

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**Toll mounts as civil war
in Syria enters fourth year**
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 78/NO. 15 APRIL 21, 2014

‘Militant’ subscription campaign off and running

BY EMMA JOHNSON

The *Militant’s* international spring subscription and books campaign to win 1,800 subscribers between April 5 and May 17 is off and running. And supporters of the paper are responding to political opportunities opened by the struggle of working people in Ukraine and the growing campaign to free the Cuban Five.

This effort is strengthened by the *Militant’s* on-the-scene reports from Ukraine and two new Pathfinder Press books: *I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived* and *Voices From Prison: The Cuban Five* that demonstrate the dignity and working-class integrity of the Five.

Subscribers can also choose from a wide range of books on revolutionary, working-class politics at reduced prices. (See ad on page 3).

Frank Forrestal and other *Militant* supporters participated in a cultural event at the Ukrainian Center in Minneapolis attended by 50 people April 6. Forrestal was a member of the *Militant’s* recent reporting team to Ukraine.

“We talked to several people at the
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Obama, USDA press for faster line speeds in poultry plants

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Workers in U.S. poultry plants process more than 8,000 chickens per hour, performing more than 60,000 cutting, pulling, grabbing or hanging motions in an eight-hour work shift. The United States Department of Agriculture, with backing of the poul-

**“We need strong unions
— I mean *strong*.”**

try bosses, now proposes to increase maximum line speeds by 25 percent, from 140 to 175 birds a minute, in a ruling USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack hopes to finalize this month.

“We need to reduce the line speeds, not increase them,” Gwen Clements said by phone from Drakesboro, Ky., April 1. Clements, 55, sliced and packed chickens for a year and a half at a Perdue processing plant in Kentucky until she was fired in January after reporting her injuries and seeking workers’ compensation for medical expenses.

“The only time they slow down is
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Ukrainians answer Moscow provocations in east, south

Ukraine rulers, IMF foist debt burden on workers



Above, 10,000 march in Odessa, Ukraine, March 30 with half-mile-long Ukrainian flag in support of Ukraine’s sovereignty. Inset, woman at March 8 protest in Crimea. Sign reads, “Putin, I’m Russian. You don’t need to save me. Get your troops out of Crimea!”

BY JOHN STUDER

Small armed bands backed by Moscow stormed government buildings in the Ukrainian cities of Donetsk, Lugansk and Kharkiv April 6 and Mykolayiv the following day in provocations designed to lay the groundwork for possible Russian intervention.

Roughly 100 pro-Moscow agents occupied the regional government administration building in Donetsk near Ukraine’s eastern border. They

declared a “People’s Republic of Donetsk,” announced they would organize a referendum May 11 on separation from Ukraine and called on Russian President Vladimir Putin to send troops, some 40,000 of which are amassed near the border.

A similar number seized the local Security Service of Ukraine office in Lugansk, where they broke into an armory and seized AK-47 assault rifles.

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Workers learn about Cuban 5 through Bronx library exhibit

BY SARA LOBMAN

THE BRONX, N.Y. — “I just learned about the fight of the Cuban Five today,” said Marlon Clarke, a young photographer and graphic art-

‘News that workers can trust’ — give to Fighting Fund

BY LEA SHERMAN

This week the *Militant* kicks off the 2014 *Militant* Fighting Fund appeal, a seven-week campaign April 5-May 27 to raise \$115,000 for the workers’ paper. The campaign goes hand in hand with the drive to win 1,800 subscribers to the socialist press.

Over the weeks leading up to the fund effort, readers have sent more than \$4,000, earmarked for the *Militant’s* reporting to Ukraine, where working people are defending the sovereignty of their country as they fight to organize unions and win bet-

Continued on page 3

ist who works at Staples. “It’s really inspiring that he’s been able to create something so beautiful out of the experience in prison.”

Clarke is one of dozens of people who came to the April 4 opening of “I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived,” an exhibit of 15 watercolors by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five, at the Bronx Library Center. The paintings will be up for the month of April on the fourth floor of the library, in the Latino & Puerto Rican Cultural Center’s Heritage Gallery, as part of the center’s celebration of National Poetry Month.

“These paintings are so important,” Isaura Hernandez said after viewing the exhibit. “They are in prison, so it’s like this becomes their voice.” Hernandez, who works in the shipping department of a golf equipment store in Manhattan, came with her brother and two friends.

“I’m always amazed that more people don’t know about the Cuban Five,” said Donna Santana. “But the media just tells us what they want us to know.” Santana is a staff member of AFSCME District Council 1707 and also works weekends at Staples.

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Cuba’s aid to victims of Ukraine nuclear disaster ‘is unparalleled’

On April 26, 1986, the Chernobyl nuclear plant near Pripyat, Ukraine, exploded and burned for 10 days. Because the plant lacked a secure containment vessel, massive amounts of radioactive material were released into the atmosphere. Twenty-eight firemen and emergency workers were killed from acute radiation syndrome. At least 1,800 children later contracted thyroid cancer because Moscow didn’t immediately evacuate the area and did nothing to ensure residents didn’t eat vegetables or give milk produced in the area to children.

In contrast to the callous indifference from Moscow, the government of revolutionary Cuba brought thousands of children to the island for treatment. Reprinted below is a recent article from *Prensa Latina* about the Cuban program, which continues to treat Chernobyl victims today.

BY ELIZABETH ALVAREZ VELÁZQUEZ

KIEV, April 7 — The Ukrainian Women’s Association for Energy Resources delivered a letter of appreciation today to the Cuban embassy in Ukraine for the assistance provided by Cuba to more than 20,000 children from areas

affected by the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear plant.

During the meeting held at the Cuban embassy, speaking on behalf of the organization, Lilia Piltiy highlighted “the gesture from a small country, unprecedented in its international scope and human significance.”

Piltiy presented the letter of appreciation to Cuban Ambassador Ernesto Senti and other Cuban diplomats in the presence of former members of the Komsomol (communist youth

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Also Inside

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Immigration inmates in Texas protest conditions, deportation

BY STEVE WARSHELL
CONROE, Texas — Inmates at the Joe Corley immigration jail here touched off a hunger strike March 17 when some 500 refused meals, demanding improved conditions, an end to abuse by authorities and a halt to deportations.

Adelina Cáseres, wife of prison strike leader David Vasquez, submitted a petition signed by 500 inmates. The prison is designed to hold 950 inmates, but currently Immigration and Customs Enforcement says 1,100 are incarcerated there.

Because of lack of communication, deportations and transfer of strike leaders, supporters of the inmates don’t know how many remain on hunger strike. Adelina Pruneda, spokeswoman for ICE, did not respond to requests for information or comment.

On March 29 inmates’ family members and supporters held a rally of about 50 people at Guadalupe Plaza in Houston.

“These men are demanding justice and dignity,” Martina Grifaldo of Alianza Mexicana of Houston told the rally. “Many of them have been held without bond for more than a year. They are demanding an end to a system of double punishment” in which they are rearrested and deported based on criminal convictions years earlier.

The inmates’ petition also demands an end to verbal abuse, unhealthy food and overcrowding and the right to regular family visits.

“The worst thing is the uncertainty,” Ernestina Hernández, wife of Manuel Martínez Arámbula, told the *Militant*. “My husband was arrested 10 months ago. We can barely pay for the house and food on my income, and we certainly cannot afford a lawyer.”

