

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Two years later Lac-Mégantic residents say, 'Reroute trains!' — PAGE 4

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 79/NO. 26 JULY 27, 2015

## Greek deal is deeper assault on workers' wages, rights

BY SETH GALINSKY

After a lot of bluster about being in a stronger position to resist European Union blackmail as a result of the large "no" vote in the recent referendum on a so-called austerity package, Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras July 13 agreed to every demand of the most powerful European finance capitalists.

Tsipras, leader of the Coalition of the Radical Left (Syriza), asked, in exchange for agreeing to deeper attacks on the living standards and rights of working people, that the imperialist lenders at least write off a bit of Athens' \$360 billion debt and make it easier for him to sell the deal.

But German Chancellor Angela Merkel refused, and in doing so sent a message to weaker crisis-wracked capitalist governments, from Spain and Portugal to Italy and Ireland — and her erstwhile allies in France.

The capitalist rulers and their media talk about a "debt crisis." But the unpayable debts are just one result of the world contraction of capitalist trade and production. For nearly

Continued on page 6

## Iran accord: Obama tries to stabilize region for imperialism

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

U.S. and Iranian officials announced July 14 they had reached a nuclear agreement. Getting such a deal has been a major focus of the Barack Obama administration's foreign policy over the last months, part of efforts by the U.S. rulers to advance their interests throughout the Middle East in face of the coming apart of the imperialist order in place there for decades.

The administration aims to make possible a closer political alliance with Tehran, especially in the fight against Islamic State. The Iranian-backed Hezbollah militia is a major point of support for the Bashar al-Assad dictatorship in Syria, and Tehran is funding and training Shiite militias fighting alongside government forces in Iraq.

The accord between Tehran and the governments of the U.S., the United Kingdom, France, China, Russia and Germany sets limits on the Iranian government's nuclear activities for 10 years. These include reducing the number of centrifuges for enriching

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## 'Workers need our own political party'

Socialist Workers launch Phila. ballot drive



Militant/Glova Scott

Osborne Hart, left, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Philadelphia mayor, talks with Local 1199SEIU union member Ernestine Bristow while campaigning at NAACP convention July 12.

## Help campaign get 2,300 signatures

BY JOHN STUDER

PHILADELPHIA — The Socialist Workers Party here announced July 12 it was launching a drive to gather 2,300 signatures to put Osborne Hart on the ballot for mayor and John Staggs for City Council at-large. The petitions have to be filed by August 3.

"Workers need our own political party, a labor party to unite us in action to defend ourselves against the capitalists' attacks and to chart a course to take political power out of their hands," the socialist candidates, who both work at Walmart, said in a statement July 13.

"The decision by the South Carolina state government to take down the Confederate battle flag, a rallying symbol for racist thugs and opponents

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## 'Removal of Confederate battle flag is victory for working class'

The following statement was issued July 13 by Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Philadelphia, and John Staggs, SWP candidate for City Council at-large.

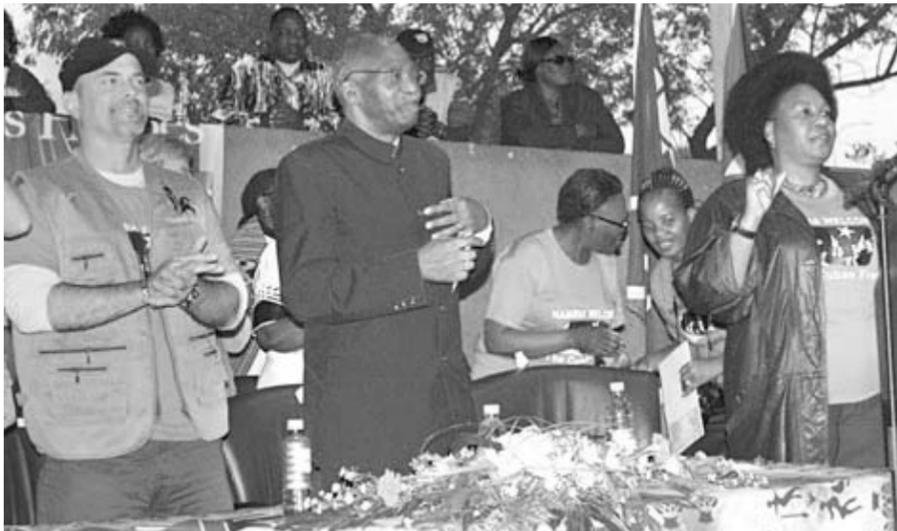
### SWP CAMPAIGN STATEMENT

The decision by the South Carolina state government to take down the Confederate battle flag, a rallying symbol for racist thugs and opponents of Black rights since it was unfurled over the Statehouse in 1961, is a powerful victory for all working people. Millions watched the historic event on television worldwide.

The removal of the flag, its rapidity, the overwhelming bipartisan political support for it — all register the power

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## Cuban Five in Namibia: New generations defend the revolution



Gerardo Hernández, left, one of the Cuban Five, with Peter Katjavivi, speaker of Namibia's National Assembly, at July 4 event in Windhoek during recent tour of southern Africa.

BY EMMA JOHNSON

"The relationship between Cuba and Namibia is etched in blood and forged in trenches during the struggle against imperialism and colonial oppression," President Hage Geingob said July 5 at a reception for the Cuban Five in Namibia. It was held at the farm near Otavi of former President Sam Nujoma — a founder of SWAPO, the country's governing party, and leader of the country's liberation struggle.

This was the second country the Five visited in southern Africa to strengthen the internationalist ties between Cuba and the peoples of the region. The tour started in South Africa June 21 and ended in Angola July 8. They were invited to Namibia by SWAPO, which led the struggle against South African occupation that won independence in 1990.

The Cuban Five — Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Anto-

Continued on page 6

## 'Now take down the monuments to enforcers of white supremacy!'

BY MAGGIE TROWE

To the cheers of thousands, the Confederate battle flag was removed from the grounds of the South Carolina state Capitol July 10. This gave impetus to the demand across the South and beyond that flags, statues and monuments that honor defenders of slavery, lynching and segregation and perpetuate lies about the Civil War and Radical Reconstruction come down as well.

The rapid move by bourgeois politi-

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—On the picket line, p. 5—

Pennsylvania Steelworkers, retirees fight ATI concessions

New Zealand bus drivers protest longer hours, erosion of seniority

# Family protests no charges in killing by Georgia cop

BY JANICE LYNN

ATLANTA — “I will never stop until we get justice,” Triston “TJ” Thomas told a packed press conference July 10 at the Davis Bozeman law firm. Thomas was responding to a Cobb County grand jury decision a day earlier to not indict Smyrna police officer Kenneth Owens for killing his brother Nicholas March 24.

Nicholas Thomas, a 23-year-old African-American mechanic, was at work at a Goodyear tire shop when he was shot in the back while driving a customer’s Maserati.

Five Smyrna and Cobb cops, along with a police dog, were attempting to serve him with a warrant for a misdemeanor probation violation. “Thomas was not trying to hit an officer,” attorney Mawuli Davis said. “The video shows he was driving past them and not veering at them.”

Initially police told the press that Owens fired in self-defense. After an autopsy report released in June confirmed Thomas was shot in the back, the cop said he was protecting a fellow officer, not himself.

Felicia Thomas decried the fact that she found out about the grand jury decision through the media, the same way she learned of her son’s death. “They didn’t even have the decency to inform us,” she said.

“I’m not really surprised,” she continued. “The Confederate flag still hangs at Stone Mountain,” a local park that by state law is preserved as a Confederate memorial. “But I have my armor on and I’m ready to go to war.”

“TJ Thomas has been going around the country supporting other families who have been victims of police violence,” Davis told the press. He stressed the importance of continued community support, pointing out that 500 people had rallied March 31 to protest the police killing, among other marches and demonstrations over the past months.

The family is requesting to see the evidence that was presented to the grand jury, which has been denied to them, and said they anticipate a civil lawsuit. “I want another march,” TJ Thomas said.



Militant/Janice Lynn

“I’m ready to go to war,” Felicia Thomas said July 10 after grand jury decision not to indict cop who killed her son Nicholas. With her are attorney Mawuli Davis (right) and her son TJ.

## Oklahoma suit challenges anti-abortion law

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Supporters of women’s right to choose abortion in Oklahoma are demanding the overturn of a state law requiring abortion clinics to have a doctor on site with admitting privileges at a local hospital. This is one of the numerous, increasingly draconian laws on the books in many states that target abortion providers by setting standards beyond what is necessary to ensure patient safety and granting hospitals effective veto power over the provider’s ability to practice.

