

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Manila students: 'We want to be part of struggles for socialism'
 — PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 81/NO. 21 MAY 29, 2017

SWP talks politics on doorsteps, picket lines

BY MARY MARTIN

The Socialist Workers Party's spring campaign to introduce the party, the *Militant* newspaper and books on revolutionary perspectives today by SWP leaders to working people is now in its final week. Branches of the SWP and Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and

Spring drive to build Socialist Workers Party

the U.K. plan to make their quotas in full and on time, and some have raised their goals.

The party-building campaign is aimed at getting to know and work with those interested in fighting against the effects of the capitalists' offensive on working people today and learning more about the party, on workers' doorsteps and strike picket lines.

The drive runs concurrently with
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Spring Campaign to expand the reach of 'Militant,' books April 1–May 23 (week six)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold
UNITED STATES				
Albany	60	73	60	62
Atlanta	65	70	65	54
Chicago	80	79	80	71
Denver	25	23	25	18
Lincoln	20	25	20	20
Los Angeles	110	103	110	87
Miami	35	24	35	26
Mullan, Idaho		1		1
New York	135	114	135	141
Oakland*	100	93	140	133
Philadelphia	50	54	50	44
Seattle	70	80	70	61
Twin Cities	50	44	50	28
Washington	50	70	50	52
Total U.S.	850	853	890	798
Prisoners	15	21		
UNITED KINGDOM				
London	50	46	50	64
Manchester	45	51	45	35
Total U.K.	95	97	95	99
CANADA				
Montreal	40	35	40	37
Vancouver	30	35	30	33
Total Canada	70	70	70	70
New Zealand	40	43	40	22
Australia	35	35	35	25
Total	1,105	1,119	1,130	1,014
SHOULD BE	1,100	943	1,100	943
*Raised goal				

Kurds' fight for freedom marks wars in Mideast

BY JIM BRADLEY

The struggle of the Kurdish people for independence and control over their own affairs is increasingly intertwined with the wars and shifting alliances across the Middle East.

Over the strong opposition of Ankara one week before a May 16-17 state visit by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to the U.S. for talks with President Donald Trump, Washington announced its decision to furnish the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG)-led Syrian Democratic Forces with heavy weapons. The move is preparation for a looming ground campaign, backed by U.S. air power, to lay siege to the Syrian city of Raqqa, the self-proclaimed capital of the Islamic State.

After a short private meeting, Erdogan and Trump met with the White House press and, putting their best face forward, said a "new era" was opening in relations. Trump said it was a "great honor" to welcome Erdogan, and he "looked forward to having a long and productive discussion" and
Continued on page 4

Members of US May Day brigade return to defend Cuban Revolution

BY DAN FEIN

CHICAGO — Workers and youth around the country will have the chance to hear about revolutionary Cuba directly from participants returning from the 12th International May Day Brigade to Cuba, held April 23 to May 8.

Reportbacks are planned in Los Angeles; Lincoln, Nebraska; and Washington, D.C. The Chicago Cuba Coalition is sponsoring a May 19 event at the Trinity Episcopal Church titled "What We Saw in Cuba," featuring brigadistas who were in Cuba for the first time.

"It's important to get the truth out about Cuba and to organize activities to demand: End the blockade of Cuba now! U.S. out of Guantánamo now! End Washington's subversive programs against Cuba!" Steve Eckhardt, the brigade's national coordinator, told the *Militant* May 14.

"I was swept away by the May Day march and its message of solidarity," Michael "Jabari" Tidmore, from Chicago, said during the march of
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Oscar López is free! Puerto Rico must be free!

Socialist Workers Party delegation joins celebration



Militant/Linda Joyce

Oscar López, holding flag, free after 36 years in U.S. jails, joins other former political prisoners, Adolfo Matos, to his left, and Carmen Valentín and Luis Rosa to his right. López told the press he plans to "struggle, struggle, struggle" to end Washington's colonial rule in Puerto Rico.

BY SETH GALINSKY

After 36 years in U.S. prisons, framed up for fighting for independence for Puerto Rico, Oscar López is now free and speaking to thousands May 17 in San Juan at a celebration of his release.

A *Militant* reporting team of Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York mayor; Martín Koppel; and Linda Joyce are in Puerto Rico, offering solidarity and covering the day's events. These include his first press conference, a car caravan through the city, a concert-celebration and his first speech to the

peoples of Puerto Rico and the world.

López flies to Chicago the next day, where as a young adult he had been a fighter for the rights of Puerto Ricans and others. He will speak in Humboldt Park and elsewhere. The Socialist Workers Party team will go door to door in San Juan talking to workers, meeting with union fighters, and speaking with students protesting the slashing of one-third of the University of Puerto Rico budget.

When López returns, they will join his car caravan May 20 for a full day of activities in San Sebastián, where
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Railroad track workers protest bosses' health care demands

BY DEAN HAZLEWOOD AND ILONA GERSH

CHICAGO — Over 30 rail workers rallied May 3 outside the Norfolk Southern's Calumet yard in Southeast Chicago to protest an outrageous proposal by their bosses to raise premiums track workers pay for health insurance. The action was organized by Lodge 1532 of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, and most participants were members of that union. Members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, the Sheet Metal Workers' International Association and the United Transportation Union division of the SMART union, which organizes railroad conductors, joined in.

"What do we want? Health care!" workers chanted. "When do we want it? Now!"

The BMW organized similar

"Healthcare, not Wealthcare" actions at Union Pacific's Proviso yard in West Chicago; the Union Pacific yard in Roseville, California; the CSX
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- NY Teamsters strike beer distributor over wages, pensions

Communist League in UK: 'Workers need to take power'

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — "I've always thought working people should rule," Kara Horton said, when Communist League members knocked on her door in Harlow May 7. "The problem is that too many workers in this country are whingers — good at moaning, but don't think they can do anything."

"Working people are *taught* that we can't do anything, that we're spectators in politics," Ólof Andra Proppé, Communist League candidate for Parliament in the Essex town, told Horton and her husband Richard.

"The biggest battle we face as a class is to throw off that self-image and learn that the solution lies in our hands," Proppé said. "We *can* make a revolution, take power and organize society."

Proppé was joined by Andrés Mendoza, CL candidate for the London constituency of Islington North. The League's revolutionary perspective is counterposed to the Conservative, Labour and other capitalist parties in the U.K.'s June 8 general election.

"I'm on a zero-hours contract. That means if one of the people I'm going to visit calls in sick, I lose a day's pay," said Kara Horton, a care assistant for young adults with disabilities. "I get just above minimum wage. Loads of workers face similar conditions — and the number is rising."

"We can already see signs that simmering anger will boil over into resistance and struggle," Proppé said. "It will be through struggle that workers will take on a broader revolutionary perspective."

Proppé and Mendoza, both factory

workers, pointed to the example of Cuba where working people toppled the capitalist rulers and established their own government. "They replaced the dog-eat-dog social relations of capitalism with human solidarity," said Proppé.

"That's what's needed here — solidarity," Kara Horton said. "Everything today is divide and rule."

One of Horton's children is in a primary school class of 33. "There's simply no way that the teachers can cope in a class of that size, let alone give the sort of individual attention kids need," she said. "And if a pupil has a shaven head, they're not allowed into school. If there's a food item in their lunch box that's not approved, it gets removed. They send a note back with the kids that I can pick it up! They're my kids, but school authorities decide what I and the kids can and can't do."

