

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
NY meeting celebrates Natalie Bombaro's life as SWP cadre
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Help Socialist Workers Party get on ballot and campaign

BY MAGGIE TROWE

A central part of Socialist Workers Party activity this spring to get the party's work and program known more broadly and win new friends and members is putting the party's candidates on the ballot in at least seven states. Eleanor García is already on the ballot for U.S. Senate in California's June 7 all-party primary.

"Winning ballot status is an indication of the party's reach and defends the legal status of the party and protections against government intrusion," SWP National Campaign Director John Studer said April 12.

Another key party-building activity is the spring drive to win readers and financial supporters of the party's paper, the *Militant*, and promote books that bring to life the lessons of working-class struggles and revolutions.

At the end of the first week of the six-week campaign, 328 people — including six workers behind bars — have subscribed or renewed, putting the SWP and Communist Leagues slightly ahead on the road to the 1,550 quota. More than \$4,800 has come in for the \$110,000 Militant Fighting Fund, reports fund director Lea Sherman.

Party supporters will talk to thou-
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Repeal Indiana law that restricts right to choose

'We won't go back to days of illegal abortion'



Militant/Betsy Farley

"It must be a woman's choice and no one else's," said Courtenay Graham at April 9 protest in Indianapolis, above, demanding repeal of new law targeting access to abortion.

BY BETSY FARLEY

INDIANAPOLIS — "We won't go back!" and "My body, my choice!" chanted demonstrators outside the Indiana Statehouse April 9 demanding repeal of the state's new anti-abortion law. Many in the largely young crowd numbering some 3,000 held home-

made signs.

HEA 1337, signed by Gov. Mike Pence March 24, bans abortions performed because of a "diagnosis of Down syndrome or any other disability." Posing cynically as a civil rights measure, the law also prohibits abortion based on the "race, color, sex ... national origin or ancestry" of the fetus. And it mandates that fetal remains that are aborted or miscarried be buried or cremated, adding additional costs to the woman.

The new law requires doctors per-
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'We need to overthrow the dictatorship of capital'

BY JOHN STUDER

"Every place I've gone on this West Coast visit, supporters have taken me to labor battles and social struggles — berry pickers fighting against Driscoll's bosses in Washington, families fighting cop killings of their relatives in Bakersfield, strikers at Cal Cartage here in Los Angeles," Socialist Workers Party vice-presidential candidate Osborne Hart told workers and students at a program at the University of Southern California April 9.

"We are fighting for \$15 an hour and for water and heat breaks," Victor Gonzales, one of the workers who
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Unraveling of European Union deepens crisis for Mideast refugees

BY MAGGIE TROWE

One result of the coming apart of the old imperialist Mideast order and growing divisions born out of the conflicting interests of the individual states in the European Union is the deteriorating situation faced by millions of people forced from their homes in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. This includes more than
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'Keep up fight to end US embargo, return Guantánamo Bay to Cuba'

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

MONTREAL — "Some think that now the struggle is over, but that's not true. Cuba needs your support more than ever to end the blockade," Gerardo Hernández told 150 people at a meeting here April 6. Supporters of the Cuban Revolution need to work "to assure the U.S. government returns Guantánamo to Cuba, ends its campaign of subversion against Cuba, and pays compensation for the damages their policies have caused," he said.

Hernández is one of five Cuban revolutionaries who were framed up and imprisoned in the U.S. for 16 years for their actions to defend Cuba from violent attacks.

He was invited to Canada by the United Steelworkers, which backed the fight to free the Cuban Five, to address the union's National Policy

Conference April 7. He spoke at meetings across Canada, including in Toronto, Ottawa and Vancouver, during his visit.

The Cuban Five "refused to be vic-
Continued on page 7

Verizon workers strike against concession demands



Militant/Maggie Trowe

NEW YORK — Nearly 40,000 members of the Communications Workers of America and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers from Massachusetts to Virginia struck telecommunications giant Verizon April 13. Unionists oppose the company's refusal to negotiate with Verizon Wireless retail workers, who unionized in 2014, and concession demands that include increased outsourcing, requiring technicians to work out of town for weeks, raising retiree health care costs and cutting benefits for workers hurt on the job. Above, workers rally at daybreak in midtown Manhattan before deploying to picket sites.

— MAGGIE TROWE

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—On the picket line, p. 5—

UMWA miners march against attack on retirees' benefits

Montreal unionists march to protest two-tier pensions

Australia gov't presses attack on construction union rights

BY RON POULSEN
AND JOANNE KUNIANSKY

SYDNEY — The Liberal-National government of Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull is revving up the rulers' long-running campaign against "militant unionism" in the construction industry, and threatens to call an early election if its proposed "reforms" are not approved. In the name of fighting the "industrial lawlessness" of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, the government is pressing attacks on workers' rights, wages and job conditions.

The industry remains one of the most dangerous. A building worker dies on the job every two weeks on average. The booming sector, a highly profitable part of an otherwise slowing economy, employs about a million workers in Australia, including many working for subcontractors. The CFMEU organizes most workers on big construction sites, including self-employed subcontractors, who sometimes hire apprentices.

Subcontracting is "a grey zone where 'subbies' get squeezed" by the big construction contractors, Nick Rawson, a carpenter and CFMEU member, told the *Militant*. Even subcontracting bosses "come to the union, which has an interest in seeing that all workers get their entitlements."

Big building bosses rail against a higher than average rate of industrial disputes and what they call "restrictive work practices" and union "intimidation." Their goal is to break the enterprise bargaining agreements that are meant to cover all workers on big sites. Turnbull seeks to re-establish and boost

the punitive powers of the Australian Building and Construction Commission. Set up in 2005 by an earlier Liberal-National government, the commission was given sweeping powers to interrogate construction workers and union representatives and to imprison them for refusing to testify.

In 2012 a Labor government replaced the commission with another body that retained many of its coercive powers. Re-establishing the ABCC would bring higher penalties and greater powers to outlaw union action. Turnbull also wants to expand the commission to include transport and dock unions.

In making the anti-union laws a key election issue, the prime minister is building on sensationalized allegations by a royal commission — a judicial inquiry with far-reaching powers — set up by the Liberal government in 2014 to probe the internal affairs of the CFMEU and other unions for "corruption."

"100 CFMEU militants in court over building site disruptions," headlined a front-page article in the March 17 *Australian* newspaper. The unionists are accused of more than 1,000 "industrial breaches," ranging from alleged coercion and intimidation to unlawful industrial action and entering sites with-



Militant/Ron Poulsen

Building workers in Sydney demonstrate March 4, 2015, against government attacks on unions.

out permission. CFMEU state branches and officials have been fined a total of \$7 million (US\$5.4 million).

The building industry is notoriously "rough and corrupt," said Rawson, and most workers see the union as "the cleanest part of the industry."

Charges made against some CFMEU union officials have been quietly dropped. Thousands of building workers protested when two CFMEU officials faced criminal charges of "blackmail" over an industrial dispute in a Melbourne court last December. The union has expelled one official in Canberra who admitted to taking bribes.

In Perth, 101 construction workers

were recently charged with taking "unlawful industrial action" almost three years ago when they allegedly attended a union meeting at a construction site. Charges were subsequently dropped against 33 of the workers, who were not scheduled to work that day.

"Productivity is up, safety is down," Howard Byrne, a mobile crane driver and CFMEU job delegate, told the *Militant*. "The industry is more dangerous than five or 10 years ago. The union is in a battle every day over safety.

"I see it as an attack on the working class by the ruling classes," Byrne said, "when they go after the strongest union and try to discredit it."

