

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Cuban revolutionaries speak
to workers across UK
— PAGE 7

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 80/NO. 29 AUGUST 8, 2016

US gov't tries for military deal on Syria with Moscow

BY MARK THOMPSON

Secretary of State John Kerry says Washington hopes to soon reach agreement with Moscow for closer military cooperation and intelligence sharing in Syria. This is the Barack Obama administration's latest step to try to advance U.S. imperialism's interests in the Mideast through collaboration with the Russian and Iranian governments.

According to the *Washington Post*, the pact the White House is seeking would establish a joint command center staffed by U.S. and Russian military and intelligence officers in Amman, Jordan, to coordinate joint airstrikes in Syria against Jabhat al-Nusra, the Syrian branch of al-Qaeda. Al-Nusra is militarily the strongest of the opposition forces fighting against the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Smaller opposition groups backed by Washington often collabo-

Continued on page 4

Capitalist 'sea of debt' paves way to bigger crisis

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Few workers need to be told that they're facing the worst economic crisis of their lifetimes. After seven years of a so-called recovery, millions still cannot find jobs or can only find part-time work. For most of those who are working, wages are stagnant or falling. Not only is there no end in sight, the workings of capitalism today are paving the way for a deeper catastrophe.

At the root of the crisis are the bosses' falling rates of profits and contraction in the rate of investment in capacity-expanding plant, equipment and employment.

"Working people in the United States are also being hit hard by the disastrous consequences of the rulers' drive over the past several decades to float their rate of profit on a sea of debt, in which we are left to drown," says Jack Barnes, national secretary

Continued on page 9

'Socialist Workers Party is revolutionary party we need'

Working class is capable of reorganizing society



Militant/John Staggs

Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy, left, at July 27 march against police brutality in Philadelphia, with Delphine Matthews, mother of Frank McQueen, killed by Chester, Pennsylvania, police in 2014. It makes no difference to workers whether Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton is elected, Kennedy said, because source of problems is capitalism.

BY MAGGIE TROWE

SALT LAKE CITY — "Workers need a revolutionary party to educate and organize the working class to fight for political power," Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy told a news conference here July 22. "That's what the Socialist Workers Party is."

"Last night Donald Trump's Republican Party convention ended," Kennedy noted. "Next week it will be the coronation of Clinton in Philadelphia. Neither the propertied rulers nor their candidates Trump and Hillary Clinton have any solution to the

irresolvable crisis of capitalism. Instead they aim to make us believe the fantasy that 'we' — the workers and the capitalist owners — are all in this together."

**CAPITALISM CAN'T
BE REFORMED**
— Editorial, page 9

Kennedy has joined party supporters across the country knocking on doors in towns, cities and farming and ranching areas, talking with working people about the impact of the world social and economic crisis, and building a working-class movement to confront it. During recent campaigning in seven counties in Utah, 210 people bought copies of *Are They Rich Because They're Smart? Class, Privilege and Learning Under Capitalism*.
Continued on page 3

'Honeywell is determined to get the union out,' say locked-out workers

BY JOHN HAWKINS

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — "Honeywell is determined to get the union out of here. They want to go back to the way things were before the union was founded" decades ago, said Willis Northcutt as he helped staff the picket line here July 22.

"It's not that the company is not making money. They're just not making enough to meet their expectations," added Northcutt, a fabricator

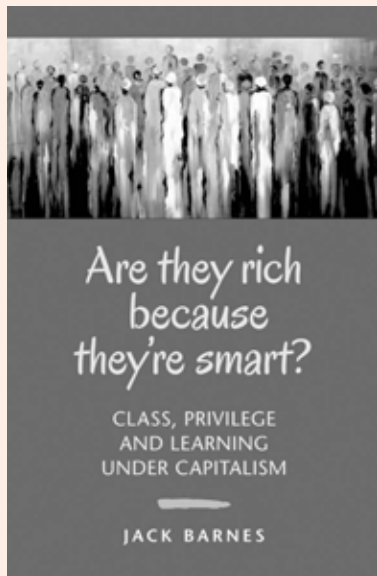
and high temperature furnace operator for 33 years.

Pickets are standing firm at every entrance to Honeywell International's aircraft brake plant here, more than two months after the company locked out 317 members of United Auto Workers Local 9, along with about 40 members of UAW Local 1508 in Green Island, New York.

Members of Local 9 voted 270 to
Continued on page 5

Are they rich because they're smart? Class, privilege and learning under capitalism

by Jack Barnes



In the coming battles forced upon us by the capitalist rulers, says Barnes, workers will begin to transform ourselves and our attitudes toward life, work and each other. Only then will we discover our own worth and learn what we're capable of becoming.

**Special offers
\$7 for book or
\$10 for book & subscription**

See list on page 8 to join with
Socialist Workers Party or
Communist League nearest you to
campaign with this book.
Our party is your party!

Free speech victory! Florida prisons reverse 'Militant' ban

BY SETH GALINSKY

In a victory against censorship and for First Amendment rights of free speech and freedom of the press, Florida prison authorities have rescinded the impoundment of the May 30 issue of the *Militant*.

At least two prisons in the state, the Santa Rosa Correctional Institution and the Northwest Florida Reception Center, had refused to give subscribers that issue of the paper because of an article titled "Prisoners Strike to Protest Abuse and Little or No Pay in Alabama," claiming that it was "a threat to the security, good order, or
Continued on page 9

Inside

Court violates trial rights of Oregon land protesters 2

Protests in S. Korea oppose plan for US missile system 4

Vancouver meeting discusses struggles of Chinese overseas 6

—On the picket line, p. 5—

Steelworkers join picket line to back New Jersey casino strikers
Strikers in Montreal's Old Port, senior homes demand \$15/hour

Court violates trial rights of Oregon land protesters

BY SETH GALINSKY

The judge in the government’s vindictive prosecution of participants in the January occupation of the Malheur Wildlife Refuge near Burns, Oregon, has once again refused to grant pretrial release of brothers Ammon and Ryan Bundy, two of the protest organizers, violating their constitutional right to presumption of innocence.

The occupation began Jan. 2 to draw attention to the frame-up of father and son cattle ranchers Dwight and Steven Hammond, and to what many working ranchers call federal “overreach” — that is rules, regulations and other bureaucratic obstacles to their use of federal land for grazing.

After serving their original prison terms on trumped-up charges of arson for setting controlled fires to protect their land, the Hammonds went back to prison Jan. 4, after a federal court ruled that the time served didn’t meet the minimum five-year sentence of the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, under which they had been charged.

The occupation ended after Oregon state troopers and the FBI ambushed

and arrested participants in the protest who were on their way to a Jan. 26 community meeting. Robert “LaVoy” Finicum, another leader of the protest, was shot and killed after he tried to drive around a roadblock and make it to the meeting.

No one was fired at or injured by anyone participating in the occupation of the refuge. This was recognized in essence on June 10, when a U.S. District Court judge dismissed the accusation of “Use and Carry of a Firearm in Relation to a Crime of Violence,” the most serious of six counts against the Bundys and 24 other defendants. If found guilty they could have faced up to life in prison.

They are still charged with “Conspiracy to Impede Officers of the United States” and “theft” of government property. They face similar charges for their participation in a protest in Nevada in April 2014 against attempts by the Bureau of Land Management to confiscate and sell 400 cows that belong to their father, Cliven Bundy.

In the motion for their release pending trial, the Bundys’ lawyers note that more than 1,000 people visited the occupation at the Malheur refuge “without interference from the federal government, notice or arrest.” The Bundys, “making no secret of their travels,” regularly attended meetings with ranchers, workers and others all over the area, including speaking with police officials about their political views. The Bundys “have a strong desire to defend themselves and vindicate their principles,” the lawyers said.

The Bundys hope to use their trial to

Socialist Workers Party files for Louisiana ballot



Militant/Rachele Fruit

BATON ROUGE, La. — The Socialist Workers Party filed here July 20 to place its candidates Alyson Kennedy and Osborne Hart for U.S. president and vice president on the ballot in Louisiana in November.

“We are facing the deepest economic, political, social and moral crisis that any of us have seen since the 1930s. It is an irreversible crisis of the system of capitalism,” Hart told the media at the secretary of state’s office after the filing.

Hart was in Baton Rouge earlier in the month to join protests against the killing of Alton Sterling by local cops and to talk with working people in the area. A video captured the cops throwing Sterling to the ground, then shooting him at point blank range.

Above, Hart, right, speaks with supermarket worker Ashley Ferdinand July 9. They met the day before at a protest against police brutality and she invited him to another meeting at Southern University.

