

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuba & Angola: the war for freedom in southern Africa
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 81/NO. 11 MARCH 20, 2017

New gov't order bars people from 6 majority Muslim nations

BY SETH GALINSKY

President Donald Trump's March 6 revised executive order, which the administration titles "Protecting the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry," is aimed at withstanding federal court challenges like those that blocked implementation of his earlier anti-Muslim, anti-working-class order.

The new order still places a temporary moratorium on travel to the U.S. from a number of predominantly Muslim nations, but it explicitly states that the ban does not apply to permanent residents or anyone who already has a visa, one of the parts of the earlier order that helped fuel large protests across the country.

It imposes a 90-day moratorium on the entry of citizens of Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen — the same countries that the Barack Obama administration had previously singled out for closer scrutiny. Iraq is no longer on the list, because the White House says the Iraqi government is already implementing "improved" vetting. The ban begins March 16.

The order no longer imposes an indefinite ban on refugees from Syria. Instead, it includes Syria in a 120-day moratorium on refugees from any-

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No to Jew-hatred, attacks on mosques, immigrants!

Socialist Workers Party in Seattle speaks out



Militant photos by Edwin Fruit
Mary Martin, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Seattle, speaking, inset, at rally in Bellevue, Washington, March 5, against attacks on South Asian immigrants, and above, discussing the party's call for amnesty for all immigrants with rally participants.

Letter to Stroum Jewish Community Center

On Feb. 27, the Stroum Jewish Community Center in Mercer Island, Washington, received a bomb threat, one of dozens of anti-Semitic threats and attacks over the last couple of months across the country. The fol-

Continued on page 3

Protest condemns racist attacks on Indians, Sikhs

BY EDWIN FRUIT

BELLEVUE, Wash. — Several hundred people came together here for a vigil and rally at Crossroads Park March 5 to honor the life of Srinivas Kuchibhotla, an Indian immigrant killed in a racist attack Feb. 22 in Olathe, Kansas; to protest the

Continued on page 3

Debate politics at Middlebury, don't attack political rights!

The Socialist Workers Party urges all supporters of free speech and the rights of working people to unequivocally condemn the March 2 actions by over 400 students and professors, middle-class leftists and a group of thugs at Middlebury College in Vermont to prevent conservative author Charles

EDITORIAL

Murray, who wrote *The Bell Curve*, from giving a lecture on his most recent book, *Coming Apart: The State of White America, 1960-2010*.

Socialist Workers Party members from Albany and New York City, along with Alyson Kennedy, the SWP candidate for president in 2016, are on their way to Middlebury to debate a working-class course toward revolutionary change and the importance of expanding political rights today. They will go on campus and to workers' doorsteps in Middlebury and surrounding working-class neighborhoods.

In the course of the event, campus officials and the meeting's organizers were forced to cancel the public meeting and move the talk to a private room, where it was broadcast by video. Murray had to be protected from physical assault, and the professor

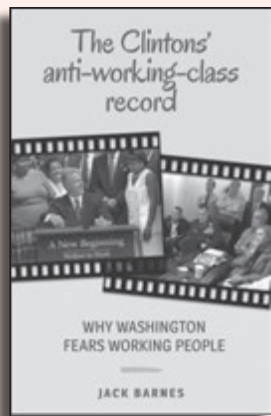
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For the first time in decades, the US rulers have begun to fear the working class

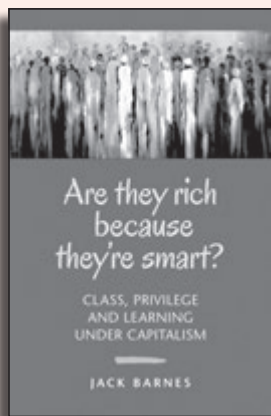
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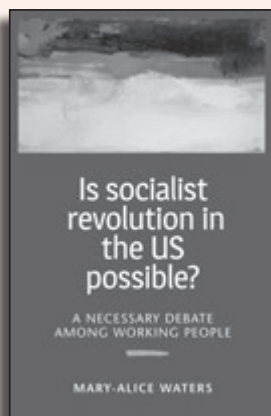
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Pension funds for nearly 1 million workers are on verge of collapse

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Increasing number of U.S. workers, already feeling the squeeze of slow-burn depression conditions pressing down on them from the worldwide capitalist economic crisis, now face losing pensions that supposedly were guaranteed to them by the bosses for as long as they lived. Large portions of these funds were gambled away by money managers or pension "specialists" assigned to administer them when the financial crash hit in 2008.

Nearly 1 million workers retired or still working are covered by pension plans in imminent danger of insolvency, the Pension Rights Center reported Feb. 28.

Based on a law Congress passed in December 2014 — the Multiemployer Pension Reform Act — pension funds deemed to be in "critical and declining status" can apply to the Treasury Department for permission to slash retirees' payments. And growing

numbers of fund managers are doing just that. According to the center, 68 private-sector union pension funds fit that description today.

In February pensions for some
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—On the picket line, p. 5—

Workers at NY Momentive plant rally for fired unionists

Washington farmworkers join union, protest conditions

Flint officials say OK to pay for water, but not to drink it

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

On March 1, Michigan state government officials announced they would no longer subsidize water used by people in Flint, even though everyone admits the water isn't safe to drink. While the city's water no longer exceeds the federal limits for lead content, residents are still told not to consume it without using state-approved filters.

This decision is further proof of the total disdain the propertied rulers and their politicians — Democrats and Republicans alike — have for working people.

"It's not safe. There's been no comprehensive testing to say it's all clear. They've simply washed their hands of it," Claire McClinton, a retired General Motors worker and long-time United Auto Workers member, told the *Militant* in a phone interview March 4. "We don't trust the Environmental Protection Agency's reports on lead, and the filters don't filter out bacteria."

Flint's chief financial officer, David Sabuda, announced the city will now shut off water to people who don't pay. He said he already has a list of delinquent accounts. Getting your water turned off means you won't be eligible to have your corroded pipes and fixtures replaced.

"We paid full price for poisoned water a lot longer than we got credits," said LeeAnne Walters, a former medical assistant, in a March 4 phone interview. "We shouldn't have to pay for it at all. It's punishing us for what they did."

Flint's water bills are among the highest in the U.S. — even when they were subsidized 65 percent by the state.

"Because I live in a zip code that's the farthest from the water treatment plant, I'm told I still have to use only bottled water," Walters said. "I bathe my four kids in bottled water, and I wash their clothes outside the city."

Walters was one of the first to discover there were high levels of lead in Flint's water when one of her children was diagnosed with lead poisoning.

Gov't disregard for working people

Flint's lead-poisoning crisis started in 2013. The source of the disaster for working people was penny-pinching and callous disregard by elected officials and regulatory agencies at every level — city, state and federal.

A state-appointed manager changed the city's water supply from Detroit's Lake Huron to the Flint River in an effort to cut corners. "It's a historic moment for the city of Flint to return to its roots and use our own river as our drinking water supply," said Democratic Mayor Dayne Walling in April 2014, as he flipped the switch.

The water Flint had purchased from Detroit for 50 years was treated with additives that form a layer of film inside the pipes, reducing lead leeching out. The state Department of Environmental Quality said Flint didn't need to add these chemicals to water from the river — even though it was 19 times more corrosive than the treated water from Detroit.

State officials brushed aside findings of elevated lead levels in children's blood. Lead is linked to serious health and developmental problems in young children, and its effects can be irre-

Calif. meeting marks internment of Japanese-Americans



SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. — Some 800 people gathered at the Kabuki Theatre here Feb. 19 to mark the 75th anniversary of President Franklin Roosevelt's infamous Executive Order 9066, which led to imprisoning 120,000 Japanese-Americans for the duration of World War II, two-thirds of them citizens of the United States. Detainees being moved from California, April 1942.

Given only 72 hours to dispose of their property, they lost their farms and crops, fishing boats, small businesses, homes, pets and personal possessions. They were herded into 10 concentration camps in remote areas, surrounded by barbed wire and soldiers in guard towers with machine guns.

A number of speakers spoke out against the Donald Trump administration's moves against immigrant workers, efforts to ban entry to those from six majority-Muslim countries, and against recent attacks aimed at mosques. "We are thankful for the Japanese-American community standing with us," said Sameena Usman, for the Bay Area chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations. Grace Shimizu of the Campaign for Justice spoke about the U.S. government's kidnapping and incarceration of over 2,200 citizens of Japanese descent from Latin America

"The U.S. government in the name of 'national security' seized them from their homes and communities, forcibly deported them, stripped them of their passports, transported them over international borders, and imprisoned them in U.S. concentration camps," she said.

— PATTI HIYAMA

versible. Less than six months after the switch, General Motors said it would no longer use Flint water at its engine plant because it was causing corrosion. Still, working people were told it was OK to drink the poisoned water. After kids began getting sick, the public outcry forced authorities to declare a public health emergency in October 2015.

"This was a disaster, but we didn't do this to ourselves," Walters said. "Before I trusted the people who get paid to protect us. Now I question things. The problem in Flint would never have been recognized if the community didn't fight. It's still not being dealt with."

