

‘Militant’  
seeks 2,000  
new readers,  
\$115,000

BY EMMA JOHNSON  
*Militant* supporters around the world kicked off the seven-week international subscription and fund drive April 11 with a goal of winning

SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE -  
MILITANT FIGHTING FUND

2,000 new and renewing readers by June 2 and raising \$115,000 to cover the costs of putting out the paper. Subscribers can also take advantage of a special offer to get any book on revolutionary, working-class politics published by Pathfinder Press for 50 percent off.

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subscribers!  
April 11 - June 2

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Chicago	155
Los Angeles	75
Miami	45
NEBRASKA	165
Lincoln	10
Omaha	155
New York	175
Oakland	125
Philadelphia	115
Seattle	125
Twin Cities	65
Washington	100
Total U.S.	1,538
Prisoners	15
UNITED KINGDOM	
Manchester	100
London	105
Total U.K.	205
CANADA	
Calgary	50
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Cuba speaks  
for world’s  
toilers at  
Summit

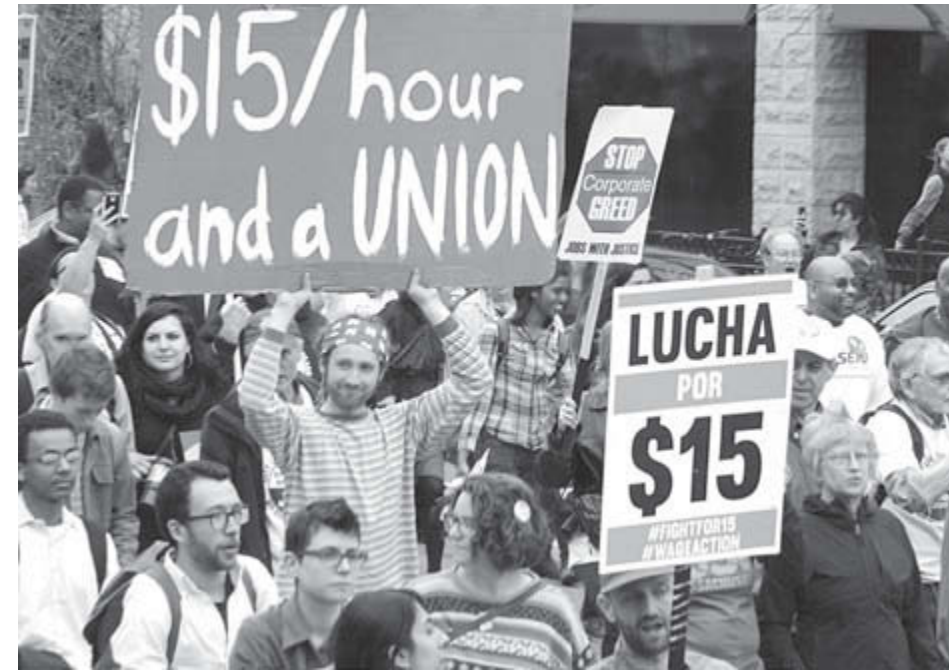
BY SETH GALINSKY  
Revolutionary Cuba was at the center of the Seventh Summit of the Americas held in Panama April 10-11, speaking for the interests of working people the world over and demanding an end to the U.S. embargo of Cuba and sanctions against Venezuela.

This was the first time a Cuban delegation attended the gathering. Washington engineered Cuba’s exclusion from the Organization of American States in 1962 as punishment for the popular revolution in 1959 that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and the proud declaration by working people there in 1961 of their decision to build a socialist society. The OAS, which sponsors the summit, includes every other government in Latin America and the Caribbean plus the U.S. and Canada.

At this year’s summit, Washington agreed to Cuba’s participation, bowing to growing demands by governments in the region who saw the exclusion of Cuba as an affront to their own independence and sovereignty. The U.S. change in position is aimed at removing an obstacle to expanding its markets and trade in the region,

Continued on page 7

Boston march of 3,000 kicks off  
April 15 actions for \$15 and a union



Boston rally April 14 was first of hundreds of actions across country and worldwide.

BY TED LEONARD  
BOSTON — “We are building a movement, not a moment,” said Veronica Turner, executive vice president of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, welcoming some 3,000 fast-food workers, personal health care workers, unionists and support-

‘Cold-blooded killing’ in  
SC fuels outrage, protests  
Cop who shot Walter Scott arrested, fired



Killing of Walter Scott — shot in back by cop Michael Slager — deepened discussion on role of cops and how to fight police brutality. Above, April 8 protest in North Charleston.

BY MAGGIE TROWE  
AND JOHN BENSON  
NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. — This industrial hub and port city in the deep South has become a center

JOIN GROWING FIGHT  
AGAINST COP BRUTALITY!  
— Editorial, page 9

of protests and the deepening national discussion on how to fight police brutality and killings.

After being stopped by the cops

April 4, allegedly for a broken tail-light, Walter Scott, who had a bench warrant for unpaid child support, tried to run away. North Charleston cop Michael Slager chased him and they scuffled. The unarmed Scott broke free and resumed running. Slager shot Scott eight times in the

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Oil workers  
strike for safety  
continues at  
five refineries

BY BOB SAMSON  
PASADENA, Texas — Steelworkers on strike against LyondellBasell turned down the company’s “last, best and final offer” during a two-day vote April 13-14. More than 300 of the 450 members of Local 13-227 voted, double the usual turnout for a contract vote, union officer Joshua Lege told the *Houston Chronicle*.

The Steelworkers strike also con-

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—On the picket line, p. 5—

California farmworkers fight  
agricultural giant Gerawan

Kenya truck drivers strike for  
union, against company abuse



# Mexican farmworkers win 15% raise, will ‘keep fighting’

BY SETH GALINSKY

“We will keep fighting until we win a labor agreement that guarantees our rights,” Fidel Sánchez, a leader of a farmworkers strike in the San Quintín valley of Baja California, Mexico, said by phone April 4, after many farmworkers returned to work “under protest.”

The workers pick strawberries, tomatoes, and other fruits and vegetables.

Led by the Alliance of National, State and Municipal Organizations for Social Justice, 17,000 farmworkers went on strike against 12 companies March 17 to demand higher wages, better work conditions and an end to sexual harassment by the bosses.

Farmworkers blocking several highways early in the strike were attacked by police with rubber bullets and teargas, and more than 200 were arrested. Most were released, but 11 are still in jail, Sánchez said.

Workers are paid piece rate, earning between 100 and 125 pesos a day (\$6.70-\$8.35). They demanded a minimum wage of 300 pesos a day. The agribusiness companies offered a 15 percent pay increase.

“Fifteen percent solves very little,” Sánchez said. “We work all year round. We don’t know what a vacation is. In violation of labor laws, we don’t get paid holidays.”

Sánchez, like several other leaders of the struggle, got experience in organizing while working in the U.S. He was involved in a fight to raise the piece rate on tomatoes in Florida in 1997-98.

Hundreds of farmworkers from San Quintín were joined by supporters in Ti-

juana for a march and rally there March 29, as part of a caravan that traveled throughout Baja California to win solidarity. They marched to Friendship Park along the border where they were met by a rally on the U.S. side that included members of the United Farm Workers, the Indigenous Front of Binational Organizations and San Diego-based Union del Barrio.

“We couldn’t cross the border,” Sánchez said. “But we each had sound systems. When we spoke, they turned off their sound and listened. When they spoke, we did the same.”

“The 15 percent increase they’ve offered is not enough but with our strike — the first in 14 years — we’ve proven they can pay more,” Fermín Salazar, another strike leader, said April 6.



Farmworkers and supporters march to border in Tijuana, Mexico, March 29, as part of caravan in Baja California to build solidarity with strike. “We demand a just wage — 300 pesos a day,” lead banner says. Strike ended with 15 percent pay raise. Workers plan to continue struggle.