A dozen members of the Oklahoma Coalition for Reproductive Justice joined Dr. Larry Burns in court July 9 for a hearing on his lawsuit challenging the 2014 law. Burns, who provides nearly half of the abortions performed in the state, has sought admitting privileges at 16 hospitals without success.

Last November the Oklahoma Supreme Court temporarily blocked the law from taking effect, allowing Burns’ clinic in Norman to stay open pending the outcome of the suit.

As of July 1, four other states have laws in effect requiring abortion providers to have hospital admitting privileges, and six have similar measures that are temporarily blocked by court orders, according to the Guttmacher Institute.

“These are really sham laws,” Burns’ attorney Genevieve Scott told the Associated Press. “They have nothing to do with a woman’s health and safety,” but rather are designed to force abortion providers to close.

“Abortion care in the U.S. is extremely safe, with fewer than 0.03 percent of patients experiencing complications with hospitalization,” said Karo Chowning, board president of the Oklahoma Coalition for Reproductive Justice. One reason hospitals give for rejecting Burns’ applications is that he can’t commit to admitting at least six patients a year.

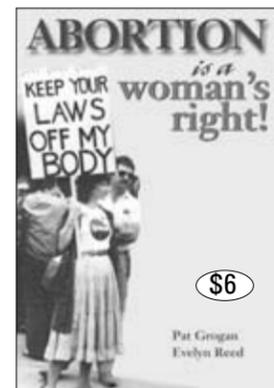
At the hearing, District Judge Don Andrews put off making a ruling, instead scheduling a February session to hear more evidence.

In the meantime, another batch of anti-abortion restrictions is scheduled to take effect this November, including a measure that would ban the most

common procedure for second trimester abortions, known as dilation and evacuation, or D&E.

“This would effectively be a ban after 15 weeks in Oklahoma, because there’s no provider here that uses a different method after that point,” Chowning told the *Militant* in a phone interview July 13. This and the numerous other restrictions are “unequal and unfair,” she added. “Those who have the resources can travel to Albuquerque, New Mexico, or Wichita, Kansas.”

The Oklahoma Coalition for Reproductive Justice is a volunteer group that formed in 2010 in response to the growing list of state restrictions on women’s right to choose. “We’ve flooded the lobby galleries at the legislature with supporters wearing pink shirts every session” in protest, Chowning said.



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# THE MILITANT

## Independence for Puerto Rico!

*To pay the capitalist bondholders, the colonial government in Puerto Rico has laid off workers, slashed pensions, raised the retirement age and cut social spending. The ‘Militant’ backs workers’ struggles against these attacks and the fight for Puerto Rican independence.*



Militant/Naomi Craine  
June 24 N.Y. Puerto Rican Day Parade.

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

# 'Ukraine gov't should restart Cuba-Chernobyl program'

The following letter was sent to Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko from those attending a scientific conference in Kiev May 16 as part of efforts to resume the internationalist medical program in Tarará, Cuba, for victims of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear meltdown in Ukraine. Cuba has offered to restart the program, which was suspended after the Ukrainian government stopped funding transportation for patients. The conference involved more than 150 people, including former beneficiaries of the program, doctors and two former ministers of health.

We, members of the All-Ukrainian Scientific-Practical Conference "Children of Tarará — Children of Ukraine!" that took place the 16th of May, 2015, in the National Scientific Section of Radiology Medicine AMN of Ukraine, dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the launching of the Ukrainian-Cuban Program "Children of Chernobyl!" — medical help for children that suffered from the Chernobyl catastrophe — express to you our high respect and ad-

dress you in the names of the 24,000 children whose illnesses we were not able to cure in Ukraine and who were able to receive the necessary medical treatment in the hospitals and medical centers of Havana and Tarará in the Republic of Cuba, at the expense of Cuba and with the support of Ukraine. It is a pity that in 2012 our cooperation in this program was stopped.

From 1990, when the "Children of Chernobyl!" program was begun, there were 197 surgeries in Cuba, 389 children with very difficult blood illnesses were treated, two successful kidney operations, and six operations to transplant spinal fluid. 14,160 children with hematological illness were treated, 13,824 with endocrinological illnesses, 8,376 otological illnesses, and 7,396 dermatological illnesses. Among the last category, for example, vitiligo (loss of pigment) and alopecia (loss of hair on the scalp) are possible to cure only in Cuba. According to the state budget of Cuba, over the life of the program more than \$350,000,000 was allocated to this program. Over



Granma/Pedro Beruvides

Victims of 1986 nuclear disaster in Chernobyl, Ukraine, receive treatment at Tarará medical facility in Cuba, August 1990. Located on seaside near Havana, Tarará had been a camp for Cuban children. As part of internationalist response, volunteer brigades built hospital and housing there for Ukrainian youth to receive treatment in comfortable surroundings.

the same period, Ukraine spent 23,000,000 hryvnias.

During 2012-13, meetings took place between the governments of Ukraine and Cuba, at the level of the Ministries of Health of both countries, with the aim of continuing the common program for treatment of Ukrainian children in Cuba. There was no doubt on either side of the necessity for the program. How-

ever, it remains suspended today. The negative effects of radiation from the Chernobyl catastrophe are a threat to future generations in Ukraine, a threat that is increasing.

Contemporary medical research on the health of Ukrainian children shows that the number who are healthy is in decline — 24.1 percent were healthy in 1992 and just 4.8 percent in 2012. There has been an increase in the number of children with chronic illness (from 21.1 percent in 1992 to 79.6 percent in 2012). This is a result, primarily, of the effects of Chernobyl, which led to the weakening of the immunological system of children designed to defend them from adverse environmental conditions; functional abnormalities of the basic life-support system of children's bodies; and susceptibility to developing chronic somatic diseases that increase the risk of birth defects and cancers. We see hereditary diseases occurring among the children of participants in the Tarará program who had themselves been cured as children in Cuba. Today their children need treatment.

There are among the members of this Conference those who suffered serious illness, received treatment in Cuba and got relief. But in the three years since the suspension of the program their health has deteriorated. Some of those not able to complete their treatment in Cuba were not able to survive and participate in this conference.

Dear Mr. President! We ask you to do everything possible to reach an agreement between Ukraine and Cuba in order to restart the program to treat Ukrainian children that suffer effects from the Chernobyl catastrophe. We believe that you can answer the hopes of hundreds of our children. They are the future of Ukraine.

## Greece: New book is tool to defend Cuban Revolution

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

ATHENS, Greece — The new book *Cuba — USA: Cuba Can't Be Bought Off*, launched here June 26, is a tool for supporters of the Cuban Revolution to explain and build on the victory registered in the steps toward normalization of relations between Washington and Havana. The negotiations between the governments of the United States and Cuba on opening diplomatic relations and toward lifting Washington's strangling embargo, announced last December, are the result of the failure of the

U.S. rulers to overturn Cuba's socialist revolution through 55 years of political and economic pressure.

The book makes available in Greek recent speeches, interviews and letters by Cuban President Raúl Castro; Fidel Castro, the historic political leader of the Cuban Revolution; Gerardo Hernández, one of the Cuban Five, who spent more than 16 years unjustly imprisoned in the U.S.; and Kenia Serrano, president of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples.

These documents explain how the Cuban Revolution "is based on international solidarity, on humanity, on social justice, on confidence in people's abilities," Cuban Ambassador Osvaldo Cobacho Martínez told nearly 40 people attending a June 26 reception at the embassy launching the book. "We will never give up on these principles and ideals of our revolution. Negotiations with the U.S. take place on this basis."

*Cuba Can't Be Bought Off* is "the result of the collaboration between the José Martí Cultural Association, the publishing house Diethnes Vima and a number of Cuban solidarity blogs and websites, including the Greek Solidarity Network," said Natasha Terlexi, who chaired the event. Terlexi is president of Diethnes Vima and a leader of the José Martí Cultural Association.

"The revolution's firm stand makes assaults by imperialism on Venezuela harder," she said, "and it gives a boost to the freedom struggle of the Puerto Rican people, whose nation is still a U.S. colony."

"Imperialism has not given up on its ultimate goals, to undermine and overthrow the socialist revolution," said Loukia Konstantinou, another leader of the José Martí Cultural Association. "They will try different methods to achieve the same goal. But we are confident that Cuba will not retreat on any of its principles."

The book contains "the words of three generations of Cuban revolutionaries," he said — the generation that made the

revolution, those who volunteered to defend Angola from South African invasions in the 1970s and '80s, and the generation that grew up during the Special Period, when Cuba faced a severe economic crisis following the collapse of the Soviet Union. "You will find the same thread throughout: Over 50 years of uncompromising struggle and at each decisive phase the revolution has come out stronger than the enemy's attempts to defeat it.