"The problem here won't be solved until 20,000 service lines of pipe are replaced," McClinton said. "The Army Corps of Engineers should get in here and replace them. And jobs should be created to get it done."

The health crisis facing working people in Flint — and the rulers' disdain — isn't limited to there. "Much of our drinking water infrastructure is nearing the end of its useful life," the American Society of Civil Engineers said in a 2013 report.

At least 3,000 cities and rural areas have lead rates in their water at least double those in Flint.

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THE MILITANT

Fight against Jew-hatred is fight of all workers!

Jew-hatred is used by the propertied rulers to divert workers from seeing capitalism as the root of problems they face. The 'Militant' reports on solidarity actions, including by Muslims, Christians and others, in response to recent rise in anti-Semitic acts.



Solidarity interfaith service of 1,000 in Chicago Feb. 8 against Jew-hatred.

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LA: SWP demands amnesty for undocumented workers!

BY BERNIE SENTER
AND LAURA GARZA

LOS ANGELES — In the final days before the March 7 election here, Socialist Workers Party mayoral candidate Dennis Richter joined a protest against the immigration cops' arrest and threatened deportation of Romulo Avelica-Gonzalez; debated his capitalist opponents on FOX radio; spoke at a public hearing against Exide Technologies' poisoning of working-class communities; and joined supporters talking to workers about the party on their doorsteps in Fullerton.

Richter joined some 100 people at a rally in front of the immigration court building here March 6 to demand freedom for Avelica-Gonzalez, a 48-year-old restaurant worker picked up by Immigration and Customs Enforcement because of a 2014 deportation order. The father of four children born in the U.S., he has lived here for 25 years.

"My dad is very strong, and that's why we are here," said Jocelyn Avelica, one of his daughters. Family members and others who responded to his arrest and prevented his immediate deportation.

His deportation order is based on a driving-without-a-license misdemeanor charge, a 1998 charge of accepting stolen property — because he bought a registration sticker that was not issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles — and a 10-year-old misdemeanor DUI charge.

"We have to demand amnesty because the threat of deportation can be held over workers' heads as long as they can't get some status," Richter told a group of students at the rally. "That's a problem for all working people, because if you want to fight for better conditions and for unions you have to involve all the workers. If the bosses can threaten some of us with deportation, or check their papers and fire them, there's a permanent, second-class section of the workforce. That makes it harder to unify and organize."

During the lively mayoral debate on FOX radio March 3, the 10 candidates were asked by a former Los Angeles

County cop what they would do to support law enforcement. Many pointed to statistics saying crime is going up in Los Angeles and pledged funding to get more cops.

"If you are a working person you don't get justice from cops, prosecutors or jails. In this class-divided society, cops mete out 'justice' on the streets," Richter said. "Cops in L.A. County have been involved in over 1,400 shootings since 2000 and zero have been charged with any crimes."

When asked if he supported Los Angeles being a sanctuary city, he said, "I'm for amnesty for all immigrants living in the U.S. This opens the door for immigrants to join in the fights working people need to wage for jobs, infrastructure and health care. This is a life or death question for the labor movement."

Richter spoke at a March 2 public hearing in Boyle Heights on the 30 years of Exide Technologies' battery-recycling plant's toxic contamination of working-class neighborhoods in the area.

Protest condemns racist attacks on Indians, Sikhs

Continued from front page

shooting of Deep Rai, a Sikh, in Kent, Washington, March 3; and to show solidarity for the South Asian community in the area. Many South Asians live here and work at companies like Microsoft, Google and Amazon.

Rita Meher of Tasveer, one of the South Asian groups that helped organize the event, welcomed everyone, explaining the gathering was put together to oppose attacks on South Asians and other immigrants.

Kuchibhotla was killed in a bar in Kansas by an assailant who yelled he should go back where he came from. His friend Alok Madasani, also from India, was shot but survived the attack.

A number of people at the rally knew Madasani, who previously lived in the Seattle area. Some had been co-workers and others had played cricket with him.

Deep Rai was shot in the arm while working on his car in his driveway. The



Militant/Thabo Ntweng

Dennis Richter, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Los Angeles mayor, speaks with high school student Alexandra Intrator, left, and college student Leslie Cortes at March 6 demonstration demanding Romulo Avelica-Gonzalez be released from ICE detention.

"It has been two years since community action forced the plant to close and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control is still holding hearings on how to proceed with the clean-up," Richter told the 75 people at the hearing. "Working people in this area are being adversely affected and this is

not being treated as a public health crisis on the federal, state or county level.

"The bosses make big profits from our labor with no regard for our health or safety," he said. "We will join your fight for the government to mobilize all the resources necessary to clean this up."

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NEW INTERNATIONAL

A MAGAZINE OF MARXIST POLITICS AND THEORY

"Of all capitalism's evils, the most fundamental one is how that system of exploitation reproduces its social relations as a condition of producing its profits. How its workings, its blind methods of functioning, keep grinding toiling humanity into the ground." — Jack Barnes

**Imperialism's March
Toward Fascism and War**
by Jack Barnes

in New International No. 10 — \$16

**Capitalism's Long Hot Winter
Has Begun**

by Jack Barnes

in New International No. 12 — \$16

Our Politics Start With the World
by Jack Barnes

in New International No. 13 — \$14

Solidarity against Jew-hatred

Continued from front page

lowing letter of solidarity was hand-delivered the next day to Dana Weiner, the center's director of community connections, by Mary Martin, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Seattle. Martin met Weiner and they discussed the fight against Jew-hatred.

On behalf of the Socialist Workers Party in Washington state, I am writing to add our voice in protest against the Feb. 27 bomb threat against the center. We condemn this action in the strongest possible way and demand that the perpetrators be arrested,

prosecuted and jailed.

We further call on all working people and the unions to speak out against this and all acts of Jew-hatred taking place across the country, including the vandalism of cemeteries in Philadelphia and St. Louis. We urge defense of anyone scapegoated and victimized — including Muslims and immigrants living in this country — in an effort to divide and weaken the working class. An Injury to One Is an Injury to All!

Please do not hesitate to call on the Socialist Workers Party if you hold any public meetings concerning this attack or for any assistance you may need.

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Conference on solidarity with Cuba set for NY

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

A “National Conference for the Full Normalization of US-Cuba Relations” will be held March 25-26 at Fordham School of Law in Manhattan, sponsored by a coalition of groups and individuals in the Cuba solidarity movement from the United States and Canada.

The purpose of the conference is summed up in three slogans on the conference website:

End all U.S. economic, financial, and travel sanctions against Cuba!

Get the U.S. out of Guantánamo!

Stop all regime change programs against Cuba!

The conference opens with two Saturday plenaries from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., and concludes with a Sunday morning plenary.

Participating in the conference, including a March 25 evening public meeting at the Malcolm X and Betty Shabazz Center in Harlem, will be José Ramón Cabañas, Cuba’s ambassador to the United States; Anayansi Rodríguez, Cuba’s ambassador to the United Nations; and leaders of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) in Havana. The Harlem meeting will be held at 3940 Broadway (corner of West 165th Street) with a reception at 7 p.m. and program at 8 p.m.

Other speakers at the Saturday eve-

ning program include Piero Gleijeses, author of *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria, and the Struggle for Southern Africa, 1976-1991*; Andrés Gómez, a coordinator of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a Cuban-American organization that supports the Cuban Revolution; Rafael Cancel Miranda, a longtime Puerto Rican independence fighter; and Aislinn Pulley, a leader of Black Lives Matter in Chicago.

There will be two workshop sessions Saturday afternoon. One workshop is on “Where We Are Today in the Fight to End All Travel Sanctions Against Cuba,” presented by Bob Guild of Marazul Charters and Walter Turner of Global Exchange. Steve Eckardt from the Chicago Cuba Coalition is coordinating a workshop on “How the United States Occupied Guantánamo Bay and the Fight to Close It.”

Yanira Kúper and Maritzel González, part of a leadership delegation from the Federation of Cuban Women participating in the annual session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women this month, will attend the conference. They will speak at a workshop entitled, “Women’s Rights and the Cuban Revolution,” chaired by Mary-Alice Waters, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party.

Other workshop topics include “Cuba and Africa” and Cuba’s internationalist medical missions.” For more information, a list of workshops and to register, see the conference website nationalcubaconference.org; email: info@nationalcubaconference.org or call (917) 887-8710.

SWP: Amnesty!

Continued from page 3

Richter joined other Socialist Workers Party campaigners in discussions at worker’s doorsteps March 4 in Fullerton, not far from where an off-duty policeman attacked 13-year-old Christian Dorscht Feb. 21. Sara Hertl, whose brother Justin was killed by the Anaheim police in 2003, joined in campaigning. She urged people to read the *Militant* and explained how she has participated in regular protests with family members whose relatives were killed by the Anaheim police.

At a campaign meeting in Los Angeles March 4, Richter condemned recent bomb threats made to four Jewish Community Centers, in Irvine, Long Beach, La Jolla and the Westside Jewish Center in Los Angeles.

“These threats here and nationwide are expressions of Jew-hatred, a deadly poison for working people,” Richter said. “The goal of Jew-hatred is to turn workers’ attention against the Jews and take the heat off the bosses, who are responsible for the crisis-ridden capitalist system and the depression-like conditions it is forcing on our backs.”

