

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Revolutionary Cuba: 'We will make no concessions on sovereignty'
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE VOL. 81/NO. 25 JULY 10, 2017

Campaign with the Socialist Workers Party in Albany!

BY JACOB PERASSO

ALBANY, N.Y. — The Socialist Workers Party is planning an ambitious campaign effort in this region over the next two months, where the party's newest branch has launched the campaign of Margaret Trowe for mayor, to win workers and youth to a revolutionary road forward.

Supporters will introduce the party to workers on their doorsteps here and in the surrounding region, join labor actions and other social protests and expand the circulation of the *Militant* and books by party leaders. They will also collect more than 1,500 signatures door to door in working-class neighborhoods to put Trowe on the ballot. Workers, young people and anyone who wants to advance the interests of the working class are invited to join in.

Trowe and campaign supporters recently visited a neighborhood in
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Shooter's bullets driven by liberal fury, capitalist political crisis

BY TERRY EVANS
 AND STEVE CLARK

James Hodgkinson, a campaign volunteer and fervent supporter of Democrat Bernie Sanders, set out with a semi-automatic rifle and handgun June 14 to kill as many Republican congressmen as he could. As he walked toward the field in suburban Washington, where they were practicing for an upcoming congressional baseball game, he asked whether the team was the Democrats or the Republicans. In his pocket he carried a list of GOP representatives.

Within a few minutes Hodgkinson had fired off some 50 rifle cartridges and 10 shots from his handgun, severely wounding Rep. Steve Scalise, the third-ranking Republican in the House of Representatives, and injuring four others. Members of a special Capitol Police security detail, assigned to Scalise due to his post
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UK: Grenfell fire deaths product of capitalist rule



Ricardo Silvestre

Grenfell Tower, just two miles from London's Kensington Palace, burns June 14. Deadly fire and social catastrophe it spawned are no accident, but direct product of how capitalism works.

Workers demand action on deaths, social catastrophe

BY ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

LONDON — When Grenfell Tower went up in flames in the early hours of June 14, killing at least 79 people and leaving hundreds homeless, it threw into sharp relief the U.K. capitalist rulers' contempt for working people.

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Fight for safety on road to workers power

The following statement issued June 22 by the Communist League in the United Kingdom is being widely distributed.

Grenfell Tower has shone a spotlight on the rulers' utter contempt for the lives of working people — from the refusal to act upon multiple warnings about proven flammable clad-

COMMUNIST LEAGUE STATEMENT

ding, inadequate exit routes, no sprinklers, faulty alarm systems — the list goes on as the truth comes out.

This was not an "accident." It was the direct product of how capitalism works. It is totally bound up with the broader carnage that working people face — from declining real wages to job insecurity, mounting social crisis

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Opponents of US colonial rule in Puerto Rico speak out at the UN



AP/Danica Coto

May 1 union march in San Juan, protesting U.S.-imposed fiscal control board. Speakers at U.N. hearing said board's dictatorial powers show Puerto Rico is colony of U.S. imperialism.

BY SETH GALINSKY

UNITED NATIONS — At this year's hearing of the UN Special Committee on Decolonization, supporters of the fight against U.S. co-

'FIGHT FOR WORKERS POWER IS ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE'
 — SWP statement at UN page 4

lonial rule over Puerto Rico spoke out against Washington's increasing exploitation of the island's people and the plunder of its resources to pay the regime's \$74 billion debt to wealthy

bondholders.

Participants welcomed longtime independence fighter Oscar López to the June 19 hearing. López was released from U.S. custody May 17 after nearly 36 years in jail for his actions opposing U.S. domination. Puerto Rico has been a U.S. colony since 1898, when Washington wrested control of the country from Spain.

The hearing took place as the U.S.-imposed Financial Oversight and Management Board — known in Puerto Rico as the Junta — continues to push the government there to make

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Berry workers in Washington win contract, raise, respect

BY CLAY DENNISON

BURLINGTON, Wash. — In a historic gain for farmworkers in Washington — the 11th largest agricultural producing state in the U.S. — berry pickers in the Skagit Valley here ratified the first contract between their union, Familias Unidas por la Justicia, and Sakuma Brothers Farms June 15. The two-year pact is the only union contract for farmworkers in western Washington.

The workers won a significant pay increase. "Thanks to the support we have won, we now have wages based on \$15 an hour, more than any other farmworkers in the state," Ramón Torres, president of the union, told the *Militant*. "In the contract we have ways to defend any worker who is fired unjustly. Our most important next step is to defend the contract. ¡Si se puede!"

"On Monday people went in to work. They said they didn't have to work as hard to get paid \$15 an hour," Alfredo Juarez, 17, one of the young-

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Thousands respond to killing of Muslim teen in Va. 6

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New Zealand packaging workers force abusive managers to resign

Miners, rail workers in Ukraine fight gov't, boss attacks

Salinas Valley food-processing workers win strikes, wage hikes

BY BETSEY STONE

SALINAS, Calif. — A walkout at the giant Taylor Farms vegetable processing plant here ended with workers winning an immediate raise of \$1.50 per hour, with another \$1 an hour coming in January.

Hundreds of workers struck June 5. The next day the rest of the workers joined in, with as many as 2,000 participating in a rally on the street outside.

The union contract at Taylor Farms, whose workers are members of Teamsters Local 890, does not run out until next year. But worker after worker told the *Militant* that with the rise in prices, especially in rent — as landlords take advantage of people moving from the Bay Area looking for cheaper housing — their pay was not covering their bills. “We had to do it, because everything is so expensive,” said Teresa Gonzalez, whose wage has gone from \$11.23 to \$12.73 an hour.

News of the strike spread to other processing plants in the Salinas Valley, where two-thirds of the lettuce consumed in the U.S. is grown. Two weeks later, workers at nonunion Earthbound Farm in nearby San Juan Bautista walked out. After two days on strike, over 1,000 workers there won an immediate \$2 an hour raise.

“All the workers gathered outside and decided that we would stay out until we got a raise, even if it took us a month,” said Carolina Rodrigues, who assembles boxes used to ship vegetables at Earthbound Farm. “We were all united. No one worked.” Rodrigues, who made \$10.95 an hour before the strike, now makes \$12.95.

Inspired by these walkouts, work-

ers went on strike June 23 at the San Benito Foods tomato cannery in Hollister, just a few miles from San Juan Bautista. The contract with Teamsters Local 890 there ran out in April. Negotiations have dragged on with workers rejecting every company offer so far.

After two days San Benito bosses upped their offer of a raise from 18 cents an hour to 65 cents. At a union meeting that afternoon, the workers turned this down and voted to continue the strike.

Much of the work in the cannery is seasonal. Initiating the strike were some 100 mechanics and others who are preparing the plant for the season that starts in July, when the tomatoes begin to ripen and the workforce will grow to 450. The wage raise they are demanding of a dollar an hour for each of three years would cover themselves as well as the seasonal workers.

The food processing plants hit by the walkouts are in the heart of the Salinas Valley, known for the large quantities of berries and vegetables grown here, including half the nation’s celery and broccoli.

The initiative for all three strikes came from workers themselves. Teamsters union representative Crescencio Diaz told a reporter for *The Packer*, a trade publication for the companies, that when workers walked out at Taylor Farms, “the union couldn’t say much. We were shocked too.”



Militant/Betsey Stone

Striking workers at San Benito Foods in Hollister picket June 24, inspired by gains at other processing plants.

Although the walkout was not union-sanctioned, once it began Teamsters officials joined with workers to negotiate with Taylor Farms.