Why race-baiting weakens fight against cop brutality

BY KEVIN DWIRE

MINNEAPOLIS — How to advance the fight against police brutality, and the threat that race-baiting poses, were an important part of a forum here April 2.

Among the 20 people who came to hear Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy and SWP candidate for Congress David Rosenfeld were several activists from the fight to prosecute the cops for the November killing of Jamar Clark, an unarmed young Black man. The district attorney announced March 30 he would not file charges against the officers, sparking renewed protests.

Thandisizwe Jackson-Nisan said she disagreed with the position of some protest leaders that Caucasians can't participate in the fight as equals. She said at a recent demonstration a high school student wasn't allowed to speak about organizing students "because they said he was white."

"The multinational character and participation in the protests is a strength," Rosenfeld said, pointing to the participation of Bill Kirvelay in a demonstration March 26, where he spoke about the killing of his brother Michael by the St. Paul police. The Kirvelays are Caucasian. "That strength is totally undermined by denying those considered to be white from speaking and participating in the leadership of the protests against police brutality."

Marty Knaeble, an airline worker who came with another airport worker active in the fight for \$15 and a union, commented, "Every worker who wants a union is up against obstacles. It's important to bring workers from that fight to the Jamar Clark fight."

THE MILITANT

Attacks on Ukraine CP threaten working class

Attacks by rightist thugs on members of Ukrainian Communist Party and moves by the government to ban the party are a deadly threat to the working class. They set precedents that will be turned against all those fighting for a class-struggle road forward in Ukraine.



Rightist thugs from Azov Civil Corp in Kiev attack members of Leninist Communist Youth Union of Ukraine Feb. 17.

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Communist League in UK: No road to 'fair capitalism'

BY PAUL DAVIES

LONDON — “The Communist League offers a perspective of independent working-class political action,” Jonathan Silberman, Communist League candidate for mayor, told a March 31 meeting of 30 rail workers hosted by the Regional Council of the Rail, Maritime and Transport Union. Among those present were tube (subway) drivers who had held a 24-hour strike the previous week over safety and company intimidation.

Green Party’s mayoral candidate Sian Berry also spoke, saying organized labor has an important role to play in creating a “fair society.”

“What’s needed is not a perspective of trying to make capitalism fair,” Silberman replied. “What’s needed is the road of revolutionary struggle to overturn the dictatorship of capital and establish a workers and farmers government.

“All capitalist politicians say what they will do for Londoners,” including the Greens, he added. “But the emancipation of the working class must be conquered by the working class itself. It will not be bestowed upon us by a reforming London mayor.”

Silberman, 64, a pharmaceutical worker on a zero-hours contract through an agency, is a member of the

UNITE union, and has been active in the labor movement for decades. “The unions must organize all workers — ‘permanent’ and agency, British-born and foreign-born — and use union power to defend workers’ interests,” Silberman said.

“What you said about forging united action and organizing agency workers hit the mark,” a tube driver Silberman had met on the picket line told him. “Many agency workers are immigrants. Their conditions are inferior. And it’s a divide-and-rule opening for the employers.” He bought a *Militant* subscription and a copy of *The Cuban Five Talk About Their Lives Within the US Working Class*. Five others at the meeting bought copies of the *Militant*.

A dozen Communist League members and supporters went door to door the next day in the Higham Hill area of the North East London Assembly constituency, where Silberman is on the ballot. Yuki Tsugehara, an exchange student from Japan, joined the effort. “We met all sorts of people,” she said. “Some had jobs, some were retired, some were students, but they were all working people. We introduced them to a new perspective.” Over two days of door to door campaigning 14 people signed up for *Militant* subscriptions.

Help get SWP on the ballot

Continued from front page

sands of workers at labor actions, protest rallies and on doorsteps and in living rooms about the crisis of capitalism and the capacity of ordinary workers

to solve that crisis by mass revolutionary action.

“Campaigning in Louisiana is a confirmation that wherever you go, you meet working people who are very concerned about what is happening to our class,” John Benson, SWP organizer in Atlanta and director of the party’s ballot drives in Louisiana and Tennessee, said in a phone interview April 12.

Socialist Workers Party members from Miami, Atlanta, New York and Minneapolis, along with party supporters in Louisiana, have been campaigning door to door in New Orleans, Belle Chasse, Gonzales and Lafayette, working to put the SWP presidential ticket of Alyson Kennedy and Osborne Hart on the ballot.

Gonzales is near Geismar, where an explosion at the Williams Olefins chemical plant three years ago killed two and injured many. “Workers are facing dangerous working conditions, two-tier wages, police brutality and other assaults by the bosses,” Benson said. “They listen when we explain that these problems come from the capitalist system, and that’s what has to be changed.”

Dean Hazlewood and Jacquie Henderson knocked on the door of a young government worker in Gonzales who is African-American. “His face lit up when he looked at the *Militant*’s front-page articles reporting protests against the police killing of Jamar Clark, a Black youth in Minneapolis, and LaVoy Finicum, a Caucasian rancher in Oregon,” Hazlewood said. He said they helped him see that cop brutality was aimed at the whole working class, and decided to subscribe to the paper.

Teams will spread out across Louisiana and New Jersey over the next two weeks and in Tennessee beginning April 28.

SWP: Workers control needed for nuclear safety

HOMESTEAD, Fla. — Two hundred people showed up March 31 for a meeting here on safety at the Turkey Point nuclear power plant after weeks of reports about radioactive tritium leaking into Biscayne Bay. Among those attending were members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, some of whom work at the reactor.

Florida Power and Light bosses and officials from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission tried to prevent the “open house” from becoming a forum, angering many.

Cynthia Jaquith, above, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate, and supporters distributed a campaign statement pointing out that one-third of the world’s population has no access to modern energy. “Today, working people can only fight to close that gap through nuclear power. But that doesn’t mean we have to accept dangerous conditions,” Jaquith said.

The fight for safety at Turkey Point is linked to the fight for \$15 an hour and a union, against police brutality and for women’s access to abortion. “In each of these battles we are up against not only our bosses but the two parties they control, the Democrats and Republicans, and the regulatory bodies they appoint,” she said. The Socialist Workers Party calls for “a labor party based on the unions that champions the fight for safety as part of organizing working people to take power out of the hands of the capitalists who poison our water, air and land and to replace their system of exploitation with one that guarantees working people safe conditions of life and work and energy to meet human needs.”

Workers should control safety conditions and should shut down any facility found to be operating unsafely until the problem is solved, Jaquith said.

Many union members liked this approach. “If I am told to do something unsafe, I am expected to report it. That’s why I like the union,” IBEW apprentice and construction worker Mario Garcia told Jaquith.

— STEVE WARSHHELL



Militant/Steve Warshell

“I want to invite you to join our ‘Justice Monday’ protests against police brutality at the U.S. Attorney’s Office” in Newark, New Jersey, Shelia Reid told Sara Lobman when they met at her house April 10. One of Reid’s sons, Jerame, was killed by Bridgeton, New Jersey, police in December 2014.

Lobman told Reid about a delegation of family members of people killed by the police that is visiting Cuba in May to learn about the revolution there.

Reid is among the 14 presidential electors for the party in New Jersey.

“I thought there were only Democrats and Republicans. I didn’t know anything about your party,” Armando Castellano, a plastics factory worker, told Kennedy and Jacob Perasso, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in New York, when they were campaigning in Wisconsin during the run-up to the recent primary elections there.

Castellano had gone to the “Day Without Latinos and Immigrants” rally of 20,000 in Madison Feb. 18 to protest a law that would give police more power to check workers’ immigration documents. “We defeated the law. Now we are going to fight for the right for everyone to get driver’s licenses,” he said.

