

'Militant' kicks off subscription, fund drives

BY EMMA JOHNSON

The *Militant* subscription campaign is off to a good start! In the first 10 days supporters around the world won 481 new and renewing subscribers toward the quota of 2,000. Several areas are already considering raising their goals.

The seven-week drive runs concurrently with the annual Militant Fighting Fund, crucial to putting the paper out—and underwriting the introductory subscription offer of 12 weekly issues for \$5. Just over \$6,800 came in last week.

"We sold four subscriptions in the first half hour," John Staggs from *Continued on page 3*

Sign up 2,000 subscribers!

April 11 - June 2 (week 1)

Country	quota	sold	%
UNITED STATES			
Los Angeles	75	43	57%
Oakland	125	54	43%
Houston	10	4	40%
Nebraska	165	52	32%
Omaha	155	49	32%
Lincoln	10	3	30%
New York	175	48	27%
Chicago	155	38	25%
Seattle	125	28	22%
Brooklyn	180	35	19%
Twin Cities	65	11	17%
Philadelphia	115	19	17%
Boston	63	10	16%
Atlanta	150	18	12%
Washington	100	10	10%
Miami	45	3	7%
Total U.S.	1548	373	24%
PRISONERS	15	6	40%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	105	29	28%
Manchester	100	30	30%
UK Total	205	59	29%
CANADA			
Calgary	50	10	20%
Montreal	75	7	9%
Canada Total	125	17	14%
AUSTRALIA	70	14	20%
NEW ZEALAND	60	12	20%
Total	2023	481	24%
Should be	2000	286	14%

Continued on page 3

April 15 protests: 'Stand together for \$15, union'

Marches in over 200 cities in US, abroad



Militant/Mike Shur

Thousands march in New York April 15. Larger actions reflected growing confidence of fast-food workers, union members, protesters against police brutality and others joining together.

BY MAGGIE TROWE

NEW YORK — Thousands of workers fighting for \$15 and a union marched down Broadway here April 15 to the cheers of onlookers and workers in stores along the route. Fast-food, Walmart, home health care, airport workers; unionists; opponents of police brutality; and others supporting the fight joined the demonstration.

"Fight for \$15" marches, strikes, sit-ins and rallies, qualitatively bigger and broader than last December, took place in more than 200 cities and towns across the U.S., as well as Hong Kong, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Greece, New Zealand, the Philippines

and the U.K.

The increased presence of members of a range of unions, including many higher paid workers, was striking. There were contingents from the New York building trades, hospital workers and janitors from Service Employees International Union, the Hotel Trades

Continued on page 4

US-Iran nuclear pact unravels as war in Yemen devastates toilers

BY NAOMI CRAINE

The imperialist order imposed in the Mideast after World War I comes apart more each day. The draft nuclear accord with Iran announced by President Barack Obama with much fanfare April 2 is already unraveling.

Under mounting international pressure and widespread outrage in Yemen, the Saudi monarchy announced April 21 it was stopping its brutal, nearly monthlong bombardment of Yemen, part of the Saudi rulers' sharp conflict with Iran, their biggest economic, political and military rival in the region. However, the next day warplanes bombed Taiz and fighting

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

AND NORTON SANDLER

OMAHA, Neb. — Two workers were killed and another injured in an explosion while cleaning petroleum distillates out of a rail car at a

Baltimore: 'Protest death of Freddie Gray in police custody!'

BY MAGGIE TROWE

Protests and public outcry erupted after Freddie Gray, 25, died April 19 of spinal injuries inflicted during his arrest and transport to the cop station by Baltimore police a week earlier.

A police report claims Gray "fled unprovoked upon noticing police presence" April 12, the *Wall Street Journal* reported. The paper said the report states the cops arrested him "without force or incident."

Officer Garrett Miller says he saw

Continued on page 9

Why is stock market up while industry slows down?

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Stock prices have tripled over the last six years, despite a continuing worldwide slowdown in manufacturing and trade, flat employment and slackening industrial production in the U.S., China and other countries. These trends mean the jump in stocks reflects speculation, not the health of the U.S. capitalist economy.

U.S. industrial production fell in the first three months of the year, the first quarterly decrease since the last recession ended in June 2009.

Some economists had pointed to the post-recession increase in manufacturing output as an indication that the U.S. economy was on the road to recovery. Yet it wasn't until October 2013 that industrial production reached pre-recession levels. Since then it has risen by an additional 5 percent, but with 1.4 million fewer manufacturing jobs today than in December 2007. In other words, the bosses increased output with fewer workers, largely by imposing speedup that eroded safety on the job.

The Federal Reserve Bank reported April 15 that industrial production dropped 0.6 percent in March, the

Continued on page 9

2 killed in Omaha explosion while cleaning oil residue from rail car

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

AND NORTON SANDLER

south Omaha rail yard April 14. They worked for Nebraska Railcar Cleaning Services.

Dallas Foulk, 40, was climbing a ladder out of the car when the explosion hurled him into the air. He died soon after paramedics took him to the hospital.

Adrian LaPour, 44, was killed in

Continued on page 6

Inside

Join May 1 protests to demand 'No deportations!' 2

DC Militant Labor Forum takes up rail safety fight 6

Prison art exhibit in NY advances solidarity with Cuba 7

—On the picket line, p. 5—

Illinois uranium workers return to work after 8-month lockout

Boston hotel workers campaign for union representation

'Treat us with dignity,' say immigrant hunger strikers

BY SETH GALINSKY

"We have come to this country, with our children, seeking refugee status and we are being treated like criminals," reads the hand-written letter sent to Immigration and Customs Enforcement by 78 women who started a hunger strike March 31 at the U.S. immigration detention center in Karnes County, Texas. "We deserve to be treated with some dignity and that our rights to the immigration process be respected."

In an attempt to intimidate the women, authorities at the privately run prison told them that they better start eating or ICE would take away their children and put them in foster care. Three leaders of the strike, and their children, were put in darkened isolation rooms. Strikers decided to end the action April 4.

Ten women restarted the strike April 15, vowing to eat just one meal a day until their demands for better treatment are met.

Kenia Galeano, 26, a leader of the first action, who was released with her 2-year-old son April 9 after immigration activists helped pay her bond, told the *Militant* in a phone interview that conditions in the center "are difficult." The 532-bed prison — one of only three such detention facilities in the country — is run by GEO Group, one of the largest for-profit prison corporations in the country.

"The water is horrible," Galeano, a garment worker from Honduras, said. "It tastes like Clorox, most of the children won't drink it. But the water that they sell costs almost \$2 a bottle. And those of us that work there only get paid

\$1 an hour."

"The rice and beans they give us were almost always partly uncooked. The vegetables are overcooked and sometimes they give food that smells so bad the kids won't even try it," Galeano said. She was locked up in the center for five months.

Like many of the women, Galeano said she left her homeland because of threats from criminal gangs that left her in fear for her life.

As part of the protest, women in the camp held up signs with large letters spelling out "Libertad" — freedom — when a helicopter flew overhead April 2. Karnes personnel reported the action as an "insurrection."

Asylum applicants used to be allowed to live with family and friends while their case was being reviewed, but "since June of last year, the Obama administration has upended that tradition," the April 10 *New York Times* reported.

Immigration officials began detaining almost all women seeking asylum with children to "create a deterrent effect," said Esther Olavarria, a Department of Homeland Security spokesperson.

In February U.S. District Court Judge James Boasberg ruled in favor of a petition by the American Civil Liberties Union overturning the policy. In response, immigration officials began setting exorbitant bonds — from \$4,000 to as high as \$15,000 — as a precondition to get out. Anyone who has been deported before isn't eligible.

ICE says it plans to double the Karnes



Protest March 31 backs women with children held at Karnes County, Texas, immigration jail.

detention center's capacity to more than 1,000 beds.

Government officials say these steps are needed to stop a wave of immigration from Central America. U.S. Customs and Border Protection reported last year that it had detained more than 47,000 unaccompanied children from October 2013 to May 2014, nearly double the number from the same period the previous year. Most of the increase was from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.

Immigration authorities have also made it harder to win asylum. "Previously if you had a one in 10 chance of persecution you could be considered," Mohammad Abdollahi, a spokesperson for Raíces, an immigrant aid organization, told the *Militant* by phone from San Antonio. "But now you have to prove a 50 percent chance." Despite this, many of the women detained in Karnes had passed the initial "credible-fear" interview, a first step toward winning asylum.

