurdistan and Catalonia, to the sharp distinction between the response of Cuba’s revolutionary government to prepare for and rebuild after recent hurricanes, and the social disaster for working people in the colonies of Washington and other imperialist powers in the Caribbean.

The drive runs concurrently with the SWP’s \$100,000 fall party fund to finance the party’s ongoing work. Charts showing the party’s progress are printed on the front page and below.

“The *Militant* stands strong for everyday workers,” Joye Beamon, a grocery store worker in Chicago, told party supporter Salm Kolis as she renewed her subscription. “It’s for people who want the real story, the truth about what is actually happening locally, nationally and internationally.”

Dan Fein from Chicago reports that he went to talk more about politics and the party with a co-worker of his at Walmart who subscribes to the *Militant* and got to meet his family. Fein told them he and other party members were going to knock on some doors to introduce the party and its literature, and asked if they have any suggestions where to go. They told Fein they thought the party would get a good response just knocking on doors on the same street. He and other party members did so and ended up signing up three of their neighbors for subscriptions.

From Seattle, party supporter Pat Scott reports that at Walmart where she works a co-worker asked her why she says Bill Clinton’s presidency was bad for working people, and that the election of Hillary Clinton would have been just as bad. Scott suggested he read *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. He bought a copy after work and got a copy of the *Militant* to decide about getting a subscription.

The book is one of the half-price specials in the drive, along with *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* also by Barnes; *Is Revolution in the US Possible?* by party leader Mary-Alice Waters; and “*It’s the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US ‘Justice’ System*”

by the Cuban Five, five Cuban revolutionaries who spent up to 16 years in U.S. prisons for their actions in defense of the Cuban Revolution.

Katy LeRougetel from the Communist League in Canada reported from Vancouver that party members attended a meeting of about 40 Kurds organized by supporters of a group from the Iranian part of Kurdistan, which celebrated the recent referendum in Iraq. “Seyran Enveri, a health care worker in a seniors home and member of the British Columbia Government Employees Union, told me her union supports the Kurdish struggle and she has spoken out on this at union gatherings,” LeRougetel said. “She got a copy of the *Militant* and gave me her number to get back to her about a subscription.”

SWP members participated in a meeting about the Kurdish fight for independence in New Jersey, where Brian Williams reports they got three new subscribers to the *Militant* and sold 6 single copies, a copy of *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* and got \$19 in donations.

Pamela Holmes reports from the United Kingdom that Communist League members from both London and Manchester got together to campaign door to door last weekend in working-class areas in Greater Manchester.

They also attended two simultaneous protests totaling 30,000 people outside the annual Conservative Party conference, with some calling for overturning the Brexit vote and others promoting a Labour Party government. Many workers were attracted to the Communist League table, displaying placards calling for support for Kurdish independence, denuclearization of the Pacific, and for the unions to fight to organize all cab drivers, including the thousands who work for Uber.

“I didn’t know anything like this existed in Manchester,” 21-year-old office worker Gemma Jorgensen told Holmes when she spotted the campaign table. “I was a big Corbynite at first but I’m not so sure now. What would the Labour Party do if it was in power?”

Holmes said it was a dead end for



Militant/Anne Howie

Communist League members Andrés Mendoza, left, and Catharina Tirsén, center, participated in Sept. 17 London demonstration in support of Kurdish referendum. Many participants, like woman at right, were interested in books by leaders of the communist movement and the *Militant* newspaper. Nine-week international drive to win new readers is centered on going deeply into working class, talking to workers on their door steps, and to workers walking strike picket lines and joining social protests like the one above.

workers to back either Labour or the Conservatives. She pointed to the Cuban Revolution as an example for working people. She described how the Cuban government mobilized the whole people to prepare for and then respond to the recent hurricanes as an example of what working people can do when we get rid of the capitalist system and replace it with workers power.

Keen to keep in touch for future activity, Jorgenson got a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, Holmes said. Over the weekend, 16 subscriptions to the *Militant* and 14 copies of the party’s campaign titles were sold.

SWP FUND DRIVE TO RAISE \$100,000

BY CHRIS HOEPPNER

The Socialist Workers Party’s \$100,000 fall fund drive helps finance the work of the party. There is increasing interest in the SWP, the *Militant*, and revolutionary books that explain why the capitalist world order of imperialist alliances and “spheres of influence” that have marked politics for decades are coming apart — from the unraveling of the European Union, to the Kurdish fight for independence roiling the war-shaken Middle East, to

rising challenges to Washington’s hegemony from China, Russia and more.

Recent contributions to the SWP fund give an indication of what’s possible. Jacquie Henderson writes from the Twin Cities that party members there are sending in \$140 from “contributions from five people we met when we knocked on their doors over the past week.”

“I don’t know that we can promise this amount every week from taking the party to working-class neighborhoods throughout the state,” she said, “but if we keep asking, if we continue to give people that we meet the opportunity to help in the work of the party in this way, it should add up to a substantial amount towards our quota of \$4,800.”

Cecelie Brown, who works at a Philadelphia-area Walmart store, donated \$10 to the SWP fund. “I believe in the working class, and if we can take over and rule, the world will have a better chance,” she said. “But we need unity and I think the SWP is a big help in establishing that. I hope other workers will join in contributing to the fund.”

If you’d like to sign up for a *Militant* subscription, order books on special or make a contribution to the party Fund, contact the party office nearest you, listed in the directory on page 8.

Socialist Workers Party Fund Drive

Sept. 16 - Nov. 21- Week 2

Area	Quota	Collected	%
Albany	\$5,000	\$200	4%
Atlanta	\$11,200	\$2,695	24%
Chicago	\$12,000	\$1,620	14%
Colorado	\$700	0%	
Lincoln	\$300	0%	
Los Angeles	\$9,400	\$125	1%
Miami	\$3,500	\$570	16%
New York	\$17,000	\$1,050	6%
Oakland	\$14,500	\$2,192	15%
Philadelphia	\$4,200	0%	
Seattle	\$8,200	\$760	9%
Twin Cities	\$4,800	\$180	4%
Washington, DC	\$7,250	\$342	5%
Other	\$1,200		
Total	\$99,250	\$9,734	10%
Should Be	\$100,000	\$22,222	22%

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To subscribe or purchase books at these prices, contact Socialist Workers Party or Communist League branches listed on page 8.