Richard Cardenas, a 19-year-old worker at Taylor Farms, said he is operating three machines in the lettuce drying area, when he is only supposed to be operating one. “There has been a high turnover,” he said. “Many workers come in and leave after a few days.”

Taylor Farms worker Moses Venegas reports that workers at two differ-

ent companies told him they were being given wage increases in the wake of the strikes. “The companies don’t want to be hit with a walkout like we had here,” he said.

After hearing that the workers at San Benito Foods had gone on strike, Taylor Farms worker Marisela Zamora told the *Militant*, “I’m so happy about that. We did a good thing.”

Nora Danielson, Raul Gonzalez and Gerardo Sánchez contributed to this article.

Victory for Wash. farmworkers

Continued from front page
est activists and leaders in the union, told the *Militant*. “So it’s a bit more relaxed now.”

In addition to the pay raise, the union won the right to represent all the pickers on the farm; seniority in layoffs and recalls; and for workers to have union representatives in the fields and at disciplinary proceedings.

In the first week since the contract was signed, Juarez said field bosses have been less abusive. “They don’t say much about you going to the bathroom or taking time to drink water, they used to be real hard on that. I haven’t heard any complaint about supervisors talking

bad to workers.”
The bosses agreed to set up a grievance and arbitration system, and negotiations are continuing on a retirement plan.
The victory came almost four years after pickers first struck over abusive conditions. They formed Familias Unidas, based on a workforce largely composed of indigenous Mixteca and Triqui people from southern Mexico. For more than three years workers struck, marched, and won growing support in the labor movement and the community. The group reorganized as a union and finally won a representation election in September 2016.

THE MILITANT

Defend rights of workers behind bars!

The ‘Militant’ reports on and supports protests by workers behind bars and their supporters against the indignities and abuse prisoners face each day, like solitary confinement, as well as the fight against censorship of the ‘Militant’ by prison authorities.



Militant/Betsey Stone

June 4 rally backs hunger strike by inmates in solitary at California’s Folsom State Prison.

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UK: Grenfell fire catastrophe

Continued from front page

A fire which started in a refrigerator on the fourth floor spread rapidly upwards when “cladding” panels that cover the outside of the 24-story tower turned it into a blazing inferno. The panels were installed as part of a 2015-16 cosmetic renovation.

The Grenfell Action Group, made up of tower residents, had repeatedly sounded the alarm over negligence of fire safety by the local council, which owns the building and supervises some 10,000 other properties.

In November 2016 Edward Daffarn published a post on the action group’s website warning that “only a catastrophic event will expose the ineptitude and incompetence of our landlord ... and bring an end to the dangerous living conditions and neglect of health and safety legislation that they inflict upon their tenants and leaseholders.” Daffarn, who lives on the 16th floor, narrowly escaped with his life.

Building management responded by threatening legal action against Daffarn because of his blog.

Grenfell Action Group and fire safety experts warned about other hazards. A single staircase was the only escape route. It quickly filled with smoke. Fire alarms didn’t work. There was no sprinkler system. In 2014, Conservative Housing Minister Brandon Lewis resisted calls to make sprinklers compulsory, saying, “The cost of fitting a fire sprinkler system may affect house building — something we want to encourage.”

Both Labour and Conservative governments have worked overtime to pare back restrictions on construction, arguing cost concerns outweighed the risks of allowing flammable materials to be used, the *New York Times* reported June 24.

And capitalist greed knows no borders. The cladding strung around Grenfell was made by the U.S. company Arconic — formerly Alcoa — and marketed around the world, even after it was banned from high-rise construction in the U.S. because of its proven danger.

Hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people live in similar style tower blocks. Fire safety tests are now being carried out on 600 buildings. Of the 120 tested by June 28, all have failed. Hundreds have been thrown out into the streets in emergency “relocations” while others have refused to leave, despite intimidation from company security guards.

Grenfell Tower is located in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, which has the highest average incomes in the country — as well as the biggest gap between rich and poor.

Residents reported widespread confusion over what emergency housing and other assistance was available. Some ended up sleeping outdoors.

The borough council’s inaction stood in sharp contrast to the outpouring of support from working people, who brought donations and organized their distribution.

Prime Minister Theresa May drew anger when, the day after the fire, she visited police and firefighters — but not residents. When she returned for a second visit under heavy police protection, a large crowd gathered to confront her, with shouts of “Coward!” and “Shame on you!”

Hundreds of residents and support-

ers joined an angry protest at Kensington Town Hall, demanding immediate rehousing in the borough, financial assistance, a full list of victims, a review of safety at other buildings and that those responsible for the fire be brought to justice.

May was forced to apologize June 21 for “a failure of the state, local and national, to help people when they needed it most.”

The opposition Labour Party has posed as a defender of the affected workers. Party leader Jeremy Corbyn went to meet residents and called for the requisitioning of empty houses in the area. Labour “Shadow Chancellor” John McDonnell said the victims “were murdered by political decisions.” The thrust of Labour Party proposals is to blame “Tory cuts” and demand more regulation. In fact, the 2006 decision to not install sprinklers into existing high-rise council flats was taken by the Labour government of Tony Blair.

With the government unable to put a foot right, the rulers tried to boost “national unity” with a much-hyped visit to residents and volunteers by Queen Elizabeth and Prince William, who live down the road in Kensington Palace. “Put to the test, the United Kingdom has been resolute in the face of adversity,” said a statement released by the queen.

But this isn’t “adversity.” This is the normal workings of capitalism, backed



AP/Tim Ireland

Two days after Grenfell fire, angry residents descend on Kensington Town Hall June 16, demanding government answer for social catastrophe that resulted in death of at least 79 people.

by the government, and they bear the full responsibility for this disaster to working people.

McDonnell and Corbyn are calling for workers outraged by the Grenfell killings to join a July 1 march calling for the May government to step down. Instead of pointing the finger of responsibility at capitalism’s dog-eat-dog system, they say the Conser-

vatives are responsible.

The Communist League is campaigning to get out the truth about the social disaster and to demand government action to aid those devastated by the fire. We invite workers and youth to join us in building a revolutionary working-class political party to chart a course towards working people taking political power.

Communist League: Fight for workers power

Continued from front page

and ongoing wars. The capitalist rulers’ only answer to their crisis is to make working people pay, including with their lives.

This is generating anger among millions of working people. The government, the Labour Party leadership and the propertied rulers fear this anger. It’s the source of their political crisis today.

Seeking to deflect it, they stand together beating the drum of “British values” — the lie that workers and bosses have the same interests — ramped up after the terror attacks in Manchester and London. Their goal is to convince working people to look to *their* government, *their* cops and courts as *our* protectors; and to win acceptance for the erosion of

political rights. Grenfell Tower shows we have no common values, interests or way of life with the capitalist rulers. We can only rely on independent working-class political action.

We should join with the survivors of Grenfell Tower in their fight for immediate quality rehousing in the local area and serious compensation. The trade unions should engage in a mass campaign — working together with tenants around the country — demanding immediate dismantling of cladding, installation of sprinklers and other protective measures nationwide. Workers don’t need the fraud of long inquiries and “better” regulations or “feel your pain” visits by party leaders and the Royals. The outpouring of solidarity with Gren-

fell residents points to what we could achieve through the mobilization of working-class unity and power.

Such a course paves the way for building a revolutionary working-class party to overturn the dictatorship of capital and establish a government that acts in our class interests. It paves the way for working people transforming ourselves, throwing off the degrading image that the rulers strive to inculcate in us, recognizing that we are capable of taking power and organizing society.