“It’s out of struggles like this that we get stronger as a class,” Kennedy said, “more capable of making a socialist revolution, taking power out of the bosses’ hands and reorganizing society and production on the basis of solidarity.”

To volunteer for these efforts, or to join the Socialist Workers Party in labor protests and other activi-

ties, contact a party branch listed on page 8. Contributions to the Militant Fighting Fund can be sent to the Militant, 306 W. 37th St, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

Spring subscription drive			
April 2 - May 17 (week 1)			
Country	Quota	Sold	%
UNITED STATES			
Lincoln	12	9	75%
Oakland	110	25	23%
Los Angeles	200	43	22%
Twin Cities	80	17	21%
Chicago	125	26	21%
New York	220	42	19%
Miami	50	9	18%
Philadelphia	90	16	18%
Washington	115	19	17%
Atlanta	100	15	15%
Seattle	100	15	15%
Total U.S.	1202	236	20%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	75	21	28%
Manchester	60	12	20%
Total U.K.	135	33	24%
CANADA			
Montreal	55	14	25%
Calgary	45	10	22%
Total Canada	100	24	24%
AUSTRALIA			
NEW ZEALAND	50	16	32%
PRISONERS			
	15	6	40%
Total	1562	328	21%
Should be	1550	258	17%

Militant Fighting Fund	
April 2 - May 17 \$110,000	
Country	Quota
UNITED STATES	
Atlanta	\$10,000
Chicago	\$11,500
Los Angeles	\$8,600
Miami	\$3,000
Lincoln	\$200
New York	\$21,000
Oakland	\$14,500
Philadelphia	\$3,200
Seattle	\$7,500
Twin Cities	\$3,500
Washington	\$7,700
U.S. Total	\$90,700
CANADA	
Montreal	\$4,000
Calgary	\$3,200
Canada Total	\$7,200
NEW ZEALAND	
	\$4,000
AUSTRALIA	
	\$1,100
UNITED KINGDOM	
London	\$2,000
Manchester	\$700
U.K. Total	\$2,700
Total	\$105,700
Should be	\$110,000

NY meeting celebrates Natalie Bombaro's life as SWP cadre

BY SARA LOBMAN

NEW YORK — “From her late teens, Natalie Bombaro spent her life building the Socialist Workers Party and the international communist movement,” Norton Sandler told participants at a meeting here April 3 to celebrate her life and political work. “She was a cadre — a word we use with pride in describing someone who works collectively, in a disciplined way, toward the party’s goal of overthrowing the dictatorship of capital that we live under today.”

Bombaro died March 20 from a stroke. The night before she had participated in a New York meeting to hear a delegation from the Federation of Cuban Women.

Among the 95 people at the celebration were Bombaro’s sister, Gerre Carr, and many relatives of her longtime companion, John Studer.

“Meetings like the one today tell you a great deal about an individual like Natalie,” said Sandler, organizer of the SWP in New York, “but also about what her party was part of over five tumultuous decades.”

Other speakers were Janet Post, a leader of the party in Philadelphia, and Don Mackle. Gale Shangold chaired the meeting. Mackle and Shangold are supporters of the SWP and members of the Print Project, made up of some 250 volunteers who produce the books on working-class politics used by the party in its work. Bombaro was one of these volunteers since the project’s inception 18 years ago.

Bombaro grew up in South Philadelphia and graduated from a Catholic girls’ high school that tracked students to become secretaries. Young men at Catholic schools in that area were directed to the nearby shipyard. She became a secretary at the University of Pennsylvania, where students and others introduced her to the civil rights movement, the Cuban Revolution, the growing struggle against the Vietnam War

and the women’s liberation movement.

She joined the Young Socialist Alliance and later the SWP in 1969, “convinced that to be effective she needed to be part of a party with a continuity going back to the Russian Revolution and before, with a leadership of current mass struggles and a clear programmatic course for the working class’s march to power,” Sandler said.

Photos on displays prepared for the meeting gave a feel for the times. One showed young Black Panther members in 1970, stripped to their underwear and lined up in public against a wall by Philadelphia cops under Police Commissioner Frank Rizzo. Bombaro was part of the SWP and YSA speaking out against this attack on political rights.

In a poster put out to build the April 24, 1971, march in Washington, D.C., against the war in Vietnam, Bombaro is marching arm-in-arm with a whole group, including an active-duty GI.

Another photo showed the August 1970 Chicano Moratorium march in Los Angeles of 25,000 against the war, the largest working-class protest opposing the war up to that point. Bombaro, at the request of the party, moved to Los Angeles in 1971.

Learned organization and discipline

“I learned organization and discipline from her example,” Jim Gotesky, who was a new party member in Los Angeles at the time, said in a message. “Natalie was full of fun, optimism, and good humor. I will always remember her standing big-eyed, bouncing with energy, and grinning ear to ear with a stack of the *Militant* newspaper under her arm or walking on the beach handing out flyers for an anti-war march.”

In the mid-1970s she took an assignment in New York as part of the secretarial staff under the direction of the central leadership of the SWP. She had special responsibility in relation to the party’s international work, including handling correspondence to and from comrades in countries where there was dangerous political repression and a misaddressed letter could cost lives.

She was part of the party leadership’s secretariat at the 1979 world congress of



Above, photo from poster promoting 1971 march on Washington against Vietnam War. Bombaro, fourth from right, joined Socialist Workers Party in 1969, convinced that to be effective she needed to be part of party with continuity going back to Russian Revolution. Inset, Bombaro proofreading in Chicago, late 1990s, as part of Print Project of SWP supporters who produce Pathfinder books.

the Fourth International, at the time the international organization of the communist movement. It was an important meeting. To be part of a new rise of resistance among working people, the Socialist Workers Party had organized over the preceding year to get the majority of its members into industrial workplaces organized by the trade unions. Similar opportunities existed in other countries.

Also that year working people in Iran overthrew the hated U.S.-supported shah. And in Nicaragua and Grenada, popular revolutions overthrew dictators and established workers and farmers governments.

“The debates and fights over these questions were decisive in winning the forces in Australia, the United Kingdom, and elsewhere who are today part of our world movement,” Sandler said. “Natalie knew in her bones the strengths of our program and her loyalty and party patriotism never wavered.”

In 1988 Mark Curtis, a union packinghouse worker and member of the SWP in Des Moines, Iowa, was framed up on rape charges while part of a fight against an immigration raid targeting some of his co-workers. Bombaro and Studer moved to Des Moines. Studer organized the more than seven-year defense effort and Bombaro was a stalwart of the work.

“Natalie was right in the thick of the battle with us,” Kate Kaku, Curtis’ wife, wrote in a message signed by both.

“She had such a way with people, making them feel welcome and appreciated. This was very important since we had to take the fight to the people and win over supporters, especially in Iowa.”

Over the years, Bombaro also built the party in San Antonio, Phoenix, Boston and Chicago.

After leaving active party membership in the early 1990s, Bombaro remained a supporter for the rest of her life, taking on various responsibilities.

When Studer and Bombaro moved to Philadelphia in 1999, Post said, the party mostly carried out propaganda work in the northern part of the city, which was majority African-American. “Natalie was confident that workers in South Philly — with its mix of Irish, Italian, Eastern European, Latino and Black workers — would be just as interested in the *Militant* and Pathfinder books,” Post said. She was right.

In recent years in New York, Mackle told the meeting, Bombaro helped strengthen the Supporters Monthly Appeal, which raises monthly contributions to sustain the party’s work.

