

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

'While Oscar López is in prison, we're all in prison'
— PAGE 7

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 80/NO. 38 OCTOBER 10, 2016

Moscow, Assad bomb Aleppo as Washington seeks new deal

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Working people in Aleppo, Syria, have been pummeled since Sept. 22 in bombings by the government of Bashar al-Assad and by Moscow, which backs the regime, after a brief truce put together by Washington and Moscow came apart.

Syrian army troops, joined by Iranian forces, Hezbollah troops from Lebanon and Shiite militias from Iraq, began a ground assault Sept. 27, attacking a number of entrances to the neighborhoods of Aleppo controlled by opponents of Assad's regime.

The imperialist rulers of the United States, France and the United Kingdom shrilly denounced the Syrian government and Moscow in a Sept. 25 meeting of the United Nations Security Council they demanded. They insisted the Russian government agree to some sort of new deal along the lines of the cease-fire that just collapsed.

"There are no prospects for political solutions," Hezbollah leader Sayyed
Continued on page 4

Grito de Lares rally protests colonial status of Puerto Rico

BY CINDY JAQUITH
AND MARTÍN KOPPEL

LARES, Puerto Rico — Some 700 people converged on this small town in the mountains of western Puerto Rico Sept. 23 to celebrate the Grito de Lares, an annual rally in support of independence from U.S. colonial rule. This year the action reflected the growing anger at the government and Washington among broad layers of the population in response to the unprecedented economic crisis here.

Fueling popular anger was the collapse of the electric power system that had plunged Puerto Rico into darkness for the previous two days. Most of the nation's 3.5 million residents lost electricity, and many were left without running water or phone service. By Sept. 23, power had been restored in only parts of the island.

U.S. colonial domination magnifies the impact of today's world capitalist depression on working people in Puerto Rico.

The rally was held in the Plaza de
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Socialist Workers Party: Protest police brutality!



Buffie Stephens/UNC Charlotte

More than 400 people march Sept. 28 at Charlotte campus of University of North Carolina. Broad discussion on need to take a stand against cop brutality followed killing of Keith Scott.

The following statement was released in Charlotte, North Carolina, Sept. 28 by Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. vice president.

The Socialist Workers Party stands with workers and young people here protesting the police killing of Keith

Socialist Workers Party campaign statement

Scott. I and my running mate Alyson Kennedy, and SWP members all across the country, have joined in demonstrations — from Ferguson, Missouri; to Council, Idaho; to Staten Island, New York; to Baton Rouge, Louisiana; to Minneapolis — with the growing number of people of all races and nationalities who say, "Enough!" to cop killings.

These actions against police brutal-
Continued on page 9

Killing by Charlotte police sparks protests, discussion

BY SAM MANUEL

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — The police killing of Keith Scott here Sept. 20 sparked outrage and triggered protests and widespread discussion and debate in area high schools, workplaces and living rooms. Scott, a 43-year-old African-American, was shot dead in the parking lot of his apartment complex by Police Officer Brentley Vinson, also Black.

The killing came on the heels of two other fatal police shootings. In Columbus, Ohio, 13-year-old Tyre King was gunned down Sept. 14 by Officer Bryan Mason, who said the youth drew a weapon. It turned out to be a BB gun. Two days later Officer Betty Shelby shot 40-year-old Terence Crutcher in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The police released a video showing he was walking away with his hands up. Within days city authorities felt compelled to arrest and charge Shelby.

In Charlotte, authorities released
Continued on page 6

Socialist Workers Party is workers' party! Runs against capitalist rule



Above, Militant/Mary Martin; inset, Reuters/Mike Segar

Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, talks to truck driver David Wardle while on his doorstep in Manchester, England. Capitalist candidates Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, inset, before Sept. 26 debate for the two main bourgeois presidential candidates.

BY MAGGIE TROWE

The Sept. 26 presidential debate between Democrat Hillary Clinton and Republican Donald Trump, and the discussion among workers and hysterical partisanship in the bourgeois media about it, shine a spotlight on the political crisis of U.S. capital. And why millions of workers are fed up with both capitalist party candidates.

The Socialist Workers Party, the only party that speaks in the interests

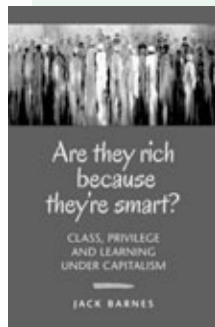
of the working class, was excluded, as were bourgeois candidates from the Libertarian and Green parties.

Clinton credited President Barack Obama for bringing economic recovery after the 2008-2009 downturn, saying, "We have come back from that abyss."

This is not the world most workers live in.

Trump gave a more realistic de-
Continued on page 9

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 workers will begin to transform ourselves and our attitudes toward life, work and each other. Only then will we learn what we're capable of becoming."

Special offer: \$7 for book, \$10 for book and 'Militant' subscription

See page 8 to contact the Socialist Workers Party or Communist League nearest you.

Our party is your party!

Inside

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1958 Cuban peasant congress: 'It's your revolution' 7

—On the picket line, p. 5—

Quebec Steelworkers strike over attacks on new hires, pensions

London bus drivers organize protest strikes at Tower Transit

Women seeking asylum go on hunger strikes over detention

BY JANET POST

PHILADELPHIA — Twenty-two women, calling themselves “Madres Berks” — Berks Mothers — have conducted two hunger strikes beginning Aug. 8 to protest the U.S. government holding them in detention at the Berks County Residential Center in Leesport.

Thirty-two women and 36 children ranging in age from 2 to 16, who fled to the U.S. from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, are being held there. They are seeking asylum from gang and drug trafficking-related violence, domestic abuse and onerous conditions bred by the world crisis of capitalist production and trade on semicolonial peoples in Central America.

Their strike was launched to expose and protest lies by Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson, who claimed the average time the women and their children spend in detention is 20 days or fewer. After they took a short break because of harassment by prison authorities, the women resumed their strike Aug. 31. They are now on another pause, attorney Jackie Kline told the *Militant*.

Most of the women have been detained more than 60 days, and some more than a year.

“I have been here for 320 days,” Amparo Osorio, from Honduras, told the *New York Times* in early September. Osorio’s 2-year-old son is with her. “What we want is for our voices to be heard.”

“We wake up and we see the same walls, the same ceiling,” 16-year-old

Estefani Leiva, the oldest child at Berks, told the *Times*. As of Sept. 24, she, her mother and sister have been detained there for 395 days. “And we think to ourselves, ‘When will this end?’”

The detainees, who are challenging the government’s blanket decision to deny them refuge, are constantly under guard. The children are not permitted to attend public school and must wear IDs around their necks. The women get \$1 a day to clean up the detention center, and at night they are awakened at least three times an hour for bed checks.

The Berks facility is the oldest of three family immigration detention centers in the U.S. — two larger and privately owned prisons are in Karnes County and Dilley, Texas.

Berks County authorities get \$300 a day per detainee from Washington to run the center, attorney Matthew Archambeault, who has represented some of the women, told NPR.

In February the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services revoked the center’s license, saying it was licensed only as a “child resident facility,” not a detention center, but Berks authorities are being allowed to keep the prison open while they appeal the ruling.

In an “historically unprecedented” decision, Lee Gelernt, deputy director of the American Civil Liberties Union’s Immigrant Rights Project, told NPR Sept. 7 that a panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 3rd Circuit Court in Philadelphia ruled that the women “have no right to go to

Athletes’ protests against killings by cops spread



Associated Press/Darron Cummings

The entire Indiana Fever women’s basketball team kneeled during the playing of the national anthem before their game against the Phoenix Mercury in Indianapolis Sept. 21. Two Mercury players, Mistie Bass and Kelsey Bone, did the same. The action was part of spreading protests by athletes — both African-Americans and Caucasians — begun by San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick, against cop brutality, killings and racist discrimination.

“The reason these guys are kneeling, the reason we’re locking arms is to bring people together to make people aware that this is not right,” Seattle Seahawks cornerback Richard Sherman told a news conference Sept. 21, days after cops killed Terence Crutcher in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Keith Lamont Scott in Charlotte, North Carolina. “They’re trying to bring people together and unite them for a cause.”

About two dozen NFL players have joined the protest, as well as athletes from college and high school football and volleyball teams, and cheerleaders at Howard University in Washington, D.C. Prior to their game Sept. 25 Carolina Panthers quarterback Cam Newton wore a black T-shirt that read, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” as protesters rallied by the stadium.