“We need to demand that the cops who killed Sterling be charged and prosecuted,” Hart said. “Police brutality can only be ended once and for all when we get rid of the system that breeds it: capitalism.”

— STEVE WARSHALL

publicize their view that the federal government’s control of some 50 percent of the land west of the Mississippi River is unconstitutional.

In other rulings that undermine their constitutional rights and ability to defend themselves, the court denied the Bundys’ request for a change of venue; for a delay in the trial to have enough time to prepare; and to not be forced to stand trial in Oregon and Nevada simultaneously.

Working ranchers in Oregon had a range of views on the wisdom of the occupation. Even among those who thought it was not the right way to protest, there was sympathy with the demand to free the Hammonds. And many

felt the occupation helped shine light on federal government policies that worsen the situation of ranchers.

Meanwhile, cattle ranchers are facing big challenges as the capitalist economic crisis deepens. The bubble that had built up in beef prices is in sharp decline.

More ranchers and working farmers across the country are going into debt for larger amounts. According to the most recent figures available from the Kansas City Federal Reserve, farm debt since the first quarter of 2014 has increased 20 percent, while farm income has dropped sharply. Delinquency rates on farm loans, which had been in decline since 2010, have begun to rise again.

THE MILITANT

Strengthen fight against police brutality!

Across the U.S. and beyond Black, Latino, Caucasian and Asian workers and youth have said ‘Enough!’ and joined protests against the cop killings of Alton Sterling, Philando Castile and others.

Follow this important fight for the working class in the ‘Militant.’



Thomas Altfather Good

July 17 protest in Staten Island, New York.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

☐ \$5 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

☐ \$10 for 12 weeks

☐ \$20 for 6 months

☐ \$35 for 1 year

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION _____

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT,
306 W. 37TH ST., 13TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018.

12 weeks of the *Militant* outside the U.S.: Australia and the Pacific, A\$10 • United Kingdom, £3 • Canada, Can\$7 • Caribbean and Latin America, US\$10 • Continental Europe, £10 • France, 8 euros • New Zealand, NZ\$7 • All other areas, US\$16 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

The Militant

Vol. 80/No. 29

Closing news date: July 27, 2016

Editor: John Studer
Managing Editor: Naomi Craine

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Emma Johnson, Jacob Perasso, Maggie Trowe, Brian Williams.

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
Website: 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.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: For one year send \$35 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: For one year

send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Africa, Asia, and the Middle East: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Canada: For one year send Canadian \$45 to the Militant, 7107 St. Denis #204, Montreal, Quebec H2S 2S5.

United Kingdom: Send £26 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, 2nd Floor, 83 Kingsland High St., Dalston, London, E8 2PB, England.

Republic of Ireland and Continental Europe: Send £85 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London at above address.

France: Send 120 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15.

New Zealand: Send NZ\$55 for one year to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland 1140, New Zealand.

Australia: Send A\$70 for one year to P.O. Box 164 Campsie, NSW 2194, Australia.

Pacific Islands: Send NZ\$55 for one year to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland 1140, New Zealand.

Submissions to the *Militant* may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.

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

‘Workers are so open to discuss politics’ of SWP

BY MAGGIE TROWE

The Socialist Workers Party is carrying out a far-reaching effort to introduce thousands of workers to the party, campaigning for communism door to door across the country. Many workers who have been following the pro-capitalist, nationalist Republican and Democratic Party conventions welcome the SWP’s internationalist perspective and its confidence that the working class can organize to take power and join the worldwide struggle for socialism.

An important tool is the new book *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege and Learning Under Capitalism* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. The introduction and three chapters — “Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? The Rationalization of Class Privilege,” “Growing Class Stratification and the ‘Enlightened Meritocracy,’” and “Capitalism, the Working Class, and the Transformation of Learning” — strike a chord with many workers.

Following its Active Workers Conference in June, the SWP organized campaigning across Vermont and

Utah, meeting many workers interested in learning about the party and its program, strengthening its proletarian character and winning contacts and supporters. More than 400 people bought copies of the new book in those two states.

The same openings exist across the country. The party in New York is fielding teams to cities and towns in New Jersey, where it campaigned this spring, and to a range of neighborhoods across the metropolitan area.

“Four of us went to the Electchester apartments in South Flushing, Queens, last weekend,” Naomi Craine reported. This is a housing complex run by International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 3, and many of the residents are members.

“We met several workers we will want to follow up with,” Craine said. “A young woman who is just finishing up her electrician apprenticeship liked the title of the book and the graphs in it that illustrate why the capitalists can’t solve their economic crisis.”

In Lincoln, Nebraska, retired railroader Joe Swanson and plastics fab-



Militant/Mitchel Rosenberg

From left, Mackenzie and Janelle Miller talk with SWP campaigners Sam Manuel and Deborah Liatos in American Fork, Utah, July 12. Party supporters talked with thousands across state.

rication worker Chris Steffen began campaigning door to door after the conference, something new for Steffen. “I was a little surprised how workers are so open to discussions about real political issues that affect their lives daily,” he said. “The big-business commentators say workers are passive to politics. Not true!”

“A man who came here as a teenage refugee from Iraq invited us in for refreshments,” Steffen said. “As we discussed the way forward for the working

class, he told us about his job in a meat-packing plant, the increased line speed and how difficult it is to get by on his wages.”

“He told us he is leaning toward Donald Trump in the election,” Swanson added, “but is bothered by the Republican candidate’s anti-Muslim vitriol. He bought the new book after we discussed how the capitalists rule by dividing the working class, and how a revolutionary movement to take power must forge unity among millions of workers.”

Kennedy: ‘SWP is revolutionary party workers need’

Continued from front page

lege and Learning Under Capitalism by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes and 179 subscriptions to the *Militant*. Reading communist literature is an essential part of understanding the party’s perspective and to be better able to think socially and act politically in defense of the interests of the working class.

Journalists from the *Salt Lake Tribune*, Fox13 television and the *Militant* covered the conference, and Kennedy and Socialist Workers Party national campaign director John Studer were interviewed on KRCL radio.

At the Republican Party convention, Trump added a law and order theme — Make America Safe Again — to his “America First” and “Make America Great Again” slogans. He continued scapegoating immigrants, falsely accusing workers without papers of being criminals, while saying he alone will “create millions more jobs.”

More than 30 million tuned in to Trump’s acceptance speech. He pledged to bring back coal, steel and other industrial jobs and keep the U.S. out of foreign wars. Trump said working people are being devastated and blamed poor “trade deals,” not capitalism. “I am going to turn our bad trade agreements into great trade agreements,” he said.

Clinton claims that “America never stopped being great” and blames any economic difficulties on Republican Party opposition to the Barack Obama administration. She has attacked Trump for being anti-immigrant, leaving out that she has backed to the hilt the anti-immigrant policies of the Obama and previous administrations that have made it harder for workers without papers to get jobs and easier for the government to put them in jail, resulting in thousands being locked up for the so-called crime of coming to the U.S. to look for work.

It makes no difference to working people which of the two is elected, Kennedy said. The day after the election, the ruling rich will still be pushing the

capitalist economic crisis on the backs of working people and escalating imperialist military intervention in the Middle East, scapegoating immigrants and undermining democratic rights.

“The war against workers here and spreading wars against workers and farmers abroad will deepen,” the candidate said. “For decades we have been battered by low and stagnant wages, plant and mine closings, speedup on the job and assaults on our unions. The rulers try to divide us with attacks on immigrant workers and on a woman’s access to abortion and to contraception.”

Washington has been engaged in non-stop wars in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya and elsewhere, Kennedy said. “Millions have been forced to flee, many seeking to get to Europe, exacerbating the crisis of the rulers there and their European ‘Union,’ which is coming apart.”

‘Gains are not won at ballot box’

“Both Clinton and Trump say, ‘I will solve your problems,’” Kennedy told the Fox13 reporter. “We say it’s working people ourselves who will solve our problems. Gains are not made at the ballot box, they’re made by workers’ struggles,” she said, citing union coal miners’ successful fight to win black lung benefits in the 1960s.

Kennedy was part of the first wave of women coal miners in the early 1980s.

She later worked at the Co-Op mine in Huntington, Utah, where she helped lead a union organizing drive from 2003 to 2006 together with co-workers who were immigrants from Mexico.

The SWP takes part in working-class struggles — from building the Sept. 8 march on Washington, D.C., called by the United Mine Workers union to defend pensions and health benefits from assaults by the government and mine bosses; to protesting police brutality in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Salt Lake City and elsewhere; to defending women’s right to choose abortion.