## ‘US troops, ‘anti-missile’ systems out of Korea!’

*Below is a solidarity message sent to the Workers’ Party of Korea on April 10 by Steve Clark on behalf of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party.*

The Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists send internationalist greetings on the occasion of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s April 15 national holiday. We pledge our unconditional solidarity with the struggle to reunify Korea, partitioned in 1945 at the hands of Washington and Moscow.

We condemn US imperialism’s drive to deploy THAAD [Terminal High Altitude Area Defense] combat weapons in South Korea — a misnamed “anti-

missile defense” system intended to fortify Washington’s offensive military footing against the DPRK, China, and Russia. Despite cynical denials by both US and South Korean officials, THAAD is clearly on the agenda of the current three-day [April 9-11] trip to Seoul by US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter.

Meanwhile, US and South Korean armed forces are continuing their annual Foal Eagle war maneuvers, involving troops from both governments in land, sea, and air operations.

Workers and farmers the world over are resisting attacks on our living standards, job conditions, and political rights. In the US, refinery workers are striking for safe conditions; employees exploited by McDonald’s, Walmart, and other capitalists are calling for a \$15 minimum wage and union rights; and working people are demanding an end to cop killings in Black communities and beyond. Hard-fought struggles are under way by working people from Ukraine to Kurdistan, from Mexico to Israel and Palestine, from Turkey to Bangladesh.

It is among embattled working people that support will be found to end US

sanctions and embargoes against the DPRK, Cuba, Iran, Russia, and Venezuela. Working-class solidarity can be won to demand that Seoul lift its ban on the Unified Progressive Party, free imprisoned UPP leaders, and stop union-busting against teachers and rail workers.

On your national holiday, the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists join with you and others the world over to demand: US troops, ships, planes, and “anti-missile” systems out of Korea. For a Korean Peninsula and Pacific Ocean free of nuclear weapons.

Korea is one!

### Notebook of an Agitator

by James P. Cannon

*From the Wobblies to the fight against the Korean War and McCarthyism*  
\$28



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*From shoe workers in Vietnam to bus drivers in Israel, garment workers in Bangladesh and oil workers in the U.S., the ‘Militant’ covers workers’ struggles worldwide against boss and government attacks on safety, wages and dignity. Don’t miss an issue.*



Shoe workers on strike in Vietnam March 31 against government cuts in social benefits.

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## The Militant

Vol. 79/No. 15

Closing news date: April 15, 2015

Editor: John Studer

On the Picket Line Editor: Maggie Trowe

**Editorial volunteers:** Róger Calero, Naomi Craine, Frank Forrestal, Seth Galinsky, Emma Johnson, Jacob Perasso, Gerardo Sánchez, Maggie Trowe, Brian Williams, Rebecca Williamson.

Published weekly except for one week in January, one week in June, one week in July, one week in August and one week in September.

**Business manager:** Lea Sherman  
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018. **Telephone:** (212) 244-4899 **Fax:** (212) 244-4947  
**E-mail:** [themilitant@mac.com](mailto:themilitant@mac.com)  
**Website:** [www.themilitant.com](http://www.themilitant.com)

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

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# Support for rights of gays spurs debate on ‘religious freedom’ law

BY R.V. SMALLWOOD

When Indiana Gov. Michael Pence signed into law the state’s so-called Restoration of Religious Freedom Act March 26 he unleashed a storm of controversy that was deepened when a similar law neared passage in Arkansas. Many backers of the bill hoped that it would permit businesses, like florists and rental halls, to refuse to provide services or accommodations for same-sex marriages if the owners claim such marriages violate their religious beliefs. Widespread protests forced Pence and the state legislature to enact a “clarified” religious freedom act a week later.

In 1993 then-President Bill Clinton signed a federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act that said that “governments should not substantially burden religious exercise without compelling justification.” The Supreme Court four years later ruled that the law could not be applied to state governments. Since then 19 state legislatures have passed similar laws.

“This bill is not about discrimination,” Pence claimed when protests against signing it broke out. “If I thought it legalized discrimination I would have vetoed it.”

But these laws have nothing to do with preventing discrimination against the free exercise of the right to worship. Their goal is to legitimize discrimination against gays and others.

“VICTORY AT THE STATE-HOUSE!” conservative group Advance America said in a press release after its leader, Eric Miller, participated in the private ceremony where Pence signed the bill. “Christian bakers, florists and photographers should not be punished for refusing to participate in a homosexual marriage.”

In addition, the Indiana bill broadens the definition of a “person” who can claim the religious exemption to include an individual, an association, a partnership, a limited liability company, a corporation, a church, a religious institution.

The move flies in the face of the dra-

matic expansion in broad public opposition to discriminatory state marriage laws that perpetuate anti-gay prejudice and bigotry by denying equal protection to individuals on the basis of their gender or sexual orientation.

### Widespread protest

Even before Pence signed the bill, Indianapolis Mayor Gregory Ballard, a Republican, urged him to reconsider, warning of potential negative economic and political consequences.

Thousands demonstrated in Indianapolis March 28 to denounce the Restoration of Religious Freedom Act.

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees was “the first organization to pull a convention from Indianapolis due to the law,” Carli Stevenson, communications coordinator for AFSCME Indiana-Kentucky Organizing Committee 962, told the *Militant*. “Our union has a long history of standing up for civil rights. We could not hold an event where our members could be discriminated against.”

Two of the state’s senior Republicans, former Gov. Mitchell Daniels and former Vice President Daniel Quayle, spoke out against the bill.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association, based in Indianapolis, said the law “might affect future events as well as our workforce.” The Disciples of Christ, with some 6,000 annual convention attendees, threatened to boycott the state.

Pence was taken aback. “I’ll call them. I’ll talk to them,” he told a news conference.

Shortly after signing the bill, he began to push for passage of a bill to “clarify” it. The new bill passed the legislature April 2.

Pence refused to propose a state anti-discrimination law. But the “clarification” adopted did include language, for the first time in Indiana, prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as race, religion, disability or U.S. military service.

“This has changed somewhat now, so



AP Photo/Doug McSchooler

Thousands rally in Indianapolis March 28 against Restoration of Religious Freedom Act. Law opens door to discrimination against gays and others, does nothing to protect right to worship.

we are taking a look at the new legislation,” Stevenson said.

“Indiana doesn’t have any protections about gender identity or sexual orientation in the state’s civil rights bill,” Mary Byrne, executive director of Indiana Youth Group, an organization that promotes the safety, health and education of gay youth, told the *Militant*.

“Some local municipalities do,” Byrne said, noting only 11 municipalities have laws barring discrimination based on sexual orientation or

gender identification. “The legislation won’t do anything for 90 percent of the state where they don’t have local laws against discrimination.”

“On the other hand,” Byrne said, “it is the first time that these two phrases ‘gender identity’ and ‘sexual orientation’ have been included in statewide legislation in Indiana. We see it as a springboard to get this included in the civil rights bill.”

Anne Parker contributed to this article.

## ‘Militant’ subscription, fund drives

### Continued from front page

Introducing the *Militant* to workers door to door in big cities, small towns and farm communities is the bedrock of the drive. Supporters will also bring the paper with them as they join picket lines, demonstrations against police brutality and other social struggles. Candidates in local elections and members of the Socialist Workers Party and Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom will join debates and discussions at political events.

*Militant* supporters in Chicago decided to make the first week of the drive a target week. They knocked on doors in Whiting, Indiana, April 12 after joining the picket lines at the BP refinery where 1,100 members of United Steelworkers Local 7-1 have been on strike since Feb. 8.

“I know why they are on strike,” said Donna Kusbel in Whiting. “My husband died in the refinery in an explosion in October 1988. The company cut corners on safety.” She was one of four people there who got a subscription.