“We all have inalienable rights as a citizen of this country and they’re being violated, and that’s what I think Colin is standing up for,” 49ers coach Chip Kelly told ESPN, backing Kaepernick’s protest actions.

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

federal court to obtain review of their asylum” because they entered the country “surreptitiously.”

“If the ruling stands, it will be the first time in the history of this country in which noncitizens who are on U.S. soil did not have the right to review,” Gelernt said.

“Only suspended in times of rebellion or invasion, that right has been extended to slaves and, more recently, to noncitizen ‘enemy combatants’ held at Guantánamo Bay in Cuba,” the *Times* wrote Sept. 2.

The ACLU is seeking a hearing to overturn the ruling before the full court of appeals and is asking that the

women be released while the case is being considered.

The Barack Obama administration has been adamantly in favor of the detention centers — arguing that they are an essential deterrent to keep immigrant families from coming to the U.S.

Members of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Berks County in Reading organized an interfaith protest vigil at Berks Sept. 6 and are planning more. Activities have also been held by the “Shut Down Berks Campaign,” which includes Juntos, an immigrant rights organization; Make the Road PA; Migrant Power Movement; and others.

THE MILITANT

Support prisoners’ fight for respect, dignity

From the 1971 Attica rebellion in New York through today, prisoners asserting their dignity have organized protests over deplorable conditions they face, including solitary confinement. The ‘Militant’ covers these fights. Don’t miss a single issue.



AP Photo

Leaders of 1971 Attica prison rebellion discuss demands with prison commissioner.

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The Militant

Vol. 80/No. 38

Closing news date: September 28, 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 December.

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.

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SWP finds thirst for workers' party in UK, Canada



Left, Mary Martin, U.S. Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Washington, speaks with construction worker Vyto Pocios Sept. 11 in Dagenham, a working-class suburb of London. Right, SWP vice-presidential candidate Osborne Hart speaks on radio talk show in Calgary, Alberta.



Militant photos: left, Jonathan Silberman; right, François Bradette

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — “People don’t have a choice when they come here but to fight for jobs,” construction worker Vyto Pocios, who was washing his car, told Alyson Kennedy, the U.S. Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate, and members of the Communist League here when they went to his house. “If you do get a job the companies push you out eventually if they can get someone to work for less.

“There is a lot of competition for jobs between workers who are Romanian, Polish, or Lithuanian,” said Pocios, who came to the U.K. as a boy with his Lithuanian parents.

Kennedy, Communist League members and Mary Martin, SWP candidate for governor of Washington state, were knocking on doors in Dagenham, a working-class suburb here, Sept. 11. Meeting workers on their doorsteps and discussing a road forward from attacks by the bosses was a central part of Kennedy’s eight-day tour in the United Kingdom.

“The bosses increase competition between workers on the job as they press down on wages and conditions,” Kennedy replied. “It’s happening around the world.

“The Socialist Workers Party calls for the unions to lead a fight for a massive public works program to put millions to work. We say all workers should be organized in unions, regardless of their birthplace. The competition for jobs won’t end until the dog-eat-dog capitalist system is replaced,” she said. “But a growing fight for jobs waged by native and immigrant workers alike can build solidarity and class consciousness, helping us prepare to fight to take political

power for ourselves.”

Pocios told Kennedy and Martin that he is classified as self-employed, even though he works for a company. The huge growth of so-called “self-employment” in the U.K., along with a big rise in temporary agency workers, is another way the propertied rulers intensify exploitation. According to government figures, there are 4.6 million “self-employed” workers in the U.K., about 15 percent of the workforce, up by more than 780,000 since 2008.

The median wage for those designated self-employed is a little over half of what other workers get. Millions more are employed through temp agencies, of whom over 800,000 are on “zero hours contracts” — with no guaranteed level of work hours or income.

“We’re finding that workers in the U.S. and the U.K. face similar grinding assaults on our wages, working conditions and social rights,” Kennedy said.

Pocios was one of 15 workers in the London area who bought copies of *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes during Kennedy and Martin’s tour.

“It doesn’t please me,” Eve, a cleaner in Harlow, a small town north of here, told Kennedy, describing her concerns

about her son’s “education” in secondary school. “It’s a way of conditioning him to become a perfect wage slave.”

The government recently announced its latest proposed education reforms — to bring back selective grammar schools for “academic high achievers.” In a victory for the working class, such schools were largely replaced in the state education system in the 1960s and ’70s.

“Education reform under capitalism is always a fraud,” said Kennedy. “Education is class divided under capitalism. Special schools prepare carefully selected ‘brights’ to track them on the road to the meritocracy and service to the ruling class. For the rest of us, it’s to learn us how to follow the rules and get a job. It’s preparation for a life of obedient labor.

“Our class learns the most from our experiences in social struggles, in union battles and on the streets,” she said. “Only a socialist revolution will overturn this system and provide the opportunity for real lifelong learning, as we work together to build a world built on human needs, not private profit.”

Richard Peplow, a retired bus driver in Harlow, said he had long supported the Labour Party.

“I was a strong trade unionist all my life,” he said, “but Labour is not labour today. Corbyn is a capitalist politician

— perhaps with a streak of honesty, unlike the others who are a bunch of crooks.”

Explaining he voted for the U.K. Independence Party in the last two elections, and for the U.K. to leave the so-called European Union, Peplow said, “I know it’s not going to make much difference. The attacks on all working people are going to mount.”

Peplow picked up a subscription to the *Militant* and said he was pleased to learn of the *Militant*’s coverage of the Angola Three, Black Panther frame-up victims held for decades in Louisiana’s Angola prison. He told Kennedy he had corresponded with and visited Lane Nelson, who spent two and a half years on death row in Angola prison and edited *The Angolite*, the prison paper, before he was released in 2011.



BY JOE YOUNG

CALGARY, Alberta — “I was very excited to do it,” Abdurahman Ali, a 31-year-old Teamster warehouse worker, told Communist League members as he joined them and Osborne Hart to campaign on workers’ doorsteps in the Ogden neighborhood here. Ali had learned about the Sept. 20-22 visit of Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. vice president, a few days earlier.

“It was my first time. Every door, you want to see who will answer, what kind of person,” he said. “I like your goals, to bring workers and farmers and regular people to power. I hope it can happen everywhere in the world. I like that you invite everybody to join.”

Over the three days, Hart and supporters of the Communist League campaigned with the Pathfinder book *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege and Learning Under Capitalism* and the *Militant* in five different working-class neighborhoods around Calgary.

“What kind of democracy is there going to be if Trump wins?” asked Rishi Nagar, the host of a popular Punjabi-language radio program on 106.7 Red FM,

Continued on page 9

Socialist Workers Party launches \$100,000 fund drive

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The Socialist Workers Party is launching a \$100,000 fund drive to take advantage of growing opportunities to win working people to the party. The 10-week drive runs from

Sept. 24 to Dec. 7.

It takes place as the party is turning to focus its activity in engaging workers on their doorsteps, discussing the deepening world capitalist crisis and the party’s program. This turn builds on the conquests by party members in door-to-door campaigning over the past several months in Minnesota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington and other states across the country.

An important component of this drive will be winning workers to get and study *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege and Learning Under Capitalism* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes and Pathfinder’s new edition of *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible? A Necessary Debate Among Working People* by Mary-Alice Waters. The new book will be available from SWP branches at the beginning of October.

The fund helps cover the SWP’s expenses here and abroad, leading

this turn and participating in workers’ struggles, actions against police brutality and other social protests, as well as working to broaden the fight to end Washington’s continuing embargo against revolutionary Cuba.

Branches around the country are adopting quotas to meet the national goal, including plans to reach out more broadly for contributions. As party supporters campaign with workers, they find more are interested in helping build the SWP by making a donation.

The *Militant* will provide weekly coverage as part of winning working people to support and join the party. A chart with local goals and payments received through Mon., Oct. 3, will be printed in next week’s issue. We ask all those who participate to send reports on your work that can be included in this column.

To contribute and join in efforts to raise funds, contact SWP units listed in the directory on page 8.

Join SWP campaigning, contribute funds!