"The challenge before the solidarity movement now," Konstantinou said, "is to fight for the immediate end to the U.S. embargo on Cuba and for U.S. withdrawal from Guantánamo," where Washington maintains a naval base in violation of Cuban sovereignty.

In a lively discussion, some participants raised concerns about what lies ahead. "Many comrades think that Cuba is tired and that it is now about to give up," one person said.

"We are aware that we face new dangers and therefore new struggles will be posed before us. But that can't be a reason to stop," the Cuban ambassador responded. "When the collapse of the socialist camp in the USSR and Eastern Europe took place, our very best friends did not believe we'd make it. We did and are still standing tall with the banner of socialism held high and held with honor!

"Socialism is of vital importance," he added. "There can be no sovereignty in Cuba without socialism. There can be no truly human values without socialism and without a people willing to fight for justice anywhere in the world. We have confidence in our people and we ask our friends to have it as well."

Participants bought 18 copies of the new book, and two took extra copies for sale to friends and co-workers.

## — CALENDAR —

### NEW JERSEY

**Newark**  
**Million People's March Against Police Brutality, Racial Injustice, and Economic Inequality.** Sat., July 25, 12 noon. *March begins at Lincoln Monument, intersection of West Market St. and Springfield Ave. Sponsored by People's Organization for Progress. Tel.: (973) 801-0001.*

### NEW YORK

**New York**  
**Absolved by Solidarity: An Exhibit of the Watercolors of Antonio Guerrero, One of the Cuban Five.** July 9-Sept. 11. *Hudson Guild Fulton Center. 119 9th Ave. Tel.: (212) 760-9837.*

**Annual Celebration of the Assault on the Moncada — The Event That Launched the Cuban Revolution.** Speakers: Rodolfo Reyes, Cuban Ambassador to the United Nations; Larry Hamm, Chairman, People's Organization for Progress; others. Fri., July 24. *Dinner-Reception, 6 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. The Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center. 3940 Broadway. Tel.: (917) 887-8710.*

### OHIO

**Cleveland**  
**The Movement for Black Lives National Convention.** July 24-26. *For information: movementforblacklives.org.*

### PENNSYLVANIA

**Pittsburgh**  
**Rally and March to ATI Corporate Headquarters: Stand with Steelworkers at ATI Fighting for a Fair Contract.** Thurs., July 30, 12 noon. *Meet at USW Headquarters, 60 Blvd. of the Allies. Tel.: (412) 298-6361.*

### Video: Cuba and Chernobyl

This 2006 Cuban TV documentary tells the story of Cuba's revolutionary internationalist program that provided medical care to more than 25,000 victims, the majority of them children, following the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster in Ukraine. It can be viewed on the *Militant* website — [www.themilitant.com](http://www.themilitant.com) — or ordered on DVD for \$7 from the Militant, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018, or email: [themilitant@mac.com](mailto:themilitant@mac.com).



# Two years later Lac-Mégantic residents say, 'Reroute trains!'

BY JOHN STEELE

LAC-MÉGANTIC, Quebec — A crowd gathered in front of St. Agnès church here July 6 to commemorate the 47 people killed on that day two years ago when an unmanned, runaway 72-car oil train rolled into the downtown area during the night and exploded, incinerating 40 buildings and spilling vast amounts of crude oil into the soil and lake.

The gathering took place a few hundred yards from the fenced-off center of the catastrophe, which two years later is only partially cleaned up and detoxified.

At noon a minute of silence was observed by the entire town followed by the tolling of the church bells 47 times — one for each of the victims. Family members who lost loved ones participated in the commemoration.

The bosses and the government have made a scapegoat of Tom Harding, a member of the United Steelworkers and the engineer of the train that exploded. He is due in court Sept. 8 to set the date for his trial on frame-up charges of 47

counts of criminal negligence causing death brought by the Quebec crown prosecutor. The train controller, Richard Labrie, also a Steelworkers union member, and Jean Demaitre, manager of train operations for the now-bankrupt Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway, face similar charges.

The federal government agency Transport Canada recently filed criminal charges against Harding and five officials of the rail company and against the company itself for allegedly violating the Railway Safety Act and the Fisheries Act.

The frame-up of Harding doesn't sit well with many people here, who view him instead as a hero. Harding — a one-man "crew" by the company's insistence and the government's agreement — parked the train on July 6, 2013, and set the brakes before going to a motel for some sleep. When he heard the explosion he rushed to the scene and, risking his life, helped release brakes on cars so they could be moved away from the conflagration.

The responsibility for the disaster "went a lot higher up, for example the Minister of Transport and the oil companies, rather than Tom Harding and the others they're trying to blame," Marie-Claude Maillet, a local resident, told the *Militant*.

In a discussion around his kitchen table July 6, Jean-Pierre Bolduc, who once worked at the bunk house for the Canadian Pacific Railway, told the *Mili-*



On July 6, two years after Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, rail disaster that killed 47 people, protesters in Portland, Oregon, stand in front of oil train with placards commemorating victims. Similar actions took place across North America. In Lac-Mégantic many want oil trains to bypass city.

*tant* that in his day "the freight trains had real crews with at least three people aboard — an engineer, a conductor and a helper."

On July 4 around 150 people marched through the town protesting the planned resumption in January 2016 of routing oil trains through the center of this town of 6,000. The demonstrators are demanding that the federal government build a bypass around Lac-Mégantic.

That protest, called Solidarity Mégantic, was organized as part of North America-wide events and demonstrations opposing the expanding use of trains to transport crude oil to refineries and ports.

A Quebec superior court judge July

13 rejected Canadian Pacific Railway's attempt to block a court settlement in which 25 companies would allocate some \$431 million for compensation of victims of the disaster.

The Steelworkers and fellow rail workers in Canada and the U.S. are raising defense funds for Harding and Labrie. To contribute in Canada, send checks to Syndicat des Métallos, 565 boulevard Crémazie Est, bureau 5100, Montreal, Quebec H2M 2V8, or go online to [www.justice4USWrailworkers.org](http://www.justice4USWrailworkers.org). In the United States, checks can be sent to Tom Harding Defense Fund, First Niagara Bank, 25 McClellan Dr., Nassau, NY 12123 or visit [www.tomhardingdefensefund.com](http://www.tomhardingdefensefund.com).

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### CALIFORNIA Oakland

**End U.S. Rule Over Puerto Rico! Free Independence Fighter Oscar López!** Speakers: Ricardo Ortiz, past and founding member of Frente Socialista de Puerto Rico; Joel Britton, Socialist Workers Party; Vylma Ortiz, attorney, media activist. Fri., July 24. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 675 Hegenberger Road., Suite 250. Tel.: (510) 686-1351.

### ILLINOIS Chicago

**Celebrate Cuba's Victory Against U.S. Imperialism — Washington Is Forced to Open Discussions on Re-establishing Relations for the First Time in More Than 50 Years.** Fri., July 31, 7:30 p.m. 2018 S. Ashland Ave. Tel.: (312) 455-0111.

### CANADA Calgary

**Relentless Fall of Employment in Canada Since 2008: The Challenge for Working People.** Speaker: Michel Dugré. Fri., July 24, 7:30 p.m. 4909 17th Ave. SE. Tel.: (403) 457-9044.

### Montreal

**Racist Flag Comes Down in South Carolina: Black Rights Fight Has Transformed Millions.** Speaker: Michel Prairie, Communist League. Fri., July 24, 7:30 p.m. 7107 St. Denis, Room 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

### NEW ZEALAND Auckland

**Confederate Battle Flag Comes Down in South Carolina: Victory for Black Rights Struggle.** Speaker: Annalucia Vermont, Communist League. Fri., July 24, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5. 188a Onehunga Mall, Onehunga. Tel.: (09) 636-3231.

### UNITED KINGDOM Manchester

**Ukraine: Workers Fight Attacks by Capitalists, Their Government and IMF Amid Russian Aggression; Repression of Communist Party and Thought-Control Law a Threat to All Workers.** Speaker: Catharina Tirsén, Communist League, recently returned from *Militant* reporting trip to Ukraine. Sat., July 25, 6:30 p.m. Room 301 Hilton House, 26-28 Hilton St. M1 2EH. Tel.: (016) 1478 2496.

## Actions in U.S., Canada point to oil train dangers

More than 90 events took place across the U.S. and Canada as part of a "Stop Oil Trains Week of Action" July 6-12, marking the second anniversary of the disaster in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, when an unattended oil train exploded in the town, killing 47 people, incinerating the downtown area and contaminating land and water.

The actions were organized by a variety of environmentalist groups who raised a range of demands — from opposing the growing amount of volatile crude oil passing through major population centers by train each week to ending fracking in North Dakota and the extraction of oil from the Alberta tar sands to ending the use of fossil fuels entirely.