Solidarity with Standing Rock Washington, D.C. March 10

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and supporters from across the country are fighting to defend their sovereignty and treaty rights. Marchers are demanding an immediate halt to the Dakota Access oil pipeline, which is being built just north of their land, threatening their drinking water.

10 a.m. — March from U.S. Army Corp of Engineers offices, 443 G Street NW
12 noon — Rally at Lafayette Park in front of White House

For more information: nativenationrise.org

Hundreds demand ICE release Daniel Medina



Militant/Edwin Fruit

SEATTLE — Chanting “Free Daniel, Free Daniel,” nearly 300 people gathered in front of the federal courthouse here demanding the release of Daniel Ramirez Medina Feb. 17. Medina had been picked up the previous week when Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents raided his home in Des Moines, Wash., looking for his father. Medina, 23, came to the U.S. when he was 7 years old and had been given authorization to live and work in the U.S. under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.

In the midst of expanded deportation efforts aimed at undocumented workers by the new administration of President Donald Trump, officials have said DACA program participants will not face removal. Nevertheless, ICE agents arrested Medina, accusing him of being a gang member.

The judge refused to release Medina, saying he didn’t have jurisdiction over immigration courts. Medina is being held in the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma.

Some 150 people rallied in Tacoma two days later, demanding Medina’s release. Medina’s next hearing in federal court is set for March 8.

— EDWIN FRUIT

Join May Day International Brigade to Cuba

BY OSBORNE HART

For the first time a delegation of workers and youth from the U.S. will participate in the 12th annual May Day International Brigade to Cuba this year. The brigade, organized by the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP), will run from April 24-May 8.

Participants will join the big Havana May Day march and rally in the Plaza of the Revolution, as well as seminars and discussions on continuing solidarity with the revolution, including how to step up efforts to demand an end to Washington’s 56-year economic embargo against Cuba and its occupation of Guantánamo Bay.

This year’s brigade is dedicated to Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, leaders of the revolution.

“Nationally there is solid interest in the brigade,” said Steve Eckardt by phone. Eckardt is a member of the Chicago Cuba Coalition, which is sponsoring the brigade’s U.S. contingent, and national coordinator for the trip. “Right now we have 36 registrants from Dallas, Seattle, San Diego, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, New York and Washington, D.C.

“There are 18 people planning to go from Chicago, including four

unionists, Puerto Ricans active in defense of Oscar López, and others involved in the anti-police brutality struggle,” said Eckardt.

In Chicago, the coalition held a fundraising party March 11 to help brigade participants cover expenses. It featured the film “Guantánamo is Ours.”

For the week leading into the May Day celebration, brigadistas will do agricultural work each morning. Their afternoons will be full of meetings with Cuban groups and political field trips.

The big May Day march is followed by an international conference in solidarity with Cuba. Brigade members have two choices after that.

One contingent will attend the May 4-6 “Fifth Seminar for Peace and for the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases” in Guantánamo. In 1903, in the aftermath of Cuba’s defeat in their war of independence, the U.S. occupied and set up a naval base there. Today the base is the site of the infamous U.S. military prison where so-called enemy combatants captured during U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are held indefinitely. Since the triumph of the 1959 revolution, the Cuban people and their government have demanded the return of Guantánamo along with an end to the economic embargo.

Other brigade members will travel to Cienfuegos and Villa Clara provinces to learn more about the history

of the revolution there. They will meet with students from the University of Medicine and participate in discussions with members of area Committees for the Defense of the Revolution.

Madhu Tikkisetty from Baltimore first learned of the May Day Brigade at the Women’s March on Washington Jan. 21, where she met Socialist Workers Party members and signed up for a *Militant* newspaper subscription. “I’ve been looking for the socialist and union movement in the U.S.,” she told the *Militant*.

“I heard about the Obama administration establishing diplomatic relations with Cuba from a friend,” Tikkisetty said. The brigade “is the opportunity I was looking for. To educate myself, interact and talk with Cubans. How did they do it? That’s the part about the revolution I want to understand.”

To help prepare for the trip, she got several Pathfinder books, including *Cuba and Angola: The War for Freedom* and *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?*

A \$512 fee covers expenses, including room, board and transportation inside Cuba. The round trip airfare to the island and participation in the Guantánamo seminar are additional.

Applications for the U.S. contingent are due March 30th. For information on how to apply and what you’ll need to participate, contact the Chicago Cuba Coalition at (312) 952-2618 or email: ICanGoToCuba@gmail.com.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

MAGGIE TROWE, EDITOR

Honeywell workers approve new contract ending 10-month lockout

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — After nearly 10 months on the picket line at Honeywell Aerospace, workers here and in Green Island, New York, will be returning to work in late March. Members of United Auto Workers locals 9 and 1508 voted 186-106 to approve a new five-year contract Feb. 25. Honeywell had locked out 317 workers at its wheel and brake plant in South Bend and 40 others in Green Island.

The South Bend workers organized three solidarity rallies and maintained 24-hour pickets at the plant for the duration of the lockout.

“We were never alone,” said UAW Local 9 Recording Secretary Bryan Rogers. “We had tremendous support from the community and other unions.”

“The biggest thing for us was union rights and seniority,” said Local 9 Vice President Todd Treder. “They wanted to be able to arbitrarily move workers from shift to shift and assign jobs and lay us off without regard to seniority, but we stopped that.”

The new contract includes increases in what workers must pay for health care. It sets the annual deductible at \$3,000, instead of \$8,000 that the company originally demanded. It also eliminates retirement pensions for new hires and freezes pension benefits for those currently working, replacing defined pension benefits with a 401(k) plan.

The agreement includes three 2 percent wage increases over 5 years for all but the highest paid workers in the plant, according to workers interviewed.

Honeywell brought in scabs from Strom Engineering to maintain some level of production during the lockout. “When the company brought them in before the vote, it actually united the local,” Treder said. “Everyone could see what the company was up to.”

“Some people say the unions are going away, but I don’t think so,” said Theo Davis, a fabricator with two years in the plant. Davis explained he voted against the first two company offers, but in favor of the new contract. “I was with this fight all along. Now we’re just better prepared, we know what to expect.”

—Betsy Farley

Workers at NY Momenive plant rally for fired unionists

WATERFORD, N.Y. — About 200 workers who recently returned to work after 105 days on strike against Momenive Performance Materials, and their families and supporters, enjoyed a spirited fundraiser at Chrome Food and Spirits here March 5 to benefit 26 workers who were fired during the strike.

“We’ll do everything we can to get them back to work,” said Dominick Patrignani, president of International Union of Electrical Workers-Communications Workers of America Local 81359, at the event. “One worker was terminated for supposedly stealing a company radio but he has the receipts to prove he purchased it. We are for using a criteria of innocent until proven guilty,” noting that the company would not agree to that.

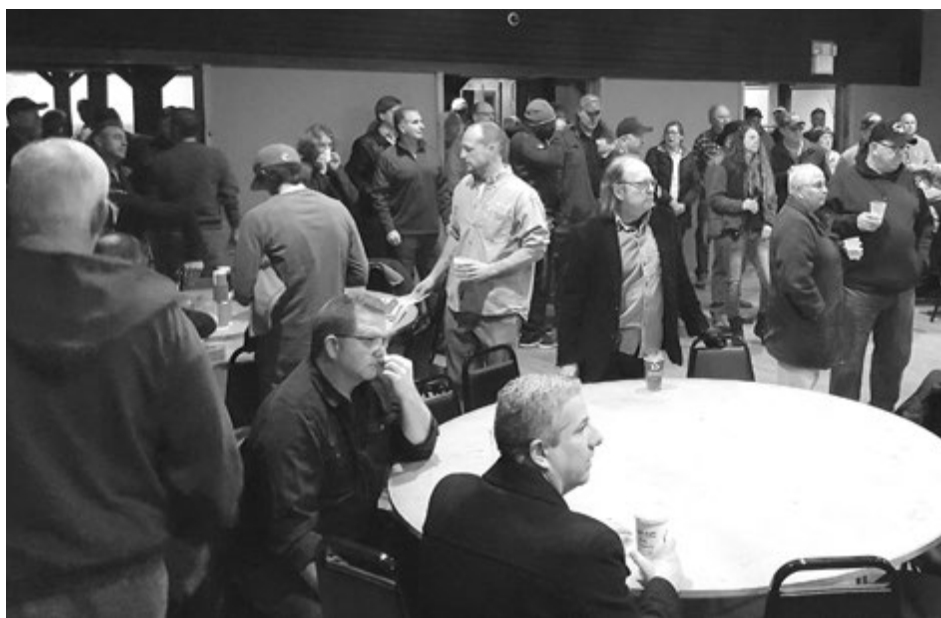
A spokesperson for Momenive said they are following the contract agreement in “full cooperation with the IUE-CWA and the governor’s office,” and said they would “not comment on open employee matters.”

The workers were fired for supposed sabotage of the plant on the eve of the strike and for alleged “misconduct” on the picket line. According to Patrignani, no convincing evidence has been presented to the union that would justify the terminations. “The company presented bogus evidence for the sabotage, such as missing labels.”