"Schooling is not about education under capitalism," Proppé said. "It's about social engineering — preparing young people for the world of work, making them obedient. That's what the rulers want workers to be."

The government has announced a cut of 7 percent in school budgets by 2020, meaning classes will be bigger than 35. In response, teachers are organizing protests and work stoppages. Peter Clifford, Communist League candidate in Manchester Gorton, joined a protest of 300 teachers, parents and students there April 28.

The Hortons were excited to learn that a brigade of 45 young trade unionists from the U.K. had visited Cuba in solidarity with the revolution there over May Day. They decided to invite brigada-



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Ólof Andra Proppé, right, Communist League candidate for Parliament in U.K., talks to Kara Horton on her doorstep in Harlow May 7 about example of Cuba's socialist revolution.

distas to their home to hear what they learned. "One of the things you'll find out is that real and lifelong education is a fact of life in Cuba," Mendoza said. Maximum class size in Havana's primary schools is 20.

Imperialist war

The two communist candidates also spoke with Jo Brown, who they met tending her garden. "For years I was a loyal employee," Brown, a retired bank clerk, told them. "But they turned nasty on the workers, and I changed my mind." Like the Hortons, Brown got a subscription to the *Militant*.

The discussion turned to today's wars in the Middle East. "I'd do everything to stop my son fighting in such wars," Brown said. "They're doing terrible things. And it's always workers who get injured or lose their lives."

"Wars abroad are an extension of the social devastation at home," Proppé said. "They're not going to stop until we take the power to make war out of the hands of the capitalist rulers. The British rulers are a declining force in the world, but they continue to send young workers to fight and die in alliance with Washington."

There are currently 1,350 U.K. troops in the Middle East, plus special forces on the ground in Iraq, Syria and Jordan, to defend the interests of British capital.

British aircraft join Washington in almost daily bombing raids, Proppé said. London has 500 troops in Afghanistan and is expanding military collaboration with Saudi Arabia, including deploying special forces in Yemen. A new British naval base has just opened in Bahrain.

"We call for the U.K. and all foreign troops out of the Middle East," Proppé said.

Working class at center stage

Both the main capitalist parties — the governing Conservatives and opposition Labour — are pitching their campaigns to appeal to what Prime Minister Theresa May calls a "quiet revolution" among working people. She speaks of electing a government that works "for everyone," not just the privileged few.

The Conservative Party campaign says the country needs May's "strong and stable leadership" to advance "Britain's interests" in upcoming negotiations over Brexit with the U.K.'s rivals in the EU. May says Brexit will allow her government to slash immigration, opening jobs to those here.

Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the Labour Party, says he will "transform Britain" from a country "run for the rich" to one "where everyone can lead richer lives."

He promises to fill government's coffers by raising taxes on corporations and

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THE MILITANT

Washington, OAS hands off Venezuela!

As the world capitalist economic crisis batters Venezuela's economy, Washington and the OAS are backing proimperialist forces seeking to overturn the Maduro government there. The 'Militant' reports on the response of workers and Cuba's defense of Venezuela.



AP Photo/Ariana Cubillos
Opponents of moves to destabilize government rally in Venezuela March 28.

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SWP party-building drive

Continued from front page

the Militant Fighting Fund to raise \$112,000 for the paper's operating expenses. The annual fund allows the *Militant* to respond to special opportunities in the class struggle — as we're doing this week sending a solidarity and reporting team to Puerto Rico as independentista Oscar López is released after 36 years of imprisonment by Washington's colonial rulers. We're asking for special contributions for the team, and to help the fund go over its goal.

This week we have a new city on our scoreboard — Mullan, Idaho — with credit for one sub and one book. Silver miners, members of United Steelworkers Local 5114, are on strike against Hecla Mining bosses at the Lucky Friday mine. SWP members and supporters have gone to Mullan several times to bring solidarity and work with miners to cover the strike for the *Militant*.

They have met a number of workers who have signed up for subscriptions and taken advantage of special offers on three campaign books. One striker helped convince another unionist to get the paper, as well as *The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. He said he'd read the book and it was the best explanation of the 2016 election. We thought that merited recognition of Mullan on the scoreboard.

The two other books on half-price special with a subscription are *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* also by Barnes, and *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters.

In the East New York section of Brooklyn, campaigners Paul Mailhot and Róger Calero spoke with Adam Ferrel, a member of Local 262 of the Plas-

terers and Cement Masons Union, when they knocked on his door May 14.

Ferrel was interested in hearing about their experiences participating in solidarity activities during May Day celebrations in Cuba. He said he was glad Washington had finally re-established diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Washington's aims haven't changed, the SWP members said. Diplomatic relations have been re-established, but the economic embargo remains very much alive, a central piece of the U.S. government's efforts to undermine Cuba's socialist revolution.

After looking over the front page of the *Militant*, Ferrel said, "This is a must have," and signed up for a subscription.

Dan Fein writes from Chicago that a team of SWP members went knocking on doors May 13 in Beloit, Wisconsin, an industrial town near the Illinois border. "It gets more difficult every day trying to make ends meet," Angela Briggs, a mother of three children whose husband is in prison, told them.

"I have two jobs. I get up at 4 a.m. and do four hours of data entry at home. I get \$8.50 an hour for that. Then I get the kids off to school and child care, and I go on to my second job at an accounting company for eight hours," she said. "Then I pick up the kids and go home for several more hours of data entry after dinner. I get paid \$13 per hour at my day job but I had to spend \$13,000 for the schooling it required. I get a little money from welfare and a little to help with child care costs."

They talked for a while about how workers can organize to fight to change things, and the need to build a working-class movement to win. "I'll get all three of those books," she said.

Two other workers SWP members talked to got subscriptions and five got copies of the books on special.

Beverly Bernardo writes that Philippe Tessier, Communist League candidate for mayor of Montreal, and other CL members campaigned in Sainte-Geneviève, an area west of Montreal where heavy rains have led to severe flooding. Party members got out a statement from Tessier demanding the government provide no-strings-attached assistance to those affected.

They met Jerzy Krawczyk as he worked on his house, trying to shore



Militant/Beverly Bernardo

Philippe Tessier, left, Communist League candidate for Montreal mayor, talks with Jerzy Krawczyk as he repairs his home after flooding in Sainte-Geneviève, Quebec, May 12.

it up against the damage. He and his wife Grace Pawluczuk are both originally from Poland. Krawczyk said local officials had done little to help. He also said their problems don't compare to what workers face in many parts of the world. "Look at the Middle East and Africa," he said.

"What else do you have to read on what you do?" he asked Tessier. He got a subscription and all three of the books by SWP leaders, and donated \$2 in change to the Militant Fighting Fund.

When workers say they want to learn more about the Socialist Workers Party, or join in the party-building campaign, party members tell them about the up-

coming SWP-organized Active Workers Conference in Ohio June 15-17.

At the conference you have the opportunity to hear talks by SWP leaders on politics today, revolutionary Cuba, and work in the unions and working class to build the party. There will also be a series of classes, as well as opportunities to meet with others involved in fighting to change society.

To help take the spring campaigns over the top in the last week of the drive, to make a donation or to learn more about the Ohio conference, contact the SWP or CL branch in your area — listed on page 8 — or write to the *Militant* at themilitant@mac.com.