Join with the Communist League and Young Socialists on the national demonstration July 1 in London to demand action and to pose the need for a revolutionary working-class alternative to capitalist rule.

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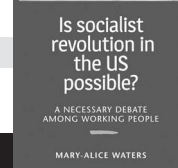
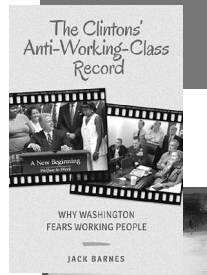
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Are they rich because they're smart?



UN Puerto Rico hearing

Continued from front page
deeper and deeper cuts in public employee wages, pensions, health care and other services.

On May 1, tens of thousands of workers and unionists marched in San Juan and held a one-day strike to protest the Junta's demands, in the largest labor action in some two decades.

López, the first speaker, was given 20 minutes, instead of the usual five, to address the committee. Puerto Rico has a "right to be an independent and sovereign nation," he said.

"Everything the fiscal control board is doing is criminal," López said, and its only purpose "is to squeeze every cent out of the pockets of every Puerto Rican on the island, and, if they could, of those in the diaspora," to pay the debt.

López also denounced Washington's pressures and threats against Venezuela. He called for an end to the U.S. embargo of Cuba and its occupation of Cuba's territory of Guantánamo.

Speakers from a wide variety of groups and views from both Puerto Rico and the United States described the deep economic and social crisis on the island today and how U.S. colonial rule makes it worse.

"I come from an island of 3.5 million inhabitants, where 45 percent of its people live below the poverty level, where the unemployment rate is above 12 percent, where last year 99.5 percent of its population drank contaminated water, where the school drop-out rate is above 40 percent, where they are trying to close 170 public schools," noted Joselyn Santos Valderrama, a leader of the Hostos Youth and students at the Inter-American University in Arecibo. "We need a radical change of course."

Santos said students at the University of Puerto Rico went on strike for two months in response to government demands for drastic cuts in university funding.

The debt is the empire's

"The debt is not ours. It's the empire's," said Gerardo Lugo Segarra, speaking for the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico. "It's the United States that owes Puerto Rico for subjecting it to more than a century of exploitation, of experiments and of deaths."

The U.S. fiscal board's actions have become so unpopular that even the two main bourgeois parties that take turns running the colonial regime — the Popular Democratic Party (PPD) and the New Progressive Party (PNP) — have complained. At the hearing, Puerto Rico Secretary of State Luis Rivera Marín, representing the pro-statehood PNP administration, complained that the "undemocratic Junta has powers over the elected government. If this is not colonialism, then international law does not exist."

At the same time, Rivera acknowl-

edged that the Puerto Rican government "is working hard to meet the requirements and demands of this Junta."

Rivera defended the June 11 non-binding plebiscite pushed through by Gov. Ricardo Rosselló despite a call for a boycott by virtually every other political party and trade unions on the island. He admitted that the wording of the plebiscite had been changed to meet the dictates of the U.S. Justice Department.

Even though only 500,000 people voted, barely 23 percent of those eligible, Rivera said the vote — 97 percent for statehood — was the "unequivocal choice of our people." This is the fifth non-binding plebiscite since 1967 and the turnout this time was the lowest ever.

María de Lourdes Santiago, vice president of the Puerto Rican Independence Party, called the plebiscite a "farce," noting that statehood would not be independence but "the annexation of Puerto Rico to the United States."

Joselyn Velázquez from the Socialist Front pointed to the May Day protests, saying, "If the demands of the people are not met, the world should not doubt that our people will continue to struggle."

In addition to representatives of organizations that back the fight for independence, there were also speakers from the Federation of Teachers of Puerto Rico, the New York State Nurses Association and the Professional Social Workers Guild of Puerto Rico.

Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York, who visited Puerto Rico last month to welcome Oscar López at his release from U.S. custody and to support the struggles of working people and youth there, told the hearing that "a successful struggle for Puerto Rico's independence from Washington's domination is also in the interest of working people in the United States."

Building the fight by working people in Puerto Rico to take political power out of the hands of Washington and their capitalist allies on the island, Hart

'Fight for workers power is road to independence'

Statement by Osborne Hart for the Socialist Workers Party at the UN Special Committee on Decolonization hearings on Puerto Rico, June 19 in New York.

Distinguished Chairman and committee members:

I am the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York City. On May 17, I was in San Juan to join with many others welcoming Oscar López Rivera on his release from nearly 36 years of imprisonment by the U.S. government.

His freedom is a victory for working people in Puerto Rico, the United States, and everywhere, despite efforts by capitalist politicians and media to smear this courageous fighter. I joined others marching proudly with Oscar López in New York's Puerto Rican Day Parade.

My brothers and sisters here have described the brutal consequences of U.S. colonial rule and why independence is a necessity for the Puerto Rican people if they are to freely determine their future.

To this we should add an important fact: a successful struggle for Puerto Rico's independence from Washing-

NY Puerto Rican Parade welcomes Oscar López



NEW YORK — A "Welcome Oscar López-Decolonize Puerto Rico" contingent of several hundred people marched prominently in the National Puerto Rican Day Parade here June 11. Many, including independence fighter López, recently released after nearly 36 years in U.S. prison, wore shirts with the Puerto Rican flag depicted in black and white. This has become a symbol in Puerto Rico of widespread protests against savage cutbacks decreed by a U.S. fiscal control board empowered by Washington to make the island's people pay on the \$74 billion debt to bondholders and hedge funds. Among the marchers were pro-independence groups, members of the UGT health care workers union in Puerto Rico, and Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York mayor.

A campaign against the fight to end U.S. colonial rule in Puerto Rico and López's participation in the parade — led by the *New York Post*, the *Daily News* and a number of area politicians — resulted in the parade being smaller than in past years. Major corporate sponsors, including Goya, Coca-Cola, AT&T and JetBlue, along with New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, withdrew support. Many along the parade route cheered as López passed by, while a smaller number booed.

Nearly 900 people heard López speak June 8 at Hostos Community College in the Bronx, part of his four-day tour in New York. Others attended a dance in his honor in El Barrio and a cultural program at El Maestro Cultural Center in the Bronx.

— SARA LOBMAN

said, is the road to independence. He pointed to Cuba's socialist revolution as an example for working people in Puerto Rico, the U.S. and around the world. (Hart's statement is printed on this page.)

The U.N. committee approved a resolution initiated by the government of revolutionary Cuba, reaffirming "the

inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence."

"Cuba will continue defending the legitimate right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence," Cuban Ambassador Ana Silvia Rodríguez said, "and will be at their side until final victory."

ton's domination is *also* in the interests of working people in the United States.

We have common interests and struggles — to get the U.S. government and the capitalist ruling class it represents off our backs. It's *their* system that's responsible for the unprecedented world capitalist crisis we are living through. This disaster comes crashing down harder today on Puerto Rico's working people and others because of its colonial bondage to Washington.

In the United States, workers and farmers also face attacks by the bosses and their government on our jobs, wages, health care, and pensions, as well as unending imperialist wars abroad.

As Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York, I have walked the picket line with striking workers at Spectrum-Time Warner Cable, many of them Puerto Rican. We have joined silver miners in Idaho on strike for safe working conditions and against union busting. I joined AT&T workers during their three-day nationwide strike for better wages and against increased health insurance costs.