The Corley detention center is operated by GEO Corrections, a private corporation that profits off incarceration of immigrants and others. The Florida-based GEO Group operates 97 prisons in the U.S. and three other countries.

While prison officials say conditions inside the center are sanitary and humane, relatives of the hunger strikers told the *Militant* that prisoners face daily abuses, such as food served with maggots and indignities from prison guards. Detainees are paid only \$1 a day for custodial work performed.

Cáceres said her husband told her there were only two toilets for 38 detainees in his block, and that inmates with infected and open wounds were given only painkillers.

“My husband and two others have been put in punishment cells and shackled to their beds 24/7,” Cáseres told the *Militant*. “His wrists and hands showed the scars of handcuffs and he looked like he had been beaten. They are protesting horrible conditions inside, but this hunger strike is mainly against the Obama administration, which has deported more than 2 million people in less than five years.”

March in San Francisco protests killing by cops



Militant/Betsey Stone

SAN FRANCISCO — More than 500 demonstrators marched through the Mission District here March 29 to protest the police killing of 28-year-old Alejandro Nieto. On March 21, the student at City College of San Francisco and night club security guard was in Bernal Heights Park on his way to work when someone called 911, reporting a Latino man with a gun. Cops say they opened fire on Nieto, who was wearing a Taser in a holster, because he didn’t put his hands up as ordered and pointed what they thought was a firearm at them. “He was not bothering anyone,” said Benjamin Bac Sierra, Nieto’s friend and former English professor. “There is no justification whatsoever — whatsoever — for him to be massacred with 14 bullet holes.”

— GERARDO SÁNCHEZ AND BETSEY STONE

Houston oil spill: ‘We pay price when they push for extra buck’

BY MIKE FITZSIMMONS

TEXAS CITY, Texas — “This is just another case of ship operators making that extra push to go for the big bucks. Now we all pay the price,” said trucker Mack Davila about the March 22 oil spill at the Port of Houston.

Some 170,000 gallons of heavy fuel oil were released into the water near the port after an oil-carrying barge collided with a cargo ship in heavy fog. The disaster tied up more than 90 vessels at one of the busiest ports in the U.S.

“Those craft shouldn’t have been sailing in the fog. People could have been injured or killed,” said Jonathan Love, a worker at Boyd’s Seafood at the base of the Texas City Dike March 29.

“They need to widen the ship channel. I’m sure the pilots of these boats are qualified, but there needs to be

more room for error,” said shrimp boat captain Donny Stanfield, who was at Boyd’s seafood dropping off a load of bait shrimp.

“A lot of people rely on the fish and crabs to feed their families,” said Margaret Taylor, a retired Texas City school bus driver who hasn’t fished at the dike since the spill. “I used to go to the dike two or three times a week.”

The port services the country’s largest petrochemical complex, which spews toxic emissions into the surrounding working-class communities.

“These companies should be held responsible for what they put out, but often they do it at night when it’s harder to notice,” said James Taylor, who was a construction worker at a refinery here. “Children are especially affected. We came here to work, not to be poisoned.”

THE MILITANT

Support workers’ struggles worldwide

Workers worldwide have taken to the streets to protest attacks by bosses and their governments against workers’ rights, living standards and dignity. The ‘Militant’ covers these fights — from garment workers in Cambodia to truckers in Vancouver, British Columbia.

AP/The Canadian Press/Darryl Dyck
Truckers in Vancouver, Canada, rally March 21 during 4-week strike that shut port.

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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.

Subscription campaign

Continued from front page

Minnesota Maidan table, including two of the main organizers,” writes Forrestal. “We showed them the paper’s coverage over the past few weeks. Both got subscriptions. We also showed them *Voices From Prison* and explained who the Cuban Five are. We talked about Antonio Guerrero’s schooling in Kiev and Cuba’s internationalist response to the Chernobyl nuclear disaster.”

Guerrero, one of the Five, studied at the University of Kiev in Ukraine, graduating in civil engineering in 1983. Since 1990 Cuba has provided free health treatment at the Pediatric Hospital in Tarará outside Havana to some 25,000 children who were victims of the 1986 nuclear disaster in Chernobyl, Ukraine.

I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived reprints 15 watercolors by Guerrero that depict the first 17 months of the five revolutionaries’ imprisonment in Miami. In *Voices From Prison*, the Five, their family members and fellow prisoners talk about how the U.S. criminal “justice” system is set up to dehumanize and break working people.

“My son got in an altercation and was charged with assault,” Kimberley Irving in Federal Way, Wash., told Edwin Fruit and Jeanne FitzMaurice when they knocked on her door with the *Militant* April 6. “The cops beat him and threw him in jail. One lawyer took \$10,000 from us and told us he could get my son 18 years in prison with a plea bargain. Another lawyer said he could get eight years, which my son agreed to. He didn’t want to go to trial because the prosecutor said he could get 30 years. This system is especially bad for Blacks and other minorities and needs to be changed.”

Irving bought a subscription and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, one of the books on special offer.

From London, Ólöf Andra Proppé

reported April 6 that on the first day of the drive supporters visited the west London neighborhood of Greenford, following up with recent subscribers as part of going door to door in the area. Three readers signed up for renewals and eight people got new subscriptions.

“This discussion we’re having now and the reporting in the *Militant* is changing my opinion on what is happening in Ukraine,” Thomas Simi told them as he renewed his subscription. Simi is originally from the Ivory Coast and works in a medical research center in the city. “I didn’t know working people are so involved in the struggles there or about the history of national oppression by Russia.”

At a protest of 50 the following day in defense of Ukrainian sovereignty outside the Russian Embassy, participants picked up two subscriptions and 22 copies of the *Militant*.

“One participant also got *Lenin’s Final Fight*,” Proppé wrote. “All in all we sold 12 new subscriptions and five renewals April 4-5. We also sold two copies of *I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived* and one *Voices From Prison*.

“We started the weekend with a sale at a meatpacking plant,” Jacquie Henderson wrote from Omaha, Neb. “We made a sign in Spanish and English in defense of workers in Ukraine and built upcoming showings of Guerrero’s watercolor paintings scheduled in Omaha and Lincoln.”

To join in the campaign, get a subscription or renew, contact a distributor listed on page 8 or call the *Militant* at (212) 244-4899.



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

“*Militant* is changing my opinion on what’s happening in Ukraine. I didn’t know working people were so involved,” said Thomas Simi, who renewed his subscription in London April 5.

Militant Fighting Fund

Continued from front page
ter conditions.

“A reporting team to Ukraine! Finally, news we can trust. Thank you,” wrote Jane Roland from Greensboro, N.C., with a check for \$50 sent with her six-month renewal.

Donations from the trip came by mail and collections at Militant Labor Forums on Ukraine in Des Moines, Iowa; Miami, Seattle, Minneapolis and Washington, D.C. Another round of forums are being organized around the country to hear John Studer and Frank Forrestal, who have just returned from Ukraine. In addition to talking about the class struggle in Ukraine, they will speak about the

example of the Cuban Revolution, the one living socialist revolution in the world, for working people in Ukraine and beyond.

The annual fighting fund makes possible reporting trips around the world. They have recently included Egypt, Burkina Faso, Mali, Cuba, Lebanon and Ukraine. Unlike big-business newspapers, which sell billions in advertising, the *Militant* depends on readers’ contributions to cover daily operating expenses.