Campaigners for the Socialist Workers Party presidential ticket of Alyson Kennedy and Osborne Hart are getting a great response: discussing with workers door to door the world crisis of capitalist production and trade, joining protests against the bosses’ efforts to make workers pay, and asking people to join the SWP. Kennedy is currently in Puerto Rico, part of a fact-finding and solidarity visit opposing Washington’s colonial rule.

You can join in these efforts — just get in touch with the party in your area, listed on page 8.

You can also contribute to the \$40,000 Campaign Fund that makes this work possible. Contributions can be made out to Socialist Workers National Campaign Committee and sent to 227 W. 29th St., 6th Floor, New York, NY 10001.

\$40,000 needed

\$28,085
raised
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Ankara escalates attacks on Kurds in Turkey, Syria

BY NAOMI CRAINE

The government in Turkey has escalated its decades-long offensive against the Kurdish people there in recent weeks, using the state of emergency declared by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan after the July 15 failed coup attempt. Turkish forces have also attacked positions of the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG) inside Syria. Blocking the consolidation of an autonomous Kurdish region — and the inspiration it would give to Kurds in Turkey — is the primary aim of the Turkish government’s military intervention there.

The Ministry of Education suspended more than 11,000 teachers in southeastern Turkey Sept. 8, accusing them of supporting the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). Then on Sept. 11 the government appointed trustees to replace 24 elected mayors of predominantly Kurdish municipalities on the same charges.

The removal of the mayors, many of whom have also been arrested, “is a coup against the will of the Kurdish people,” Abdullah Demirbas told the *Militant* in a phone interview Sept. 19. Municipal workers responded with strikes and protests, he said. Demirbas is a former mayor of the Sur district of the majority-Kurdish city Diyarbakir, who spent time in jail for his political views.

Using tear gas and water cannon, police broke up a Sept. 11 rally of 200 in front of City Hall in Suruc. The cops also attacked a protest in front of Batman City Hall, as well as demonstrations by teachers against the suspensions.

Ankara has targeted freedom of the press, shutting the country’s only Kurdish-language daily, *Azadiya Welat*, Aug. 28 and arresting its staff. Two weeks earlier police raided the pro-Kurdish *Ozgur Gundem*, closing it down.

The Erdogan government has used the emergency decrees to fire or imprison thousands of others it considers opponents, and clamp down broadly on democratic rights. Many are charged with being followers of Fethullah Gulen, a Turkish cleric and former ally of Erdogan who has lived in the U.S. since 1999. Erdogan says Gulen was behind the July coup attempt and is demanding Washington extradite him.

Kurds are an oppressed nationality who make up some 20 percent of the population in Turkey. The Erdogan government has been waging war on them since a 2013 PKK-initiated cease-fire broke down in July 2015. Ankara has put cities across the Kurdish southeast under siege, killed hundreds, including many civilians, and displaced several hundred thousand.

The PKK initiated armed struggle against the government in 1984. Its Stalinist-trained leadership carried out bombings and other acts that resulted in large numbers of civilian casualties, giving a series of Turkish regimes the pretext to attack the broader Kurdish population. Tens of thousands were killed over three decades.

PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan, who has been imprisoned since 1999, called for a return to a peace process in a message conveyed by his brother following a Sept. 10 visit.



Reuters/Sertac Kayar

Sept. 19 protest in Diyarbakir, Turkey, against suspension of teachers who regime accuses of supporting PKK. Signs read “Don’t touch my teacher” and “We’re here for an honorable life.”

“By their actions — ending parliamentary immunity for representatives, appointing trustees, removing Kurdish teachers, putting pressure against the media — the government wants to prevent a peaceful resolution,” Demirbas said. “They want to criminalize us and say to the world, ‘These Kurds don’t understand anything but force.’”

“The Kurdish municipalities in Turkey had close connections with the Kurdish cantons in Syria,” he said. “That’s one of the reasons they imposed the trustees.”

The Turkish government claims the Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) in Syria and its YPG militia are

just a branch of the PKK in disguise. When Turkish troops moved into northern Syria in August along with militias grouped in the Free Syrian Army, Erdogan openly proclaimed their goal was to fight the “PYD terror groups” as well as Islamic State. Ankara’s offensive in Syria is backed by Washington.

On Sept. 22 Turkish artillery targeted YPG positions near the city of Tal Abyad, in the Kurdish-controlled region of northeast Syria near the Turkish border, the Kurdish ARA News agency reported. The next day, Turkish-allied militias hit Kurdish forces in the village of Merenaz in the Kurdish canton of Afrin in western Syria.

Moscow, Assad bomb Aleppo as US seeks new deal

Continued from front page

Hassan Nasrallah told a Lebanese newspaper. “The final word is for the battlefield.”

Hundreds of civilians have been killed in the bombings over the last several days. The airstrikes have included incendiary weapons and “bunker-buster” bombs designed to pulverize concrete. Ammar al-Salmo, head of the Aleppo branch of the volunteer Syria Civil Defense, said three of the rescue group’s centers were bombed and emergency vehicles destroyed.

On Sept. 23 the attacks damaged the pumping station that provides water to some 250,000 residents left in eastern Aleppo where rebels have control. In retaliation, government opponents shut off a pumping station that supplies 1.5 million people in the rest of the city. The population now has to rely on well water, which is most likely contaminated, according to UNICEF.

Aleppo, which was Syria’s largest city and the main commercial and industrial center, has been fiercely contested since the civil war began in 2011, after the Assad regime crushed mass protests for democratic rights. The strongest forces among government opponents there are jihadist militias loosely allied with the Army of Conquest, led by Syria’s former al-Qaeda branch. The Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) controls the city’s northern Kurdish Sheikh Maqsoud district.

As the assault on Aleppo continues, Turkish troops and some Syrian militias allied with them continue to push into the area north of the city, seeking to prevent the PYD from unifying Syria’s Kurdish areas to the east and west.

Conflicting national interests among Washington, Moscow, Tehran, Ankara and other Mideast capitalist regimes

keep scuttling all efforts to reach a deal. Washington — whose power and influence has been weakened by its unending wars from Iraq to Afghanistan — sees a bloc with Moscow as the only road to achieve some variant of stability to preserve its imperialist interests there.

At the U.N. Security Council meeting, U.S. Ambassador Samantha Power said Moscow was engaged in “barbarism” in Syria. The French and British ambassadors joined Power in walking out when the Syrian ambassador addressed the council.

Russian Ambassador Vitaly Churkin argued that Damascus has shown “envious restraint.” He pointed out that groups Washington has backed in Syria, including in Aleppo, fight alongside al-Qaeda-linked forces, which the U.S. government agrees are “terrorists.”

The truce came apart after U.S. bombers hit government troops in eastern Syria Sept. 17, a move Washington said was a “mistake,” and after Moscow denied considerable evidence it was responsible for an attack that destroyed a U.N.-organized convoy of humanitarian aid headed for besieged rebel areas near Aleppo.

At a Sept. 22 congressional hearing, Defense Secretary Ashton Carter reiterated that Secretary of State John Kerry is “trying to get the Russians to move ... toward putting an end to the civil war.”

More U.S. troops headed to Iraq

Testifying with him, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chair Gen. Joseph Dunford stressed that the U.S. priority in Syria is to destroy Islamic State, saying, “I do not have a military objective to remove Assad.”

Washington is moving to increase its ground troops in Iraq by 500 — to 6,400 — in an effort to hasten an as-

sault against Islamic State in Mosul in concert with Iraqi army units.

The U.S. rulers also plan to launch a major offensive against Islamic State’s self-proclaimed capital in Raqqa, Syria. But these efforts have been complicated by the sharp conflict between the Turkish government and Kurdish forces that would need to be centrally involved.

The battle for Mosul has the potential to ratchet up sectarian divisions among the Sunni Arab tribes, who are the majority of the population in that area; the Shiite-led Iraqi government; and the Kurdish autonomous region in northeast Iraq. Kurdistan Regional Government President Masoud Barzani has reportedly suggested the partition of Nineveh province, of which Mosul is the capital, into Sunni, Shia and Kurdish sections, and that Kurds be allowed to vote on whether to join Iraqi Kurdistan.

An estimated 2 million people remain in Mosul. Kurdish regional officials say they’ve begun building refugee camps to house 500,000 civilians who might flee the fighting, but don’t have the resources to finish them. The KRG interior ministry says it’s already “overstretched” as 1.8 million people displaced by the fighting in Iraq and Syria have already taken refuge in the Kurdish region.