In concluding, Sandler noted that the best tribute to Bombaro was to “build the SWP and a powerful movement that can fight for the emancipation of the great majority of humanity.”

Before and after the program participants enjoyed a plentiful spread of food. A fund appeal raised \$5,216 to build the party.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

Oakland

What It Will Take to Win Jobs for All. Speaker: Eric Simpson, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 23, 7:30 p.m. 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Tel.: (510) 686-1351.

CANADA

Calgary

Two Years After Maidan Revolt Ukraine Rulers Target Workers. Speaker: Francois Bradette, Communist League. Fri., April 22, 7:30 p.m. Dragon City Mall, 328 Centre St. SE, Unit 246. Tel.: (403) 457-9044.

Montreal

The Fight for \$15 an Hour and a Union; Workers Need a Union-Based Labor Party to Fight for Political Power. Speaker: Michel Prairie, Communist League. Fri., April 22, 7:30 p.m. 7107 St. Denis, Room 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

UNITED KINGDOM

Manchester

Campaigning for the Working-Class Alternative. Speaker: Jonathan Silberman, Communist League candidate for London mayor and assembly, recent participant in trade union protests in Paris. Sat., April 23, 6:30 p.m. Donation: £2.50. Room 301, Hilton House, 26-28 Hilton St. Tel.: (016) 1478-2496.

One-day strike opposes job cuts at Calif. warehouse

BY DENNIS RICHTER AND BERNIE SENTER

LOS ANGELES — Some 40 warehouse workers organized a one-day strike at California Cartage Co. April 6 after the company informed them

that their jobs will end April 30. The company notified the more than 200 temporary workers it hires through one staffing agency that they must reapply with a new agency. Many of them have worked at the distribution warehouse for years and know from experience the bosses will try to weed out those they consider troublemakers.

Workers at California Cartage load and unload trucks and containers, many from China, full of clothes, furniture, appliances and electronics for retail giants like Amazon, Kmart, Sears and Lowe’s.

The warehouse workers had struck twice in the last seven months, each time for three days, demanding work schedules based on seniority, not manager preference. The strike last September also protested un-

paid wages, management retaliation against workers involved in organizing efforts, and dangerous conditions, including lack of breaks and water while working inside containers that are like ovens in the summer. Workers and supporters held informational picket lines in February and March demanding safety shoes, paid sick days and job placement by seniority.

Through these actions, organized by the Warehouse Worker Resource Center and backed by the Teamsters union, workers have begun to score small victories, such as company-provided safety shoes and have won confidence to fight for safer conditions.

“The [staffing] agency is like a tumor,” striker John Cartwright told the *Militant* on the picket line. “We’ve got to cut them out so we can deal with the company.”

Some 30 workers began the action

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Militant/Dennis Richter

California Cartage workers picket warehouse April 6.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

MAGGIE TROWE, EDITOR

Help the *Militant* cover labor struggles around the world!

This column gives a voice to those engaged in battle and building solidarity today — including Steelworkers opposing concessions, construction workers demanding safe conditions and workers fighting for \$15 and a union. 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

UMWA miners march against attack on retirees' benefits

WAYNESBURG, Pa. — Some 3,000 miners marched and rallied here April 1 to protest the attempt by Alpha Natural Resources to tear up its contract with the United Mine Workers of America and end its pension and medical obligations for 2,600 retired miners through the bankruptcy courts.

April 1 is John Mitchell Day, a paid holiday for union miners honoring an early UMWA president and traditionally a day of union actions. Most of the marchers were retirees and their families. People came from Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio and Indiana.

About 30 members of the United Steelworkers who work at the Brackenridge, Pennsylvania, plant of Allegheny Technologies Inc. participated. They recently returned to work after a six-month lockout.

"Bankruptcy is just a way for corporations to rob the workers of everything they have earned," UMWA President Cecil Roberts told participants. He recalled the fight in 2012 when miners held rallies around the coal fields during Patriot Coal's attack on their contract and pensions using bankruptcy laws.

Alpha Natural Resources employs over 600 miners at the Cumberland Mine near here, and operates 50 mines around the country. The company filed a motion to gut the contract March 28.

In other developments, Donald Blankenship, former CEO of Massey Energy, was sentenced April 6 to a year in prison for his responsibility for the massive 2010 explosion that killed 29 miners at the nonunion Upper Big Branch Mine in Montcoal, West Virginia. The contempt for safety at that mine was a product of the decades-long drive by coal bosses in their drive for profit to push back safety rights and deal blows to the UMWA. This is the first time a top mining executive has been convicted for violating safety regulations.

— Ned Measel

Montreal unionists march to protest two-tier pensions

MONTREAL — Members of United Steelworkers Local 6658, on strike since Feb. 6 against attacks by Lafarge Cement on their pensions, led an April 4 march here of several hundred unionists. The action was called by the Quebec Federation of Labor youth committee to demand the provincial government ban companies from implementing pension plans with inferior benefits for newly hired workers, which demonstrators called "orphan clauses."

Members of UNIFOR Local 145, locked out by furniture retail chain Brault & Martineau at its east end Montreal distribution center since Feb. 28, marched behind their union banner.

Steelworkers from across Canada, who were in Montreal for the union's National Policy Conference and a Next Generation conference for younger

union members, joined the action, as did small delegations of other unions.

"Our members remain united despite Lafarge's efforts to divide us," Steelworkers Local 6658 Vice President Francois Cardinal — a Lafarge worker and participant in the Next Generation conference — told the cheering crowd.

— Beverly Bernardo

Chicago teachers' one-day strike protests cuts, attacks on union

CHICAGO — Thousands of members of the Chicago Teachers Union rallied and marched downtown with students, parents and other supporters April 1 demanding a contract that honors promises for wage increases from the previous contract that expired June 30. They snarled rush-hour traffic as they concluded a full day of picketing

Union: Amtrak rail worker deaths 'totally unacceptable'

BY JANET POST

CHESTER, Pa. — An Amtrak maintenance worker and a supervisor were killed here April 3 when a southbound train slammed into the backhoe they were using on the track.

"There have been three track worker fatalities in Amtrak's Northeast Corridor since March 1, 2016," said Freddie Simpson, international president of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, in a statement issued the next day. "This is totally unacceptable and points to systemic deficiencies in the safety culture at Amtrak."

Joe Carter Jr., 61, the backhoe operator who was killed, was a member of the BMW. The other fatality was maintenance supervisor Peter John Adamovich, 59. About three dozen passengers were injured.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



April 26, 1991

The successful challenge against the U.S. ban on art from Cuba pokes another hole in the more than 30-year U.S. trade embargo.

The Miami city government's move to shut down the Cuban Museum of Art and Culture by evicting it from its city-owned premises is an attempt to push in the opposite direction. The city commissioners' action is governmental censorship plain and simple. It is an attempt to push back democratic rights and to narrow the breach in the U.S. economic and ideological blockade against Cuba.

Forces supporting the museum's shutdown do not want working people to know the truth about Cuba; and their attack on democratic rights is part and parcel of the U.S. employer-government offensive against the rights, unions, and standard of living of working people.



Militant/George Chalmers

United Mine Workers of America members and supporters marched in Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, April 1 protesting coal bosses' attempts to gut retirees' pensions and benefits.

schools and joining afternoon protests against cutbacks at the city's community colleges.

The Chicago Board of Education announced in February it would stop paying part of teachers' pensions, which it has done since 1981, when the "pension pickup" was agreed to in lieu of raises. Teachers say this amounts to a pay cut.

School officials say that while negotiations continue they won't implement pay increases from the last contract based on

teachers' education and seniority.