Momenive used the fired workers as a bargaining chip to pressure the union to sign a contract. Workers told the *Militant* that Momenive threatened to never let the 26 back, and lay off another 150 workers if they didn’t vote for the contract. The agreement was approved in mid-February.

Union workers distributed T-shirts to their fellow fighters that read “Stood the line for 105,” on the front and “Now we stand for 26,” on the back.

A “50-50” raffle was held to benefit the fired workers. Rich Gaughan, a



Militant/Jacob Perasso

Unionists who recently struck Momenive Performance Materials for 105 days in Waterford, New York, attend fundraiser March 5 to support 26 workers company fired during strike.

worker at the plant, won \$853 and immediately donated it to those who were fired. “It is extremely important that we win their jobs back,” he told the *Militant*. “In my opinion we never should have returned to work without them.”

“Outside the plant we became more

unified,” said plant worker Michael Harrington. “The strike was our stand. Someone has to take a stand.”

Donations can be sent to Save The 26 IUE-CWA 81359, P.O. Box 339, Waterford, NY 12188.

—Jacob Perasso

Wash. farmworkers join union, protest conditions

BY CLAY DENNISON

EVERETT, Wash. — “We want separate bathrooms for men and women. We want water to wash with. We want soap. We want toilet paper. We just want the basics,” blueberry worker Reina Solano told Socialist Workers Party members who came to express solidarity, as her fellow workers picketed in front of Golden Eagle Farms in Washington’s Snohomish River Valley.

Some 30 farmworkers and a few supporters marched along the edge of a road in front of the grower’s barns and offices. They chanted, “Strike!” “Contractors out!” and “We want the workers rehired!” in Spanish.

Golden Eagle Farms is owned by an investment group run by Francesco Aquilini, who also owns the Vancouver Canucks ice hockey team. The Aquilini family is one of the 25 richest capitalist families in Canada, according to *Canadian Business*.

The Golden Eagle Group, which runs forestry, blueberries, cranberries, bees, two golf clubs and a standing period

western town movie set, has been fined at their berry farms in Canada over safety conditions and in the U.S. for overuse of water and illegal timber harvesting.

“They always promise improvements but they don’t do anything,” Solano said. “The contractor told us, ‘If you don’t want to work, get out of here.’ Then she fired us.”

“We don’t want to work for a contractor,” she said. “We want to work directly for the farm, like we did last year.”

Pickers, who had been pruning the blueberry bushes to prepare for the coming growing season, told us that 75 workers were fired the previous week by Sheila Monterrey, one of the farm-labor contractors, after they asked for sanitary bathroom facilities.

“There are people working here who are members of Familias Unidas or have family members or friends in the union,” explained Solano. The Familias Unidas por la Justicia union won a representation election in 2016 at Sakuma Brothers Farms, 40 miles north of here.

A large group of workers fired by

Golden Eagle Farms signed up with the union a few days before the picket line went up. The picketing was led by Ramón Torres, president of the union.

The workers and their union are raising other demands as well. “Last year we made \$11 an hour. They should pay us more this year. We want a \$1.50-an-hour raise,” Solano said.

“They promised to pay us every week, then the contractor said we have to wait until the last day of the month for what is owed to us,” she said. “It’s not right. We need our money. I have children in day care.”

“We, the workers at Golden Eagle Farms, call on the other workers and on the community not to work for this company or for contractor Sheila Monterrey,” Silvino Arce, another worker she fired, posted on the union’s Facebook page, “until they fix the working conditions and reach an agreement with us, the workers.”

Workers at another Golden Eagle site in the area are discussing joining the union, Torres said.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



March 20, 1992

“You should draw a mushroom cloud and put underneath it, ‘Made in America by lazy and illiterate Americans and tested in Japan,’” said U.S. senator Ernest Hollings March 2. He was addressing workers at the Roller Bearing Company of America plant in Hartsville, South Carolina.

Hollings said his remarks on the nuclear bombing of Japan by Washington during World War II were in response to Japanese legislator Yoshio Sakurachi, who had said that American workers are “lazy” and that a third of them “cannot even write.”

Remarks directed against Japan have become the stock-in-trade of many Democratic and Republican politicians and spokespeople of some corporations recently. They have helped to fuel a wave of attacks against Asian-Americans, including the 850,000 people in this country of Japanese origin.



March 20, 1967

Walter Reuther has ganged up with General Motors to break a second walkout by UAW Local 549 in Mansfield, Ohio. The latest strike followed a February tieup over the issue of GM farming out work to other plants, in which 17 workers were suspended from their jobs. When Reuther threatened to take over the local, the membership voted to end the earlier strike. International union representatives were then to sit in on local talks with GM over the disciplinary layoffs and the job issue that touched off the dispute.

Only 12 of the workers given disciplinary layoffs were put back to work and it soon became apparent that the other five were to be fired. This led to the second walkout. When Reuther again issued a back-to-work order, a majority of the local union members voted to defy his order and continue their protest action.



March 21, 1942

Eight workers were killed and 21 seriously wounded when the British-controlled police in Madras, India, opened fire on strikers at two textile mills on Wednesday, March 11, according to Reuters, the British news agency.

Most textile mills in India are owned by Hindu and Moslem capitalists. These native exploiters of the masses of India are as ruthless as the British imperialists. The kind of “independence” they want is merely a better share of the booty that the three parasitic classes of India — the British imperialists, the native capitalists, and the landlords and landlord-princes — squeeze from the masses.

But against the masses, the Indian capitalists join with the British imperialists. British bullets shoot down Indian workers with the warm approval of Indian capitalists.

Washington, Seoul – and Beijing – press NKorea

BY SETH GALINSKY

Some 3,600 U.S. troops and 300,000 South Korean soldiers are involved in annual “Foal Eagle” military maneuvers that began on the peninsula March 1. These maneuvers will include “Key Resolve” computer-simulations practicing “preemptive strikes” and “decapitation exercises targeting the North Korean leadership,” according to South Korea’s *Chosun Ilbo* newspaper.

The military exercises are “saber-rattling” aimed at the people and government of North Korea, a March 2 statement by military officials in the North said. They come on top of steps by Washington to install an advanced Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, anti-missile battery in South Korea.

The latest moves are also designed to push the Chinese government, the main trading partner of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, to join efforts to tighten pressure on Pyongyang.

Stars and Stripes reported Feb. 28 that the U.S. Army has sent more than 100 Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles to arrive in time for the war games. The vehicles, permanently assigned to 8th Army units, could be used in any attempt to cross the heavily mined DMZ zone between North and South.

Korea is the only unresolved national division imposed by the imperialist victors coming out of World War II. Some 70 years ago, Washington divided the country in two, with the collaboration of the Stalinist regime in Moscow, and then carried out a brutal war of aggression there. Some 3 million Korean civilians, half a million North Korean soldiers, hundreds of thousands of Chinese volunteers, and 100,000 South Korean and United Nations-sponsored soldiers, including 54,000 from the U.S., were killed. Entire towns and villages were leveled by U.S. carpet bombing.

Although an armistice was signed in 1953, to this day Washington refuses to sign a peace treaty with the DPRK. The two countries are technically still at war.

The United Nations Security Council and Washington stepped up their threats against the North after Pyongyang test-launched ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear weapons on Oct. 19, 2016, and again Feb. 11.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported a leaked White House internal memoran-

dum saying the new Donald Trump administration should consider the option of a military strike if Pyongyang moves toward testing an intercontinental ballistic missile.

On Feb. 18 the Chinese Commerce department announced it was suspending all imports of coal from North Korea, the country’s main source of hard currency. Coal is the North’s largest export — sales to China brought in an estimated \$1.2 billion last year — and the country faces a widespread trade embargo from the capitalist world.

“This country, styling itself a big power, is dancing to the tune of the U.S.,” Pyongyang’s Korean Central News Agency said, referring to China without mentioning it by name, “while defending its mean behavior with such excuses that it was meant not to have a negative impact on the people living in the DPRK but to check its nuclear program.”

The Chinese action came in the wake of accusations by the Malaysian government that North Korea was responsible for the death of Kim Jong Nam, the estranged half-brother of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. Nam died after he appeared to be poi-



U.S. Navy. Mass Communications Specialist 3rd Class Alfred A. Coffield
Members of the South Korean Navy Underwater Dive Team prepare for an explosive ordnance disposal exercise March 3 as part of annual South Korean, U.S. military maneuvers.

soned by two women at the airport there Feb. 13. The North Korean government says charges that they were involved are a slander.

Poking a finger at both Washington and Beijing, North Korea on March 5 launched four more ballistic missiles into the Sea of Japan. The launching — in the first week of the Foal Eagle war games — also coincided with the opening of China’s National People’s Congress in Beijing.

Both Beijing and the DPRK oppose installation of the THAAD battery in

South Korea. While Washington and Seoul say the anti-missile battery is being deployed to defend South Korea from attack by the North, its radar capacity would allow it to keep track of activity in China.

Beijing took retaliatory measures against South Korean businesses, including banning Chinese tour groups from visiting South Korea beginning March 15. South Korea’s largest export partner is China and some 8 million Chinese tourists visited South Korea last year.

Gov’t bars people from 6 majority-Muslim nations

Continued from front page

where in the world and lowers the annual limit of refugees legally entering the U.S. to 50,000 — less than half what it has been.