— CALENDAR —

CALIFORNIA

Oakland
“Our Party Is Your Party.” Speakers: Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. vice president; Jeff Powers, SWP candidate for U.S. House of Representatives. Fri., Oct. 7. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Tel.: (510) 686-1351.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

AUSTRALIA

Sydney
Deal to End Colombia-FARC War Opens Door for Workers, Peasants: Lessons from the Cuban Revolution. Speaker: Manuele Lasalo, Communist League. Fri., Oct. 7, 7 p.m. Donation \$4/\$2 (unwaged). Upstairs, 281-7 Beamish St., Campsie. Tel.: (02) 9718-9698.

CANADA

Calgary
Free Oscar López Now! End U.S. Colonial Rule in Puerto Rico! Speaker: Katy LeRougetel. Fri., Oct. 7, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. Dragon City Mall, 328 Centre St. SE, Suite 246. Tel.: (403) 457-9044.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland
Working-Class Alternative: Celebrate the Communist League Campaign for Mayor of Auckland. Speaker: Patrick Brown, Communist League candidate for mayor. Sat., Oct. 8, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5. 188a Onehunga Mall, Onehunga. Tel.: (09) 636-3231.

UNITED KINGDOM

Manchester
Police Brutality and the Rulers’ Fear of the Working Class. Speaker: Catharina Tirsén, Communist League. Fri., Oct. 7, 7 p.m. Donation: £2.50. Room 301, Hilton House, 26-28 Hilton St. M1 2EH. Tel. (016) 1478-2496.

—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 workers locked out by Honeywell, United Gas Workers Union members fighting concession demands by Dominion Gas, 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

Quebec Steelworkers strike over attacks on new hires, pension cuts

GRENVILLE-SUR-LA-ROUGE, Quebec — Since voting to strike by 99 percent June 15, 92 members of United Steelworkers Local 6213 have picketed round-the-clock at the Resco plant here, which produces refractory bricks for steel and aluminum mills.

Press technician Julie Labelle, wearing a “femme d’acier” (woman of steel) T-shirt, told the *Militant* Sept. 18 the company is out to weaken the union by doubling the probation period to 90 days. “With layoffs every two months, new workers won’t ever get into the union,” Labelle said. Even with 13 years’ seniority, she works only seven to eight months a year. And the company wants to double the period before new workers receive full salary, she said.

Resco bosses also want to halve the

pension benefits of existing workers and eliminate a defined benefit pension for new workers, replacing it with a fund dependent on how much the employer contributes.

Strikers said Steelworkers from Lafarge Cement in Saint-Constant, 80 miles away, visited the picket line. Those unionists waged a successful three-month strike against a similar attack on their pensions. USW members from ArcelorMittal in Montreal stopped by too. Their local has pledged \$1 per week per member — \$550 a week — for the duration of the strike.

Union employees of Resco Products in Tarentum, Pennsylvania, whose contract expired in March, face similar concession demands in their negotiations.

On Sept. 19 the Resco workers in Quebec voted to accept a new contract.

—Beverly Bernardo

Trial set for unionists framed up in Quebec rail disaster

BY JOHN STEELE

SHERBROOKE, Quebec — By the time he goes to trial, “Tom Harding will have been waiting four years to be vindicated,” Thomas Walsh, Harding’s lawyer, told the *Militant*.

Locomotive engineer Harding and train controller Richard Labrie face frame-up charges of criminal negligence causing death in relation to the July 2013 Lac-Mégantic rail disaster. At a hearing here Sept. 13, Quebec Superior Court Justice Gaétan Dumas set their trial date for Sept. 11, 2017.

The two unionists, members of United Steelworkers Local 1976, are being scapegoated for the derailment and explosion of a runaway Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway oil train that killed 47 people and destroyed downtown Lac-Mégantic. If convicted they could face life in prison.

Former company official Jean Demaire and Montreal, Maine and Atlantic, which is now an officially bankrupt corporate entity, have also been charged.

The English-language daily *Globe and Mail* and the Transportation Safety Board’s official report have documented how the cost-cutting profit drive of the rail bosses, with the complicity of Ottawa’s Transport Canada agency, was at the root of the disaster.

Walsh questioned why the defunct railroad, which “has no assets and can’t be fined or jailed,” has been charged and not its former owner, Edward Burkhardt, who today runs the railway management company Rail World.

Among those who attended the hearing to show solidarity with Harding and Labrie was Robert Bellefleur, a Lac-Mégantic resident and activist with the Citizen and Groups Coalition for Rail Safety, which has been fighting to force Ottawa to build a rail bypass around the town of 6,000. “A majority of people in Lac-Mégantic consider that those really responsible for the tragedy are those who asked for and authorized the deregula-

tion of the rail system across Canada,” he told the *Militant*.

That’s who allowed the railroad to “operate an oil train over several years with one engineer, with minimal oversight” while “accumulating safety violation warnings,” Bellefleur continued. “But the courts prefer to charge simple workers rather than the MMA bosses or the top Transport Canada officials.”

Before the hearing Bellefleur and retired Washington, D.C., locomotive engineer Fritz Edler held a banner in front of the courthouse calling on the prosecutor to drop the charges against Harding and Labrie.

Following the hearing Edler, an activist with Railroad Workers United, a lobby group of rail unionists in the U.S. and Canada, gave the prosecutor’s office a petition signed by more than



Militant/Anne Howie

Bus drivers in London, members of Unite union, organize 24-hour strike against Tower Transit. Issues include schedule changes that cut pay and abusive comments by company chairman.

London bus drivers organize protest strikes at Tower Transit

LONDON — Over 1,000 bus drivers, engineers and controllers, members of the Unite union, carried out three 24-hour strikes against Tower Transit beginning Aug. 26.

“The main thing is respect,” Ahmed Saleh, a union steward at the Westbourne Park depot, told the *Militant* Sept. 17. Tower Transit Chairman Neil Smith angered workers when he said during an interview in Singapore last

year, “The problem in London is a very large immigrant workforce that you have to train to drive the bus,” in contrast to the “highly educated workforce of people with high aspirations” in Singapore. During a verbal confrontation with union convener Abdul Hanafi Aug. 26, Smith called strikers “bastards.”

The strikes were called over schedule changes that left drivers with less income, short-changing on overtime pay, and refusal to negotiate collectively at the company’s three depots.

Saleh said the company is cutting 60-minute lunch breaks to the contractual minimum of 40 minutes. “And the time to stretch your legs at the end of a route has been reduced from 12 to 15 minutes to three to four.”

A strike scheduled for Sept. 19 was called off when the company agreed to negotiations with all three depots.

“The strikes were growing more solid,” Saleh told the *Militant*. “When Smith called us ‘bastards,’ it made us more determined.”

—Ögmundur Jónsson

Solidarity Rally

Support members of UAW Local 9 locked out by Honeywell

South Bend, Indiana
Wed., Oct. 5, 5-7 p.m.
3520 Westmore, by gate 9

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



October 11, 1991

Haitians set up barricades in the capital city of Port-Au-Prince September 30 in response to a military coup against the government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Hundreds of Haitians living in Miami took to the streets to condemn the coup. Several thousand rallied outside the United Nations building in New York, calling on the UN Security Council to denounce the coup. In Haiti, at least 26 people were reported killed and 200 wounded by the military.

Aristide won the presidency by a landslide vote last December, in what most Haitians regarded as the first freely conducted election in decades.

Washington backed the brutal reign of the Duvalier family that took power in 1957. The dictatorship was overthrown in 1986 through a massive upsurge.



October 10, 1966

NEW YORK — Immediately after the Sept. 29 fire-bombing of the headquarters of the Socialist Workers Party, Judy White, SWP candidate for governor, told newsmen:

“If the right-wing terrorists think they can intimidate us by such tactics, they are mistaken. We intend to continue our opposition to the American intervention in Vietnam and our opposition to Johnson’s escalation of the war. We will continue to demand the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops.

“We appeal to all opponents of the war in Vietnam to rally with expressions of solidarity against the pattern of violence being used in hope of silencing opposition to Johnson’s drive toward war.

“Answer the terrorists by closing ranks.”



October 11, 1941

BAYONNE, N.J. — 1500 workers of the Maiden Form Brassiere factory, members of Local 160 of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, went out on strike here last week.