# Spanish gov't, cop assaults fail to prevent Catalan vote

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Dockworkers, firefighters, public workers, students and many others, including the F.C. Barcelona soccer team, joined a general strike Oct. 3. Labor unions and other groups called the action across Catalonia to protest attacks by Spanish cops that injured some 900 people as the federal government in Madrid tried unsuccessfully to shut down a referendum on independence there two days earlier.

Despite the all-out efforts by the Spanish government to prevent the referendum on Catalanian independence from taking place, some 2.3 million people braved cop attacks and threats to cast ballots Oct. 1 — 90 percent in favor. The attacks did cut turnout in some areas, along with a boycott by opponents of breaking away from Madrid. Turnout was 42 percent of the 5.4 million eligible voters.

Madrid, declaring the referendum illegal, sent in federal police with orders to seize ballots and cordon off polling stations. Knowing the cops would face widespread opposition, the federal government housed them on special boats by the docks, where port workers protested their presence.

On Sept. 29 thousands of referendum supporters — teachers, students and their families — occupied about 1,000 school polling stations, preventing the cops from closing them down. Hundreds of farmers drove tractors to the doors to help keep them open. On the morning of the vote Civil Guard and National Police forces in riot gear attacked crowds and attempted to remove people from the polls and seize the ballots.

As lines stretched for blocks of individuals waiting to vote, cops fired rubber bullets at crowds in Barcelona and other cities and beat people.

“The only thing this will do is make those undecided people vote ‘yes’ to independence,” Marc Quintana, a 34-year-old carpenter who was forcibly removed by police in Sant Julià de Ramis before he could vote, told the *Wall Street Journal*.

“It’s really sad to have to vote like this,” Honorato Pons, 79, a retired welder, told the *New York Times*. “I’m not going to let anybody in Madrid shut my month and leave me feeling humiliated.”

“We did what we had to do,” Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy told the media Oct. 1, praising attacks by the federal cops.

About 2,000 polling stations remained open, according to Catalan officials. With large crowds blocking cops from entering most voting stations, the Spanish government decided to call off federal cop operations early. The polls stayed open until 8 p.m.

During the more than 35 years of his brutal dictatorial rule, Gen. Francisco Franco banned unions, crushed dissent and campaigned to stamp out Catalan nationalism, barring use of the Catalan language. After his regime fell following his death in 1975, Catalans fought for and won growing autonomy in capitalist Spain. In 2005 the Catalan parliament passed a new Statute of Autonomy by an overwhelming majority that expanded self-rule in the region. It was approved by the federal parliament and carried in a referendum in Catalonia the following year. But the expanded autonomy was

challenged in Spain’s highest Constitutional Court by the People’s Party — the party of Prime Minister Rajoy.

In 2010 the court threw out or watered down some of the autonomy provisions. “The interpretation of the references to ‘Catalonia as a nation’ and to ‘the national reality of Catalonia’” in the act “have no legal effect,” the court said.

Two weeks later over a million Catalans marched in Barcelona against this decision. Similar marches have taken place every year since on Sept. 11 — the National Day of Catalonia. The march this year, just a couple of weeks before the banned referendum, was a million strong.

The referendum — and the brutal response from Madrid — is a reflection of how the sharpening imperialist competition and capitalist economic crisis is pulling the European Union apart, as is Brexit in the U.K.

## Kurds stand up to threats from Mideast regimes

Continued from front page  
rialist rulers in Washington.

“I’ve been fighting for half a century. With my people I have been through mass killings, deportations, gassings. I remember times when we thought we were done for, headed for extermination,” KRG President Masoud Barzani told Bernard-Henri Lévy, the maker of a new documentary film “Peshmerga,” in Erbil Sept. 25, after passage of the referendum. “During those decades of resistance, of hopes dashed and reborn, I never imagined that in my lifetime I would see the day when ... my people would finally be able to come together and express to the world their desire to be democratic and free.”

Out of 4,581,255 eligible voters, 72 percent turned out to vote. “Yes” for an independent Kurdistan won 92.7 percent. Tens of thousands of Kurds in Iran, Turkey and Syria celebrated, as did Kurds throughout the world. This historic development was possible because the ruling classes in Washington and across the region have been absorbed in wars amid the unraveling of the artificial borders and “order” imposed on the toilers of the Middle East by the victors in the two 20th century imperialist world wars that denied the over 30 million Kurds the right to their own state.

The outrage, and the fear, of the rulers in Ankara, Tehran and Damascus — Kurdistan’s neighbors who oppress the great majority of the rest of the region’s Kurds — as well as in Baghdad and Washington, found swift expression.

On Sept. 29 Baghdad ordered a halt to all foreign flights in and out of Kurdistan and demanded that Erbil hand over the KRG’s two international airports to the central government — a demand rejected by Erbil.

The Iraqi government also threatened to send troops to seize oil fields in Kirkuk, territory historically Kurdish but claimed by Baghdad in continuity with the Arabization policy of the former Saddam Hussein dictatorship.

The Iraqi parliament Oct. 3 barred Kurdish elected members from participating and told them to go back to Kurdistan. Then the remaining members of parliament, led by political allies of Tehran, voted to demand the Federal Court strip the Kurdish delegates of their im-



Reuters/Susana Vera

Demonstration outside National Police station in Barcelona Oct. 3, part of general strike across Catalonia to protest Spanish cop assaults on Catalan independence referendum.

munity and put them on trial.

Baghdad has also asked Ankara to turn over oil revenues the KRG receives through Turkey, a key aspect of Kurdistan’s economy. For some years the landlocked KRG has been shipping oil via Turkey to international markets, but Ankara now threatens to shut down the pipeline. So far the oil continues to flow.

“Wake up from this dream,” Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told the Kurds. “An independent state is not being founded in northern Iraq, but on the contrary, a continuously bleeding wound is being opened.” He claimed the only way the referendum passed was by manipulation of Israel’s Mossad intelligence agency.