Events included marches in Lac-Mégantic (see article above); press conferences in Minneapolis and Milwaukee; the blockade of an oil train on the Columbia River in Portland, Oregon; a public hearing in Baltimore; and a vigil and rally in Richmond, Virginia.

The group ForestEthics has produced a map to show "blast zones" — the routes of oil trains in the U.S. and potential disaster impact areas.

Before the Baltimore hearing at City Hall July 8, 100 people held signs outside to mark the six times oil trains have crashed in North America this year.

"Exactly how much oil is moving through Maryland is not clear," an article on the WYPR radio website said. "The state collects that info from railroads — but CSX and Norfolk Southern, the state's biggest rail operators,

sued to block the disclosure of that information."



KINGSTON, N.Y. — Several dozen people took part in a vigil near the railroad tracks that run through the middle of town here July 9 in memory of the 47 people killed in the Lac-Mégantic rail disaster. They held signs that read, "RRers call them 'bomb trains,'" "2X a day, more coming our way," "Stop the Oil Trains" and "Stop the Pipelines." Trains bringing North Dakota crude to East Coast refineries run through the Hudson Valley. Oil is also transported by pipeline down the river valley and by barge and tanker on the river.

Following the vigil, around 100 people attended a public event at Kingston City Hall titled "Trains, Pipelines and Barges: Forum on Crude Oil Transport in the Hudson Valley." Speakers from a number of environmental groups and some government officials spoke out against the dangers of the oil trains.

Wes Gillingham, a farmer and staff member of Catskill Mountainkeeper, noted the importance of Pope Francis' Encyclical on the environment, "On Care for Our Common Home," and read from it.

A spokesperson for CSX, the rail carrier that runs trains through the valley, told the *Saugerties Times* there is "a lot of misinformation" being circulated.

— Tony Lane

ST. PAUL, Minn. — About 30 supporters of Citizens Acting for Rail Safety held a press conference July 7. Speakers included elected officials, first

responders and residents of the Minnesota "blast zones" — the areas near oil and ethanol train routes throughout the state that would be affected by derailments and explosions.

Seven oil trains run through the state every day, each with 100 cars, said Cathy Velasquez Eberhart, a CARS organizer. "We have a rolling pipeline by our house and we were never consulted," she said. "Please join us in addressing this important safety issue."

— Helen Meyers

RICHMOND, Calif. — "Having only one person on the crew was the direct cause of the accident at Lac-Mégantic," said Brian Lewis, a retired railroader with 35 years experience and a member of Railroad Workers United, to a rally of more than 150 people July 11. Participants in the Stop Oil Trains event, marched past the Burlington Northern Santa Fe rail yard here and rallied at Washington Park. The action was sponsored by a number of local environmental groups, including the Sun Flower Alliance, Sierra Club, 350 Bay Area and the Asian Pacific Environmental Alliance.

While many at the gathering called for the end of oil transport by rail, Lewis was well received when he explained that as a switchman he and other workers had routinely handled toxic chemicals, including potentially deadly chlorine gas needed to purify drinking water. Railroads could be part of the solution, not the problem, with a strengthening of the union fight for bigger crews and safer operating conditions.

— Jeff Powers

# —ON THE PICKET LINE—

MAGGIE TROWE, EDITOR

## Help the *Militant* cover steel, auto and other contract fights!

This column is dedicated to spreading the truth about the labor resistance that is unfolding today, to give voice to those engaged in battle and help build solidarity. National steel and auto contracts are expiring this summer and fall. I invite workers involved in fights against concessions to contact me at 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018; or (212) 244-4899; or themilitant@mac.com. We'll work together to ensure your story is told.

—Maggie Trowe

## Pennsylvania Steelworkers, retirees fight ATI concessions

HARRISON, Pa. — More than 700 retired members of United Steelworkers Local 1196 turned out July 8 to support their union brothers and sisters at an informational meeting here on contract negotiations with Allegheny Technologies Inc. When the contract between ATI and 2,450 Steelworkers expired June 30, the union bargaining committee agreed to continue working on a day-to-day basis as negotiations continued.

ATI wants to slash health care for active, retired and future workers; institute 12-hour shifts; cut pension agreements for current and future workers; reduce wages and overtime pay; and change contract language to allow the company to contract out more work, a union fact sheet says.

The next day active and retired Steelworkers rallied here and in Washington, Pennsylvania. Some 350 took part at the protest here.

"What's happening could have ramifications across the country," said Fran Arabia, president of USW Local 1196 at ATI's Brackenridge mill. Contracts for 30,000 Steelworkers at U.S. Steel and ArcelorMittal expire Sept. 1.

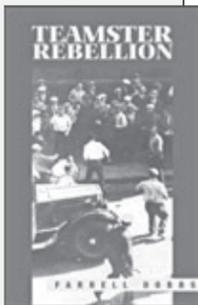
"When the contract expired at midnight June 30," Arabia told the *Militant*, "ATI brought in three busloads of scabs from Strom Engineering," a strike-breaking outfit. "The company locked in Steelworkers from the four-to-midnight shift along with the scabs, and locked out the Steelworkers waiting to report to work for the midnight shift. Not until the company got the word about the day-by-day contract extension agreement did they release the locked-in Steelworkers and allow the midnight shift to enter the mill. Right now the scabs are staying in hotel rooms."

At a rally of Local 7139-05 at the ATI Flat Rolled Products corporate offices in Washington, red T-shirts were everywhere. "We will not accept the offers that would put us back to the times of Andrew Carnegie," Rick McFeely, USW Unit Chair of the Houston, Pennsylvania, Local, told rally participants. Carnegie was a strikebreaking 19th-century steel baron. "Back then they would make you work 12 hours or more with no overtime pay. We will not work in conditions that make us unsafe, we will not let them bully us around."

## Teamster Rebellion

by Farrell Dobbs

The 1934 strikes that built the industrial union movement in Minneapolis and helped pave the way for the CIO, as recounted by a central leader of that battle.—\$19



pathfinderpress.com

According to Trib Total Media, the company has refused to comment on negotiations.

The Steelworkers have called a rally for July 30 at ATI headquarters in Pittsburgh.

—Josefina Otero, retired member USW Local 7139-05

## New Zealand bus drivers protest longer hours, erosion of seniority

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Some 60 bus drivers and their supporters staged a lively protest in the central city here July 8. The drivers, members of the Tramways Union and the FIRST Union, are fighting moves by their employer, NZ Bus, to impose longer hours, more broken shifts with longer unpaid breaks in the middle and increased weekend work. NZ Bus, which employs 1,100 drivers, contracts to the Auckland Council to provide bus services in the city.

The drivers chanted, "NZ Bus, consult with us," expressing their anger at the unilateral imposition of the new rosters, which are scheduled to go into effect July 19. Officials from both unions say going ahead with the rosters breaches the workers' contract with the company. They have filed a grievance with the government Employment Relations Authority over this.

"We have always had one day per weekend off, or both days, or a four-day weekend," said a night shift driver who asked that her name not be used. "Now we'll be working up to five weekends in a row. That means we could be working every weekend in February at the height of summer. That doesn't make for family life. What use are two days off in the middle of the week when the kids are at school?"

In a July 8 press release, the company



Militant/Patrick Brown

Bus drivers, members of Tramways and FIRST unions, in Auckland, New Zealand, protest July 8 against NZ Bus attack on seniority and imposition of longer hours, split shifts, weekend work.

said that the new rosters are "fairer to more drivers" and that younger drivers with families will not work an "excessive number of weekends."

But Tramways Union President Gary Froggatt said that the changes will affect about 600 drivers at all levels of seniority. The new rosters also end a seniority provision that allows longer-serving drivers to work more humane schedules.

Driver Ian Taiaroa said he'd be starting earlier but still finishing at the same time with the new schedules. "I've never been a union man," he said. "But I can see now the only way is to protest like this, in front of everyone. I drive the 'bendy' buses, so I'll still only be working weekdays, not weekends, but I'm here to support my brothers and sisters. We're all in this together."

—Felicity Coggan

## Seattle Macy's workers march against concessions contract

SEATTLE — Macy's workers, members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 21, and supporters marched and rallied at two stores here July 8 and 9, protesting cuts to health care, staffing and pension funding and elimination of personal-time days off.

Close to 200 people demonstrated in front of the downtown store July 8, including members of Service Employees International Union, UNITE HERE

and UFCW members from other retail stores in the area.

"They are cutting hours and with part time there is no guarantee for more work," said Candice Hemphill, who has worked for 10 years at the South Center store in Tukwila, just south of here. "In addition, the company now pays 70 percent for benefits, but they want to change that to 50 percent."