May Day: Protest against deportations, cop brutality

May 1, an international workers holiday since the rise of the union movement in the U.S., got a new lease on life in 2006 when 2 million workers — immigrants and their supporters — carried out the first national political strike in U.S. history opposing criminalization and demanding an end to deportations of workers born in other countries. This year some important May Day actions across the U.S. will take up the cause of immigrant workers. They will also be marked by the rising Fight for \$15 and protests against police brutality and killings. Some actions are listed below.

Boston. "Our struggle, our voice." 4 p.m. feeder marches from Chelsea, East Boston, Revere and Everett will march to Glendale Park in Everett for 5:30 p.m. rally. Sponsor: May 1st Coalition. For information call (617) 889-6080.

Hightstown, New Jersey. Sat., May 2, rally at 2 p.m. at Memorial Park. March at 4 p.m. Sponsor: Unidad Latina en Acción NJ. For information call (203) 278-2729.

Milwaukee. Solidarity March, 11 a.m. 1027 S. Fifth St. Sponsor: Voces de la Frontera, Youth Empowered in the Struggle.

Oakland, California. "Stop Police Terror!" 9 a.m. rally at Port of Oakland, APL gate near berth 62. Noon rally at Frank Ogawa (Oscar Grant) Plaza, downtown Oakland. (International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10 plans a stop-work meeting to attend.)

Seattle. Annual May Day March for Immigrant and Workers Rights. Rally at 2 p.m. at Judkins Park. March at 3 p.m. to Federal Courthouse, 700 Stewart St. Sponsor: El Comité, May 1st Action Coalition.

THE MILITANT

Solidarity strengthened by social struggle

Ties of solidarity among working people are strengthened in times of growing social struggles, leading to a drop in crime. From the civil rights movement in the 1960s to the Cuban Revolution, these examples help point the way forward as workers' resistance increases today.



AP Photo/Harvey Georges
Civil rights leader Gloria Richardson faces off National Guard in Maryland, July 1963.

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

Subscription, fund drives

Continued from front page

Philadelphia said by phone April 20. "We did two blocks with family houses in northeast Philly. In three hours we won eight new readers."

"This was a new area, mostly Caucasian with many union members" Staggs said. "Among the new readers are a union postal worker and members of the Teamsters, the Carpenters union and the Communications Workers of America."

The team, made up of Staggs and two Walmart workers, found support for the fight to raise the minimum wage, for safety and against one-person crews on the railroads. The postal worker said all new hires where she works are on lower tiers and treated like temps.

"The *Militant* seems to be a paper with the real news, not the fake news," she said as she filled out the subscription blank.

The majority of the new readers signed up when partisans of the paper knocked on their doors in working-class

neighborhoods in big cities, small towns and rural areas. The drive got a boost at the April 15 national day of action for \$15 and a union, where dozens of protesters signed up to get the socialist newsweekly.

Supporters in New York joined actions April 15 in different parts of the city. Throughout the day they sold 35 subscriptions and more than 100 single copies of the *Militant*.

Everyone who signs up can buy books published by Pathfinder Press and issues of the *New International* magazine at half price. Eighteen of the new readers in New York took advantage of this offer. Seven went for *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes and three picked up *Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs.

In Montreal, Josette Hurtubise renewed her subscription and decided to get *Mother Jones Speaks*.

"I'm a teacher, a job mostly occupied by women, and reading these stories is



Militant/Andrés Mendoza

Paul Davies, right, Communist League candidate in Manchester for U.K. Parliament in May 7 elections, talks to hospital care assistant Jonathan Sutherland at his home in Newton Heath April 19. Sutherland, saying he identifies with name *Militant*, bought subscription and a book.

a good source of inspiration to continue the struggle for women's rights and to keep what we have gained," she said.

The Militant Fighting Fund lets read-

ers who appreciate and respect the paper join in financially backing it.

"We sent in \$1,055 toward our goal of \$10,000," reported Ilona Gersh from Chicago April 20. "A member of the United Auto Workers at an Illinois plant that makes train locomotives contributed \$70 to the fund as he renewed his subscription."

"I am very pleased with your paper. It gives me news about workers all over the world," wrote a Florida prisoner, renewing his subscription. Workers behind bars are some of the most loyal readers and have a very high rate of renewal. Six have already sent in subscriptions, putting them well ahead toward the goal of 15. The Prisoners' Fund makes it possible to offer the paper to prisoners at no cost or sharply reduced rates.

Join other readers in reaching out broadly with the paper, and please send a generous contribution to the fund. Contact a distributor listed on page 8. And send us reports on your progress.

US-Iran pact unravels, war in Yemen continues

Continued from front page
continued across the country.

Within a week of the announced nuclear accord, top Iranian officials disputed the White House version of what's in the unwritten "framework" that guides negotiations between now and June 30.

"We will not sign any agreement unless all economic sanctions are totally lifted on the first day of the implementation of the deal," Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said April 9. The Obama administration insists that the plan is to gradually lift the imperialist sanctions strangling Iran's economy, matching steps Tehran takes to comply with limits on enriching and storing uranium.

Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei declared the same day, "Iran's military sites cannot be inspected under the excuse of nuclear supervision," discrediting Obama's April 2 claim that Iran had "agreed to the most robust and intrusive inspections ... for any nuclear program in history."

The Israeli government opposes the deal. "The terms of the framework — which will leave an unreformed Iran

stronger, richer and with a clear path to a bomb — make war more likely," Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon wrote in an April 8 *Washington Post* column. He dismissed the idea that inspections would prevent Tehran from developing the capacity to build nuclear weapons, arguing for keeping the sanctions in place to secure a "better deal."

The government of Saudi Arabia issued a cautious statement April 6 saying it hoped the talks would achieve "a binding and definitive agreement that would lead to the strengthening of security and stability in the region." The same statement called for "noninterference in the affairs of Arab states" by Tehran, referring to Iranian support for militias in Iraq, Syria and Yemen.

The assault on Yemen is largely a proxy war against Iran, which Riyadh says is backing Houthi rebels who recently overthrew a U.S.- and Saudi-backed government. The Saudi-led bombardment, which began March 26, has destroyed hospitals, schools, mosques and factories and killed nearly 1,000 people. Saudi-led forces also im-

posed a naval blockade on Yemen that has cut off urgently needed food and medical supplies. The war has forced 150,000 residents to flee their homes, according to the U.N.

While Washington says Iran has a history of political and material support for the Houthis, Tehran denies giving direct military aid. Iranian officials announced April 8 they were sending two warships to the coast of Yemen to "safeguard naval routes for vessels in the region" near the strategic Bab al-Mandab Strait.

The same day Washington, which is providing intelligence and logistical support for the Saudi regime's war in Yemen, warned Iran not to interfere. "The United States is not going to stand by while the region is destabilized or while people engage in overt warfare across lines — international boundaries — in other countries," Secretary of State John Kerry said.

On April 20 U.S. officials said aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt and a guided missile cruiser would join 10 other U.S. warships in the waters off Yemen, explicitly as a warning to Iran.

In face of broad opposition from both Republicans and Democrats, Obama agreed April 14 to sign a bill that will allow Congress to block whatever final nuclear deal is negotiated with Tehran. It would delay any relief from economic sanctions by a month or more, and allow a two-thirds majority in Congress to prevent the sanctions from being lifted, which would scuttle any accord. Obama had previously insisted that reaching an agreement was within the purview of the executive, not Congress.

"We are not negotiating with the U.S. Senate or the House of Representatives," Iranian President Rouhani responded, noting that the talks include the governments of China, France, Germany, Russia and the United Kingdom, as well as Washington. "If there is not going to be an end to the sanctions in this round of the talks, there is not going to be a deal."

At an April 17 news conference, Obama said U.S. diplomats should use "creative negotiations" to find a course toward lifting sanctions that the rulers in Tehran would find it easier to sell.

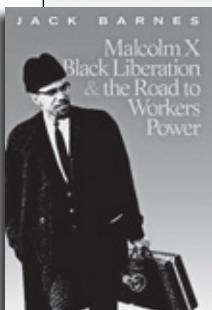
"How sanctions are lessened, how we snap back sanctions if there's a violation, there are a lot of different mechanisms and ways to do that," Obama said.

