

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**Cuban 5: Prison labor is window
into workings of capitalism**

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 80/NO. 5 FEBRUARY 8, 2016

Workers face 'recession within a depression'

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

For years workers in the United States and much of the rest of the world have been living under capitalist economic depression conditions. Evidence now shows a renewed contraction — a recession within the depression. Many bourgeois economists now admit this, although they have no explanation of why or proposals for how to end it.

"Heed the Fears of the Financial Markets" was the title of a column by former Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers in the *Financial Times* Jan. 11. "How alarmed should [policymakers] be about the prospect of a global slowdown?" he asked, adding they should "plan for the worst."

For more than a year Summers has been warning of a decade or more of "secular stagnation," in which "full employment and production" will be impossible. He now has more company.

Workers in coal, steel, rail, oil and other basic industries could have told

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Socialist Workers Party: 'Free the Hammonds!'

No to FBI killing, cop siege in Oregon!


Brooke Warren/High Country News

Protesters demanding freedom for ranchers Dwight and Steven Hammond applaud in front of their home in Burns, Oregon, Jan. 2, days before they returned to prison on frame-up charges.

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK — "The Socialist Workers Party joins with ranchers and working people in Oregon, demanding the immediate release of Dwight and Steven Hammond, father and son cattle ranchers framed up by the government," Joel Britton, chairperson of the Socialist Workers Party

in Oakland, California, told a Militant Labor Forum here Jan. 22.

Britton recently spent a couple days

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As we go to press, FBI agents and Oregon State Police shot and killed Arizona rancher Robert Finicum and arrested Ammon Bundy and other participants in the occupation of the Malheur Wildlife Refuge Jan. 26. They were going to speak at a meeting of 150 people at the Senior Center in John Day, Oregon. The FBI has surrounded the occupied area of the refuge and ordered those inside to leave. **See Editorial page 9**

Poisoning of water in Flint reflects capitalists' disdain for working class



Water You Fighting For

Demonstration in Flint, Michigan, March 17, 2015. Only after workers protested and organized their own investigations did government officials admit water was contaminated.

BY SETH GALINSKY

"We knew something was wrong from the minute they pushed the button," said Claire McClinton, a resident of Flint, Michigan, in a phone interview. The retired General Motors worker and longtime union member was referring to April 25, 2014, when Democratic Mayor Dayne Walling

switched the city's water supply to the Flint River.

"The water coming out of our faucets was discolored, it either smelled like a swimming pool with so much chlorine or like sewage," she said. Residents of this working-class city started bringing bottles of the water

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Washington joins Tehran, Moscow to seek Syria truce

BY MAGGIE TROWE

The nuclear deal with Tehran implemented Jan. 16 represents a major advance in moves by the Barack Obama administration to put together a new political bloc in the Middle East to replace the shattered imperialist-imposed "world order" put in place after World War II. Washington aims to build on deepening collaboration with Tehran, as well as Moscow, to forge and police a cease-fire to end the five-year Syrian civil war and impose a semblance of stability. The U.S. government and its imperialist allies in Europe and elsewhere have no interest in continuing war in the region.

At the same time, they are using Islamic State-inspired terror attacks to scapegoat Muslims and cut away at political rights critical for working people. French President Francois Hollande announced Jan. 22 that he will extend the state of emergency and restrictions on protests and other rights he imposed after terrorists killed 130 people in Paris Nov. 13. Government officials said the extension would last "as long as necessary."

Since the Iran deal was consummated, Tehran has sought to rebuild its economy. Iran is one of the largest countries in the Mideast, with a population of 82 million, a modern capital-

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Is it in workers' interests for the UK to remain in the EU?

BY PETE CLIFFORD

MANCHESTER, England — The U.K.'s Conservative Party government is committed to holding an in-out referendum on the country's membership in the European Union, and wants to hold it this year. Recent polls say it is too close to call.

Prime Minister David Cameron's decision to hold the vote reflects how the pressure of the long and deepening capitalist economic crisis and growing discontent across class lines are fueling shifts and fissures in political parties here. This has been highlighted by the backing for the UK Independence Party, formed by splits from the Conservatives on issues of immigration and getting out of the EU; growth of the Scottish National Party; and the election of a left winger, Jeremy Corbyn, to lead the Labour Party.

Whatever the outcome, the U.K. rulers' role in the world will continue to decline, as will the accelerating

crisis of the EU itself and sharpening disunity between member states.

No prominent wing of the U.K.'s capitalists favor breaking from the EU. The 28-country union "is by far

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fired McDonald's worker!
10,000 UK junior doctors strike
against extension of hours

Rally demands freedom for ‘Fort Dix Five’ prisoners

BY GEORGE CHALMERS

CAMDEN, N.J. — “My brothers are innocent,” Burim Duka said, speaking to reporters Jan. 6 as a hundred family members and other supporters of the “Fort Dix Five” rallied outside a hearing at the federal courthouse here. The charges against them were “100 percent manufactured,” he said.

In 2007 Dritan, Shain and Eljvir Duka, and friends Mohamad Shnewer and Serdar Tatar, were falsely charged with conspiracy to attack military personnel at Fort Dix as well as on weapons offenses.

Chris Christie, then U.S. attorney for New Jersey, brought the charges against the five as part of a wave of government-organized frame-ups and victimizations aimed at Muslims and Arabs after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

The government used paid FBI informants with long criminal records who spent more than a year attempting to entrap the Duka brothers and their friends into joining a terrorist plot.

The five were never convicted of *doing* anything, but on fabricated charges of conspiracy. “That there isn’t more explicit evidence does not concern me and obviously didn’t concern the jury either,” District Judge Robert Kugler admitted as he sentenced them in April 2009.

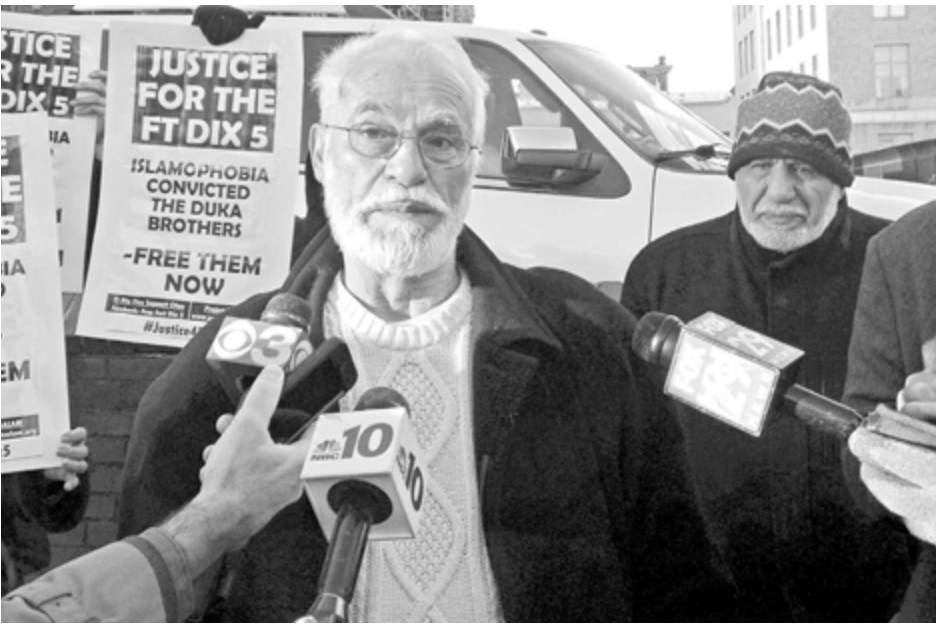
Even though they weren’t charged with terrorism, prosecutors demanded a “terrorism enhancement” to their

sentences, winning life terms for four of the five defendants. The Duka brothers have been held in separate high-security prisons in Colorado, Indiana, Virginia and Kentucky, brother Burim said, much of it in solitary confinement.

Zurata Duka, the three brothers’ mother, told the *Militant* that around two years ago family members saw new interest in exposing the frame-up.