“Through these fights and bigger battles to come, working people will gain the class consciousness and confidence to build a revolutionary movement that can overthrow today’s dictatorship of capital, establish a workers and farmers government and join in the worldwide struggle for socialism,” Kennedy said.

Javier Segura, a medical interpreter who met Socialist Workers Party campaigners when they knocked on his door, came to the press conference to meet Kennedy and support the party’s ballot effort. Campaigners collected nearly 1,700 signatures, two-thirds more than the 1,000 required by the state. But several counties, after checking petitions submitted earlier in the month, rejected more than half as “invalid.”

“It is simply not credible that so few



Militant/Maggie Trowe

SWP presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy during July 22 KRCL radio interview in Salt Lake City. Behind Kennedy is Javier Segura, who met campaigners at his door.

of those who signed for us are ‘eligible,’” Studer told the reporters. “In Washington state, after our protest, authorities found 200 more valid signatures and certified the SWP on the ballot. Our attorneys in Vermont and Chris Wharton here in Utah are working with us to win a similar result.”

In a July 21 letter to the office of the lieutenant governor, which supervises elections, Wharton wrote that the signatures collected at workers’ doors “demonstrate broad support among working people in Utah for my client’s candidates to appear on the ballot.”

When reporters asked why the SWP is encountering these obstacles Kennedy replied, “The election laws are designed to keep the two capitalist parties in power and to make it difficult for a working-class party to get on the ballot.”

Several workers sent messages in favor of the Socialist Workers Party candidates winning ballot status. “The time has come to start hearing and listening to the voice of the working men and women of Utah,” wrote John Haight, a former copper miner and longtime unionist from Kearns. “I signed the petition to put Alyson Kennedy and Osborne Hart on the ballot for president and vice president. They have won workers’ support across the state of Utah.”

More than \$1,100 was raised in Utah to cover campaign expenses. Additional funds are needed to keep going.

Join the Socialist Workers Party campaigning

- ☐ Contact me to join in campaigning for the working-class alternative and help get out the new book *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?*
- ☐ Enclosed is ___\$1,000 ___\$500 ___\$200 ___\$100 ___\$25 ___other (Make checks payable to Socialist Workers National Campaign Committee)
- ☐ Enclosed is \$5 for a 12-week introductory subscription to the *Militant*

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Socialist Workers Party 2016 Campaign

227 W. 29th St., 6th Floor, NY, NY 10001

Tel: (646) 922-8186 ✉ Email: swp2016campaign@gmail.com

Protests in S. Korea oppose plan for US missile system

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Working farmers in Seongju, South Korea, have organized daily actions since a July 8 U.S.-South Korean announcement that their county would be the site of the deployment of a U.S. anti-ballistic missile system.

The Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system — which combines high-power radar with an interceptor missile battery — is scheduled to be in operation by the end of 2017. It is the latest step in U.S. imperialism’s continued aggression against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea in the north. The Chinese government dismissed Washington and Seoul’s claim that North Korea is the only target, saying the deployment is aimed at Beijing as well. The Russian government also objected.

The U.S. military already operates a THAAD system in Guam and two X-band radars in Japan. The system in Seongju would be able to monitor military activity deep into China.

When South Korean Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn visited Seongju July 15, he was met by a demonstration of 3,000. Hundreds have shown up for daily candlelight vigils outside the county office. The mayor and council speaker started a hunger strike July 12. Many residents traveled to Seoul to take part in a July 21 protest of 2,000 people.

Seongju, a rural area 135 miles southeast of Seoul with a population of 50,000, provides some 60 percent of all melons sold in South Korea.

Opponents of the missile deployment in parliament argue that the agreement will worsen economic relations with Beijing, South Korea’s biggest trading partner, and have called for it to be submitted to the legislature for approval.

Representatives from 44 different organizations spoke out against the deployment at a July 14 press conference in Seoul. Among them was the National Council of Churches in Korea, which issued a statement warning, “THAAD deployment will provoke a strong reaction from North Korea and aggravate the already deteriorated relation of North and South.”

Washington and Moscow partitioned the Korean Peninsula in 1945, at the end of World War II. Washington organized a brutal 1950-53 war there to maintain its imperialist domination, and has been the main obstacle to the unification of the country ever since.

To this day, the U.S. rulers refuse to sign a peace treaty with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Washington has 28,500 soldiers stationed in South Korea and conducts regular military maneuvers against the North. In recent years it has instigated round after round of U.N. sanctions against North Korea, using Pyongyang’s limited nuclear ca-



Minjung Yeonhap Party

More than 3,000 people protest in Seongju, South Korea, against deployment of U.S. anti-ballistic missile system there during July 15 visit by Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn.

pability as a pretext. U.S. nuclear weapons are deployed on ships and warplanes in the region.

On July 11, Pyongyang responded to the announced THAAD deployment by launching three ballistic missiles, which landed in the sea off the country’s east coast. Their range is enough to reach all

of South Korea.

The Chinese government, which signed a new round of U.N. sanctions against North Korea in March, said the U.S. deployment would do nothing to end North Korea’s nuclear program and would “destabilize the regional security balance.”

Slaughter in Syria goes on as US gov’t, Moscow talk

Continued from front page

rate with and depend on al-Nusra, and would be greatly weakened as a result.

In return, Washington wants Moscow to pressure the Assad government to ease off bombing areas held by opposition groups aligned with Washington, and to step up attacks against Islamic State forces. After talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in Laos July 26, Kerry told reporters that he hopes by early August to announce a deal that would “make a difference ... to the course of the war.”

Responding to press reports that many in the U.S. military and spy agencies are uneasy about sharing intelligence with Moscow, Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said July 25, “We’re not entering into a transaction that’s founded on trust.” Defense Secretary Ashton Carter echoed the point at the same press briefing, stressing an agreement with Moscow would be based on “mutual interest to the extent ... we’re able to identify that.”

Meanwhile, Assad’s forces, backed by Russian airstrikes and Iranian militias, are continuing a major offensive in Aleppo, Syria’s largest city. Some 300,000 people in the eastern half of the city, which is controlled by opposition forces, have been cut off from food and other supplies. Schools, hospitals and markets are being eradicated by Syrian and Russian planes dropping barrel bombs and incendiary cluster munitions.

The civil war in Syria, which began in 2011 after the government crushed mobilizations of hundreds of thousands of Syrians demanding political rights and an end to Assad’s regime, has left half a million dead and forced millions from their homes.

Asked in a July 13 interview with NBC News to respond to charges that he had blood on his hands, Assad replied, “If you have a doctor who cut the hand because of a gangrene to save the patient, you do not say he is a brutal doctor. He’s doing his job.”

The U.S. and Russian governments brokered a cease-fire in February, and

Washington put aside its demand that Assad must go. But the cease-fire rapidly fell apart and proposed talks on a political settlement stalled. Talks between the Assad government and many of the opposition groups that have been involved in the civil war are now projected to restart in Geneva in late August.

Offensives against Islamic State

As it seeks Moscow’s help to try to stabilize the situation in Syria, the Obama administration is looking to further push back Islamic State. Defense and foreign ministers from more than 40 countries met in Washington July 20-21 to discuss projected military offensives by U.S.-allied ground forces later this year to retake Mosul in Iraq and Raqqa in Syria, the two main cities still held by the reactionary group.

As they met, fierce combat was underway in Manbij in northwest Syria, where Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, backed by U.S. airstrikes, were battling to retake the town from Islamic State. Manbij has been a strategic link in the IS supply line from Turkey to Raqqa, its de facto capital. Islamic State troops have prevented many of the town’s 80,000 residents from escaping, using them as human shields.

Taking Manbij would bring the Kurds — an oppressed people in Syria, Iraq, Turkey and Iran — closer to controlling a continuous stretch of territory in northern Syria, along the Turkish border. Because of this, the Turkish government until May had refused to let U.S. planes fly from its Incirlik air base to back Kurdish forces in Syria, and had threatened to bomb any advance on Manbij by the SDF.

Some 300 U.S. special operations forces on the ground in Syria will “help conduct the offensive,” reported the *Wall Street Journal*. According to Syrian human rights groups, U.S. airstrikes on villages near Manbij killed more than 50 civilians July 19.

The situation facing refugees is dire. Since May 25, nearly 40,000 civilians fleeing the fighting in northern Syria

have arrived in the Kurdish town of Afrin after the Turkish government closed its border. Turkey refuses to allow aid across the border.

In the west, Jordan closed its border following a suicide bombing June 21, blocking food and medicine from reaching 70,000 refugees in desert camps on the Syrian side and barring access to medical treatment in Jordan for injured fighters and civilians. Russian airstrikes targeting Assad opponents hit one of these refugee camps July 12.