As supporters of the paper meet people in political activities and door-to-door sales, it’s not uncommon that workers throw in a couple extra bucks

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Special offers with ‘Militant’ subscription

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Cosmetics, Fashions and the Exploitation of Women. Fri., April 18, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

IOWA

Des Moines

The Class Struggle in Venezuela. Speaker: David Rosenfeld, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 18, 7:30 p.m. 3707 Douglas Ave. Tel.: (515) 707-1779.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis

Working People from Ukraine to U.S. Defend Themselves Against the Bosses’ Offensive. Speaker: Frank Forrestal, Socialist Workers Party, just returned from *Militant* reporting trip to Ukraine and Havana book fair in Cuba. Sat., April 19. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 416 E. Hennepin Ave., Room 214. Tel.: (612) 729-1205.

CANADA

Montreal

Lac-Mégantic, Pipelines and Grain Shipments: Why Workers Should Fight for Control of the Industry. Speaker: Michel Dugré, Communist League. Fri., April 18, 7:30 p.m. 7107 St. Denis, Room 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.



Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power

by Jack Barnes

\$10 with subscription (regular \$20)

The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning

The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism

by Jack Barnes

\$2 with subscription (regular \$3)

Women in Cuba

The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution

by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer

\$10 with subscription (regular \$20)

Women and Revolution

The Living Example of the Cuban Revolution

by Asela de los Santos, Mary-Alice Waters and others

\$3 with subscription (regular \$7)

Los cosméticos, las modas, y la explotación de la mujer

(Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women)

by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, Mary-Alice Waters

\$10 with subscription (regular \$15)

See distributors
on page 8



The Cuban Five

Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free
from pages of the ‘*Militant*’
\$3 with subscription (regular \$5)

Cuba and Angola

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by Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro; Cuban generals; Gabriel García Márquez

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The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions

by Jack Barnes

\$10 with subscription (regular \$24)

Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?

A Necessary Debate

by Mary-Alice Waters

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We Are Heirs of the World’s Revolutions

by Thomas Sankara

Speeches from the Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87

\$5 with subscription (regular \$10)

Thomas Sankara Speaks

The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-1987

\$10 with subscription (regular \$24)

Japan gov't moves to evict Korean group from offices

BY SETH GALINSKY

Chongryon, the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan, is facing eviction from its headquarters in Tokyo. Built in 1986, the Korean Hall has been a center for Koreans who have faced decades of discrimination in Japan. The offices have also functioned as a de facto embassy for the North Korean government, as Tokyo and Pyongyang do not have diplomatic relations.

Over the last decade the Japanese government has stepped up its attacks against the association along with measures aimed at isolating North Korea. Chongryon operates some 70 schools for Korean residents in Japan, a newspaper, banks and other businesses, and has been an important source of food, medicine and other aid for North Korea.

After annexing Korea and turning it into a colony in 1910, the Japanese government confiscated much of the country's best agricultural land, forcing thousands of peasants off their farms. By 1938, according to an article in *Saitama University Review*, some

800,000 Koreans had moved to Japan in search of work.

Hundreds of thousands of Koreans were conscripted during World War II, forced to slave in Japanese factories and mines or serve as cannon fodder for imperial Japan. In addition, as many as 200,000 Korean women were forced into sex slavery as "comfort women" for Japanese troops throughout Asia. By 1945 there were 2 million Koreans in Japan.

When the war ended, most returned to Korea, but some 600,000 stayed in Japan. In 1950, Japan stripped the children of Japanese mothers and Korean fathers of citizenship. In 1955, Tokyo required all "foreigners" to be fingerprinted. Koreans were excluded from government jobs. Those who were allowed to become naturalized citizens were required to adopt Japanese names. Koreans in Japan were stateless until 1972, when they were granted permanent residency status.

In the 1970s and '80s Korean residents led a movement against finger-



Reuters/Issei Kato

Police officers patrol in front of Tokyo headquarters of General Association of Korean Residents in Japan, March 25, where group faces eviction by government authorities.

printing, for the right to use their Korean names and for an end to exclusion from many jobs. They won the right to keep their ethnic names in 1987 and an end to forced fingerprinting in 1993.

In 2006, after Pyongyang conducted a nuclear test, the Japanese government banned most financial transactions with North Korea, clamped down on family remittances, and shut down

a ferry service between the two countries, making it harder for Koreans in Japan to visit relatives and send aid. Tokyo has worked hand in hand with Washington in its moves to punish and isolate the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Many financial institutions tied to Chongryon failed in 2012 and a district court ordered the auction of the group's Tokyo headquarters to pay part of a \$6 million debt. The federal government and seven regional governments ended subsidies to Chongryon schools in 2013, increasing financial pressure on the group.

When a Mongolian company that was willing to let Chongryon stay in the headquarters won the auction bid, the court rejected it, claiming that the paperwork submitted was inadequate. Instead the court awarded the headquarters to real estate developer Marunaka Holdings Co.

"Many Koreans in Japan suspect that the government's Resolution and Collection Corporation and the court had a secret agreement to make sure Chongryon is evicted," Kyung Hee Ha told the *Militant* by phone from San Diego April 9. "The bid the court accepted was half the market price of the building and below what the Mongolian company bid."

"I was born and raised in Japan as a third generation *zainichi* [Korean resident of Japan]," said Ha, a graduate student at the University of San Diego. "My grandparents, who were peasants, migrated to Japan when their lands were taken away. I left Japan when I was a high school sophomore. I didn't see a future there because of discrimination against Koreans."

Even though Koreans now have the right to use their ethnic names, Ha said few do, "because we censor ourselves. We know what it's like to be Korean in Japanese society."

"The moves to evict the Chongryon should not be considered an independent incident," she said, "but in a broader context of the U.S. empire and the Japanese empire."

The move to deprive Chongryon of its headquarters is designed "to stamp out the movement of Koreans in Japan," the Pyongyang-based Committee for Aiding Overseas Compatriots of Korea said in a March 28 statement.

Meanwhile, Tokyo continues to take steps to loosen restrictions on the use of its military imposed as a result of Japan's defeat by Washington in World War II. On April 1, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe lifted a ban on the export of weapons that had been in place since the late 1960s.

Cuba's aid to victims of Ukraine nuclear disaster

Continued from front page

league of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union), who organized the first trips in March 1990, along with parents and young people who had received treatment in Cuba.

Some of those in attendance recalled with emotion the pleasant surprise they had felt when the first group of 139 children arrived on March 29, 1990 and were received at Jose Marti International Airport by the leader of Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro.

They said that currently there are thousands of young people living normal lives, fully integrated in society thanks to solidarity from Cuba, which provided medical assistance to some 25,000 children.

For his part, Ambassador Senti highlighted the willingness of the Cuban government and people to continue this project in conditions that correspond to current events, for the sake of the youngest generations in Ukraine.



Cuba's revolutionary government has provided free medical care to more than 25,000 children affected by 1986 nuclear power plant disaster in Chernobyl, Ukraine. Above, patients visit doctor's office in Tará near Havana, Feb. 7, 2006. Below, Ukrainian children recite poems at Pediatric Hospital in Tará, March 23, 2010.