“Israel played no part in the Kurdish referendum, aside from the natural, deep and long-standing sympathy the Jewish people have for the Kurdish people and their aspirations,” Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu replied. Tel Aviv is the only government that has declared its support for an independent Kurdistan, hoping it can provide a counterweight to the growing influence of Tehran’s rulers.

“An artificial state” in Kurdistan “is an issue for Turkey’s national security,” Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said. Ankara is “working hard” to join with Tehran and Baghdad to step up pressure against the Kurds.

Armed forces from Iran, Iraq and Turkey are conducting military war games on the KRG’s borders. But there have been no direct attacks on the Kurds.

### Washington: vote lacked ‘legitimacy’

“The vote and the results lack legitimacy and we continue to support a united, federal, democratic and prosperous Iraq,” Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said Sept. 29. At the same time, the State Department made it clear they oppose any armed attacks against the KRG, calling for “calm on all sides.”

The pressure the mass vote for Kurdish independence puts on neighboring rulers was reflected in statements by the foreign minister of Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad, who said Damascus is open to discussions with Syrian Kurds about the formation of an autonomous Kurdish region within Syria’s borders.

In fact, one already exists along the

border with Turkey, called the Democratic Federal System of Northern Syria, home to 2 million Kurds, defended by the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG). The YPG is in a tactical alliance with Washington, fighting to oust reactionary Islamic State from Raqqa, its self-declared capital, and to extend U.S. influence in Syria along the eastern bank of the Euphrates River from Deir el-Zour to Syria’s border with Iraq.

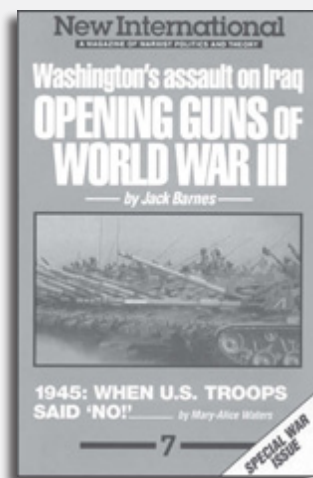
Syrian army forces, backed by Iranian officers, Hezbollah forces and Russian bombers, are also trying to take these areas, but are currently confined to the other side of the Euphrates.

The U.S. imperialist rulers are locked in a struggle with Moscow, as well as the capitalist rulers in the region, all seeking to defend their own national economic and political interests. In particular, Washington is trying to prevent Tehran from firming up a land route from Afghanistan through Iraq and Syria to Hezbollah in Lebanon.

### Opening Guns of World War III: Washington’s Assault on Iraq

by Jack Barnes

In *New International* no. 7



“The U.S. rulers have no interests in the national rights of the Kurds. The depth of national pride and determination of the Kurdish people is a mystery to them.”—Jack Barnes

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# German rulers' political crisis

**Continued from front page**  
vote shows workers in Germany are becoming more bigoted and reactionary.

Despite its dominant position against its competitors in the EU, Germany is not immune to the political turmoil occurring in other capitalist countries. As the broader economic, social and moral crisis battering working people continues to unfold, millions of workers, looking for a way out, have voted against the parties that have shared power as the crisis deepens.

Alexandra Heil, a 43-year-old worker on disability benefits, told the *Washington Post*, that she wasn't sure about the AfD because "they are somewhat Hitler-like, and I don't want that." But she went ahead and voted for them because she "just wanted something to change," and was pleased to see the establishment politicians "all wetting their pants a bit" at the result.

Across Germany the official unemployment rate has fallen, but those figures obscure the reality for many working people. There are consistently high numbers of workers classified as long-term unemployed. Workers in so-called mini jobs that pay less than \$540 a month have risen from 2.2 million in 2003 to 7.8 million in 2016.

The government's disdain for workers and their problems was graphically displayed when CDU General Secretary Peter Tauber had to apologize in July after contemptuously stating that those who just studied hard wouldn't get stuck in mini jobs.

Over a million Germans have turned to food banks to get enough to eat, and

the numbers are rising. When a cleaner from Bochum challenged Merkel about why growing numbers of pensioners can't afford to make ends meet, Merkel told her she couldn't "change our pension system at the moment," and suggested she just buy a private pension. The cleaner responded that on her wages she couldn't afford it.

Some pundits claim the growing "fascist threat" is innate in the genes of the German people, as *New York Times* columnist Roger Cohen indicated in an article titled "The Return of the German Volk." He says people who voted for AfD are "violent" and "rightist, nativist, nationalist," just plain "reactionary."

But fascist outfits don't evolve out of bourgeois parties or through electoral politics. They are forged in combat in response to rising working-class struggles and social movements. History shows the bosses reluctantly turn to the fascists when the social crisis of their system is deepest, ceding some power in order to drive working-class struggles off the streets, and crush the unions and workers' parties that lead them.

The election results showed the response by millions of workers and others to the impact in Germany of the same worldwide carnage that drove millions in the U.S. to elect Donald Trump. And to register through the ballot box their opposition to what is being done to them by parties at the center of bourgeois politics in the interests of Germany's propertied owners.

## AfD grows where crisis is deepest

AfD picked up its highest percentage of votes in eastern parts of Germany, where workers face the deepest depression-like conditions. The Berlin wall was torn down over 25 years ago by the struggles of the peoples of East Germany against the Stalinist regime there. In the wake of German reunification, Berlin announced a "Solidarity Pact" which was supposed to bring basic living conditions in the east up to the levels of the rest of the country.

But unemployment in the east remains higher, wages and pensions lower, public services poorer and overall living conditions worse. Between 1990 and 2015 fully 15 percent of the population of Germany's five eastern states left

## Hundreds protest toxic waste in Los Angeles



Militant/Deborah Liatos

COMMERCE, Calif. — Three hundred people marched to the office of the California Department of Toxic Substances Control here Sept. 18, demanding a thoroughgoing cleanup of contamination from the Exide Technologies battery recycling plant. The plant operated in Vernon from 1922 to 2015, spewing arsenic, lead and other toxic waste on working-class communities southeast of Los Angeles.

Protesters say the current cleanup is inadequate. It would remove contaminated soil from only 2,500 of the 10,000 homes near the plant. It does not cover inside of homes.