Workers in the U.S. can understand, from their experiences, how the \$74 billion debt crisis is being used to squeeze working people in Puerto Rico in order to pay the wealthy bondholders. My party finds a lot of interest when we tell workers, from big cities like New York to rural areas in Idaho and throughout the country, what our campaign learned in San Juan when I met with unionists, other workers and students. They are eager to hear about the big May Day union march, the two-month student strike at the University of Puerto Rico, and other actions against the cutbacks imposed by the fiscal control board.

We stand with the hundreds of thousands of Puerto Rican workers forced to migrate to the U.S. because of the economic catastrophe. We will find ourselves fighting side by side, and that will strengthen solidarity between workers in both countries.

The U.S. ruling class campaigns vigorously to convince Puerto Ricans that their survival depends on Washington — just as they try to convince working people here that we're incapable of organizing society ourselves.

This year I visited Cuba and par-

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—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA Oakland

Accelerating Crisis of Capitalist Politics. Speaker: Joel Britton, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., July 7, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5, unemployed \$1. 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Tel.: (510) 686-1351.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

New Zealand packaging workers force abusive manager to resign

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Workers at the Orora Kiwi Packaging plant here where I work recently forced National Manufacturing Manager Robert Busson and other plant supervisors to resign.

Busson was hired more than two years ago to implement speedup and drive down wages and conditions at the company's three plants nationwide in Hastings, Christchurch, and Auckland.

Bullying, harassment and abusive behavior towards individual workers, in particular casual workers, was the modus operandi of supervisors under Busson. Workers who stood up to company intimidation were threatened with disciplinary action and told, "If you don't like it there's the door."

In September 2016 young union workers spearheaded a petition drive demanding Busson's removal. A majority of production workers — union and nonunion — at the plant here signed it.

Almost two months later Orora bosses attempted to reach an early contract settlement, even though the current one didn't expire until the end of February. The bosses offered a 6.5 percent wage raise over three years and a \$500 signing bonus. But workers rejected the offer.

The vote was followed by an "alarming" decline in production, according to the Orora bosses, and the resignations of senior plant supervisors. Shortly afterwards Busson resigned. Most of my co-workers say this was because of our resistance.

—Eugen Lepou

Toronto Zoo workers' strike over job security strengthens union

TORONTO — "We are standing up for the little guy which involves sacrifices and to make it easier for others in the future," picket captain Brandon Bordash told supporters of the Communist League June 3 at the main entrance to Toronto Zoo.

Some 400 members of Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 1600 went on strike May 11. About half work full-time, the rest are seasonal workers. The union represents zookeepers, horticulturalists, tradespeople, administration and public relations staff, concession and ride operators at Canada's largest zoo.

The union says that the key issue is job security for newer employees, against contracting out their work. The board of management of the zoo, which is owned by the city of Toronto, closed the zoo during the strike. City bus driv-

ers were refusing to cross the picket line.

More than 1,000 people attended a rally in solidarity with the strikers June 2 in front of City Hall. Delegates from the nearby CUPE convention and supporters from other unions and the community participated.

The workers ratified a four-year agreement June 11 and returned to work. "Although we lost some job security," Local President Christine McKenzie told the *Militant*, "it was a worldly experience for this young workforce, a majority of whom have not previously participated in a strike situation. They now better understand what it means to be in a union."

—David Olson



Militant/David Olson

Striking Toronto Zoo workers June 3. One-month walkout opposed contracting out their jobs.

Miners, rail workers in Ukraine fight gov't, boss attacks

BY PATRICIA MARSHALL

Over the past year tens of thousands of workers in Ukraine have been involved in strikes and protest actions against deteriorating living and working conditions, unpaid wages, and harassment and firings of union activists.

In February 2014 sustained popular mobilizations by workers and others, known as the Maidan, toppled the pro-Moscow regime in Ukraine. Since then working people have faced deepening attacks on living conditions and political rights by the bosses, the capitalist government in Kiev, and international "advisers" and lenders from Washington to the International Monetary Fund.

The effects of the worldwide slowdown in production and trade have been exacerbated by a Russian-backed separatist war in Ukraine's industrial southeast and by Moscow's annexation of Crimea in March 2014. Three years into the war 10,000 people have died and almost 3 million have been displaced in Ukraine or have fled to Russia.

"Kryvyi Rih has the biggest concentration of industrial workers with different multinational corporations like Evraz, Metinvest and ArcelorMittal," said Mykhailo Volynets, chair of the Independent Trade Union of Miners of Ukraine (NPGU), in a May 24 phone interview with the *Militant*. "They export and get normal world prices but they pay low wages, the equivalent of \$150

to \$500 per month. Workers know how to count. They do the math and want to get back to the 2008 wage level of 1,000 euros [\$1,125]."

Protests and underground sit-ins by thousands of iron ore miners in Kryvyi Rih earlier in May started at the Iron Ore Combine and included a tense standoff at Evraz Sukha Balka. Miners' families and other workers assembled at the Evraz mine after management refused to let supplies through to 620 protesting miners nearly a mile underground. "The blockade was broken and the Evraz administration started negotiations," Volynets said.

An occupation at the ArcelorMittal mine administration building by more than 1,000 workers led to the opening of negotiations. Agreements were reached with all three companies for wage increases between 20 and 70 percent.

The government of President Petro Poroshenko, who is worth over three-quarters of a billion dollars, is pursuing a series of anti-working-class measures, part of qualifying for loans of up to \$17.5 billion from the IMF. These include the closure or privatization of state-owned industries, including two-thirds of state-owned mines; sale of publicly owned agricultural land; cuts in pensions; and a new anti-worker Labor Code.

"The old, former state-run unions support the new Labor Code and the independent unions are excluded from the

hearings on it," said Volynets.

"Article 67 says that if production stops at one site, the boss can transfer workers to another site and can fire workers who refuse," he said. "It's like a master transferring slaves."

Miners in the state sector have frequently barricaded roads and carried out other protests to get months of back wages. Miners from Novovolynsk in western Ukraine sent representatives to protest at the Ministry of Energy and Mines in Kiev May 16 over mounting unpaid wages.

During March 35 people died in workplaces across Ukraine. From June 6 to 12, two miners were killed at separate mines, and four others were seriously injured in a methane gas explosion at another. "Workers are disappointed in the authorities and there'll be more conflict," Volynets said.

Hundreds of rail workers protested outside the Ukrainian Railway headquarters in Kiev June 14. "We demand a wage increase of at least 100 percent," said Vladimir Kozelskii, head of the Free Trade Union of Railway Workers of Ukraine. Their average monthly wage is 6,300 hryvnia (\$240). The rail workers set up tents and continued protests over the next five days.

On June 20 train drivers in Kremenchuk, in central Ukraine, started a work-to-rule protest backing the Kiev action. No trains left the depot.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



June 26, 1992

MORGANTOWN, West Virginia — Locked-out members of U.S. Local 5668 have approved a three-year contract with Ravenswood Aluminum, ending a 19-month struggle to win their jobs back. The contract was approved by a vote of 1,287 to 181.

"We consider this a victory for unions everywhere," said Johnny Lynch, a member of Local 5668 with 35 years experience at Ravenswood. "The company set out to bust this union and they did not succeed. We think this is a good contract except for the job combinations, but we can live with it. People are jubilant."

After the announcement June 12, there was a celebration at the union hall, and picket shacks were dismantled. Gone also from the picket lines are the white vans with Vance security goons inside.



July 10, 1967

After spending two months talking with black GIs in Vietnam, Karl Purnell, former Pennsylvania state legislator, has concluded that "a new breed of impatient young men is going home, ready to provide shock troops for the civil rights movement."