Press estimates put the number of Iranian troops and militia members killed while fighting for the Assad regime at 700 over the past several years. Previously quiet about its military activities in Iraq and Syria, Iranian authorities now publish the names and photos of those killed and honor them as “defenders of the shrines” of the Shiite saints, part of an effort to promote public patriotism behind the military interventions.

One goal of the July 20-21 meeting in Washington was to garner greater support from U.S. allies in preparation for an assault on Mosul by Iraqi and Kurdish forces. Washington is sending 560 more troops to Iraq to help prepare the assault.

Paris said it would deploy an aircraft carrier, London pledged an additional 50 military trainers, the Canadian government offered 40 to 50 medical personnel and Australian officials announced they would boost training of Iraqi police.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

NEW YORK

New York

71st Anniversary of U.S. Imperialism’s Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The Socialist Workers Party Calls for U.S. Nuclear Disarmament. Speaker: Dave Prince, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Aug. 5. Dinner, 6:45 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$7 dinner, \$5 program. 227 W. 29th St., 6th Floor. Tel.: (646) 964-4793.

CANADA

Montreal

Build the Fight Against Police Brutality! Charge the Ottawa Cops Who Beat Abdirahman Abdi to Death! Speaker: Annette Kouri, Communist League. Fri., Aug. 5, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 7107 St. Denis, Room 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

The Coming Apart of Imperialism’s Post-“U.S. Lost the Cold War” Order in the Middle East. Speaker: Annalucia Vermunt, Communist League. Fri., Aug. 5, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5. 188a Onehunga Mall. Tel.: (09) 636-3231.

UNITED KINGDOM

Manchester

Join the Fight Against Police Brutality! Speaker: Hugo Wils, Communist League. Sat., Aug. 6, 6:30 p.m. Donation: £2.50. Room 301, 26-28 Hilton House, Hilton St., M1 2EH. Tel.: (0161) 478-2496.

United Mine Workers Rally at the U.S. Capitol

The UMWA has called a national rally to pressure Congress to pass the Miners’ Protection Act to prevent the cutting off of health-care and pension benefits for 22,000 retired union members, spouses and dependents.

Thurs., Sept. 8, 11 a.m. Washington, D.C.

For more info visit: www.umwa.org

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

MAGGIE TROWE, EDITOR

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

This column gives a voice to those engaged in battle and building solidarity today — including unionists striking US Foods, workers locked out by Honeywell and construction workers demanding safe conditions. I invite those involved in workers' battles to contact me at 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018; or (212) 244-4899; or themilitant@mac.com. We'll work together to ensure your story is told.

— Maggie Trowe

Steelworkers join picket line to back New Jersey casino strikers

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — Members of United Steelworkers District 10 attending our union conference here ended the session a little early July 19 for an act of solidarity.

We gathered around 300 strong and marched up the boardwalk to the Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort to join UNITE HERE Local 54 on their picket line.

About 1,000 cooks, bartenders, housekeepers and other members of the union have been on strike since July 1, when contract negotiations broke down with casino owner Icahn Enterprises. The main issues are health care, which the company eliminated after declaring bankruptcy in 2014, and work rule provisions.

You could feel the energy rise as we approached and joined our sisters and brothers on the line. Many members of the Steelworkers returned to the picket when the conference adjourned each evening.

— Vonie Long, USW Local 1165 president, Chester County, Pa.

Strikers in Montreal's Old Port, senior homes demand \$15/hour

MONTREAL — On July 16 some 200 members and supporters of Old Port Workers Union — Local 10333 of the Public Service Alliance of Canada — demonstrated in the streets of Old Montreal to gain support for their strike that began May 27. Their main demand is a minimum wage of 15 Canadian dollars (\$11.34) an hour.

Almost half of the union's 350

members at the historic tourist attraction earn less than CA\$15.

Since negotiations began last February the bosses have come back three times with the same offer, union President Konrad Lamour said before the march.

Management has used the fact that Old Port is under federal jurisdiction to get around Quebec's law against hiring strikebreakers, and has begun to employ nonunion workers in jobs such as parking lot attendants and security. Some of the port's main attractions — a beach, science center, Imax theater and exhibition center — remain closed by the strike.

"I'm involved in the struggle because it's an important cause," Kevin Sorto, an electrical engineering stu-



UNITE HERE Local 54 Facebook

Participants in United Steelworkers District 10 conference in Atlantic City join members of UNITE HERE July 19 picketing Trump Taj Mahal Casino, now owned by Icahn Enterprises.

dent at McGill University, told the *Militant*. He was hired as a parking attendant, but the strike started before he began to work. That hasn't stopped him from picketing five days a week.

At the rally, Serge Cadieux, general secretary of the Quebec Federation of Labor, talked about the fight of some 3,000 nurses, nursing assistants and other members of the Service Em-

ployees International Union in private residences for the elderly. Unionists at 32 residences went on strike June 21 to win a new contract and a CA\$15 an hour minimum wage.

The union website reports that a big majority of workers obtained CA\$15 an hour in the 13 proposed settlements concluded to date.

— Michel Prairie

'Honeywell is determined to get union out'

Continued from front page

30 to reject Honeywell's "last, best, and final offer," which drastically increases health care costs, tears up work schedules and allows the company to ignore job classifications.

"It's not just that they want to raise our weekly premium payments and increase the deductible to \$8,000 — they refused to guarantee that there will be any health coverage whatsoever in the future," Local 9 Recording Secretary Bryan Rodgers told the *Militant*.

"We are offering the same health care that is available to every other Honeywell employee in the U.S.," said Honeywell Aerospace spokesperson Scott Sayres in a phone interview. "For the last five years, the union has

been insulated from the incremental health care increases all Honeywell employees — and most Americans — have faced," he elaborated by email.

"What the company basically wants is a list of work rules, not a contract," Rodgers said. "They want to take away just about everything — paid absences, all the letters of understanding from past contracts." The last negotiation session was held June 9.

"The company thought the new guys would vote yes, but they didn't," said Tim Smothermon, 33, on the picket line. He just started work at Honeywell Dec. 7. "They're trying to starve people out. That's why they've been blocking our unemployment benefits."

Honeywell is attempting to con-

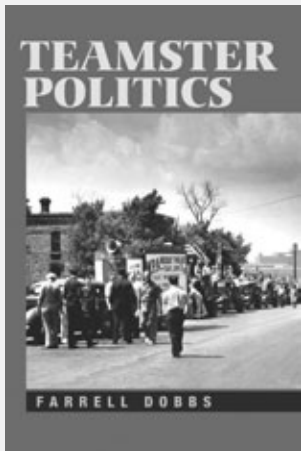
tinue production with supervisors and about 200 replacement workers provided by strikebreaking outfit Strom Engineering.

"They might be running the machines but they're not getting any production out the door," said Fred Reihl, 62, who retired in March after 22 years with the company.

"We're planning a rally in the next six weeks," Rodgers said. The New York local held a successful event in Green Island June 15, and "we want to do the same thing here. We'll be posting the details soon on the local's website."

Contributions to aid the locked-out workers can be sent to UAW Region 2B, earmarked "UAW Local 9 lock-out support."

Recommended reading



"Unionism and politics cannot be separated. Power generated at the trade-union level can be shattered by government blows. Workers must enter the political arena as an independent class force, with their own party."

— Farrell Dobbs

Other books in four-part series:
Teamster Rebellion
Teamster Power
Teamster Bureaucracy
\$19 each or all four for \$65
pathfinderpress.com

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



August 2, 1991

HAVANA, Cuba — With growing inter-imperialist competition and increasing economic and social devastation in Latin America threatening explosive struggles by workers and peasants throughout the region, the heads of state of Latin America's Spanish- and Portugese-speaking countries held the "First Ibero-American Summit" in Guadalajara, Mexico.

The July 17-19 event included 23 heads of state or government from 19 Latin American countries, plus Spain and Portugal. Everyone from Cuban President Fidel Castro to King Juan Carlos I of Spain was present.

The unprecedented character of the meeting was noted by Castro in his remarks to the gathering. "For the first time," he pointed out, "we Latin Americans are meeting without having been called together by someone else."



August 8, 1966

MINNEAPOLIS — An antiwar rally here was broken up by city cops July 16, on the charge that speakers were not displaying the American flag. The meeting, sponsored by the Minnesota Committee to End the War in Vietnam, was the first protest rally of the summer here.