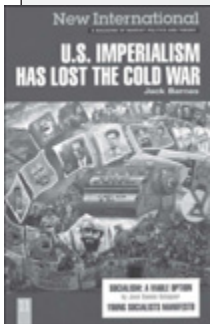
"We cannot be victims of our own state agencies. On my block, there are 19 homes. Twelve have somebody with cancer," Joe Gonzalez, above in wheelchair, with sign reading, "Gov. Brown Where Are You," told the rally. Gonzalez, a lifelong resident of the area, has been diagnosed with terminal cancer.

Exide took over the lead-acid battery smelter in 2000, running it 24 hours a day. Area residents campaigned to shut it down. As evidence of the pollution mounted, company officials signed a deal with the U.S. Attorney's Office to pay \$59 million to demolish the plant and clean it up, and the government agreed not to prosecute them. Opponents of the department's cleanup plan have formed the Lead-Free Communities Coalition to continue the fight.

— BILL ARTH

## U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War

by Jack Barnes



*U.S. imperialism has lost the Cold War, the Socialist Workers Party concluded after the collapse of regimes and parties across Eastern Europe and the USSR that claimed to be communist. Contrary to imperialism's hopes, the working class there has not been crushed.*

in *New International* no. 11 \$16  
Also in Spanish, French, Farsi, Swedish, Greek, Icelandic

## The Stewardship of Nature Also Falls to the Working Class: In Defense of Land and Labor

by Jack Barnes



*"Under capitalist social relations, human hardship from natural occurrences falls in starkly different ways on different social classes. In New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, life or death, a home still habitable*

*or forced diaspora — a few feet above or below sea level marked the class divide"*  
— Socialist Workers Party statement in *New International* no. 14

\$14. Also in Spanish, French, and Swedish

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## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



October 16, 1992

President George Bush declared on Oct. 2 that the U.S. government "will seek a new UN Security Council resolution, with a provision for enforcement, banning all flights in Bosnian airspace except those authorized by the UN. If asked by the UN, the U.S. will participate in enforcement measures."

The brutal war being carried out against the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina is not a matter of indifference for working people around the world. The people of the Yugoslav republics deserve international solidarity, not imperialist intervention. We should demand: End all plans for military intervention in Bosnia! Lift the economic sanctions that are strangling the people of Serbia and Montenegro!



October 16, 1967

Soviet officialdom seems determined to mar the celebrations of the 50th year of the October Revolution with more persecutions of antibureaucratic writers. A trial similar to that of authors Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel in February 1966 seems again in the works. Chief defendant is said to be Aleksandr Ginzburg, sparkplug of the underground magazine *Phoenix* 1966.

The chief grievance of the bureaucrats against Ginzburg is that he circulated a "White Paper," containing the transcript of the Sinyavsky-Daniel trial, together with letters of protest against the trial made by prominent Soviet intellectuals.

The resourcefulness of young Soviet rebels, in being able to get hold of such documents and circulate them in semi-underground conditions, does indeed bode ill for Soviet bureaucrats.



October 17, 1942

John L. Lewis' departure from the CIO is not news; it was freely predicted far in advance of the recent action of the United Mine Workers convention in formally withdrawing from the organization. The injurious effects of this rupture on the industrial union movement are not at all mitigated by the fact that it was generally anticipated.

The miners' organization played a progressive role second to none in helping to enroll the mass production workers under the banner of the trade union movement. From the first day, the opposition to the craft union bureaucrats within the AFL to the time when the CIO was firmly established (having fought and defeated the bosses in rubber, steel and auto) the question of industrial unionism was the central issue of the struggle within the labor movement.



# Thousands protest ‘anti-drug’ killing by cops in Philippines

Workers, students discuss deepening social crisis

BY RON POULSEN

MANILA, Philippines — Thousands of working people and students have been joining protests here against the recent cop killing of 17-year-old high school student Kian Loud delos Santos and others in Caloocan City, a mostly poor, northern Manila working-class district.

A four-person team — myself and Linda Harris from the Communist League Australia, Janet Roth from the CL in New Zealand and Philippe Tessier, Communist League candidate for mayor of Montreal — learned about this fight during a trip here in mid-September.

Popular support for Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, elected last year, has been bolstered by an expansion of the Philippine economy — a product of a recent investment boom. Many working people also support action against widespread drug traffic and violence on the streets, and have been drawn behind Duterte’s murderous “war on drugs and crime.”

Delos Santos was one of 82 people killed by Manila-area cops Aug. 16 in one of the authorities so-called anti-drug operations, this one called the “one time, big time” initiative. Large protests led by family members erupted after surveillance camera video and eyewitness reports showed delos Santos was dragged across a schoolyard by cops Jerwin Cruz, Jeremias Pereda and Arnel Oares and shot three times while he knelt in front of them. This blew apart the cops’ lie that he died in a “gun-battle.”

The cold-blooded killing galvanized broader opposition to the regime’s cop and vigilante killings.

The outrage was so widespread that Duterte had to order the arrest of the cops, who were charged with murder. A public Senate inquiry into the killing was launched. “You are not allowed to kill a person that is kneeling down begging for his life,” Duterte said. “That is murder.”

“I used to believe in Duterte’s promise to end crime,” 20-year-old college student Michael Alberto Darang told the *Sydney Morning Herald* at delos Santos’ funeral Aug. 27. “But I never wanted deaths for the innocent. Stop these killings. Instead, arrest drug lords and others.”

We were in the Philippines to visit the Polytechnic University of the Philippines at the invitation of the Circle of Young Socialists and PUP SPEAK — Students Party for Equality and Advancement of Knowledge — a student group that won last year’s student council elections.

“As many as 5,000 went to the wake and funeral for Kian, including people from many organizations,” Elijah San Fernando, a leader of CYS and chair of PUP SPEAK, told the *Militant*. He said students at the university mobilized for weeks in demonstrations against cop abuse and murders.

“Duterte is protecting the drug lords,” Fernando said. “Many Filipino politicians try to excuse the extrajudicial killings of teenagers and even children as

‘collateral damage.’”

The government admits to 3,450 deaths from “gun battles,” which the cops call “nanlaban,” meaning self-defense, since Duterte’s election.