Book specials for subscribers

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power by Jack Barnes

\$10 with subscription (regular \$20) Also in Spanish, French, Greek, Farsi, Arabic

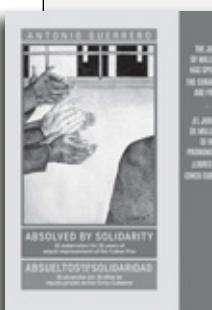
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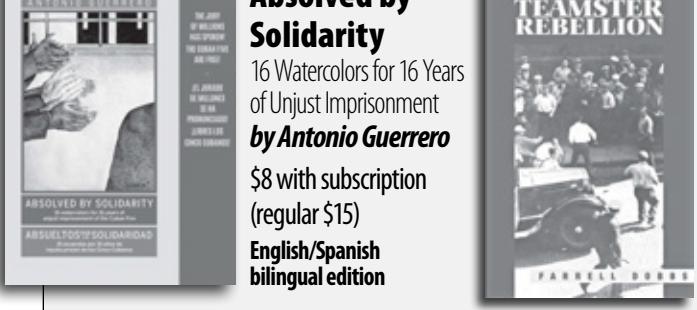
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Militant Fighting Fund

April 11-June 2 (Week 1)

Country	Quota	Paid	%
UNITED STATES			
Atlanta	\$8,600	\$1,705	20%
Oakland	\$13,500	\$2,185	16%
Chicago	\$10,000	\$1,055	11%
Twin Cities	\$3,600	\$350	10%
Nebraska	\$13,750	\$160	1%
Lincoln	\$150	\$50	33%
Omaha	\$3,300	\$110	3%
Boston	\$3,750	\$0	0%
Brooklyn	\$10,000	\$0	0%
Los Angeles	\$7,250	\$0	0%
Miami	\$2,000	\$0	0%
New York	\$10,000	\$0	0%
Philadelphia	\$3,200	\$0	0%
Seattle	\$8,600	\$0	0%
Washington	\$8,000	\$0	0%
Total U.S.	\$91,950	\$5,615	6%
CANADA			
Calgary	\$2,900	\$512	18%
Montreal	\$4,400	\$0	0%
Total Canada	\$7,300	\$512	7%
NEW ZEALAND	\$4,400	\$0	0%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	\$1,000	\$0	0%
Manchester	\$600	\$0	0%
Total U.K.	\$1,600	\$0	0%
AUSTRALIA	\$1,350	\$335	25%
Total	\$106,600	\$6,974	6%
Should be	\$115,000	\$16,429	14%

April 15 protests for \$15

Continued from front page
Council and many others.

"I came out to support the home health care workers," said Joyce Austin, a nurse marching with 1199SEIU. "They're overworked and underpaid for work that's so important. They become like family to the people they care for, but can't even afford to take a vacation or take off when they're sick."

There are some 150,000 home health care aides in New York City. Of those, 80,000 are in the SEIU and earn \$10 an hour. The nonunion aides earn less. Signs saying "Invisible no more" were common among the home care workers.

Increased confidence was palpable at actions across the country. Many workers noted that Walmart and McDonald's were feeling the pressure and had raised wages for some workers recently.

We want more now'

David Soriano, 39, a wheelchair attendant who works for PrimeFlight Aviation Services at LaGuardia airport, makes \$9.10 an hour and has been taking part in protests and one-day strikes. "We were aiming for \$10.10 an hour, but now we want \$15," he told the *Militant* during the march.

In downtown Brooklyn, a 6 a.m. protest organized by Laborers' Local 79 drew about 500 people. Plumbers, electricians and laborers wearing boots and hard hats marched together with fast-food, carwash and delivery workers.



Fight for \$15 protesters rally inside McDonald's restaurant in southwest Chicago.

Walmart workers join 'Fight for \$15' actions



Militant/Glova Scott

WASHINGTON — Some 50 Walmart workers and others joined a "Fight for \$15" rally in front of the H Street Walmart April 12. Many came from a labor retreat organized by the Food Chain Workers Alliance. OUR Walmart, an organization of Walmart workers fighting for \$15 an hour and a union, recently joined the Alliance. The protesters held a moment of silence for Walter Scott, the forklift driver killed by a cop in North Charleston, South Carolina, April 4.

Tiffany Beroid (second from left), an OUR Walmart member fighting her firing by Walmart in 2012 after she asked for a light-duty assignment during a high-risk pregnancy, attended. So did Dominic Ware, an OUR Walmart member from Oakland, California, who was fired for striking in 2013.

On April 15, OUR Walmart members from the area took part in "Fight for \$15" actions here, in Richmond, Virginia, and in New York. Glova Scott, a member of OUR Walmart here, spoke at the New York rally.

— NED MEASEL

Ned Measel is a member of OUR Walmart in Washington.

In Chicago, 125 people rallied outside a McDonald's on the West Side. Doug Hunter and three other workers from the restaurant joined in.

"The manager is intimidating us," Hunter said. "They cut the hours and messed up the schedules of those of us who are protesting. I tell my coworkers they have a right to demonstrate."

"We want more than \$15 now," he said. "We want social justice. We want an end to police brutality. We want child care. We aren't going to stay on the bottom of humanity. We are standing up!"

Some 45 workers at Brink's Armored Transportation walked off the job to join the protest. "We're all in this together," said Terrance Garrett, 25, a messenger and driver. "I'm ready. Once you take a stand you have to keep going."

Some 200 workers protested outside a South Side McDonald's at 6 a.m. chanting, "Get up! Get down! Chicago is a union town!" People driving by honked encouragement.



Militant/Bob Braxton

"We all need to stand together," said Phyllis Jackson, 63, an airport worker who makes \$7.25 an hour, at rally of 300 in Atlanta, above. "With support and unity, we have a chance to win."

At protests across the country, workers said they were buoyed by recent protests against the cop killing of Walter Scott in South Carolina and other police assaults.

Workers from Dallas, San Antonio, Austin and the Rio Grande Valley joined the protests in Houston.

"Slavery days are over, but we're still doing hard work for a little bit of nothing," said Tanzie Dorough, a Burger King worker. "My first strike was last December."

"Everyone deserves more pay," said Santa Rubio, a McDonald's worker. "I have worked here for 11 years and earn \$8.50 an hour. My husband has worked for 21 years in construction and still makes \$8 an hour."

Hundreds demonstrated across Washington state. In addition to fast-food workers, Uber drivers, Macy's and Walmart workers, adjunct faculty members from Seattle University and farmworkers from eastern Washington marched in downtown Seattle.

"Even though we need money, we took the day off," said a farmworker who asked not to be identified. "We can't live on what they pay us."

Nearly 1,000 workers marched from a church in the Black community of Overtown through downtown Miami. At the nearby Ft. Lauderdale airport, Fight for \$15 protesters rallied in the terminal.

Debate on wages in capitalist press

The protests are spurring debate in the capitalist media on increasing wages. In an April 15 article in the *Washington Post* titled "Americans Are Spending \$153 Billion a Year to Subsidize McDonald's and Walmart's Low Wage Workers," Ken Jacobs, chair of the University of California at Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education, railed against "the substantial public cost of low wages" and advocated raising wages "to generate significant savings to state and federal governments." In other words, the liberals can save "taxpayers" money by legislating slightly higher wages for workers, who they view as passive victims.

Michael Strain, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, responded in an April 17 op-ed: "If a worker can only bring in, for example, \$9 per hour in revenue to his firm, it is simply unrealistic to expect his firm to

pay him, say, \$15 per hour."

McDonald's, which registered \$1.09 billion net income in the fourth-quarter of 2014, and Walmart, which returned \$12.8 billion to shareholders in 2014, are not losing money. They are profiting from the exploitation of wage labor, not doing workers a favor.

The vigor and solidarity on display at the April 15 actions showed a working class with growing confidence in its ability to fight and win support, one that doesn't need the contemptuous handouts of the left or the condescending "tough love" of the right.

Anne Parker in Chicago, Edward Foote in Seattle, Deborah Liatos in Houston, Anthony Dutrow in Miami and Naomi Craine in New York contributed to this article.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Working-Class Resistance, Fights Against Cop Brutality: Why Working People Need to Break From the Democratic and Republican Parties. Speaker: Norton Sandler, Midwest organizer of Socialist Workers Party. Sat., May 2, 7:30 p.m. 2018 S. Ashland Ave. Tel.: (312) 455-0111.