The strike came after many efforts by the shop negotiating committee to obtain an improved contract had been stalled by the employers. The employers had received assistance from the bureaucratic representatives of the national office of the ILGWU, who were proposing to sign a contract behind the backs of the workers involved.

The strike, supported unanimously by the workers in the plant, has not been authorized by the ILGWU. The questions of local autonomy and union democracy have become as prominent in the strike as the problem of wage increases and improved conditions.

Puerto Rico: US colony

Continued from front page

the Revolution in downtown Lares, where an armed revolt against Spanish colonial rule — the Grito de Lares (Battle Cry of Lares) — was launched Sept. 23, 1868, less than three weeks before the anti-colonial uprising in Cuba known as the Grito de Yara. It was led by Ramón Emeterio Betances and other Puerto Rican revolutionaries fighting for independence and the abolition of slavery.

While the rebellion was crushed, it became a symbol of the fight for liberation after Washington invaded Puerto Rico in 1898, seizing it from Spain and becoming the colonial master.

This year's Grito de Lares celebration was marked by growing opposition to the government's attacks on the living standards and rights of working people. A focus of this fight is the cynically named PROMESA (Spanish for "promise") law, which the U.S. Congress has imposed on the island to force it to repay the colonial regime's \$70 billion debt to bondholders. The law established a seven-member "fiscal control" board, appointed by U.S. President Barack Obama, with the power to sell Puerto Rican assets, lay off workers, enforce anti-strike legislation, reduce the minimum wage to \$4.25 an hour for workers under 25, and jail officials who do not carry out its dictates.

This comes on top of the tens of thousands of public employees who have already been laid off, as well as steeply raised sales taxes and slashed social services. These attacks have been enacted by both the pro-Commonwealth Popular Democratic Party (PPD) and the pro-statehood New Progressive Party (PNP) governments over the last decade.

'The debt isn't ours'

"The debt is not ours, it's imperialism's debt!" declared Aleida Centeno, speaking for the Nationalist Party at the rally. "It's we who should present the United States with a bill for 118 years of exploitation and plunder."

María de Lourdes Santiago, the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) nominee for governor of Puerto Rico, pledged that if the party's candidates are elected, they will refuse to abide by PROMESA and the fiscal board's orders, even if threatened with jail.

Santiago said PIP supporters, who are canvassing house to house, have never seen such openness to their anti-colonial message in a nation that for decades had been polarized between supporters of the current "commonwealth"

status, statehood and independence.

Eduardo Villanueva, president of the Human Rights Committee, reported growing support for the fight to release Oscar López Rivera, a Puerto Rican *independentista* who has been in prison in the U.S. for more than 35 years. He has resisted every effort to break him and make him renounce his views, Villanueva said.

A major action calling for López's freedom is set for Oct. 9 in Washington, D.C. Villanueva said organizations here are planning to send a delegation. A sister protest will take place in San Juan.

Wilma Reverón, a co-chair of the Hostos National Independence Movement (MINH), also pointed to the importance of the fight to free López. She had just returned from a summit meeting in Caracas, Venezuela, of the Non-Aligned Movement, where MINH represented the Puerto Rican independence movement. She said the summit demanded that Washington free Oscar López.

Protests are being organized in San Juan during a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the U.S. federal court in Puerto Rico planned for next week, Reverón said. The court has a decades-long record of frame-ups and repression against the independence movement.

SWP presidential candidate speaks

Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, told the crowd that she was on a nine-day visit to the island "to support Puerto

Killing by Charlotte police sparks protests, discussion

Continued from front page

dash-cam and body camera footage of the shooting of Scott after refusing for days. The videos failed to back police claims that Scott was a threat or carried a gun.

"Hundreds of us are here tonight to protest peacefully, as we have been all week," Rev. William Barber, president of the North Carolina NAACP, told a church rally of several hundred Sept. 26. "We are all here marching together — Black, white, Latino, male, female, gays and straight. We are united and won't be divided."

Over 100 people packed a City Council meeting the same day, and more than 40 signed up to speak out against the police shooting and the city's response. One was Zianna Oliphant, a young girl who needed a step ladder to reach above the podium.

"We shouldn't have to protest because you are treating us wrong. We do this because we need to and have rights," she said, fighting back tears. "It's a shame that our fathers and mothers are killed and we can't see them any more. It's a shame we have to go to their graveyard and bury them."

Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president, addressed 50 people at a vigil that day at the site where Scott was



Militant/Cindy Jaquith

This year's Grito de Lares rally was marked by opposition in Puerto Rico to imposition of U.S. "fiscal control" board and ongoing attacks on rights and standard of living of working people.

Rico's right to self-determination and to join your protests against the U.S. fiscal control board and other struggles by workers and youth to defend jobs, wages, health care, education and living standards."

The fight for Puerto Rico's independence "is also in the interests of working people in the United States because we face a common enemy, the imperialist ruling class and its government," she said.

The SWP is actively building the Oct. 9 action in Washington for Oscar López, she said. Her remarks were warmly received, and daily newspapers and TV news reported on her speech.

Camila Sánchez-Longo spoke on behalf of young people who have main-

tained a permanent tent encampment in front of the U.S. courthouse in San Juan since June to protest PROMESA and the fiscal control board.

José Rivera of the Socialist Front and Norberto González Claudio of the Revolutionary Workers Party-Macheteros also addressed the rally. González Claudio was imprisoned in the U.S. from 2011 to 2015 for his pro-independence activities. Other speakers included Miriam Montes Mock, cousin of Ana Belén Montes, who is serving a 25-year sentence in a U.S. prison for passing information to the Cuban government while she worked at the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency, and Jorge Farinacci Fernós, son of the late *independentista* leader Jorge Farinacci García.

killed. "Police killings are a working-class issue," he said. "The killings are systemic to capitalist rule. We need a movement of millions that can replace it with the rule of working people."

Hart spent two days here joining protests and knocking on doors in working-class neighborhoods, discussing the fight against police brutality, the effects on working people of the spreading capitalist crisis and Washington's wars abroad.

Discussion runs through Charlotte

On Sept. 23, students at half a dozen Charlotte-area high schools organized rallies, cafeteria-wide discussions, sit-ins, prayer circles and a poetry slam. Before that evening's football games, players and cheerleaders from West Mecklenburg and Ardrey Kell high schools knelt together for a moment of silence. At Mallard Creek High some players knelt during the national anthem. West Charlotte High's cheerleaders were dressed in black instead of their maroon and gold and held signs saying "All Lives Matter" and an enlarged photo of protesters confronting the cops.

City officials and the media sought to portray the protesters as violent, highlighting some incidents of vandalism and looting.

"I have been to almost every rally and the rioting didn't help," John Simmons, 22, told the *Militant* at the vigil. "But the failure of the police to not immediately release the videos was a blatant lack of transparency and increased everyone's feeling that they had something to hide," he said.

On Sept. 23, attorneys for Scott's fam-

ily released a cellphone video taken by his wife as cops approached and killed him. Rakeyia Scott can be heard telling the cops her husband has no gun, that he has a traumatic brain injury and that he is not going to hurt anybody. She repeatedly says, "Don't shoot him."

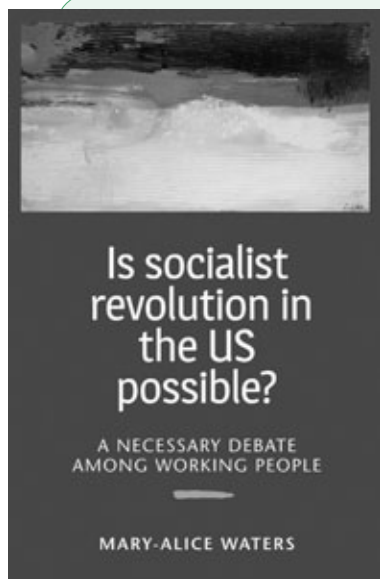
Neighbors said Scott often sat reading in his white truck near the entrance to the complex, waiting for the school bus to drop his son off, and that's what they thought he was doing that afternoon.

Participants in the rallies across the city have noted the broad response to the killing. "It was important for people to see that Latinos share a common oppression with Blacks from the police," Noe Pliego Campos, a student at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, told the *Militant* as he joined a group carrying the Mexican flag in one of the marches. "We also made signs in Spanish so that those who don't read English could understand what the protests are about."

"What happened on Tuesday didn't just start on Tuesday," Scott's neighbor Yolanda Haskins told the Sept. 26 church rally to thunderous applause.