“The drug menace is real,” Fernando said, but more people are now rejecting the “bloody anti-drug campaign of Duterte.” Drug use is “a public health problem. No jobs, low wages, the difficulty in getting access to public services — the system itself is the problem.”

In an effort to defuse the mounting protests and public revulsion, the police command announced Sept. 15 that the entire cop force at Caloocan, with the exception of the newly installed chief and his deputy, would be reassigned and retrained.

Students snapped up copies of the *Militant* and books by leaders of the Socialist Workers Party when we set up literature tables at the university, with assistance from CYS and PUP SPEAK activists. Many wanted to discuss U.S. and world politics, the Cuban Revolution and women’s liberation. This was one reflection of the openings in the Philippines for working-class fighters and youth to reach new people with communist ideas.

### Workers face slum conditions

Circle of Young Socialists members also took us to a poor, working-class area in Malabon, in the north of Manila Sept. 14. Emily Cano, organizer of the Ang Bagong Bahay Housing Cooperative, and others from the neighborhood welcomed us with a “boodle fight” —



Militant photos/Ron Poulsen  
Left, Philippe Tessier, Communist League candidate for mayor of Montreal, talks with Emily Cano, organizer of protests demanding government replace slum housing, Sept. 14. Above, housing in Malabon neighborhood of Manila, Philippines.

a meal of rice, fish, chicken and vegetables laid out on banana-leaf-covered tables. Afterwards they took us on a tour of the area — small houses jammed together along narrow alleyways with an open drain in the middle.

Cano had been a domestic worker in Abu Dhabi in the 1980s. For the past 15 years, she has led community protests by coop members demanding the government build decent housing to replace the slums.

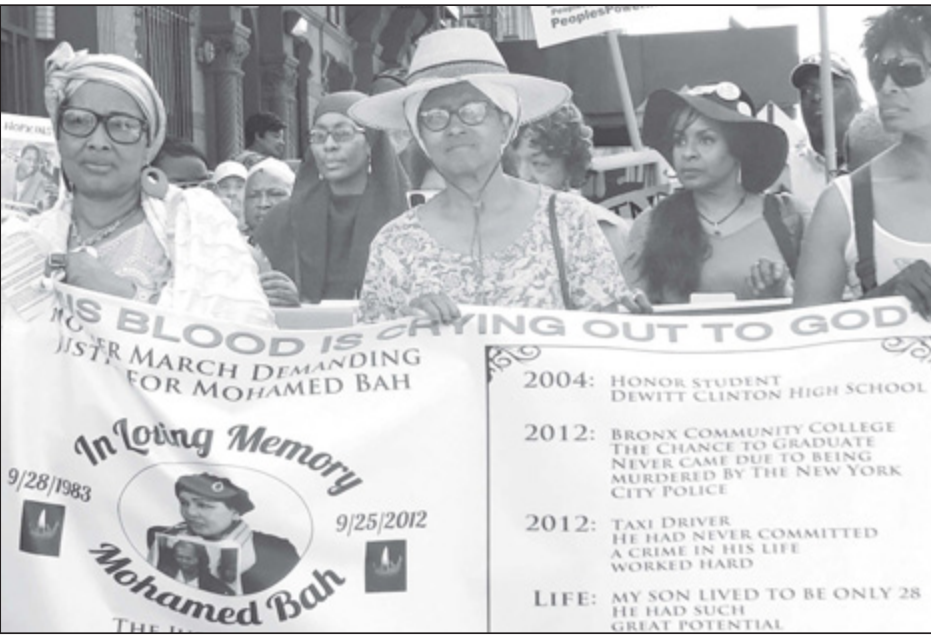
She and others showed us where the water levels reached during flooding after a recent typhoon. They receive no aid from the municipality to repair flood damage, which occurs regularly. We saw volunteer community workers rebuilding a washed-out bamboo bridge

across the canal.

They showed us houses gutted from fires caused by electrical faults. Many working people in the poorer areas are “forced to tap into the water and power supplies illegally just to live,” Cano said. “Street crime is a problem,” she said, explaining how gangs roam the area, committing robberies and rape. Comments by community members we met, as well as signs on some of their doors, made it clear that these conditions have led people to support Duterte’s campaign to “clean up the streets.”

“Almost every night, people find bodies by the canal or roadway, shot in the head execution-style,” Cano said. “Two mayors who were opposed to Duterte were murdered.”

## Protest marks 5 years since cops killed Mohamed Bah



Militant/Sara Lobman

Above, from left, Hawa Bah, Mohamed Bah’s mother; Sharonne Salaam, mother of Yusef Salaam, one of the Central Park Five; and Gina Best, whose 28-year-old daughter India Kager was killed by police in 2015 in Virginia Beach, Virginia, at New York protest Sept. 25.

BY STEVE CLARK

NEW YORK — Some 75 people gathered in Harlem Sept. 25 to mark the fifth anniversary of the cop killing of Mohamed Bah and protest the Aug. 22 announcement by the U.S. Attorney’s Office that the federal government will not indict the police officers who broke down his apartment door and killed him. A New York grand jury rejected indictments in November 2013. Participants marched from the building where Bah was shot to

the state office building several blocks away.

Family members of 16 victims of police killings and frame-ups came from around the country to stand with Hawa Bah. Others included Kadiatou Diallo, whose son was killed in a hail of gunfire by New York cops in 1999, and Rhonda Dormeus, whose daughter Korryn Gaines was killed and five-year-old grandson Kodi wounded in a shooting by Baltimore County police in their apartment in August 2016.

In September 2012, Hawa Bah, from Guinea, West Africa, was visiting her son, a student and taxi driver, and found him suffering from depression. She called 911 for an ambulance and waited downstairs for medical workers to arrive. Instead, five heavily armed cops appeared, pushed past her, went to Bah’s apartment and shot him dead.

Police spokespeople initially said Mohamed Bah had slashed at two officers with a 13-inch knife, prompting detective Edwin Mateo to yell, “He’s stabbing me, shoot him.” But Mateo later said he was actually hit by a police Taser — information kept from Hawa Bah and her attorneys. Mateo has admitted in civil court proceedings that Mohamed Bah did not stab him.