NEW INTERNATIONAL

A MAGAZINE OF MARXIST POLITICS AND THEORY

"Of all capitalism's evils, the most fundamental one is how that system of exploitation reproduces its social relations as a condition of producing its profits. How its workings, its blind methods of functioning, keep grinding toiling humanity into the ground." — Jack Barnes

**Imperialism's March
Toward Fascism and War**

by Jack Barnes

in New International No. 10 — \$16

**Capitalism's Long Hot Winter
Has Begun**

by Jack Barnes

in New International No. 12 — \$16

Our Politics Start With the World

by Jack Barnes

in New International No. 13 — \$14



Militant fund

Continued from page 3

"for the cause." They will be asked if that money can be put toward the Militant Prisoners' Fund, which helps provide subscriptions to workers behind bars at a reduced rate or in some cases free of charge.

"A young woman's face lit up and she said 'wow' when we told her the extra dollar she gave would go to the Prisoners' Fund. She told us she had a relative in prison," said Nancy Boyas-ko, selling door to door in the Bronx, N.Y., April 6.

"Thank you for continuing my subscription (several times!). The news in the paper is very important to me and the comrades that I share it with," wrote a prisoner from Florida who just renewed his subscription.

To contribute, contact distributors listed on page 8 or send a check or money order to "The Militant," 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

See list of distributors on page 8 or visit pathfinderpress.com

ON THE PICKET LINE

Oakland workers demand minimum wage hike

OAKLAND, Calif.—Some 300 workers marched through downtown here March 27, calling for an increase in the minimum wage. Participants included airport fast-food and concession workers, food vendors at the Oakland Coliseum, hotel workers and others.

“I began working for See’s Candies five years ago, making \$9 an hour. Today I’m making \$10.25. That’s why we have to fight,” said Re Bunly, a concession worker at the Oakland Airport, speaking to the protesters as they rallied at City Hall. A minority of the concession workers, including those at See’s, are nonunion.

About 200 employees of HMS Host at the Oakland airport, members of UNITE HERE Local 2850, have been fighting for a contract since July 2012. They won a victory last summer when three workers, fired for union-organizing activity, were rehired.

—Betsey Stone

Building workers protest in NY contract fight

NEW YORK—Thousands of members of Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ and their supporters demonstrated along Park Avenue in Manhattan here April 2 to defend wages and benefits. The union’s contract with the city’s Realty Advisory Board, due to expire April 20, covers some 30,000 porters, doormen, maintenance people, cleaners, supers and others who service residential properties at 3,300 apartment buildings in Manhattan.

“Maintaining or bettering our wages and health care are most important to us,” said Jerry Smiley, a porter at Lindsay Park, a residential facility.



Militant/Dan Fein

New York porters, cleaners and maintenance workers march April 2. Union contract with building owners expires April 20.

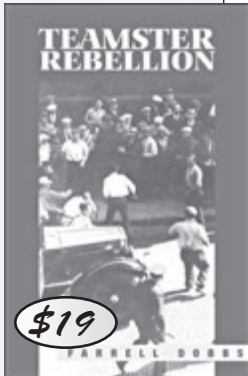
Teamster Rebellion by Farrell Dobbs

The story of the 1934 strikes that built the industrial unions in Minneapolis and helped pave the way for the CIO as a fighting social movement, recounted by a central leader of that battle.

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Members of 32BJ attending the protest came from across the East Coast, from Washington, D.C., to Connecticut. Other unions there in solidarity included the Communications Workers of America, Newspaper Guild, United Federation of Teachers and Teamsters.

“Hotel workers are here today to support 32BJ getting a fair contract,” said Ben Horn, a hotel worker and member of Hotel and Restaurant Employees Local 6. “New York City is a very expensive city to live in and we need good wages.”

—Dan Fein

Feds push to increase poultry plant line speed

Continued from front page

when inspectors come from OSHA [Occupational Safety and Health Administration] or the USDA,” said Clements. “As soon as they leave, the speed goes back up again.”

The USDA lacks the “regulatory authority and expertise” to address workers’ safety, an agency spokesperson wrote in an email to *Safety + Health* magazine in response to criticism of the proposed New Line Speed Inspection System. “Our core mission is to protect the food supply; this is the driving force behind our proposal to modernize poultry inspection.”

The USDA proposal comes in response to an executive order issued by President Barack Obama in January 2011 to “modernize” poultry production and inspection regulations. The president called for a new set of rules “permitting faster line speeds” and making “better use of the Agency’s resources” that would “limit the number of online inspectors.” The USDA’s proposed rules foist greater responsibility for food safety onto workers, who would simultaneously be pressed to crank out three chickens per second.

Fired for reporting injuries

When she was fired, Clements had just been diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome and missed work due to bronchitis, which she believes was caused by overexposure to plant chemi-



Militant/Betsey Stone

March 27 protest in Oakland, Calif., demands minimum wage hike. Hella is slang for “really.”

cal.

“The company nurse did everything to discourage me from reporting the injury,” she said. “Many, many had the same complaints about pains in the hands, wrists, shoulders. Some of these injuries can’t be corrected, you have them for the rest of your life. People suffer in silence, because they know they will be fired if they complain.”

The Southern Poverty Law Center interviewed 302 poultry workers in Alabama for its March 2013 report “Unsafe at These Speeds.” Nearly two-thirds reported suffering work-related injuries and illnesses. A similar number said workers were scared or reluctant to report such injuries to the company.

“I worked with women from Asia, Africa, Latin America,” Clements said. “The workforce is 80 percent women and 80 percent immigrant. The turnover was huge, every once in a while they would have contests to try to keep it to less than 45 workers a week. This is a rural area, there aren’t many jobs paying this well. I started at \$9.60 an hour and after six months got \$11.35. They use this to make us compete with each other in a race to the bottom.”

Clements has testified on the conditions in the plant before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, hoping to put pressure on the government to force the companies to slow down the speed. A coalition of 15

civil and human rights organizations has submitted a petition to OSHA and USDA.

“We petition to lower the speeds without reducing the staffing, both for meat and poultry,” Tom Fritzsche, staff attorney at the Southern Poverty Law Center, told the *Militant* April 1.

Among those protesting the New Line Speed Inspection System are 68 members of Congress, who wrote a letter March 17 urging USDA Secretary Vilsack to withdraw the proposal, citing concerns over “food safety, worker safety, animal welfare.” The letter points out that production speed is already a leading cause of injury in an industry with one of the highest injury rates in the country. Brushing aside USDA claims of protecting food safety, the letter warned that the new system could lead to higher rates of salmonella and campylobacter poisoning.

According to estimates by the United Food and Commercial Workers union, 30 percent of poultry processing is unionized. There is no union at Perdue where Clements worked.

“When I was hired they gave us a full 30 minutes of anti-union propaganda, how union organizers would seek out your kids at school if you don’t sign the union card,” she said. “There is a whole wall in the plant with scare and fear stuff against the union. We need strong unions — and I mean strong.”

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



April 21, 1989

It would be hard to overstate the importance of what was accomplished when hundreds of thousands of people marched on Washington April 9 to defend the right of women to decide whether or not to have an abortion.

The demonstration was a learning experience — above all, for those who participated. Fighters for abortion rights met unionists, students, Blacks, Native Americans, and many others who agree about the importance of defending abortion rights.

They found out more about each other’s struggles, such as the strike at Eastern Airlines and many other fights against attacks by the employers and the government on democratic rights and living standards.

More than ever before, the defense of abortion rights is an indispensable part of defending the democratic right of privacy.



April 20, 1964

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Clifton DeBerry, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, stimulated a real discussion on socialism and civil rights among Fisk University students during his campaign visit here.

The discussion got right down to brass tacks when a student asked: “Are you running as a Negro, as a socialist, or just trying to prove a point?”

