

# THE MILITANT

**INSIDE**  
**NY exhibit, program win support for Cuban Revolution**  
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 79/NO. 31 SEPTEMBER 7, 2015

## Socialist Workers Party leads drive for new readers

*Statement by the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party, issued Aug. 27 by Norton Sandler, the party's trade union director.*

For the next eight weeks, starting Sept. 5, the Socialist Workers Party is organizing our members and other working people to win 2,300 new readers and renewals to the *Militant* newspaper, which presents the positions of the party and helps organize its political activity. SWP members are urging fellow workers to subscribe  
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### Support Steelworkers!

#### Sept. 1 Day of Action Pittsburgh

**Rally and march to U.S. Steel and ATI**  
 12 noon at USW Headquarters  
 60 Blvd. of the Allies

**Burns Harbor, Indiana**  
**Rally at ArcelorMittal**  
 3:30 p.m. USW Local 6787  
 1100 Max Mochal Hwy.

**Organized by Steelworkers union**  
 For more information visit [usw.org/steel](http://usw.org/steel)

For other actions go to [usw.org/act/campaigns](http://usw.org/act/campaigns)

#### Sept. 7 Labor Day Picnic Virginia, Minnesota

**Iron Range Labor Assembly**  
 Olcott Park, 9th Ave. W and 7th St. N  
 Noon to 4 p.m.

**Organized by Minnesota AFL-CIO**

## Steelworkers fight bosses' demands for concessions

Solidarity actions set when contracts expire Sept. 1



Militant/Dan Fein

Rally of 3,000 Steelworkers Aug. 21 in Gary, Indiana, against concession demands by U.S. Steel and ArcelorMittal in contracts covering 30,000 that expire Sept. 1. Allegheny Technologies Inc. locked out 2,200 Steelworkers in Pennsylvania and five other states Aug. 15.

**BY MITCHEL ROSENBERG**

HARRISON, Pa. — A week after Allegheny Technologies Inc. locked out more than 2,200 workers, members of the United Steelworkers are staffing picket lines and winning solidarity in their fight against ATI's concession demands and use of strike-breakers.

Meanwhile, a Sept. 1 contract expiration looms between 30,000 members of the USW and basic steel giants ArcelorMittal and U.S. Steel, who are also demanding major concessions; the contract covering 137,000 workers at Chrysler, Ford and General Mo-

tors expires Sept. 14; and the SMART union is in contract negotiations covering 40,000 workers at major U.S. railroads.

The USW is building a Sept. 1 "Solidarity in Steel Day of Action"  
**Continued on page 4**

## Stock plunge rooted in world crisis of capitalism

**BY BRIAN WILLIAMS**

Amid a paroxysm of fear and panic, fueling dumping of stocks across financial markets worldwide, some \$5 trillion was lost, including \$2 trillion since Aug. 17 in the U.S. From Shanghai to New York, London to Sydney, losses, then "stabilizations," then continuing volatility have agitated bourgeois government policy makers and apologists for the capitalist system.

The mid-August plunge in stock markets is the result of the decades-long and growing crisis of capitalist accumulation, production and trade. Accelerated by the housing and credit collapse in 2007-2008, this crisis is producing depression conditions for working people, with no end in sight. As industrial profit margins have shrunk, beginning in the 1970s, the propertied rulers have increasingly turned from investing in plants and production, moving instead to speculation in stocks, bonds, derivatives and all kinds of financial paper.

World trade in the first half of 2015 has tumbled to the lowest level since  
**Continued on page 9**

## SWP campaign finds interest, support at Sanders rally in S.C.

**BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN**

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. — Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Philadel-

phia, and supporters of the party from around the Southeast traveled here Aug. 22 to talk with those attracted to a campaign meeting for U.S. Sen.

Bernie Sanders, who is running for president in the Democratic Party primary.

Hart and the SWP got a serious hearing among those attending the rally of 3,000. Many stopped to talk at book tables hung with big signs saying, "Read About Socialism" and "Socialist Workers Party." Eight people subscribed to the *Militant*, 130 got single copies and five books from Pathfinder Press were purchased.

Sanders and iconoclastic Republican candidate Donald Trump are drawing big crowds because people see  
**Continued on page 3**



Militant/Glova Scott

Socialist Workers Party candidate Osborne Hart, center, talks with Machinist union member James Morrison outside meeting for Bernie Sanders Aug. 22.

## Immigrants pour into Europe, driven by wars, social crisis

**BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN**

CALAIS, France — More than 4,000 mostly young immigrants are now encamped in what they call the "New Jungle" on the outskirts of the port here. They are fleeing war, economic crisis and the social effects of imperialist exploitation in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Thousands have attempted to use the Calais-to-Folkestone "chunnel" to seek refuge in the United Kingdom, many hundreds successfully.