Of the seven stores in the bargaining unit, only two are in Seattle, where the minimum wage is being raised to \$15 per hour by 2018. "We want the other five stores to get the same pay," she said.

Some 150 people, including members of OUR Walmart, rallied at Macy's in the Northgate Mall here July 9.

"Cutting back to 20 hours makes it impossible for people to support themselves and their families, said Marvella Joseph, a Macy's worker in Lynnwood who was there with her two young children. "This is the first time I have marched like this but I am glad to know that the union is behind us and will not let the company intimidate workers."

Nichole Booker has worked at the Federal Way Macy's for 22 years as a sales associate. "When your hours get cut you don't qualify for benefits," she said. "And the company is increasing job duties, making us do the work of two or three people with no increase in pay."

—Edwin Fruit

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



### July 27, 1990

ZILLAH, Washington — "A contract is our goal," said Carlos, one of 40 milkers on strike at the Cow Palace/Springer One dairy farm here.

"They are the biggest and worst paying in the state," said Pablo. With over 4,000 cows, the dairy farm is the fourth largest in the United States.

"He hasn't given a raise in 10 years," said Javier, a young worker. "In fact, he's cut wages."

Several workers explained that they are not just fighting for a raise, but "so everyone is paid equally."

The strike began on July 6. More than two months earlier the workers began to organize themselves and went to the United Farm Workers of Washington State for aid. When the owners refused to negotiate, the strike began.



### July 26, 1965

JULY 20 — The Deacons of Defense and Justice in Bogalusa, La., a Negro self-defense organization, are facing increasing harassment, arrests, and moves by state police to disarm them while the civil rights workers they have sworn to protect continue to suffer physical attacks from whites under the very noses of local and state cops.

Joe Gatlin, 26, a Bogalusa Negro resident, was booked by police on charges of "attempted murder." Police, who claim he is a member of the Deacons, say he fired shots at a carload of white nightriders. There were no injuries. It is not illegal in Louisiana to carry guns in autos, and Klansmen in the area do so as a matter of course. Governor John J. McKeithen has announced that state troopers will disarm Negroes in cars and confiscate their guns.



### July 27, 1940

DETROIT, Mich. — The top leadership of the United Automobile Workers of America will submit a detailed report on its activities and the progress of the organization to the national convention of the union.

An honest and forthright report would have to admit that the union has made absolutely no progress in its organizational work; that the organization drives on Ford, the aircraft industry and the competitive parts plants were total flops. It would have to admit that the leadership sabotaged and side-tracked the necessary fight for the 30 hour week at 40 hours pay; and it would record that the top leaders today have jumped on the bandwagon of the Morgan-Dupont National Defense Council and are conducting themselves as recruiting sergeants for the Wall Street war machine.

# Cuban Five in Namibia

**Continued from front page**  
 nio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González —spent up to 16 years in U.S. prisons on frame-up charges. The final three returned to Cuba in December as part of the agreement to move toward re-establishing diplomatic relations between Washington and Havana, a victory for the people of Cuba, their government and the international campaign demanding their freedom.

Hernández, Fernando González and René González served as internationalist combatants in Angola before taking assignments to go to the U.S. to monitor counterrevolutionary groups that have carried out violent attacks against the Cuban Revolution with Washington's complicity.

In 1975 the Angolan government turned to revolutionary Cuba, requesting help to beat back a military invasion by the South African apartheid regime. Some 375,000 Cubans volunteered for combat in Angola over 16 years. They helped repel repeated incursions, culminating in the victorious 1988 battle at Cuito Cuanavale, where the South African army suffered a military defeat at the hands of the combined forces of the Angolan army, Cuban internationalists and SWAPO combatants.

It was "one of the decisive turning points in Southern African history and brought the white minority regime in South Africa to its knees," Nujoma said at the reception.

"You don't see big media making reference to Cuito Cuanavale," Hernández said, addressing the reception. "For them that battle didn't exist. The media of the empire want to offer a completely different history of Africa that erases the role of our compatriots, erases the role of Cuban internationalists."

## Rulers fear revolutionary example

"They fear the example that we represented," Hernández said. "That example goes beyond Cuba and the Cuban Revolution."

"The fact that we kept firm in our ideals," he said, referring to the failed attempt to break the spirit of the Five in prison, "went against the script they want people to believe."

The U.S. rulers want people to believe that the Cuban Revolution and the fight for independence of Namibia are "just a moment in history," he said, and when the historic leaders of those movements

are gone "the revolution will cease to exist."

"They are wrong," Hernández said. "Both in Cuba and Namibia there are new generations that feel inspired by the example of Fidel Castro, Nelson Mandela, Sam Nujoma. A new generation that is willing to sacrifice their lives to keep going forward."

Nujoma described the barbaric attack on the Cassinga Refugee Camp in 1978, when more than 1,000 Namibians lost their lives. Cuban forces repelled the South African troops and managed to take hundreds of people to safety.

"The children who survived the massacre were taken to Cuba," he said. Two schools were established on the Isle of Youth there where thousands of young Namibians were educated.

During their four days in Namibia the Five visited the Heroes' Acre, a monument dedicated to those who paid with their lives in the centuries-long fight for independence. They took part in a solidarity march with 1,000 supporters and a meeting of some 2,000 — Namibians, Cubans and members of the diplomatic corps. Next February, Namibia will host a continental solidarity event with Cuba, according to Prensa Latina.

"Our internationalist mission helped



Cuban Five, inset, at rally in Windhoek, Namibia, July 4 during their visit to southern Africa. Three of Five were internationalist volunteers in Angola when revolutionary Cuba joined Angolan and Namibian combatants to defeat apartheid South Africa's assault.

us in prison in the U.S., to rise above our imprisonment," René González said during their two-day visit to Angola. "We fulfilled our mission here, but we also learned a lot from the Angolans, from their dignity, generosity and affection. I also think it made us grow."

The Five were invited to Angola by the governing MPLA party, the Angolan Parliament, solidarity organizations and the Angola League of Friendship with the Peoples. Gen. Armando da Cruz Neto of the MPLA leadership received them at the airport, where the

Organization of Angolan Women had organized a welcoming reception.

In addition to meeting government representatives and solidarity organizations, they laid a wreath at the monument of Agostinho Neto, Angola's first president after liberation from Portugal's colonial rule in 1975. They also visited the Alto Las Cruces cemetery to pay tribute to Raúl Díaz Argüelles, the first head of the Cuban military mission in Angola, who died in 1975 in the southern province of Cuanza Sul after an anti-tank mine explosion.

# Greek deal is deeper assault on wages, rights

## Continued from front page

two decades the bosses worldwide have mostly not invested in expanding production and productive capacity, where their profit rates have been falling.

Instead, they pour massive amounts of capital into stocks, bonds, derivatives, loans and other forms of fictitious capital — until the speculative bubbles inevitably burst. Then the rulers seek to squeeze more out of the working class, whose labor is the source of their wealth.

The crisis is shattering the myth of a united capitalist Europe, and increasing competition among rival powers. The capitalist governments in Europe are united only in their determination to make working people bear the brunt.

Within the European Union, which includes the 19-member eurozone, capitalists in each country go after the wages and living conditions of working people within their borders, and the ruling classes of the larger powers seek to reinforce their domination and deepen the exploitation of toilers in the weakest. That's what's playing out in Greece.

## 'Bailout' is assault on working class

The demands Berlin is imposing on Greece — in exchange for an additional \$96 billion in "loans" that will simply go to pay previous loans — are even harsher than before the referendum.

Among the terms of the so-called bailout: steeper cuts in pensions, increased sales taxes, automatic cuts in government spending if budget surpluses don't meet targets, privatization of electricity transmission, weakening union collective bargaining rights and removal of obstacles to laying off workers.

Under the deal Athens must privatize some \$55 billion of government assets and place the proceeds in a fund supervised by EU institutions. Some 50 percent of the fund is to be used to "re-capitalize" Greek banks, i.e. protect the

deposits of bondholders; 25 percent to service the Greek debt; and 25 percent for unspecified "investment."

Current laws that protect bread and milk sellers from competition will be repealed "to open Greek business to the international marketplace" the *New York Times* reported. Restrictions on Sunday work will be lifted.

In an attack on Greek sovereignty, the deal instructs Athens to "consult and agree" with the EU on all bills before making them public or presenting them to parliament.

While the *Wall Street Journal* on July 10 described Tsipras' capitulation as a "spectacular U-turn," it was in continuity with Syriza's class-collaborationist course. After winning election in January on a so-called anti-austerity platform, the Tsipras government stated its intention to "honor its financial obligations to all of its creditors." In a vote a few days before the deal, only two of Syriza's 149 deputies in parliament opposed authorizing Tsipras to agree to the EU demands. Another 15 either ab-

**Continued on page 9**

## Ukrainian gov't squeezes workers

The Ukraine government, which owes \$74 billion in foreign debt, much of it to U.S. capitalists, is threatening to withhold its next payment unless it gets a 40 percent write-off.