DeBerry replied that he was running as a Negro who had learned from experience what it means to live in a ghetto, to be segregated and discriminated against.

As a result of his experience in the civil rights and labor movements, he had learned that capitalism is the root source of Jim Crow and that the most effective way to fight Jim Crow is to make it part of the fight against capitalism and for socialism.



April 21, 1939

Some 320,000 soft coal miners are out on strike in the Appalachian region. Since April 1, pits and shafts from Pennsylvania to Alabama have been idle. Almost continual conferences have been held for over a month in New York City between the operators and representatives of the United Mine Workers of America, but both sides declared up to April 17 that the negotiations were “hopelessly deadlocked.”

The contract, which expired on March 31, provided for a 35-hour week and a daily basic wage of \$6 in the north and \$5.60 in the south. A miner would consider it a miracle, however, if he earned an average of \$1000 during the year.

The miners, with the splendid discipline and courage for which they are famed, have shut down every mine tight as a drum. To date the strike is pretty near 100 percent effective.

Miners in eastern Ukraine refute press in Russia, US

BY JOHN STUDER

KRIVII RIG, Ukraine — While eastern Ukraine has strong cultural ties to Russia, most workers in the region oppose Moscow's annexationist provocations, miners here told the *Militant*, refuting the impression given by much of the bourgeois press coverage, from Russia to the U.S. The miners said they are prepared to defend Ukrainian sovereignty, which they see as a necessary extension of defending their interests as workers against bosses in Ukraine.

"There are differences between east and west Ukraine," Samoilov Yuriy Petrovych, the leader of the Independent Trade Union of Miners in Krivii Rig, an iron-ore mining center some 85 miles southwest of Dnepropetrovsk in eastern Ukraine, told the *Militant* in the union's office here March 26. "For example, there are some 200 newspapers in this region, but only 10 or 15 are in Ukrainian. The others are all filled with Russian government propaganda calling the Maidan protesters in Kiev fascist, claiming they are a threat to Russian-speaking people in the east."

"Here in the east we have closer ties to Russia," he said. "Many of us have relatives in Russia and have long considered Russians as our brothers. But today the Russian government is threatening an invasion of Ukraine, and the majority of workers here agree that we will do our best to defend our country."

"We are organizing workers into self-defense units to prepare as best we can," said Bondar Vitalievyh, another union leader. "We began a couple months ago so workers could defend themselves against gangs of thugs organized by the mine bosses."

"We put out a statement saying we needed to organize to stop separatist manifestations in Ukraine," Vitalievyh said. "Pro-Moscow thugs came out, including some armed snipers, to confront our Maidan demonstration here Feb. 24, but hundreds of workers organized in our self-defense units prevented them from killing anyone."

"We put out a flyer calling on workers to come to the city council meeting the next day to demand the local government act on the will of the people or resign," continued Vitalievyh, pointing to a photo on the wall of hundreds of miners and others voting at the meeting. Members of the city council, he said, were supporters of former pro-Moscow President Viktor Yanukovich, who had fled the country two days earlier.

The unionists are determined to step up efforts to organize workers and others prepared to defend Ukraine's national sovereignty, come what may.

The miners organized a tour for *Militant* correspondents of the EVRAZ iron-ore mine. The mine is run by Russian capitalists who own ore and coal mines, processing plants and steel mills in Ukraine, Russia, Canada, South Africa and the U.S.

"This mine is extremely dangerous," Vitalievyh said. "Two years

ago we had 23 'accidents,' and the government was pressured to come and carry out some inspections.

"Our union fights for safer working conditions, as well as to ensure the company and government provide health care and pensions when you leave the job," he said.

"Three hundred fifty women work underground in the mine," said Elena Maslova, a 15-year veteran in the mine and the local's director for gender equality. "There are some 40 positions that women are barred from."

Continued on page 9



Militant/Oksana Demynovych

"We demanded improvements in pay and working conditions for women," said miner Elena Maslova (above), local miners' union director for gender equality, in Krivii Rig March 26.

State Dept. anti-Cuba 'twitter' plot exposed by AP

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

From 2009 to 2012, the Barack Obama administration set up a Twitter-like social media site in Cuba with the pipe dream of eventually using it to organize political demonstrations against Cuba's revolutionary government. The secret program flopped and was brought to light April 3 by the Associated Press based on more than 1,000 pages of documents and interviews.

Called ZunZuneo, Cuban vernacular for a hummingbird's tweet, the operation was financed and run by the U.S. Agency for International Development. USAID, which operates under the veil of "humanitarian" missions around the world, is an arm of the State Department whose stated purpose is "furthering America's foreign policy interests in expanding democracy and free markets."

"Once again the United States government has not renounced its subversive plans, which have as their objective changing Cuba's political order and continue every year to be funded with a multimillion dollar budget," said Josefina Vidal, director of Cuba's Foreign Ministry, North American Affairs Division, in an April 4 statement.

"Documents show the U.S. government planned to build a subscriber base through 'non-controversial content': news messages on soccer, music and hurricane updates," AP said. "Later when the network reached a critical mass of subscribers, perhaps hundreds of thousands, operators would introduce political content aimed at inspiring Cubans to organize 'smart mobs' — mass gatherings called at a moment's notice that might trigger a Cuban Spring."

"To ensure the success of the Mission," one document said, "there will be absolutely no mention of United States government involvement."

ZunZuneo was aimed mostly at young Cubans. It was halted in 2012 after just 40,000 out of the 1.25 million cellphone users in Cuba signed up — most unaware of any connection with USAID.

Alan Gross — a former USAID contractor arrested in Cuba in 2009, convicted as a U.S. spy and sentenced to 15 years in prison — announced April 8 that he was starting a fast to protest "deceptions and inaction by both governments, not only regarding their shared responsibility for my arbitrary detention, but also because of the lack of any reasonable or valid effort to resolve this

shameful ordeal."

The U.S. government has shown little interest in Gross since his arrest for trying to implement another State Department scheme that involved setting up a parallel Internet on the island.

"Once Alan was arrested, it's shocking that USAID would imperil his safety even further by running a covert operation in Cuba," said Gross' attorney Scott Gilbert in the April 8 statement. "USAID has made one absurdly bad decision after another."

An April 4 *Granma* article pointed to remarks made by Cuban President Raúl Castro regarding such ill-fated schemes. "They are eager to deceptively market the supposed advantages of disregard for ideology or social conscience to the youngest [Cubans] as if such concepts were not fully reflective of ruling class interests in the

capitalist world," Castro said in a Jan. 1 talk in Santiago de Cuba celebrating the 55th anniversary of the revolution. They hope to "induce a break between the historical leadership of the revolution and younger generations, promoting uncertainty and pessimism about future prospects, all with the clear objective of dismantling socialism in Cuba from within."

The *Washington Post* lambasted AP for printing the news story and defended the plot in an April 7 editorial titled, "A U.S. Plan to Help Cubans Communicate Should Be Applauded." AP "called this 'a secret plan,'" wrote the editorial board of the liberal daily, "as if there were something scandalous about undermining tyranny — and as if there were some readily available nonsecret means of doing so."

Exhibits of paintings by Antonio Guerrero one of the Cuban Five

I Will Die the Way I've Lived

Chicago April 13

Closing reception, 1-3PM. Beverly Arts Center, 2407 W. 111th St. Tel.: (773) 445-3838.

Lincoln, Neb.