"We met in Sudan," David and Kebron, students originally from Ethiopia, told members of the Communist League from the U.K. who visited the camp here Aug. 8 and joined in an "Open the Borders" protest.

Three British dailies — the *Times*, *Express* and *Telegraph* — reported the CL's participation.

The two youth detailed their long journey — including a 12-day high-speed, nonstop car ride across the Sahara Desert from Sudan into Libya. Like many camp residents, all of whom are deemed "illegal" by the French and British governments, they declined to give their last names.

Both David and Kebron were arrested in Libya. Kebron was taken from the women's prison to the home

of a prison guard and forced to work without pay as a domestic servant. Both escaped from captivity, reuniting to cross the Mediterranean.

Nearly 250,000 people have made the sea crossing to Italy or Greece this year, and more than 2,000 have died trying.

### 'Here we are brothers and sisters'

David and Kebron succeeded and made it to Calais. While Ethiopian  
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### Inside

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—On the picket line, p. 5—

Calif. hospital maintenance workers strike for first contract

Alberta concrete truck drivers end lockout, keep seniority

# Canadian gov't silent on Turkish assault on Kurds

BY TONI GORTON  
AND JOHN STEELE

TORONTO — In the context of the U.S.-backed Turkish government military action targeting Kurdish fighters and the coming Oct. 19 Canadian federal election, Ottawa has been silent on the Turkish government's murderous assaults.

At the same time the Conservative Party government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper is taking political initiatives to build a voting base among Kurdish immigrants and win popular support for its military intervention in Iraq and Syria as part of the Washington-led military coalition against the reactionary Islamic State.

Since last October, Ottawa has had a combat mission of six CF-18 fighter jets, a refueling tanker aircraft, two surveillance planes and one airlift plane, involving an air crew of 600 in Iraq. Nearly 70 special operations troops are training Peshmerga military forces of the Kurdistan Regional Government in northern Iraq, which have been an effective fighting force against Islamic State.

The Canadian government "supports the fight for human rights everywhere. We identify with the Kurdish spirit," Jason Kenney, minister of defense and minister of multiculturalism, told a crowd of about 1,000 people here at the 13th Annual Kurdish Peace and Culture Festival Aug. 15. The annual event is organized by the Toronto Kurdish Community Centre, which is rooted among Kurdish immigrants from Turkey, many of whom are construction workers. Labourers International Union of North America Local 183 was a sponsor of the

festival.

Kenney spoke from a stage festooned with flags of the Kurdistan Workers Party of Turkey (PKK), the Kurdish People's Protection Units of Syria (YPG), the Peshmerga and the Kurdistan Regional Government, as well as the image of PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan, who is serving a life sentence in Turkey. Ottawa considers the PKK a "terrorist" organization and by extension the YPG, which is allied with the PKK.

Kenney tried to link the role of the Peshmerga forces and the Canadian military in fighting "Daesh" — an Arabic name for Islamic State. He described last winter's Kurdish victory in Kobani, Syria, as a turning point, but didn't mention the leading role played by YPG in defeating IS. Elaborating on one of the central themes of the Conservative Party election campaign, he said Islamic State had radicalized 130 Canadians "so we have to fight Daesh here at home."

Kenney's speech drew some cheers, but mostly polite applause.

A much warmer reception was given to Feleknas Uca, a Yazidi Kurd who was elected to the Turkish parliament from the People's Democratic Party (HDP) in June. She accused the government of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of using the bombing campaign and repression to push back electoral gains of the Kurds and set the stage for the ruling Justice and Development Party to regain in new elections majority rule.

## 'Repression is increasing daily'

"It looks like the Turkish government is trying to get the country back on a war footing," Uca said in an interview

## 'Stop Dominican government attacks on Haitians'



Militant/Maggie Trowe

BROOKLYN, N.Y. — Several hundred people joined a rally and march here Aug. 14 to protest moves by the government of the Dominican Republic to step up "denationalization" and deportation of Haitians and those of Haitian descent. Steve Erias, a 23-year-old college senior, said the Dominican police are "even kicking people out who were born there. They are attacking people."

Some people were handing out fliers calling for a boycott of the Dominican Republic. "A boycott is wrong and the law is wrong," office worker Sherly Moreau said. "I have family in both the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Haitians go to the DR just to find work."

Marshals led chants such as "Haitian lives matter! Dominican lives matter! Black lives matter! All lives matter!" and "No deportation, only liberation."

— DEAN HAZLEWOOD

with the *Militant* Aug. 14. "Repression is increasing day by day, people detained and killed day by day."

She said she met with Kenney and asked Ottawa to put pressure on the Turkish government to come back to the peace talks table, provide international observers during the expected fall election and stop bombing Kurdish areas.