In Chicago, *Militant* supporters also set up a table at the April 9-12 national conference of MEChA, a Chicano student organization. Part of the conference was a march to a local McDonald’s as part of the fight for \$15 and a union.

Five conference participants signed up for subscriptions and four bought the Spanish-language edition of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* at half price (see ad).

The Militant Fighting Fund runs the same seven weeks as the subscription drive. Contributions to the fund are key to putting the paper out, covering printing, shipping, rent, utilities and up-keep of the offices. The fund also helps underwrite the special introductory subscription offer of \$5 for 12 weeks.

“We got a \$20 donation from one of my co-workers when he attended his first Militant Labor Forum,” reported Katy LeRougetel from Calgary, Alber-

ta, April 13. Forums are weekly events in most cities where the Socialist Workers Party and Communist Leagues have meeting halls. “We were showing a video on Cuba’s internationalist aid to victims of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster in Ukraine.”

Supporters of the Communist League candidates in the May 7 elections in the United Kingdom went door to door in London and Manchester last weekend.

Many workers in Dagenham in east London know about the fight of garbage truck drivers there against wage cuts of £1,000 (\$1,470) a year and a 50 percent cut in the time allowed for safety checks on their trucks.

“I support the drivers’ action,” Joanne Maloney told Jonathan Silberman, Communist League candidate in the national elections, as she signed up. “My husband was made redundant, along with 1,000 others, when the plant he worked at closed down. He’s been unemployed since.”

Seven people bought subscriptions in Newton Heath, a working-class neighborhood in Manchester April 11-12.

Andrés Mendoza, the Communist League candidate for Manchester City Council, met Yvonne Jones, a pharmaceutical worker. She told Mendoza she didn’t agree that British and foreign-born workers had common interests.

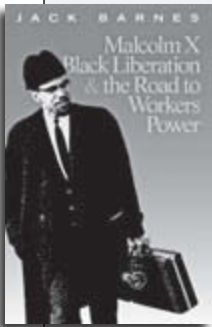
“You can’t put 10 people in a five-seat car,” Jones said. “We only live on a small island. This government is putting foreign people first.”

“The rulers want us fighting each other, but we need to learn how to unite in struggle,” Mendoza responded.

Jones decided to subscribe. She said she liked the fact that the *Militant* covers Pussy Riot, the Russian performers who were imprisoned for protesting the Vladimir Putin regime.

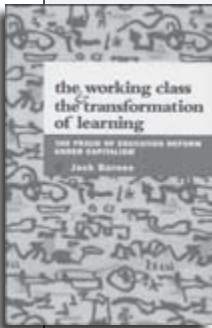
We call on readers to join in efforts to reach out broadly with the socialist newsweekly and to send a generous contribution to the fund. Contact a distributor listed on page 8. And send us reports on your experiences.

## Book specials for subscribers



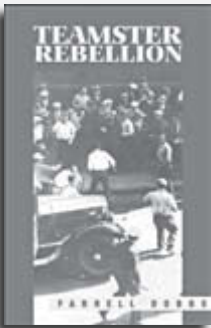
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# Palestinians fight Islamic State attack on Syrian refugee camp

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Reactionary Islamic State forces seized sections of the Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp April 1 on the edge of Damascus, Syria’s capital. The area had been under siege and bombardment with murderous barrel bombs by Bashar al-Assad’s regime there over the past two years in a drive to root out forces opposed to his dictatorial rule.

Yarmouk was founded in 1957 and became home to some 160,000 Palestinians uprooted by Israeli pressure and wars between Tel Aviv and surrounding Arab regimes. After massive public protests against Assad’s government shook Syria in 2011, the regime responded with military assaults against its opponents, including Palestinian groups in the refugee camp. Many fled a second time, to nearby Lebanon. According to the U.N., about 18,000 civilians, including 3,500 children, remain in the camp facing dire conditions.

“There is no food or electricity or water,” Ahmad, a resident of the camp, told the London *Guardian* April 10. “Daesh [an Arabic acronym for Islamic State] is killing and looting the camp, there are clashes, there is shelling. Everyone is shelling the camp. As soon as Daesh entered the camp they burned the Palestinian flag and beheaded civilians.”

The Syrian regime has added to the carnage. Between April 2 and 10 Assad’s aircraft dropped 36 barrel bombs on Yarmouk, killing at least 47 people, reported the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. Among targets hit was one of the camp’s two hospitals. According to the Observatory, at first Islamic State took control of 90 percent of the camp by defeating fighters mainly from Aknaf Beit al-Maqdis — a Syrian and Palestinian militia opposed to Assad. Members of the Nusra Front, Syria’s al-Qaeda branch, assisted Islamic State’s advance by helping them enter Yarmouk through Hajar Aswad, a neighborhood bordering the camp controlled by the Nusra Front.

“Palestinian armed groups alongside the Free Syrian Army are fighting to prevent ISIS [Islamic State] from establishing a foothold in Damascus,” Salem al-Meslet, a spokesman for the opposition Syrian National Coalition,

told Al-Jazeera April 5.

“Our force is now in the center of the camp after confining Islamic State terrorists to only 35 percent of the camp,” Khaled Abdel-Majid, a leader of the joint Palestinian groups fighting Islamic State, told the *Australian* by phone April 10.

In a statement issued the previous day from Ramallah, in the West Bank, the Palestine Liberation Organization said it refused to be drawn into supporting any military offensive in the Yarmouk camp “whatever its nature or cover,” calling instead “for resorting to other means to spare the blood of our people and prevent more destruction and displacement.”

## Oil workers continue national strike at 5 refineries

Continued from front page

continues at four other oil refineries and plants where the bosses refuse to agree with a national pattern contract with Shell Oil reached a month ago. Along with LyondellBasell, bosses at Marathon’s refinery and cogeneration facility in Texas City, Texas; at the BP-Husky refinery in Toledo, Ohio; and at the BP refinery in Whiting, Indiana, are holding out, hoping to extract concessions from the local unions.

The nationwide strike, the first since 1980, started Feb. 1. At its height 15 refineries and petrochemical plants nationwide were struck by nearly 7,000 union members. After they approved local agreements and the oil bosses signed on to the national agreement, unionists returned to work at 10 of the struck facilities.

The rally cry of the strike is safety. The unionists are fighting for the companies to hire more workers and stop forcing them to work 12-hour shifts seven days a week for weeks on end, with forced overtime to boot. They are demanding more of the thousands of contract workers in the refineries be represented by the Steelworkers.

LyondellBasell’s offer would have eliminated premium pay for work on normally scheduled workdays when workers have put in 40 hours by working their scheduled days off. Given excessive overtime at the refinery, Lege estimates that the average employee would lose between \$500 and \$1,000 every month. He said the agreement has been in contracts for six decades as a deterrent to excessive overtime.

LyondellBasell management accused the union of taking “an intractable stance.” In a letter to employees, Executive Vice President Kevin Brown declared talks at “an impasse” and said the company would implement the terms of the final offer. “With full appreciation and respect for your legal right to strike and remain off work, we believe that doing so is not in your best economic interest.”

“This is a worthy cause of the workers and the community,” Dan Hammock told the *Militant* on the picket line at LyondellBasell April 11. Hammock, a console operator for nine years, said he is proud of his participation in the strike. “In the past, the more we gave up in concessions, the



AP Photo/Mohammed Zaatari

Rally in Ein el-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp near Sidon, Lebanon, April 10 in support of Palestinians fighting Islamic State and Assad regime near Damascus, Syria. Sign says, “Yarmouk camp, steadfast camp, we do not want aid, we need you to stop the barrel bombs.”

more they wanted. These are shark-infested waters. And like sharks, they smell blood.”

“If the company wanted to, they could have resolved this strike in three days,” said Ken Wells, who was picketing with Hammock. “This is about union busting. They want to see how long we can last.”