The *Washington Post* ran a column June 29, 2015, by Radley Balko titled, “The Outrageous Manufactured Case Against the ‘Fort Dix Five.’” *The Intercept*, an online publication, published a story exposing the frame-up, including commentary from Shain Duka in prison.

The court heard motions filed by



Militant/Ruth Robinett

Firik Duka, father of Dritan, Shain and Eljvir, framed up by Washington on conspiracy charges in 2007, speaks outside court hearing pressing for their freedom Jan. 6 in Camden, New Jersey.

each of the Duka brothers to set aside their sentences because their court-appointed attorneys didn’t represent them properly. The lawyers “didn’t let them testify,” Firik Duka, their father,

told reporters.

Supporters of the five have been holding weekly vigils outside the Camden courthouse since November. The next one is set for Feb. 12.

Poisoning of Flint water shows capitalist disdain

Continued from front page

to City Council meetings. “It looked like English tea,” McClinton said, “and all the while they’re telling us it’s safe to drink.”

The story of how the water was poisoned is an indictment of capitalism and ruling-class scorn toward the residents of this working-class city. Every level of government — from the city to the governor to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency — was complicit. It made no difference whether the officials were Democrats or Republicans, Black or Caucasian.

But it’s also the story of working peo-

ple who refused to accept the lies. “We were being dismissed and ridiculed and called names,” LeeAnne Walters said by phone Jan. 24. “We had no choice but to fight.” Walters, a housewife and former medical assistant, was one of the first to learn there were high levels of lead in her home’s water. One of her children was diagnosed with lead poisoning.

Flint residents jammed City Council meetings, organized their own community forums and held street protests.

“That’s the best part of what happened,” Walters said. “It brought the community together, we put aside our differences and we joined forces.” Flint has the highest official poverty rate of any city in Michigan. Its population is 55 percent African-American and 35 percent Caucasian.

The crisis stems from the decision by Flint Emergency Manager Darnell Earley — appointed by Republican Michigan Gov. Richard Snyder in 2013 to take over all financial powers of the local government — to switch to Flint River water.

“He had the idea it would be cheaper than the pretreated water we had been getting from Detroit for 40 plus years,”

Rev. Alfred Harris, president of Concerned Pastors for Social Action, told the *Militant*.

In October 2014, less than six months after the switch, General Motors said it would no longer use Flint water at its engine plant because it was causing corrosion. “You don’t need to be a rocket scientist to know if it’s not safe for engine parts, then it sure as hell isn’t safe for human beings,” McClinton said.

In January 2015 the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality found high levels of a carcinogenic byproduct of chlorine used to disinfect the water. That same month the first tests showing dangerous levels of lead in the water became public.

Yet three months later Mayor Walling was still tweeting, “[My] family and I drink and use the Flint water everyday, at home, work, and schools.”

Researchers from Virginia Tech University — spurred by a call from Walters — tested water from 300 Flint homes. They announced the results in September: high lead levels in more than 25 percent of homes, as much as 13,200 parts per billion. According to the Cen-

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THE MILITANT

Defend rights of workers behind bars

The capitalist ‘justice’ system incarcerates millions of workers under harsh conditions designed to break their spirit. Prisoners have conducted hunger strikes and other protests, asserting their humanity and demanding better conditions. The ‘Militant’ covers these struggles.



Militant/Eric Simpson

Protesters condemn death of Mario Martinez from poor medical care in California jail.

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SWP: Free the Hammonds!

Continued from front page
in Burns, Oregon, as part of a Socialist Workers Party team to bring solidarity to the fight to free the Hammonds and learn more about the efforts. Mary Martin, chairperson of the SWP in Seattle, joined Britton on the platform.

The Hammonds were found guilty in April 2014 of “malicious damaging and destroying, by means of fire” 139 acres of federal land in 2001. “That’s less than one-quarter square mile,” Britton said. Steven Hammond was found guilty of an additional charge for a 2006 fire that burned one acre.

In much of the West, where the government owns 50 percent of the land, private ranches are surrounded by federal lands. Federal agencies, like the Bureau of Land Management, grant generous concessions to big capitalist enterprises, but hinder and harass smaller ranchers like the Hammonds.

“The Hammond ranch is right next to land the government has bought up for the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge,” Britton said. “But the Hammonds declined to sell.”

Rusty Inglis, president of the Harney County Farm Bureau, told Britton that wildfires, mostly from lightning, burn hundreds of thousands of acres in Oregon every year. In 2014 one fire alone burned nearly 400,000 acres near Burns.

“Inglis and others told us that controlled fires are commonly used by ranchers to get rid of invasive Juniper trees and to protect farms from wildfires,” Britton said.

The charges were brought under the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, signed by then President Bill Clinton, which established mandatory minimum sentences for many offenses. District Court Judge Michael

Hogan ruled that the minimum sentence of five years for arson under the act was not meant for cases like this and “would not meet any idea I have of justice, proportionality.” He sentenced Dwight Hammond to three months and Steven to one year in prison.

Federal prosecutors vindictively appealed and the U.S. Appeals Court ordered the Hammonds sent back to prison to complete the full five-year minimum, citing other sentences imposed under minimum-maximum regulations, including 50 years to life for stealing nine videotapes and 25 years to life for the theft of three golf clubs under California’s three-strikes law.

“Small ranchers and working people in Burns and more broadly see this as a terrible injustice,” Britton said. A Jan. 2 demonstration drew 300. “There are only 7,000 people in all of Harney County. This was a big action.”

After the rally a dozen or so participants led by Ammon Bundy, a businessman from Arizona whose father is a Nevada rancher, began an armed occupation of the Malheur Wildlife Refuge. Bundy and others in his group Citizens for Constitutional Freedom demand the Hammonds’ release, as well as advancing schemas such as transferring federal land to the control of local governments.

Most area ranchers and others who back the Hammonds “are for fighting via legal means and say they are opposed to the occupation,” Britton said. “Others are glad for the national attention the occupation brought to the issues.”

The FBI, sheriff departments and the state police are stepping up their presence in Burns. So far they haven’t tried to stop those occupying the refuge from moving freely, Britton said, but calls for a government attack are growing.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown demanded



Dwight Hammond and wife Susan Hammond greet protesters who marched in Burns, Oregon, Jan. 2 opposing Washington’s vindictive resentencing of him and his son Steven.

a swift end to “the unlawful occupation” Jan. 20. In an editorial that day the *Oregonian*, the state’s largest-circulation daily, called for “measured but aggressive actions.”

This is a dangerous sign, Britton said, recalling the April 1993 FBI assault on the Branch Davidian religious sect in Waco, Texas, that murdered 86 people, including 17 children, under the Clinton administration.

“For workers around the world, watching the carnage in Waco was an almost unbearable reminder of the kind of violence the capitalist government, capitalist political parties and their armed gangs . . . will not hesitate to use,” Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes said in a statement at the time. “Today the target may be a marginal religious group. Tomorrow it can be workers who step out of line or their unions and other class organizations.”

‘Bird lives matter’

Mary Martin described attending a Jan. 19 protest by environmental groups in Portland, Oregon. SWP members contended with those supporting the jailing of the Hammonds and calling for forcibly ending the occupation of the Malheur reserve. Some held signs that

said, “We’re for birds not bullies” and “Bird lives matter.”

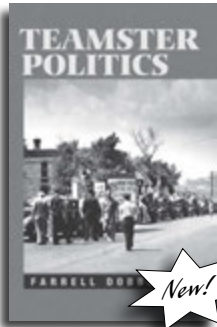
“This just contributes to the campaign for another Waco-type assault,” Martin said. “We went there with a large sign that said ‘Free the Hammonds! Socialist Workers Party.’ A few people made faces at us and walked away, but we found no obstacles to engage in civil debate. A couple people gave us thumbs-up and some said they agreed the Hammonds got a raw deal.

“We explained that we live in a class-divided society and need to end the dictatorship of capital,” she said. “We need a workers and farmers alliance like they built in Cuba. We sold nine copies of the *Militant* in a freezing rain.”