CANADA

Calgary

Workers Need to Fight for Political Power. Speaker: Katy LeRougetel, Communist League candidate in Calgary-Cross. Fri., May 1, 7:30 p.m. 4909 17th Ave. SE. Tel.: (403) 457-9044.

Montreal

Turmoil in the Middle East — Which Way Forward for Working People? Speaker: Aimée Kendergi, Communist League. Fri., April 24, 7:30 p.m. 7107 St. Denis, Suite 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

—CALENDAR—

NEW YORK

New York

Join Family Members of 43 Students Disappeared by the Police in Mexico in a March for Justice to the UN. Sun., April 26. Assemble at Washington Square Park at 4 p.m. Sponsored by Caravana43. For more info: www.caravana43.com.

Absolved by Solidarity. 16 Watercolors for 16 Years of Unjust Imprisonment. Prison Paintings by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five. The Clemente, LES Gallery, ground floor. 107 Suffolk St. Exhibit runs April 11-May 2. Open daily 4-9 p.m.

March to Free Oscar López! Puerto Rican independence fighter jailed in U.S. for more than 33 years. Sat., May 30. Assemble: 11 a.m. at 125th Street and Adam Clayton Powell Blvd. For more info: www.freeoscarnycmay30.org.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

MAGGIE TROWE, EDITOR

Help make this column a voice of workers' resistance!

This column is dedicated to spreading the truth about the labor resistance that is unfolding today. It seeks to give voice to those engaged in battle and help build solidarity. Its success depends on input from readers. If you are involved in a labor struggle or have information on one, please contact me at 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018; or (212) 244-4899; or themilitant@mac.com. We'll work together to ensure your story is told.

—Maggie Trowe



Militant
Wyndham Boston hotel workers, some shaking detergent-bottle maracas, picket April 10 for union representation. "They don't respect our rights," kitchen worker Blanca Arroyo said.

Illinois uranium workers return to work after eight-month lockout

After being locked out for nearly eight months, workers at Honeywell's uranium conversion facility in Metropolis, Illinois, began returning to work April 20 after ratifying a three-year agreement March 27.

"The new contract is a vast improvement over Honeywell's initial offer," United Steelworkers Local 7-669 President Stephen Lech told the *Militant*, "but we didn't get everything we wanted."

Honeywell locked out about 150 members of Local 7-669 Aug. 1, 2014, after only 11 days of negotiations for a new agreement.

In June 2010 Honeywell also locked out the Steelworkers, who turned the lockout into a fight — organizing around-the-clock picketing and reaching out to the labor movement nationally and internationally for solidarity.

The unionists returned to work in August 2011 after beating back the company's most onerous takeback demands.

Talks between Honeywell and the union, which stalled twice during the most recent lockout, resumed March 18. Three days later the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service announced a tentative agreement.

"One gain we made was making it harder for them to contract out work while our members are laid off," said Lech. "Before, a laid-off worker could be recalled only to their old job. The company used this provision to subcontract out work when we had members laid off. We eliminated that. Now any unfilled positions have to be offered to laid-off workers before they can be contracted out."

One of the changes in the new contract is on health care, Lech said. Local 7-669 was the last Honeywell facility in the country that was not covered by the health care plan the company offered to salaried employees, a plan with much

higher out-of-pocket expenses.

In exchange for accepting this plan, members receive a \$500-a-year payment into employee health savings accounts, long-term disability coverage and education assistance, said Lech.

The other thing the union conceded was the company's ability to contract out maintenance work, said Lech. "Honeywell demanded the elimination of the maintenance department. But we won protection for our members."

Anyone who is eligible for retirement in the next three years can retire now with full retirement pay and benefits, he said, and any maintenance worker who wants to continue working can do so in production departments.

—R.V. Smallwood

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 4, 1990

NEW YORK — A massive outpouring here April 20 protested a federal AIDS policy banning blood donations from Haitians. Tens of thousands of Haitians began assembling in Brooklyn at 9:00 a.m. From there they marched across the Brooklyn Bridge to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) offices at Federal Plaza and at the nearby city Health and Hospitals Corporation headquarters.

Traffic ground to a standstill as more than 50,000 protesters surged across the bridge for three hours. The chants rang out, some in Creole, but mainly in English: "The FDA is racist"; "No blood, no sweat"; "AIDS is not a Haitian Disease ... Haitian disease is liberation." In a sea of blue-and-red Haitian flags, hundreds carried signs that read, "FDA equals 'Federal Discrimination Agency,'" and "We need a cure, not a stigma."

Oil strikers protest at boss conference in Texas



USW Oil Workers

Striking Marathon oil refinery workers and supporters rallied outside the 2015 IHS CERAWeek conference on energy policy and investment in Houston April 21, where Marathon President and CEO Gary Heminger spoke.

The national oil strike that began Feb. 1 continues at Marathon in Texas City, Texas; LyondellBasell in Pasadena, Texas; BP-Husky in Toledo, Ohio; and BP in Whiting, Indiana.

"Almost everybody is back to work" at the Marathon refinery in Catlettsburg, Kentucky, Steelworkers Local 8-719 Vice President Dave Martin told the *Militant*. In a divided vote after no recommendation from the local officers, members approved a contract April 3.

"The company held a return-to-work 'debriefing' for everyone in two groups," Martin said. "The plant manager said there's a new bar for us to perform to, that contractors work safer than we do and that during the strike the company had higher production with less people. Everybody's mad about the remarks. I believe it jump-started our local. Members are sticking together more now. It's a different place after the strike. We've come out of this a lot stronger."

In addition to the four refineries still on strike, the fight for safe working conditions, cuts in forced overtime, hiring of more workers and further efforts to organize more contract maintenance workers into the Steelworkers continues inside all the union-organized refineries.

—MITCHEL ROSENBERG

Mitchel Rosenberg is a member of Steelworkers Local 10-1 in Philadelphia.

Boston hotel workers campaign for union representation

BOSTON — More than 100 members of UNITE HERE Local 26 and supporters, some shaking homemade detergent-bottle maracas, picketed outside the Wyndham Boston Hotel April 10 to support workers there in their campaign for union representation.

Local 26 announced "a public campaign to win respect and a fair process to decide on unionization."

"We are fighting for justice," Blanca Arroyo, a kitchen worker, told the *Militant*. "They don't respect our rights."

Local 26 members from other hotels

and campuses, including the Park Plaza Hotel, Le Meridien Hotel and Northeastern University, joined the picket line after work. Workers from the Back Bay Hilton, where a unionization campaign began with a picket line March 30, also came to show their support.

Local 26 announced April 11 that after a two-year campaign, workers at the Harvard-owned DoubleTree Suites have won the fight for a union and will begin negotiating their first contract. On Nov. 20, 2014, DoubleTree workers conducted their first hotel strike in Boston in more than 100 years.

—Kyle Dunphy



May 3, 1965

The disclosure that an FBI undercover man was a member of the gang which murdered Mrs. Viola Liuzzo last month on Highway 80 in Alabama after the Selma-to-Montgomery civil-rights march, has been treated in the daily press as if the fact reflected great credit on the FBI.

But the disclosure — which came to light April 20 when the undercover man, Gary Thomas Rowe, appeared before the Lowndes County Grand Jury to testify against the three other members of the KKK gang — raises a number of questions which cry out for answers. Chief among these is why the FBI — which had such sources of information — did not prevent the murder of Mrs. Liuzzo. Connected with this is why FBI undercover man Rowe, who was in the car from which the murder shots were fired, allowed the murder to take place.



May 4, 1940

SAN FRANCISCO — The Sailors Union of the Pacific won one of its greatest victories today when the Pacific-American Shipowners Association capitulated to the SUP wage demands for a flat \$10 increase to all ratings and a 10 cents an hour increase on overtime pay.

Yesterday stop-work meetings were held in every port on the Pacific, when the SUP members were called off the ships to consider the counter-proposals of the shipowners, who had offered a \$7.50 increase. Attended by well over 2,800 members, the stop-work meetings voted practically unanimously to reject the offer of the shipowners. Confronted by the firm stand of the Sailors, it took the shipowners less than 24 hours to change their minds and concede the union's demands.

DC Militant Labor Forum takes up fight for rail safety

BY ANNE REVERE

WASHINGTON — Union signs reading “We Are Not Going to Die for the Railroads Anymore,” “Danger! Explosive Cargo on Un-Manned Cars,” “Hands Off Locomotive Engineers” and “Time for \$15 at Walmart” decorated the Socialist Workers Party hall here for the April 18 Militant Labor Forum titled “Railroad Labor and Safety: Prospects for a Fightback Movement.”