Talks have resumed between BP and Steelworkers Local 7-1 in Whiting. “We are taking it day by day,” Tom Gajewski, chief operator at the refinery there, told the *Militant*. “We have gotten a lot of support from the community — everything from food to wood. People from Fight for \$15 came out to our union hall. I used to be a fast-food worker in high school. The cost of living keeps going up and

pay is stagnant.”

Meanwhile, Exxon Mobil rejected the union’s contract offer at the refinery in Beaumont, Texas. Workers there are not on strike, having continued on the job on 24-hour rolling extensions of the previous contract, as was the case at a number of other refineries. The company refused to sign on to the national pattern agreement, saying they wanted a longer contract.

“The Company no longer believes that Beaumont’s participation in pattern bargaining is beneficial,” said the company’s so-called Employee Information Bulletin, “and we are pursuing an off pattern agreement to get long-term certainty for our business and employees.”

Anne Parker in Whiting, Indiana, contributed to this article.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

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**WASHINGTON, D.C.**  
Celebrate the Working-Class Election Campaign in D.C. Speaker: Glova Scott, Socialist Workers Party candidate for D.C. City Council Ward 4. Sat., April 25. Dinner, 6 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. Donation: Dinner \$10, program \$5. 143 Kennedy St. NW., Suite 15. Tel.: (202) 536-5080.

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—CALENDAR—

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



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# —ON THE PICKET LINE—

MAGGIE TROWE, EDITOR

## Help make this column a voice of workers' resistance!

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

—Maggie Trowe



Militant

Striking Steelworkers picket Tesoro oil refinery in Martinez, California, March 18 demanding reinstatement of fired striker Criff Reyes. Workers approved contract March 24 and are still fighting for return of Reyes. "Strike strengthened union," said Steelworker Ben Fields.

### California Steelworker: 'Union was strengthened by oil strike'

MARTINEZ, Calif. — Union refinery workers, members of United Steelworkers Local 5, began returning to work at the Tesoro refinery here after nearly two months on strike. In a hard-fought battle, strikers demanded safer working conditions. Not everything we fought for was won, but many strikers went back believing that our union was considerably strengthened through the fight.

Five units are still on strike in Indiana, Ohio and Texas.

The membership of the Tesoro unit of Local 5 approved the strike settlement agreement March 24 by a narrow margin. Many voted against the proposal because Tesoro refused, as part of the back-to-work agreement, to reinstate Criff Reyes, one of our picket captains fired toward the end of the strike. Criff, an alkylation plant operator, had emerged as one of the main leaders in the fight. "All or none" was the sentiment expressed by many Local 5 members at the largest union action during the strike—a rally of 200 to 300 at the main Tesoro gate March 18.

The union committee and Tesoro agreed to take Criff's firing to arbitration with an expedited timetable. The union has established a "We are Criff Reyes Defense Fund" to support Criff and his family while he is out of work. Over \$10,000 has been raised toward the \$15,000 goal.

Contributions can be made at [www.gofundme.com/q8skxc](http://www.gofundme.com/q8skxc).

The memory of this strike and the strikers' fighting spirit will stay with us and our union as we face difficult situations with the company in the future. We are already experiencing an increase in company harassment and abuse on the job as we return to work.

— Ben Fields, member of USW

Local 5, works on analyzer maintenance at Tesoro refinery in Martinez.

### California farmworkers fight agricultural giant Gerawan

SAN FRANCISCO — More than 100 farmworkers traveled here from Fresno in California's Central Valley March 31 to build support for their fight against Gerawan Farming, one of the country's largest fruit growing enterprises.

They marched through downtown with supporters from local unions, rallied on the steps of City Hall and attended a San Francisco Board of Supervisors meeting, where a motion was passed to support their fight to force the company to respect their union contract.

The action was part of a national effort organized by the United Farm Workers to put a spotlight on the anti-union and anti-worker campaign being waged by Gerawan, a company that employs thousands of workers picking peaches, table grapes and

other fruits.

Since 2013, the company has refused to honor a contract imposed by the state Agricultural Labor Relations Board. The pact was the product of binding arbitration that took place after negotiations with the company broke down.

Gerawan has orchestrated a well-funded campaign to decertify the union. Supporters of the union have been harassed and fired. Crew foremen circulated petitions calling for a decertification vote, which took place in November 2013. Because of these and other irregularities, ballots from this election remain impounded by the Agricultural Labor Relations Board.

In a letter dated March 30 to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, co-owner Dan Gerawan bragged that his workers make the industry's highest wages.

"Workers are making \$11 an hour at Gerawan," UFW organizer Antonio Cortes told the *Militant*. "This is due to the pressure of our struggle. And only the workers hired directly by the company get this pay. The thousands of contract workers are only paid \$9 an hour. We are demanding that they get paid the same."

— Jenny Duncan

### Kenya truck drivers strike for union, against company abuse

Long-distance truck drivers in Kenya who work for Kuwait-based Agility Logistics parked their trucks on the main highway between the port of Mombasa and Nairobi March 3 in a peaceful protest against excessive work hours — including shifts up to 24 hours long — and denial of union recognition by the company. The same day a second group of drivers gathered near Mai Mahui, on the road between Nairobi and the Uganda border, according to the International Transport Workers' Federation, which is backing the truckers.

On March 15, armed police attacked sleeping drivers in the middle of the night, beating them and forcing them to drive at gunpoint to a company site. In one location community members



Militant

Members of United Farm Workers fighting for a contract at Gerawan Farming protest at San Francisco City Hall March 31.

rallied to the drivers' defense and prevented a similar attack by cops.

The drivers and other Agility workers are seeking union recognition for the Kenya Long Distance Truck Drivers' and Allied Workers' Union and protesting an earlier transfer of four union activists, who were given only a few days notice that they would be shifted from Mombasa to workplaces up to 750 miles away. Two workers being transferred to Uganda have no permit to work there.

Drivers involved in accidents have been fired without any investigation, Agility workers in Nairobi reported, and the company refused to cover medical expenses for drivers injured at work. The company also failed to provide safety equipment, such as overalls and safety boots.

A Kenyan court ordered the strikers back to work March 18, calling the job action "unlawful." Agility said it would apply a "no repercussions" policy for returning drivers and that drivers involved would receive full pay for the strike period. According to the company, the strikers accounted for 10 percent of Agility's workforce in Kenya.

Agility Logistics, one of the world's largest transportation companies, employs more than 20,000 workers in 100 countries. It is building a series of transport hubs across Africa. Agility drivers carry bulk cargo, containers and fuel from the Mombasa port across Kenya and on to Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and Tanzania. The striking drivers won support from other unions on their routes, including dockworkers in Mombasa.

— Sharon Lassen

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



April 27, 1990

TEANECK, New Jersey — The killing of a 16-year-old Black youth by a white cop has provoked outrage from the Black community here.

Phillip Pannell was shot in the back by Officer Gary Spath just after 6:00 p.m. on April 10. Spath was chasing the young man through a backyard in a predominantly Black section of this northern New Jersey suburb.

The following evening 1,000 people attended a candlelight vigil to protest the killing. When the vigil ended at the Teaneck municipal building participants were confronted by local police wearing riot helmets and carrying nightsticks.

"It was a tinderbox and the police were the match," a community activist explained to a local paper.



April 26, 1965

Opponents of U.S. aggression in Vietnam and partisans of social change should be greatly heartened by the remarkably successful April 17 student March on Washington to End the War in Vietnam.

The turnout of 20,000 was double the number expected by the organizers of the march. Viewed in relation to the character of the march, the figures are even more impressive. These 20,000 were not there simply to voice an amorphous pro-peace sentiment. They were in the capital as militant, conscious opponents of a war now going on.

They were there to oppose the reactionary efforts of the Johnson administration to crush a legitimate, popular revolution with bombs, napalm and gas.