Teachers are also protesting anticipated school closings and bigger class sizes. Forty-nine public schools in Chicago were shuttered in 2013.

Many teachers and their supporters say the attacks amount to union busting. "If we lose our union we're done," Deborah Davis, an elementary school teacher for 20 years, told the *Militant*. "I'm tired of teachers being stepped on."

— Ilona Gersh

The crash is under investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board and the Federal Railroad Administration. According to initial statements by the NTSB, the train was traveling under the speed limit and the engineer applied the emergency brakes five seconds before impact. The train skidded another mile before derailing.

The very day of the crash, Sen. Charles Schumer from New York told the Associated Press, "Clearly this seems very likely to be human error."

"What he's really saying is 'worker error,'" said John Staggs, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Pennsylvania. "But the real source is the dangerous conditions and pressures created by the capitalist bosses. We say, 'No worker has to die!'"

"Amtrak has abandoned a close call

reporting system that permitted these problems to be identified and resolved without waiting for fatalities," said BMW Pennsylvania Federation General Chairman Jed Dodd in the union statement. The company "instituted a draconian discipline program designed to intimidate and silence the rank and file regarding safety. ... The blame should lay squarely at the feet of senior management officials responsible for these misguided and regressive policies."

At the Fair & Square grocery a block from the crash site, some customers raised their concerns with the *Militant*.

"The railroad companies only fix something after an accident, or after some injustice," said Clifford Stokes, who worked 28 years in maintenance for the SEPTA commuter system. "They think the workers are beneath them."



April 25, 1966

A fresh affirmation that it pays to fight for your rights is provided by the victory in the five-year battle to overturn the Arizona State "loyalty" oath. When the Arizona legislature adopted the McCarthyite oath proviso in 1961, Vernon and Barbara Elfbrandt and two other school teachers refused to sign it because it violated their constitutional rights. Represented by the American Civil Liberties Union, they challenged it in the courts.

In striking down the state oath, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that it rested on the doctrine of guilt by association. At the same time the court limited the scope of its ruling to avoid knocking out similar oath requirements in other states. That means the fight against these anti-democratic strictures must be continued. Meanwhile Mr. and Mrs. Elfbrandt are to be congratulated on their well-earned victory.



April 26, 1941

NEW YORK, April 20 — The picket lines of the United Negro Bus Strike Committee yesterday succeeded in gaining a contract from the Fifth Avenue Bus Co. and the New York City Omnibus Corporation to hire a minimum of 100 colored bus drivers, 70 colored maintenance men, and eventually a total of 17 percent of the company's employees will be colored.

At the close of the recent 11-day strike of the bus workers, a movement started in Harlem to do something about getting Negroes jobs as chauffeurs and mechanics on the bus lines. The United Negro Bus Strike Committee was formed and at a mass meeting in the Abyssinian Baptist church attended by more than 1,000 Harlemites, it was enthusiastically decided to boycott and picket the bus lines at all Harlem bus stops.

‘End dictatorship of capital’

Continued from front page

struck at California Cartage April 6, said in the discussion. “We’ll continue to have strikes until they get the message. And it’s not just us. It was good to hear about the other struggles taking place that you talked about tonight.”

This is the kind of response the Socialist Workers Party candidates are getting when they present the party and its revolutionary class-struggle perspective to workers, on picket lines, protest marches and on their doorsteps.

“I think this election is going to be a changing moment,” 18-year-old Tori Gill told SWP presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy as they marched in Indianapolis April 9 in defense of women’s right to choose abortion. “I’m volunteering for Bernie Sanders because I don’t want to live in a country where Ted Cruz or Donald Trump are in charge.”

“In 1964, when Republican Barry Goldwater and Democrat Lyndon Johnson ran, there was a lot of hysteria with people saying that if Goldwater won there would be war,” Kennedy replied. “Johnson won, but then he was the one who escalated the Vietnam War.

“This woke me up to the reality of politics under capitalism,” Kennedy said. “They try to make us believe we can change things by voting, but it’s just not true. What ended the imperialist Vietnam War was the relentless fight of the Vietnamese people for national liberation and the anti-war movement it inspired in the U.S. And that fight changed the way millions of workers, including among the GIs, looked at things.

“Capitalism is in crisis today, and the employers and their government are taking it to the working class. By fighting back — and we will, by the millions — we’ll get more confidence to rely on ourselves,” she said. “What we have here is a social dictatorship. The capitalists hold the power and rule in the interests of their class.

“We won’t change things by pulling a lever, but by building a revolutionary party to take political power,” she said, “like they did in Cuba in 1959.”

The decades-long crisis of capitalist production and trade is worsening today. Manufacturing and mining have

plummeted, from China to Brazil, affecting exports across Europe and the U.S. Recent headlines in the *Financial Times* have recurring themes — like “Grim Manufacturing Data Dent UK Recovery” and “Grim Year Forecast for Developing Nations.”

Coal and oil bosses in Wyoming alone have tossed some 5,500 workers out on the street as markets dry up and prices fall.

While government officials keep saying unemployment is under 5 percent and the U.S. economy is doing well, conditions worsen for millions. Because Washington says the recession is over, more than half a million people who get food stamps will see them cut off now because they haven’t found a job.

In this context, the Socialist Workers Party is getting a broader hearing and more volunteers. And for this reason, candidates like Republican Trump and Democrat Sanders, who say there’s a crisis and claim they’re running against the powers that be, are drawing thousands to their meetings and winning primary contests.

Anti-Trump hysteria

Bourgeois liberals and conservatives are pulling out the stops to defeat Trump. The *Boston Globe* put a fake front page on their Sunday edition dated April 9, 2017, with made-up stories they said could happen if Trump is elected.

The pro-Democrat *Globe* editors urge primary voters to back anybody but Trump, in hopes of denying him enough delegates to win the Republican nomination on the first ballot, leading to an open convention fight. This is also the strategy of Republican contenders Cruz and John Kasich.

The editors, as well as many in the Republican Party hierarchy, say they hope Speaker of the House Paul Ryan will then be picked to represent the party in November. But Ryan called a special press conference April 12 to say again he isn’t running.

All these attacks haven’t stopped Trump. He is currently leading polls in New York by more than 30 points, with Cruz coming in third.

Petty-bourgeois radicals of every description say Trump is a fascist, as dangerous as Nazi Adolf Hitler. “We intend to do what the city’s elected so-called leaders refuse to do — and shut down



Militant photos: above, Carl Weinberg; inset, Bernie Senter
Above, Dan Fein, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Illinois, talks with participant at April 9 rally in Indianapolis against anti-abortion law. Inset, SWP vice-presidential candidate Osborne Hart, left, pickets with California Cartage warehouse workers in Los Angeles during one-day strike April 6.



Trump from spreading his hateful message,” the Workers World Party said on its website under the header “No Fascist Movement.”

There is no growing ultra-rightist or fascist movement today. The bosses don’t need one, because the working class is not yet strong or organized enough to challenge their rule.

Sanders is facing parallel attacks from the liberal Democratic Party establishment. “Sanders Over the Edge,” headlined an April 8 *New York Times* column by Paul Krugman. Attacking Sanders’ proposals for reforms to save capitalism as it faces hard times, he says Sanders has “character and values issues.” Worst, Krugman says, is that Sanders and his followers might not rally behind the party banner if Hillary Clinton wins the nomination.

Many workers see Trump and Sanders as similar. At a March 31

South Bronx Sanders rally, Stephanie Edwards told the *Financial Times* she backed him over Clinton. “She could see herself voting for Mr. Trump over Mrs. Clinton, despite the fact she is both female and African-American,” the paper reported.