UK: 'Workers need to take power'

Continued from page 2

individuals earning more than £80,000 (\$103,000) a year; renationalizing the Royal Mail, railways and energy companies; and establishing a state bus company. He says Labour will fund infrastructure projects and lay out £6 billion in new education spending and cap class sizes at 30 for the first three years of primary schooling.

"The capitalist parties speak about 'we British.' They say they stand for a government that 'works for everyone,'" CL candidate Andrés Mendoza told fellow marchers at the May Day protest in London. "But there is no such 'we.' Britain is class divided.

"The working class is the agency

of social change," he said. "The Communist League advances independent working-class politics, and we do it all year round, not just during elections."

Some members of petty-bourgeois left organizations at the march criticized the Communist League for standing in the election, saying they should join in and submerge themselves going all-out in support of Corbyn and Labour.

Putting their money where their mouth is, the Communist Party is fielding no candidates for the first time in its history. Nor is the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition — an alliance of the Socialist Workers Party, Socialist Party and others.

Militant Fighting Fund

April 1- May 23 (week 6)

Country	Quota	Paid	%
UNITED STATES			
Albany	\$4,100	\$3,670	90%
Atlanta	\$10,725	\$7,319	68%
Chicago	\$11,850	\$5,232	44%
Denver	\$750	\$555	74%
Lincoln	\$350	\$355	101%
Los Angeles	\$8,450	\$7,067	84%
Miami	\$3,200	\$2,100	66%
New York	\$16,600	\$11,078	67%
Oakland	\$13,700	\$9,764	71%
Philadelphia	\$3,600	\$2,277	63%
Seattle	\$7,300	\$5,066	69%
Twin Cities	\$4,100	\$1,232	30%
Washington	\$7,350	\$3,748	51%
Total U.S.	\$92,075	\$59,463	65%
CANADA			
Montreal	\$5,100	\$4,615	90%
Vancouver	\$3,000	\$547	18%
Total Canada	\$8,100	\$5,162	64%
NEW ZEALAND			
	\$4,575	\$3,737	82%
AUSTRALIA			
	\$1,175	\$1,430	122%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	\$2,450	\$1,792	73%
Manchester	\$925	\$490	53%
Total UK	\$3,375	\$2,282	68%
FRANCE			
	\$450	\$303	67%
Other		\$400	
Total	\$109,750	\$72,777	65%
Should be	\$112,000	\$96,000	86%

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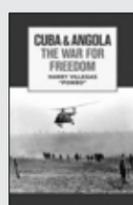


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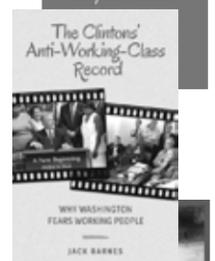
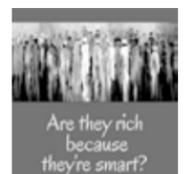
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\$7 EACH WITHOUT SUBSCRIPTION (NORMALLY \$10)



To subscribe or purchase books at these prices, contact Socialist Workers Party or Communist League branches listed on page 8.

Kurds' fight marks Mideast

Continued from front page an “unbeatable” relationship. Erdogan said he hoped the trip would lead to a new foundation for relations.

Ankara claims the YPG — which controls 20,000 square miles of north-eastern Syria and aims to forge an autonomous Kurdish region along the entire length of the 560-mile Syria-Turkey border — is a wing of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). Ankara, Washington and the European Union have listed the PKK as a “terrorist” organization.

Ankara has begun to soften some of its criticism of Washington’s decision to collaborate with the YPG in Syria, with some officials saying the U.S. military has “no choice” but to do so. But, standing at Trump’s side, Erdogan said, “It is absolutely unacceptable to take the YPG into consideration as partners in the region.”

“We support Turkey in the fight against terror and terror groups like ISIS and the PKK, and ensure they have no safe quarter,” Trump told reporters, making clear Washington has no quarrel with Ankara’s moves against the PKK in Turkey and Iraq.

For most of the last three decades Ankara has oppressed its 15-million-strong Kurdish population and warred against the PKK, an armed party with Stalinist roots that wages guerrilla actions against the Turkish rulers in the name of Kurdish autonomy.

At the end of April Ankara bombed YPG positions in Syria. In response, Washington sent troops driving jeeps flying U.S. flags to accompany YPG forces on the border.

The 30 million Kurds spread across Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq were denied their own homeland by the imperialist victors of WWI, who imposed artificial borders on the workers and farmers of the Mideast to advance

their own political and economic interests in the oil rich region.

Today the imperialist order in the Middle East is unraveling — the result of weakening U.S. power and more than a decade of Washington’s unresolved wars in the region. In this context, the historic struggle of the Kurdish people has come to the fore. This is also reflected in the recent decision by the main political parties in Iraqi Kurdistan to hold a referendum on independence.

The rulers in Baghdad, Ankara, Damascus and Tehran — all of whom fear their Kurdish population fighting for self-rule — oppose the referendum. Washington shares their view, declaring they are for Iraq’s “unity and territorial integrity.”

In its effort to push back Islamic State, part of its broader campaign to reimpose stability in the Middle East and protect U.S. imperialist interests, Washington seeks whatever alliances it deems useful in the short-term.

Islamic State captured huge swaths of Syrian and Iraqi territory in 2014. It filled the vacuum created by three wars: the U.S.-backed war waged by the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq against the people of Iran in the 1980s, and Washington’s two subsequent “regime change” wars. The Syrian civil war, which began in 2011 after the Bashar al-Assad regime in Damascus met mass mobilizations for democratic rights with brutal repression, widened that vacuum.

The U.S. military is convinced the YPG-led SDF is the only force with sufficient, tested combat experience that can defeat IS in Raqqa with a minimum of U.S. “boots on the ground.” There are currently over 1,000 U.S. troops in Syria.

Erdogan has raised that the YPG could be replaced with Syrian troops it has trained, known as the Free Syrian Army, and troops from Ankara’s own army. The Syrian Democratic Forces responded at a press conference May 12 in Tabqa, a town 25 miles from Raqqa their fighters had just captured from IS. “We thank anyone who wants to help but our forces are capable enough to liberate Raqqa,” SDF

Miami action defends rights of Haitian immigrants



Militant/Chuck Guerra

MIAMI — Hundreds of people demonstrated in front of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services office here May 13 demanding that Temporary Protected Status — the right to live and work in the U.S. — be extended for 58,000 immigrants from Haiti.

TPS was created in 1990 for refugees from countries devastated by wars or natural disasters. The Barack Obama administration extended it to immigrants from Haiti after an earthquake there in 2010 killed about 300,000 people and left 1.5 million homeless. It has been renewed three times since, including after a cholera outbreak killed 9,000 and sickened 800,000 more, and after Hurricane Matthew hit in 2016, killing over 1,000 and devastating much of the country.

Citizenship and Immigration Services has recommended the Department of Homeland Security not renew TPS for Haitians when the current extension expires in July, claiming the situation there has improved. The decision is expected by May 23.

The May 13 action was organized by a coalition of Haitian community groups, labor unions and others. Many people carried signs saying, “Yes to TPS” and “Immigrants’ rights are human rights.” Some waved Haitian flags. A contingent from UNITE HERE came, carrying a union banner reading, “All races. All religions. All immigrants.”