Fritz Edler, a veteran member and officer of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, and Glenn Gales, a Red Cap at Amtrak and president of Transportation Communication Union Local 570, spoke.

They both had participated in March conferences on rail safety in California and Washington state sponsored by Railroad Workers United, a labor group active in last year’s successful fight against boss demands for one-person “crews” on the BNSF Railway, and Backbone Campaign, an organization active on environmental and other issues.

Joining them was Glova Scott, an overnight stocker at Walmart and member of OUR Walmart, which has been leading the fight for \$15 an hour and a union here. Scott is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for City Council in Ward 4 in the April 28 election.

“Washington, D.C., is a rail town although most people don’t think of it that way,” Edler said. “The railroads are a significant employer, with commuter, passenger and commodity lines. Safety on the railroads is a national question. We are up against the individual private companies who fight tooth and nail for themselves. But they work collectively to keep their workforces down.”

Because of the crisis in the economy, “these days they are emboldened,” he said.

Militant Labor Forums are a weekly Friday night event in cities across the country where SWP members and others involved in workers’ struggles participate. The same is true of Communist League members in the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. (See locations on page 8.)

“My education ultimately stemmed from what I learned by coming to the Militant Labor Forum 40 years ago,” Edler said. “While everything about a topic can’t be covered, it whets your appetite to continue on your own.”

“A lot of people don’t know about what is faced by workers who carry oil, coal, grain and other freight through the surrounding working-class communities,” said Gales. “The bosses fight to lengthen the trains and increase the tonnage and cut crews. Some trains are three miles long and weigh 18,000 tons.”

“Just think about the dangers involved with a one-man crew — a worker out there by themselves with a remote control unit hanging on his waist,” Gales said. Rail bosses promote radio control from the ground to operate the train, to cut back crew size and reduce labor costs.

“Because my campaign is part of unfolding workers’ resistance,” said

Scott, “I’ve learned a lot about safety — nurses fighting for lower patient-nurse ratios and refinery workers striking for safety and against forced overtime. At a recent union-organized hearing I attended, Metro workers described the dangers of not having proper radio communications while operating trains.”

“What workers need is to exercise workers control on the job. We need unions strong enough to shut down a job if it’s not safe,” she said. “We need to use political power that is independent from the Democrats and Republicans, a labor party based on the unions to have political discussions and take action in our class interests. These questions are becoming less abstract as workers are standing up.”

Tom Headley, an engineer who works in the D.C. Amtrak yard and is a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, described how rail workers there recently came together to push back management’s plan to impose 12-hour shifts. “It’s a question of profits vs. safety. The companies would rather clean up an occasional train wreck than pay the cost of properly maintaining the track and equipment to prevent train wrecks in the first place,” he said.

All too often union officials are part of the problem, Edler said. “The union leaderships have become the managers of the rate of risks and givebacks, but there is a hunger for leadership, for a way to fight back,” he said.



Militant/Ruth Nebbia

Glova Scott, OUR Walmart member and SWP candidate for City Council; Ned Measel, chair; and Fritz Edler, member, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen.

On March 5, 21 cars on a BNSF Railway train hauling 103 tankers of crude oil derailed near Galena, Illinois, an aerospace worker said. Several cars ruptured and the oil inside caught fire and exploded.

A month before the accident a flat spot on one of the tanker’s wheels was detected, according to a preliminary investigation by government regulators. The day of the derailment the same wheel was flagged defective 130 miles outside Galena. But under Federal Railroad Administration regulations, BNSF was not obligated to repair it until the car’s next regularly scheduled mechanical checkup, so the train rolled on, and off the tracks.

BNSF, owned by billionaire investor

Warren Buffett, has been in the vanguard demanding rail workers give in to operating trains with only an engineer on board.

“The railroads maintain zero liability. There are so many ‘behavioral safety’ programs. There’s always a worker who did something wrong,” said Edler.

“The problem that we face is that the government is for the rich. They do what is necessary for their class, everywhere. It’s not our government,” Scott said. “What we need to do is awaken workers to our capacities to fight independently of the capitalist parties. As we fight we find a road forward. Win or lose, we have experiences and discussions and find leadership. That’s the opportunity that lies in front of us.”

Two rail car cleaners killed in Omaha explosion

Continued from front page
side the burning tanker.

Joe Coschka, who had been working on top of the car, told the media he was saved by his safety harness that prevented him from being blown off. He said he heard LaPour call out for the ladder so he could get out of the car. The ladder had been blown about 200 feet away by the explosion. LaPour’s body was trapped inside the burning rail car for six hours until firefighters said the dangerous fumes dissipated.

The three men had never previously cleaned out petroleum distillates, a highly flammable substance created from crude oil, Coschka told the *Omaha World Herald*. He said LaPour told him, “It’s like walking on Mars, like Styrofoam. It’s weird,” and the smell was similar to natural gas.

“I just want their families to know they died hardworking guys in a serious accident. I am the survivor,” Coschka said, “I am going to speak for them.”

Friends said Foulk wanted off the job. “It was just a hard core work atmosphere, inhaling chemicals,” Zachary Vest told the *World Herald* April 17. “I know he didn’t like it.”

Foulk’s girlfriend Shelley Briggs told WOWT television that he told her the company didn’t follow safety guidelines.

“I heard a big explosion. I thought it was a jet that had taken off from Offutt Air Base and exploded. I ran to the back and looked up to the sky to see if it was falling from the air,” Tina Fough,

a 16-year resident of the area near the rail yard, told the *Militant*. “I smelled fumes. There is a lot of cancer in this area. We don’t know what they do down there.”

“It sounded like the noise when you start a barbecue grill but a hundred times louder,” said Laura Champ, who was visiting her friend Tammy Mancilla when the blast took place. “I thought a rail car derailed,” Mancilla said. “We hear noises all the time, but this was different.”

Mancilla and Champ set up a makeshift memorial for the two workers on the hill above the rail yard.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited Nebraska Railcar Cleaning Services for a number of serious safety violations in 2013. The company recently cut a deal to pay more than \$7,000 to settle two of them.

“No worker has to die on the job,” Dennis Richter, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Nebraska in 2014, said in a statement released to the press and distributed to workers in the neighborhood around the rail yard and throughout the state. “The companies we work for and the government don’t represent our interests. Only the working class puts the lives of workers and those who live in the communities near dangerous workplaces ahead of profits.”

“Only our own organization and use of trade union power — including the ability to shut down production — if we face dangers conditions can ensure safety,” the statement said.

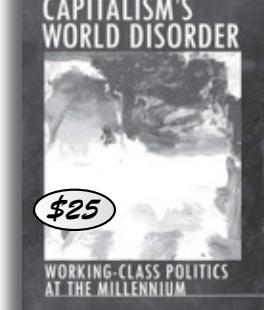
In December seven workers were injured in an explosion in a rail car repair shop in Atchison, Kansas. No one has been held accountable.

Last May a 27-year-old worker employed by Environmental Remediation and Recovery Inc. died after collapsing inside a rail car he was cleaning in Chicago. OSHA held the company responsible and fined it \$188,400.

A spaghetti dinner fundraiser for Foulk’s family will be held here at Joby C’s Midtown Tavern at 25th and Leavenworth April 25 at 3 p.m.

Capitalism’s World Disorder

by Jack Barnes



“A new pattern is being woven in struggle today as working people emerge from a period of retreat. The emerging pattern is taking shape, defined by the actions

of a vanguard whose ranks increase with every single worker or farmer who reaches out to others with the hand of solidarity and offers to fight together.”

pathfinderpress.com

SWP's 45 years of rich political history in Texas

BY ANTHONY DUTROW

HOUSTON — A meeting here April 18 celebrated four and a half decades of building the Socialist Workers Party in Texas. The event marked the closing of the SWP branch in Houston. Strengthened by recent experiences in the class struggle, party members are moving to other cities to help the SWP deepen its involvement in expanding working-class resistance throughout the country.

Among the 42 people attending the event at the MECA Community Center were co-workers of SWP members, friends of the party from the Rio Grande Valley, party members from Atlanta and Miami, supporters from Austin and one from Mexico. Eleven came from Asamblea Popular de Houston, a group involved in the fight to hold the Mexican government accountable for the disappearance of 43 students from Ayotzinapa, Mexico.