Ukraine is not a member of the European Union and has its own currency, the hryvnia. But the capitalists from wealthier nations continue to bleed poorer ones no matter what currency or trade bloc or common market they are in.

Unlike Greece, where European government institutions and the IMF bought up the debt in 2014, in Ukraine most of the debt is owed to private speculators. U.S.-based hedge fund Franklin Templeton Investments is the largest single holder of Ukraine's sovereign debt, with some \$8.9 billion of bonds, which it bought before pro-Moscow President Viktor Yanukovich was overthrown in February 2014. About \$3 billion is owed to Moscow.

Franklin Templeton saw high interest rates and dollar signs in Ukraine's turmoil. "We do look for situations that are out of favor," bond buyer Michael Hasenstab said in a video the company released in April 2014.

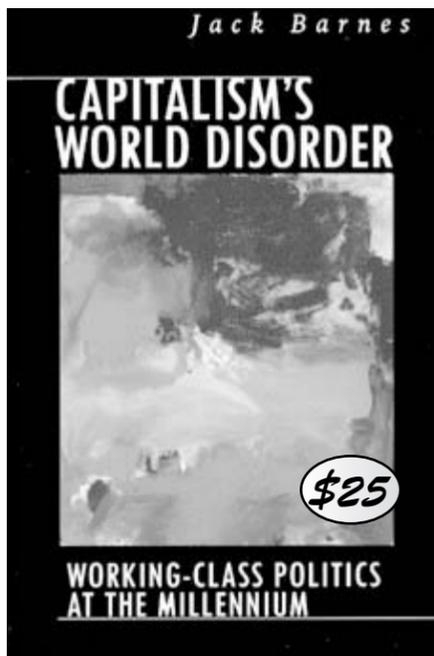
Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko has been aggressively carrying out IMF "free-market" measures that line the pockets of local and foreign capitalists. In addition to slashing pensions, he has raised taxes, laid off government workers and eliminated fuel subsidies, nearly tripling household gas prices and increasing electricity prices by 50 percent. The government plans to privatize government-owned businesses that employ 1.3 million people.

Real wages fell 24 percent over the last year and official unemployment is at 10 percent, the highest in 15 years. Under the impact of the worldwide capitalist economic crisis and the Moscow-backed war in eastern Ukraine, the gross domestic product is expected to shrink 9 percent this year.

In May former Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers wrote that if U.S. hedge funds refuse to write down Kiev's debt, there's no chance that Moscow or Russian capitalists will either. "Why not set a precedent that if you lend money at a high spread to a country that is then invaded, you should not expect the world's taxpayers to ensure that you are paid back in full," Summers wrote.

A \$120 million payment is due July 24. In June the parliament approved a law allowing the government to declare a moratorium on payments.

— SETH GALINSKY



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# 'Remove racist monuments!'

Continued from front page

cians of all stripes to take down the emblem of racist terror came in the wake of the massacre of nine people at a Black church in Charleston, South Carolina, by a white supremacist, and the broad outrage that act provoked.

As the South Carolina government was preparing to remove the flag, a debate broke out in the House of Representatives on a proposal to affirm, in an amendment to a spending bill, that the same flag could be flown in national cemeteries on Confederate Memorial Day, recognized in nine states, and portrayed on souvenirs in National Park gift shops. Republican House Speaker John Boehner stopped the debate, which was so out of step with national politics. He set the entire bill aside July 9 and called for a review of Confederate symbols and memorabilia.

In a July 9 address to the City Council, New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu called for the removal of monuments to Confederate Gens. Robert E. Lee and P.G.T. Beauregard and to Jefferson Davis, president of the pro-slavery Confederate States of America.

Landrieu also called for removing the Battle of Liberty Place monument, a memorial to the vigilante White League, which carried out a short-lived coup against Louisiana's Reconstruction government in 1874.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, a Republican from Kentucky, called June 23 for taking down the statue of Jefferson Davis from the Kentucky

state Capitol.

In South Carolina, the removal of the Confederate battle flag rekindled the demand to remove a prominent statue of "Pitchfork" Ben Tillman, governor and then U.S. senator from 1890 until 1918, from the statehouse grounds. Tillman was a white supremacist terrorist who led the bloody overthrow of Reconstruction in the state. His Red Shirt vigilantes lynched seven African-Americans on July 8, 1876. A few weeks later he presided over the assassination of State Sen. Simon Coker, who was Black.

This is a national discussion. About 350 took part in a "March of Solidarity for the Charleston Nine" in Seattle July 7 sponsored by the First AME Church, the NAACP, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and others. Speakers supported the removal of the Confederate battle flag in South Carolina and called for renaming the Jefferson Davis Highway in Washington state.

## Truth about Reconstruction

In a July 1 *Washington Post* article titled "Why Do People Believe Myths About the Confederacy? Because Our Textbooks and Monuments Are Wrong," historian James Loewen assailed the widespread falsification that the Civil War was not fought over slavery.

"The Confederates won with the pen (and the noose) what they could not win on the battlefield: the cause of white supremacy and the dominant understanding of what the war was all about," Loewen wrote.

## How Black struggle has strengthened working class

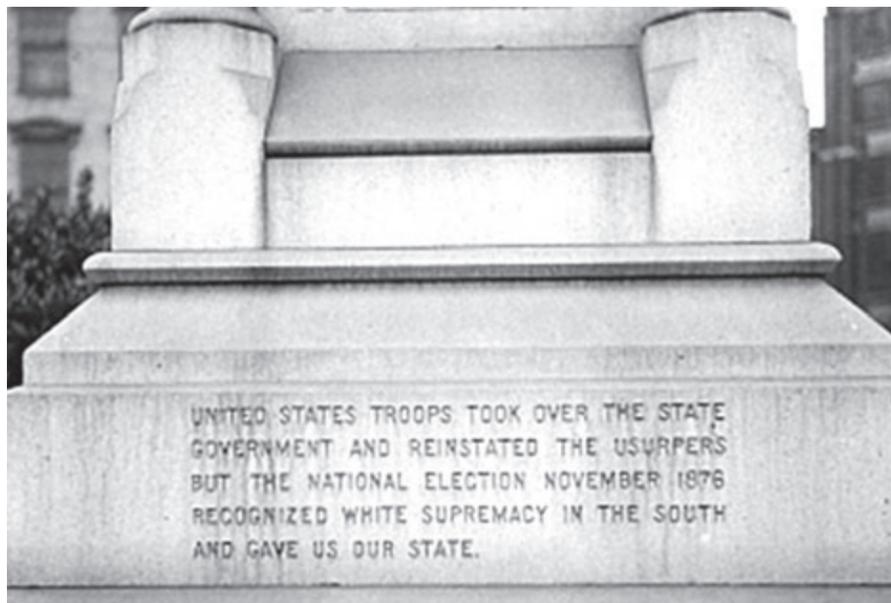
*Below is an excerpt from Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. It describes discussions between Leon Trotsky and Arne Swabeck, a leader of the communist movement in the United States, which took place in 1933 in Turkey, where the Bolshevik leader was living in exile after being expelled from the Soviet Union by the counterrevolutionary regime of Joseph Stalin. Copyright © 2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

BY JACK BARNES

Trotsky's starting point in the discussions with Swabeck was the fact that racist oppression and anti-Black prejudice in the United States were the largest obstacle to revolutionary unity of the working class. As a result of such oppression, Trotsky pointed out, few "common actions [take] place involving white and Black workers," there is no "class fraternization." "The American worker is indescribably reactionary," Trotsky said. "This can be seen now in the fact that he has not yet even been won to the idea of social insurance." And, Trotsky added, "The Negroes have not yet awakened, and they are not yet united with the white workers. Ninety-nine point nine percent of the American workers are chauvinists; in relation to the Negroes they are hangmen as they are also toward the Chinese, etc. It is necessary to make them [white workers] understand that the American state is not their state and that they do not have to be the guardians of this state."

Those conditions, of course, have changed substantially since 1933 as a result of class battles. They began shifting in the mid-1930s as a product of the labor struggles that built the CIO, growing opposition to fascism and the spreading imperialist world war, and motion toward a labor party independent of the Democrats and Republicans. These changes accelerated in the 1950s with the conquests of the mass civil rights movement and Black liberation struggles, which had their roots in the massive urbanization, migration to the North, and shifts in the composition of the industrial workforce that began prior to World War II. As a consequence of these struggles, and as a component of them, workers in the United States *did* fight for an important form of social insurance: Social Security. And as a result of the labor battles of the 1930s and civil rights struggles of the 1950s and '60s, they came to see an expanded version of that Social Security, including Medicare, Medicaid, and related programs, as *rights*.