Meanwhile, deportations of undocumented immigrants continue, with the threat of implementation of broader moves allowed for in Trump’s Jan. 25 executive orders. These actions against the immigrant section of the U.S. working class are being widely discussed by working people of all nationalities.

For decades workers born here have been working and living alongside workers without papers, and they’ve got to know and trust each other. Deportations and immigration raids are less popular than ever in the working class.

“This is a union household and a Trump household,” Karen Tranchina told Candace Wagner, who had knocked on her door to introduce the Socialist Workers Party in Brooklyn’s Sunset Park neighborhood March 5. “I don’t like a lot of what Trump says and does, but I really hate Hillary Clinton.”

Tranchina said she knows a lot of people who are undocumented, “Italian, Mexican, from everywhere. I have friends who say, ‘deport them all.’ I don’t agree with that.”

What the bosses want is a superexploited section of the working class that they can use to push down wages. “The unions need to fight for amnesty as part of unifying working people,” Wagner told her. That makes sense, Tranchina said.

Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York, met with a group of West Africans in Orange, New Jersey, March 5. “The SWP demands amnesty — everyone who’s here is here — and says no more raids or deportations,” he said. “And we’re against any immigration tests based on religion, nationality or political views.”

“Every country has its own borders and immigration laws,” Shermelle Coleman Grant told Róger Calero and this correspondent, who were campaigning for the Socialist Workers Party door to door in the Bronx’s Hunts Point neighborhood. “I think that immigrants who commit crimes should be kicked out. But many of my neighbors in this building are immigrants. And they haven’t done anything wrong. They just want to work. They’re worried about what’s going to happen.”

‘I don’t want my neighbors deported’

“Some people say that Blacks and Latinos don’t get along, but that’s not true,” Grant said. “We share each other’s food. Our kids play together. I don’t want to see them deported.”

“We have to build a revolutionary workers movement and not let them divide us,” Calero said.

Along with his anti-immigrant rhetoric and threats to accelerate these anti-worker measures, Trump has echoed calls made earlier under former presidents Obama and George W. Bush calling for immigration “reform,” telling the *New York Times* Feb. 28 that Democrats and Republicans need to compromise. In his speech to Congress later that day Trump said that the U.S. should switch away from “lower-skilled immigration” and instead adopt “a merit-based system.”

Most immigrant workers — their confidence strengthened by the successful March 16 Day Without Immigrants nationwide strikes and protests — are not panicking, but are waiting to see what develops. “We are understanding the power that we have,” Mario Ramírez, an organizer with Voces de La Frontera, said by phone from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, March 8. The group organized a march of 20,000 March 13 to protest the raids and deportations and is helping to initiate nationwide actions on

May 1. In 2006 millions went on strike to protest a bill in Congress that would criminalize undocumented workers.

In fact under Trump, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement cops continue the same policies on the ground as the Obama administration. The widely publicized Feb. 6-10 sweeps that picked up more than 680 immigrants were smaller than many similar actions under Obama. Like those raids, Immigration and Customs Enforcement claimed they were targeting individuals who had previously done time for serious crimes or had been accused of major offenses. And as they picked up people at home, on the street or at other locations, other undocumented workers who were not accused of serious offenses were also picked up.

There have also been some cases where people who had been reporting to ICE on a regular basis while awaiting hearings on their appeals of deportation orders, who expected to be granted an extension like they had other times over the last several years, instead were deported.

The Department of Homeland Security, CNN reported March 4, “is considering a proposal to separate children from adults when they are trying to enter the country illegally.” Under current policy, families are kept together in detention or released while awaiting an immigration hearing. Homeland Security has also threatened to prosecute parents who are undocumented immigrants as smugglers if they pay someone to bring their children to the U.S.

But so far these proposals are just on paper.

U.S. District Court Judge Derrick Watson set March 15 for a Hawaii legal challenge to Trump’s revised orders on refugees and visitors from the six majority-Muslim countries. That’s one day before they are set to go into effect.

Recommended



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FBI: Anti-union weapon for bosses against Teamsters

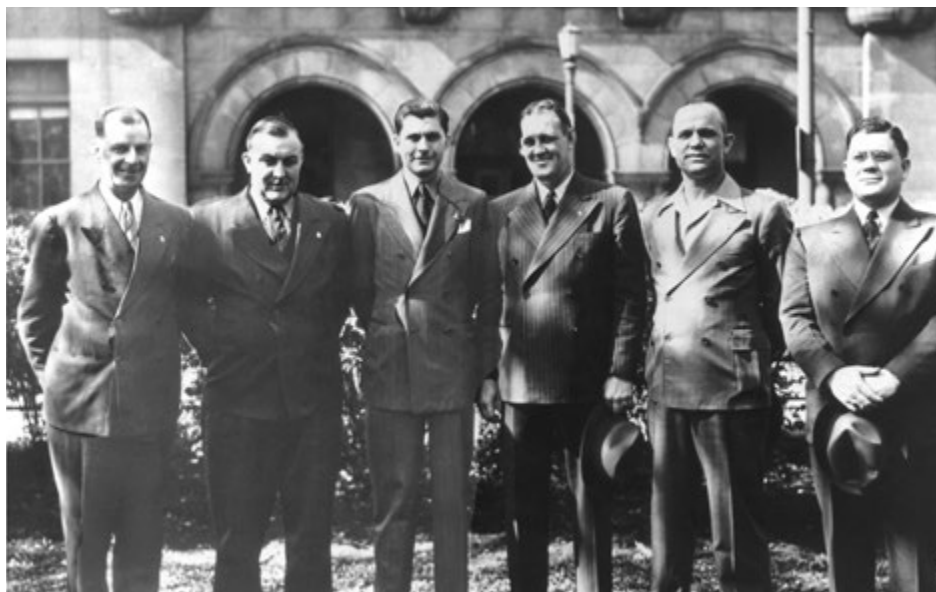
Teamster Politics by Farrell Dobbs, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for March, is part of a four-volume series along with Teamster Rebellion, Teamster Power and Teamster Bureaucracy on the Teamster battles of the 1930s. Dobbs, a leader of the 1934 Teamster strikes and central organizer of the 11-state drive that unionized over-the-road truckers, was national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party from 1953 to 1972 and its presidential candidate four times. The excerpt is from the chapter "Antilabor Role of the FBI." Copyright © 1975 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FARRELL DOBBS

The provocative interference of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the legitimate affairs of the people in this country, including disruption of their political and trade-union organizations, was given large-scale exposure after the Watergate scandals. But the antidemocratic and antilabor activities of federal and other police agencies were already in operation during the 1930s.

That role was evidenced in the 1939 governmental attacks on the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, which occurred at a time when I was a general organizer assigned to the union's over-the-road campaign in the Midwest. In



In 1939 Teamster leaders, from left, Howard Fouts, Ralph Johnson, Jack Maloney, Francis Quinn, Louis Miller and Walter K. Stultz, as well as Earl Carpenter, were framed by FBI on behalf of trucking bosses in Sioux City, Iowa. The arrests were used as a "cover for a union busting attack of major proportions," says Farrell Dobbs. All seven were sent to jail for two years.

connection with the organizing drive — an action that helped lift the IBT into its present powerful status — several officials of Teamster locals were framed up and hauled into the courts on various charges. ...

In July 1938 the Teamsters and Bakers unions had jointly tied up the wholesale bakeries in Sioux City. The strike was solid. Not a single worker sought to return to the job. Since this left the police with no pretext to attack the picket lines, there were no instances of violence in the city during the walkout.

The incident later seized upon to fabricate a case against the Teamsters was of an isolated and questionable nature. One of the struck firms, Metz Baking Company, operated extensively in the region of Sioux City. A Metz truck was allegedly burned during the strike near the Iowa-Minnesota line. The company blamed the Teamsters, and the charge became a one-day sensation in the papers.

[Teamsters] Local 383 disclaimed any knowledge of the matter, observing that there would have been no point in the strikers taking such action in the hinterlands. The outcome of the struggle had to be determined in Sioux City, where the union forces were strong and in full control of the situation. ...

In any event, the conflict was actually fought out in Sioux City, and after a walkout of about a month the strikers won. A year later union contracts with the bakeries were renewed on improved terms, without need for strike action. By that time the false allegations against the

Teamsters concerning the Metz truck were thought to have sunk back into limbo.

Not so. The FBI had long been working quietly on the case. This had led to secret indictments against several Teamster officials by a federal grand jury, which had been convened in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, at the opposite end of the state. They were alleged to have participated in the burning of the truck during the 1938 strike.

There were five counts against them: violation of the Dyer Act (transporting a stolen vehicle across state lines); interference with interstate commerce; conspiracy to do both of the above; conspiracy to steal bakery goods; and possession of stolen bakery goods.

The first three of these counts were the most vital, since they were used to assume federal jurisdiction over the case. Such action conformed with the line that President Franklin D. Roosevelt had laid down by then. His aim was clearly to provide a basis for federal police actions designed to weaken strong trade unions.