Deborah Liatos, organizer of the Houston SWP, welcomed everyone, urging them to look at the displays on the rich political history of the party in Texas.

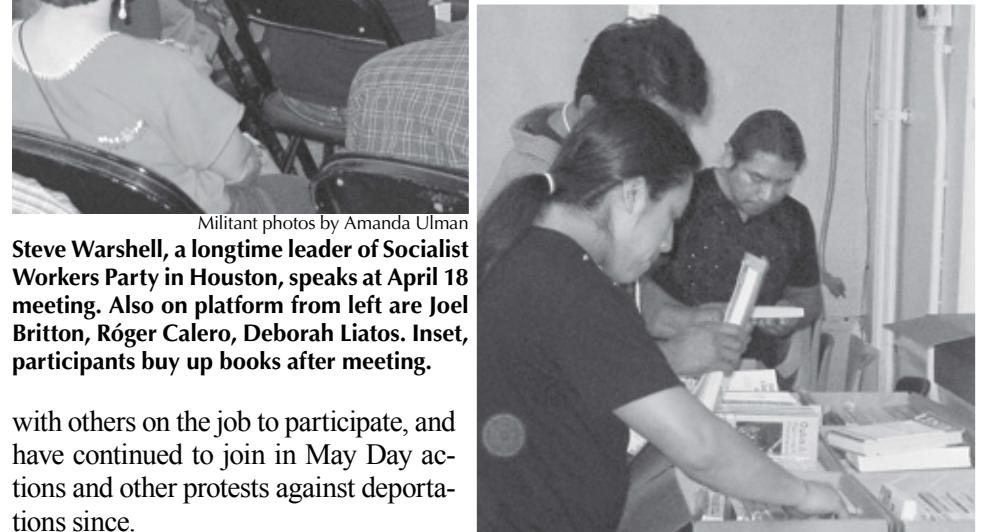
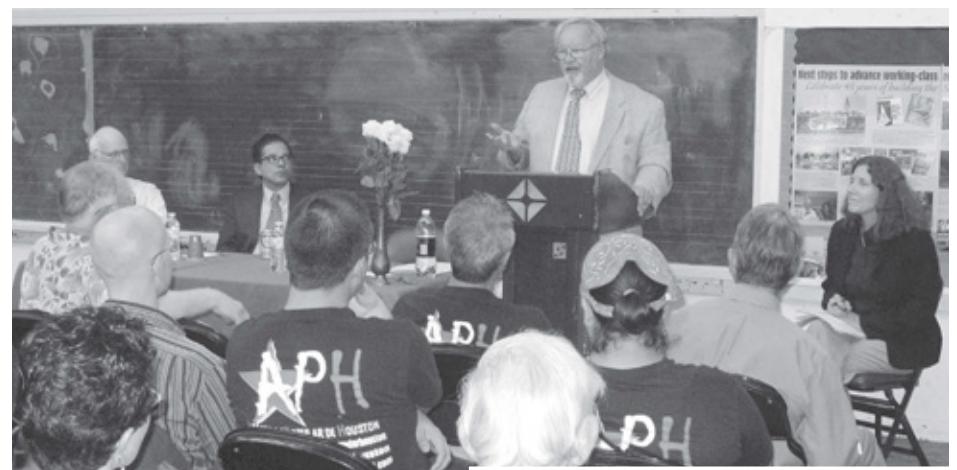
"We received a phone call one morning in 2002 telling us that Róger Calero

never made his flight returning to Houston from a *Militant* reporting trip to Cuba and Mexico," said Steve Warshell, a long-time leader of the SWP in Houston. "We found that Calero was being held by immigration cops at their infamous Greens Road Detention Center." *La migra* intended to deport him back to Nicaragua, where he was born.

One of the reasons Calero was released 10 days later was because he immediately began interviewing his fellow inmates and reporting on lockup conditions for the *Militant*.

The SWP launched an international campaign to stop the deportation. After a six-month fight, international pressure forced immigration authorities to declare Calero "not deportable." By 2004, Warshell said, he was running as the SWP candidate for U.S. president.

Propelled by opposition to the pending anti-immigrant Sensenbrenner bill, which would have branded all undocumented workers as felons, immigrant workers here and nationally began to prepare for massive outpourings April 10 and May 1, 2006, Warshell said. Party members threw themselves into building the actions, including working



Militant photos by Amanda Ulman
Steve Warshell, a longtime leader of Socialist Workers Party in Houston, speaks at April 18 meeting. Also on platform from left are Joel Britton, Róger Calero, Deborah Liatos. Inset, participants buy up books after meeting.

with others on the job to participate, and have continued to join in May Day actions and other protests against deportations since.

"We can join in increasing labor resistance today," Warshell said, "like the strike by Steelworkers in area oil refineries and widespread proletarian struggles against police brutality. There are new openings for communists today to build our movement and recruit."

"We're leaving Houston and closing the branch here," he said, "but as the class struggle deepens and the party grows, we will be back."

The SWP and Young Socialist Alliance in Texas grew out of the fight against Washington's war against Vietnam in the 1960s, said Joel Britton, an SWP leader from Oakland, California. Party branches were built in both Houston and Austin.

As a result of the party's growing public presence, it became a target of the Ku Klux Klan, as were Black rights' fighters, anti-war activists, and KPFT, the local Pacifica radio station.

"Houston's KKK operated with true impunity, tied in with the police force, the sheriff's department," and other parts of the so-called justice system, Britton said.

"One of the high points in the fight against Klan attacks was when Debbie Leonard, SWP candidate for mayor in 1971, debated a top Klan leader — not once but twice," Britton said.

"We were not pushed out — we campaigned for public office, reached out with the *Militant*, organized Militant Labor Forums, won people to our movement from the anti-war movement and our engagement in the Chicano struggle," Britton said. The SWP publicized and worked with the independent La Raza Unida Party, which was based among working-class Chicanos and Mexicanos.

New developments in working class

"By the mid-1970s the party was looking to new developments in the working class and union movement," Britton said.

"The steel bosses in Houston and elsewhere didn't take kindly to the formation of Steelworkers Fight Back, led by Ed Sadlowski, a leader of the union in Chicago, to fight to oust the conservative, class-collaborationist misleaders of the union nationally," he said. Neither did the Klan, which attacked Sadlowski supporters.

Party members in Houston working in the large steel plants here jumped right into the fight, Britton said.

Britton also pointed to the role of SWP members in Houston in the 11-year cam-

Continued on page 9

Prison art exhibit in NY advances solidarity with Cuba

BY ELLEN BRICKLEY AND SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK — A live video exchange with the sister and mother of Antonio Guerrero in Havana, Cuba, was a highlight of the opening at the Clemente Soto Vélez Cultural and Educational Center here of the exhibit of 16 watercolors by Guerrero, titled "Absolved by Solidarity."

Antonio Guerrero is one of five Cuban revolutionaries who spent some 16 years in U.S. prisons after being framed up by Washington. Since December all five have been back in Cuba after the victory of an international campaign to free them.

The April 11 opening was chaired by César Sánchez of the July 26 Coalition, a Cuba solidarity group that helped organize the event.

Jan Hanvik, executive director of the Clemente, welcomed the more than 70 participants, saying he was "inspired by Guerrero's paintings." The center offers a space for art and culture "not often found in other galleries," he said.

Miguel Trelles, a resident artist and member of the center's board, spoke about Clemente Soto, a poet and Puerto Rican nationalist in the 1930s and '40s, himself framed up and jailed for several years. Trelles noted the ties between the fight for independence for Puerto Rico, a U.S. colony, and for Cuban sovereignty.

Pointing to the "transformative power of art and the need to communicate," Trelles said it's remarkable "that a non-artist in a prison cell — an environment that has become very commonplace for people of color, a sad reality of this democracy of ours — could produce art in regular daily life."

Cuba's socialist revolution

Martín Koppel, editor of the Spanish-language text in *Absolved by Solidarity*, the bilingual catalog of the exhibit, gave

a brief history of the fight to free the Cuban Five.

"These paintings are not about the past but about today," he said. He noted the ongoing work by Guerrero and his four comrades — Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González and René González — to advance Cuba's socialist revolution.

That includes the fight to end the brutal U.S. economic embargo of Cuba, Koppel said. "And that's our fight too — right here in the United States."