For about 15 minutes, the rally was proceeding in an orderly fashion. Just as the fourth speaker was mounting the ladder, however, a plainclothesman, later identified as the chief of police, grabbed the sound equipment and informed the chairman, Larry Seigel, that he was under arrest.

The young woman who was about to speak was dragged into the street by three cops and the speakers' ladder was confiscated as "evidence." Six committee members were arrested including Joseph Johnson, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senator from Minnesota.



August 2, 1941

Every advanced worker in New York City remembers the anti-fascist demonstration organized by the Socialist Workers Party against the Nazi Bund at Madison Square Garden on February 20, 1939. Fifty thousand workers joined our demonstration. Hundreds of thousands of others gave us their moral backing and were glad that there was a workers' party that knew how to deal a blow against the fascists.

We organized that famous demonstration around the slogan: "Build Workers' Defense Guards to answer the fascist menace."

Today our anti-fascist demonstrations constitute one of the main points in the indictment drawn up by the United States Department of Justice against 29 members of Local 544-CIO and the Socialist Workers Party.

Vancouver meeting discusses struggles of Chinese overseas

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO
AND PATRICK BROWN

RICHMOND, British Columbia — The ninth International Conference of the International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas brought together more than 330 people here in the Vancouver metropolitan area July 6-8. It was ISSCO's largest gathering since its 1992 founding in San Francisco, and its first international conference in North America since then.

The event took place in a region where Chinese immigration has had a substantial weight in history. Today about half the population of Richmond, a city of 213,000, is Chinese-Canadian or Chinese immigrants, the highest proportion in Canada.

The majority of conference participants came from the United States and Canada. Others hailed from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and Australia, while smaller numbers attended from Europe, Latin America and Africa. Some 90 additional participants from China had been expected but were unable to secure government funding for travel expenses.

The narratives of Chinese overseas involve not only a "sorry history of repression," ISSCO founder Ling-Chi Wang told the conference, but years of "civil rights struggles in Chinese communities across the world." Wang is a retired professor of Asian-American Studies who headed the Ethnic Studies department at the University of California at Berkeley for many years.

In a keynote speech closing the conference, co-founder Prof. Wang Gungwu, of the National University of Singapore, focused his remarks on China's continuing rise as a major modern power, and the likely impact it will have on communities of Chinese overseas.

The experience of Chinese settlers in British Columbia, starting with the 19th century gold rush, was a theme running through the conference. Many participants took part in tours organized in conjunction with the conference to the historic Chinatown area of downtown Vancouver and the fish canneries and shipbuilding yards where many Chinese worked in the early 20th century.

Another tour focused on another conference theme, the historic links and intermarriage between Chinese immigrants and the indigenous peoples of the region that is today British Columbia.

A rafting and bus trip along the Fraser River allowed participants to visit large-scale gold mining sites that had been worked by Chinese prospectors.

Chinese workers in Canada

Many of some 50 conference panels — more than a dozen in Mandarin — and several films took up contributions and struggles of the Chinese in Canada, including the increase in immigration from Hong Kong that accelerated with the return of that formerly British colony to Chinese sovereignty.

From C to C: Chinese Canadian Stories of Migration, screened at a panel session, captured the crucial part of Chinese laborers in building the Canadian Pacific Railroad. On completion of that massive project, the Canadian government imposed a head tax on all Chinese immigrants. Initially set at 50 Canadian dollars in 1885, it rose to CA\$500 by 1903, the equivalent of two years' pay for most workers.

In 1923 the Canadian government adopted a Chinese Exclusion Act, banning all immigration from China, which remained in effect until 1947. Chinese-Canadians in British Columbia were also denied the right to vote and faced many other forms of discrimination.

In 2006 Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper — under pressure from a public campaign — officially recognized the historical injustice of the tax,



Josephine Chow

International Society for the Studies of Chinese Overseas conference in British Columbia. One focus of event was history of Chinese in Canada standing up to decades of discrimination.

while offering no more than symbolic payments to the 35 surviving head taxpayers and 360 surviving widows.

Chinese immigrants to the United States, New Zealand and Australia, among other countries, faced similar measures. Would-be Chinese immigrants to Australia were obliged to write out a passage in a European language dictated to them by an immigration official, a de-facto bar to Chinese immigration, recounted Michael Williams of University of Western Sydney.

Other topics of conference panels ranged from overseas Chinese literature, to challenges faced by Chinese students in other countries, to the experience of overseas Chinese returning to the People's Republic of China. One particularly interesting presenta-

tion looked at the 1965-66 massacre of Chinese in Indonesia as General Suharto drowned in blood the Communist Party there and crushed the resistance of workers and peasants for several decades.

Discussion spilled over into a display area where a number of sponsoring organizations had tables. These included the Chinese Canadian Historical Society of British Columbia, the Pacific Canada Heritage Centre-Museum of Migration, the Richmond Museum Society, and Pathfinder Press.

The conference concluded with an ISSCO business meeting and elections, and a special brief presentation on Nagasaki, Japan, the site of the next regional conference, to be held Nov. 17-19, 2017.

Shared history of China and Cuba began in 1800s

BY PATRICK BROWN

RICHMOND, British Columbia — The place of Chinese indentured laborers and their descendants in Cuban society, from the mid-1800s through the 1959 Cuban Revolution and today, was the subject of several presentations at the July 6-8 conference of the International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas.

The shared history of China and Cuba began with the arrival of the first shiploads of contract laborers. From 1847 to 1874, some 140,000 Chinese "coolies," as they were known, were brought to Cuba to work the sugar plantations under near slave-like conditions.

Conference presentations showed that in ways both big and small these first Chinese immigrants helped to shape Cuban society. Rebellions against their

conditions of life and work, thousands of Chinese laborers escaped and became soldiers in the revolutionary wars for Cuban independence from Spain that began in 1868, wars that also fought for the abolition of slavery and indentured servitude.

On one panel, Kin-sheun Louie of the Chinese University of Hong Kong described how Chinese medicine was introduced to Cuba along with these indentured workers. Evelyn Hu-DeHart of Brown University spoke on "Chinese Contract Laborers in Cuba: Neo-Slavery or Transition to Free Labor?"

Chinese workers sent letters back home detailing their servitude in Cuba and in Peru, where they worked in silver mines and in collecting *guano* fertilizer, explained Rudolph Ng from University of Cambridge. Their damning testimony played a role in pressuring the imperial Qing government to officially end the coolie trade in 1874, he said.

Cuba's revolutionary trajectory

"What distinguishes Chinese in Cuba today from those who settled anywhere else in the world is the near-total absence of discrimination, or even prejudice, against Cubans of Chinese descent," said Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and editor of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*. The reason, she said, is the "revolutionary political course and integrity of Cuba's communist leadership." Her presentation was titled, "Socialist Cuba and China's Expanded Economic Relations in Latin America and the Caribbean."

In both Cuba and China "great revolutionary struggles in the wake of World War II brought to power leaderships that were identified as socialist," said Waters, but "from the beginning the political trajectories of their leaderships were diametrically opposed."

Waters cited several examples of these "divergent class directions," including Havana's fight in the mid-1960s to persuade Beijing and Moscow to come together in support of the Vietnamese Revolution and Beijing's support for murderous military dictatorships in Chile and Argentina in the 1970s. Cuban leaders condemned Beijing's support for the genocidal Pol Pot regime in Cambodia, and the 1979 Chinese invasion of Vietnam, which they called "criminal," Waters said.

She described Cuba's internationalist response when the racist apartheid regime of South Africa invaded Angola in 1975, on the eve of its independence

Continued on page 7



Militant/Mary Ellen Marus

Conference participants visit abandoned Chinese gold mining sites along Fraser River. Chinese laborers were also an indispensable part of building Canadian Pacific Railway in late 1800s.



Our History Is Still Being Written

THE STORY OF THREE CHINESE-CUBAN GENERALS IN THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

What distinguishes Chinese in Cuba from those who settled anywhere else in the world is the near-total absence of discrimination, or even prejudice, against Cubans of Chinese descent. The reason is the revolutionary political course and integrity of the Cuban leadership. \$20. Also in Spanish, Chinese, Farsi

pathfinderpress.com

or from distributors listed on page 8

Cuban revolutionaries speak to workers across UK

González and Hernández: Join campaign to end US economic war, return Guantánamo to Cuba

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — “Our victory is your victory. You were on the right side of history.” Up and down the country, thousands heard this message from Gerardo Hernández and René González, two of the Cuban Five, thanking working people here for support in the fight against their imprisonment in the U.S.