None of this was known to the IBT until September 23, 1939. At four o'clock that morning FBI agents descended upon the homes of the unsuspecting victims. The dragnet caught up Teamster officials in three cities: Louis Miller and Walter K. Stultz in Omaha, Nebraska; Francis Quinn in Des Moines, Iowa; Howard Fouts and Ralph Johnson in Sioux City. (Jack Maloney was also on the list, but he was attending a union conference in Chicago at the

time. Upon his return to Sioux City he surrendered himself through a lawyer.)

After the arrests, obstacles were put in the way of the defendants making bail. Fellow union officials, who sought help from bonding agencies to get them out of jail, were shadowed by FBI agents. Pressure was then brought against the bondsmen to scare them off. Despite such harassment, release of the six was finally obtained by posting \$5,000 bail for each one.

A seventh victim was Earl Carpenter. He had been an officer of the Omaha IBT local until late 1938 when he moved to Oakland, California, and took a job as a bus driver. He, too, was picked up by the FBI and held in an Oakland jail pending later transport to Iowa for his trial.

Ominously enough, the attack had not been limited to Sioux City Local 383, the only IBT unit involved in the 1938 bakery strike. Omaha Local 554 and Des Moines Local 90 had also become targets of the FBI. All three locals were among the key links in the eleven-state formation through which the Teamsters were organizing over-the-road drivers across the entire upper Mississippi valley. Thus it was plainly evident that the Metz incident was being used as a cover for a union-busting attack of major proportions, and strong countermeasures were needed to ward off the danger. ...

Earl Carpenter, Jack Maloney, Francis Quinn, and Walter K. Stultz were put in the federal prison at Sandstone, Minnesota. Howard Fouts and Ralph Johnson were sent to Terre Haute, Indiana. Louis Miller was locked up at Leavenworth, Kansas. Before entering prison Miller sent me a letter expressing his feelings about the situation. "As you know," Lou wrote, "a decision has been made which seems to be final and under these circumstances there is nothing left for me to do but take the consequence. I want you to know that in spite of the verdict which has declared me guilty, I shall serve time as a free man, in thought.

"I have at all times tried to play the game as a true unionist, fighting for those principles which every true union man has in his heart. I do not intend that this letter should in any sense be an obituary, rather I want to arouse the union consciousness of every working man and woman."

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March **BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

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Cuba & Angola: the war for freedom in southern Africa

Havana event on book by ‘Pombo’ highlights Cuban Revolution’s proletarian internationalism and moral values



Feb. 15 Havana book fair panel presenting *Cuba and Angola: The War for Freedom* by Gen. Harry Villegas. Crowd included dozens of veterans of Cuba’s internationalist missions. From left: Iraida Aguirrechu, Col. Leonardo Tamayo (Urbano), Gerardo Hernández, Víctor Dreke, Martín Koppel, Harry Villegas (Pombo), Mary-Alice Waters, Brig. Gen. Delsa Esther (Teté) Puebla, and Aleida Guevara March.

BY RÓGER CALERO

HAVANA — “I was asked to say a few words about my experiences in prison and as an internationalist combatant,” said Gerardo Hernández. “But frankly, I feel a little uncomfortable talking about that here, surrounded by so many combatants with so much history.”

Hernández was speaking at a Feb. 15 presentation of *Cuba and Angola: The War for Freedom* by Harry Villegas, known around the world by his nom de guerre, Pombo. The launching of the Pathfinder Press title, published in both Spanish and English, was part of the Havana International Book Fair.

Hernández’s description was not an overstatement. The overflow audience of 120 included dozens of revolutionary combatants — veterans of Cuba’s internationalist missions abroad, especially in Angola and other African nations, and of Cuba’s own revolutionary battles. Hernández himself is one of the five Cubans who spent more than a decade and a half in U.S. prisons for their actions in defense of the Cuban Revolution. He and two others of the Five also served in

Angola.

Attending the event were diplomatic representatives of eight African countries. They included the ambassadors from Congo-Brazzaville (Republic of the Congo), South Africa, Namibia, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of the Congo (previously Zaire), and Equatorial Guinea, as well as the cultural attaches of Angola and Mali.

Cuba and Angola: The War for Freedom is a book-length interview with Harry Villegas, a brigadier general in Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR), now retired. It’s a firsthand account of Cuba’s volunteer military mission in Angola, which between 1975 and 1991 helped defend the newly independent country against multiple invasions by the South African apartheid regime and its backers in Washington and other imperialist governments.

The 1988 defeat of the South African army at what is known as the battle of Cuito Cuanavale assured Angolan sovereignty. It also led to the independence of Namibia and hastened the end of white-supremacist rule in South Africa.

In addition to Villegas, the speakers presenting the new book were Víctor Dreke, Gerardo Hernández, and Mary-Alice Waters. Dreke is the head of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution in Havana Province and president of the Cuba-Africa Friendship Association. Hernández is today vice rector of Cuba’s Higher Institute of International Relations. Waters is president of Pathfinder Press, co-editor of *Cuba and Angola: The War for Freedom*, and a member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States.

Joining them on the platform were Brig. Gen. Delsa Esther “Teté” Puebla, vice president of the Combatants Association, and Col. Leonardo Tamayo, better known as “Urbano,” who in 1966–67, together with Villegas, was part of a revolutionary column that fought in Bolivia under Che Guevara’s command. Urbano and Pombo were two of the five combatants who eluded capture by the Bolivian army and its U.S. advisers after Che and others were killed.

Also joining the platform were Aleida Guevara March, daughter of Che Guevara, and Iraida Aguirrechu of the Editora Política publishing house, who assisted in preparing the new book.

The War for Freedom, Dreke told the audience, tells the story of “Cuba’s participation in the liberation of Angola and other countries in Africa, responding to the requests of African governments and liberation movements.”

Dreke himself was part of a unit of Cuban volunteers, led by Che Guevara, who in 1965 fought in the Congo alongside Congolese anti-imperialist fighters. In 1966–68, Dreke also headed Cuba’s mission aiding forces in Guinea-Bissau fighting for independence from Portugal.

Fidel’s decisive leadership

This account of the Angola mission, Dreke said, is told from a unique vantage point. Villegas served there in 1977–79, commanding a Motorized Infantry Regiment in Angola’s northern region. He then returned in 1981, serving for some seven years as liaison between the Cuban com-

mand in Angola and the Revolutionary Armed Forces special command post in Cuba, headed by Fidel Castro.

“A liaison’s assignment in a war, in addition to the military dangers, carries great political responsibilities,” Dreke noted. “Providing accurate information is crucial to those making decisions. And Fidel, as commander in chief, would ask about even the smallest details. You’ll read in the book how our commander would ask Pombo, ‘Tell me what you’ve seen, not what anyone else has told you. Give me your opinion.’”

Hernández said *The War for Freedom* offers an accurate account of Cuba’s role in the liberation of southern Africa. Young Cubans need to know this history, he insisted. And that becomes increasingly important as the events become more distant for new generations.

“It’s no secret that in many places in the world today, when there is talk about the independence of Angola, or the end of apartheid and the release of Nelson Mandela from prison, Cuba is often not even mentioned,” Hernández said. “Revolutionaries around the world are in constant battle against imperialism’s propaganda machine, which seeks to distort and rewrite history to their liking.”

Cuban combatants set example

Hernández paid tribute to the members of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution present in the meeting, not only for their support to the worldwide campaign to free the Cuban



Above, members of Women’s Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment in Angola. Right, Cuban-Angolan tank crew at Cuito Cuanavale, May 1988. What comes through in book by Pombo is “the dignity and respect with which every human being is treated — Cuban, Angolan, Namibian, whether friend or enemy combatant,” said Waters. Cuba’s 16-year internationalist mission in Angola, said Raúl Castro in 1991, made it possible to “know much better what we are capable of achieving.”

Five from U.S. prisons, but above all for their own example. It was “the heroes and heroines who came before the Five,” he said, “who with their example charted a course of struggle and resistance that inspired us in prison.”

Mary-Alice Waters noted how communist workers in the United States and other countries are using *Cuba and Angola* in their political activity among workers and youth. Through the living example of the Cuban Revolution, she said, the record Villegas presents helps us explain what socialism really means. A socialist revolution is about “learning who we are capable of becoming — how we transform ourselves, as we fight to transform our economic and social relations.”

What comes through in Pombo’s account, said Waters, is the proletarian moral values instilled by Cuba’s revolutionary leadership, especially Fidel Castro: “The dignity and respect with which every human being is treated — Cuban, Angolan, Namibian, whether friend or enemy combatant. The determination to win every battle with the least possible sacrifice of human lives.”

And “Why, in Fidel’s words, ‘those not willing to fight for the freedom of others will never be able to fight for their own.’” (See Waters’ remarks on this page.)

Needed for new generations

Villegas described how *Cuba and Angola* came about over several years of collaboration with the book’s editors, while he was the executive vice president of the Combatants Association, working under the leadership of its president, Commander Juan Almeida. The book was aimed especially at young people in the United States and other countries, he said. But the Combatants leadership also found it valuable as a way to “promote revolutionary values among the young generations of Cubans.”