With the rise of industrial unions, more and more workers who are Black, white, Asian, and Latino — native-born and immigrant — today *do* work alongside each other in many workplaces, often doing the same jobs. They *do* engage in common actions and class fraternization. But the fight to combat multiple forms of segregation and racism, and to overcome national divisions in the working class — through mutual solidarity and uncompromising struggles using any means necessary — remains the single biggest task in



Inscription on Battle of Liberty Place monument in New Orleans celebrates white supremacy. Removal of Confederate battle flag at South Carolina Capitol has spurred calls to remove other emblems of racist terror, and interest in real history of Civil War and Radical Reconstruction.

But "the noose" — lynchings by the Ku Klux Klan and the South Carolina Red Shirts and the Louisiana Knights of the White Camelia and their ilk — was no parenthetical factor in the rewriting of history. It was the motor force.

The Civil War began in reality in the 1850s when Kansas farmers fought off bands of mercenary thugs sent by the slave-owning oligarchy in the South over whether that territory would become a free or slave state. The Republican Party was born out of that conflict.

After Republican Abraham Lincoln was elected president in 1860, the slaveholders in seven states orchestrated secession from the United States, and in April 1861 fired on Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina, beginning a bloody four-year war that ended in victory against the slavocracy.

forging the proletarian vanguard in this country.

Trotsky, in his exchange of views with Swabeck, went on to point out that during a major rise of revolutionary struggle and proletarian class consciousness in the United States,

it is then possible that the Negroes will become the most advanced section. ... It is very possible that the Negroes will proceed through self-determination to the proletarian dictatorship in a couple of gigantic strides, ahead of the great bloc of white workers. They will then be the vanguard. I am absolutely sure that they will in any case fight better than the white workers.

But this can only happen, Trotsky emphasized, "provided the communist party carries on an uncompromising, merciless struggle not against the supposed national prepossessions of the Negroes but against the colossal prejudices of the white workers" — prejudices brought into the working class by the bourgeoisie and the imperialist masters, through their petty-bourgeois agents — "and makes no concession to them whatsoever."

This is what Trotsky had learned from [V.I.] Lenin, the central leader of the Bolshevik Party and Communist International, and from his own long revolutionary experience in the tsarist prison house of nations.

For a number of years following 1867, in South Carolina in particular, the exploited rural producers, led by Blacks, established popular revolutionary Radical Reconstruction governments in the states of the former Confederacy. These governments took steps in the interests of freed slaves, small farmers and other working people. Federal troops were present to enforce the rights of the freed slaves, and popular militias were formed composed of Blacks and Caucasians.

The defeat of Reconstruction required a bloody counterrevolution led by the gangs of racist lynchers. They were given the green light by the country's capitalist rulers, who withdrew federal troops from the South in 1877, fearing the growing alliance of freed slaves, small farmers and the emerging industrial working class.

The resulting Jim Crow segregation, which included ideological rationalization of its racist terror in history books and public monuments, lasted until a powerful proletarian-led Black movement dealt it a death blow in the middle of the last century.

Today the change in consciousness in the U.S. population, including in the South, a product of decades of Black struggle, has kindled a desire to tell the truth about the history of that struggle, and an urgency to do so.

Mary Martin in Seattle contributed to this article.

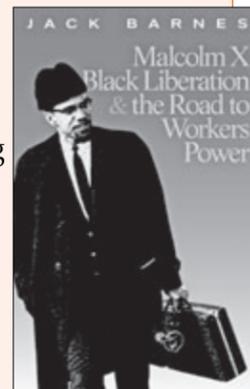
### For further reading

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

by Jack Barnes

"The revolutionary experience of the producing classes during Radical Reconstruction is a story that needs to be told by a proletarian party in the United States. It is an example of what many of our predecessors fought for a century ago — a forerunner of the kind of fighting workers and farmers alliance we are struggling for today." \$20

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# SWP leader: 'Socialist revolution in U.S. is possible'

The excerpt below is from *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for July. Author Mary-Alice Waters is a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and president of Pathfinder Press. The selection is from her presentation at the 2007 Venezuela International Book Fair in Caracas. Copyright © 2008 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

I am speaking here today as one of a small minority, including among those who call themselves leftists, or revolutionaries, a minority that says without hesitation or qualification: Yes, revolution is possible in the United States. Socialist revolution. To put it in class terms, a proletarian revolution — the broadest, most inclusive social upheaval of the oppressed and exploited imaginable, and the reorganization of society in their interests.

As it deepens, that mass revolutionary struggle will win the support of the majority of the working class, small farmers, and other exploited producers and their powerful allies among oppressed nationalities, women, and others. It will be led by an increasingly class-conscious, tested, and expanding political



Militant/MikeShur

"What is coming are years that will bring increasingly conscious and organized resistance by a growing vanguard of working people pushed to the wall by the bosses' drive to cut wages and increase what they call productivity," said Waters. Above, hotel workers march in New York April 15 in national day of action to back fight for \$15 an hour and a union.

vanguard of the working class.

In the third American revolution, workers who are African-American will be a disproportionately large component of the leadership.

That revolutionary struggle will take political and military power from the class that today holds it, mobilizing the strength and solidarity — the humanity — of working people in the United States on the side of the oppressed and exploited worldwide.

It will be a struggle that transforms the men and women who carry it forward as they fight to transform the twisted social relations inherited from the dog-eat-dog world of capitalism — relations that corrode human solidarity and coarsen us all.

What's more, revolutionary struggle by the toilers along the path I just described is inevitable. It will be initiated at first not by the toilers, but forced upon us by the crisis-driven assaults of the propertied classes. And our struggles will be intertwined, as always, with the resistance and struggles of other oppressed and exploited producers around the globe.

What is not inevitable, however, is the outcome of these coming revolutionary struggles. That is where political clarity, organization, discipline, and the caliber of proletarian leadership become deci-

sive. That is why what we do now, while there is still time to prepare — what kind of nucleus of what kind of revolutionary organization we build today — weighs so heavily.

I wanted to assert this at the start so our discussion here at this event can share a common vocabulary. This is the meaningful class content I give the oft-abused word "revolution."...

Today, above all I want to address my remarks, with all due respect, to those who doubt that socialist revolution in the United States is possible — to those who believe, or fear, that U.S. imperialism is too powerful, and that revolution has become at best a utopian dream.

To those who harbor such doubts, I will pose a question:

What assumptions about the future, explicit or implicit, could justify such a conclusion? What would the future have to look like?

I hope others here will address this as well. But I would like to give my answer.

To reach that conclusion, you would have to believe that the coming decades are going to look more or less like those we knew for nearly half a century following World War II.

You would have to believe that there won't again be economic, financial, or social crises on the order of those that marked the first half of the twentieth

century. That the ruling families of the imperialist world and their economic wizards have found a way to "manage" capitalism so as to preclude shattering financial crises that could lead to something akin to the Great Depression; to growing assaults on the economic, social, and political rights of the toilers; to spreading imperialist war; to the rise of mass fascist movements in the streets. That such a crisis of the capitalist system would no longer be met by working-class resistance like the mass social movement that exploded in the United States in the 1930s and built the industrial unions.

You would have to be convinced that competition among the imperialist rivals, as well as between them and the more economically advanced semicolonial powers, is diminishing and that their profit rates, which have been on a long downward trend since the mid-1970s, are now going to begin to rise for several decades on an accelerated curve.

You would have to believe that such a turnaround in their accumulation of capital can be accomplished without the massive destruction of productive capacity — human and physical — wrought by decades of war, such as those that culminated in the inter-imperialist slaughter of World War II. That is what was necessary for the capitalist rulers to get out of the last great depression.

I believe the evidence is overwhelming that the future we face is the opposite. ...

What is coming are years that will bring increasingly conscious and organized resistance by a growing vanguard of working people pushed to the wall by the bosses' drive to cut wages and increase what they call productivity.

What is coming are years punctuated by street battles with ultrarightist movements aimed against fighting union militants, revolutionary socialists, Blacks, immigrants, Jews, and others — in even the most "stable" of bourgeois democracies.

What is coming are years of economic, social, and political crises and intensifying class struggle that will end in World War III, inevitably, if the only class that is capable of doing so, the working class, fails to take state power — and thus the power to wage war — out of the hands of the imperialist rulers.

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# Flag removal is victory for workers

**Continued from front page**

erful social and political consequences of the victorious struggle led by African-Americans in the 1950s and '60s that overthrew Jim Crow segregation. Those battles transformed the consciousness of the U.S. population.