Attorney Debra Cohen, who spoke at the Harlem action, told the *Militant* that the trial of a federal civil lawsuit filed by Hawa Bah against the city will begin Nov. 1. Supporters are encouraged to attend the opening of the trial at the U.S. Courthouse, 500 Pearl Street, at 9 a.m.

## ‘Colonialism is the hurricane’

Continued from front page

conomic resources,” he said. It’s a similar story in all the colonies and semicolonies of the United States, Britain, France and the Netherlands in the Caribbean because the imperialist powers and colonial regimes work to suck even more wealth out of workers and farmers.

Capitalist social relations turn the effects of disasters like hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria, or Mexico’s earthquakes, into catastrophes for working people.

And, like in Puerto Rico, workers and farmers in the rest of the Caribbean are being ravaged by the disastrous effects on them caused by the worldwide capitalist economic crisis and exacerbated by wealthy bondholders demanding debt payments.

Before Irma and Maria hit, the treasury of the U.S. Virgin Islands “had barely enough cash to keep the government funded for three days,” the *New York Times* reported. Unemployment was more than twice the U.S. average. The debt of nearly \$2 billion was higher per capita than Puerto Rico’s. Its pension system was on the verge of bankruptcy. And the colonial government had used up funds set aside for relief from hurricanes and other natural disasters to meet other expenses.

Barbuda was almost 90 percent destroyed by the storms and all its 1,800 residents had to be evacuated to Antigua — with help of the Venezuelan government. Gaston Browne, prime minister of the former British colony of Antigua and Barbuda, has asked for a moratorium on its \$15.8 million debt to the International Monetary Fund. But the IMF says it would rather loan the government more money instead.

Some of the islands in the Caribbean play special roles in world capitalist profit gouging. Tax and other loopholes in the British Virgin Islands mean that more than 400,000 capitalist enterprises worldwide are registered there, with some \$1.5 trillion in assets. Though workers in the British colony face a disaster from the hurricane, with at least 70 percent of the homes and other buildings there destroyed, the tax shelter profit business was up and running again within days.

Cancel Miranda described the carnage facing working people in Puerto Rico before the storms. “The truth is, brother, even before Hurricane Maria, there were children here who went to bed hungry,” he said. “There were hundreds, maybe thousands, of street vendors at the stoplights. That’s the wonder

of being a colony.”

And much of the damage “could have been avoided,” he said. Over the last decade, the colonial regime has laid off thousands of government workers, including at the electric company, which cut back on maintenance to pay its debt.

### No electricity for months

More than 80 percent of the electrical lines were destroyed by Hurricane Maria, Ángel Figueroa Jaramillo, president of the UTIER electrical workers union, told the *Militant* Sept. 30. And outside San Juan there was almost no phone service. “The government and the electric company didn’t prepare for the storms,” he said. “The workers, the linemen, were ready to get the system back up, but the company hasn’t provided the equipment, the materials, the cables, the cranes, transport.”

For two weeks after the storm, thousands of containers of food, and merchandise for Walmart and other stores clogged the ports because of a lack of diesel and warehouse space, while thousands of people were without basic necessities. Drivers showed up at the convention center in San Juan in answer to the call by the local government only to be turned away.

It wasn’t until Sept. 30, CNBC reported, that enough trucks finally began arriving at the port, clearing out the backlog, opening space for more aid to arrive.

President Donald Trump and San Juan Mayor Carmen Yulín Cruz got into a long-distance fight over who was more responsible for the disorganization and lack of progress in recovery in Puerto Rico. In fact, both were right. No level of government — from Washington to Puerto Rico — was prepared or mobilized to meet the needs of working people. When Trump visited the island Oct. 3, the two smiled and shook hands.

### Revolutionary Cuba shows the way

In sharp contrast, the revolutionary government in Cuba led workers and farmers to prepare for the hurricanes in advance, minimizing loss to life and property, including evacuating 1.8 million people before the storms made landfall. Reconstruction is well underway. The government reported Sept. 29 that nearly 100 percent of electricity was back up after repairing 3,600 poles, more than 2,000 kilometers (1,250 miles) of electric lines, and more than 1,300 transformers.

To rebuild more than 14,000 destroyed homes and 23,500 damaged ones the government is offering loans, grants and subsidized construction materials. Many fields are already being replanted with quick growing crops.

The Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC) has called for a national mobilization of voluntary work Oct. 7 to advance “redoubling our efforts to erase as quickly as possible the consequences of this destructive event.”

When workers and farmers made a revolution in 1959, led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement, they took control of the government and began to mobilize to meet their needs, they transformed themselves. They take responsibility for each other and offer solidarity and whatever they have to others in distress. While fighting to restore power in Cuba, the revolutionary government

### Int’l brigade brings solidarity to Cuban people



ACN/Odalís Acosta

More than 200 people from 21 countries, including 67 from the U.S., arrived in Cuba Oct. 1 to join the two-week “In the Footsteps of Che” International Brigade, organized by the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP).

The brigade is joining the Cuban people in commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Oct. 8, 1967, fall in combat of Argentine-born Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara. Guevara was in Bolivia then, fighting with others to organize a revolutionary movement in the southern cone of Latin America. The brigade will visit many areas in Cuba where Guevara led troops in Cuba’s revolutionary war and after the overthrow of the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship organized political work essential to consolidating workers and farmers rule. Che’s insistence that participation in voluntary labor is crucial to advancing workers’ revolutionary consciousness was the theme of the opening days of the brigade.

“What Che represents is so important,” explained Fernando González, president of ICAP and one of the five Cuban heroes framed up and jailed for years in U.S. prisons for activity in Florida in the 1990s defending the Cuban Revolution from attacks by U.S.-backed counterrevolutionary groups. “Che is an example to follow for his confidence in the capacities of human beings to transform themselves into revolutionaries.”

Brigade members will do voluntary labor on farms near the camp, then travel to Santa Clara, where Che’s remains and those of other combatants who fought alongside him are interred, for the Oct. 8th commemoration.

They will tour areas hard hit by Hurricane Irma and join in hurricane recovery work in Sancti Spiritus. Many brigade members brought gloves, tools and safety equipment, prepared to jump into the effort.