Collaboration between Pathfinder and

the Combatants Association, Villegas added, has also led to books based on interviews with several other general officers of the Revolutionary Armed Forces. He cited *Marianas in Combat* by Teté Puebla, a firsthand account of the Mariana Grajales Women’s Platoon in the Rebel Army during the Cuban revolutionary war; *From the Escambray to the Congo* by Víctor Dreke; and *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*, one of whose authors, Brig. Gen. Gustavo Chui, was in the audience.

Teté Puebla pointed out that Cuba’s internationalist solidarity extends far beyond Africa to lesser-known experi-



ences, such as its support to the Vietnamese liberation war.

“Fidel always reminded us that everywhere where Cubans fought, the only thing we brought back was the bodies of our fallen combatants,” she said.

‘We learned about colonialism’

Leonardo Tamayo spoke about his participation in Angola in a battalion of special troops of Cuba’s Ministry of the Interior. The battalion landed literally hours before the country’s formal independence ceremony on Nov. 11, 1975, and was pivotal in the initial battles that repelled the invasion by Zairean and South African troops.

“We had the opportunity to learn about the hardships imposed by colonialism on the Angolan people,” Tamayo said. “And we were respectful toward the people of that country in every way.”

Aleida Guevara spoke about her participation in the Angola mission as a young pediatric doctor. For Cubans of her generation who served in Angola, “it was an experience that marked us for life,” she said. She contrasted the brutal realities she witnessed, faced by millions across the semicolonial world, with the gains won by Cuban working people through a socialist revolution.

Speaking from the audience, Gen. Gustavo Chui, who was severely wounded in the Angolan war, mentioned his own experience organizing the staff of the special command post in Havana at the beginning of the war in 1975. He underscored Villegas’s description of Fidel Castro’s decisive political and military leadership in winning the victory.

Today, Chui said, when people talk about the war in Angola, they often

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‘Living example of the Cuban Revolution helps explain what socialism really means’

Below are the remarks by Mary-Alice Waters at a Feb. 15 presentation on Cuba and Angola: *The War for Freedom at the Havana International Book Fair* (see accompanying article). Waters is a member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party and president of Path-

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BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

First, a thank-you to Gen. Teté Puebla and the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, including all of you who are here with us today. It’s an honor to be able to present this book to a gathering so representative of Cuba’s history of proletarian internationalism.

On behalf of Pathfinder Press, I also want to extend a warm welcome to the distinguished ambassadors from Congo-Brazzaville, Namibia, South Africa, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Equatorial Guinea who are with us today, as well as other members of the diplomatic corps from Angola and Mali.

Among those with us today are four other compañeros without

whose contributions this book might not have appeared, at least not with all the qualities it has. They are our chairperson and coeditor of the book, Martín Koppel; Róger Calero, a member of Pathfinder’s staff; Lt. Col. José Gárciga, whose own service in Angola and research helped verify many details; and especially Iraida Aguirrechu of Editora Política, whose diligence and editorial skills were indispensable.

Above all, of course, a very special thank-you to General Harry Villegas — for giving Pathfinder the privilege of working with you to publish *Cuba and Angola: The War for Freedom*. For us and many others around the world, you will always be “Pombo.”

I think we tried Pombo’s patience more than once with our interminable questions, as we worked together to bring this book to fruition. Now that the product of his labor is in hand, we hope he will forgive us.

I’ll share with you the one criticism Pombo has voiced so far, however. He didn’t get to express an opinion about which color we used for the Spanish cover, and which for the English. But after seeing both, he told us he likes the red one better. The combatants of the FAR are known to be watermel-

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The Cuban Revolution in World Politics

Cuba & Angola:

The War for Freedom

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Example of Cuban Revolution

Continued from page 9

ons, he said: You may be green on the outside, but on the inside you’re red.

To speak the truth

A few days after the death of Fidel last November, supporters of the Cuban Revolution in New York organized an activity across the street from the Cuban mission to the United Nations to express our respect and solidarity. The de Blasio administration’s police confined us to a small area on a sidewalk, but we made our presence known to passers-by with banners and chants of “*Cuba sí, bloqueo no!*” among others.

We took special measures to keep business entrances along the sidewalk clear, but inevitably some customers were annoyed and wondered what was going on. So an employee at a small cafe came out to ask — at first with quite an edge to his attitude. “Chef Obadiah,” he said his name was; he was African American.

We explained why we were there, to honor Fidel and his leadership of the Cuban Revolution. We told him about Cuba’s internationalism in Africa, its aid to Angola, and support for the independence struggle in Namibia. And we showed him a copy of *How Far We Slaves Have Come!* with Nelson Mandela’s tribute to the Cuban people for their role in the historic defeat of the South African apartheid regime.

His response?

In a very different tone of voice, he said, “I never knew that Cubans helped free southern Africa! Why didn’t I learn that in school?”

Cuba & Angola

Continued from page 9

think only of the victorious battle of Cuito Cuanavale in 1987-88. “But Angola was a long struggle. It extended over 15 years.”

Pascal Onguemby, ambassador of Congo-Brazzaville and dean of the diplomatic corps in Havana, commented that in talking about the war in Angola, people “often forget to mention the Republic of the Congo.” He emphasized the crucial act of the Congo-Brazzaville government in November 1975 in allowing the initial Cuban forces to land there on their way to Angola to defeat the Zairean and South African invasion.

Over the decades, no country in the world has done for Africa what Cuba has done, Onguemby explained.

“Cuba went to Africa to fight the Ebola epidemic, while others sent guns,” he said. “How can you fight Ebola with guns?” Onguemby was referring to the Cuban medical volunteers who went to Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone in 2014 to fight the deadly epidemic, in contrast to Washington, which sent a few medical professionals along with hundreds of troops.

Ambassadors and diplomatic representatives of the other African countries present also took the floor, thanking Cuba for its decades-long internationalist solidarity.

At the end of the meeting, those in attendance bought all 180 copies available of *Cuba and Angola: The War for Freedom*, along with several dozen other books at the Pathfinder table.

I cite this to convey why for us in the United States it is so important that this new book by Pombo is now circulating in both English and Spanish — and before long in other languages too.

As a special note, I’ll add that within a few months, one of those languages will be Farsi, a language widely spoken across the Mideast and Central Asia — not only in Iran, but also Afghanistan, Kurdish areas of northern Iraq, Tajikistan, the Caucasus, and elsewhere. It’s a region where we know from firsthand experience there’s a real thirst for more and truthful information about the Cuban Revolution. A few weeks from now Pathfinder will be taking this book by Pombo, and many others available at this meeting today, to a large book fair in Erbil, in northern Iraq, only some 80 kilometers [50 miles] from the front line of battle in Mosul.

The story of the chef in New York, with one or another variant, occurs over and over again in our political activity among workers and youth in the US. And it is not only those who are African and African American who react as he did.

I hope Gerardo [Hernández] will say a few words about similar experiences he had during his long years in prison as part of the US working class behind bars, including the respect the Cuban Five won among fellow prisoners as a result of their service in Angola. In the pages of *It’s the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US ‘Justice’ System*, an interview with the Five published by Pathfinder last year, they describe how the record of Cuba’s internationalism in Africa is one of the things that helped protect them.

What does ‘socialism’ mean?

Cuba’s example in Africa is also one of the clearest ways we have to explain what the oft-abused word “socialism” really means. It’s not the “socialism” that supposedly exists in Sweden according to Bernie Sanders, nor does it have anything to do with his timid calls for “regulating” the banking system of global financial capital — or to be more precise, “regulating” the money capitalists worldwide in whose interests and by whom that globalist system has been constructed.

A socialist revolution is something very different. As Fidel and Che and Raúl — and those of you here today — have always demonstrated in action, socialism is about working people “broadening their scope,” to borrow the phrase of the great US revolutionary leader Malcolm X. It is about learning who we are capable of becoming — how we transform ourselves, as we fight to transform our economic and social relations. Transform how we live and work together, as we break the chains of capitalist exploitation and compulsion.

The multiple generations of Cubans who served in Angola received an indelible education in *capitalism*, and not only the enormous historical brutality of its colonial version.

That is what was captured so well by Raúl’s words in May 1991, when he welcomed home the last Cuban combatants returning from Angola. The Angolan mission was not a “sacrifice” for the Cuban people, he emphasized. It strengthened and steeled them for the challenges to come — above all, as history turned



Top, Juventud Rebelde/Calixto Llanes, above Joe Brusky

Cuba and Africa is aimed especially at youth in United States and other countries, Villegas said. But it’s also a way to “promote revolutionary values among young generations of Cubans.” Above, Cuban students join Jan. 27 annual Torchlight March, celebrating José Martí’s leadership in Cuba’s fight for independence from Spain. Below, February 2017 protest in Milwaukee against scapegoating and deportations of immigrant workers.

out, the challenges of the Special Period.

“If our people know themselves better, if all of us know much better what we are capable of achieving,” said Raúl, “that too is thanks to Angola.”

Fidel’s political, military leadership

I want to make only one more point. Pombo’s words are addressed to youth everywhere. That includes youth here in Cuba, both inside and outside the FAR. It is, above all, a book about Fidel’s *political* leadership of the Cuban Revolution and how those political capacities are the foundation of Fidel’s *military* leadership. It is a *class question*. A revolutionary army is always anchored in the irreconcilable difference between the values of the dog-eat-dog world of capitalism and the moral values — proletarian moral values, I would say — that Fidel has instilled in us all from the very first days of the revolutionary struggle.