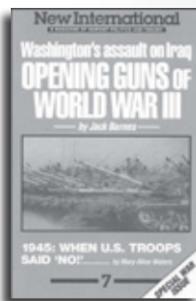
Cynthia Jaquith, right, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Miami, joined the protest, carrying a sign reading, “Stop deportations! Amnesty now! Halt attacks on TPS!”

— CHUCK GUERRA

Opening Guns of World War III: Washington’s Assault on Iraq

by Jack Barnes

In *New International* no. 7



“The Kurdish people have come to the center stage in world politics as never before, not primarily as victims, but as courageous and determined fighters for national rights.”

— Jack Barnes

\$14. Also in Farsi, French, Spanish, Swedish

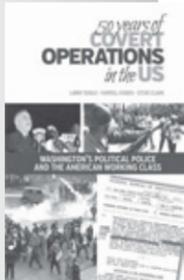
50 Years of Covert Operations in the U.S.

Washington’s Political Police and the American Working Class

by Larry Seigle, Steve Clark, Farrell Dobbs

The 15-year political campaign of the Socialist Workers Party to expose decades of spying and disruption by the FBI and other opponents of government policies.

\$12. Also in Spanish, Farsi



PATHFINDERPRESS.COM

Immigrant workers in Colorado beat back deportations

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

DENVER — Jeanette Vizguerra walked out of the First Baptist Church here May 12, surrounded by supporters chanting “Si luchamos, ganamos” (If we fight, we win).

Vizguerra and supporters marched to the State Capitol Building. She was joined by Arturo Hernández García for a press conference to announce they had each won a two-year stay of deportation from Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

For 86 days Vizguerra, who has lived and worked in Colorado since 1997, had been staying in two churches that offered her sanctuary to prevent her deportation.

She will keep fighting “to resist deportation and exploitation” of the undocumented, Vizguerra told the press, pointing to Ingrid Encalada Latorre, 33, from Peru, who has been living for over five months at the Mountain View Friends Meeting house to prevent ICE from deporting her. Latorre, a nursing home worker,

Commander Abdulqadir Hevidli said, adding it’s better if the people of Syria “solve their own problems.”

Washington has tried to maintain its relations with Ankara, including use of the Incirlik Air Base for U.S. bombers. The Pentagon promises it will only supply operation-specific weapons to the SDF; cut off the supply if the weap-

ons are smuggled elsewhere or misused; ensure that most of the fighters in the assault on Raqqa, a majority Arab city, will be Arabs and not Kurds; that the YPG will not occupy the city after Islamic State has been ousted; and pledged to boost intelligence cooperation with Ankara to strengthen its war against the PKK.

has lived in the U.S. since 2000.

Originally from Mexico, Vizguerra has worked cleaning office buildings and was a member and organizer of Service Employees International Union Local 105. She is a well-known labor and immigrant rights fighter. Three of her children are U.S. citizens.

Vizguerra first faced deportation proceedings in 2009 when she was convicted of using a false ID after a traffic stop. She visited Mexico after her mother’s death, and, when she returned to the U.S. in 2013, she was detained and accused of illegal entry. ICE granted her several stays of removal.

In February ICE rejected her application to renew the stay and Vizguerra accelerated her fight for the right to remain in the U.S., which received widespread news coverage in the area.

Hernández has been fighting deportation since 2014 when he took sanctuary for nine months at the First Unitarian Church. After protests demanded he not be deported, ICE sent a letter saying he was no longer a pri-

ority. He walked out of the church in July 2015, but ICE detained him again on April 26 this year.

There have been numerous protests against the deportations of Vizguerra, Hernández and Latorre. On May Day 150 people rallied outside the GEO Aurora Detention Facility where Hernández was being held. The GEO group, one of the largest private contract prison businesses in the country, is being sued for abusive treatment of tens of thousands of immigrants.

New International

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Intercontinental Press

International news magazine 1963-86

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—ON THE PICKET LINE—

NY Teamsters strike beer distributor over wages, pensions

MELVILLE, N.Y. — Some 130 drivers and warehouse workers struck the Clare Rose beer distribution company on Long Island April 23 against boss plans to end pension fund payments and cut wages. The workers are members of Teamsters Local 812, which organizes more than 3,500 beverage workers around the New York area.

The company has frozen the pension plan and intends to replace it with a 401(k) defined contribution system. These require deductions from workers' paychecks and leave retirees insecure.

The pay cut is aimed at the drivers. Patrick Waryold, who has driven for the company for 14 years, explained that the drivers are paid strictly on commission, as well as getting bonuses from the beer companies.

"It's hard work, sometimes 10 to 12 hours a day, but we make out pretty well," he said. "We're not asking for more pay. We just want to keep what we have."

Now the company plans to hire a

separate sales staff, so drivers would be paid by the day with a small commission. The union calculates this would cut take home pay by 30 percent.

The company is attempting to fill beer orders with management and the strikebreaking Strom Engineering Corp.

The Teamsters are picketing distribution centers here and in East Yaphank 24 hours a day. They've been receiving support and publicity for their strike from the local and national Teamsters union, as well as other unions.

On May 6 they got support on the picket line from Teamsters Local 210 members from the Sims Municipal Recycling plant in the Sunset Park neighborhood in Brooklyn, Teamster members from a warehouse in the Bronx and workers at area Coke and Pepsi processing plants.

— Candace Wagner

Rail workers in UK rally to oppose cuts in train crews

LONDON — Some 200 members of the Rail, Maritime and Transport union and supporters rallied outside



Militant/Sara Lobman

Teamsters Local 812 members on strike against Clare Rose beer distributor picket May 6 in Melville, New York, against company demands for wage cuts, end to funding union pensions.

Parliament April 26 to mark the first anniversary of the start of a series of strike actions against Southern Rail. The company, with government backing, is seeking to remove guards (conductors) from trains and impose driver-only-operation on passenger trains. Rail, Maritime and Transport

members have participated in 31 work stoppages over this year. Rail workers employed by Northern Rail and Merseyrail, facing similar moves by the bosses, have also taken action.

— Jonathan Silberman

KFC workers strike and rally in New Zealand

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Some 100 workers and supporters rallied here April 22 outside the Balmoral branch of the Kentucky Fried Chicken fast-food chain. The action was part of a two-hour nationwide strike by Unite Union members at KFC that saw similar rallies in five other cities.

"We are fighting for a living wage," Swastika Nair told the *Militant*. She was one of four workers at the St Lukes branch of KFC who shut the restaurant and joined the rally. "We put a handwritten note on the door saying, 'Store is temporarily closed due to industrial action,'" said Nair, who is a union delegate (shop steward) at the store.

Placards said, "Overworked and underpaid" and "On strike!" And chants rang out, "Never cross a picket line!" Cars and trucks honked support as they drove past the inner city intersection.

Most of the predominantly young workforce at KFC is on the minimum wage of 15.75 New Zealand dollars per hour (US\$10.90). The Unite Union is asking for 10 cents an hour wage increase over each of the next three years.

KFC in New Zealand is owned by Restaurant Brands, which also owns Carl's Jr., Starbucks and Pizza Hut. Workers there also struck and joined the rallies. It was the first strike at Restaurant Brands in New Zealand since 2006. The Unite Union is trying to get the company to reopen negotiations on the union contract after talks broke down. About half of the company's 4,000 workers are union members.

— Mike Tucker

Victory! Firings during strike at Momentive reversed!