The U.S. delegation is the largest on the brigade, followed by 37 people from Argentina, 26 from Brazil, 20 from Chile, and internationalists from Zambia, Guinea-Conakry, Congo-Brazzaville, Bolivia, Austria, Greece, France and more. — MAGGIE TROWE

offered to send four brigades of electrical workers and a fully equipped mobile hospital with 39 doctors to help in Puerto Rico. The U.S. rulers haven’t responded. “We have heard of Cuba’s offer,” Cancel Miranda said. Jaramillo, the electrical union leader, said he had heard about it too.

It could be six months before most of Puerto Rico has electricity. Puerto Rico and Cuba show the difference between capitalism and socialism, Cancel Miranda said. “In Cuba working people are united. They were prepared in advance, they had shelters ready. They depend on themselves.”

### Cuban internationalists aid Mexico, Caribbean

While still facing challenges in repairing damage from Hurricane Maria, workers and farmers in Cuba, organized by their revolutionary government, have made big strides in restoring electricity and beginning the process of rebuilding homes.

And in an example of internationalism — what Cuban workers often say means “sharing what we have, not what’s left over” — at the same time they’re mobilizing at home, they’re also sending needed personnel and aid to working people elsewhere.

On Sept. 23, the Cuban government sent 1.6 tons of humanitarian aid to the Caribbean islands of Dominica and Antigua and Barbuda. Along with the shipment were medical personnel, a canine rescue brigade and electrical technicians to repair hurricane damage.

This is on top of the 771 Cuban internationalist volunteers already in the Caribbean before hurricanes Irma and Maria hit, who stayed on to help. Among the islands where the Cubans are stationed are Antigua and Barbuda; San Cristóbal and Nieves; St. Lucia; Bahamas; Dominica; and Haiti.

Because of the Cuban revolutionaries’ well-deserved reputation for internationalist solidarity, the colonial regimes welcome the help.

On Sept. 29, Cuban TV reported that 40 volunteers from the Henry Reeve Medical Brigade — including doctors, nurses, lab technicians, anesthesiologists and physical therapists — were on their way to the Mexican state of Oaxaca, one of the poorest parts of the country, which suffered serious damage in the Sept. 7 earthquake.

Writing in Granma, newspaper of the Communist Party of Cuba, Ricardo Alonso Venereo explained the Cuban people offer solidarity because it feels the misfortunes of other peoples “as if they were our own.”

— SETH GALINSKY



# 1917 Bolshevik Revolution: Example for workers today

Below are excerpts from *Revolutionary Continuity: The Early Years 1848-1917* by Farrell Dobbs. It is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for October. Dobbs was a central leader of the successful 1930s Teamsters' strikes in Minneapolis and the eleven-state over-the-road campaign that spread the union across the Midwest. He served as labor secretary and then national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, part of the communist leadership cadre determined to build a proletarian party modeled on the Bolshevik Party led by V. I. Lenin that organized the workers and peasants of Russia to take power in October 1917 — 100 years ago. Copyright © 1980 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FARRELL DOBBS

Although the October insurrection ended capitalist use of the government against the workers, it did not follow that they could achieve full economic supremacy in one stroke. More was involved than the seizure of capitalist industry by the soviet regime. For this step to become practical, the workers first needed to gain experience in administering the national economy while most factories remained temporarily capitalist owned.



May Day demonstration in Petrograd, 1917. October Bolshevik Revolution was one of the two great 20th century revolutions, alongside the 1959 Cuban Revolution led by Fidel Castro.

To carry out the desired measures in the industrial sphere, Lenin explained, revolutionary democracy had to be applied so the masses could develop confidence in their own strength. In addition to their other functions, the trade unions had to become schools for managing the economy. The workers had to be schooled in the art of administration in handling overall management of production and distribution. Toward that end their control over the bosses had to be extended at once to every facet of industry and trade. Knowledge acquired through such activities would prepare them to administer the whole economic structure, and all capitalist enterprises could then be expropriated.

Quick action was taken by the soviet government to set this process into motion. By official decree workers' control was established over all industrial, commercial, banking, and agricultural enterprises employing five or more people. Committees elected by the workers in these enterprises were authorized to keep a constant eye on company books, records, inventories, etc.; ferret out secrets kept from them by the bosses; and see that all operations were conducted in the public interest.

Factory committees of this kind constituted the organizational nuclei for state regulation of the industrial economy. They became part of and subordinate to the trade unions in the various branches of industry. The unions, while

independent, were in turn responsible to the soviets, and subordinate to them on matters of planning and state policy. By means of this overall structural form, the workers in each factory could defend their immediate interests. ...

Seventy years after publication by Marx and Engels of the *Communist Manifesto*, the October revolution had brought a government to power that led the workers in establishing the world's first workers' state. Its appearance introduced qualitatively new dimensions into the class struggle internationally. For the first time in history a state without exploiters was being founded. The old bourgeois society — in which a privileged minority used its control of the economy to rule over and plunder the toiling masses — had been displaced. The means of production and distribution were now collectively owned by the working people.

A viable structure already existed for the organization of mass action to achieve new social advances made possible by the changed property relations. The soviets served that purpose admirably. These bodies provided a vehicle for establishment of a higher form of democracy than had ever existed in any bourgeois republic. The soviets personified the Marxist concept of a self-conscious movement representing the immense majority, acting in the interests of the immense majority, and doing so in keeping with the democratic

principle of conscious development of society by majority decision. They served as dynamic instruments through which to extend the rights and ensure the welfare of the working people.

Once in full control over industry and commerce, the soviet leadership made economic planning to serve social aims the keystone of the new society. Under the old bourgeois order, in which the coining of capitalist profits was the main goal, social relations had been conditioned by the blind play of economic forces. As a result downturns, if not deep economic depressions, had followed inevitably after periods of relative prosperity. In sharp contrast to the economic anarchy that had previously prevailed in production and distribution under capitalism, the soviets were given the chance to demonstrate the intrinsic value of a planned economy.