Neither Sanders nor Trump offer a road for workers to fight back. Both promote “America first” nationalism in an effort to tie workers’ fate to the fate of the bosses.

“The Socialist Workers Party is a working-class party with a revolutionary perspective that is involved in working-class struggles today,” Kennedy told Shobi Pratap at the Indianapolis abortion rights action. “We are building a revolutionary working-class movement to overthrow the dictatorship of capital and take political power. We will join with other working people worldwide in transforming the world.”

Help get the Socialist Workers Party presidential ticket on the ballot!

**Louisiana: April 14-20; New Jersey: April 16-May 1;
Colorado: April 23-25; Tennessee: April 28-May 7, May 20-June 4;
Washington state: May 7-22; Minnesota: May 17-June 5**

To volunteer for these efforts, help expand the readership of the *Militant* and *Pathfinder* books, or to join the Socialist Workers Party in labor protests and other activities, contact a party branch listed on page 8 or the Socialist Workers Party 2016 campaign, 227 W. 29th St., 6th Fl., New York NY 10001. Tel.: (646) 922-8186. Email: swp2016campaign@gmail.com.

—CALENDAR—

WASHINGTON, D.C.

‘Through Cuban Eyes’: An Opportunity to Learn What’s Really Happening in Cuba. Speaker: Cuban Ambassador José Ramón Cabañas. Fri., April 22, 7 p.m. University of the District of Columbia, David A. Clarke School of Law, 4340 Connecticut Ave. NW, 5th Floor. Sponsor: International Committee for Peace, Justice and Dignity to the Peoples. TheInternationalCommittee.org

NEW ZEALAND

End the U.S. Embargo. Return Guantánamo. No Interference in Cuba’s Internal Affairs. Speaker: Yexenia Calzado from the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples.

Auckland

Wed., April 27, 7 p.m. Trades Hall, 147 Great North Road, Grey Lynn. Contact Cuba Friendship Society. Email: cubafriends.ak@gmail.com. Tel.: 021-151-7887 or 09-620-9872

Wellington

Tues. April 26, 6:30 p.m. Southern Cross Bar, Abel Smith Street. Cuba Friendship Society c/- P.O. Box 6241, Wellington

Indianapolis rally against anti-abortion law

Continued from front page

forming abortions to have admitting privileges at a local hospital or an agreement with a doctor who does, renewed yearly. It also says a woman must have the “opportunity” to view an ultrasound and hear a fetal heart tone 18 hours before an abortion, requiring two appointments. Such restrictions have already reduced the number of abortion providers in the state to six, down from 12 in 2011.

Indiana is one of many states where government officials have imposed increasingly onerous restrictions on abortion access. Utah Gov. Gary Herbert signed a bill March 30 requiring doctors to administer anesthesia to any woman having an abortion at 20 weeks of pregnancy or later, adding unnecessary risk to the procedure.

“This is my first protest ever,” said Theresa Carper, 22, a DePauw University student, at the rally. “This is so important, because pregnancy must be a woman’s choice and nobody else’s,” her friend Courtenay Graham added.

“It’s about abortion, but it’s a question of wages too,” said Ashley Moore, a 26-year-old warehouse worker, pointing out that there is no union at her job.

“We discussed this law and the protests against it at our Women of Steel meeting last week,” said Rosa Maria Rodriguez, a steelworker in East Chicago and an officer of United Steelworkers Local 1010. “We then took it right to the floor of the union meeting,” winning support, including from the men. “A large percentage of our members are women and it has to be our choice,” she said. “There’s no other voice loud

enough to be heard like a union.”

The American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana has filed a lawsuit on behalf of Planned Parenthood of Indiana and Kentucky asking the court to issue a preliminary injunction to prevent the law from taking effect on July 1. The suit calls the law unconstitutional because it violates the 14th Amendment guarantee of the right to due process and equal protection under the law by imposing an “undue burden on a woman’s right to choose.”

“The ACLU stands firmly against discrimination in all forms, but that isn’t what this law is about,” Jane Henegar, executive director of the Indiana ACLU, told the media. “Unnecessary restrictions, like those recently signed into law, demean women and threaten the quality of their health care.”

New Zealand events build support for Cuban Revolution

BY ANNALUCIA VERMUNT

DUNEDIN, New Zealand — “Cuba still needs your solidarity and support. Continue mobilizing in order to defend our right to self-determination without the economic blockade and any interference in our internal affairs,” wrote Fernando González in a message to the opening of an exhibit of paintings by Antonio Guerrero here March 22.

González and Guerrero are two of the Cuban Five, who were imprisoned on frame-up charges in the U.S. for activities defending the Cuban Revolution.

The exhibition “I will die the way I’ve lived” — watercolors depicting the Five’s first 17 months in prison in the “hole” — was opened at the Otago Art Society Gallery by Cuba’s ambassador to New Zealand, Mario Alzugaray, with over 20 attending. The showing was sponsored by the Cuba Friendship Society in Dunedin and the Alliance Party.

“Many people are surprised when I tell them the embargo is still in place,” Alzugaray said at a meeting earlier in the day at the University of Otago, referring to the 55-year U.S. economic war against Cuba. “The small parts that have been lifted so far are directly connected to U.S. interests.”

“The blockade is imposed on companies around the world,” he said. “Even in China my colleague tried to buy a tele-

‘Return Guantánamo to Cuba now!’

BY VED DOOKHUN

WASHINGTON — We have “diplomatic relations not normal relations with the U.S. government,” Miguel Fraga, First Secretary of the Cuban Embassy, told a meeting at the University of the District of Columbia here April 2. “The U.S. embargo is the main obstacle.” He also called for the return of U.S.-occupied Guantánamo to Cuba.

The meeting, attended by 60 people, was organized by the D.C. Metro Coalition in Solidarity with the Cuban Revolution and co-hosted by the UDC David A. Clarke School of Law.

Fraga pointed to gains made by the revolution despite the economic embargo, like keeping 50,281 Cuban volunteer health care workers in 68 countries.

The embargo prevents Cuba from “upgrading its infrastructure” and acquiring needed resources, Fraga said. It also prevents medical advances made by Cuba from being utilized around the world, including a drug treatment developed in Cuba that reduces the need for amputations in diabetics by 70 percent.

In response to a question about racial discrimination in Cuba, Fraga said, “Cuba does not have a problem with discrimination like in the United States.” There are “equal opportunities.”

Another participant asked if Havana could offer the U.S. government “a face-saving way out of Guantánamo.”

“Guantánamo is part of Cuba,” Fraga said, and has to be “returned immediately” for there to be normal relations.

Omari Musa contributed to this article.

vision from Walmart and the company refused when they saw he had a Cuban passport.”

“In Cuba we may not have the best hospitals in the world,” he said. “But the treatment you receive does not depend on your personal wealth,” a registration of the transformation of social relations as a result of the revolution.

An audience member challenged how Cuba could be socialist when it allowed Washington to have a naval base at Guantánamo Bay. Since the Cuban Revolution triumphed in 1959, Alzugaray said, the revolutionary government has demanded the return of Guantánamo, which has been held by U.S. imperialism since 1903 under a “lease” it imposed on the Cuban people.

“As far as I know it is the only U.S. military base that is maintained against the will of the host nation,” he said. “An important part of defending our revolution just 90 miles from the U.S. has been to never give Washington a pretext for a full-scale invasion of our island. So there has never been an attempt to militarily take it back.”