"My son was shot in the back while running away," Moesha Brown said, describing how cops shot her 16-year-old son Laquan Brown. "If someone is running away, how is he a threat to a police officer?"

Larneka Jackson told the rally how her brother, Lareko Williams, was tasered to death in 2011. She disagreed with those who argue that the answer is more police training, saying the cop who killed her brother had years of training and documents saying he was qualified.



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"What lies ahead are struggles that transform us as we fight to transform the twisted social relations of the dog-eat-dog world of capitalism — relations that corrode human solidarity and coarsen us all."
— Mary-Alice Waters

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See page 8 to contact the Socialist Workers Party or Communist League in your area.

‘While Oscar López is in prison, we’re all in prison’

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK — Oscar López Rivera “is the spirit, the conscience, the symbol of the Puerto Rican People in their fight against colonialism,” legendary independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda said at a panel discussion at El Museo del Barrio here Sept. 24. “As long as Oscar is in prison, we are all in prison.”

The panel was one of three meetings here that honored Cancel Miranda and built support for the Oct. 9 protest in Washington, D.C., to demand freedom for López. At a Grito de Lares event at La Marqueta Retoña in East Harlem, 200 turned out to hear him, including many workers who live nearby.

Now 73 years old, López has been jailed in the United States for more than 35 years on frame-up charges of “seditious conspiracy” because of his actions to win independence for the U.S. colony.

Also speaking were López’s daughter Clarisa López, Hostos Community College professor Ana López and Margaret Power, a professor at Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. The panel was chaired by Félix Matos, president of Queens College.

Cancel Miranda, 86, spent 25 years in U.S. jails, first for refusing to be drafted into the U.S. Army just before the Ko-



Militant/Naomi Craine

Long-time Puerto Rican independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda speaks at Sept. 24 meeting in N.Y. to build Oct. 9 White House protest for freedom for imprisoned fellow *independentista* Oscar López. From left, López’s daughter Clarisa and Hostos professor Ana López.

rean War, and later for carrying out an armed protest in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1954 together with Lolita Lebrón, Andrés Figueroa Cordero and Irving Flores. They carried out the action to answer Washington’s lie that Puerto Rico was no longer a U.S. colony.

The veteran *independentista* described several high points of the strug-

gle of the Puerto Rican people against Spanish and then U.S. colonialism.

“My father was a survivor of the Ponce Massacre,” Cancel Miranda said, referring to March 21, 1937, when police attacked a peaceful demonstration demanding the freedom of jailed Nationalist Party leader Pedro Albizu Campos, killing 21 people.

1958 Cuban peasant congress: ‘It’s your revolution’

BY SETH GALINSKY

In the middle of the revolutionary war led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement to overthrow the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship, 201 peasant delegates made their way by foot and by horseback to the dance hall in the tiny town of Soledad de Mayarí Arriba for the Peasant Congress in Arms. The Sept. 21, 1958, meeting took place in Oriente province, much of which was under the control of the Rebel Army’s Second Front.

“The Rebel Army is your army, it’s the army of the people, of the peasants,” Raúl Castro, commander of the Second Front, told them.

The meeting was one of many actions by rebel leaders aimed at organizing working people to take control and put in place what Fidel Castro called “the embryo of the new state that would emerge after the revolutionary triumph.”

The congress had been set for Calabaza de Sagua, but after nearby bombing raids by Batista’s air force, it was moved 30 miles away. Many delegates found out about the change at the last minute and ended up walking for three days, at times through swamps, crossing rivers and dodging strafing by the regime.

The delegates were sharecroppers, tenant farmers, working farmers and “squatters” from rebel-controlled territory. Some came from areas still ruled by Batista. There were also some farmworkers, mostly cane cutters. They were joined by Raúl Castro, Vilma Espín and other leaders of the Second Front.

This wasn’t the first meeting of the rural poor. In May, Fidel Castro met with 500 coffee pickers in the Sierra Maestra to discuss how to deal with sabotage of the harvest by capitalist landowners seeking to undermine the advancing revolution.

There were more than 159,000 farms in Cuba in 1958, but 1.4 percent of the owners controlled 46 percent of the

land. Nine U.S. capitalists alone owned more than 3 million acres. Peasants were forced to accept lower prices for their crops because of the stranglehold on transportation and financing by capitalist landlords and middlemen. Most farmworkers, with no land of their own, barely squeaked by with a few months of work during harvest time.

According to *Sierra Maestra* newspaper, 96 percent of peasants rarely ate meat and only 2 percent had eggs in their diet. More than 40 percent of the rural population was illiterate.

After Raúl Castro promoted the first Revolutionary Peasant Committees in April, 84 were formed, attracting some 5,000 members. They organized peasants to support the Rebel Army by storing food, gathering supplies and providing information on the movement of the dictatorship’s forces. They became the champions of the demands of the rural poor.

In July, 32 peasant leaders from every municipality controlled by the Second Front elected a Regional Agrarian Committee with José “Pepe” Ramírez Cruz as president and Teodoro Pereira La Rosa as vice president. They told coffee farmers they should not sell a quintal of coffee — about 100 lbs. — for less than 42.5 pesos. And they encouraged farmers to contribute to finance the Rebel Army.

The capitalist landowners launched a campaign to red-bait the committee, charging it was a communist plot. Long-time peasant leader Ramírez, and other members of the Popular Socialist Party, were particular targets. In response, the committee worked to organize the congress, promising leadership elections.

The congress became a tribune for exploited peasants. They denounced the evictions of farmers from the land they worked and the actions of the thugs of the *latifundistas* and demanded fixed prices for their crops, access to health

care, roads and credit.

The congress formed the Regional Peasant Committee, laying the basis for what is today the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP). Choosing between two competing slates, delegates elected a leadership that backed the revolution and rejected those that had spearheaded the red-baiting attack. Pereira was elected president and Ramírez organization secretary.

‘Without land reform, no revolution’

“Without land reform, there can be no Cuban Revolution,” Raúl Castro said in his closing remarks to the congress. “We may be unaware of the magnitude of what we are doing here, because right now, today, the Agrarian Revolution is beginning, is emerging, and must form the basis of the true Cuban Revolution.”

“Workers and peasants have the same destiny and have to unite in struggle,” he added.

Two weeks later, Fidel Castro, the central leader of the Rebel Army and the July 26 Movement, issued Law 3, which stated that peasants would “immediately” begin to receive titles to the land they worked.

In 2014 Onésimo Marín Rodríguez, one of the delegates, described to *Venceremos* the impact the congress had on the peasant struggle.

“We felt a support that we never saw in previous governments. We learned firsthand what the political, social and economic objectives were of the revolution that was being born,” he said. “We left enthusiastic with the idea of creating more peasant associations to accelerate the fall of the dictatorship.”

And accelerate it they did. On Jan. 1, 1959, Batista fled as the Rebel Army advanced across the country. Workers and farmers responded to the July 26 movement’s call for a general strike and insurrection to ensure that a revolutionary government would take his place.

Cancel Miranda noted that when he joined the armed protest in 1954, his father was in jail for violating a gag law that prohibited speaking out or circulating literature “with the intention of overthrowing” the government, a law aimed at independence supporters.

“How can we work with those of our brothers and sisters who have been brainwashed to believe they need the United States?” Cancel Miranda was asked during the discussion.

“We have to understand them,” he said. “In all colonies only a minority dare to fight” the colonial power. “They condition us since we are little kids” and foster dependence.

After 118 years of being a U.S. colony, “the miracle is that there are still Puerto Ricans who believe in ourselves and are fighting,” Cancel Miranda said. “I am not fighting against any Puerto Rican, no matter how brainwashed he is. ... I’m fighting U.S. imperialism. That’s the enemy.”

Clarisa López read a letter from her father about Cancel Miranda. López was born in Puerto Rico and moved to the U.S. when he was 14. Unlike Cancel Miranda, López Rivera wrote, “I allowed myself to be drafted by the U.S. Army and ended up participating in an unjust and criminal war” in Vietnam.

After López returned, he learned about Cancel Miranda and the other nationalist prisoners and joined the campaign to free them, including “knocking on doors and talking with community residents.” After a decade they were successful and the last of the prisoners were freed Sept. 10, 1979.

Cancel Miranda noted that he and López passed through some of the same prisons. “To this day,” López wrote, “I still run into prisoners who spent time with him and ask about him.”