April 22-23 & 25-30

Clyde Malone Community Center, 2032 "U" St. Opens April 22, 10AM. Reception, 7-9PM. April 23, 10AM-6PM. At Meadowlark Café, 1624 South St., April 25-30, 8AM-11PM. Reception, April 25, 7:30PM. Tel: (402) 475-4620.

New York

April 1-29

Bronx Library Center, 5th floor, 310 East Kingsbridge Road. Call (718) 579-4257 for hours and tours. Closing program, Fri., April 25, 5:30PM, Room C21 on concourse level.



San Francisco May 4

Exhibit and reception: 2-4PM. Program at 2:30PM. San Francisco Public Library, Bayview Branch, 5075 Third Street.

Manchester, England May 17-31

Opening event, Sat. May 17 6PM. Exhibit hours: Mon.-Sat. 9AM-5PM. Moston Miners Community Arts and Music Centre, Teddington Road, Moston. Tel.: 0161-682-6253.

Sydney, Australia May 9-11

Opening event, Fri., May 9, 6:30PM. StirUp Gallery, Addison Road Community Center, 142 Addison Road, Marrickville. Exhibit hours: Sat., 11AM-3PM; Sun., 9AM-3PM. Tel.: 0413 450 981.

Auckland, New Zealand

April 5-24

Artstation, 1 Ponsonby Road. Tel.: (09) 376-3221; (09) 303-1755. Exhibition schedule: Mon.-Fri., 9AM-5PM; Sat., 9AM-4PM.

Toll on workers mounts as Syria war enters 4th year

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The civil war in Syria has entered its fourth year, taking a deep toll on working people caught between bombardments and “starvation sieges” by the Bashar al-Assad regime and the brutality of al-Qaeda forces seeking to recruit, plunder and grab territory amid the chaos. The resulting social crisis is spilling beyond Syria through an exodus of millions.

More than 150,000 people have been killed since the start of the war, reports the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. More than 40 percent of the country’s population has been displaced from their homes, many becoming refugees in nearby countries.

Syrian government airstrikes and artillery assaults killed at least 26 rebels April 3-4 in Mleiha, an agricultural area east of the capital Damascus, the Syrian Observatory said. “Barrel bombs” were also unleashed April 5 in the Al-Sakhour neighborhood of Aleppo.

According to the U.N., residents living in the two areas are among the 800,000 Syrians in opposition-held territories who have been under siege by government forces, prevented from leaving their neighborhoods and denied food, medical supplies and other necessities.

Some 20 barrel bombs were being dropped per day in Aleppo, Syria’s largest city, and surrounding communities in February, as U.N.-brokered “peace” talks collapsed. On April 1 some 15 civilians were killed and dozens wounded by barrel bombing of Maaret al-Artik in the Aleppo region, reported Turkey’s Anadolu news agency.

The Assad regime’s position has been strengthened since Moscow and Washington concluded a deal that included working with Damascus to dismantle its stockpile of chemical weapons after the regime was accused of carrying out a sarin gas attack last August that killed hundreds of civilians.

Pro-Assad forces, including the paramilitary National Defense Force, have been aided by Hezbollah soldiers from Lebanon, irregular fighters from Shiite groups in Iraq and Revolutionary Guard troops from Iran. In mid-March, with a strong Hezbollah presence, Assad retook control of Yabrud, near the Lebanese border. Nine months earlier his forces seized control of the border city of Qusayr with Hezbollah’s help.

The fighting has spread into Lebanon “between Sunni Muslims who mainly support Syria’s rebels and Alawites who back Assad,” Reuters said April 3, with



Residents of Al-Sakhour neighborhood of Aleppo, Syria, inspect damages after forces loyal to President Bashar al-Assad’s regime dropped barrel bombs on the area April 5.

“bombings and rocket attacks from the capital of Beirut to the Bekaa Valley.”

In Lebanon, the number of Syrians officially registered as refugees grew to more than 1 million in early April, nearly triple the number there 12 months before. Some 2,500 new refugees are registered by the U.N. every day. Another 400,000 Syrians are living in the country without official refugee status, government officials told Associated Press. Prior to the influx, Lebanon’s population was about 4.5 million people.

In Syria, half of the hospitals are destroyed, industrial production has collapsed and unemployment is at 50 percent, according to the Syrian Center for

Policy Research.

Before the civil war, Syrian children “almost universally attended elementary school,” reported the *New York Times*. “Now fewer than half are in school; among refugees in neighboring Lebanon, the figure is 12 percent.”

A total of 2.6 million Syrians are registered as refugees in five countries. In addition to Lebanon they include: Turkey with 668,000; Jordan, 589,000; Iraq, 220,000, the most in the autonomous Kurdish region; and Egypt, 136,000.

The struggle in Syria began in March 2011 with popular protests demanding political rights. Assad responded with a bloody crackdown. Opposition forces rallied under the banner of the Free Syrian Army, which took control of parts of northern Syria, including areas around Aleppo and some suburbs of Damascus.

The Free Syrian Army has suffered setbacks while Islamist groups have gained strength. Last November a coalition of seven Islamist groups split from the FSA and formed the Islamic Front. Meanwhile, other more reactionary Islamist groups linked to al-Qaeda — the Nusra Front and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria — have seized control of some areas.

Fighting between the various Islamist factions over the past several months has killed 4,000 people, the Syrian Observatory reports, enabling Assad’s forces to make gains.

Workers learn about Cuban 5 in New York

Continued from front page

She brought Clarke, a co-worker at Staples, to the event.

“A lot of families and other patrons of the library have dealings with the prison system,” Linda Caycedo, the librarian who organized the exhibit, said in welcoming people to the program. “It’s important to have resources for them, and I don’t just mean books. This program and exhibit are part of fulfilling the library’s mission to inspire lifelong learning, advance knowledge, and strengthen our communities.”

Sery Colón, a reciter of poetry and producer of cultural events in New York’s Puerto Rican community, and Carmen D. Lucca, a poet and translator, each read a poem by Guerrero. Colón read “From the Hole.” Lucca read the poem that is depicted in his

painting “The ‘Rec,” — the “recreation” cage at the Miami Detention Center where Guerrero began many of his poems.

“Each event like this one is a real act in favor of the Cuban Five, the Cuban Revolution and the Cuban people,” said Ariel Hernández, a first secretary at Cuba’s Permanent Mission to the United Nations. “For us it’s another way to bring the fight of the Five to New York. And it’s especially important to have it in a working-class neighborhood in the Bronx.”

“The Cuban Five are in prison because they are examples of the Cuban Revolution, of the men and women who brought into being the first free territory of the Americas, of men and women who to this day refuse to bow to Washington,” said Deborah Liatos, a member of the Socialist Workers Party.

Following the short program in a meeting room downstairs, there was a reception while small groups went up to view the paintings. People were still talking two hours later, when the library closed for the night.

“Seeing the paintings in the booklet *I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived* was really nice. But full size, up on the wall, they really come to life,” said Jhuni Garcia, a student at Bronx Community College who helped walk people through the exhibit. “Learning more about the Cuban Five tonight makes them even more powerful. Jails are the darkest place, but the Cuban Five and other prisoners talk to each other, share poems, and find ways to communicate.”

“When I heard about the program I had to come to support the Cuban Five,” said Gwen Debrow, who works as a customer service representative for Goodwill.