April 27, 1940

Workers of America, join with us in celebrating May Day, the day dedicated to the international solidarity of the working class.

Join with us in pledging on this day that the workers in every country are our brothers, that whether they speak French or German or Italian or Russian or English the workers in all lands belong together in one united band against their oppressors. *Long live the international solidarity of Labor against all the bosses, "democratic" or fascist!*

Tens of millions of our brothers have been stuffed into uniforms and guns thrust into their hands — to shoot each other down. Let us dedicate ourselves this day to put an end to this slaughter of workers by workers.



# Cold-blooded killing fuels outrage

Continued from front page back, then tried to cover it up.

Police and city officials were faced with immediate protest and a call for an independent investigation from Scott's family, leaders of the International Longshoremen's Association and community groups, in the context of spreading protests against police violence and rising labor resistance nationwide.

Then a cellphone video of the shooting taken by Feidin Santana, a barber on his way to work, was made public April 7. The video not only showed Slager shooting Scott in the back, but also dropping an object that looked like a stun gun near the body.

Santana said he feared cop retaliation, but decided to give the video to the Scott family, who released it.

Under the spotlight of national and international outrage and media attention, state police arrested Slager April 7 on murder charges and held him without bond. The next day the city fired him.

The day Slager was fired, Rodney Scott, Walter's brother and a longshoreman, told the *New York Daily News*, "That was totally cold-hearted murder as far as I'm concerned."

Protests, vigils and meetings continue almost daily. More than 1,000 people attended Walter Scott's funeral April 11, opened to the public by the family.

Later that day 75 people rallied and marched to North Charleston City Hall in a protest organized by the NAACP, National Action Network and Black Lives Matter.

A debate is taking place at many of the actions on the need for discipline and to refrain from provocative acts. This keeps the focus on cop violence, as marchers take the moral high ground, and reduces the likelihood of police interference.

"This march has to be peaceful and nonviolent," Michelle Felder, one of the organizers of the march to City Hall, told participants. "I know you young people are angry, and you should be, but we don't want any trouble."

Dwayne German, 56, a maintenance worker at The Citadel military college here, spoke at the rally about the death of his stepson, 19-year-old Denzel Curnell, in June 2014. Police officer Jamal Medlin claimed Curnell shot himself during a stop-and-frisk, and a state investigation ruled the death a suicide.

German rejects that. "If I didn't speak out I would dishonor his memory," he told the *Militant*.

T.J. Thomas, the brother of Nicholas Thomas, a Smyrna, Georgia, auto tire shop worker killed on the job by cops March 24, also spoke.

## Cumulative impact of protests

Several hundred people, including North Charleston Mayor Keith Summey and Police Chief Eddie Driggers, attended an overflow service at the Charity Missionary Baptist Church April 12. Nelson Rivers, the church's pastor and vice president of the National Action Network, invited NAN President Rev. Al Sharpton to speak. Sharpton, who called for body cameras for the cops and an independent police review board, heaped praise on Summey, saying it was remarkable that the first mayor to "do the right thing" was a white man in the deep South.

But Summey wasn't responsible for

Slager's arrest. That was the result of the rise of broad protests against police brutality over the last year and their cumulative impact. They shine a spotlight on cases that once were swept under the rug and — when evidence like the video of the killing of Scott surfaces — force some punitive action by officials. And workers are gaining confidence their protests will get publicity and support.

Later that day 150 protesters gathered for a vigil at the field where Scott died. A memorial has sprung up there as dozens of people stop by to drop off flowers, cards and other remembrances. The mayor and police chief attended.

Residents in the majority Caucasian working-class neighborhood near where Scott was killed told the *Militant* that being stopped by cops for missing tail-lights or other minor infractions is common. "On Rivers Drive and Montague Avenue, you will get pulled over, more so if you're Black," Gladys Singleton, a seamstress, said, adding that at least five Black men have been killed by cops in recent years.

## Longshoremen help lead protests

The International Longshoremen's Association in Charleston has a long history of struggle against the maritime bosses. When union members marched against the use of nonunion labor on the docks in 2000, hundreds of Charleston cops attacked them, then brought frame-up charges against union leaders. "We're real familiar with police aggression," ILA Local 1422 leader Leonard Riley said in a phone interview April 13.

Local 1422 was instrumental in helping organize the public response to Scott's killing, including an April 7 press conference and a protest at City

# 'Solidarity is strengthened by social struggle'

The *Militant* received the following letter from reader August Nimtz in Twin Cities, Minnesota, commenting on the article "Does 'Broken Windows' Policy Cause Police Brutality?" in the Feb. 23 issue.

The *Militant* is right on in its article on police brutality and what it will take to eliminate it as well as the daily "crime and gang violence" working people have to live with. "Ties of solidarity among working people are strengthened in times of growing social struggles" — the beginning of a real answer to the latter. At the height of the Black rights movement 50 years ago, the Feb. 1, 1965, *Militant* reported on a study on how crime in the Black neighborhood dropped during the most intense moments of the mass mobilizations in one of the movement's sites. *Militant* readers, anti-police brutality fighters in particular, would also benefit in knowing more about how the Cuban Revolution was able to dismantle the police force and replace it with one that serves the interests of working people.

Below we reprint the article Nimtz refers to, with the original headline.



## How to Cut the Crime Rate: Mobilize People for Rights

A Johns Hopkins and Howard University study of crime patterns in Cambridge, Md., showed a clear link

## NY Socialist Workers candidate joins SC protests



Militant

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. — "Thank you for coming to join with us," Michelle Felder, a home health worker, above right, and Laura Winfield, left, told Maggie Trowe, second from right, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in New York. Felder and Winfield were two of the organizers of a march to City Hall here April 11 protesting the police killing of Walter Scott.

"I came to thank you and others in Charleston for standing up so strong against the killing of Walter Scott," Trowe responded. "This is a key question for all workers, and I plan to use my campaign to win support for your fight from workers in New York. Those who protest against police brutality across the country are starting to have an impact, as the arrest of the cop who killed Scott shows."

Trowe participated in a number of protests, including a service at the Charity Missionary Baptist Church, where she talked with Levon Scott, 49, a church trustee and city sanitation worker. "City workers need a union," Scott said. "The new head of sanitation is firing people right and left."

"Workers resistance to the bosses' attacks is growing, and we're gaining confidence," Trowe said. "Labor and social resistance — the protests here against police brutality, the Fight for \$15 across the country next week — they're all the same fight."

— JOHN BENSON

Hall the next day.

"We're not overly impressed by the arrest and charges," Riley said. "We're more concerned now that they carry out a real prosecution."

"Local 1422 will continue to stand up

and speak out against injustice in any form, whether it is racial profiling, racial discrimination or as in this case racial homicide," local President Kenneth Riley said in an April 9 statement on the ILA international website.

between "direct action" civil rights activity and a reduction in crimes among Negroes. The study showed that in the months of May through September in 1962 and 1963, during which there was considerable civil-rights activity in Cambridge, the Negro crime rate dropped to 25 per cent of the 1961 rate.

There was no corresponding difference in the crime rate of Cambridge whites.

According to the Jan. 15 *Baltimore Sun*, the university researchers drew the following conclusions:

"1. Aggressions built up by the system of segregation, instead of being dammed up or unleashed against other Negroes, were channeled into the non-violent protest movement . . ."

"2. All levels of the Negro community were affected by the movement. Even Negroes who took no active part in the protests were deterred from crime by a spirit of unity and common concern for the movement."

The civil-rights movement in Cambridge, led by the Cambridge Nonviolent Action Committee under the direction of Gloria Richardson, was one of the most militant in the country. For several months in the summer of 1963 the National

Guard was called into Cambridge to maintain martial law.