During the forum discussion, one participant asked what he could do to help free the Hammonds and prevent the government from launching a Waco-style assault.

“The most important thing is to get out the truth,” said *Militant* editor John Studer from the audience. “Help us get out the *Militant* — the only paper telling the truth — as we go door to door in working-class neighborhoods. Set up speaking engagements for Joel and others who have gone to Burns. If you’re a union member see if your local will call for the release of the Hammonds.”

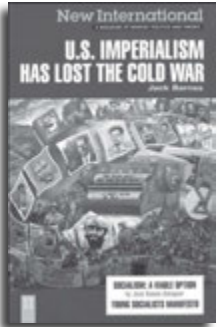
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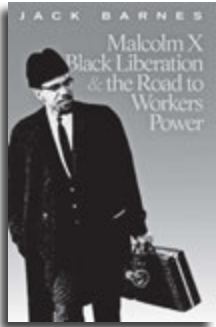
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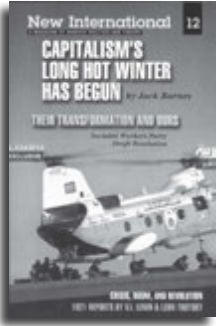
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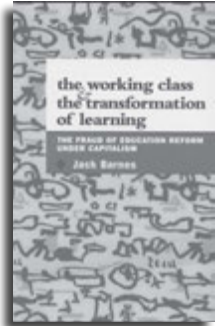
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Flint shows capitalist disdain

Continued from page 2
ters for Disease Control and Prevention anything above 15 parts per billion is a danger, especially to children and pregnant women.

That same month, Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, a pediatrician with Hurley Children’s Hospital, said tests had found that 4 percent of Flint children had dangerous levels of blood lead, double the numbers before the water switch and in some places triple.

Some government officials still denied there was any danger. Michigan Department of Environmental Quality spokesperson Brad Wurfel told the *Flint Journal* that those publicizing the problem were fostering “near-hysteria.”

Federal EPA officials said the lead was within safe levels. An internal EPA memo in June 2015 warned that high lead was a “serious concern” but the agency did nothing to alert the public.

But the truth began to win out. Flint River water is 19 times more corrosive than Detroit’s Lake Huron treated water, yet Flint authorities did not add a simple corrosion inhibitor to the water. This would have prevented lead from leaching from decades-old pipes, for only \$100 a day. The damage now is probably irreversible. The cost of replacing pipes could reach \$1.5 billion.

On Oct. 1, officials of Genesee County, where Flint is located, declared a public health emergency and urged residents to stop drinking the water, something many, if not most, had already done.

In January this year, President Barack Obama declared a federal emergency in Flint but refused to make a “disaster” declaration, which would have meant more funds for the city. He has authorized \$5 million for buying bottled water and lead filters and additional loans.

The aid offered so far “it’s not even a drop in the bucket,” said Rev. Harris. “It’s a Band-Aid that’s all it is.”

Flint residents are still forced to use bottled water and install lead filters. The city has jacked up water rates, some people are paying \$150 a month or more “for water they can’t even use,” Harris notes.

“We have won some victories,” said McClinton. “The latest is getting national attention. We were able to get them to go back to using Detroit water. But we need structural repairs. We need the Army Corp of Engineers. We need a special health facility to monitor, especially for our children because lead damage is irreversible.”

“This fight is far from over,” said Walters.

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Washington seeks Syria truce

Continued from front page
ist economy and high level of culture and education.

With the phasing out of imperialist sanctions, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has been touring Europe. Italian officials announced the two governments will sign business agreements totaling more than \$16 billion.

Washington and Moscow are pushing for United Nations-sponsored peace negotiations in an “indirect format” in Geneva Jan. 29. But obstacles to holding the gathering point to broader difficulties in the way of Washington’s plan.

While officials from Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s regime plan to attend, opposition groups called the High Negotiations Committee, cobbled together in Saudi Arabia, say they won’t come unless Assad’s troops halt all attacks and sieges against civilian areas.

Khaled Khoja, president of the Syrian National Coalition, said that Washington, Tehran and Moscow have decided on imposing “a ‘national government’ and allowing Bashar al-Assad to stay in power and stand for re-election.”

Moscow demands the U.N. invite the Syrian Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD), which through its military wing — the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG) — with aid from U.S. bombing has driven rightist Islamic State forces out of Kurdish areas. “Without this participant the talks cannot achieve the results that we want, a definitive political solution in Turkey,” said Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

If the PYD is invited “of course we will boycott,” responded Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu. Ankara, which is conducting a murderous military operation against the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in southeast Turkey, views the PYD as “terrorist.”

Mass popular mobilizations against the Assad regime in 2011 were met with brutal retaliation, crushing them. This led to the civil war, killing more than 250,000 people and displacing millions.

Decades of betrayal by the Stalinist Syrian Communist Party left no revolutionary working-class leadership in the country capable of charting a course to defeat the regime and take power. In the vacuum this created, exacerbated by the brutal slaughter unleashed by Assad, Islamic State was able to seize territory and set up a reactionary caliphate.

More than 400,000 people live in areas besieged by Assad, cut off from access to food and supplies. An estimated 2.5 million Syrians have fled to Turkey; a million to Lebanon and about 630,000 to Jordan, according to the U.N.

Hundreds of thousands have fled to Europe. Their arrival coincides with a sharp capitalist economic downturn. Governments there have moved to increase border patrols, erecting barbed wire fences and other obstacles.

The Kurdish people have long been

denied a homeland. In the 1916 Sykes-Picot pact, London and Paris, victors over Berlin and the Ottoman Empire, carved up the oil-rich region and imposed national borders. Kurds were divided into parts of Syria, Turkey, Iraq and Iran. The secret deal was exposed after the 1917 Russian Revolution, when the Bolsheviks released the pact made by the imperialist powers to divide the spoils they found in the files of the overthrown czarist regime.

Independent Kurdistan ‘now closer’

World leaders “have come to this conclusion that the era of Sykes-Picot is over,” said Masoud Barzani, president of the autonomous Kurdish region in northern Iraq. Barzani said Iraq and Syria would never be reconstructed with their former borders. He urged a new accord, saying an independent Kurdistan is “now closer than at any other time.”

The ongoing assault against the Kurdish population in southeastern Turkey by the government of Recep Tayyip Erdogan has received little coverage in the U.S. press. Dozens of civilians have been killed, villages destroyed and more than 100,000 people driven from their homes. “Turkish authorities are bombing infrastructures and residential neighborhoods across Sirnak and Diyarbakir,” two major cities in the area, Kurdish human rights lawyer Hoshin Ebdullah told ARA News Jan. 24.

Since the Islamic State-inspired terror attack in Paris, 31 U.S. governors have said they will try to keep Syrian refugees out of their states.

Severe restrictions and bureaucratic obstacles have made it extremely difficult for Syrian refugees to get into the U.S. Since 2012, authorities have admitted just 2,174 Syrian refugees — a grand

Bronx rally protests anti-Muslim assault



Militant/Sara Lobman

BRONX, N.Y. — “This should not happen in the future, to either a Muslim or non-Muslim,” Mujibur Rahman, above, told a Jan. 19 rally in front of the elementary school here where he had been beaten three days earlier by two youth shouting, “ISIS, ISIS.” Rahman, who is Bangladeshi, had been picking up his 9-year-old niece from the school.

In addition to his brother Khalilur Rahman, speakers included Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., Community Board 9 member Mohammed Mujumder, and Public Advocate Letitia James.

On Jan. 22, two teenagers were arrested in the attack.

— SARA LOBMAN

total of 0.0007 percent of the U.S. population.

In New Jersey, with an estimated 200,000 Muslims, Gov. Chris Christie, who sought out relations with Muslim communities and groups when he ran for governor in 2010, has changed his tune. Now seeking the Republican presidential nomination, he calls for stopping Syrian refugees, including “orphans under age 5,” from entering the United States.

In France, Hollande is calling for amending the constitution to allow the

government to deny those with dual citizenship entry into the country and to revoke their French citizenship if they are deemed a “terrorist risk.”