Such planning, carried out in a society where capitalist expropriators of the surplus social product had themselves been expropriated laid the basis for rapid development of the productive forces. The available social wealth could thus be increased apace, and means provided to make a better life for all.

Appropriation of the surplus social product by the proletariat through its government opened the way to new cultural advances. It became possible not only to reduce scarcities in living necessities and eventually eliminate them, but also to widen the vistas of the future. The door was opened to begin eradicating the crushing inequalities due to class, race, and sex oppression that had been reinforced by centuries of exploitation and rule by the privileged classes.

Together with the new social potential that had been created, the soviet triumph gave powerful impetus to proletarian struggles going on elsewhere in the world. A concrete demonstration had been seen of the manner in which the working class internationally could take steps to end the imperialist war, abolish capitalism, and move toward construction of a socialist order.

In the process of reaching these goals through their own revolutionary struggles, the Bolsheviks had also shown in practice how the workers elsewhere could build a vanguard party capable of leading the exploited masses in battle against the capitalists.

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# Support fight for independent Kurdistan!

Continued from front page

Kurds in Iran, Syria and Turkey took to the streets applauding the vote. And it’s also no surprise that the referendum brought an immediate and harsh response from the capitalist regimes in these countries, where the vast majority of the Kurdish people live.

Baghdad was especially upset that the referendum included oil-rich Kirkuk. Historically Kurdish, Kirkuk is today a multinational city, with Kurds, Turkmen and Arabs, the result of a conscious “Arabization” drive by former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. Kurdish Regional Government leader Masoud Barzani has pledged that all minorities and nationalities would be treated equally in an independent Kurdistan. This would be sharply different from the treatment of the Kurds and other minorities by Baghdad, as well as by the capitalist regimes in the rest of the region.

The Kurds — more than 30 million strong, the largest nationality in the world without their own country — have refused to stop fighting for their national rights despite tremendous odds. In Iraq, Turkey, Iran and Syria they have suffered bloody attacks from the ruling regimes that have often denied them the right to speak their language, own land, or even be treated as citizens. Because of the weakening of U.S. imperialism and the continual wars that have wracked the Middle East, the Kurds found the space to make significant advances, winning the right to speak Kurdish in Turkey and carving out autonomous re-

gions in Syria and Iraq.

The Kurdish struggle shows that it is possible to stand up to centurieslong oppression and win. This is what the Iraqi rulers, the other capitalist rulers in the Middle East and Washington fear the most — that the Kurdish struggle will inspire workers and farmers to stand up and fight for their own interests.

And the impact goes beyond the Middle East. It’s a boost for workers and farmers in Puerto Rico fighting to end U.S. colonial rule, and inspires working people in Catalonia, opposing attempts by the Spanish state to block their right to self-determination.

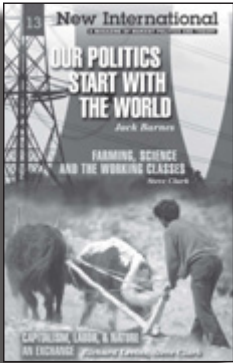
Working people around the world should oppose the threats and hostile moves by the governments of Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria. Stand with the Kurdish people and their fight for an independent homeland. Raise these questions in your union, with co-workers and others. Prepare now to take to the streets in solidarity if the Kurds are attacked.



Sept. 17 demonstration in Beirut, Lebanon, in support of right of Kurds in Iraq to hold referendum for independent Kurdistan. Similar demonstrations took place worldwide.

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# Sanctions hit NKorea

Continued from front page

expected when he allowed such eccentric words to trip off his tongue.”

But the two governments are not on the verge of a new war. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson admitted Sept. 30 that Washington and the DPRK are talking “directly, through out own channels.”

To get its way, Washington is tightening the economic screws on North Korea — increasingly with the aid of the government of China. The main victims of the economic assault are the working people of Korea. So far, the leaders of the DPRK don’t feel what Washington offers in exchange is sufficient to convince them to stop developing nuclear weapons and delivery systems.

Since a 1953 cease-fire was signed, the U.S. government has refused to sign a peace treaty with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. There are some 28,500 U.S. troops based in the South, and Washington organizes provocative war games several times a year, including simulations of eliminating DPRK leaders.

In one of the most recent provocations, two U.S. B-1B bombers crossed over the Demilitarized Zone into North Korean airspace Sept. 23. Pyongyang ignored the violation, prompting South Korean spy agency officials to say the DPRK “is careful to avoid unintended provocations or clashes.”

In July Washington banned travel by U.S. citizens to North Korea beginning in September. On Sept. 3, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea carried out what it said was an underground test of a hydrogen bomb. On Sept. 11, at the urging of Washington, the U.N. Security Council imposed its harshest sanctions yet. This includes reducing oil exports to North Korea by 30 percent, banning all North Korean textile exports, restricting the hiring of overseas labor from North Korea, and expanding the inspection of North Korean ships on the high seas.

Beijing — North Korea’s main trading partner — has begun implementing more sanctions. South Korean newspaper *Hankyoreh* reported Sept. 29 that Beijing has ordered North Korean businesses in China and Chinese-North Korean joint ventures to shut down by early January. It has also begun restricting coal, seafood and garment imports from North Korea and exports of some petroleum products.

While Washington demands that Pyongyang give up its nuclear weapons, President Trump says nothing about the U.S. nuclear arsenal. The U.S. rulers have enough nuclear weaponry to destroy the planet many times over.

Washington is the only government in the world that has ever used a nuclear weapon, dropping atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. During the Korean War, President Harry Truman had nuclear weapons transported to the Korean Peninsula and threatened to use them against North Korean and Chinese combatants who were fighting to defend the Korean people’s right to a united, undivided nation. Neither China nor North Korea had a single nuclear weapon at the time. Worried about the political price the U.S. rulers would pay if they used nukes again, in the end Truman ordered the bombs returned to the U.S.

“Working people the world over aspire to an earth that’s free of these and other weapons of mass destruction,” the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists said in a message of solidarity to the people of the DPRK Sept. 8.

“The Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists join with others across the world to demand: U.S. troops, ships, planes, and THAAD missile and radar systems out of Korea! For a Korean Peninsula and Pacific and Asia free of nuclear weapons! Korea is one!”

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