Despite this the CNAC won a number of demands in Cambridge, embodied in a July 23, 1963 five point program. These included integration of the Dorchester County schools, appointment of a bi-racial city committee, integration of all public places of accommodation, and the proposal for the building of low-rent public housing.

The university investigation of the effects of the Cambridge movement put its finger on a key point when it concluded: "The most important single fact is that [the Cambridge movement] was conducted almost entirely by lower class Negroes."



AP Photo/Harvey Georges

Gloria Richardson, right, civil rights leader in Cambridge, Maryland, faces off with National Guard, July 15, 1963.



# Cuba speaks for world's toilers at Summit of Americas

**Continued from front page**  
where U.S. companies are competing with rivals, especially from China.

"I thank all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean for their solidarity, which enabled Cuba to participate on an equal footing," Cuban President Raúl Castro said.

"As I'm owed six summits from which we were excluded, that's six times eight," Castro joked to applause and laughter, referring to the eight minutes allotted each head of state for their speeches this year. He asked for "a few minutes more."

Castro gave the history of the struggle for Cuban independence and against imperialist intervention in the region. He noted that U.S. intervention in Cuba began in April 1898, when U.S. soldiers landed on the island as Cuban freedom fighters were on the verge of winning a nearly 30-year war against Spanish colonialism.

U.S. troops "came as allies and seized the country as occupiers," Castro said. In 1901 the U.S. occupiers forced Cuba to add the Platt Amendment to the island's constitution, granting Washington the right to meddle in the internal affairs of Cuba and handing over what is now the U.S. Guantánamo Naval Base.

Washington organized "the overthrow of democratic governments and the installation of terrible dictatorships in 20 countries" in Latin America and the Caribbean, Castro said, including in Guatemala, Chile and Panama.

"I must reiterate our total support, resolute and loyal, to the sister Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela," Castro said, demanding U.S. sanctions against Venezuela be lifted.

"We suffered more casualties than the attackers" in the 1961 U.S.-led mercenary invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs, Castro said, but the invasion was "defeated in less than 72 hours." Since then, Cuba has been the target of scores of terrorist attacks by counterrevolutionaries, he added, causing more than 3,400 deaths and nearly 2,100 incapacitated for life.

Castro scoffed at Washington's inclu-



Verde Olivo

**Cuban volunteer militiamen celebrate defeat of U.S.-organized mercenary invasion at Playa Girón, Cuba, April 1961, part of history of U.S. aggression against Cuban Revolution.**

sion of Cuba on the State Department list of countries that sponsor terrorism and demanded it be removed.

On April 14 President Barack Obama announced plans to remove Cuba from the list, after a congressionally-mandated 45-day review period.

Even though Obama has joined Cuba in opening discussions on re-establishing diplomatic relations, Castro said, "the economic, commercial and financial blockade continues to be applied in full force against the island, causing harm and scarcities to the people and is the fundamental obstacle to the development of our economy."

"Despite scarcities and difficulties, we remain true to sharing what we have. Currently there are 65,000 Cuban collaborators working in 89 countries, especially in medicine and education," he said.

"If, with scarce resources, Cuba has been able to achieve this," he asked, "what couldn't be done in this hemisphere with the political will to join forces to contribute to the countries that need it the most?"

## World order must be changed

"Nothing of what exists today in the economic and political order serves the interests of humanity," he said, quoting Fidel Castro. "It cannot be sustained. It must be changed."

Fellow heads of state welcomed Cuba's participation. "Cuba is here because it fought for more than 60 years with unprecedented dignity," Argentine President Cristina Fernández told the gathering.

There is the "beginning of a new relationship between the people of the United States and the people of Cuba," Obama stated in his remarks. "The Cold War has been over for a long time. And I'm not interested in having battles that, frankly, started before I was born."

But Obama made it clear that while the U.S. tactics toward Cuba have changed, Washington's goals have not. "We're still going to have serious issues with Cuba," Obama put it at a press conference after the summit.

On April 11, Obama and Castro met for an hour to discuss further steps toward reestablishing diplomatic relations.

Obama told the press afterwards that "what we have both concluded is that we can disagree with the spirit of respect and civility, and that over time it is possible for us to turn the page and develop a new relationship in our two

countries."

"We have agreed to disagree. No one should entertain illusions," Castro said, adding "we have to be patient — very patient."

At a later press conference, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez said that "lifting the blockade is essential for advancing toward normalized relations."

## Battle of ideas

Cuban delegates took the offensive in defending the island's socialist revolution and calling for united action to defend the region's toilers from the impact of the worldwide capitalist economic crisis, both at the summit and in other meetings held in conjunction with it.

The "Forum of Civil Society and Social Actors," held April 8-10 as an official counterpart to the meeting of the heads of state, was a scene of heated debate.

Many in the official delegations from Cuba, which included university students and representatives of mass organizations like the Federation of Cuban Women, had not been given their credentials. Meanwhile, members of U.S.-

backed opposition groups that have little support in Cuba, were accredited. The Cuban and Venezuelan delegations walked out of some of the planned activities in protest.

A youth forum — co-sponsored by Pepsi, Dell and other corporations along with the World Bank, Young Americas Business Trust and the Summit — also became part of the battle of ideas, with the participation of a delegation of 20 Cuban youth. "What we want to discuss in depth are problems like free and high quality education and health care for all," Juan Cajar, a student at the University of Panama told the Cuban youth paper *Juventud Rebelde*.

As the youth forum opened, delegate Ariana Guerra, vice president of the Cuban Federation of University Students, told EFE news service that they were there "to defend just causes and to show our solidarity with the people of Venezuela."

Some 3,500 people participated in an alternative Summit of the Peoples, organized at the initiative of unions and social movements in Panama that are part of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America.

"Cuba will never let down the people of our America," Miguel Barnet, head of the National Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba, told the gathering. "And our spirit of generosity and devotion will never be weakened. It is expressed in the thousands of Cuban doctors who combat lethal epidemics and in teachers who save many communities on the planet from the conditions of ignorance and spiritual and material misery that the capitalist system imposes."

The Summit of the Peoples called for dismantling U.S. military bases in the Americas and an end to U.S. military intervention around the world; rejected the U.S. designation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as a threat to U.S. national security; called for an end to the U.S. embargo of Cuba; and demanded freedom for Oscar López, a Puerto Rican political prisoner in U.S. jails.

# April 15 actions for \$15, union

**Continued from front page**

began taking place across the country as the *Militant* goes to press. The Boston action was held April 14 because April 15 is a state holiday and the anniversary of the 2013 terror bombing at the Boston Marathon. Next week's *Militant* will have coverage from many of the protests.

"Thank you for your support," Francisco, who did not want his last name used, told the crowd. He is one of six workers at U.S. Kleaning Systems Inc., who are in a fight with their boss, a subcontractor at AMC Loews. They are paid less than minimum wage with no premium for overtime. After they organized protests at the theater, the boss paid them only half of what they were owed.

"With the protest today we hope they will pay us the rest," he told the *Militant*. The six are owed \$24,000.

The downtown march made stops at Northeastern University, where teaching assistants are fighting for higher pay, and at an office building at 31 St. James Street, where union cleaners were replaced with a nonunion con-

tractor.

When the protesters stopped at a McDonald's along the route, they found the door locked with a sign saying the restaurant was closed for "emergency maintenance."

Participants included members of SEIU, New England Council of Carpenters, Massachusetts Nurses Association, Boston Teachers Union, United Food and Commercial Workers, Laborers' International Union, National Association of Letter Carriers, Ironworkers and United Steelworkers-organized taxi drivers. Mass. Action Against Police Brutality members handed out flyers for a Saturday protest.

Several hundred people joined the first of what will be many New York actions April 15, a 6 a.m. march in downtown Brooklyn. The protest was organized by Laborers' Local 79 and involved other members of the building trades, fast-food, Walmart and home health care workers, community organizations and a high school drill team marching band. Protesters chanted in English and Spanish as one worker after another took the mike to speak out.