The victory in South Carolina lays the basis to mobilize this broad sentiment to make further advances that strengthen the unity of working people, including deepening the Black Lives Matter fights that have pushed back cop violence and brutality and the fight to overturn restrictions placed on the right to vote after the Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act in 2013.

This course strengthens the working class. The propertied capitalists and their government seek to rule by divide and conquer, turning Caucasian against African-American, those with a job against the unemployed, men against women, native born against immigrant. Victories that strengthen work-

ing-class solidarity help workers see more clearly that our common enemy is the bosses and their two-party system.

Today their world system faces a deep economic and social crisis of declining capitalist production and trade. They have no answers, except to try and take it out on our backs, to try and increase their profitability through cutting jobs and speeding up work for those remaining, gutting workplace safety, and attacks on our social and political rights.

Workers need our own political party, a labor party, to unite us in action to defend ourselves against the capitalists' attacks and to chart a course to take political power out of their hands.

The Socialist Workers Party candidates — both Walmart workers who are active in the fight for \$15 an hour and a union and participants in the fight to bring the flag down in South Carolina and other working class battles — are running to advance this perspective.

# Obama tries to stabilize Mideast for imperialism

**Continued from front page**

uranium; limiting the level of enrichment to 3.67 percent, far below weapons grade; and cutting stockpiles of low enriched uranium, ostensibly extending to one year the time it would take for Iran to acquire enough fissile material for a weapon.

Intrusive inspections of Iran's uranium mines, military facilities and manufacturing plants that "few other countries have ever agreed to" will be conducted by the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency, the *Wall Street Journal* reported.

In exchange, financial and economic sanctions — some of which began in 2006 — that imperialist powers and the U.N. had imposed on Iran would be lifted as soon as its government is declared in compliance with the restrictions, expected to take at least six to nine months. These sanctions hit working people the hardest and have led to increased joblessness, declining wages and rising food prices. A ban on conventional arms sales and on trading ballistic missiles and parts will remain in effect another five to eight years.

The agreement will now be debated in Congress over the next 60 days. Obama has said he would veto

any measure to block it.

Once both sides have ratified the pact, the Iranian government would gain access to about \$100 billion in frozen assets that the imperialist powers has seized under the sanctions, and oil sales can increase.

The agreement has strained Washington's relations with longtime allies in the region, from Israel to Saudi Arabia. "Israel is not bound by this deal with Iran because Iran continues to seek our destruction," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told reporters July 14.

## Kurdish advance worries Turkish gov't

The agreement with Tehran comes as tensions are heating up between Kurdish fighters making advances against Islamic State in Syria and Turkey's rulers, who are increasingly alarmed about the prospect of the Kurds establishing their own self-ruled territory.

In a June 26 speech Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that his government will "never allow" the Kurds to establish a state "in the north of Syria." Ankara has increased its military presence along Syria's border, deploying tanks and anti-aircraft missiles as well as additional troops.

Gen. John Allen, U.S. special envoy for the coalition against the Islamic State, visited Ankara July 7 to meet Turkish officials over speculation that Turkey might launch a military intervention inside Syria. Turkey has been at odds with Washington for not joining the U.S.-led "coalition" and for demanding a buffer zone be established inside Syrian territory where refugees would live under Turkish military control.

The Iranian government backs Ankara in preventing establishment of a Kurdish state in Syria. Iran's ambassador to Turkey, Ali Reza Bikdeli, said both governments have agreed to preserve "the unity" of Syrian territory, reported ARA News.

Some 30 million Kurds in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria have been battling against national oppression and a homeland denied to them by the imperialist division of the region put in place following World War I by London and Paris with Washington's backing.

The capture of the strategic town of Tel Abyad on Turkey's border last month by Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) gives Kurdish groups in northern Syria control of most of the nearly 250 miles of territory adjacent to Turkey stretching from Kobani to the Syria-Iraq border. Islamic State fighters have also been driven out of one-third of the province of Raqqa.

A statement issued by the YPG General Command July 10 noted that over the past 65 days its fighters successfully liberated 4,250 square miles of territories from the reactionary Islamic State. "Relying on the will and ability of our forces, they can defeat Daesh [Islamic State]," the statement said, despite "how low our forces resource might be, and the lack of support in the area of weapons and ammunitions." Fearing the rising fight for Kurdish sovereignty, Washington, while conducting some airstrikes in the area, has refused to provide YPG with needed heavy equipment to more effectively combat IS.

# SWP ballot drive

**Continued from front page**

of Black rights since it was unfurled over the Statehouse in 1961, is a powerful victory for all working people," they said.

In the first two days of the drive 171 people signed to put Hart and Staggs on the ballot.

"These politicians — I don't care if its Democrats or Republicans — all talk down to us," George Bagby, a musician, told Staggs as he signed the socialists' petition in Germantown July 14. "The way they talk to us about the economy, for example — telling us long explanations about how 'it's working.' We know how the economy is working — it's not." He volunteered to perform at campaign events.

"I can't believe how people can get by today, especially younger people," Joanne Welch told Hart when he knocked on her door in the Port Richmond neighborhood the same day. "After 18 years I was laid off by Thriftway. Everybody spends time worrying about how they're going to pay their bills each week."

"The capitalist system is in a crisis, and they don't see any way to get out," Hart said. "They try and make us pay for it, put the burden on us."

"At Walmart we're fighting to defend ourselves. We demand '\$15 an hour, full-time work and a union,' just like people at McDonald's and other places are fighting for," the socialist candidate said. "The victory in South Carolina helps to unify the working class, it makes us stronger, better able to fight."

Socialist campaigners also discussed the crisis workers face around the world. From Greece to Ukraine to Puerto Rico, the rulers are squeezing working people, in the name of "paying debts" as their response to the contraction of capitalist trade and production. Working people in the U.S. need to stand with the toilers in these countries, up against the same class enemy.

## Deep attacks on education

Many workers wanted to discuss the disaster in Philadelphia's school system. Because of federal and state government refusal to fund the schools, over the last four years the school district has eliminated 5,000 jobs, closed 31 facilities and slashed programs, cutting \$1 billion from the budget. The schools are run by a state-ordered School Reform Commission, with three members assigned by the governor and two by the mayor.

The teachers' contract ran out in 2013, but they continued to work under its terms. Last October, the commission voted unanimously to throw it out and impose health care costs on teachers. The union sued and won, reinstating the old contract provisions, in January.

The cuts would be even deeper, but the rulers imposed new, anti-working-class taxes — a 1 percent sales tax jump and a \$2 per pack cigarette tax increase.

"We are campaigning against these attacks on the teachers and the rulers' assault on the schools," Hart said. "I also explain that the capitalist rulers have no interest in working people becoming truly educated. The most meaningful education we get comes when we fight together, in the process transforming ourselves." He recommends the pamphlet *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning: The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism*, by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, to anyone thinking about these questions.

The socialist campaign plans to field petitioners every day for the next two weeks to meet their goal. Volunteers gather at the campaign headquarters, get their boards, campaign literature and copies of the *Militant*, books about revolutionary history and politics from Pathfinder Press, and head out. At the heart of the effort is knocking on doors in working-class neighborhoods all across the city.

To join in, come to 3701 Pulaski Ave., or call (215) 225-1270, email [philaswp@verizon.net](mailto:philaswp@verizon.net).

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# Crisis in Greece

**Continued from page 6**

stained or were absent.

Tsipras used the referendum to claim that he fought as hard as he could, but this was the best he could get. In the absence of any revolutionary proletarian leadership in Greece, nothing different is possible.

Workers in Greece have already been paying a high price for the capitalist crisis. Since 2010 their wages and living standards have been forced down as part of previous "bailout" deals. Nearly 30 percent of government workers have been laid off and pensions slashed 40 percent. In 2012 the minimum wage was cut by 22 percent, for those under 25 the cut was 32 percent.

With unemployment at 25.6 percent — up from 10 percent in 2010 before the imposition of EU cost-cutting demands — it's now the highest in the EU and higher than in the U.S. during the Great Depression of the 1930s. And for youth it's more than 50 percent.

Production has plummeted. Per capita gross domestic product has declined 25 percent since 2007.

A July 13 editorial in the *New York Times* complains that the crisis in Greece cannot be resolved unless there is a plan to "restore its moribund economy to life." But under today's worldwide conditions of stagnation of capitalist trade and production, and bled by the terms of the "bailout," that is a tall order.

Meanwhile, the Greek government is increasingly turning to Moscow, which is ready to capitalize on the crisis. Greek Energy Minister Panayotis Lafazanis told the *Financial Times* in early July that Moscow has offered to build a pipeline to deliver Russian natural gas through Turkey. If agreement is reached, Moscow could then bypass its existing pipeline in Ukraine.