A demonstration called by the General Confederation of Workers (CGT) and many human rights and labor organizations is being organized in Paris for Jan. 30 to protest the state of emergency and the constitutional “reform.”

The state of emergency causes “fear that this and future governments will use it against workers and militants,” said a CGT statement Dec. 29.

Alberta farm and ranch workers law stirs debate

**BY MICHEL DUGRÉ
AND JOE YOUNG**

CALGARY, Alberta — After weeks of contention the Alberta provincial legislature adopted the Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers Act Dec. 10. The new law requires farmers who employ laborers to provide Alberta Workers’ Compensation Board coverage for their employees and abide by Occupational Health and Safety regulations. The act extends labor standards to farmworkers, including the minimum wage, the right to set up a union, paid vacation and protection from reprisal for refusing to do dangerous work.

Before the bill’s passage Alberta was the only province without any labor standards for farm and ranch workers and one of only four where workers’ compensation coverage for on-the-job injuries doesn’t apply to them.

Agriculture is the economic sector with the highest number of deaths on the job in Canada. There were 937 agricultural fatalities nationwide from 2002 to 2012, including 190 in Alberta.

The bill was passed along straight party lines, with New Democratic Party legislators voting in favor and the opposition Wildrose and Progressive Conservative parties voting against.

Thousands of farmers and ranchers organized protest rallies and convoys against the measure outside government-organized hearings in rural areas leading up to the vote. The fact that the NDP government led by Premier Ra-

chel Notley didn’t consult with farmers before introducing the bill contributed to the anger of many of them. So did the fact that in its initial form the legislation required small farmers who get help from their children and neighbors to pay costly insurance. The government Dec. 7 backtracked, introduced amendments requiring farmers to purchase insurance only for farmworkers who earn a wage and only for the duration of their employment.

Unions backed the legislation. The Alberta Federation of Labour held a press conference Dec. 7 where unionists brought 112 pairs of work gloves to represent workers killed on the job on farms in Alberta since 2009.

“This debate should be about a group of workers who have been denied their basic rights for far too long,” Federation President Gil McGowan said at the event, “workers who put in long hours at greenhouses and aren’t entitled to overtime, and those who get injured on factory farms and who have no recourse.”

Few farmworkers’ voices could be heard in the weeks leading to the adoption the bill. “Farmworkers are afraid to speak because of pressure from their bosses,” said Philippa Thomas, an agricultural worker disabled by an on-the-job injury in 2006. “I got zero help from my employer,” she said in a radio interview. “Farmworkers should be protected.”

The nearly 40,000 farmworkers in Alberta have no organization, in part

because there are on average fewer workers per farm here than in other provinces. There are several groups that advocate for farmworkers, including the labor federation and the United Food and Commercial Workers union.

Many farmworkers from Mexico and the Caribbean work during the warmer months on “temporary foreign worker” visas under Canada’s Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program. They were not present while the bill was being debated.

Some farmworkers opposed the legislation. “The government is just trying to take control and tell us what to do,” Jordie Nash, 30, told the *Militant*. Nash is one of 30 workers at a big feedlot tending 30,000 to 60,000 cattle at a time. “Big government doesn’t work. The NDP is not listening. They are urban.”

Some farmers spoke out in support of the bill. “As an operator of a true family farm, where my family does all the work, I do not appreciate it when my challenges are invoked as justification for multimillion-dollar farming operations, with full-time employees, to not have to use the same practices as other businesses,” said Mark Olson, from Carstairs, in a Dec. 7 letter to the *Calgary Herald*.

National Farmers Union Women’s Vice President Toby Malloy said in a Dec. 4 release that Alberta farmers, ranchers and farmworkers “deserve the safety net of insurance coverage that is already legislated in other provinces.”

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CANADA

Calgary

**The Fight Against Police Brutality:
Toronto Police Officer Found Guilty of
Attempted Murder.** Speaker: Joe Young,
Communist League. Fri., Feb. 5, 7:30 p.m.
4909 17th Ave. SE. Tel.: (403) 457-9044.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

MAGGIE TROWE, EDITOR

Help the *Militant* cover labor struggles across the country!

This column gives a voice to those engaged in battle and building solidarity today — including workers fighting for \$15 and a union; locked-out ATI Steelworkers; Verizon workers opposing concessions; construction workers demanding safe conditions. I invite those involved in workers' battles to contact me at 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018; or (212) 244-4899; or themilitant@mac.com. We'll work together to ensure your story is told.

— Maggie Trowe

California protest: Reinstate fired McDonald's worker!

OAKLAND, Calif. — Fast-food workers mobilized with supporters at a McDonald's in north Oakland Jan. 16 to demand the reinstatement of Carlton Inman, an African-American who has participated in Fight for \$15 actions. He works at McDonald's in nearby Richmond. Co-workers of Inman who participated in the protest told the *Militant* that he was a good worker and unfairly let go. "They kept reducing my hours and then didn't call me at all," Inman said.

Chanting, "Black lives matter at work," protesters blocked the store's driveways for more than two hours. The action was organized by the Bay Area Solidarity Action Team and the East Bay Organizing Committee, a group of fast-food workers.

The demonstration was part of a "Reclaim Martin Luther King" week-end of activities that included a march of over 2,000 here Jan. 18, two actions at the Oakland airport and an occupation of the Bay Bridge.

— Betsey Stone

Airport workers rally in nine cities for \$15 on MLK Day

Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ organized actions demanding \$15 an hour and a union at nine airports — Boston; Chicago; Miami; Newark, New Jersey; New York; Philadelphia; Portland, Oregon; Seattle; and Washington, D.C. — on the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday Jan. 18.

Chanting, "Enough is enough!" more than 100 airport workers and supporters marched and rallied at the airport in Philadelphia, where airline subcontractors have refused to pay wheelchair attendants the \$12 an hour city minimum wage, saying they aren't eligible because they receive tips.

"Like Martin Luther King we are fighting for fair wages, workers' rights and dignity," wheelchair attendant Onetha McKnight told the rally. "When King participated in the 1968

Memphis sanitation workers' strike, workers carried signs saying, 'I am a man!' and 'I am a woman.' We need to say that today. No one should have to work two or three jobs or live on government aid. And we have the right to form a union."

Some 300 workers rallied at LaGuardia Airport in New York. Héctor Figueroa, president of Local 32BJ, was one of a number of speakers who pointed out that in 1963 King called for a minimum wage of \$2 per hour, the equivalent of \$15.51 today.

"We need this \$15. The rent is going up," LaToya Johnson, a wheelchair attendant for five years, told the *Militant*. "How do we pay for food?"

In Miami, more than 60 airport workers demonstrated outside the offices of airline contractor Eulen America Inc. Cristian Garcia Veras came with fellow maintenance workers from Nova Southeastern University to bring solidarity. The workers are demanding TCB Systems Inc., the contractor they work for, recognize SEIU Local 32BJ as their union.

Three Eulen America contract workers from other cities gave greetings at the rally — Delores Green, who works at the JFK Airport in New York; Sandra Smith from Ft. Lauderdale; and Kebede Tegegn, employed at Ronald Reagan National Airport in Washington, D.C. After the rally the three joined a delegation that tried unsuccessfully to meet with corporate officials.



Militant/Dag Tirsén

"A tired doctor could risk a person's life," said medical student Jack Dover, right, at picket outside Salford Royal Hospital in Greater Manchester, England, during nationwide strike Jan. 12.

"I want to tell them face to face that slavery was abolished a very long time ago," Smith told the rally.

— Janet Post in Philadelphia,
Dean Hazlewood in New York,
and Anthony Dutrow in Miami

10,000 UK junior doctors strike against extension of hours

MANCHESTER, England — More than 10,000 junior doctors — doctors in postgraduate training — set up some

100 picket lines across England Jan. 12 and struck for 48 hours. The actions were organized by the British Medical Association. Outside Salford Royal Hospital here strikers carried handmade placards protesting cuts to the National Health Service and against contract proposals by Health Minister Jeremy Hunt that extends hours.