Hernández: ‘Keep up fight to end US embargo’

Continued from front page

tims and were always fighters,” said Colette Lavergne, representing the Table de Concertation de Solidarité Québec-Cuba, at the April 6 event, which the group sponsored. Alain Croteau, Steelworkers district director for Quebec, and Alain González González, Consul General of Cuba in Montreal, gave greetings.

Hernández spoke about the international campaign to free the Five. “During the first years it was an unpopular cause to defend ‘those Cuban spies,’” Hernández told the meeting. “But we were on the right side of history.”

“Some people think we are free because of the negotiations” with Washington, he added. “But if we weren’t known, it wouldn’t have been an uncomfortable issue for the U.S. Your efforts made us known.”

Rallies in Poland seek to defend, extend legal abortion



AP/Alik Keplicz

Thousands rallied in Warsaw, above, and across Poland April 3, opposing a proposed law banning all abortions. Poland already has one of the most restrictive abortion laws in Europe, allowing the procedure only in case of rape, threat to a woman’s health, or irreversible damage of the fetus.

A few days later, Prime Minister Beata Szydlo backed away from her initial support for the ban, which is promoted by the Catholic hierarchy. Thousands rallied again across the country April 9 for the right to choose, waving coat hangers as a symbol of deadly illegal abortions. “It’s not only a protest against the new draft law, it’s a protest against existing law,” said Krystyna Kacpura, executive director of the Federation for Women and Family Planning.

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

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Five Cuban revolutionaries, framed up by the U.S. government, spent up to 16 years as part of the U.S. working class behind bars. 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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Russian Revolution changed social, property relations

Writings of Leon Trotsky (1929) is one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* for April. Alongside *V.I. Lenin*, Trotsky was a central leader of the October 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, just months after the overthrow of the czarist monarchy in February. It was the first time that the working class took and held political power, governing through workers councils known as soviets. After Lenin's death in 1924, Trotsky led a fight to continue the Bolsheviks' communist course, in opposition to the political counterrevolution led by a privileged bureaucratic caste headed by Joseph Stalin. Trotsky was eventually forced into exile, and was assassinated in Mexico in 1940 by Stalin's secret police. This excerpt is from the article "Is Parliamentary Democracy Likely to Replace the Soviets?" written from Turkey in February 1929. Copyright © 1975 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Literacy class in early 1920s Soviet Union during first years of revolution. "October Revolution cleared the path for the greatest democratic revolution in human history," Trotsky wrote.

The confiscation of the landed estates, the total elimination of the traditional class privileges and distinctions of Russian society, the destruction of the czarist bureaucratic and military apparatus, the introduction of national equality and national self-determination — all this was the elementary democratic work that the February revolution barely even addressed itself to before leaving it, almost untouched, for the October Revolution to inherit. It was precisely the bankruptcy of the liberal-socialist coalition, its incapacity for this work, that made possible the Soviet dictatorship, based on an alliance of the workers, peasants, and oppressed nationalities. The very same causes that prevented our weak and historically belated democracy from carrying out its elementary historical task will also prevent it in the future from placing itself at the head of the country. For in the intervening time, the problems and difficulties have grown greater and democracy weaker.

The Soviet system is not simply a form of government that can be compared abstractly with the parliamentary form. Above all it is a new form of property relations. What is involved at bottom is the ownership of the land, the banks, the mines, the factories, the railroads. The working masses remember very well what the aristocrat, the big landowner, the official, the loan shark, the capitalist, and the boss were in czarist Russia. Among the masses there undoubtedly exists much highly legitimate dissatisfaction with the present situation in the Soviet state. But the masses do not want the landowner, the official,

or the boss back. One must not overlook these "trifles" in intoxicating oneself with commonplaces about democracy. Against the landowner's return, the peasants will fight today just as they did ten years ago, to the last drop of blood. The great proprietor can return to his estate from emigration only astride a cannon, and he would have to spend his nights out on the cannon as well. It is true that the peasants could reconcile themselves more easily to the return of the capitalist, since state industry thus far has provided the peasants with industrial products on less favorable terms than the merchant used to earlier. This, we should note in passing, is at the root of all the internal difficulties. But the peasants remember that the landowner and capitalist were the Siamese twins of the old regime, that they withdrew from the scene together, that during the civil war they fought against the Soviets together, and that in the territories occupied by the Whites the factory owner took back the factory, and the landowner, the land. The peasant understands that the capitalist would not come back alone, but with the landlord. That is why the peasant wants neither of them. And that is a mighty source of strength, even though in negative form, for the Soviet regime. . . .

The Soviet system with its nationalized industry and monopoly of foreign trade, in spite of all its contradictions and difficulties, is a protective system for the economic and cultural independence of the country. This was understood even by many democrats who were attracted to the Soviet side not by socialism but by

a patriotism which had absorbed some of the elementary lessons of history. To this category belong many of the forces of the native technical intelligentsia, as well as the new school of writers who for want of a more appropriate name I have called the fellow travelers.

There is a handful of impotent doctrinaires who would like to have democracy without capitalism. But the serious social forces that are hostile to the Soviet regime want capitalism without democracy. This applies not only to the expropriated property owners but to the well-to-do peasantry as well. Insofar as this peasantry turned against the revolution, it always served as a support for Bonapartism.

Soviet power arose as the result of tremendous contradictions on the international and domestic scene. It is hopeless to think that democratic safety switches of a liberal or socialist type could withstand these contradictions, which during the past quarter century have built up to their highest tension; or that they could "regulate" the thirst for revenge and restoration that inspires the ousted ruling classes. These elements are stretched out in a long line, with the merchant and industrialist holding onto the kulak, the landlord holding onto the merchant, the monarchy tagging along behind them, and the foreign creditors bringing up the rear. And all of them are straining to take first place in the country in the event of their victory.

Napoleon correctly summed up the dynamics of the revolutionary age, dominated as it is by extremes, when he said, "Europe will be either Republican or Cossack." Today one may say with far more justification, "Russia will be either Soviet or Bonapartist."

What I have just said should indicate that I am not about to assert the existence of absolute guarantees for the permanent stability of Soviet power. If the Opposition thought that, there would be no sense in the struggle we are waging against the danger of Bonapartism. I am even less inclined to claim that the solidity of the Soviet system can remain unaffected by the particular policies of the present Soviet government. The bitterness of our internal struggle shows full well how dangerous we think Stalin's zigzag policies are for Soviet power. But the very fact of our struggle testifies also that we are far removed from the so-called attitude of pessimism.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

When people counterpose democracy to the Soviets, what they usually have in mind is simply the parliamentary system. They forget about the other side of the question, the decisive one at that — namely, that the October Revolution cleared the path for the greatest democratic revolution in human history.

April **BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

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Solidarity with Verizon strikers!

The following statement by Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president, was released by the SWP National Campaign Committee April 13.

Today I walked the picket line with Verizon workers in Philadelphia, forced on strike by the bosses' drive to increase profits. I urge fellow workers to do likewise, and to organize solidarity for the nearly 40,000 Communications Workers of America and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers members from New England to Virginia. Their fight is our fight!

Verizon is notorious for its relentless attacks against workers and their unions. They have slashed the number of union workers nearly 40 percent in the last decade, pushing more work on those who remain and outsourcing to nonunion contractors.

The bosses forced strikes in 2000 and 2011. This contract expired in August 2015 and the bosses have refused to budge. They won concessions last time and now want more — higher health care costs, cuts in pensions, job speedup, forced transfers for weeks at a time, and deeper inroads against the union. They call some 80,000 retired workers "legacy problems," whose benefits should be slashed. Meanwhile, the company made \$39 billion

in profit over the last three years.