The Kurdish people "are going through a critical time," Uca said. "It's been almost 100 years since the Treaty of Lausanne, which divided the Kurdish people into four countries. The same concept is being repeated today. New lines are being drawn by today's dominant powers."

Uca said the Kurdish struggle is not just for the Kurds but for democratic rights of all citizens of Turkey. The government offensive is also aimed at the unions, with police entering union halls without warrant and arresting people, she said.

Ozgun Akkaya, a public affairs spokesperson for the Kurdish Commu-

nity Centre who co-chaired the festival program, told the *Militant* that Kurds are not getting the military aid they need from governments and parties anywhere. "In Kobani we needed heavy anti-tank weapons against Islamic State. The U.S. would not give us these weapons" he said.

In his remarks at the festival, Akkaya noted that Aug. 15, 1984, marked the beginning of the armed struggle by the PKK for Kurds' national rights. He said that since then Kurds in Turkey had won recognition as an "ethnicity" with the right to learn and speak their language and enjoy their music.

"There is still a long way to go," he said. "The two-year cease-fire between the PKK and Turkish army dissolved two weeks ago following a series of airstrikes against PKK installations. The only party representing the Kurds, the HDP, is being attacked with bombs and propaganda. But we must keep going to ensure the freedom of all Kurdish people."

## THE MILITANT

### Join struggles against cop brutality!

By standing up and protesting cop brutality, relatives of those killed by police and thousands of others have begun to push back the cops, demonstrating that Black lives matter and all lives matter. The *'Militant'* supports and builds these actions. Don't miss an issue!



Militant/John Hawkins

Aug. 9 rally marks anniversary of police killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri.

## SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

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

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

# Socialist Workers Party leads drive for new readers

Continued from front page to, discuss and join in expanding the readership of the party press.

The subscription drive kicks off over Labor Day weekend, when unions are organizing marches, picnics and other events. Socialist Workers Party members and workers and youth who look to the SWP politically are building these activities along with others.

## SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

Naomi Craine, a member of the SWP National Committee, is the subscription drive director. Craine, currently a staff writer for the *Militant*, is a longtime union member, including of the United Food and Commercial Workers and UNITE HERE.

Concurrent with the subscription effort, the Socialist Workers Party is organizing a fall fund drive to raise \$100,000 to carry out the party's political work.

### Join Labor Day kickoff

The 2015 Labor Day actions are part of the increased resistance this year to the employers' relentless offensive against the working class, as well as to the brutal capitalist "justice" against Blacks and other working people meted out by the cops and courts. Workers across the U.S. have taken steps forward in the fight for a \$15 minimum wage and a union. Steelworkers are battling the bosses' steep concession demands, with national demonstrations to be held in Gary, Indiana, and in the Pittsburgh area on Sept. 1.



**Dan Fein, center, discusses *Teamster Politics* with Walmart workers who joined Steelworkers march and rally in East Chicago, Indiana, Aug. 19, against steel bosses' concession demands.**

Labor Day activities in Charleston, South Carolina, will build on the Black-led victory for the working class this summer of having the Confederate battle flag removed from the state Capitol grounds, as well as ongoing fights against police brutality and for unionization and better wages and job safety. Joining Labor Day events in parts of the U.S. will be autoworkers whose contracts expire in September and workers organized by the Communications Workers of America and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers fighting to hold off Verizon's takeback contract demands.

Working people are responding to the consequences on our lives and those around us of today's capitalist depression in production, employment and trade, as well as crushing debts on homes, credit cards, automobiles and college loans. Tens of thousands of workers and farmers have been killed, wounded, or left with lifetime disabilities from Washington's wars just since 2001, as the U.S. imperialist-dominated global order imposed at the end of World War II unravels. The U.S. ruling class, with no solutions to the crisis, seeks to make working people bear the brunt.

Out of the resistance to the rulers' grinding offensive, there are new opportunities to expand a Marxist current

that follows the lead of the Socialist Workers Party in political and union struggles and joins in getting the *Militant*, Pathfinder books and the magazine *New International* into the hands of working people.

During the subscription drive, Socialist Workers Party members and others who support the party's work — including SWP candidates for mayor and City Council in Philadelphia and port commissioner in Seattle — will take the *Militant* and books broadly to porches and apartments in working-class neighborhoods in cities across the U.S., as well as to workers, farm laborers and farmers in small towns and rural areas. We'll distribute the paper at political meetings, social protests and labor actions. We're intervening with the *Militant* and book tables to reach workers and youth in the big crowds at campaign events for Bernie Sanders and for Donald Trump.

Members and supporters of Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom are joining in this international campaign.