Cancel Miranda told the audience he met other political prisoners while in jail, including Native American activist Leonard Peltier and former Black Panther Herman Bell. Both are still in jail “for fighting for their people,” he said.

The U.S. government couldn’t break López’s spirit even after more than 12 years in solitary, Cancel Miranda said.

At the infamous Marion prison “the control units are 6 feet by 8 feet, the bars of the cell and the walls are all painted the same drab color,” Clarisa López said. When she and her daughter Karina visited her father there, they were separated by thick glass. “We would dress with really bright colors,” she said, “so that his eyes could have happiness.”

“My father is the freest man I know.”

For more information on the Oct. 9 protest and concert visit www.boricua-humanrights.org or www.freeoscarlopeznow.com.



pathfinderpress.com

Cosmetics, fashions and the exploitation of women

Cosmetics, Fashions and the Exploitation of Women is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for October. Joseph Hansen, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, sparked a lively debate when under the pen name Jack Bustelo he wrote an exposé in the Militant in 1954 on the profit-driven cosmetics industry and their efforts to propagandize women that they desperately needed cosmetics to get beautiful. This book is drawn from the record of that debate, which became known in the history of the SWP as the "Bustelo controversy." It includes an introduction by current SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters along with other articles discussing the pressures that bear down on women and men in capitalist society, especially during periods of political reaction and retreat. Excerpted is SWP leader Evelyn Reed's article, "The Woman Question and the Marxist Method," defending Bustelo. Copyright © 1986 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY EVELYN REED

As we have frequently pointed out, the past fourteen years of war boom and prosperity have produced a conservatizing effect upon the working class which we describe as a "bourgeoisification." One of the forms this takes is the readiness of the workers to accept bour-



Cosmetics and "fashion" industries play on economic and emotional insecurities of women to rake in profits. "The deliberate promotion during postwar years of the 'feminine mystique,'" Socialist Workers Party leader Mary-Alice Waters wrote in introduction to *Cosmetics* book, aimed to make women see themselves "as wives, mothers and housekeepers."

geois opinions and propaganda as scientific truth and adapt themselves to it.

Like the whole working class, the party is under constant pressure and bombardment from this massive bourgeois propaganda machine. As the conscious vanguard, however, we must not permit ourselves to become influenced by it to the slightest degree. On the contrary, we must counter this mood in the working class through unrelenting ideological struggle.

Certain discussions now taking place in the party reveal that a certain amount of adaptation to bourgeois propaganda has arisen which, although probably unwitting, is a signal that should alert us to the danger. These discussions revolve around a very important and highly complex subject, the woman question. Since many aspects of this question are still obscure, and all aspects are sensitive, it is all the more imperative that we begin such a discussion on the basis of utmost clarity and objectivity. ...

The contradictory position of the comrades arises out of the notion that questions concerning women in the realm of sex, beauty, and so on transcend class lines. The discussion, therefore, is taking place in an abstract void, apart from history and the class struggle. This notion arises out of the bourgeois myth that the needs of all women in the realm of sexual beauty are identical for all classes of women because of their common identity as women.

This is completely false. The *class distinctions* between women transcend

their *sex identity* as women. This is above all true in modern capitalist society, the epoch of the sharpest polarization of class forces.

The woman question cannot be divorced from the class question. Any confusion on this score can only lead to erroneous conclusions and setbacks. It will divert the class struggle into a sex struggle of all women against all men.

Historically, the sex struggle was part of the bourgeois feminist movement of the last century. It was a reform movement, conducted within the framework of the capitalist system, and not seeking to overthrow it. But it was a progressive struggle in that women revolted against almost total male domination on the economic, social, and domestic fronts. Through the feminist movement, a number of important reforms were won for women. But the bourgeois feminist movement has run its course. ...

[A]s capitalism developed, there arose an enormous expansion of the productive machine and with it the need for a mass market. Since women represent half the population, profiteers in "beauty" eyed this mass and lusted to exploit it for their own purposes. And so the fashion field was expanded out of the narrow confines of the rich and made socially obligatory upon the whole female population.

Now, for the first time, *class distinctions* were covered over and concealed behind *sex identity*, to serve the needs of this sector of big business. And the bourgeois hucksters began grinding

out the propaganda: All women want to be beautiful. Therefore all women have the same interest in cosmetics and fashions. Beauty became identical with fashion and all women were sold on their common "needs and wants" for these fashions.

Today, billions are coined out of every department in the fashion field; cosmetics, clothes, hairdos, slenderizing salons, beauty salons, jewelry, fake and real, and so on. Beauty, it was discovered, was a very flexible formula. All you had to do to become rich was to discover a new aid to beauty and convince the whole population of women that they "needed and wanted" this aid. ...

Thus, when the comrades defend the *right* of women to use cosmetics, fashions, etc., without clearly distinguishing between such a right and the capitalist *social compulsion* to use them, they have fallen into the trap of bourgeois propaganda. Even worse, as the vanguard of women, they are leading the mass of women into this fashion rat race and into upholding and perpetuating these profiteers, exploiters, and scoundrels.

It is contended that so long as capitalism prevails, we must abide by these cosmetic and fashion decrees. Otherwise, we will be left behind in the economic and social rear. This is true. We must give at least a token recognition of the harsh reality.

But this does not mean that we must accept these edicts and compulsions complacently, or without protest. The workers in the plants are often obliged to accept speedups, pay cuts, and attacks on their unions. But they always and invariably accept them under protest, under continuing struggle against them, and in a constant movement to *oppose* their needs and will against their exploiters.

The class struggle is a movement of *opposition*, not *adaptation*, and this holds true not only of the workers in the plants, but of the women as well, both workers and housewives. It is because the issues are more obscured in the realm of the women as a sex that some of our own comrades have fallen into the trap of adaptation. In this respect we must change our course. Let us begin to demonstrate, through history, that the modern fashion standard of beauty is not a permanent fixture, and that the working woman can and should have something to say about it.

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Join fight to end police brutality!

Continued from front page
ity — aimed at the working class and disproportionately at workers who are Black — are having an impact. While they are episodic, not yet part of an organized national movement, they build on the historic transformation won by the powerful working-class movement led by African-Americans that smashed Jim Crow segregation in the 1950s and ’60s.

This is seen in how swiftly the rulers had to move to bring down the Confederate battle flag, the hated symbol of Jim Crow, across the South last year. It is felt in the growing refusal to accept police killings and other abuses of the capitalist state and in the changing consciousness and confidence of millions of workers that my supporters and I find when we knock on doors across the country.

This is the reason the capitalist rulers have taken some steps to rein in their cops. For instance, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, charges were filed just days after Officer Betty Jo Shelby shot and killed Terence Crutcher.

Spurred by protests in 2014 against police killings, the *Washington Post* began recording people shot dead by police in 2015. By the end of the year the total was 991, 26 percent of them African-Americans — double the proportion of the population that is Black.

Some said this shows the rise of police killings. But in fact police brutality and racist violence have fall-

en dramatically from the days of Jim Crow — in the North as well as the South.

What *is* new is the broad public attention cop attacks get, the bravery and willingness of thousands to capture the shootings on video and the widespread outrage over the killings. Millions are discussing why these assaults take place, the character of the social system from which they arise and what can be done to end them once and for all.

Police serve and protect the wealthy rulers, not only defending their property, but carrying out their divide-and-conquer methods to maintain state power. Police violence against workers is baked in the cake of capitalism and can’t be reformed away.

As a result of the mighty battles that overthrew Jim Crow, there is more unity and solidarity between Black and Caucasian workers today than ever before. And we’re in a stronger position as it becomes clearer there is no answer under the political rule of the bosses and bankers to the deepening crisis of their capitalist system and the misery, brutality and wars it foists on the back of our class.

We have to organize in our millions to fight back, through which we will become politically capable of organizing to take political power ourselves.

This course requires leadership. Join the Socialist Workers Party!

SWP campaign finds interest in UK, Canada

Continued from page 3
when he interviewed Hart.

“The same democracy that exists now, the same if Clinton wins,” Hart replied. “The democracy of the dictatorship of capital, where workers can vote for one of the capitalist parties, but both represent the rulers. Workers, who produce all the wealth, have no say over how it’s used because the boss class holds state power.