"They want doctors to work from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday with no extra pay for Saturdays or evenings," Jack Dover told the *Militant* as he picketed. "A tired doctor could risk a person's life."

"We're not asking for a pay rise — we're trying to prevent a pay cut," said Anna Skinner, a first-year trainee at Newham University Hospital in London. "The government is asking for 40 percent more work from us with nothing in return. Even when we are fully staffed during the week we are over-stretched."

Katie Percival, a doctor in her first year of training at Salford Royal, said the government has not listened to doctors. "Instead, they are spreading a lot of lies. I'm really glad we have a union. I'm willing to stay here for as long as it takes!"

— Catharina Tirsén
and Paul Davies



Militant/Glova Scott

Workers at Reagan National Airport in Washington, D.C., rally Jan. 18 calling for \$15 an hour and a union.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



February 8, 1991

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In a massive outpouring of opposition to the criminal war unleashed by Washington against the people of Iraq, more than 125,000 people converged in this city January 26. It was by far the largest national demonstration against the war and followed by one week a January 19 protest of some 25,000 people here.

Simultaneous antiwar marches were held in many other U.S. cities, Canada, Britain, Germany, New Zealand, and elsewhere. The action here, and a West Coast march in San Francisco, mobilized a broad range of organizations and individuals, showing the potential of the antiwar movement to mobilize opposition in the streets to the slaughter the U.S. government has opened.

Protesters began to assemble in the mall on the west side of the U.S. Capitol, where Congress, less than two weeks earlier, voted to go to war against Iraq.



February 7, 1966

[President] Johnson's decision to resume bombing of north Vietnam marks a new stage in the escalation of the Vietnam war. It demonstrates conclusively that the so-called "peace offensive" was nothing but a maneuver intended to lull antiwar sentiment in the United States and the world. Even during the "peace offensive," the U.S. escalated the war in the south through intensified bombings of villages and homes with jellied gasoline fire bombs, a massive troop buildup, and large-scale troop actions. Johnson now intends to intensify the war still further in both north and south Vietnam, sending ever greater numbers of American boys to kill and be killed in this unjust and counterrevolutionary war.

We urge everyone who is against this war to speak out and act now to oppose this new escalation.



February 8, 1941

ELIZABETH, N.J., Feb. 2 — Another big open-shop corporation has been set back on its heels by union strike action. 1600 workers of the Phelps Dodge Copper Products Corporation, employed in the Baywater plant here, return to work tomorrow morning after the company acceded to the strikers' demands that an NLRB election be held in the plant immediately and that the company agree to negotiate a union contract.

The Baywater plant was shut down last Friday morning, after the company refused to consider union demands for opening of contract negotiations.

Company officials were howling that 30 million dollars in war contracts are being worked on in the Baywater plant. In addition they claimed that the strike tied up production of orders to other manufacturers with war contracts totaling over \$200 million.

Teamster Rebellion

BY FARRELL DOBBS

The story of the strikes and union organizing drive the men and women of Teamsters Local 574 carried out in Minnesota in 1934. They showed in life

what workers and their allies in the countryside and the cities can achieve when they're able to count on the leadership they deserve. \$19

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Georgia cop indicted in killing of Anthony Hill

BY JANICE LYNN

ATLANTA — A grand jury indicted DeKalb County police officer Robert Olsen Jan. 21 on felony charges, including murder, for the March 9, 2015, killing of 27-year-old Anthony Hill. It is the first time in more than five years that a cop in Georgia will be prosecuted for a fatal shooting, out of 184 cases.

About 100 cheering protesters greeted Hill's family outside the courthouse after the indictment was announced. "Hopefully this will at least send a message that if you do wrong you're going to be held accountable for it," said Hill's mother, Carolyn Baylor-Giummo.

An African-American veteran of the war in Afghanistan, Hill had been diagnosed with bipolar disorder and was struggling to find the right medication. A neighbor called 911 seeking a paramedic after spotting him wandering naked and unarmed outside their apart-

ment complex. The call was dispatched as a suspicious person report. Officer Olsen, who is Caucasian, arrived and shot Hill twice, claiming he feared for his safety.

Leading up to the grand jury hearing more than a dozen protesters, including Hill's girlfriend Bridget Anderson, camped outside the courthouse in freezing weather for three days, starting on the Martin Luther King Day holiday. Signs and banners at the vigil read "Justice for Anthony Hill" and "Mental Illness Not a Crime."

A steady stream of people stopped by the encampment to express solidarity, including veterans who told of their struggles with post-traumatic stress disorder; victims of police brutality; activists from Black Lives Matter and the community group Rise Up Georgia; students and religious figures; along with a number of media outlets. Supporters donated food and coffee, as did several local restaurants.

Anderson told the media that Hill's medication had adverse effects. His tongue would swell and his jaw often locked. He sought medical assistance with the Veterans Administration for months, but appointments were incorrectly scheduled or he'd be on hold for five hours. "The country failed the love of my life," she said, "not just the police, but the VA."

"I'm on top of the world," Anderson told the *Atlantic Journal-Constitution* after the grand jury decision. "It was such a blatant use of excessive force."



Rally in Decatur, Georgia, protesting police killing of Anthony Hill, March 2015.

Australian literacy program based on Cuban example



Militant/Joanne Kuniansky

SYDNEY — "We are always ready to help," said Cuban literacy teacher José Chala Leblanch, above right, Jan. 8 as he was welcomed back to Australia. "That's what Cuba has been doing the last 50 years, and in return we have solidarity everywhere."

Chala pioneered the "Yes I Can" Aboriginal adult literacy program in the outback town of Wilcannia in 2012. He has returned as an adviser for the expansion of the program, organized by the Literacy for Life Foundation in Brewarrina, 600 miles northwest of Sydney.

The effort draws on the experience of the Cuban Revolution's successful literacy campaign in 1961, as well as the Cuban program developed in Grenada during the revolution there in the early 1980s. "It expands people's minds," Chala said. One student told him it was "the best thing that happened to his community." Participants gain confidence, he added, and "want to talk politics at 3 a.m. in the morning!"

The success of "Yes I Can" where government courses have failed to improve literacy is due to the way it is organized with the involvement of the Aboriginal community. "You have to listen and learn," the Cuban teacher said. "Every community is different."

In Brewarrina, where more than two-thirds of the 1,500 residents are Aboriginal, there is high unemployment, so one of the next steps is preparing students to get jobs.

The informal gathering of 50 people, in a small room at a bar here, was hosted by the Australia-Cuba Friendship Society.

— LINDA HARRIS

Working people face a 'recession within a depression'

Continued from front page

these pundits the truth earlier. Mines and mills are shutting down. Those still working face speedup and dangerous conditions.

"Future economists will probably call this decade the 'longest depression,'" wrote University of California at Berkeley economics professor Brad DeLong in the online Huffington Post. Investment adviser John Hussman titled his Jan. 18 newsletter "An Imminent Likelihood of Recession," noting, "The current total of 10 (of a possible 12) month-over-month declines in Industrial Production has never been observed except in the context of a U.S. recession."

A spate of articles in the business sections of the capitalist press blame the

recession on the Federal Reserve's decision to raise interest rates last December. A Jan. 25 article in the *Wall Street Journal* is titled "Why the Fed Is the Root of Much Market Turmoil."

But none of the bourgeois economists can explain why the economic decline continues. In fact, the current crisis is baked in the capitalist cake. It's the cumulative result of more than four decades of falling average industrial profit rates. This leads the capitalists — who are motivated by making profits, not by producing goods people need — to hoard cash; U.S. companies are now sitting on \$1.9 trillion. Or they turn to speculation in paper values, such as stocks, bonds and derivatives.

This speculation blows up bubbles that eventually burst. One example was

the housing bubble that triggered the 2008 recession. Each time they say it will be different, but it's not. And the effects for working people are devastating.

Over the first three weeks of this year, nearly \$8 trillion in stock value was wiped off the books as markets worldwide plunged. Their prices had gone up and up, with no relation to production.