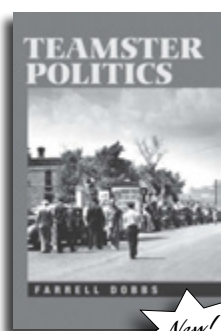
We're talking with workers about the need to put an end to the dictatorship of capital, whose social and political consequences all of us live under today. We discuss the need for the revolutionary organization and mobilization of the

Continued on page 9

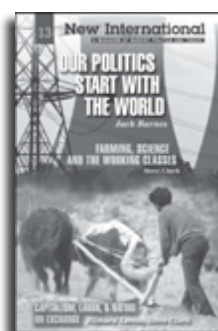
## Join the Socialist Workers Party at Labor Day actions

Contact a party branch (see directory on p. 8) to march in union contingents, learn about labor struggles and increase the readership of the *Militant*.

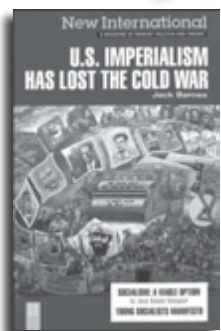
## Special book offers for 'Militant' subscribers



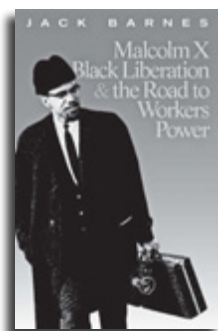
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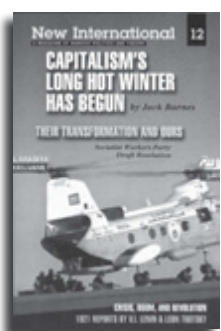
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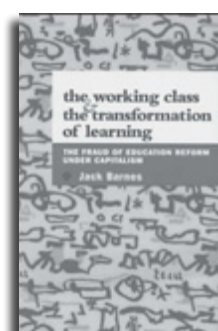
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by Jack Barnes  
\$10 with subscription  
(regular \$20)  
Also in Spanish, French, Greek, Farsi, Arabic



**New International no. 12**  
Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun  
by Jack Barnes  
\$8 with subscription  
(regular \$16)  
Also in Spanish, French, Swedish, Greek, Farsi, Arabic



**The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning**  
The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism  
by Jack Barnes  
\$2 with subscription  
(regular \$3)  
Also in Spanish, French, Icelandic, Swedish, Farsi, Greek

If you have a subscription to the *Militant*, these special offers are for you. Contact a distributor listed on page 8.

## SWP campaign finds interest

Continued from front page them as different from the other bourgeois candidates, disdainful of politics as usual, at a time of acute crisis.

The first person Hart shook hands with was Paul Garbarini, a county worker distributing fliers for the Sept. 5 "Days of Grace" march and rally called by the International Longshoremen's Association Local 1422 in honor of Walter Scott, Clementa Pinckney and other victims of racist and police violence (see calendar on page 4).

"I'll put some of those fliers on my campaign table so we can work with you to build it," Hart told Garbarini. "The SWP campaign is a voice for working people. My running mate, John Staggs, and I are workers at Walmart fighting for \$15 an hour, a union and full-time work. Workers need a labor party based on the unions."

"If only labor knew," replied Garbarini. "They keep voting for the Republicans."

"We have to make a class break from the capitalist parties, whether Democrats or Republicans," said Hart. "I'm talking about taking political power, building a revolutionary movement, independent of the ballot box."

"The mass, dignified response here in Charleston to the racist massacre of Pinckney and other churchgoers in June is an example of what we see when working people lead," he added. "The removal of the Confederate battle flag from the state Capitol came after battles

led by African-Americans that transformed the consciousness of millions across the board and strengthened the working class."

Tony Reyes, a construction worker who is Cuban-American, got an introductory subscription to the *Militant* and *Cuba and Angola: Fighting for Africa's Freedom and Our Own*. "We need change," he said. "I'd get a few more books, but I got a \$300 speeding ticket because of some racial profiling the other night," Reyes said. "The cops were egging me on, giving me the Sandra Bland treatment." Bland, 28, was pulled over and arrested by a Texas cop for a minor traffic violation. She died in police custody July 13.

"I know what you are talking about," said Hart. "I'm active in the Black Lives Matter movement. Our protests across the country against police killings have pushed the cops back."

Some people wanted to know how Hart differed from Sanders, who sometimes describes himself as a "democratic socialist."

"Capitalism is the problem workers face. Sanders' platform is for reforming capitalism," Hart told a student reporter. "The SWP points to the example of the Cuban Revolution, where working people overturned capitalism."

The press took note of the response to the Socialist Workers Party. A reporter for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* did an article about the SWP effort, with a prominent photo of the literature table.

# Steelworkers fight concessions

Continued from front page in Pittsburgh and Burns Harbor, Indiana.