“We are not naive — imperialism hasn’t ceased being imperialism,” they said, explaining how the U.S. rulers have turned to different methods to try to achieve their decades-long goal of overturning the socialist revolution in Cuba. At event after event, they urged participants to campaign for Washington to end its economic war against Cuba and to return Guantánamo, which it occupies and uses as a U.S. naval base and prison camp.

Along with Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero and Fernando González, Hernández and René González were framed up by the U.S. “justice” system for their work monitoring counterrevolutionaries in Florida who have carried out violent attacks against the Cuban Revolution and its supporters. The last of the Five won their release after more than 16 years in prison and returned to Cuba on Dec. 17, 2014 — a victory for the Cuban Revolution and those who fought worldwide to win their freedom.

During their July 9-17 tour, Hernández and González spoke at two annual union-organized festivals that drew thousands: the Durham Miners’ Gala in northeast England and the Tolpuddle Martyrs’ Festival, hosted by the Trades Union Congress. The latter commemorates the 1834 railroading of six agricultural laborers for trade union activity and the massive working-class campaign that won their freedom.

Hernández and González also ad-



Two of the Cuban Five spoke to thousands at union-organized events during July 9-17 tour in United Kingdom. Left, Gerardo Hernández speaks at Tolpuddle Martyrs’ Festival honoring agricultural workers targeted for union activity in 1830s. Right, René González talks to youth at Durham Miners’ Gala.

ressed the Unite union’s policy conference in Brighton, and spoke to public meetings numbering hundreds in London and Manchester, England; Cardiff, Wales; and Glasgow, Scotland. The tour was organized by the Cuba Solidarity Campaign, with backing from a number of trade unions, and included a meeting with members of Parliament. Cuban Ambassador Teresita Vicente and other embassy representatives were present at each event. Adriana Pérez, wife of Hernández, and Olga Salanueva and Irma González, wife and daughter of René González, spoke at various meetings.

“I was supposed to have died in prison twice and then serve another 15 years,” Hernández repeatedly joked. “But they didn’t take into account people like you. When people ask me what I think about



Militant photos: Left, Jonathan Silberman; right, Catharina Tirsén

them stealing years of our lives, I say that we stole a lot more back!”

“We’ve discovered the real U.K. through your solidarity,” added René González, who the British government had twice previously denied a visa. He and Hernández spoke warmly of the continuous river of letters they’d received from the U.K. while in prison.

“I could see the respect they have gained by what they have done,” commented Adam Herring, a young factory worker, after the meeting of 300 in Manchester.

Many people at these events were learning about the case of the Cuban Five for the first time and snatched up Cuba Solidarity Campaign literature. Participants also bought more than 200 copies of *“It’s the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US ‘Justice’ System”: The Cuban Five Talk About Their Lives Within the US Working Class* — a book-length interview with the Five published by Pathfinder Press.

Cuba’s internationalism in Angola

Bakers union member Hubert Mbongo Mpasí learned about the Cardiff meeting when he was on strike in June over low pay at the RF Brookes food plant in nearby Newport. From the floor at the meeting, he saluted the contribution of Cuba to the struggle in Angola, “which consolidated independence for Angola, won independence for Namibia and without which Nelson Mandela would have died in prison.”

“Angola was the greatest experience of our lives,” Hernández told the Manchester meeting during a lively question-and-answer session. He, René González and Fernando González were among the 425,000 Cuban volunteers who went to Angola to repel two invasions by the apartheid regime in South Africa.

“That experience prepared us for our time in prison” the Cuban leader explained. “It made us more solid in our principles.” He recounted how fellow prisoners, especially African-Americans, had rallied round the Five when they learned about Cuba’s internationalist mission in Angola.

René González told the gathering how much he appreciated being in Manchester, the birthplace of the modern working class and the class struggle written

about by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. “The hatred of the Five, the hatred of the Cuban Revolution is part of that same class struggle,” he said.

Solidarity vs. values of capitalism

“Only the working class can forge the society humanity needs,” González told the Tolpuddle Festival. He contrasted the solidarity and internationalism of the Cuban Revolution with the terrorist action that had just taken place in Nice, France, and the broader values of capitalism. “Capitalism emphasizes egoistic tendencies. The only antidote is solidarity and socialism.”

The imperialists have tried everything possible to destroy the socialist revolution in Cuba, González said in response to a question, and are now targeting the government of Venezuela. “Ruling families in Venezuela have been controlling that country

for years. They don’t want to lose that control.” At a side meeting during the Unite union conference, the two Cuban leaders were joined on the platform by Rocío Maneiro, Venezuela’s ambassador to London, and by Luis Primo of the Venezuelan National Union of Workers.

“I liked the way they spoke about the battle to win youth in Cuba,” said Jonny Forbes, a young factory worker at the Manchester meeting.

“This is a big challenge,” Hernández had said in answer to a question. “Youth today don’t have Giróns in which to participate,” he said, referring to the massive mobilization of working people in Cuba that defeated the U.S.-organized mercenary invasion at Girón Beach in the Bay of Pigs in 1961. “But we have a lot in our favor,” the heritage of the Cuban revolutionary struggle over decades. Young people are drawn into and engaged in the political process, he said, including international solidarity, through which they’re developing their consciousness.

Speaking from the floor at the Manchester meeting, Garry Gallagher spoke of his experience as a bakery worker on strike at Hovis in 2013, fighting to win permanent status for agency workers. “When you’re in struggle you break down barriers,” Gallagher said. “I can relate to how you know inside that you’re right. And you *are* right in what you’re fighting for.”

Tony Hunt and Ólöf Andra Proppé contributed to this article.

“It’s the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US ‘Justice’ System”

The Cuban Five Talk About Their Lives Within the US Working Class

Framed up by the U.S. government, the Cuban Five spent up to 16 years within the U.S. working class behind bars. In this 2015 interview they talk about U.S. capitalist society and its “justice” system, and about the future of the Cuban Revolution. \$15 Also in Spanish, Farsi



PATHFINDERPRESS.COM

Chinese-Cuban history

Continued from page 6

from Portugal. Over the next 16 years “more than 425,000 Cuban volunteers helped defend Angola against the ongoing war waged by South Africa and its U.S. backers,” she said, helping bring about the end of apartheid. By contrast the Chinese government pursued a policy of collaboration with the Angolan forces supported by the South African regime.

In recent years, Waters noted, Beijing’s increased trade with Havana has been linked with “pressure to persuade Cuba’s leadership to follow China’s example of what some refer to as ‘market socialism,’ that is, the free development of capitalist market relations in all spheres,” — a path that revolutionary Cuba has steadfastly rejected.

This political trajectory of the Cuban Revolution, Waters noted in conclusion, also explains why the elimination of discrimination against Chinese in Cuba was possible. In the words of Moisés Sío Wong, one of the authors of *Our History Is Still Being Written*, the reason the status of Chinese-Cubans is different from anywhere else in the world “is that here a socialist revolution took place. The revolution eliminated discrimination based on the color of a person’s skin.

Above all, it eliminated the property relations that create not only economic but also social inequality between rich and poor.”

Meeting in Chinatown

Discussion on the Chinese in Cuba continued after the ISSCO gathering at a July 10 “community dialogue” entitled “The Chinese-Cuban Connections.” Conference participant Kin-sheun Louie gave a talk in Cantonese, which is spoken by the largest number of Chinese in the Vancouver area, opening the event. It was followed by a lively discussion that helped dispel the widespread misconception that all the Chinese left Cuba following the victory of the socialist revolution in 1959.

The event was organized by the Pacific Canada Heritage Centre-Museum of Migration, whose display of books and documents at the conference had attracted a lot of interest.

Some 30 people attended the meeting in Vancouver’s Chinatown, including workers, small business owners and students from the area. It was held in the historic building of another conference sponsor, the Ing Suey Sun Tong Association of Vancouver, established in 1914 to provide a home away from home for members of the Ing clan.

USSR disfigured by parasitism, bureaucracy under Stalin

Writings of Leon Trotsky (1936-37), one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for August, covers the first year in exile in Mexico of Trotsky, a central leader of the Russian Revolution. Many of the articles, letters and interviews focus on exposing the bloody purges and frame-up trials being used by the regime headed by Joseph Stalin to eliminate all opposition to its totalitarian rule in the Soviet Union. Trotsky helped initiate the Commission of Inquiry, chaired by the prominent liberal John Dewey, professor emeritus of philosophy at Columbia University. The commission investigated the proceedings of the Moscow Trials in which Trotsky and his son Leon Sedov were the main ones accused. It conducted hearings in Mexico April 10-17, 1937, and concluded that Trotsky and Sedov were not guilty. The excerpts below are from the April 27, 1937, interview, "Answers to the Jewish Daily Forward," a New York Yiddish-language social democratic daily. Copyright © 1970 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

Q: Will the new constitution adopted in Russia actually give more freedom to the laboring classes and to the population as a whole?