In December the portion of U.S. industrial capacity being used was 76.5 percent. For utilities it fell to 73.2 percent, the lowest since records began being kept in 1972.

While the Labor Department reports hundreds of thousands of jobs were added last year — especially part-time, temporary and at low pay in service and retail — only 17,000 new manufacturing jobs were created for all of last year through November, compared to 18,000 such job openings every month in 2014, reported the *Financial Times*.

Declining production has contributed to the plunge in oil prices, and further job cuts. Schlumberger, the biggest oil service company worldwide, plans to cut 10,000 jobs, bringing to 34,000 the number axed since November 2014. With the drop in oil and coal shipments, Union Pacific Corp. laid off 3,900 rail workers last year. Canadian Pacific Railway said it will cut up to 1,000 jobs this year. Mining output fell 11.2 percent in 2015.

Workers in the U.S. face this new downturn after six and a half years of a "recovery" many have never felt.

The labor force participation rate has declined the most for workers under 25 years old since December 2007. At 62.6 percent last month, the overall labor force participation rate remains at a nearly 40-year low.

While the paltry number of jobs created did nothing to lower real unemployment, wages of many workers have declined. The official U.S. poverty rate was 14.8 percent in 2014. That's higher than in 1966, when President Lyndon Johnson launched his so-called War on Poverty.

Bosses hoped growth in China would create a miracle, fueling growth worldwide. But the workings of capitalism has hit with a vengeance there as well, with production contracting.

"Over the past year, about 20 percent of China's growth as reported in its official statistics has come from its financial services sector," writes Summers, "and Chinese debt levels are extraordinarily high. This is hardly a case of healthy or sustainable growth."

Capitalist investors, who over the past seven years ploughed trillions of dollars into so-called emerging markets — China and semicolonial countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America — to profit off high interest rates, are now rushing to withdraw. In 2015 a record \$732 billion was pulled out of these countries, according to the Institute of International Finance. On top of this working people are being forced to pay for the debt crisis from Puerto Rico to Ukraine.

Capitalism's World Disorder

Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

by Jack Barnes

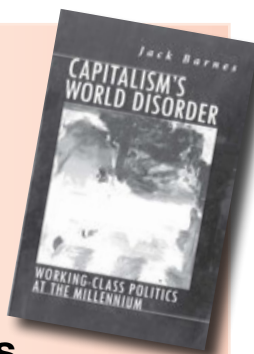
The social devastation and financial panic, coarsening of politics, cop brutality, and imperialist aggression—all are products not of something gone wrong with capitalism but of its lawful workings. \$25

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions

by Jack Barnes

Building the kind of party working people need to prepare for coming class battles through which they will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and all society. A handbook for those seeking the road toward effective action to overturn the exploitative system of capitalism and join in reconstructing the world on new, socialist foundations. \$24



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Prison labor is a window into workings of capitalism

Cuban 5: ‘In US prisons they aim to dehumanize you; in Cuba a prisoner is another human being’

“It’s the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US ‘Justice’ System”: The Cuban Five Talk About Their Lives Within the US Working Class, a new book from Pathfinder Press, is now available. The Five were arrested in Florida and framed-up by the FBI in 1998 for their activity in defense of the Cuban Revolution. The last of them returned to Cuba in 2014. The book centers on a 2015 interview by Mary-Alice Waters and Róger Calero in which they talk about their time as part of the large section of the U.S. working class behind bars. Most of the excerpts below are from the section “In US Prisons They Aim to Dehumanize You; in Cuba a Prisoner Is Another Human Being.” Copyright © 2016 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

RAMÓN LABAÑINO: To understand the American system of justice, you have to begin from the fact that it’s a system used by the US government to enable a powerful minority to control a vast majority who are poor and dispossessed.

Almost 40 percent of the state and federal prison population in the US is African American, and more than 20 percent is Latino. In some states and some prisons the percentages are even higher. The whites in prison are poor, too. You may come across a rich person, a politician, here and there, people doing minimal time for white-collar crimes — and with all the protection in the world. A person who is poor — Black, Latino, Native American, white — faces the enormous savagery of what’s called American justice.

It serves above all to sustain a system that has no solution for the poor, present or future. It’s a way to separate them from society. It’s a way to hold off a revolution, to keep the conditions for a genuine revolutionary struggle from



Left, courtesy of Gerardo Hernández

Federal prisoners are required to work, but only make \$0.23 to \$1.15 an hour. It’s “a cheap workforce locked up in prison, with no right to organize, no health or safety protections,” notes Ramón Labañino. The Cuban Five “never took jobs that paid a little better since they were a source of income for other inmates and a source of conflict for that reason,” added Antonio Guerrero. Left, Gerardo Hernández in front of Federal Prison Industries factory in Lompoc, California, November 2003. Above, photo of prisoners on the job posted on the Bureau of Prisons website.

emerging.

In the United States, imprisonment is a way of dehumanizing a human being. It’s a way of isolating you from society, including from your family. To make you feel alone. To make you feel depressed. To make you feel as if you have no one to turn to. ...

RÓGER CALERO: In the federal prison system, inmates are required to work, right?

RAMÓN LABAÑINO: That’s correct. You have to have a job of some kind. I did all sorts of things. I started out as an orderly, doing cleanup jobs. I taught Spanish to English speakers. I was a janitor in the laundry room. I worked for a while cleaning and straightening up the recreation area.

The better-paid jobs are with UNICOR. That’s the trade name for Federal

Prison Industries, a government-owned corporation going all the way back to the 1930s. More than half of federal prisons have factories run by UNICOR. Inmates are paid from \$0.23 to \$1.15 an hour.

It’s a terrific deal for the government. A cheap workforce locked up in prison, with no right to organize, no health or safety protections. Nothing.

Inmates in these factories make uniforms, clothing, shoes, office furniture, even military items — and are paid a fraction of the federal minimum wage, which is \$7.25 an hour right now. What a gold mine! It’s all part of the US justice system.

MARY-ALICE WATERS: And a window onto the workings of capitalism! You had experience with that kind of class exploitation before your arrests too. René [González] worked jobs in construction and on road repair crews. Antonio worked in a restaurant kitchen, then at a Days Inn, later digging ditches, and finally — through a temp agency — as a janitor at the Boca Chica Naval Air Station in Key West. We’ve read about that last job, since prosecutors used it as “evidence” in their espionage conspiracy frame-up.

RAMÓN LABAÑINO: In Tampa, when I first arrived in the US in 1992, I delivered newspapers door-to-door and sold shoes for a mail-order business. When I was assigned to move to Miami in 1996, I ended up driving a van delivering medicine and other merchandise to pharmacies. That was the most steady job I had. ...

RÓGER CALERO: What about the jobs you and others had in prison. How many hours a day did you work?

RAMÓN LABAÑINO: You normally work from eight to five. But often there’s overtime. During the war against Iraq, for example, there were a lot of orders for clothing and boots. The factory at the Beaumont penitentiary in Texas worked practically around the clock.

FERNANDO GONZÁLEZ: At the federal prison in Oxford, Wisconsin, where I spent five and a half years, the factory assembled electronic components and systems for rockets, fighter jets, and tanks.

ANTONIO GUERRERO: You have to have a job, but sometimes it’s hard to find work and you have to wait for someone to leave. In prison you never take a job somebody else already has. And we never took the jobs that paid a little better, since they were a source of income for other inmates — and a source of conflict for that very reason. Like jobs in the kitchen, where people stole things.

In the penitentiary at Florence, Colorado, where I spent eight and a half years, they needed someone to give classes in math and in English as a second language, so I did that. Later, I worked as a teacher at Marianna, because some inmates asked me for help in passing the tests given in Spanish to get their GED [General Educational Development] certificates, the equivalent of a high school diploma. I wasn’t working for the prison then. I did it for those individuals, who together paid me \$15 a month. More Latino students got their GEDs with the help of the course I taught than during practically the entire history of Marianna.

MARY-ALICE WATERS: US prisons are organized to exact retribution. To punish. They try to destroy a person’s dignity and sense of worth.

FERNANDO GONZÁLEZ: That’s exactly right.