On the picket lines at ATI's Brackenridge flat-rolled steel plant here and in nearby Washington, Pennsylvania, locked-out Steelworkers described how working conditions in the mills have deteriorated.

"It's hard to take," said bricklayer Jack Halinka, describing how ATI is pressuring him to retire in August, rather than in December when he turns 63. Halinka criticized the forced 12-hour shifts and two-tier contract ATI wants. "That'll cause trouble for workers," he said.

"We had 900 members working in 2011, it's down to 575 now," said Fran Arabia, president of Local 1196 at the Brackenridge plant. "Our people are being forced to work 12-hour shifts, six or seven days a week."

"We can't give in to this company," said crane operator Mickey Karns. "The last contract was the first time we had to pay for health care, so the company got their foot in the door."

Workers now pay no premium and have a total annual deductible of \$600 for family coverage, Arabia told the *Militant*. ATI is demanding a \$214 monthly premium with a \$6,000 to \$8,000 deductible. "It's a plan designed to keep people from using it," Arabia said. "Plus

new hires will get only a health savings account of \$500 per year, and no pension, just a 401(k) plan."

Steelworkers outside the mill in Washington could see Strom Engineering personnel, who are being trained to replace the union workforce, taking breaks. Strikebreakers from Phillips Group Inc. guard the plants.

Skip Longdon, president of Local 7139-05 in Washington, told the *Militant* that ATI managers went to Madio's Pizza in Brackenridge Aug. 20 and saw a sign supporting the USW. They told the owner they would stop ordering pizza for meetings and training sessions. In response, two groups of motorcycle-riding Steelworkers rode to the shop to order pizzas. "There were about 100 of us," said Longdon, one of the bikers. Later that day, a large contingent of Teamster bikers did the same.

*Mitchel Rosenberg is a member of USW Local 10-1 at the Philadelphia Energy Solutions refinery.*

## BY JOSEFINA OTERO

GRANITE CITY, Ill. — Some 500 Steelworkers and supporters held a "Get Fired Up! Solidarity Rally" across from the U.S. Steel corporate office here Aug. 21, protesting concessions and showing solidarity with unionists at ArcelorMittal and those locked out by ATI.

"U.S. Steel is going to test our will," Jason Chism, president of Steelworkers Local 50, said. "If we stand up in solidarity, we will last one day longer!"

A number of Glass City Works bricklayers attended. Around 25 Steelworkers from nearby Alton Steel, who are working on a 30-day extension since their contract expired Aug. 19, took part.

*Josefina Otero is a retired member of Steelworkers Local 7139-05 at ATI in Washington, Pennsylvania.*

## BY DAN FEIN

GARY, Ind. — Some 3,000 Steelworkers from the U.S. Steel mill here rallied Aug. 21. Two days earlier several hundred held a similar event near the ArcelorMittal mill in nearby East Chicago.

Four Walmart workers from Chicago with signs supporting the Steelworkers joined the march and got a warm welcome.

"This gives me a vision of what a union can be — everyone together," said Ray Scott, one of the Walmart workers. "This is what we need at Walmart."

"It was a great turnout today," Erica Rogers, who has worked at the U.S. Steel mill for eight years, told the *Militant*. "I feel proud about my union."

Participants held a moment of silence for Kenneth Gish, 61, a member of Steelworkers Local 6787, who died that day after falling from scaffolding in the basic oxygen furnace at the ArcelorMittal mill in Burns Harbor.

## BY DAVID ROSENFELD

VIRGINIA, Minn. — As a small plane flew over this small Iron Range town pulling a banner reading, "STEEL RALLY TODAY 4:30," more than 1,500 United Steelworkers taconite (iron ore) miners marched against concession demands by U.S. Steel, ArcelorMittal and Cliffs Natural Resources.

A sea of protesters, their spirits buoyed by the large turnout, marched from the Miners Memorial Building to

## Mineworkers protest Patriot's attack on union



Militant/Linda Joyce

SCOTT DEPOT, W.Va. — Hundreds of United Mine Workers of America members and supporters came from all over West Virginia and parts of Ohio and Pennsylvania Aug. 17 to march to Patriot Coal's headquarters here, protesting the company's plans to use the bankruptcy process to ditch its contract with the UMWA and stop payments to the union's 1974 pension plan.

"We worked all our lives and now we may lose our pensions," said Eral Jay Walker, a retired miner and member of UMWA Local 93 from Mingo County. "We made them billions and now they say they are out of money."

Representatives of the United Steelworkers, building trades and painters unions, American Federation of Government Employees, Communications Workers of America and others came to support the coal miners.

"Don't let the wealthy get their money first," Daniel Kane, UMWA secretary treasurer, told the rally. "We need economic justice for everyone." He called for Congress to change U.S. bankruptcy laws. UMWA President Cecil Roberts, third from right behind banner above, marched and addressed the rally.