Ben Ramos, who works at an after-school program in the neighborhood, also helped tour visitors through the exhibit. “This is a very international neighborhood, a poor area,” said Ramos, who is a leader of the Popular Education Project to Free the Cuban 5 and ProLibertad, an organization that fights for the release of Puerto Rican political prisoners. “It’s powerful to have the exhibit here. It’s only through reaching out like this that the Five can win the mass solidarity that can free them.”

The library will host a closing program for the exhibit on Friday, April 25, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Who are the Cuban Five?



Fernando González, Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino and René González are Cuban revolutionaries who during the 1990s accepted assignments from the Cuban government to gather information on the operations and plans of Cuban-American paramilitary groups based in southern Florida. These rightist outfits, organizing on U.S. soil with virtual impunity, have a long record of carrying out bombings, assassinations and other deadly attacks, both against targets in Cuba and supporters of the Cuban Revolution in the United States, Puerto Rico and elsewhere.

On Sept. 12, 1998, the five were arrested by the FBI. They were framed up and convicted on a variety of charges, which included acting as unregistered agents of the Cuban government and possession of false identity documents. Without a shred of evidence, three were charged with “conspiracy to gather and transmit national defense information.”

Hernández was also convicted of conspiracy to commit murder, based on the pretext that he bore responsibility for the Cuban government’s 1996 shoot-down of two Brothers to the Rescue aircraft that had invaded Cuban airspace in disregard of Havana’s repeated warnings. He is serving two life terms plus 15 years. His wife Adriana Pérez is barred from entering the United States.

René González returned to Cuba in May 2013, halfway through his parole. Fernando González was released Feb. 27 and arrived in Cuba the next day.

Voices From Prison: The Cuban Five

The dignity and integrity of the Cuban Five has won them the respect of thousands around the world as well as fellow prisoners. Here three who have known them behind bars speak out. Also accounts of prison life and resistance by Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Elizabeth Palmeiro and Puerto Rican independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda. Also in Spanish.

\$7. Special publication offer \$5

‘I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived’

Fifteen watercolors by Antonio Guerrero for the 15th anniversary of the imprisonment of the Cuban Five. With text by Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino. Also in Spanish.

\$7. Special publication offer \$5

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Long view of history reveals status quo is not everlasting

Below is an excerpt from Understanding History, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for April. This collection of articles by George Novack, long-time leader of the Socialist Workers Party until his death in 1992, covers a broad range of topics, applying the Marxist method of analysis to theoretical and political questions posed in the workers movement. The piece below is from the chapter "The Long View of History." Copyright © 1972 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY GEORGE NOVACK

Everything in this world — and this is especially true of political regimes and social systems under class society — includes within itself its own opposition, its own fatal opposition. This is certainly true of the power of capitalism which breeds its own nemesis in the productive — and political — capacities of wage labor.

The irony is that the greater the wealth of the capitalists, the stronger becomes the social position of the exploited workers from whom this wealth is derived. The United States has witnessed, side-by-side with the rise of monopoly capitalism, the emergence of an ever more strongly organized, cen-



“Slaveowners, like capitalists today, taught that their ‘American way of life’ was the crown of civilization. But maturing differences broke out in a civil war which disposed of the old order.” Above, Civil War Battle of Milliken’s Bend, June 6, 1863, in which a former slave captured his master.

tralized and unified labor movement. Ever since the capitalists and wage workers came into existence together, there have been differences, friction, outbursts of conflict, strikes, lockouts, between sections of these two classes. They arise from the very nature of their relations, which are antagonistic.

By and large, up to now, these conflicts have never gone beyond the bounds of the basic political and economic structure laid down by the Civil War. They have been subdued, reconciled or smoothed over. Despite all disturbances, the monopolist rulers have entrenched themselves more firmly in their paramount positions. However, a closer scrutiny of the development discloses that the working class occupies an increasingly influential, though still subordinate, place in our national life.

The question presents itself with renewed force: Will this situation of class stalemate — with the workers in a secondary position — continue indefinitely? The capitalists naturally answer that it can and must be so. Furthermore, they do everything from teaching in school the perpetual existence of the established class structure to passing anti-labor laws to insure the continuance of the status quo. The union officialdom, for their part, go along with this general proposition.

Neither the capitalist spokesmen nor the AFL-CIO officialdom will find any

precedent in American history to reinforce their expectations of an indefinite maintenance of the status quo. That is one lesson from our national past that the “long view” of socialism emphasizes. For many years, despite occasional tiffs, the American colonists got along with their mother country and even cherished the tie. Then came a very rapid and radical reversal in relations, a duel to the end. The same held true of the long coexistence of the Northern free states and Southern slavery. For sixty years, the Northerners had to play second fiddle to the Southern slave autocracy until the majority of people in the country came to believe that this situation would endure indefinitely. The slaveowners, like the capitalists of today, taught that their “American way of life” was the crown of civilization. But once the new combination of progressive forces was obliged to assert itself, the maturing differences broke out in a civil war which disposed of the old order. The political collaborators of yesterday turned into irreconcilable foes on the morrow. ...

Organized labor has within its own grasp enough political strength, not to speak of its economic and social capacities, to be the sovereign force in this country. That is why any movement toward the formation of an independent party of labor based on the trade unions would have such highly revolutionizing implications upon the exist-

ing setup, regardless of the intentions or announced program of its organizers. Any such move on a massive scale would portend a shift in the power of supreme decision in the United States from capitalist to labor circles, just as the coming to Washington of the Republican Party in 1860 signified the shift of power away from the slaveholders to the Northern industrialists.

The Republican leaders of 1861 did not have revolutionary intentions. They headed a reformist party. They wanted to restrict the power of the slaveholders. But to do this involved upsetting the established balance of class forces. The slaveholders recognized the threat to their supremacy far more clearly and felt it more keenly than did the Northern Republican leaders themselves. That is why they initiated a counterrevolutionary assault in order to retrieve the power they had previously possessed.

The parallel with any national assumption of political power by the labor movement, even in a reformist way, is plain to see. Is such a shift possible? A succession of crucial shifts of power has marked the onward movement of the American people: from Britain to the colonial merchants and planters in the eighteenth century; and from the Southern slavocracy to the industrial capitalists in the nineteenth century. The thrust in the present period of our national history is toward another such colossal shift this time from the ruling plutocracy to the rising working class and its allies among the oppressed minorities.

The whole course of economic, social and political development in this country in this century points to such a shift in power. Of course, the working class is far from predominant yet, and even less conscious of its historical mission. But, from the standpoint of the long view, it is most important to note the different rates of growth in the economic, social and political potentialities of the respective contenders for supreme power. Reviewing this country’s history from 1876 to 1957, together with the rate of growth of the working-class movement on a world scale, the balance of forces has been steadily shifting, despite all oscillations, toward the side of working-class power.

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Volunteers get revolutionary books onto shelves

BY NICK CASTLE

Volunteers in many parts of the world help get books on revolutionary working-class politics published by Pathfinder Press into university, high school and municipal libraries; city and national museums; independent bookstores; national conferences; city book fairs; and college classrooms.

Through a concentrated effort between September and February volunteers in the U.S. and Canada in 15 cities logged 121 book orders, 36 to first-time Pathfinder customers — exceeding the goal of 105 orders.

Special emphasis was placed on winning professors to include Pathfinder books in their class syllabuses. Pathfinder books have recently been ordered for university classes in Seattle (*Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* and *February 1965: The Final Speeches*), Los Angeles (*The First and Second Declarations of Havana* and *Nelson Mandela Speaks*) and Miami (*Our History Is Still Being Written*).