Workers here and around the world face attacks as the crisis of capitalist production, trade and profit rates deepens. The bosses want us to pay for their crisis — in jobs, wages, social benefits, life and limb.

Our most powerful weapon is our ability to stop production by militant mobilization, and to win solidarity. A fighting example can spur new labor organization and determination.

Verizon bosses say they have already trained thousands of scabs to cross the picket line. And they'll use all the weapons at their command — the cops, court injunctions to limit pickets, and slanders in the big-business media.

For decades union officials have told workers to look to capitalist politicians, not our own class power. The working class needs our own party, a labor party based on the unions, to mobilize independent of the bosses and their parties.

A labor party would be a tribune of the people and mobilize to defend all our struggles, from strikes to protests against cop brutality and in defense of a woman's right to choose abortion. It would carve out a road to fight to take the power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers, form a workers and farmers government and join the fight for a socialist world.

Support the Verizon workers!

Strike opposes job cuts at Calif. warehouse

Continued from page 4

marching half a mile along the Pacific Coast Highway to the warehouse at the Port of Los Angeles, where they gave the company and the agency notice they were striking for the day.

A picket line in front of the truck entrance swelled to over 50 people.

"I'm out here because so many other places are like this," said Marvin Quinonez, 26, one of a handful of workers joining for the first time. "I'm proud to see people from our community and neighborhood standing up. Unless we speak out, nobody is going to do anything about it." Workers are required to physically report to the staffing agency located at the warehouse every workday and can be sent home without pay if there is no work.

"What do we want? Direct hires! When do we want it? Now!" chanted workers who kept the picket line up all day, stopping trucks for a few minutes before letting them enter the facility. Some 20 Teamster-organized port truckers joined the picket line in the afternoon. Pickets distributed informational leaflets on their fight to hundreds of workers entering and leaving the warehouse.

"We are on strike because the company keeps violating our rights and breaking the law," Victor Gonzales, a longtime warehouse worker facing termination, told the Warehouse Worker Resource Center newsletter.

"Cal Cartage is trying to remove us. I've been

here for seven years through a temp agency, but we need to create permanent jobs for the workers in this warehouse," he said. "The retaliation we are experiencing has been ongoing. This strike will last one day, but our fight will go on, until we have decent jobs, until we win."

Toward the end of the day, the workers marched into the company and staffing offices to notify bosses the strike was ending and they were returning to work the next day. At a gathering afterwards they set a time to meet the next morning to return to work together and make sure everyone got jobs.

The following day, when California Cartage refused to return three of the strikers to work, immediate picketing was initiated by the resource center, the Teamsters port division and the three workers. Inside, workers on their lunch break organized a delegation of 15 to confront the head of the staffing agency. By afternoon the three were put to work.

Neither Cal Cartage nor the temporary agency responded to the *Militant's* request for comment on the strike.

"We turned the tables on them," Quinonez said. "This time instead of them bullying us, we bullied them and got our jobs back."

At their weekly Friday meeting, the workers decided to circulate a petition among the workforce demanding they be hired directly by California Cartage or be guaranteed employment through the new staffing agency.

Mideast refugees

Continued from front page

52,000 people trapped in crowded Greek refugee detention camps after officials in Albania, Bulgaria and Macedonia sealed their borders.

Many refugees and immigrants trying to enter Europe are stuck in camps on Greek islands where they landed, such as Lesbos, Chios, Kos and Samos, located close to Turkey's Aegean coast. Under a March 18 accord between the European powers and Ankara, Turkey began accepting migrants deported from Greece. Some 325 people were returned the first week.

The imperialist governments' actions pit workers of different nationalities against each other. Syrians are still considered for asylum and settlement in Europe, in a very slow process. But since February immigrants from war-torn Afghanistan are not.

Fights broke out among nearly 1,000 Syrian and Afghan asylum-seekers at a detention center in Chios April 1, leaving five people seriously injured. Cops allowed the melee to go on for six hours before intervening. About 800 people then broke out of the camp and marched to the port, where they set up tarps and tents. They were attacked April 7 by some local residents shouting anti-immigrant slogans and hurling small firebombs, and police forced most of them to move to a nearby shelter.

At Piraeus, Athens' tourist port on the Greek mainland, a recent fight between young Syrian and Afghan men lasted three hours. Some 4,600 refugees live in tents and warehouses at the port, and the social democratic Syriza government wants to get rid of them before Orthodox Easter May 1, the beginning of the peak tourist season.

"Do not lose your courage, we stand by you, we love you," read a government flyer distributed in Arabic, Farsi, Greek and English to migrants. Then it threatened, "The port of Piraeus cannot host you any more and you have nothing to win by remaining here. In a few days the port of Piraeus will be emptied (evacuated)."

Athens is in the process of selling Piraeus Port Authority to Chinese shipping giant COSCO in the second large privatization move carried out by the Syriza government since last year. Dockworkers struck and marched in Athens April 8 protesting the sale and the job losses they anticipate as a result.

In Idomeni, Greece, a small town on the Macedonian border, a group of refugees, including many women and children, held a demonstration and sit-in on railroad tracks, demanding to be allowed to cross the border, the Greek press reported April 8. Thousands of people, including some 4,000 children, live in unsanitary conditions in the camp there.

Millions displaced in Syria, Iraq

Millions remain displaced in Syria. The partial cease-fire brokered by Washington, Moscow and Tehran allows the government of Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad, aided by Russian airstrikes, to continue its attacks on Nusra Front, which is affiliated with al-Qaeda. Other opposition groups have been hit as well.

In Iraq, thousands of civilians fled heavy fighting April 8 in the Islamic State-occupied town of Hit in Anbar Province, which Iraqi government forces are fighting to retake.

Some 12,000 families have returned over the past month to parts of Ramadi that have been cleared of land mines set by Islamic State forces before they were driven out of the city by Iraqi government forces in December. Half a million people used to live in the city, which the war has reduced to rubble.

The military campaign pressed by Washington and its allies to retake the city of Mosul in northern Iraq from Islamic State has made little progress. Iraqi regular army forces outside of Makhmour haven't been able to oust 100 to 200 soldiers of the brutal Islamist group, in spite of Washington's airstrikes and shelling by a U.S. Marine artillery contingent on the ground.

The fighting has forced many civilians to flee. More than 2,000 people have overwhelmed a camp in Makhmour that the Iraqi army is not prepared to maintain. Many of the refugees, the majority of them Sunni, distrust the largely Shia government and militias. "The Iraqi army had no plan for us and we're 2,000 people," Abu Noor, a teacher from a nearby village, told a *Wall Street Journal* reporter at the camp. "What will they do with Mosul? That's two million!"

LETTERS

Oppose N. Carolina law

On April 3, close to 1,000 people gathered at the College Park Baptist Church to oppose North Carolina's House Bill 2, which prohibits anti-discrimination suits of any kind, eliminates existing municipal nondiscrimination protections for LGBT people, and prevents such provisions from being passed by cities in the future. Current state law allows people to discriminate against gays and lesbians.

The law prevents cities from adopting living wage laws, benefits and hour regulations for workers in the city, and even child labor regulations. A rally at the state Capitol

is planned for April 24 in Raleigh. Diane Shur Greensboro, North Carolina

Please update website

I think it would be a very smart decision to update your website

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

The Prisoners' Fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. To donate, send a check or money order payable to the Militant and earmarked "Prisoners' Fund" to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

and give it a newer more fresh look. It looks like it was made in the early 1990s, and is difficult to use in comparison to others.

Cole Gauvey
by email

Editor's note: Thanks, we're working on it! Please stay tuned.

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.