In an article in the July 3 *Nation* Purnell says that, "having been taught that it is possible to fight and even die for the cause of freedom, these veterans are coming home determined to receive fair and equal treatment."

Purnell is critical of the many articles appearing in the press which claim that black GIs are critical of civil rights leaders who oppose the war. He says that "dissenters like Stokely Carmichael and Cassius Clay, who take such a verbal beating before the television cameras, are seen as heroes for their courage in fighting the white establishment."



July 11, 1942

July 15, 1942, marks one year since the beginning of the Minneapolis case. On that date a Federal Grand Jury in St. Paul handed down an indictment against 29 leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and officials of Local 544-CIO, on charges of "seditious conspiracy" and violation of the Smith "Gag" Act.

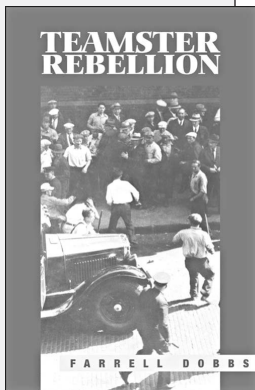
Immediately after the indictment the Civil Rights Defense Committee was organized, and authorized to take charge of the defense in the case, publicize the important issues involved, and raise the funds necessary to defray the heavy court costs.

This week the CRDC announced that almost 150 central labor bodies and local unions representing over one million workers have in the last year rallied to the cause of the Minneapolis defendants by passing resolutions of support and sending financial aid.

Teamster Rebellion

by Farrell Dobbs

The 1934 strikes that built the industrial union movement in Minneapolis and helped pave the way for the CIO, as recounted by a central leader of that battle.—\$19



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Havana: ‘We will make no concessions on sovereignty’

BY SETH GALINSKY

“None of these U.S. presidents could overthrow the invincible Cuban Revolution,” read the words on a poster from Cuba’s *Tricontinental* magazine with pictures of the 12 presidents who have been in office since the Cuban Revolution triumphed in 1959. Underneath the picture of President Donald Trump it says, “Nor will you.”

The poster captures the calm but firm response across Cuba to President Trump’s reversal of a few of the measures taken by then President Barack Obama after Washington and Havana re-established diplomatic relations in 2015.

Trump announced the shift to great fanfare in Miami’s Little Havana neighborhood June 16. Flanked by veterans of the failed 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, he saluted some of the most notorious henchmen of overthrown Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista and claimed he was taking the measures to back the fight for human rights on the island.

In a press conference in Vienna, where he was on a diplomatic visit, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez denounced the steps back. “The United States has no moral authority, it cannot give lectures on human rights or on democracy,” he said, pointing to widespread police brutality, lack of adequate health care, low rates of unionization, deportations of immigrant workers, and torture of prisoners held at the U.S. Naval Base in Guantánamo, Cuba.

Washington’s measures are also an attack on the rights of U.S. citizens to travel, Rodríguez said. He noted that during the presidential election campaign, Trump said he supported the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba and other changes in U.S.

policy but that he would seek a “better deal with our country.”

“A better deal would mean lifting the blockade, returning the territory of the Guantánamo Naval Base, accepting the concept of mutual compensation that would greatly benefit certified U.S. property owners, due to the nationalizations of the 1960s,” Rodríguez said.

President Trump had announced he was ending individual people-to-people travel to Cuba. Other travel, including group travel, will not be affected. In addition, he said that U.S. companies would no longer be allowed to have any economic dealings with companies that are run by the Cuban military.

None of the measures will take effect until the Treasury Department issues new regulations, which could take months, according to a White House fact sheet. And White House officials told Reuters that already concluded deals such as Marriott-owned Starwood Hotels’ joint venture with a Havana hotel would be left alone.

Trump also vacated Obama’s Oct. 14, 2016, directive “United States-Cuba Normalization.” A statement by the government of Cuba noted that “although it did not attempt to hide the interventionist character of U.S. policy or the objective of advancing its interest in changes in our country’s economic, political and social order, the [Obama] directive recognized Cuban’s independence, sovereignty and self-determination, and the Cuban government as a legitimate, equal interlocutor. ... It also recognized that the blockade was an obsolete policy that should be eliminated.”

Washington’s economic war against the Cuban Revolution began in 1960



Bohemia Archives

“Agrarian reform or death. With Fidel, for Cuba. Campesinos from Jíbaro,” read banner at 1961 July 26th demonstration in Cuba. “Work of Cuban Revolution has meant development of Agrarian Program that dignified our countryside,” Cuba’s National Association of Small Farmers said last week, responding to Washington’s continuing attacks on Cuba’s revolution.

and has been maintained by every U.S. president, Democrat and Republican alike, ever since.

Despite all of Trump’s hype about “canceling the last administration’s completely one-sided deal with Cuba,” the changes leave most of the last two years’ agreements in place. Among the measures not affected are: the lifting of many restrictions on group travel to the island; ending the U.S. government’s “wet foot, dry foot” policy, which had encouraged Cubans to head to the U.S. in rickety rafts instead of getting visas; and allowing a little more trade with Cuba, while keeping the draconian embargo in place and continuing to fund programs aimed at undermining the revolution.

The *Miami Herald* noted in a June 16 editorial that it had backed Obama’s “thaw” and still does. At the same time the paper said that “Trump is right to recalibrate this policy without jettisoning it wholesale” because Washington

has made “most of the concessions” and Cuban President Raúl Castro has given very little in return.

A number of mass organizations in Cuba have spoken out against Washington’s continuing attacks on Cuban sovereignty. A statement by the Union of Young Communists (UJC), pointed out that “when U.S. President Eisenhower approved, in 1960, a program of covert action against Cuba with the clear goal of destroying the revolution, none of us had been born.”

Although Cuban youth today did not live through the early days of the revolution, “we have learned from history,” the UJC said. “The empire might have changed its personalities and vintage, but its essence remains the same.”

Cuba’s National Association of Small Farmers said, “For campesino families, the work of the Cuban Revolution has meant the development of an Agrarian Program that dignified our countryside, granted ownership of land to its true owners, brought the advances of science and technology to agriculture, granted credits to finance production, a stable market for products, ensured the right to education, health, sports, access to cultures and most importantly, it gave us independence and dignity.”

Foreign Minister Rodríguez said Cuba’s revolutionary government reasserts its “willingness to continue the respectful dialogue and cooperation in areas of mutual interest” with the U.S. government, but will not “make concessions which compromise our independence or sovereignty.”

Thousands respond to killing of Muslim teen in Va.

BY NED MEASEL

RESTON, Va. — Thousands turned out here June 21 to honor the life of Nabra Hassanen, 17, who was brutally beaten to death June 18 by a man who attacked her and her friends with a baseball bat on the way to their mosque in Sterling.

Hassanen and her friends had been at McDonald’s for a pre-dawn meal before heading to the All Dulles Area Muslim Society mosque for the start of the day’s Ramadan fast. Police say that Salvadoran immigrant Darwin Martínez Torres, 22, killed the teenager in a fit of road rage.

“I don’t believe this story,” Nabra’s father Mohmoud Hassanen, who works as a driver for a car service, told the *Guardian* newspaper. “He followed the girls, and all of them had head cloths, meaning they are Muslim, and he had a baseball stick.”

Whatever the motivation for the attack, many here see the murder as part of an atmosphere of increased anti-Muslim hostility around the country.