A: Constitutions cannot in general



1919 celebration of second anniversary of Bolshevik Revolution, first time working class took and held power in history. At center are leaders V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky. Nearly every major Bolshevik participant was later executed by counterrevolutionary regime headed by Stalin.

change the regime. They only inscribe on paper the real relationship of forces. In the USSR the relationship of forces during the last ten years has definitely changed in favor of the privileged bureaucracy and to the detriment of the laboring classes. The new constitution sanctifies this new relationship of forces. It officially consolidates power in the hands of the bureaucracy, which appears in the text of the constitution under the pseudonym of the "Communist Party." Under the new constitution still more than under the old, whoever attacks the rights and privileges of the bureaucracy will be declared a Trotskyite and placed outside the law.

Q: Do prosecution and death sentences against the loyal old Communists constitute a definite policy of the present Russian administration, or are they just the result of individual revenge against people disliked by Stalin?

A: Stalin is only an instrument in the hands of the new leading caste. His personal vindictive character naturally plays a certain role. But the extermination of the old generation of Bolsheviks is dictated by the interests of the privileged summits of the bureaucracy.

Q: What kind of political regime now prevails in Russia? Is it state capitalism or dictatorship?

A: In my book *The Revolution Betrayed*, I tried to show that to call

the Soviet regime "state capitalism" is neither scientific nor correct. The forms of property created by the October Revolution are still preserved. On this basis — with favorable international and internal conditions — the development of socialism is possible. However, the growth of the bureaucracy shakes and weakens the new forms of property, in the degree that the bureaucracy more and more arbitrarily disposes of the productive forces of the country and swallows up a larger and larger portion of the national income. The economic regime of the USSR has a transitional character, that is, represents a certain stage between capitalism and socialism, closer to capitalism than to socialism. This transitional regime, however, is more and more disfigured by the parasitism of the bureaucracy. In the political sense the regime represents a historical equivalent of Bonapartism. The further development of the bureaucratic autocracy threatens to undermine the forms of property created by the October Revolution and to throw the country far back. That is why the overthrow of the Bonapartist bureaucracy is the most important condition for the further movement of the USSR toward socialism. ...

Q: Does the activity developed by the Soviet government at Birobidzhan follow strategic plans to fortify this section in the event of war with

Japan, or does it actually represent the creation of a free, autonomous state for the Jewish nation within the Soviet Union?¹

A: Both tendencies have played a role since the creation of Birobidzhan. Under a regime of Soviet democracy, Birobidzhan could undoubtedly play a serious role as regards the national culture of Soviet Judaism. Under a Bonapartist regime which nourishes anti-Semitic tendencies, Birobidzhan threatens to degenerate into a sort of Soviet ghetto. ...

Q: Have you been well-informed about the standpoint of the *Forward* with reference to the attacks made upon you in Russia and America?

A: My friends in New York have kept me regularly informed of the position of the *Forward* as regards the judicial frame-ups in Moscow. I deeply appreciate the objective reports which the *Forward* has given and is giving to its readers on this question. It is unnecessary for me to recall here the profound difference between our principled positions. However, all the parties of the working class and of the laboring masses in general are interested in seeing that the ideological struggle is not poisoned by slander, falsifications, frame-ups, and juridical assassinations. That is precisely why I hope that the *Forward* will open its pages to the work of the Inquiry Commission presided over by Professor Dewey.

Q: Do you consider satisfactory the results attained by the Inquiry Commission of which Professor Dewey was a prominent member?

A: I am satisfied to the highest degree with the first step of the work of the New York commission. The report of the investigation which it made will shortly be published. Every thinking man will be able to compare the verbatim report of the Moscow trial with the verbatim report of the Coyoacan [Mexico] investigation. I do not doubt for an instant that the truth will find its way over all obstacles.

¹ Birobidzhan was a section of the Russian Republic on the border with China, set aside by the Soviet government in 1928 for colonization by Jews. It was made an autonomous region in 1934 and was dissolved in 1938-39 by Stalin, who claimed it had become a haven for opposition elements.

IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

Where to find distributors of the *Militant*, *New International*, and a full display of Pathfinder books.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: **Oakland:** 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Zip: 94621. Tel: (510) 686-1351. Email: swpoak@sbcglobal.net **Los Angeles:** 2826 S. Vermont. Suite 1. Zip: 90007. Tel: (323) 643-4968. Email: swpla@att.net

FLORIDA: **Miami:** 7911 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 2. Zip: 33138. Tel: (305) 390-8310. Email: swpmiami@att.net

GEORGIA: **Atlanta:** 777 Cleveland Ave. SW Suite 103. Zip: 30315. Tel: (678) 528-7828. Email: swpatlanta@bellsouth.net

ILLINOIS: **Chicago:** 2018 S. Ashland Ave. Zip: 60608. Tel: (312) 455-0111. Email: SWPChicago@fastmail.fm

MINNESOTA: **Minneapolis:** 416 E. Hennepin Ave., Suite 214. Zip: 55414. Tel: (612) 729-1205. Email: tcswp@qwestoffice.net

NEBRASKA: **Lincoln:** Tel: (402) 217-4906. Email: swplincn@windstream.net.

NEW YORK: **New York:** 227 W. 29th St., 6th Floor. Zip: 10001. Tel: (646) 964-4793. Email: newyorkswp@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA: **Philadelphia:** 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite 20. Zip: 19149. Tel: (215) 708-1270. Email: philaswp@verizon.net

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 7603 Georgia Ave. NW, Suite 300. Zip: 20011. Tel: (202) 536-5080. Email: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

WASHINGTON: **Seattle:** 5418 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118-2439. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Email: seattleswp@qwestoffice.net

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 1st Flr, 3/281-287 Beamish St., Campsie, NSW 2194. Mailing address: P.O. Box 164, Campsie, NSW 2194. Tel: (02) 9718 9698. Email: cl_australia@optusnet.com.au

CANADA

QUEBEC: **Montreal:** 7107 St. Denis #204 H2S 2S5. Tel: (514) 272-5840. Email: clc_can@bellnet.ca **ALBERTA:** **Calgary:** Dragon City Mall, 328 Centre St. SE, Suite 246. T2G 4X6 Tel: (403) 457-9044. Email: clccalgary@fastmail.fm

FRANCE

Paris: BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15. Email: militant.paris@gmail.com

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: 188a Onehunga Mall, Onehunga. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025, Auckland 1140. Tel: (09) 636-3231. Email: clauack@xtra.co.nz

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND: **London:** 2nd Floor, 83 Kingsland High St., Dalston. Postal code: E8 2PB. Tel: (020) 3583-3553. Email: cllondon@fastmail.fm **Manchester:** Room 301, 3rd floor, Hilton House, 26-28 Hilton St. Postal code: M1 2EH. Tel: (016) 1478-2496. Email: clmanchr@gmail.com

August **BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS

25% DISCOUNT

Writings of Leon Trotsky (1936-37)
Articles, letters and statements from 10-month period in Mexico after the expulsion of the Russian Revolution's leader from Norway. \$37 **Special price: \$27.75**

The Jewish Question
by Abram Leon
\$25. **Special price: \$18.75**

Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International
Documents 1907-1916
\$38. **Special price: \$28.50**

Voices From Prison
The Cuban Five
by Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Rafael Cancel Miranda
Accounts of prison life and resistance. Pays tribute to the unbending dignity and integrity of the Cuban Five, framed up by the U.S. government.
\$7. **Special price: \$5.25**

Malcolm X: The Last Speeches
by Malcolm X
\$17. **Special price: \$12.75**

L'histoire du trotskysme américain
(History of American Trotskyism)
by James P. Cannon
\$22. **Special price: \$16.50**

Join Pathfinder Readers Club for \$10 and receive discounts all year long

ORDER ONLINE AT
WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM
OFFER GOOD UNTIL AUGUST 31

Capitalism can't be reformed

We are living through an irreversible crisis of the capitalist system — a slow-burning depression that is building toward an even greater catastrophe. This drives never-ending imperialist interventions and wars in the Middle East and elsewhere as the old order continues to unravel with no end in sight.

The capitalists have no solution. That's why the two main bourgeois parties are in crisis, the Democrats even more than the Republicans.

The Obama administration denies there is a problem. The economy is doing great, the president says. This is echoed by Hillary Clinton, who vows to continue the great "progress" of the last eight years. Many workers ask, "What progress?"