"We cannot turn our backs on what has already been promised," Barbara Ward, a coal miner for 35 years and member of UMWA Local 1713 in Pineville, told the *Militant*. "We need to make our voices heard — whatever it takes!"

— LINDA JOYCE

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### CALIFORNIA

#### Oakland

**How Cuban Revolutionaries Are Answering U.S. Lies About Cuba.** Speaker: Betsey Stone. Fri., Sept. 4, 7:30 p.m. 675 Heegenberger Road, Suite 250. Tel.: (510) 686-1351.

### CANADA

#### Calgary

**Open the Borders to Immigrants from Africa, the Mideast.** Speaker: Katy Le-Rougetel, Communist League. Fri., Sept. 4, 7:30 p.m. 4900 17th Ave. SE. Tel.: (403) 457-9044.

#### Montreal

**What China's Economic Slowdown Means for Working People Worldwide.** Speaker: Annette Kouri, Communist League. Fri., Sept. 4, 7:30 p.m. 7107 St. Denis, Room 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

## —CALENDAR—

### NEW YORK

#### Jackson Heights

**Rally to Back Campaign to Free Puerto Rican Political Prisoner Oscar López Rivera.** Sun., Aug. 30, 4 p.m. Roosevelt Avenue, 74th Street and Broadway. Organized by 34 NYC Mujeres x Oscar.

### SOUTH CAROLINA

#### Charleston

**Days of Grace.** In honor of Walter Scott, Clementa Pinckney and other victims of racist and police violence. March and rally. Sat., Sept. 5, 9 a.m., Wragg Square, 342 Meeting St.

Strategy Conference, Sept. 5, 2-6 p.m.; Sept. 6, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., International Longshoremen's Association Local 1422 Hall, 1142 Morrison Dr. Sponsors: ILA Local 1422, Black Lives Matter Charleston.

### UNITED KINGDOM

#### Manchester

**All Lives Matter! No Human Is Illegal! Protest Cameron's Scapegoating of Refugees and Asylum-Seekers!** Fri., Sept. 4, 4-6 p.m. Piccadilly Gardens. Email: 4September4to6@gmail.com.

a park for a closing rally.

"If you think we will turn our backs on our retirees, bring it on!" John Arbogast, vice president of Local 1938 at U.S. Steel's Minntac mine, told the crowd.

Small contingents from other unions in the area were present.

The contract between the Steelworkers and Cliffs Resources expires at the end of September.

The price of steel has dropped sharply in the past year, and hundreds of miners here have been laid off.

## BY JANICE LYNN AND RACHELE FRUIT

FAIRFIELD, Ala. — Some 150 Steelworkers rallied outside the Steelworkers Local 1013 hall Aug. 21 against concessions and the loss of 1,100 jobs when U.S. Steel closes its blast furnace here Nov. 17.

"For 17 years I was out there busting my heinie in the heat on rotating shifts," Dewana Bryant, 50, one of those facing layoff, told the *Militant*.

"Today was my last day," said crane operator Reginald Mills. "How am I going to support my family? These CEOs make decisions that look good on paper, but not for us."

"We need to make sure we stick together, through the good and the bad," said Jeff Ashford, 44, a thread tech in the pipe mill.

Speakers at a short rally included Daniel Flippo, director of USW District 9, and Daryl Dewberry, international vice president of United Mine Workers of America, District 20.

## BY JANET POST

FAIRLESS HILLS, Pa. — More than 30 members of United Steelworkers Local 4889 at U.S. Steel rallied in front of the union hall here Aug. 20.

At a home-cooked meal after the rally Local President Bill Coe called for sup-

port for the 2,200 workers locked out by Allegheny Technologies Inc.

Steelworkers from Allied Tube and Conduit Corp. in Philadelphia, where 175 members will lose their jobs when the main plant closes Oct. 5, joined the event.

## Calais refugees

Continued from front page and Eritrean working people are pitted against each other by the divide-and-rule politics of capitalist politicians in the Horn of Africa, in the New Jungle "we are brothers and sisters," camp residents told us over and over.

The New Jungle also houses immigrants from the Middle East and Asia. Originally from Pakistan, Zee told us how he and others trek to Calais, crossing Iran, Turkey, Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary, Austria and Italy.

The makeshift camp is taking on aspects of permanence. There are two schools, two mosques, a church, three "restaurants" and a few food stores. Some days there's a generator for charging mobile phones.

The French government has established a center at the edge of the camp, providing a meal a day during the week and some limited housing for women and children.

"The government wanted to stop camps springing up around the city," said François Guenoc, one of some 200 volunteers who bring food and assistance to New Jungle residents.