Nihad Awad, national executive director of the Washington-based Council on American-Islamic Relations, urged police to “conduct a thorough investigation of possible bias motive in this case, coming as it does



AP Photo/Steve Helber

Thousands attend vigil in Reston, Virginia, June 21 to honor Nabra Hassanen, beaten to death three days earlier on her way to mosque. Anti-Muslim attacks increased sharply last year.

at a time of rising Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate attacks nationwide.” Awad said that CAIR has documented a 57 percent increase in anti-Muslim bias incidents from 2015 to 2016.

More than 5,000 people attended Hassanen’s funeral June 21. Later that evening thousands more joined a vigil at the Lake Anne Plaza in Reston, where the Hassanen family lives. The vigil, initiated by the South

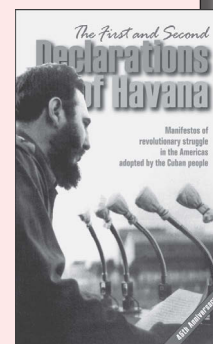
Lakes High School Muslim Students Association, featured family, friends and classmates, school principal Kim Retzer, Imam Mohamed Magid of the All Dulles Area Muslim Society, Rabbi Michael Holzman of the Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation, and a representative of the Restoration Methodist Church. The synagogue made its sanctuary available for Muslim evening prayers afterwards.

The First and Second Declarations of Havana

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Join SWP campaign in Albany



Ken Brooks talks with Maggie Trowe, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Albany mayor, June 25. Government neglect of neighborhood led to fire that left 40 people homeless.

Continued from front page

Albany where a June 23 fire damaged four buildings and left 40 people homeless. The fire began in an abandoned building nearby that residents had demanded be demolished and had a history of code violations.

Workers at Bimbo Bakeries noticed the fire around 6 a.m. and ran over to evacuate residents. “I’m just so grateful for them,” Brittany Bryant told the *Times Union*, “because I don’t know if we would have made it out of the house in time.”

“This fire was not an ‘accident,’” Trowe told residents, when she and campaign supporters visited the area. “It was caused by the neglect of city and state government authorities. The mayor and other city officials, members of the capitalist parties, defend the interests of the bondholders, property developers and big business. They don’t give a damn about us. We need a party that fights for workers’ interests on the road to taking power. That’s what the Socialist Workers Party is about.”

“There are so many families in shelters, and especially in winter there are not enough beds. But there are all these abandoned houses,” said Lillian Danarow, a 40-year-old medical assistant and mother caring for seven children. “There’s no community center here, nowhere for the kids to play.”

“I didn’t vote for Trump or Clinton. I don’t see anyone I want to vote for, they don’t care,” Danarow added. “We as people need to come together. How can we change things?”

“The working class has the capacity to run everything without big government and without divisions,” said Trowe. “In Cuba they made a revolution and one of the things they did was to nationalize the housing stock and limit rents to 10 percent of workers’ income. No one is left on their own in Cuba. It is because they made a revolution there and I believe we can make a revolution here.”

Danarow bought a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, by SWP National

Secretary Jack Barnes. Neighbors donated \$10 to the campaign. One of the donations came from a woman named Cathy, who said she worked as a medic for many years. She pointed to Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who is positioning himself for a 2020 presidential run, and Sen. Charles Schumer, saying, “They can’t possibly know what it’s like to be a real person.”

Gretchen Gorman joined the discussion as she dropped off supplies her family and neighbors collected for the families affected by the fire.

Ken Brooks, an accountant who grew up in Albany, said there had been promises before the election to address housing and other issues but no action has been taken. He said he would try to get an invitation for Trowe to speak at his neighborhood committee meeting and bought a subscription to the *Militant*.

Campaigners also fanned out to several other working-class communities in Albany and surrounding towns over the June 24-25 weekend to lay the groundwork for the stepped-up campaign effort. Putting Trowe on the November ballot will require sustained work from July 11 through the end of August. For more information on how you can get involved, contact the campaign at albanswp@gmail.com.

Che Guevara Cuba brigade set for October

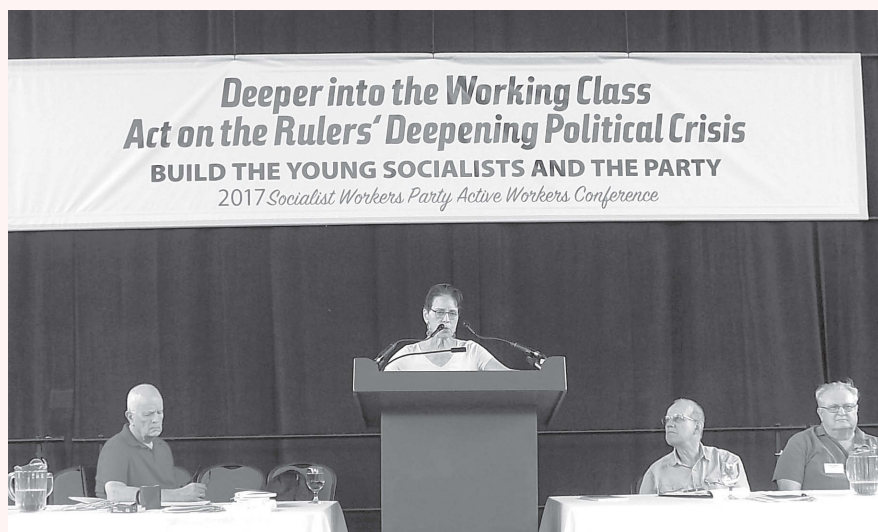
BY JIM BRADLEY

On the heels of the recently concluded May Day International Brigade to socialist Cuba, which for the first time included a delegation from the United States, the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) is organizing an “In the Footsteps of Che International Brigade” Oct. 1-15.

The brigade is “a tribute to Commander Ernesto Che Guevara on the 50th anniversary” of his fall in combat, the ICAP call says. “It will be composed of delegations from different parts of the world interested in Che’s legacy, and in reaffirming their solidarity with the Cuban Revolution.”

“I’m sure we’ll have at least as much participation from the U.S. as we had for the May Day brigade,” Steve Eckardt, brigade national coordinator, told the *Militant*. The U.S. contingent of 54 was the largest in the 300-strong May brigade. “I have never seen the interest in Cuba there is today. May Day brigade members are now speaking at report-back events across the country.”

Socialist Workers Party conference: ‘Respond to rulers’ political crisis’



Militant/Laura Anderson

From left, Jack Barnes, national secretary of Socialist Workers Party, and SWP leaders Mary-Alice Waters, Steve Clark, Norton Sandler.

The Socialist Workers Party’s Active Workers Conference this year took place under the banner: “Deeper into the Working Class. Act on the Rulers’ Deepening Political Crisis. Build the Young Socialists and the Party.” The gathering was held in Oberlin, Ohio, June 15-17.

Next week’s *Militant* will carry a full report on the conference.

The unprecedented character of this political crisis of U.S. capitalism and its two-party system was brought home by events on the eve of the conference. On June 14 James Hodgkinson, a Bernie Sanders supporter, attempted to assassinate Republican U.S. representatives during practice for an annual baseball game, wounding one, aiming to substantially narrow the Republican majority in Congress.

Deeply shaken by the outcome of the 2016 elections, liberals in the Democratic Party, the middle-class left, and the media fear the workers who voted for Donald Trump, hoping to “drain the swamp” in Washington. These self-styled “progressives” are frightened that the ballot results foretell coming struggles by working people, whose living and job conditions and basic dignity are being hard hit by capitalism’s unfolding economic and social breakdown.