BY MAGGIE TROWE AND JACOB PERASSO

WATERFORD, N.Y. — Workers won an important victory here May 11 when International Union of Electrical Workers-Communications Workers of America Local 81359 announced Momentive Performance Materials bosses had been forced to back off the firing of two dozen unionists during their bitter 105-day strike against the company.

"We stuck to our guns," Frank Izzo, a maintenance worker at the plant, told the *Militant* May 13 over his kitchen table in nearby Clifton Park. "Our attitude was that they all go back."

Izzo is one of 700 workers who struck against concession demands by management at the Albany-area chemical plant. When the unionists returned to work in February, they continued fighting to reinstate 26 strikers the

company charged with "sabotage" or "misconduct" on the picket lines.

"We were able to achieve resolution on 25 of the 26 members as of last night," Local President Dom Patrignani said in a May 11 union statement. The agreement means 16 of the fired workers return to work May 15, five chose to retire and four reached severance agreements. The union will continue to "commit every effort" for the one worker who awaits a hearing date for arbitration on his firing, Patrignani said.

The unity of the unionists and the solidarity they won during the strike put pressure on the company. "We wore insignias and wristbands on the job, we had a billboard near the plant and signs in the windows at the 'hot dog' union headquarters," Izzo said, referring to the former fast-food stand

across from the plant the union used as its strike center.

"They carried out retaliation on us when we went back to work, including telling us we can't wear '26' stickers on our hard hats," Les Wheeler told the *Militant* when we visited him in Johnsonville. "The company tries to persuade public opinion that unions are bad. I can't believe how arrogant they were in their attack on us, but it backfired, and we said, 'Enough is enough!'"

The strike "brought to me stronger bonds with other union members who I had never met," he added.

"I'd like to thank everyone who pushed so hard to stand with the 26," Patrignani told the *Militant* May 15. The fight continues for the remaining fired union member, he said. "We're standing strong on it."

— 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO —



May 29, 1992

NEW ROCHELLE, New York — Chants of "Union! Union! Union!" rang out as dozens of angry *New York Times* truck drivers picketed the newspaper's wholesale distribution plant here to stop the delivery of the Sunday paper by newly hired scabs.

"The *Times* is out to bust our union," said Edward Ellis, a driver with 22 years of service.

By a resounding majority vote May 6, members of the Newspaper and Mail Deliverers' Union rejected contracts that would have dealt a big blow to working conditions and reduced wages.

While the strike involves only the 220 *Times* drivers, members of the NMDU know a successful union-busting move would embolden the other media owners to follow suit. Workers from the *Daily News*, veterans of a militant strike themselves, have joined the picket lines together with other unionists.



May 29, 1967

NEW YORK — One of the first debates on Vietnam to be officially sponsored by a union was held here May 17. A hundred people turned out for the open forum on "Labor and the War in Vietnam" which was sponsored by Local 384 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. The panel included two speakers in favor of the war and two against. All were union officials.

One member of the audience asked what the union movement could do to oppose the war. Ed Grey, an official of the New Jersey United Auto Workers, answered by saying, "Labor can do a great deal — including sponsoring meetings like this." Pointing to inflation, government strikebreaking, and high taxes, Al Viani, of Local 371 of AFSCME, commented that, "Labor has a direct stake in ending the war... We need to show where we stand."



May 30, 1942

LOS ANGELES, Cal. — In a move unprecedented in U.S. history, American citizens are being taken from their homes and transported to hastily constructed concentration camps.

From Los Angeles, caravans guarded by army jeeps daily bear Japanese-American families to the desolate Owens River Valley.

Considerable pressure for the ousting of Japanese-Americans came from California Chambers of Commerce, the Bank of America, and the reactionary Associated Farmers. These groups see in the Japanese-American farmer not a military menace, but an obstacle to their complete domination of California agriculture. Taking advantage of the situation to demand their ousting in the name of "national defense," California bankers hope to seize control of the truck gardening fields vacated by the Japanese-Americans.

— CALENDAR —

CANADA

Vancouver

Fighting for Fairness at Hecla. Rally to Support USW 5114 Silver Miners on Strike in Mullan, Idaho. Thurs., May 25, 10 a.m. Olympic Cauldron (2010 Olympic Torch), 1055 Canada Place. Tel.: (604) 683-1117. Sponsored by USW District 3 Canada.

'We want to be part of struggles for socialism'

Students in Manila discuss world politics with communists from US, Australia, New Zealand



Militant/Ron Poulsen

Far-ranging discussion with Polytechnic University of the Philippines students in Manila, at right, spurred interest in revolutionary politics and literature brought by guests.

BY LINDA HARRIS
AND RON POULSEN

MANILA, Philippines — “Reading your book *Feminism and the Marxist Movement* was like a breath of fresh air. I stayed up until 3 in the morning to finish it,” Shaira Mae Embate told Mary-Alice Waters, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States. Embate, a student at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, had just bought the book and then met Waters while taking part in the Asia-Pacific Regional Conference of Solidarity with Cuba, held here April 8-9.

“It was so clear,” Embate said. “Unlike every other book on the women’s rights struggle I’ve read, I didn’t need a dictionary to try to figure out what it was saying. We’ll be discussing it in our women’s organization because it was incredibly informative.”

Embate and Dhel Pulanco, a recent graduate from Polytechnic University, invited Waters and other members of the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Leagues in Australia and New Zealand, who were participating in the Cuba solidarity conference, to the university for a meeting with members of their campus group. Some 25 students attended the April 12 meeting, eager to meet and discuss politics with communist workers from other countries.

Many students at Polytechnic Uni-

versity are from working-class or rural farm families. Tuition is more affordable there than at other universities, they told us.

They said their organization, called SPEAK (Students Party for Equality and Advancement of Knowledge), was formed in 2015 out of a successful campaign to remove a university dean accused of corruption. The group won last year’s student council elections, displacing the Maoist campus organization that had held office for three decades.

Struggles in the Philippines

While SPEAK is focused on campus issues, many of the youth have been involved in broader struggles. They joined nationwide protests against the decision last November by President Rodrigo Duterte’s administration to rebury the remains of longtime dictator Ferdinand Marcos in Manila’s “Cemetery of Heroes.” Marcos was toppled by mass popular mobilizations in 1986 and died in exile in the United States.

Some SPEAK members said they were involved in struggles for women’s rights, others to protect the environment. Some are active in opposing discrimination against Muslims, Methodists and other religious minorities in a majority Catholic country where the church hierarchy wields strong political influence.

Also participating in the meeting



AP/Aaron Favila

Students in Philippines joined actions last Nov. 25 protesting decision by President Rodrigo Duterte to rebury remains of dictator Ferdinand Marcos in Manila’s “Cemetery of Heroes.”

were a campus professor, a lawyer involved in defending workers’ rights, and a leader of Alab Katipunan (Blazing Brotherhood), a left-wing group some SPEAK leaders belong to.

Embate explained that she is from a peasant family on Mindoro Island. She described a struggle by coconut farmers in Quezon province last year who organized a 75-mile march to demand the government give them title to their land.

“When we graduate many of us will become workers,” she said. “We want to be part of something bigger, part of struggles to transform society and fight for socialism.” She said she was especially pleased that members of the international communist movement were there to bring “political problems on an international scale” into the meeting, because she wanted to get more of a world perspective.