“The elections don’t change anything. Every social measure that benefits the working class was won by workers ourselves through labor and social struggles — from the American Revolution against British colonialism to the Civil War that ended slavery, to the strikes and organizing drives that built the labor movement during the 1930s depression, to the mass Black-led movement of the 1950s and ’60s that overturned Jim Crow segregation. The same is true in Canada.”

“What is going on in Syria? What is the U.S. doing supporting Turkey against the Kurds?” Mustafa Alhasan, a Kurdish worker, asked Hart at a citywide meeting organized by the Communist League.

“The Socialist Workers Party supports the Kurds’ fight for national rights in Syria, Turkey, Iraq and Iran,” Hart said. “Washington uses its effective fighting capacity for its own ends, but is no friend of the Kurds. President Obama and Vice President Biden both cheered the Turkish-organized military intervention into Syria and joined in demanding the Kurds pull out of areas they have won control over.

“There is no revolutionary working-class leadership in the Middle East,” he said. “The void is filled by the brutal, anti-working-class Islamic State. There, as elsewhere, a revolutionary workers movement needs to be built.”

“In building a movement, how can we overturn the dictatorship of capital?” asked Tanya Johnston, who supports Native Americans in North Dakota protesting the construction of a pipeline near the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation.

“The SWP stands in solidarity with the Native people at Standing Rock,” Hart said. “Our candidate for Senate in Minnesota has joined the protests there and I’m going in October. For over 150 years, Native Americans have been forced onto reservations under oppressive conditions.

“Now, when the ruling rich seek to run a pipeline over land they hold sacred, threatening their water supply, the Sioux are standing up in dignity to demand their sovereign rights,” Hart said. “And their fight has attracted thousands more Native people and others from all across North America.

“In the course of labor and social battles to come, we will transform ourselves, conquering the political program and self-worth needed to take political power out of the hands of the capitalist exploiters and establish our own workers and farmers government.”

Katy LeRougetel contributed to this article.

SWP is workers’ party!

Continued from front page
scription of factory closings, the weakness of the vaunted recovery and the danger of another financial collapse. “We are in a big, fat, ugly bubble,” he said.

Trump’s remedy? Give capitalists “incentives to build new companies or to expand” by sharply cutting taxes on the wealthy and easing regulations.

“The debate demonstrates once again that the U.S. rulers have no solution to the historic crisis of the capitalist system, and the deepening disaster it means for working people,” Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, told the *Militant* Sept. 27. “Clinton denies the crisis, while Trump proposes to solve it by largesse for the bosses.

“My party has campaigned door to door and talked with thousands of workers who want to discuss the way out of this intolerable situation. We explain that the workings of capitalism lead to depression and war, and only the working class can solve it by unifying in struggle against the grinding depression conditions we face and organizing to take political power.”

Clinton and Trump vied to show their desire to serve as U.S. imperialism’s commander in chief in its endless wars abroad.

Clinton vowed to “intensify our airstrikes” in Syria and Iraq. She said she would continue Obama’s assassination policy, pledging to “take out” Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. “I was involved in a number of efforts to take out al-Qaeda leadership when I was secretary of state,” she boasted.

“President Obama and Secretary Clinton created a vacuum the way they got out of Iraq,” Trump said. Washington should have “taken the oil” from Iraq to stop the formation of Islamic State, he proclaimed.

SWP opposes Washington’s imperialist wars

“The Socialist Workers Party calls for an end to Washington’s wars and all U.S. troops out of the Middle East,” Kennedy said. “U.S. imperialism’s 25-year war in the region has meant death and destruction for millions of our fellow toilers in those countries.”

The debate took place against the backdrop of days of protest in Charlotte, North Carolina, over the Sept. 20 police killing of Keith Scott.

Trump said the protests show the need for strengthening the cops for more “law and order in our country.” He announced he had just been endorsed by the Fraternal Order of Police and called for increased use of unprovoked “stop-and-frisk” cop searches.

“We have to work with the police,” Clinton said. “We have to make sure they respect the communities and the communities respect them.”

Trump reminded Clinton she had referred to African-American youth as “super-predators” in 1996, when she defended the draconian sentencing laws of her husband’s administration.

“The Socialist Workers Party calls for charging Charlotte police officer Brentley Vinson for the killing of Scott,” Kennedy said. “My running mate Osborne Hart is in Charlotte today joining the protests and campaigning in working-class neighborhoods.”

Throughout the debate Trump painted Clinton as a corrupt insider. She said he was unfit to be president.

The *New York Daily News*, which backs Clinton, interviewed several people the day of the debate. “I’m unimpressed, to say the least,” Dylan Marshall of Weehawken, New Jersey, said. “I don’t believe that either party has a clean interest in running the country.”

“I’m not sure if I’m even voting,” said college student Amanda Velez. “The elite people choose. We just vote to make it seem like we’re doing something.”

Socialist Workers Party campaigners heard similar comments campaigning in working-class areas across New York and New Jersey over the last few days.

“The Socialist Workers Party is part of the working class,” Kennedy said. “We back and build solidarity with any fights that break out today — from Charlotte to the fight against the bosses’ lockout of Honeywell workers in Indiana and New York.

“But there is not yet any sustained labor resistance or mass social struggles, that is yet to come,” she said. “What’s happening is far-reaching discussion on all these questions on workers’ doorsteps and in their living rooms. The SWP is joining these discussions and finds an unprecedented openness to the revolutionary working-class program we put forward.

“And a growing number are responding to our invitation to join in campaigning with us,” she said.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE® Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)
1. Publication Title: The Militant.
2. Publication Number: 0349-040.
3. Filing Date: 9/29/16.
4. Issue Frequency: Published weekly except for one week in January, one week in June, one week in July, and one week in December.
5. No. of Issues Published Annually: 48.
6. Annual Subscription Price: \$35.
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (*Not printer*) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4®): 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018-2482.
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (*Not printer*): 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018-2482.
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (*Do not leave blank*). Publisher (*Name and complete mailing address*): The Militant Publishing Association, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018-2482. Editor (*Name and complete mailing address*): John Studer, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018-2482. Managing Editor (*Name and complete mailing address*): Naomi Craine, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018-2482.
10. Owner (*Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address*). Full Name: Susan LaMont; Complete Mailing Address: 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018-2482.
11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities: None.
12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates). The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes: Does not apply.
13. Publication Title: The Militant.
14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: October 3, 2016.
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation. Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months: a. Total Number of Copies (*Net press run*): 3900. b. Paid Circulation (*By Mail and Outside the Mail*) (1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (*Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser’s proof copies, and exchange copies*): 1559; (2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (*Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser’s proof*

copies, and exchange copies): 62; (3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®: 1397; (4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (*e.g. First-Class Mail®*): 55; c. Total Paid Distribution (*Sum of 15b. (1), (2), (3), and (4)*): 3073; d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (*By Mail and Outside the Mail*): (1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541: 39; (2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541: 3; (3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (*e.g. First-Class Mail*): 6; (4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (*Carriers or other means*): 117; e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (*Sum of 15d. (1), (2), (3), and (4)*): 165; f. Total Distribution (*Sum of 15c and 15e*): 3238; g. Copies not Distributed (*See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3)*): 662; h. Total (*Sum of 15f and g*): 3900; i. Percent Paid (*15c divided by 15f times 100*): 94.90%; No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date. a. Total Number of Copies (*Net press run*): 3500. b. Paid Circulation (*By Mail and Outside the Mail*) (1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (*Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser’s proof copies, and exchange copies*): 1286; (2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (*Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser’s proof copies, and exchange copies*): 36; (3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS: 1014; (4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (*e.g. First-Class Mail*): 50; c. Total Paid Distribution (*Sum of 15b. (1), (2), (3), and (4)*): 2386; d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (*By Mail and Outside the Mail*): (1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541: 41; (2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541: 3; (3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (*e.g. First-Class Mail*): 6; (4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (*Carriers or other means*): 118; e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (*Sum of 15d. (1), (2), (3), and (4)*): 168. f. Total Distribution (*Sum of 15c and 15e*): 2554 g. Copies not Distributed (*See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3)*): 946; h. Total (*Sum of 15f and g*): 3500; i. Percent Paid (*15c divided by 15f times 100*): 93.42%.
16. Publication of Statement of Ownership. If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the October 10, 2016, issue of this publication.
17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner: Lea Sherman, Business Manager (signed), Date: 09/29/16.
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