GERARDO HERNÁNDEZ: The road to rehabilitation does not exist in the US prison system.

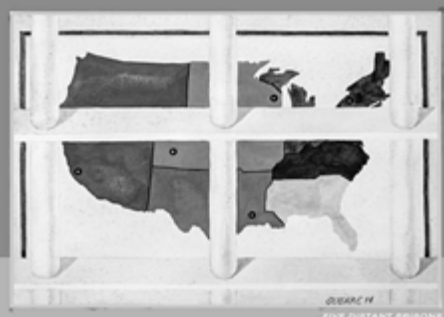
RAMÓN LABAÑINO: What happens when you enter the prison system? The first thing they do is to isolate you — from society, from your family.

I’d say most people in federal prison lose contact with their families within a few months. Most families don’t have the economic resources to support someone in prison. There are families that overcome these obstacles, of course, but many others can’t.

With no family support, no money beyond the pittance you make in prison, you become more and more isolated. You become “institutionalized,” as they say. You made a mistake in life, or at least that’s what they convicted you of, but now you’ve got no choice but to take on the rhythm of the prison. The prison becomes your world.

Just released...

THE CUBAN FIVE talk about their lives within the US working class



“It’s the poor who face the savagery of the US ‘justice’ system”

Includes 40 photos from their years in prison and since the Cuban Five won their freedom and returned to Cuba.

“They chose five distant points for us to serve our unjust sentences. . . . But nothing could stop the Five from marching together with our people and our supporters the world over in the long battle for freedom.”

—Antonio Guerrero

Five Cuban revolutionaries, framed up by the U.S. government in 1998, spent up to 16 years as part of the U.S. working class behind bars. Each reached out to fellow prisoners with respect, solidarity, and through their own example — and won respect and support in return.

What prepared the Cuban Five to act as each did? Above all, it was Cuba’s socialist revolution, whose class character and values their conduct exemplifies. With understanding, objectivity and humor, in this 2015 interview they talk about U.S. capitalist society and its “justice” system. And about the future of the Cuban Revolution.

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Debs: ‘US socialists stand with the Russian Revolution’

Below is an excerpt from the June 1918 Canton, Ohio, speech included in Eugene V. Debs Speaks, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for January. For giving this anti-war speech, Debs was charged with violating the Espionage Act and thrown in prison, serving two years and eight months of a 10-year sentence. An unwavering revolutionary socialist internationalist, Debs points to the example of the Russian Revolution and Bolshevik leaders V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky. Under their leadership, the new Soviet republic ended Russia's participation in the imperialist-organized slaughter of World War I. While in prison, Debs ran as Socialist Party candidate for president, winning almost a million votes. When released, he got a standing ovation from his fellow workers behind bars. Copyright © 1970 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY EUGENE V. DEBS

Yes, my comrades, my heart is attuned to yours. Aye, all our hearts now throb as one great heart responsive to the battle cry of the social revolution. Here, in this alert and inspiring assemblage [applause] our hearts are with the Bolsheviki of Russia. [Deafening and prolonged applause.] Those heroic men and women, those unconquerable



Courtesy of Tamiment Institute Library, New York University

Eugene Debs speaks to 1,200 at Socialist Party state convention in Canton, Ohio, June 1918 after visiting three socialists imprisoned for speaking out against imperialist World War I.

comrades have by their incomparable valor and sacrifice added fresh luster to the fame of the international movement. Those Russian comrades of ours have made greater sacrifices, have suffered more, and have shed more heroic blood than any like number of men and women anywhere on earth; they have laid the foundation of the first real democracy that ever drew the breath of life in this world. [Applause.] And the very first act of the triumphant Russian revolution was to proclaim a state of peace with all mankind, coupled with a fervent moral appeal, not to kings, not to emperors, rulers or diplomats but to *the people* of all nations. [Applause.] Here we have the very breath of democracy, the quintessence of the dawning freedom. The Russian revolution proclaimed its glorious triumph in its ringing and inspiring appeal to *the peoples* of all the earth. In a humane and fraternal spirit new Russia, emancipated at last from the curse of the centuries, called upon all nations engaged in the frightful war, the Central Powers as well as the Allies, to send representatives to a conference to lay down terms of peace that should be just and lasting. Here was the supreme opportunity to strike the blow to make the world safe for democracy. [Applause.] Was there any response to that noble appeal that in some day to come will be written in letters of gold in the history of the world? [Applause.] Was there any response whatever to that appeal for universal peace? [From the crowd, “No!”] No, not the slightest

attention was paid to it by the Christian nations engaged in the terrible slaughter.

It has been charged that Lenin and Trotsky and the leaders of the revolution were treacherous, that they made a traitorous peace with Germany. Let us consider that proposition briefly. At the time of the revolution Russia had been three years in the war. Under the Czar she had lost more than four million of her ill-clad, poorly-equipped, half-starved soldiers, slain outright or disabled on the field of battle. She was absolutely bankrupt. Her soldiers were mainly without arms. This was what was bequeathed to the revolution by the Czar and his regime; and for this condition Lenin and Trotsky were not responsible, nor the Bolsheviki. For this appalling state of affairs the Czar and his rotten bureaucracy were solely responsible. When the Bolsheviki came into power and went through the archives they found and exposed the secret treaties — the treaties that were made between the Czar and the French government, the British government and the Italian government, proposing, after the victory was achieved, to dismember the German Empire and destroy the Central Powers. These treaties have never been denied nor repudiated. Very little has been said about them in the American press. I have a copy of these treaties, showing that the purpose of the Allies is exactly the purpose of the Central Powers, and that is the conquest and spoliation of the weaker nations that has

always been the purpose of war.

Wars throughout history have been waged for conquest and plunder. In the Middle Ages when the feudal lords who inhabited the castles whose towers may still be seen along the Rhine concluded to enlarge their domains, to increase their power, their prestige and their wealth they declared war upon one another. But they themselves did not go to war any more than the modern feudal lords, the barons of Wall Street go to war. [Applause.] The feudal barons of the Middle Ages, the economic predecessors of the capitalists of our day, declared all wars. And their miserable serfs fought all the battles. The poor, ignorant serfs had been taught to revere their masters; to believe that when their masters declared war upon one another, it was their patriotic duty to fall upon one another and to cut one another's throats for the profit and glory of the lords and barons who held them in contempt. And that is war in a nutshell. The master class has always declared the wars; the subject class has always fought the battles. The master class has had all to gain and nothing to lose, while the subject class has had nothing to gain and all to lose — especially their lives. [Applause.]

They have always taught and trained you to believe it to be your patriotic duty to go to war and to have yourselves slaughtered at their command. But in all the history of the world you, the people, have never had a voice in declaring war, and strange as it certainly appears, no war by any nation in any age has ever been declared by the people.

And here let me emphasize the fact — and it cannot be repeated too often — that the working class who fight all the battles, the working class who make the supreme sacrifices, the working class who freely shed their blood and furnish the corpses, have never yet had a voice in either declaring war or making peace. It is the ruling class that invariably does both. They alone declare war and they alone make peace.

Yours not to reason why;

Yours but to do and die.

That is their motto and we object on the part of the awakening workers of this nation.

If war is right let it be declared by the people. You who have your lives to lose, you certainly above all others have the right to decide the momentous issue of war or peace. [Applause.]

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OFFER GOOD UNTIL JANUARY 31

Oppose FBI raid, killing in Oregon!

The Socialist Workers Party urges working people to join in demanding the U.S. government free Oregon ranchers Dwight and Steven Hammond! We should also join in condemning the FBI and cop killing of Robert Finicum and the arrest of Ammon Bundy and other participants in the occupation of the Malheur Wildlife Refuge on conspiracy charges.

The Hammonds have been imprisoned *twice* on the same frame-up arson charges for seeking to defend their ranch and livelihood from government interference and abuse. Their sentence was vindictively lengthened by the federal “justice” system through use of anti-working-class terrorism laws.