“How can we involve students in labor issues?” asked Jonald Bagasina. “Some students are afraid of joining protests, others aren’t interested.”

Waters replied, “What we’re facing everywhere is a global capitalist crisis such as none of us have lived through.” The capitalist ruling classes in every country, from the U.S. to the Philippines, have been making working people pay for this crisis, she said. These conditions are pushing more youth and working people everywhere to search for answers, and sharper struggles are inevitable.

Waters noted that as the class struggle intensifies, many students will move beyond campus politics and join struggles by workers and farmers, not as well-meaning outsiders “serving the people,” but as part of the working class.

Janet Roth, a member of the Communist League in New Zealand who works in a dairy plant and is a member of the Dairy Workers Union, described how, as a student many years ago, her involvement in the fight for women’s rights and other political struggles led her to the communist movement. “The party I joined rooted itself in the working class,” she said.

Part of working class, not outsiders

Ron Poulsen, from Sydney, Australia, explained that communism is not an ideology or a set of ideas dreamed up in an ivory tower, but a line of march for the working class. “It’s based on the gen-

eralized lessons of more than a century and a half of the workers’ movement. We need to study these lessons, but Marxism can only be learned as part of the struggles of the working class,” said Poulsen, a member of the Communist League in Australia.

He pointed to the example of Cuba’s socialist revolution, which shows the capacity of workers and farmers to organize a successful fight for state power and begin transforming society, transforming themselves in the process.

A broad range of questions and opinions were talked through in the nearly three hours of discussion, from how to oppose the bosses’ contracting out of jobs to questions about trade pacts and “globalization.” One question was on the challenge of organizing workers in call centers — a rapidly expanding business in the Philippines — where U.S., Australian and other companies take advantage of superexploited labor and an English-speaking workforce.

Baskaran Appu, from Auckland, New Zealand, spoke about the work of building the Communist League there. “As we go door to door in working-class neighborhoods, we are finding an unprecedented openness among workers to discuss a class perspective,” he said.

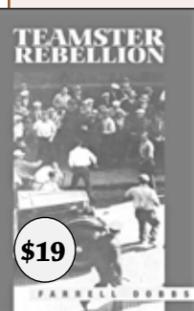
Several of us explained how in every country the employers push down wages and working conditions in their drive for profits. They try to divide and weaken the working class, introducing contract jobs and using racist demagoguery or scapegoating immigrants, women and others. But the unfolding capitalist crisis pushes workers to fight back. And in the process working people grow in confidence and understanding.

Martin Koppel, from New York, described how SWP members have been part of protests against deportations of immigrants. “These actions have won widespread solidarity among native- and foreign-born workers alike,” he said.

In reply to a question about how to respond to capitalist “tax reform” plans that increase the burden on the working class — like one being proposed by the Philippine government today — Linda Harris from the Communist League in Australia pointed to the example of socialist Cuba. At the initiative of the revolutionary leadership there, hundreds of thousands had participated in “workers’

Continued on page 7

Books for revolutionary-minded workers and youth



Teamster Rebellion

by Farrell Dobbs

This is the first in a four-volume series on the class-struggle leadership of the strikes and organizing drives in the 1930s that transformed the Teamsters union in much of the Midwest of the U.S. into a fighting social movement and pointed the road toward independent labor political action.

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes



Feminism and the Marxist Movement

by Mary-Alice Waters

See distributors on page 8 or for complete catalog visit:

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Brigade: Solidarity with Cuba!

Continued from front page

hundreds of thousands to Revolution Square in Havana May 1. “The Cuban people stay upbeat in face of the U.S. blockade. They are resilient.”

“Being at May Day reinvigorated me and shows what we need to do to make change in the U.S.,” said Jaimee Swift, a brigadista from Howard University in Washington.

Tidmore and Swift were two of over 50 people from the U.S. who joined 300 other brigadistas from 29 countries for 15 days of activities aimed at learning about Cuba’s history and its revolution. They visited museums, heard talks on Cuba’s current economic challenges, talked with people in the street, visited hospitals, and had discussions with leaders of mass organizations in Cuba. Many also did voluntary work in the fields.

It was the first time there was a U.S. contingent as part of the annual international May Day Brigade, offering brigadistas from other countries and Cubans they met an opportunity to learn firsthand about conditions facing working people in the United States. At the May Day march U.S. delegates stood on the viewing stand with a banner that said in English and Spanish: “End the U.S. economic war against Cuba now!” and “U.S. out of Guantánamo now!” Many passing marchers who read the banner responded with clenched fists and cheers.

We stayed at the Julio Antonio Mella International Camp in Artemisa province, a one hour drive from Havana.

On the first four days, many brigadistas did volunteer agricultural work in the morning. They visited nearby farm cooperatives, planted yucca, removed rocks so mango trees could be planted, and worked in banana and tomato fields.

“We have 145 members in our cooperative, but we need more,” Héctor Iriarte, a leader at one of the cooperatives and a Communist Party member, said during a work break. “We have a challenge motivating our youth to work in the fields growing food. Education is free in Cuba up to university level.” We are trying to win them to the importance of producing food as part of the efforts to strengthen the revolution, he said.

“There are two events that happened after the 1959 revolution that changed the lives of Cuban women — the literacy campaign and the construction of child care centers allowing women to work,” said Federation of Cuban Women representative Elpidia Moreno at an April 26 panel that also featured other leaders of Cuba’s mass organizations.

A representative of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers explained the role of unions in organizing and improving production, and in mobilizing workers to defend their revolution. There were also speakers from the Federation of University Students and the Union of Young Communists.

They explained how from the beginning the new revolutionary government, led by Fidel Castro, mobilized workers, farmers and youth to transform the conditions of their lives — and to transform themselves in the process. And how they’re committed to continue to do so today.

International Solidarity Conference

On May 2 an International Solidarity Conference took place at the Convention Palace in Havana. Some 1,000 people from 86 countries attended. Ana Teresita González, Cuban Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, told participants the U.S. government hasn’t stopped seeking ways to subvert and undermine the revolution.

Fernando González, president of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples, spoke about the ongoing U.S. economic war against Cuba. He pointed to a banner calling for U.S. out of Guantánamo and emphasized the importance for the solidarity movement to campaign for an end to Washington’s illegal occupa-



Militant/Dan Fein

Members of U.S. delegation on the 12th International May Day Brigade to Cuba join hundreds of thousands of Cubans supporting their socialist revolution at May 1 action in Havana.

tion of that piece of Cuban territory.

“The May Day march made my heart skip a beat,” Karen “Arewa” Winters, a member of the U.S. delegation from Chicago, told the conference. She spoke about police brutality in Chicago, especially in the Black and Latino neighborhoods on the south and west sides. Her nephew was shot and killed by Chicago cops last year. “Police in Cuba are different,” she said to applause.

On the way to Cienfuegos province, the buses stopped at historic sites in Santa Clara where we learned about the role of the revolutionary army column led by Che Guevara in defeating dictator Fulgencio Batista’s army, helping bring down the U.S.-backed regime and bringing Cuba’s workers and farmers to power.

A few years after the victory of the revolution, Guevara led a guerrilla movement in Bolivia. He was captured and murdered in cold blood by the Bolivian army in a CIA-organized

operation in 1967. His remains were returned to Cuba in 1987 and brought to what is now the Che Guevara Memorial in Santa Clara.