Donald Trump wins a hearing because he talks about the crisis: high unemployment, low wages, women without access to childcare. But his answers are anti-working-class demagoguery: promising to "make America great again" and "safe again," and to create jobs by putting "America First" and negotiating better trade deals. Scapegoating immigrants and blaming all Muslims for terrorism — in fact the largest number of victims of Islamist terrorists are Muslims — serve to divide working people. Blaming trade pacts for the economic crisis obfuscates the real enemy: capitalism.

The Bernie Sanders campaign — and the Occupy movement that hopes to gain control of the Democratic Party — is no better. Their mantras — campaign finance reform, more liberal Supreme Court judges, tax the rich — also take workers' eyes off the real problem. There is no better, more humane capitalism. It can't be tweaked or reformed. It must be replaced.

Working people, the producers of all wealth, can see

our potential power reflected in the fear the rulers have of us, and how hard they try to convince us to accept our lot in life. "The Revenge of Unrealistic Expectations" is the title of a July 24 opinion piece by Robert Samuelson in the *Washington Post*, attacking all those who pine for a "romanticized world" of higher wages and low unemployment. But workers and farmers will not accept the rulers' vision of the world.

All the bourgeois candidates, from Trump to Clinton and Sanders, assert that it is your vote Nov. 8 that matters. Their message is have faith in the elections.

Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy is spot on when she says that whoever wins the election, the bosses will keep trying to boost their falling profit rates on our backs, the worldwide capitalist economic crisis will continue, the imperialist order will keep unraveling.

The only road out of this crisis is for working people to act to end the rulers' class dictatorship, like workers and farmers did in Cuba in 1959.

The party joins every battle that increases the self-confidence of working people, our discipline in struggle, our class consciousness and understanding of our own worth. This includes union fights to improve wages and conditions, protests against police brutality and for a women's right to abortion, and actions like the Sept. 8 United Mine Workers union march on Washington, D.C., to that demand health care benefits and pensions for retired miners be maintained.

"Workers need a revolutionary party to educate and organize the working class to fight for political power," Kennedy says. "That's what the Socialist Workers Party is."

Free speech victory in Florida prisons

Continued from front page discipline of the correctional system."

The Florida Department of Corrections library administrator informed the *Militant's* attorney David Goldstein July 22 that the prison Literature Review Committee had reversed its decision.

On a similar pretext and an absolutely baseless charge of "hang/gang signs," Santa Rosa banned the June 13 issue, citing a page that included an article on the fight to free Puerto Rican political prisoner Oscar López. After Goldstein — from the law firm of Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky & Lieberman — wrote to the review committee, they said the impoundment of that issue had been an "error."

"Literature is not what causes disruption," a prisoner in Santa Rosa said in a letter to the *Militant*, after the impoundments. "Nowhere do I recall literature causing physical violence."

"This is not just a victory for the *Militant*," said the paper's managing editor, Naomi Craine. "It's a victory for all those who believe that prisoners have the right to read anything they want, to keep learning about the world and being part of it, regardless of the prison bars. We will never stop defending that right."

The prison authorities gave "baseless justification that images of prisoners or their supporters asserting their rights would lead to prison chaos," said Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan, president of the National Lawyers

Guild, in a July 21 statement calling for reversing the impoundment. "The National Lawyers Guild works closely with prison communities and our jailhouse lawyer members to ensure wide dissemination of engaging reading material, and calls for the full distribution of the *Militant*."

"Stop Prison Abuse Now, a prison reform organization located in Miami, Florida, believes that the First Amendment rights of prisoners should be respected, including having access to *The Militant* newspaper," said a statement from the group. "We do not believe that this access conflicts with operating prisons in a manner that will protect the safety of both prison staff and prisoners, which all fair-minded citizens support."

Benjamin Stevenson, staff attorney of the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida, wrote to the Literature Review Committee opposing the impoundments. Florida-based *Prison Legal News* spoke out against them, as did the *San Francisco Bay View*, a national Black newspaper.

The July issue of *Bay View* was recently banned from prisons in Pennsylvania for an article about the possibility of prisoners participating in a work stoppage. The issue was also banned at the Menard Correctional Institution in Illinois. "We call on prison authorities in Pennsylvania and Illinois to lift the ban on the *San Francisco Bay View*," said Craine.

Growing 'sea of debt'

Continued from front page

of the Socialist Workers Party, in *Are They Rich Because They're Smart? Class, Privilege and Learning Under Capitalism*.

One example is the growing auto sales credit bubble with car loans topping \$1 trillion.

Remember the collapse of the housing bubble and "subprime" loans that was one of the sparks of the 2007 financial collapse? According to the *Wall Street Journal* banks have a new phrase, "near-prime," but it's the same thing. These subprime auto loans increased from \$2 billion in 2008-2009 to \$22 billion in 2013. Like the subprime housing loans, they're packaged as securities and resold as a financial "investment."

"Someone is going to get hurt," J.P. Morgan Chase & Co. Chief Executive James Dimon said in June. But don't worry, he added, auto lending is only 12 percent of the \$8.4 trillion mortgage market so it's not a "systemic issue."

The Federal Reserve Bank of New York reported in May that mortgages, the largest component of household debt, increased \$120 billion since the end of last year. While credit card balances declined, student loan debt rose by \$29 billion.

Household debt is also on the rise in Sweden, France and other countries around the world.

The *Journal* June 22 sought to calm any worries, stating that the percentage of people in the U.S. with subprime credit scores is the lowest in a decade and that loan defaults "are near record lows." A month later the paper was singing a different tune. "Big banks are socking away more money to cover possible losses on consumers loans," it reported, "as their executives warn the long boom in credit quality has peaked."

In the decades since the 1974-75 worldwide recession capitalists have placed speculative bets on stocks, bonds, derivatives and other kinds of commercial paper, what Karl Marx called fictitious capital. They do this instead of investing in factories and producing the things that can help humanity — such as rebuilding and repairing needed infrastructure.

Even while stock market prices are still high, many of their financial bets are not doing too well. "Long-term returns for U.S. public pensions are expected to drop to the lowest levels ever recorded," reported the *Journal* July 25. In other words, relying on expected "good returns" — instead of fully funding pensions — has not worked out too well. As a result now there is more than a \$1 trillion funding gap.

Meanwhile, world trade has been stagnant at best for the last 18 months, according to the *Financial Times*. And the global volume of exports and imports in April this year are below what they were in January 2015.

With the continuing drop in oil prices, energy companies worldwide have slashed more than 385,000 jobs. Amid lower prices, increased bankruptcies and defaults on loans by oil companies and what capitalist economists call "oversupply," the *Journal* reported July 26, there has been a "resurgence of U.S. shale oil production" which could spark further price drops.

Depression conditions affects workers worldwide

In the U.S. and 24 other "advanced" countries, two-thirds of the population earn the same or less than those doing the same jobs a decade ago, says a July report by the McKinsey Global Institute, highlighting the impact of the slow-burning depression. In 2014 more than half a billion people, many in Europe, but also in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the U.S., had lower or stagnant real incomes compared to 2005.

Among those hardest hit are young workers, the report notes, "raising the spectre of a generation growing up poorer than their parents" and "losing faith in aspects" of the capitalist economic system.

In Russia, a country not included in the McKinsey report, conditions facing working people are also going from bad to worse. "Almost a third of Russians now buy less food than before, while 49 percent admit they save on medicine by ignoring doctor prescriptions," reported Bloomberg News. "Some two-thirds say prices of goods and services bought by their families are rising at double the pace of officially reported inflation, if not faster."

The nation's largest supermarket chain, Magnit PJSC, reports a drop in purchases for the first time. Retail sales in June shrank for a record 18th month, dropping 5.9 percent from a year earlier, according to the Federal Statistics Service in Moscow.

LETTERS

Prison censorship

I always look forward to receiving the *Militant*, which I read from the cover to the Spanish section. I especially compliment the historical pieces. Exceptional quality.

Your July 25 issue speaks of the [Florida prison] censorship as "arbitrary and capricious." There was no stoppage at my institution.

*A prisoner
Florida*

Too poor for drivers licenses

A class action suit has been filed against the state of Virginia for sus-

pending the driver's licenses of people too poor to pay their court costs and fines.

I was shocked to learn that currently one in six drivers in the state, some 900,000 people, have their

licenses suspended due to inability to pay these court-imposed fines! In this largely rural state, that means that most of these workers are forced to drive illegally, eventually get caught and end up with even more fines and jail time.

*Mike Galati
Fredericksburg, Virginia*

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

'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.