"We'd like to go to the U.K. because we speak English," David told us. "But new measures taken by the British government and saturation policing by the French government has made it more difficult."

While cops have recently backed off from directly intervening in the New

Continued on page 9

# —ON THE PICKET LINE—

MAGGIE TROWE, EDITOR

## Help the *Militant* cover steel, auto and Verizon contract fights!

This column is dedicated to spreading the truth about labor resistance unfolding today, to give voice to those engaged in battle and help build solidarity. National steel and auto contracts are approaching expiration and the East Coast Verizon agreement has expired. I invite workers involved in fights against concessions to contact me at 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018; or (212) 244-4899; or themilitant@mac.com. We'll work together to ensure your story is told.

—Maggie Trowe

### Calif. hospital maintenance workers strike for first contract

WALNUT CREEK, Calif. — Some 100 unionists and family members picketed John Muir Medical Center here Aug. 5 in support of 18 maintenance workers who have been on strike since May 18.

The workers voted to join Stationary Engineers Local 39 in June 2014, becoming the first employees at the Walnut Creek hospital to unionize. John Muir settled the engineers' contract at the nearby Concord facility last December, but refuses to agree to the same pay and benefits for the newly unionized workers here.

Unionists, including other hospital workers, hotel workers and steelworkers, came from across the Bay Area to join the rally. Lining busy Ygnacio Valley Road during evening rush hour, the pickets received honks and thumbs up from workers driving by.

Kyle Trombetta, one of the strikers with 13 years at the hospital, told the *Militant* that management is concerned that if their fight is successful the nurses might get inspired and organize next. "This is not just about us. We're unionizing this place for the future."

—Hank Scheer, member IUOE Stationary Engineers Local 39 in Martinez, California

### New Zealand retail workers walk out for higher wages

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Some 30 workers and supporters rallied for two hours outside the Manukau branch of The Warehouse retail chain here Aug. 6. About 15 workers walked off the job, leaving managers to staff the store. They were joined by employees from other shifts and other unionists.

The workers were rejecting a 30-cent wage increase offered by the company in contract negotiations, FIRST Union organizer Dennis Maga said in a press release. The tiny increase would mean a majority of staff would remain at little above the minimum wage, he said.

Workers on the picket told the *Militant* that they were also concerned about understaffing, pressure to speed up and abuse by managers.

—Mike Tucker

### Alberta concrete truck drivers end lockout, keep seniority

CALGARY, Alberta — Teamsters locked out by Burnco Rock Products Ltd. for three days voted 70-10 Aug. 13 to return to work after pushing back the company's attack on seniority. The 96 concrete mixer truck drivers at five plants in Alberta, members of Teamsters Local 362, set up picket lines Aug. 10, days before a scheduled vote on a contract proposal from Burnco. The company produces aggregates, paving asphalt and ready-mix concrete.

The drivers voted 78-4 to authorize a strike July 30, shop steward Doug

Dodd told the *Militant* on the picket line at the Shepard Place plant here Aug. 10. Workers carried signs that read, "On legal strike against lock-out."

"To be perfectly blunt, they're trying to break the union," Dodd told CBC News Aug. 10. "We got guys that have worked here over 30 years and they want to be able to sit them at home, bring in whoever they want, whenever they want."

"They've been trying to undermine seniority for a couple of years," said Jim Carlson, a Burnco driver for 27 years.

Pickets described a steady campaign of company pressure over the past period, from increased disciplinary write-ups to the placement of cameras in the drivers' room and the padlock-



Militant/Hank Scheer

Expanded picket line Aug. 5 backs strike of maintenance workers at John Muir Medical Center in Walnut Creek, Calif., demanding first contract after winning union representation last year.

ing of a washroom.

Asked on the picket line if there was tension between the younger drivers and those with more seniority, Dodd pointed to some picketers, "I'm sure that was the company's intention. But we've got some younger guys over there and they're solid."

It was the company that requested a meeting and brought a new proposal, Dodd told the *Militant*. After seeing

the strength of picket line participation, "they came to the realization that it wasn't going to be as easy as they thought, and their proposal was going to go down in flames," he said, referring to the attack on seniority. The two-year contract has a 1 percent raise the first year and none in the second. Saturday overtime now will be paid only after 40 hours work.

—Katy LeRougetel

## 'Keep fighting' says family of Black teen killed by Ga. cop

BY SAM MANUEL

ATLANTA — "As long as I have breath I will continue to fight to get justice," Freda Waiters told supporters speaking at a press conference on the steps of the county courthouse here Aug. 7. The previous day a 23-member grand jury for the second time let a Union City cop walk free in the fatal shooting of her 19-year-old son Ariston Waiters more than three years ago.

A week later the federal prosecutor for Georgia's Northern District told Waiters and her attorneys that his office will open an investigation into the shooting.