## For further reading...

**Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution**  
by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer  
\$20 Also in Spanish

**Cuba and the Coming American Revolution**  
by Jack Barnes  
\$10 Also in Spanish, French and Farsi

**Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?**

by Mary-Alice Waters  
\$7 Also in Spanish, French, Farsi, Swedish

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# Putin glorifies despotic czars as examples of Russian pride

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Who your heroes are says a lot. Russian President Vladimir Putin, who appeals to Great Russian chauvinism seeking to boost his regime and its modern-day territorial claims, promotes glorification of the czars and the country's despotic feudal history. Revolutionary working-class leaders Karl Marx and Frederick Engels accurately described the monarchs who ruled the Russian empire for centuries as "the mainstay of European reaction." Their rule was overthrown by the historic working-class-led revolution in 1917.

A recent blockbuster exhibition staged in Moscow and St. Petersburg by the Russian Military-Historical Society celebrated the medieval dynasty of the 16th century czar known as Ivan the Terrible. Mirroring current Kremlin propaganda, the show's theme was that Russia has suffered attacks from the west for centuries and been forced to mount wars of conquest to defend itself against foreign opponents. It depicted Ivan, infamous for brutality, as were many rulers of his epoch, as a victim of slander and sanctions from abroad.

The Military-Historical Society was founded three years ago by Russian Minister of Culture Vladimir Medinsky, in cooperation with Russia's defense ministry. Its other exhibits include a March 2015 show of paintings celebrating Moscow's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine the year before. Putin has urged the society to promote "patriotism and the sacred duty of defending our homeland, national dignity and loyalty to our roots."

## Reactionary history of czarism

In looking to promote an image of imperial Russia besieged by foreign enemies, Putin harkens back to the 1800s when Russia's rulers were the organizers of reactionary forces in Europe, seeking to destroy democratic and revolutionary threats and extend their feudal empire. Marx and Engels



Portrait of 16th century Russian Czar Ivan the Terrible at recent exhibit staged by Military-Historical Society. Vladimir Putin says Ivan wasn't so terrible, is good model for Russia today.

wrote often to urge revolutionaries across Europe to organize to meet this threat. Their views are summed up in "The Foreign Policy of Russian Tsardom," an 1890 article by Engels.

"The Empire of the Tsar is the mainstay of European reaction, its last fortified position and its great reserve army," Engels wrote. He explained the role of foreign conquest in maintaining czardom at home, saying, "To the Jingo public the fame of victory, the conquests following on conquests, the might and glamour of Tsardom, far outweigh all sins, all despotism, all injustice, and all wanton oppression."

Engels details how the Russian rulers pontificated on liberal principles to pursue diplomatic intrigue and wars of conquest. They proclaimed Russia's "duty to protect the oppressed Greek Church and downtrodden Slavs ... under the name of 'freeing the oppressed'" to justify continuous assaults in Crimea against Turkey in search of an outlet to the Black Sea.

In eastern Europe, the czars talked piously of the "Principle of Nationalities" to justify seizing chunks of Poland and what are today Belarus and Ukraine, Engels said.

Engels' depiction of Czar Nicholas I, who gained the throne in 1825, sounds eerily like Putin: "A conceited mediocrity, whose horizon never exceeded that of a company officer, a man who mistook brutality for energy, and obstinacy in caprice for strength of will,

who prized beyond everything the mere *show* of power."

The czars targeted every advance of the bourgeois democratic revolution in Europe — from the French Revolution of 1789 to the revolutionary upsurge that shook Europe in 1848, in which Marx and Engels were participants.

Engels describes how Russia's defeat in the Crimean War in 1853-56 spelled the beginning of the end for czarism, whose course "is possible only in a country where, and so long as, the people remain absolutely passive, have no will other than that of the Government, no mission but to furnish soldiers and taxes."

"The war had proved that Russia needed railways, steam engines, modern industry, even on purely military grounds," Engels wrote. "And thus the government set about breeding a Russian capitalist class. But such a class cannot exist without a proletariat, a class of wage-workers, and in order to procure the elements for this, the so-called emancipation of the peasants had to be taken in hand."

## 'Revolution in Russia can stop war'

Engels pointed to the conflicts already drawing the capitalist powers of Europe toward a continent-wide war, including the German annexation of the French territory of Alsace-Lorraine and Moscow's plans to capture what is now the Turkish city of Istanbul. At the same time Europe was

increasingly marked by "the struggle in all countries, ever growing fiercer, between the Proletariat and the Bourgeoisie," he said.

The "danger of a general war will disappear on the day when a change of things in Russia will allow the Russian people to blot out, at a stroke, the traditional policy of conquest of its Tsars, and to turn its attention to its own internal vital interests," Engels wrote. That is why the working class in Western Europe is "very deeply interested in the triumph of the Russian Revolutionary Party, and in the overthrow of the Tsar's absolutism. Europe is gliding ... towards the abyss of a general war, a war of hitherto unheard-of extent and ferocity. Only one thing can stop it — a change of system in Russia."

In fact it was in midst of the slaughter of World War I that the Russian toilers and democratic forces were able to "blot out, at a stroke" the czar and his imperial designs. Because a revolutionary working-class leadership had been prepared in the Bolshevik Party led by V.I. Lenin, the toilers of Russia won political power, opening a new era for the working class.

Under this revolutionary leadership the toilers began to take on the legacy of capitalism and imperialism, including combating national chauvinism and championing the rights of the peoples that had been oppressed within the czarist "prison house of nations."

These gains and the revolutionary perspectives they provided workers and farmers worldwide were overthrown in a bloody counterrevolution led by Joseph Stalin in the late 1920s. Stalin, like Putin, was a fan of Ivan the Terrible. He ordered the destruction of books on the reactionary history of czardom and personally edited their replacements, presenting Ivan as a unique and progressive ruler who sought to turn Russian despotism into a great world power.

It is the political legacy of Marx, Engels and the 1917 revolution in Russia, not the record of czarism, that stands as an example that working people in Russia and throughout the world can draw strength and inspiration from. It's an example that Putin wholeheartedly rejects and would like to wipe out of history.

## Further Reading

### First Five Years of the Communist International

by Leon Trotsky

During its first five years, the Communist International, guided by V.I. Lenin, sought to build a world movement of Communist parties capable of leading the toilers to overthrow capitalist exploitation and colonial oppression. Vol. 1 \$28, Vol. 2 \$29. For Readers Club members \$21.75 each.

### The Revolution Betrayed

by Leon Trotsky

Roots of the disintegration of the Soviet bureaucracy and sharpening conflicts in and among the former republics of the USSR. \$20

### Collected Works of Marx and Engels

Vol. 27 includes 1890 article by Frederick Engels, "The Foreign Policy of Russian Tsarism." \$35. Other volumes available.

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# Join growing fight against cop brutality!

For decades, cops from one end of the country to the other have brutalized workers — and disproportionately workers who are Black — with impunity. They do so in the interests of the propertied rulers, as part of maintaining capitalist rule over the millions of toilers their system exploits and oppresses.

It's not a question of “rogue” cops, as Jack Barnes, the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, said about the Los Angeles cops who beat Rodney King in 1991. “We are talking about a *social* phenomenon,” Barnes said, “the product of a *policy* that trains, coarsens, and makes it profitable for cops to mete out such brutal punishment.”

But new winds are blowing today. Protests against cop killings and beatings of working people over the last year have forged a growing alliance of unionists, Black rights fighters and others who take to the streets to protest every new assault. Public protests get more publicity, encourage others to act, win broader solidarity, increase fighters' confidence and reinforce ongoing struggles.