For me, that above all is what comes through in Pombo’s account. The dignity and respect with which every human being is treated — Cuban, Angolan, Namibian, whether friend or enemy combatant.

The determination to win every battle with the least possible sacrifice of human lives.

The concern for the education and care of the children of Cassinga — survivors of the horrendous massacre in May 1978 carried out by South African forces at the Namibian refugee camp there in southern Angola.

The respect for women everywhere and insistence that Cuban women’s participation in the war was, as Fidel put it, “a moral necessity, a revolutionary necessity.”

The insistence that any Cuban who committed a crime in Angola be tried under Angolan law.

The insistence that “those not willing to fight for the freedom of others will never be able to fight for their own.”

All this, and much more you will find in these pages.

How Rebel Army learned to fight

As most of you here today know firsthand, Fidel will go down in history as one of the greatest military commanders of the toilers, of the humble.

In reading Pombo’s account, I keep being reminded of a story I first heard from General Néstor López Cuba or General Enrique Carreras some twenty years ago, I don’t remember which of them it was. It was while we were conducting the interviews published in *Making History: Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces*, a wonderful book that contains interviews with Generals José Ramón Fernández and Harry Villegas in addition to Carreras and López Cuba.

One of them had been part of a Cuban leadership delegation to a congress or other event in the Soviet Union. During a reception, he and other officers of the FAR were talking with a group of their counterparts in the Soviet military, who expressed admiration for Fidel’s military leadership in Angola.

“Where did your commander acquire that knowledge?” one of the Russian officers asked. “At what military academy did he study?”

Our Cuban compañeros could hardly contain their amusement as they replied, “Fidel didn’t learn to fight by reading a textbook or taking a class. He learned, as we all did, by fighting.”

That is the story of any genuine revolution.

And it captures not only the past and the present, but the future of socialist Cuba as well.

Debate politics, don't attack political rights!

Continued from front page

who moderated the talk was attacked and injured, requiring emergency medical treatment.

Working people need the political space to organize and debate out the road forward, and advance the fight against the effects on us of today's slow-burning capitalist economic crisis. This is the road to unite our class, win allies and chart a course to take political power.

In these conditions, the propertied rulers are coming to fear our class and are looking for ways to close down political space. Many now argue that workers are too stupid to be allowed to vote.

The organized goon tactics of those who slandered Murray as a "white nationalist and racist" and chanted "racist, sexist, anti-gay, Charles Murray go away," helped the rulers.

A golden opportunity was missed to publicly debate and expose *The Bell Curve's* class biases and

the anti-working class fears of the capitalist rulers and their meritocratic backers like Murray.

The Bell Curve is taken up and taken apart in the 2016 Pathfinder Book *Are They Rich Because They're Smart? Class, Privilege and Learning Under Capitalism* by Jack Barnes, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.

"The book is a retread of discredited views, but nor primarily scientific or pseudoscientific ones about IQ, genetics, and so on. It has some of that too, but that's not the main point. The book is subtitled 'Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life.' That is what it is about. It's about *social class* above all, even more than it is about race. It's about the fear that the majority cannot be conned — and cannot be 'lightly' policed — forever."

"What's at issue is the attempt to defend the wealth and class privilege of a so-called meritocratic layer — the 'cognitive elite' is the euphemism chosen by Murray and Herrnstein."

Murray goes on to describe what they fear. "An increasingly isolated cognitive elite. A merging of the cognitive elite with the affluent. A deteriorating quality of life for people at the bottom of the cognitive ability distribution."

They fear the conditions that are breeding what Hillary Clinton called the "deplorables," who today are searching for a way to fight their "deteriorating quality of life."

The next issue of the *Militant* will report from Vermont on how this political debate is unfolding, a debate with high stakes for working people everywhere.



AP Photo/Lisa Rathke

Some 400 students, middle-class leftists and thugs break up talk by Charles Murray, author of *The Bell Curve*, at Middlebury College in Vermont. Later, goons chased Murray and the moderator. They physically assaulted her, sending her to the hospital.

LETTERS

'Down with the frontiers?'

You quote Osborne Hart, SWP candidate for mayor of NYC, as saying, "The slogan raised by many liberals and middle-class leftists to tear down the wall and open the border is utopian and dangerous. If enacted, such moves would sharply increase joblessness and competition among workers, and deal blows to the unity of the working class."

I find this puzzling. I recall attending SWP conventions in the mid-1970s where "down with the frontiers" was a prominent slogan. National borders are artifacts of the capitalist state, allowing the free flow of capital and commodities but regulating workers' movements. Please explain your current stance.

Chuck Cairns

Ray Brook, New York



The *Militant* received the following letter at the same time we received the one above. It quotes Russian Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explaining why the slogan 'Down with frontiers' is utopian and wrong under capitalism. The excerpt is from Lenin's speech on the national question on April 29, 1917, which is printed in Lenin's Collected Works, vol. 24, pp. 299-300. In his remarks Lenin

refers to another related article, whose full title was "A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism." It can be found in vol. 23, pp. 58-59.

Dear Editor,

I wanted to forward this to you: "The method of socialist revolution under the slogan 'Down with frontiers' is all muddled up. We have not succeeded in publishing the article in which I called this view 'Imperialist Economism.'"

"What does the 'method' of socialist revolution under the slogan 'Down with frontiers' mean? We maintain that the state is necessary, and a state presupposes frontiers. The state, of course, may hold a bourgeois government, but we need the Soviets. But even Soviets are confronted with the question of frontiers.

"What does 'Down with fron-

tiers' mean? It is the beginning of anarchy. ... The 'method' of socialist revolution under the slogan 'Down with frontiers' is simply a mess. When the time is ripe for socialist revolution, when it finally occurs, it will spread to other countries. We shall help it along, but in what manner, we do not know. ...

"We say that frontiers are determined by the will of the [local] population. Russia, don't you dare fight over Kurland [a region of Latvia]! Germany, get your armies out of Kurland! That is how we solve the secession problem. The proletariat cannot use force, because it must not prevent the peoples from obtaining their freedom. Only when the socialist revolution has become a reality, and not a method, will the slogan 'Down with frontiers' be a correct slogan. Then we shall say: Comrades, come to us."

Ernesto X
by email

'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.

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

Pensions collapse

Continued from front page

4,000 retired members of Teamsters Local 707 in New York were halted as officials announced the fund was insolvent. The same circumstances may soon be facing another 35,000 workers covered by the New York State Teamsters Pension Fund in the Albany region and 407,000 in the Midwest and South covered by the Central States Pension Fund.

"I had a union job for 30 years," Local 707 retiree Tim Chmil, 71, told the *New York Daily News*. "We had collectively bargained contracts that promised us a pension. I paid into it with every paycheck. Everyone told us, 'Don't worry, you have a union job, your pension is guaranteed.' Well, so much for that."

Money managers seeking to turn a profit gambled away these funds speculating on stocks, bonds, hedge funds and other financial schemes. When the financial markets crashed in 2008, 40 percent of the Teamsters' Central States Pension Plan's investments went up in smoke.

And things have continued to get worse. As of last August, pensions run by companies in the S&P 1500 index were underfunded by \$562 billion — up \$160 billion in just seven months, reported the *Financial Times*.

The crisis is rooted in how these pension funds were set up — on a company-by-company basis, or in the case of multiemployer plans, industry by industry. Instead of basing pensions on the pipe-dream of the perpetual profitability of the bosses, retirement for all working people should be government-financed at union scale.

In February 2016 monthly pensions of Local 707 members were slashed by more than 30 percent in hopes of keeping the fund solvent. But a year later the fund went broke and retirees received even lower amounts from the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp., a federal agency that insures union pension funds. Average monthly take home pay after taxes was only \$570, agency officials said, with many Teamster retirees getting only one-third of what they were promised at retirement.

But the government's Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. itself will soon go belly up. "We're projected to run out of money in eight to 10 years," Tom Reader, the group's director, told the media.

In Cleveland, Iron Workers Local 17 approved benefit cuts ranging from 20 to 60 percent for retirees at the end of January, in hopes of extending the lifespan of their "declining status" fund.

Joe Finley, 63, who regularly worked 12 hours a day and took weekend shifts to earn more credits for his pension, told the *Washington Post* that his monthly check is being reduced to \$1,900 from about \$3,500 — a gap equal to his monthly mortgage payment. "You play by all the rules," he said, "and then they pull the rug out from under you."

Last year several thousand Teamsters rallied at the U.S. Capitol to protest cuts up to 50 percent in retiree benefits proposed by Central States Pension Fund administrators. The action helped hold off the cuts. But the Treasury Department said it didn't see anything that could prevent the fund's collapse.

Pension funds for federal, state and city government workers are also in deep crisis, unfunded by more than \$5 trillion. South Carolina alone has a projected shortfall of \$24 billion, more than triple the state's annual budget.

In Puerto Rico, a U.S. colony, the government Employee Retirement System, which owes \$45 billion to nearly 100,000 retirees, will run out of cash this year. In a desperate effort to keep things afloat, managers had wrapped the fund's assets up as bonds and sold them on the market. Today they're close to worthless.

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