“More workers recognize what’s happening today as a political crisis,” Jack Barnes, national secretary of the SWP, said in the opening talk. And political crises are gripping the United Kingdom and countries across Europe. This brings new openings in workers neighborhoods and elsewhere to campaign for SWP candidates, win readers of the *Militant* and books by communist leaders, and recruit to the party and young socialists.

The conference heard talks by SWP leaders Waters on “Without Internationalism We Wouldn’t Be Communists: Reaching Out in Africa, Asia and Beyond” and Clark on “New Avenues for Extending the Communist Movement in the Middle East.” There were classes and a closing rally.

Young socialists and party members come out of the gathering organizing to campaign for SWP candidates in Albany, New York — where the party is running Margaret Trowe for mayor — and other cities. They’re building support for fights by cable employees, silver miners and farmworkers, as well as protests against cop killings and for women’s rights. Along with members of Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, SWP and YS members are organizing to participate in an October Che Guevara brigade to Cuba and the World Festival of Youth and Students in Sochi, Russia.

— TERRY EVANS

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

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Why capitalist rulers expanded marriage to working people

Below is an excerpt from “How Women Lost Control of Their Destiny and How They Can Regain It,” a talk given in 1970 by Evelyn Reed, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party until her death in 1979. It is reproduced in Problems of Women’s Liberation, one of the Books of the Month for June. It explores the economic and social roots of women’s oppression. Reed explains why the oppression of women is a product of property — not sexual — relations, and how winning women’s liberation is intertwined with the fight to overthrow capitalist rule. Copyright © 1970 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY EVELYN REED

In its earlier stages, as in ancient Greece and Rome where this institution was consolidated, the propertied basis of monogamous marriage was bluntly expressed. The Roman jurists, who formulated the principle of “patria potestas” (all power to the father), also codified the laws of property which furnished the basis of the marriage laws. These have remained essentially the same through all the three principal stages of class society: chattel slavery, feudalism, and capitalism.

Under chattel slavery, marriage was the prerogative of the patricians, that is, of the wealthy and noble class alone. Slaves did not marry; even their



The capitalist rulers use marriage and the family to relieve their class “of all responsibility for the welfare of the workers,” notes Evelyn Reed. “Each tiny ‘nuclear’ family must live or perish through its own efforts.” Above, Noree Williams helps husband Steve Williams, who suffers from Alzheimer’s disease, at their home in San Jose, California, May 21.

mating was subject to the whim or will of the master. But at that early point in social development even the plebeians did not marry in the formal sense of the term; they merely cohabited as pairs according to old folk customs and traditions. Thus marriage began as an upper-class innovation for the exclusive benefit of the big proprietors of wealth. ...

At this present stage in the evolution of marriage and the family the original propertied basis of the institution is obscured by the fact that the poor and propertyless are just as much obliged to enter into the state of legal wedlock as the rich. Marriage had now become mandatory upon all classes. Failure to comply resulted in legal penalties of various kinds, not the least of which was branding the unmarried wife as a “prostitute” and her children as illegitimate. The unmarried mother and her children were treated as social outcasts, a fate that was regarded as worse than death.

This raises the question: How and why did an institution created by the wealthy class to serve its propertied interests become extended to the working masses which have little or no property? How did a *class* institution in its inception become a *mass* institution in its subsequent development? The answer to this must be sought in the capitalist mode of class exploitation.

Capitalism brought into being large-scale industry and along with it masses of the proletariat packed into factory towns and cities. This brought about a change in the economic position of women. So long as agriculture and household crafts remained dominant in production, all the members of the family, women and children included, helped in the work that sustained the family and the community. Cooperative labor within the family framework was the characteristic mode of life on the farms, in the small shops, and in the home enterprises.

But with the rise of industrial capitalism, these productive families of the pre-industrial era were displaced by the non-productive consumer families of urban life. With the dispossession of masses of men from farms and small businesses, and their relocation as wage workers in industrial cities, women were stripped of their former place in productive work and relegated to breeding and house-keeping. They became consumers totally dependent upon a breadwinner for their support.

Under these circumstances somebody had to be saddled with the lifetime responsibility for taking care of dependent women and children. This was fixed, through universal marriage, upon the husbands and fathers, although no guarantees whatever were given to these

wage earners that they would always have jobs or sufficient pay to fulfill their family obligations.

To conceal this economic exploitation a new myth was invented. Under church doctrine marriages were “made in heaven” and had a divine sanction. But now there arose the propaganda that the family was a “natural” unit without which humans cannot satisfy their normal needs for love and children. Hence it became the “natural” obligation of the father and/or mother to provide for their loved ones — regardless of whether they were unemployed or incapacitated or even dead.

Here, then, is the answer to our first question, what kind of society requires the institution of marriage and the family and for what purposes. It is class society that needs it, to serve the purposes of the rich. In the beginning the institution served a single purpose, that connected with the ownership and inheritance of private property. But today the family serves a double purpose; it has become a supplementary instrument in the hands of the exploiting class to rob the working masses. Universal, state-imposed marriage became advantageous to the profiteers with the rise of the industrial wage-slave system. It relieved the capitalists of all social responsibility for the welfare of the workers and dumped heavy economic burdens upon the poor in the form of family obligations. Each tiny “nuclear” family must live or perish through its own efforts, with little or no assistance from outside.

One difference between factory exploitation and family exploitation is that the former is easily recognizable for what it is, while the other is not. You cannot convince wage workers that their economic dependence upon the bosses is either sacred or natural; on the contrary, they know they are being put upon, sweated, and exploited. But in the case of the family, Mother Nature and the Divinity are both conjured up to disguise its economic basis by declaring it to be both “sacred” and “natural.” In truth, the only thing sacred to the capitalist ruling class is the almighty dollar and the rights of private property. Under these conditions, the human needs for love, whether sexual or parental, are not benefited but twisted and thwarted by an institution which was not founded upon love but upon economic considerations.

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by Carlos Tablada
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Liberal fury, capitalist crisis

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as Republican house whip, shot and killed Hodgkinson before he could kill other Republican politicians. Senators Jeff Flake and Rand Paul and three other House members were also at the game.

The assault came amid a frenzy of anti-Donald Trump demagoguery in the liberal media, Democratic Party circles, the middle-class left, and from Broadway to Hollywood and beyond. “It’s time to destroy Trump,” Hodgkinson himself had recently written on Facebook.

The shooting is a reflection of the deepening political crisis of the U.S. capitalist rulers that was revealed, and *accelerated*, by the outcome of the 2016 election. Both the Democratic and Republican parties are wracked with widening divisions. Neither of them, nor the two-party system through which the propertied U.S. families maintain their rule and defend their profits, will be the same again.

Behind the hysteria is the employing class’s fear of the workers who voted for Trump. They were hoping to “drain the swamp” of capitalist politics in Washington and somehow halt the mounting social, economic and human calamity they and millions of other working people face. The rulers and their political representatives in both ruling parties are frightened that the election results point to growing class struggle to come.

CBS news anchor Scott Pelley even rationalized the attempted assassination by blaming the Republican victims. “It’s time to ask,” he said, whether the attack “was to some degree, self-inflicted.” And Phil Montag, co-chair of the Nebraska Democratic Party technology committee, was caught on YouTube saying he was “glad” Scalise was shot — “I wish he was f---ing dead.”

Unabated witch hunt

The liberals’ witch hunt of President Donald Trump continues unabated. They hope the “investigation” by special prosecutor and ex-FBI Director Robert Mueller, initially justified to look into alleged “Russian ties” to Trump’s 2016 campaign, will damage the president and/or those around him enough to somehow invalidate the election results or even lead to impeachment proceedings.