And these fights are strengthened by growing working-class resistance against the grinding offensive of the bosses aimed at making us pay for today's crisis of their capitalist system. Workers fighting for \$15 and a union or walking the picket line on the first national oil strike in more than 30 years see links between their fight and their sisters and brothers fighting cop violence. And vice versa.

When protesters hit the streets after the cold-blooded killing of Walter Scott in North Charleston, South

Carolina, and a courageous bystander gave his family a video of cop Michael Slager firing eight bullets into Scott's back as he fled unarmed, the news flashed around the world. The video has been watched by millions. The authorities saw no choice but to arrest, charge and fire the cop.

That doesn't mean the fight is over. As longshore unionist Leonard Riley said, “We're not overly impressed by the arrest and charges. We're more concerned now that they carry out a real prosecution.”

The function of police in capitalist society is to serve and protect the capitalist rulers and to intimidate and divide the working class. They aim their fire disproportionately at the layers of the class that have a history of resistance.

From the Civil War to Radical Reconstruction to the mass proletarian movement that toppled Jim Crow in the 1950s and '60s, as well as in the construction of the industrial union movement in the 1930s and since, Black workers have been among the most determined fighters in class battles in the U.S.

Participating in the battle against police brutality is an issue of central importance for the working class. It is *our* fight. It is part of awakening, as Malcolm X said, to our humanity, to our self-worth. It is part of building a revolutionary proletarian movement that can overthrow the dictatorship of capital and remove the root cause of capitalist violence and oppression.

We must be ready to go to Charleston, to Ferguson, to Staten Island or wherever resistance against police brutality breaks out.

## Ukraine ban on free speech threat to sovereignty

BY NAOMI CRAINE

In the name of denouncing totalitarianism and honoring independence fighters the Ukrainian parliament passed several laws April 9 that trample on the freedom of speech. Like many other steps by the capitalist government in Kiev — from austerity measures that hit workers the hardest to the treatment of civilians in the separatist-controlled areas in the east as the enemy — the new laws undermine the defense of Ukraine's sovereignty against disruption and attacks from Moscow.

The laws “endeavor to impose particular views on Ukrainian history and effectively criminalize ‘dissident’ positions,” wrote Halya Coynash, a member of the widely respected Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group and outspoken opponent of the laws, April 13. They are especially dangerous in light of “the war being waged by Russia and its proxies, and relentless attempts to sow division and enmity between Ukrainians.”

One law condemns “communist and national-socialist (Nazi) totalitarian regimes in Ukraine,” making it illegal to display Soviet or Nazi symbols, and bans “public denial of the criminal nature of the communist totalitarian regime of 1917-1991 in Ukraine” — that is during the entire existence of the Soviet Union.

It would outlaw anyone who argues that the Russian Revolution in 1917 was an advance for the working class in Ukraine and worldwide, even if they are opponents of the Stalinist counter-revolution there and fought against Stalin's assaults on Ukraine in the 1930s and beyond.

Another measure grants social benefits and full military status to veterans of nationalist forces during World War II, including the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. Both groups were branded fascist by the Stalinist regime in Moscow and Ukrainians hold wide range of opinions about them today. But the new law seeks to stifle any debate and force everyone in Ukraine to hail the two groups or face charges.

There is substantial evidence that forces in these groups collaborated with Nazi occupation troops when they invaded Ukraine. Some of their members developed revolutionary anti-Stalinist views after the war and fought to advance the national interests of workers and farmers in Ukraine.

A third thought-control law bars calling World War II the “Great Patriotic War,” saying it prohibits “falsification of the history of the Second World War 1939-45” in schools, textbooks, the media and by public officials — posing the obvious question of who decides what qualifies as “falsification.” The final law purports to open the archives of the secret police from the Soviet era, placing them under the control of the Institute for National Remembrance, which helped draft the other thought-control measures.

All four laws were adopted unanimously by the Cabinet, rubber-stamped by parliament and now await the signature of President Petro Poroshenko.

The passage of the laws “is not just killing the chances for real historical investigation and debate,” Coynash wrote. “It is also forcing a significant number of Ukrainians to fall silent or face being against the law in their own country for expressing their opinions.”

She cited a recent survey of Ukrainians' views of historical events, highlighting regional differences that the government's course will exacerbate. “Most regions view the collapse of the Soviet Union positively,” she said, “however the opposite is true in three regions” — Donbass, Kharkiv, and Dnepropetrovsk and Zaporizhya, all eastern regions where the pro-Russian separatist forces are based. Nationally, “a relative majority (47 percent against 20 percent) viewed the creation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic positively,” which would put nearly half of the population at odds with some aspects of the new laws.

“There is no reason to expect Russia's well-paid and manned propaganda machine to stay silent when such obvious opportunities to fuel resentment and anger are handed to them on a platter,” Coynash said.

### ‘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.

# Mobilizations against cop assaults spread

BY EMMA JOHNSON

The fight against police killings and brutality against African-Americans and other working people is growing and becoming more organized. Families and friends who have sustained ongoing actions for years demanding prosecution of the cops responsible are finding each other and joining forces. Expanding struggles by unionists against boss attacks, from Walmart to the national oil strike, reinforce these fights today, and more unionists are joining in.

“It's important for us to support our union sister in this fight,” said Scott Houldieson, newly elected vice president of United Auto Workers Local 551, addressing an April 4 rally in front of the police station in Calumet, Illinois, demanding the cops who killed 15-year-old Stephon Watts in February 2012 be held accountable.

Danelene Powell-Dickens, Watts' mother, is a member of the local and a number of her fellow unionists joined the rally. So did members of Service Employees International Union, Teamsters and United Food and Commercial Workers union. Members of the NAACP, Socialist Workers Party and Black Lives Matter also joined in.

“We stand with her and her family in demanding justice for Stephon,” Houldieson said.

In Calgary, Alberta, five cops shot Anthony Heffernan three times in the head and once in the chest after they broke into his motel room March 16. When Heffernan, who was battling drug addiction, opened the door holding a lighter and a syringe, they used a Taser and then shot him. Motel staff had called the police after Heffernan failed to check out and didn't respond when they tried to talk to him through the locked door.

“In no way was this a high risk situation for five police officers,” said Pat Heffernan, Anthony's father, at an April 4 rally of 100 called by watchdog group Cop Block. “We do not have a just society if police can come to a wellness call and act like this.”

Heffernan was a journeyman electrician. Fellow electricians and members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers joined the rally.

Several dozen opponents of police brutality gathered March 22 outside the former home of Errol Chang in Pacifica, California, to mark the one-year anniversary of his killing by cops.

Chang suffered from bipolar disorder and paranoid schizophrenia. He suffered a psychotic breakdown March 18, 2014, and barricaded himself in the house. Family members sought the aid of police. During a six-hour standoff with the cops, Chang attempted to surrender.

“In the old days they used to chain up the mentally ill, torture them, shock them,” Dolores Piper told the rally. Her nephew Derrick Gaines was killed by police in nearby South San Francisco two years earlier. “We should be way beyond that now. But no, we just outright shoot them down. So many mentally ill people are shot by the cops.”

In Los Angeles 200 people joined friends and family members of many of the estimated 617 people killed by cops in Los Angeles County since 2000 in an April 7 “Remember Me” march. The action was organized by the new STOP Police Violence coalition.

Protesters converged on the offices of District Attorney Jackie Lacey and the County Board of Supervisors from four different starting points.

“We have to show we are not giving up. We are fighting for our rights,” Melissa Macias, a high school student, told the *Militant*. She was at the action for Eduardo Bermuda, a family friend shot by cops last November.

*R.V. Smallwood in Chicago; Katy LeRougetel in Calgary, Alberta; Mark Shaeffer in Pacifica, California; and Wendy Lyons in Los Angeles contributed to this article.*

### Correction

The caption on one of the photos on the front page of the April 13 issue should have described Joanne Kuniansky as the Communist League candidate for the New South Wales state parliament in Australia.