Alejandro Molina spoke about the campaign to free Oscar López Rivera, a Puerto Rican independence fighter jailed in the U.S. for 34 years. "Oscar would be present at a gathering like this if he were free," Molina said.

Fernando González of the Cuban Five shared a prison cell with López for four years. A display at the exhibit includes López's painting of González and his wife Rosa Aurora Freijanes.

For half a century López has fought to change "the situation of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. and the colonial status of Puerto Rico," Molina said, urging everyone to join a May 30 march in New York to demand his freedom.

Ben Jones, a well-known artist from New Jersey, read parts of comments by Guerrero after he was freed, hailing "the victory that the Five are back in Cuba still doing revolutionary work."

"There is nothing like a self-taught artist," he said. They "create consciousness that penetrates the veil of reality we live in under a commodified, corporate-controlled society. The artist's purpose is to get at the truth."

Kathleen Paolo from the Coalition of Concerned Legal Professionals also spoke.

A message from Alicia Jrapko, a leader of the International Committee for the Freedom of the Cuban 5, thanked the Clemente. "As long as the official

policy here [in the U.S.] is one of regime change," she said, "our work is not done."

Speaking live from Cuba, María Eugenia Guerrero said her brother's watercolors were "a necessary means of resistance to let the world understand who the Cuban Five are."

With help from fellow inmates, Tony taught himself to paint, she said. Through his paintings he showed what happened at the trial and how the Five "were defending the Cuban people against terrorism" by counterrevolutionary groups in the U.S. The paintings helped win the jury of millions that paved the way for their freedom. Tony worked with other prisoners to organize art shows by them as well, she said.

As soon as María Eugenia stopped speaking, Iris Baez, one of three leaders of Parents against Police Brutality in the audience whose sons were killed by cops, leapt to her feet to say "how glad we are the Five are back with the families. It was a victory." She was joined by Hawa Bah and Juanita Young.

"We'd like to meet you in Cuba," added Young, standing beside Baez. María Eugenia replied, "We're waiting for you here with open arms."

Along with Mirta Rodríguez, Antonio's mother, she also responded to comments by others, including Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *Absolved by Solidarity* who had recently been with them in Cuba to launch the catalog, and Nelli Moctezuma from Caravan 43, which is fighting for justice for 43 students disappeared by the Mexican police.

Also taking part in the opening was Ike Nahem of the July 26 Coalition; leaders of Casa de las Américas; People's Organization for Progress; health care workers from SEIU1199; and United Day Laborers of Woodside.

The exhibit at the Clemente is open from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. through May 2.

'Tinder of discontent begins to pile up, a spark can light it'

Below is an excerpt from Teamster Rebellion by Farrell Dobbs, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for April. The first of his four-volume series on the Teamster battles, it tells the story of the men and women of Teamsters Local 574 and the 1930s strikes, organizing drives and political campaigns they carried out in Minnesota that paved the way for the nationwide rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations as a fighting social movement. Dobbs, a coal-yard worker then still in his 20s, was one of the central leaders of the 1934 strikes. At the time he wrote this account almost 40 years later, Dobbs was national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. Copyright ©1972 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Minnesota Historical Society

Striking Teamsters defend themselves from bloody assaults by police, special deputies organized by bosses' Citizens Alliance in 1934. Seeming working-class passivity as depression conditions spread in 1930s were shattered as strike wave began in 1933 and spread across country.

gins to occur in their attitude, which is not always immediately apparent. The tinder of discontent begins to pile up. Any spark can light it, and once lit, the fire can spread rapidly.

In Minneapolis the flames were bound to become widespread because it was not only the coal workers who were being driven toward action to correct an increasingly intolerable situation. Conditions were bad throughout the entire trucking industry. Wages were as low as ten dollars and rarely above eighteen dollars for a workweek ranging from fifty-four to ninety hours. . . .

Another objective factor impinging upon the Minneapolis scene was the general working-class upsurge then beginning to take place throughout the country. Seeking help from the official labor movement to defend their class interests, workers were pouring into the AFL in growing numbers. During 1933 a mounting wave of strikes developed nationally. This trend arose primarily because of low pay, long hours and a general feeling of insecurity. It got further impetus from one aspect of Roosevelt's "New Deal" which had been in operation since the spring of the year. Section 7(a) of the newly adopted National Industrial Recovery Act (NRA) purportedly guaranteed the workers the "right to organize." This official declaration helped

along the process of unionization, even though the workers were to find themselves mistaken in their belief that the capitalist government would actually protect their rights.

At root the NRA was devised for the benefit of the capitalist class. To stimulate production for profit, Roosevelt had adopted an "easy money" policy leading to what was called the "sixty-cent dollar." The resulting climb in prices struck a new blow at the workers who were already suffering the dire effects of economic depression. As a consequence, organized labor intensified its pressure for government assistance through wage and hour laws. To sidestep labor's demands, the NRA provided for self-organization of "fair competition" among employers who would voluntarily set minimum-wage rates and maximum hours. To give them a free hand, antitrust laws were suspended. NRA labor codes for each industry were thereby decided by the employers alone. The workers had no voice in the matter. . . .

In Minneapolis, however, the Citizens Alliance leaders took the view that the NRA didn't go far enough in their favor on the collective-bargaining issue. A directive was issued to the employers of the city that no union whatever was needed, in any form, for bargaining with their labor force. Workers should be urged, the Citizens Alliance said, to "bargain" with the employer

as individuals concerning the terms of their employment. This hard-nosed employer policy caused the local AFL officials to lean all the more heavily upon the Regional Labor Board.

A problem resulted for the insurgent workers, especially the younger militants who spearheaded the radicalization. Their youthfulness freed them from the inhibiting effects of earlier labor defeats and they moved toward battle with the bosses as though they were inventing something new. It followed, however, that they were inexperienced and didn't know just how to conduct the fight. This made them vulnerable to AFL misleaders trained in the Gompers school. A saving factor existed in the workers' objective need to find leaders with a correct policy and the fighting ability to carry it out. To meet this need, the help of a revolutionary socialist party was required.

As the political vanguard of the class, the revolutionary party constitutes a bridge in historic consciousness for the workers. It absorbs the lessons of the class struggle, victories as well as defeats, preserving them as part of its revolutionary heritage. The party's cadres are the mechanism through which this "class memory" is infused into labor struggles on the given contemporary scene. The Communist League cadres could fulfill this role in the trucking industry if they could link themselves with the militant workers through the trade-union movement. In their approach to this problem the comrades made a distinction between formal and actual leadership.

Holding an official post does not automatically make one a leader. A semblance of leadership authority can be maintained for a time through bureaucratic abuse of official powers, but in the long run one must actually meet the responsibilities of a given post or a leadership void will be created. In the latter case someone else can step into the void and begin to exercise actual leadership authority without necessarily holding an official post. A contradictory situation develops, the outcome of which has to be determined by the course of events. In the end the more competent leader, as proven through performance, can wind up with the official authority as well.

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BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FARRELL DOBBS

Wiseacres of the day spoke pontifically about the "passivity" of the working class, never understanding that the seeming docility of the workers at a given time is a relative thing. If workers are more or less holding their own in daily life and expecting that they can get ahead slowly, they won't tend to radicalize. Things are different when they are losing ground and the future looks precarious to them. Then a change be-

April BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Baltimore: Death in police custody

Continued from front page

a knife clipped to the inside of Gray's pants pocket and filed charges against him.

Gray's spine was 80 percent severed at the neck while he was in police custody, William Murphy Jr., an attorney representing Gray's family, said April 19. He had surgery April 13, then went into a coma until he died six days later.

A video taken by a bystander shows Gray, who was 5 feet 8 inches tall and weighed 145 pounds, grimacing and crying out while being dragged, his legs listless, to the police van. His family says he was in good health previously.

The day after Gray's death, Police Commissioner Anthony Batts and Deputy Commissioner Jerry Rodriguez announced that six city cops had been suspended with pay while the department investigates. They released a timeline of events during the arrest, indicating Gray asked repeatedly for an inhaler and medical attention and was placed in leg irons for "act-

ing irate" during the van ride.

"I know when Mr. Gray was placed inside that van, he was able to talk," Rodriguez told the press. "When Mr. Gray was taken out of that van, he could not talk and he could not breathe."

The next day the federal Justice Department announced it was opening an investigation into Gray's death.

Hundreds chanting "Justice for Freddie" marched April 21, led by Gray's mother, other family members and Rev. Jamal Bryant. The action opened a week of protests and rallies.