Mueller’s 12 years as the federal government’s top cop equip him well

Brigade to Cuba

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anniversary of Guevara’s fall in combat.

Brigade members will also meet with members of the Federation of Cuban Women, the Cuban Trade Union Federation, high school and college students’ organizations and members of the Union of Young Communists. And they will volunteer for agricultural work at a farm cooperative with Cuban farmworkers.

“I encourage everyone to get their applications in before the brigade fills up,” said Eckardt. Similar brigade contingents are being organized in dozens of other countries.

Participation in the U.S. brigade — including housing, food and transportation within Cuba — costs only \$650. Travel to Cuba is separate. Deadline for registration is Sept. 10.

For more information, contact the Chicago Cuba Coalition at (312) 952-2618 or ICanGoToCuba@gmail.com.

to lead a witch hunt. Since the early 20th century, the FBI has served as Washington’s political police. It has spied on, harassed, and sought to disrupt political and union activity by vanguard workers, Socialist Workers Party members, fighters for Black liberation, and other opponents of Washington’s imperialist policies.

As special prosecutor, Mueller has the unqualified authority to force witnesses to testify and to drag them before a closed-door grand jury, where they have no right to counsel. Federal prosecutors — whether targeting working-class fighters, “organized crime” figures, union officials, or their own peers and rivals in the capitalist two-party setup — follow a notorious pattern. They pour agents and resources into finding something, anything, to pin on you, real or manufactured. “Where there’s smoke, there must be fire.” Then they go all out for a conviction or a plea bargain.

In the case of Donald Trump, the liberals and their newspapers and TV networks are more than pleased to boost the frame-up. Dispensing with any pretense of presumption of innocence, *New York Times* columnist Charles Blow wrote of Trump on the June 19 op-ed page, “in the court of public opinion he’s already guilty.”

Mueller has appointed a staff of lawyers that includes a number of Democratic Party donors, as well as a former Clinton Foundation attorney. Mueller is also a close friend of former FBI Director James Comey.

During the 2016 election, as part of an Obama administration effort to protect Hillary Clinton’s campaign, Comey usurped Justice Department authority by going on TV to say the FBI had decided not to recommend charges against her. Then, after he was fired by President Trump, he testified before Congress in early June that he “leaked” (through a friend) an FBI memo he’d written “because I thought that might prompt” the appointment of a special prosecutor.

“You don’t have to be a Trump partisan to have concerns about where all of this is headed,” said the *Wall Street Journal* in a June 16 editorial (and the *Journal*’s editors are decidedly *not* “Trump partisans.”) “Much of Washington clearly views Mr. Mueller as their agent to rid the country of a President they despise. Every political and social incentive in that city will press Mr. Mueller to oblige.”

Any attempt to impeach Trump, however, will infuriate millions of working people and others who voted for him, and many who didn’t, too. “American politics is divisive and dysfunctional as it is,” the *Journal* editorial warned. “Imagine what it will be like if millions of Americans conclude that a presidential election is being overturned by an elite consensus” of major newspapers and TV networks.

Growing numbers of working people already know something stinks about these “investigations” and the media orgy they’re subjected to morning, noon and night. This isn’t because they’re convinced the Trump administration has done anything to advance workers’ interests. Neither major capitalist party can or will. President Trump, like his Democratic and Republican predecessors, governs to advance the interests of the capitalist rulers and their profit-driven exploitation and oppression of working people.



Cartoon captures the employing class’s fear of workers who voted for President Trump. The rulers are frightened the election results point to growing class struggle ahead. Fewer workers than ever identify themselves with *either* the Democratic or Republican parties.

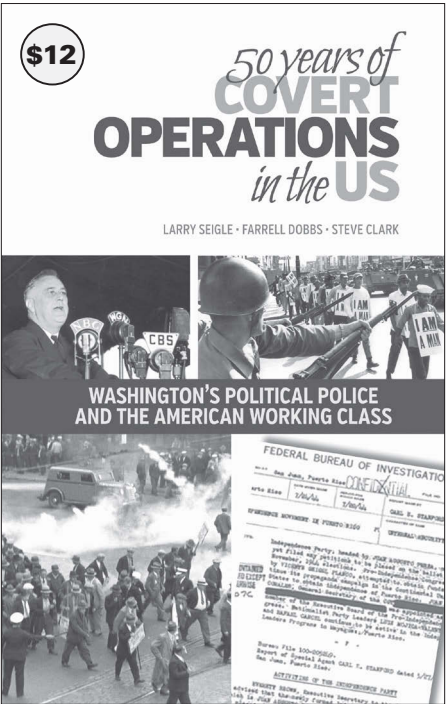
Fewer workers than ever today identify themselves and the interests of their families with *either* party, the Democrats (the long self-proclaimed “friends of labor”) or the Republicans. They see that Democratic Party leaders and loyalists, as well as sections of the Republican Party, are determined to reverse the outcome of an election these bourgeois and middle-class layers can’t reconcile themselves to.

Liberal Democrats bemoan what they view as the “stupidity” and “ignorance” of workers and farmers who voted for Trump and who in mid-2017 are still incapable of “discovering” the danger of having him — instead of Hillary Clinton or some other Democrat — in the White House. Short of another sharp financial breakdown or deep capitalist recession, however, most of these working people will withhold judgment as long as they’re convinced the Democrats are determined to obstruct the new administration from doing anything.

Both capitalist parties fracture

The fracturing of the Democratic Party deepened after the defeat of party hopeful Jon Ossoff in Georgia’s 6th Congressional District June 20. Democrats had poured over \$31 million into defeating the incumbent Republican. This was the fourth time this year that Democratic special election hopes have been dashed, trailing in the dust of others in Kansas, Montana and South Carolina.

For further reading ...



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These losses have aggravated political infighting between Democratic Party “regulars” — those who look to the Clintons, Barack Obama, or hopefuls such as New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo — and those grouped around Bernie Sanders. Sanders and supporters of his “political revolution” increasingly insist that even if the Democratic Party loses some elections, those defeats are worth the price if they can wag their fingers and later take it over and reshape it as what they’ll falsely paint as a party of the “working class” and “progressives.”

As for the Republican Party, its divisions are shown, among other things, by its inability — despite sizable congressional majorities, especially in the House — to pass a single piece of substantive legislation since the opening of Congress and presidential inauguration in January. Their failure in both the House and the Senate to “repeal and replace” the erroneously named Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) is a clear example.

The depth of the GOP’s crisis, however, is revealed elsewhere. That’s the fact that they’re stuck with a president, the de facto head of the party, who wasn’t elected as a Republican. And who really isn’t one.

Hart speaks at UN

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ticipated in the massive working-class march on May Day. I was part of a U.S. delegation that went to Guantánamo, sovereign Cuban territory forcibly held by the U.S. The fight to end U.S. colonial rule and to end U.S. occupation of Guantánamo go hand in hand.

Cuba’s socialist revolution shows us what workers and farmers can accomplish when we organize ourselves to take state power out of the hands of the capitalist class, transforming ourselves in the process. Along that road we can begin to reorganize society in the interests of the vast majority. Along that road genuine independence can be won. The Cuban Revolution is an example for working people in Puerto Rico, the U.S., and around the world to emulate.

Mr. Chairman, this committee’s condemnation of U.S. colonial rule over Puerto Rico serves the interests of people worldwide who struggle against oppression and exploitation and for self-determination.