In December, following the death of Nelson Mandela, volunteers organized a special two-week push to get bookstores and libraries to order books on Mandela, including in his own words and about the revolution in South Africa he led. More than 20 such orders were made. The largest was an order from a national bookstore chain in Canada that included 50 copies each of *Nelson Mandela Speaks*

and *The Struggle Is My Life*. A Civil Rights museum in North Carolina ordered 10 copies each of books on Mandela, as well as *Malcolm X*, *Black Liberation*, and *the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes and two books of Malcolm X's speeches: *Malcolm X Talks to Young People* and *February 1965: The Final Speeches*. A number of orders were also placed for issue no. 5 of the Marxist magazine *New International*, which contains a feature article titled, "The Coming Revolution in South Africa."

As volunteers gear up for another effort this spring, orders are already coming in for Pathfinder's new books on defense of the Cuban Five: *I Will Die the Way I've Lived* and *Voices From Prison: The Cuban Five*. Volunteers in the Twin Cities helped bring in a large order for these and other titles from an art gallery that sponsored an exhibit of Antonio Guerrero's "I Will Die the Way I've Lived" watercolor paintings.

Two other new titles are expected soon: *Socialism on Trial* and *50 Years of Covert Operations in the US*, both in English and Spanish.

With the fall/winter effort completed, volunteers are sharing lessons from their recent work, setting goals for spring 2014 sales that is just underway, and reaching out with Pathfinder books that can help strengthen the class struggle unfolding around the world, from Cambodia to Ukraine, from Egypt to the United States.

Miners in eastern Ukraine refute press

Continued from page 6

Most work in pump stations, on conveyors and in the explosives warehouse. Among underground miners, 10 percent are women.

"When we demanded improvements in pay and working conditions for women, the company told us if we kept complaining they would just replace us with men," she said. "So they hired a man and put him in a position usually filled by women, at the pay women get. But he refused to stay on the job."

"The existence of our independent union is important," she said. "The old unions, dating back to before the Soviet Union collapsed, just parrot what the government and the bosses say."

"The official unions, and the educational system in the country, are only good at preparing future slaves for industry," Vitalievych said. "We've got to involve the younger workers, the younger miners."

The Independent Trade Union of Miners of Ukraine (NGPU) was born out of strikes, protests and massive marches in 1989-91, which were at the center of political ferment that helped prepare the way for an independent Ukraine. Miners coupled demands for higher pay, better working conditions and the right to strike with political demands, including the end to Russian domination.

In October 1990 members of union strike committees across the country met in Donetsk and established the new, independent miners union. The Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Ukraine, which the NGPU is part of, was "created literally

in the tent camps of the working-class people," the federation explains on its website.

Coal production crisis hits workers

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the coal industry in Ukraine has taken big blows. The number of mines has tumbled from over 300 to 143. Forty-three of the more productive mines have been privatized. One company, DTEK, owned by a syndicate run by Rinat Akhmetov, Ukraine's richest capitalist, accounts for almost half of the country's coal production.

Thousands of miners were thrown out of work in the transition, leading to widespread unemployment in coal regions in the east and west of the country.

Explosions, roof falls and silicosis lung disease take a heavy toll on miners. Mines in Ukraine, along with those in China, are the most dangerous in the world.

Since the 2008 worldwide financial crisis, sagging demand and falling prices for coal have hit the industry hard in Ukraine. The government closed nearly 20 percent of state-owned mines and cut production in the others. Akhmetov said DTEK plans to both raise production and "seriously decrease the number of employees," industry journal *Coal Age* reported in December.

Miners in the U.S. are facing similar assaults, *Militant* correspondent Frank Forrestal, a former coal miner in western Pennsylvania, told the Ukrainian miners. "Coal bosses have closed less profitable mines in West Virginia and Pennsylvania,

where the union has had a base, and opened nonunion ones in the West. At the same time working conditions have gotten worse as bosses cut corners to defend their profits.

"Forty years ago there was a big social movement in the coal fields to enforce safer conditions to lower the prevalence of black lung that strengthened the union," Forrestal said. "But today black lung is coming back."

"The more we talk," said Elena Maslova, "the more I'm reminded of something we used to think about — the need for all proletarians of the world to unite."

Moscow provocations

Continued from front page

A group of pro-Moscow agents also seized the Security Service of Ukraine office in the northeastern city of Kharkiv, but were pushed out two days later by elite Ukrainian units, who arrested 70.

"Police were doing nothing at all, they were just walking amid the thugs," Zinovy Flionts, an eyewitness in Kharkiv, told the *Kyiv Post*. "The guys who took over the administration were either some Russians or simply criminals brought from somewhere."

On the night of April 7, similar forces attempted to take over the administration building in the southern city of Mykolayiv, but were repulsed by local volunteer self-defense units.

The operations echo the provocations that prepared Moscow's invasion of Crimea, which was followed by a rigged referendum at gunpoint March 16 and seizure of the peninsula. Since then, thousands of Crimean residents — Tatars, ethnic Ukrainians and others — have left the peninsula. More than 1,000 families in Ukraine have opened their homes to receive the refugees.

"There is a script being written in the Russian Federation, for which there is only one purpose: the dismemberment and destruction of Ukraine and the transformation of Ukraine into the territory of slavery under the dictates of Russia," Ukrainian Interim Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk said April 7.

These moves do not represent any "sharp rise in tension" in the majority Russian-speaking east of Ukraine, the Kharkiv Human Rights Group said April 7. This is reflected in the "relatively small numbers involved," the group said, and flies in the face of recent polls and demonstrations in the region showing majority sentiment for Ukraine unity.

The *Donbass News* published an open letter from people in the city urging the interim Ukrainian government to "deal with the indecisive actions by local authorities" to counter threats to "Ukrainian sovereignty, territorial integrity and Constitutional order."

Some 10,000 marched in Odessa against pro-Moscow provocations March 30, carrying a half-mile-long Ukrainian flag. A march in support of the Russian government the same day there drew 3,000.

Meanwhile, the interim Ukrainian government is pressing ahead with plans to slash state expenses and make Ukrainian capital "more competitive" on the back of working people as part of a deal for usurious loans from the International Monetary Fund. Yatsenyuk told Reuters they intend to double gas prices and freeze state salaries and pensions. "We will regain trust and credibility from foreign investors," he said. "This is the roadmap for Ukraine."

The rulers of Ukraine, Russia and the U.S. have but one point of agreement: the desire to bring an end to the mobilization of working people in Ukraine. The Ukrainian parliament voted unanimously April 1 to disarm "paramilitary groups" — targeting the thousands who remain in Kiev's Independence Square, the center of mobilizations across the nation that overthrew the pro-Russian regime of Viktor Yanukovich in February.

Secretary of State John Kerry said March 30 that he and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov agreed on the need to work with the Ukrainian government to assure "demobilization and disarmament of irregular forces and provocateurs."

At the same time, several new bills were introduced in the Russian Duma to "prevent the kind of street demonstrations that gripped Ukraine's Kiev," *USA Today* reported April 6. One proposal would authorize the cops to use lethal force against civilian protesters.

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

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Militant/Oksana Demynovych

Front row from left, Samoilov Yuriy Petrovych, citywide leader Independent Miners union; John Studer; Bondar Alexander Vitalievych, NGPU organizer at EVRAZ Suha Balka iron ore mine; Frank Forrestal; Elena Maslova, miner, outside miners' union office.