The 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act and other measures adopted after the Sept. 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon are for use against workers’ rights. That’s what happened to the Hammonds. And Washington will use these laws to target others who fight

attacks by the bosses and the government, from union picket lines to protests against cop abuse.

Whatever one may think of the schemas that Bundy puts forward, they pose no threat to the lives of working people. From the start government officials, the FBI, many left-wing groups and the liberal news media smeared them as right-wing terrorists, laying the basis for a murderous assault like the 1993 attack on the Branch Davidian religious sect in Waco, Texas.

That’s why many in Burns, Oregon, wanted the Bundys and their cohorts to leave. Most support the Hammonds and many sympathize with the occupiers’ protest against Washington’s discriminatory use of vast government land holdings. But they feared that the occupation would lead to another Waco.

Free Dwight and Steven Hammond! No to another Waco! Drop the charges against Ammon Bundy and others who occupied the Malheur reserve!

Is it in workers’ interests for UK to stay in EU?

Continued from front page

the UK’s largest trading partner,” the government’s most recent report on trade says, with 45 percent of exports and 53 percent of imports.

The EU regulates its 28-member nations with a raft of legislation and rules that have covered questions from “human rights” to working conditions to the curvature of imported bananas.

Many smaller capitalists in the U.K. have been enraged at the high costs imposed by the EU’s bureaucracy and regulations.

The U.K. is one of nine members that have not adopted the euro as a common currency, and it isn’t part of the Shengen area, where travel across borders has been officially passport free.

The EU’s founding treaty says it will evolve toward “an ever closer union.” But contradictions in the size and strength of the varied national states, exacerbated under the mounting capitalist crisis, have increased conflicts between nation states. Germany, the dominant country in the EU, has been the main beneficiary. The EU, whose origins lie in the “world order” imposed by Washington and its European allies after the second imperialist world war, is coming apart.

In recent months these divisions and conflicts have accelerated in reaction to the new wave of immigration of refugees fleeing war and devastation in Syria and elsewhere in the Middle East and northern Africa. Following the Islamic State terror attacks in Paris and New Year’s Eve anti-woman assaults in Cologne, Germany, and elsewhere, many by immigrants, European governments have reasserted their national sovereignty and reinforced their borders, in direct contradiction to EU rules.

Effects of the economic crisis on working people, growing immigration, and bureaucratic meddling by EU officials in Brussels have deepened the crisis both between U.K. political parties and inside them.

Under the pressure of recent elections, Prime Minister David Cameron committed to holding the referendum. He claims he is pushing EU leaders for a broad “new settlement,” a “reformed EU,” to better defend the interests of the United Kingdom. At the same time, he watered down his demands in order to increase the chance of agreement. His proposals include allowing the U.K. to opt out of the EU’s goal of “ever closer union,” acceptance that the euro is not the only currency of the EU, and powers for national parliaments — especially in London — to veto certain EU legislation.

Cameron calls for the right to deny social benefits for four years to EU workers who move to the U.K. — which has drawn sharp opposition from authorities in Poland and other countries that provide the bulk of EU immigrants to the country.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel wants the U.K. in the EU. Berlin is concerned about a British withdrawal accelerating the centrifugal tendencies tearing away at the union. Washington, a strong advocate of British membership from the beginning, also favors

continued U.K. membership.

The “Brexit” debate has exacerbated division within the Conservative Party. Some 100 Conservative Members of Parliament, nearly one-third, say they are leaning towards voting “no.” Cameron has released government members to campaign as they choose, but only after he secures a new deal with the EU.

To win the vote to stay in the EU, Cameron depends on support from Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn, the bulk of the trade union officialdom and the Scottish National Party. Corbyn and the union officialdom claim EU membership has protected workers’ rights and conditions in the U.K.

But this doesn’t square with the experiences of growing numbers of workers facing job cuts, zero-hours contracts, stagnant pay and worsening working conditions. As a result, workers are looking for a new road forward. Questioning EU membership is gaining a broader hearing.

One beneficiary of the discontent among workers and the middle classes is UKIP, a populist party that gained 13 percent of the general election vote. UKIP leader Nigel Farage says breaking with the EU is the only way to control the country’s borders. He says the U.K. has become a “groveling junior member of a German-dominated club.”

Workers around the country are considering what stance on the referendum will harm them less. “What have we gained from the EU?” Manchester meat factory worker Brian Oregio told the *Militant*. “It seems it’s just for business.”

“Unless I hear Britain will be better off out, then I’ll vote to stay,” said fellow worker Charles Kwalombota.

“I’m for Europe, but there’s too many rules and regulations, only some are good for workers,” added Tyrone Sullivan. “I think they need to restrain immigration too. At the moment I don’t know how I’ll vote.”

As the debate unfolds, the Communist League is running Jonathan Silberman for mayor of London.

“There is no class-neutral ‘thing’ called Europe. The EU is a bosses club,” Silberman tells workers as he campaigns at their doorsteps, political events and actions to back workers’ struggles. “It was established to strengthen the propertied rulers against their capitalist rivals, against working people, and to bolster imperialist interests against the oppressed peoples of the semicolonial world. We urge workers to vote for an end to the U.K.’s membership.

“Both the government-led ‘yes’ campaign and the ‘no’ campaign are nationalist and anti-worker,” he says. “They start from what’s in the interests of ‘Britain.’ Class-conscious workers start from what’s in the interests of working people.

“The challenge facing workers is not to look to the capitalist rulers for protection — be they inside or outside the EU,” says the Communist League candidate, “but to fight for independent political action and international working-class solidarity, to forge a labor party that can mobilize working people in a revolutionary struggle for a workers and farmers government.”

Bea Bryant supported communist movement

Bea Bryant, a decades-long supporter of the international communist movement, died in Blenheim, Ontario, Jan. 13 at the age of 93.

Bryant grew up in a poor French-speaking farm family in Swan Lake, Manitoba. She became a primary school teacher in Toronto.

Repulsed by Washington’s war in Korea, inspired by the anti-Stalinist revolution in Hungary and won to the revolutionary perspectives of communist leader Leon Trotsky, who fought to defend the Leninist course of the Russian Revolution against the bureaucratic counterrevolution led by Joseph Stalin, she joined the Socialist Educational League, a predecessor of today’s Communist League in Canada.

In 1961 Bea and her husband, George Bryant, then members of the League for Socialist Action, formed as the Canadian movement expanded, went to Cuba for six weeks as part of the party’s effort to learn about the revolution and bring that back to workers in Canada. She was active in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, which organized to get out the truth about revolutionary Cuba and protested Washington’s moves against it.

She helped to recruit to the communist movement a new generation attracted by the Cuban Revolution, the fight against the imperialist war in Vietnam and other developments in the class struggle.

In 1986 Bea and George moved to southern Ontario. She remained an active supporter of the Communist League, helping to distribute the *Militant* newspaper and books on revolutionary, working-class politics, published by Pathfinder Press. She was a thoughtful and critical reader of the *Militant*, which published many of her letters.

In the final 15 years of her life Bryant was active in the fight to win the freedom of the Cuban Five, revolutionaries framed up and imprisoned in the U.S. Responding to an appeal in the *Militant*, she began writing to them, and they responded regularly.

“Every year she received a birthday card from Gerardo Hernández,” George Bryant noted. She was overjoyed to learn of the victory with the return of the last three of the Five to Cuba in December 2014.

The Bryant’s home near the shore of Lake Erie became a bed and breakfast spot for members and supporters of the communist movement. Good food and sharing experiences in building the communist movement were always on the agenda, as well as tours of her well-kept flower garden.

*John Steele
Montreal, Quebec*

Land use article ‘right on the money’

The article, “Oregon Actions Demand ‘Free Hammonds,’ Open Land Use,” in the Jan. 25 issue and the accompanying editorial are right on the money. They are a convincing affirmation that the *Militant* is published in the interests of all working people, both wage workers and producers on the land.

*Doug Jenness
Tucson, Arizona*

Plans to return to Cuba

I would like to receive a year’s subscription to the *Militant*. I am Cuban and I plan to return to Cuba as soon as I leave prison.

*A prisoner
Florida*

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

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