In Cienfuegos, we visited health care centers, including the Provincial Hospital, Ambulatory Specialized Center and the Pediatric Hospital, where we learned about the Cuban health care system. It’s not based on whether you have or can pay for health insurance like in the U.S. Health care is available to all at no cost, made possible by the socialist revolution.

Anyone who wants to learn more about what difference a revolution can make, should consider going on a brigade to Cuba. The second international “In Che’s Footsteps” brigade will take place Oct. 1-15. For more information write to alatinacsur@icap.cu. Contact those of us who participated in the brigade who live in your area and join with us is getting out the truth about Cuba’s socialist revolution.

‘We want to be part of struggles for socialism’

Continued from page 6

parliaments” in the mid-1990s, discussing and rejecting proposed taxation of workers’ wages.

One youth said many of his fellow students were worried about their future careers if they got involved in broader politics.

Waters replied that education, like

all social relations under capitalism, is designed to train students to see themselves as individuals. “You’re taught you should strive to rise out of your class, not fight to rise *with* your class,” she said. “Ours is a political struggle to raise consciousness that workers need to organize as a class to take political power. Until we do that, no gains are permanent.”

The heart of this political battle, Waters said, was captured well by Malcolm X, “a revolutionary leader of the working class in the United States. When he was asked, ‘Are you trying to wake people to their own exploitation?’ Malcolm said, ‘No, to their humanity, to their own worth.’”

The fight for political space

A couple of students pointed to dangers they face when taking part in protest rallies with the possibility of arrests and becoming targets of police and vigilante squads.

“How to protect yourselves from government repression and murderous attacks by political opponents is not something those of us from outside the Philippines can answer for you,” Waters said. “But we do know from our own experiences and the lessons of history that the answer must flow from a broader strategy to mobilize working people along the road to political power.”

That strategy, she said, means fight-

ing to unify and organize the working class and transform the unions into instruments of revolutionary struggle. It means rejecting the subordination of the interests of working people to electoral and governmental alliances with “progressive” bourgeois forces, the course that is followed by the Communist Party of the Philippines, a Mao-Stalinist organization, and its various split-offs. For the CPP, “protracted rural warfare” is part of this class-collaborationist course, aimed not at taking power but winning concessions from one bourgeois government or another.

Waters pointed to the lessons learned by the Communist Party in the United States, founded in 1919 by workers determined to emulate the example of the Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution. V.I. Lenin and other leaders of the Communist International helped convince the young party to come out from underground and fight for the political space to operate openly.

Following this back-and-forth exchange, and a tour of the campus, the members of SPEAK put on a “boodle fight” — a traditional Philippine meal — for us. Then the students swarmed the literature table to browse the issues of the *Militant* and books on revolutionary politics we were leaving them, thirsty to learn more about workers’ struggles and a way forward worth fighting for.

Welcome Puerto Rico Freedom Fighter Oscar López! End U.S. Colonial Rule!



After nearly 36 years in U.S. prisons for his actions in support of independence for Puerto Rico, Oscar López Rivera was released May 17 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and welcomed by thousands at a rally in Río Piedras. On May 18 he was welcomed at a march and rally in Chicago’s Humboldt Park.

Upcoming events with Oscar López

- Sat., May 20** – 11 a.m. **San Sebastián, Puerto Rico**
- Sun., May 28** – 4 p.m. Mujeres de la Puente, **San Juan, Puerto Rico**
- Wed., May 31** – 7 p.m. program, St. John’s Presbyterian Church, **Berkeley, Calif.**
- June 8** – 7 p.m. Hostos Community College, **Bronx, New York City**
- June 8 to 11** – other events in **NYC** include June 11 Puerto Rican Day Parade
- Sat., June 17** – **Chicago** Grand Marshal Puerto Rican Day Parade
- Mon., June 19** – Oscar speaks at **UN Hearing on Decolonization in NY**
- Mon., Sept. 18** – 7 p.m. Taller Puertorriqueño **Philadelphia**

For more info: Boricuahumanrights.org

Eugene Debs: 'Capitalism breeds poorhouse and prisons'

Below is an excerpt from Eugene V. Debs Speaks, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for May. It is a reprint from Debs' book Walls and Bars, describing his prison experiences, written upon his release from the federal penitentiary in Atlanta. In 1919 the U.S. rulers threw Debs in prison for speaking out against Washington's imperialist aims in World War I. He ran as the Socialist Party candidate for president from prison in 1920, getting almost 1 million votes. Debs supported the Russian Revolution and called for workers in the U.S. to emulate that example and take political power. Copyright © 1970 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Debs was jailed in 1919 for outspoken opposition to Washington's imperialist aims in World War I. He ran as the Socialist Party candidate for president from prison in 1920 election.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY EUGENE V. DEBS

There is an intimate relation between the poorhouse and the prison. Both are made necessary in a society which is based upon exploitation. The aged and infirm who remain docile and submissive through the struggle for existence, to whatever straits it may reduce them, are permitted to spend their declining days in the county house and to rest at last in the potters' field.

But they who protest against their pitiless fate rather than yield to its stern decrees, they who refuse to beg, preferring to take the chances of helping them-

selves by whatever means seem most available, are almost inevitably booked for the jail and the prison.

Poverty has in all ages, in every nation, and under every government recorded in history, been the common lot of the great mass of mankind. The many have had to toil and produce in poverty that the few might enjoy in luxury and extravagance. But however necessary this may have been in the past, it need no longer be true in our day.

Through invention and discovery and the application of machinery to industry, the productive forces of labor have been so vastly augmented that if society were properly organized the great body of the people, who constitute the workers and producers, instead of being poor and miserable and dependent as they now are, would be happy and free and thrill with the joy of life.

There can be no question about the simple and self-evident facts as here set forth:

First, here in the United States we live in as rich a land as there is on earth.

Second, we have all the natural resources, all the raw materials from which wealth is produced in practically unlimited abundance.

Third, we have the most highly efficient productive machinery in the world.

Fourth, we have millions of workers skilled and unskilled not only ready, but eager, to apply their labor to the industrial machinery and produce a

sufficiency of all that is required to satisfy the needs and wants of every man, woman and child under a civilized standard of living.

Then why should millions be idle and suffering, millions of others toiling for a pittance, and all the victims of poverty, and of a bleak and barren existence?

The answer is, that capitalism under which we now live has outlived its usefulness and is no longer adapted to the social and economic conditions that today confront the world. Profit has precedence over life, and when profit cannot be made, industry is paralyzed and the people starve.

Here let it be said again, and it cannot be repeated too often nor made too emphatic, that poverty and ignorance, with which poverty goes hand in hand, constitute the prolific source from which flow in a steady and increasing stream most of the evils which afflict mankind.

It is poverty from which the slums, the red light districts, the asylums, the jails and the prisons are mainly recruited.

It was in the so-called panic of 1873, which lasted five years and during which millions were in a state of enforced idleness due to "overproduction," that the "tramp" made his appearance in American life. The industrious workman, turned by his employer into the street because he had produced more goods than could be sold, became a tramp; the tramp in some instances became a beggar and in others a thief and criminal.

From that time to this the tramp has been a fixed institution in American life, and epidemics of crime are reported with regularity in the daily press.

Poverty breeds misery and misery breeds crime. It is thus the prison is populated and made to prosper as a permanent and indispensable adjunct to our Christian civilization. The most casual examination of the inmates of jails and prisons shows the great majority of them at a glance to be of the poorer classes.