The spotlight on police brutality in Baltimore came in the wake of the April 4 killing of unarmed African-American forklift driver Walter Scott in North Charleston, South Carolina. Police officer Michael Slager stopped Scott for a missing taillight and then shot him in the back as he ran away. After a bystander's video disproved Slager's claim he was defending himself, the cop was charged with murder and fired.

Bay Shore rally protests cop killing of Kenny Lazo

BY STEVE CLARK

BAY SHORE, N.Y. — A protest outside the Suffolk County Police Department's third precinct here marked the seventh anniversary of the April 2008 police beating and death of Kenny Lazo.

Unlike at previous protests, this year police blocked the station with barricades, fencing and patrol cars. They refused to let family members and protesters leave crosses on the front step with names and death dates of Lazo and others killed in police custody. Police on the station's roof and sidewalk, as well as plainclothes cops in cars across the street, videotaped the 100 participants.

Lazo, 24, was beaten with flashlights by cops who pulled over his car on April 12, 2008. The cops admit pummeling him but claim he tried to grab an officer's gun while resisting arrest on alleged drug charges. Instead of taking him for medical care, police brought him to the third precinct, where he collapsed of heart failure.

The Suffolk County medical examiner ruled Lazo's death a homicide, saying he suffered "sudden cardiac death following exertion associated with prolonged physical altercation with multiple blunt impacts." Neither this finding nor photos of Lazo's bruised and bloodied face and body were given to the grand jury, family attorney Frederick Brewington told the *Militant* at the protest. No indictments were handed down.

A federal civil suit is set for trial in July against county officials, the police department, and officers John Newton, James Scimone, William Judge, Christopher Talt and Joseph Link. Lazo's partner Jennifer

Gonzalez and his mother Patricia Gonzalez are demanding \$55 million in damages.

Family members say Lazo was stopped for going eight miles over the speed limit. "What we know for sure," says their fact sheet, "is that Kenny was handcuffed, forced down on the ground, beaten and choked with flashlights."

Unlike the recent shooting of Walter Scott in North Charleston, S.C., Patricia Gonzalez told the *Militant*, there were no witnesses to the cop beating of her son. "If it hadn't been caught on videotape, the killing would have been swept under the carpet, like the truth about Kenny was," she said.

Posters at the vigil displayed drawings, names and death dates of a number of those killed in police custody in the area, including Latinos such as Lazo, who was Puerto Rican, as well as Blacks and Caucasians. "It's not about race with us," Gonzalez said. "It sometimes is with them [the cops]. But for us it's about police brutality. It's about uniting all those who want to make a change."

The *Militant* also spoke with Cathy Artura, whose brother Daniel McDonnell was killed by Suffolk County cops in May 2011. He had been arrested in his yard over a dispute with a neighbor. "He was white and Irish," Artura said. "It happens to all of us."

After taking him to jail, Suffolk County cops denied McDonnell his bipolar medication and then used a Taser and beat him, as he lay naked on the wet floor of his cell, Long Island's *Newsday* reported. His family recently settled a civil suit for \$2.2 million and are asking the state attorney general to open a criminal investigation.

SWP's rich political history in Texas

Continued from page 7

paign that won legal residence for Hector Marroquín in 1988. Marroquín had come to the U.S. after facing death threats in Mexico for his socialist politics. He got a job in a factory here and joined the SWP.

"This case chillingly reminds you of the 43 disappeared students in Mexico and how important the fight is to get to the truth behind their disappearances," Britton said.

"The 45 years of accomplishments described in the presentations have strengthened the work of the Socialist Workers Party nationally," said Calero, a member of the SWP National Committee.

He described his experiences participating in the Havana International Book Fair and related activities in February in Cuba that showed how the leadership example and political maturity of the Cuban Five is making a big impact there.

New generations in Cuba want to hear what they have to say. They want to learn about the Five's internationalist assignment working in the U.S. to ferret out plans by counterrevolutionary paramilitary groups with a record of attacks in Cuba and against supporters of the Cuban Revolution, as well as how they conducted themselves in the U.S. class struggle when they were framed up and imprisoned for about a decade and a half.

"Their example of selfless dedication to workers and youth in Cuba and around the world — including in the United States — is the kind of leadership we need," said Calero.

Libertad Miguel, from the Asamblea Popular de Houston, was one of many who stayed after the program to socialize, read messages sent to the meeting, study the displays and look over a table full of Pathfinder books on special sale. She was impressed with how the talks explained the class struggle. "You can't just reform or transform capitalism, you have to overthrow it," she said.

Henry and Alma Cooper first met the party in 1998 at protests against the police killing of Pedro Oregón, a 22-year-old Mexican immigrant who was shot 30 times, nine in the back.

"While the SWP will be missed here, we will continue to point to it as the best example we have of how to fight and at the same time win others to socialism," Henry Cooper said.

"I never imagined the party had done all of this. What a history," said Lara Canales, who traveled from Mexico to be at the meeting. She bought a stack of books, including extras for friends in Mexico. Some 200 books were sold.

A collection for the work of the party nationally raised \$1,013.

Why are stocks up?

Continued from front page

biggest single monthly decline in more than two and a half years. The drilling of new oil and gas wells declined 17.7 percent. Automobile production rose 3 percent, but that didn't compensate for the general downward trend.

One reflection of the slowdown is the drop in the utilization of industrial capacity to 78.4 percent last month, compared to the 80.1 percent average since 1972.

The massive expansion of fracking in North Dakota and elsewhere nearly doubled U.S. oil production from 2008 to 2014, to 9.3 million barrels a day. But over the past year oil prices have declined 50 percent. As a result, the oil barons are cutting back. Rigs actively drilling new oil wells fell to 760 in mid-April, less than half the number in October. Output in North Dakota declined in February for the second month in a row.

Schlumberger Ltd., the world's largest oil fields service company, has cut 20,000 jobs since the end of last year.

China's economy is also losing steam, dashing the illusions of layers of capitalist rulers in the U.S. and other imperialist countries that an eternal "Chinese miracle" would prop up world trade and production. Beijing's economy still grew in the first quarter of 2015, but at the lowest rate since the beginning of 2009.

Capitalists have no answer to crisis

The capitalist rulers have no answer to the economic crisis except fiddling with monetary "stimulus" measures, which have little effect. Since the end of 2008 the Federal Reserve has kept interest rates near zero. For nearly six years through last October it bought up a total of \$3 trillion in government bonds and worthless mortgage-backed securities from banks — essentially a massive money-printing operation.

Similar stimulus measures were recently launched in the 19-country eurozone, with the European Central Bank set to purchase more than \$1.1 trillion in government bonds by September 2016.

Central government banks claim these steps encourage companies to hire more workers and increase production. But that's not what's happening.

Nonetheless, U.S. stock prices have tripled over the last six years.

Time magazine notes in its April 6 issue what it calls a "troubling truth," that "sales growth is trailing well behind earnings growth." Companies have higher profits and stock prices "not because the economy is booming and they are selling more stuff but because they have cut costs, kept salaries flat and not invested in new factories or research and development."

Instead, they're sitting on hoards of cash or seeking higher returns through speculation in stocks, bonds and derivatives, which creates no new wealth, just increases paper values. CNN reported March 20 that U.S. corporations are holding onto a record-high of \$1.4 trillion in cash, unwilling to invest it in production or hiring.

In his Feb. 9 newsletter to investors, financial analyst John Hussman referred to the huge jump in stock prices over the last half decade as "the excruciating tendency for the market to advance despite overvalued, overbought, overbullish syndromes."

The capitalists are "periodically seized by fits of giddiness in which they try to accomplish the money-making without the mediation of the production process," Frederick Engels wrote more than 100 years ago, in a note in Karl Marx's *Capital*. Sooner or later the bubble will burst.

The percentage of the population with a job was 59.3 percent in March for the third consecutive month, little changed since 2009. Prior to the recession it was 63.3 percent. Some 6.7 million people with jobs want to work full time, but can only get part-time work.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 126,000 jobs were created in March. While hiring in manufacturing is down, jobs in food services, hospitality and retail are up. Pay for these jobs hovers around minimum wage, and many are part-time. The combination of more jobs at low wages has the contradictory effect of giving workers more confidence as well as helping to fuel the fight for a \$15 an hour minimum wage and a union, which is expanding and winning increasing support among other workers.