When, perchance, some rich man goes to prison the instance is so remarkable that it excites great curiosity and amazement. A rich man does not fit in prison. The prison was not made for him. He does not belong there and he does not stay there. The rich man goes to prison only as the exception to prove the rule.

The social system that condemns men, women and children to poverty at the same time pronounces upon many of them the sentence of the law that makes them convicts. And this social system in the United States rests on the foundation of private ownership of the social means of common life.

Two percent of the American people own and control the principal industries and the great bulk of the wealth of the nation. This interesting and amazing fact lies at the bottom of the industrial paralysis and the widespread protest and discontent which prevail as these lines are written. The daily papers are almost solid chronicles of vice and immorality, of corruption and crime.

In the city of Chicago the authorities frankly admit being no longer able to cope with crime and, happily, Judge W. M. Gammill, of that city, comes to the rescue by recommending the re-establishment of the whipping post as a deterrent for the crimes and misdemeanors committed by the victims of a vicious social system which Judge Gammill upholds. The distinguished judge's Christian spirit as well as his judicial mind are vindicated in his happy and thoughtful suggestion which is finding ready echo among ruling class parasites and mercenaries who, no doubt, would experience great delight in seeing the poor wretches that are now only jailed for the crimes that the injustice of society forces them to commit, tied to a post and their flesh lacerated into shreds by a whip in the hands of a brute.

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OFFER GOOD UNTIL MAY 31

Puerto Rico must be free!

Continued from front page
he grew up.

Before leaving for Puerto Rico, Hart released a statement saying, “Welcome home, Oscar! We look forward to fighting shoulder to shoulder in defense of working people around the world.

“This is a victory not just for the people of Puerto Rico but for working people in the U.S.

“We say: End U.S. colonial rule in Puerto Rico! U.S. and Puerto Rican workers — same enemy, same fight! Emulate the Cuban Revolution! *Independence isn’t granted, it must be fought for!*”

López will continue on to New York, the San Francisco Bay Area and Philadelphia, and will appear before the United Nations decolonization hearing June 19. He will speak out as part of the unfolding struggle against U.S. imperialism’s continuing plunder of the resources and people of Puerto Rico.

Also on May 17, U.S. District Judge Laura Taylor Swain is holding the first hearing on the colonial regime’s bankruptcy filing in the face of \$74 billion owed to profit-hungry bondholders and \$49 billion to workers’ pension funds.

The bankruptcy is being used to deepen the anti-working-class measures the Puerto Rican government has been carrying out at the behest of the Financial Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico.

The board was appointed last year by President Barack Obama as part of the Promesa law passed with bipartisan support by Congress. The Junta — as it is referred to in Puerto Rico — has dictatorial power over the budget, finances and economic measures of the Puerto Rican government.

In 2000 Puerto Rico’s gross public debt was \$23.8 billion. By 2006 it was almost \$40 billion.

The debt grew to more than \$72 billion from 2006 to 2015, in the midst of the worldwide capitalist economic crisis, exacerbated on the island because of its colonial exploitation. The government took out loans and sold more bonds, not

to invest in infrastructure or create jobs, but largely to try and keep up with paying the interest and principal on prior loans and bonds. By comparison, Detroit’s obligations were \$18 billion when it declared bankruptcy in 2013.

At the same time, Puerto Rico’s gross domestic product dropped 18 percent and pharmaceutical and other private companies closed down.

More staid capitalist financial companies sold off their bonds, worried the colony’s down-spiraling economy would threaten their ability to continue raking in profits. Hedge funds scooped them up, for as little as 12 cents on the dollar. But they still demand full payment, plus interest.

The government stepped up the squeeze on working people to pay the debt. Since 2006 it has laid off 30,000 public workers; raised the retirement age; closed schools; hiked the sales tax to 11.5 percent, higher than any U.S. state; slashed pensions; and frozen public employee wages. So far this year there have been deeper cuts to pensions and more layoffs. The colonial government just announced it is



Militant/Linda Joyce

Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York, being interviewed by press in Puerto Rico outside residence of Oscar López, where he joined those waiting to greet the longtime independence fighter the morning of his release from federal custody. López’s freedom is a victory for working people in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, Hart said.

shuttering some 180 public schools to save cash for the bondholders.

In 2015 the annual average income in Puerto Rico was \$18,626, just 45 percent that of Mississippi, the poorest U.S. state. Workers and middle class profes-

sionals have fled the island in droves.

Help the *Militant* reporting team get out the story by sending your contribution to the Militant Fighting Fund, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

Rail workers protest boss demands to cut health care



Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees

Track workers from Saint Joseph and Smithville, Missouri, were part of protests across the country May 3 against attempt by rail bosses to more than triple price of health insurance.

Continued from front page

yard in Nashville, Tennessee; the BNSF Railway’s Argentine yard in Kansas City, Kansas; and other locations.

The rail bosses are pushing this attack as part of their efforts to boost profits at workers’ expense. The Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way

Employees contract — and the contracts of most other rail workers — expired at the end of 2014. The employers are proposing BMW members get an annual 2 percent wage raise, but are refusing to backdate the increase to cover the over two years since the last contract ran out.

Bill Fletcher, a Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way member and a rail worker for 28 years, told people at the rally that the bosses are proposing to jump workers monthly health premiums by more than 300 percent, from \$228 to \$780.

“This is a dangerous job,” he said. “We’re out here busting our ass every day to make their profits.”

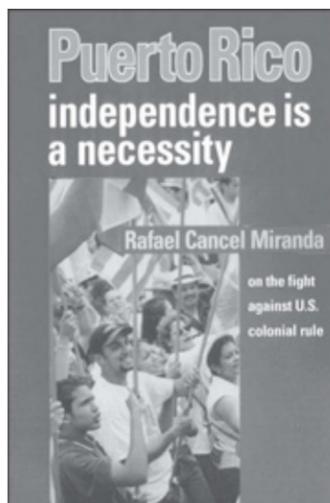
Other rail workers also face employer moves to raise health care costs. The bosses argue that workers must pay more to make up for lower profit rates.

Rail workers face obstacles to their right to strike in pro-employer federal legislation that mandates workers go through miles of red tape and months and sometimes years of meetings and arbitration before they can hit the bricks.

Standing on a traffic island in the early morning sun, workers heard from several other speakers from the union, Jobs for Justice, and area environmental groups.

Local activist Olga Bautista spoke for the Chicago South East Side Coalition to Ban Petcoke, which has been waging a fight to stop the dumping of the toxic waste on the banks of the Calumet River near where they live.

Further reading

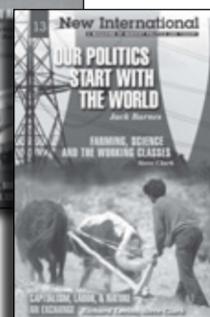
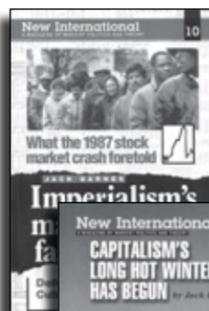


Rafael Cancel Miranda — one of five Puerto Rican Nationalists imprisoned by Washington for more than 25 years until 1979 — speaks out on brutal reality of U.S. colonial domination, campaign to free Puerto Rican political prisoners, example of Cuba’s socialist revolution. \$6

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