Cop Luther Lewis said he chased Waiters Dec. 14, 2011, when he saw

him running after getting reports of teenagers fighting with shots fired. He drew his gun and ordered the Black teenager to lie down, which he did. Lewis shot Waiters twice in the back as he lay on the ground face down being handcuffed. There were no witnesses and the cop claimed later that Waiters tried to grab for his gun.

Fulton County District Attorney Paul Howard reopened the case after police lieutenant Chris McElroy, who had been in charge on the scene, came forward and contradicted Lewis' story. He also implicated the police chief who covered for Lewis.

"I think Mr. Waiters died senselessly and his family deserves some

closure," McElroy told the press. "It's not sat right with me from the very first time I arrived on the scene."

Supporters of the Waiters family have continued to protest and circulated a petition demanding Lewis be fired and for the removal of the police chief.

Attorneys and the investigator for the Waiters family said that while the new evidence leading to reopening the case was strong, Georgia law allows cops, unlike family members and their attorneys, to be present during the entire grand jury proceedings. Lewis made an emotional 90-minute statement to close the hearing. Under state law he could not then be questioned or cross examined.

## Nonunion construction deaths on rise in NY

BY EMMA JOHNSON

NEW YORK — "I'm here to protest the conditions these guys work under," carpenter Mike Haggerty told the *Militant* on a picket line outside a construction site here Aug. 13. "They are underpaid, they have no benefits and no safety equipment. Did you hear about the young worker who was killed when the trench collapsed on him?"

The picket line on 36th Street on Manhattan's West Side was organized by the Carpenters union to call attention to the conditions prevailing on nonunion construction sites across the city, where workers, often Latinos without papers, pay with life and limb for the bosses' profit drive.

On Aug. 5, two construction companies and two of their managers were indicted on charges of manslaughter for recklessly causing the April 6 death of Carlos Moncayo, 22, originally from Ecuador.

An inspector that day tried to get supervisors to stop workers digging a trench that was seven feet deep without fortifying walls. He kept pleading for more than two hours before a boss final-

ly told the workers to get out. Moments later the trench, then 14 feet deep, collapsed and Moncayo was buried alive.

Ten workers were killed on construction sites in the city and Long Island in 2013 and 11 in 2014. So far this year 11 have lost their lives, most of them working nonunion jobs. Latinos make up 25 percent of construction workers, but represented 38 percent of fatalities in 2012.

"They make \$10, maybe \$12 an hour and lots of them don't have papers," said José Zayas as he walked the picket line. "I speak Spanish, but we can't really talk to them, because bosses are standing around watching and we don't want to cause them losing their jobs or even risk deportation. But we always tell them this is not against them."

Most union jobs pay from \$35 to \$65 an hour. Nonunion workers are paid between \$8 and \$30, mostly at the lower end. At least half are paid off the books, with no Social Security, unemployment compensation, coverage for workers' compensation or health insurance.

The City of New York and its housing development agencies have overwhelmingly contracted nonunion outfits

to build so-called affordable housing, making it the least unionized and lowest paying construction segment in the city.

According to the 2015 report "The Price of Life," 25 percent of close to 90,000 carpenters in New York state are undocumented, in addition to 40 percent of 125,000 laborers and roughly one-third of dry wallers and roofers.

The wholesale organizing drive needed to unionize these workers faces many obstacles, among them organizational disputes and little interest from the existing unions, which are fractured along trades lines.

"We can't legally bring in members who don't have a Social Security number, a high school diploma or a public work record," said picket captain Gerald Matthews, an official with the Carpenters. "But we are reaching out to organize them. We have a provisional membership, where we place workers in sites we organize. After two or three paychecks they have a work record and we can bring them into full membership."

Matthews estimates that 75 percent of construction sites in the city today are nonunion.

# Don Rasmussen: Stalwart of miners' fight for safety

BY NED MEASEL

For more than 50 years, Dr. Donald Rasmussen was a stalwart and firm ally in the fight by miners for improved safety in the nation's coal mines. His work in diagnosing and educating about black lung disease contributed to battles that strengthened the United Mine Workers of America. Rasmussen continued treating miners and speaking out on black lung — a disease caused by the mine bosses' greed — until just a couple months before his death July 23 at age 87.

"You might not believe it," Debbie Wills told the *Militant*, in a phone interview Aug. 10, "but folks used to be told that coal dust was good for you." Wills has been active in the National Black Lung Association in West Virginia for decades. "Rasmussen was a pioneer in the diagnosis of black lung disease. He proved it in a scientifically conclusive way."

Black lung disease, or coal miners' pneumoconiosis, is caused by inhaling coal dust particles. It is incurable. It is also completely preventable with the use of ventilation, water sprays and respirators.

After serving as a doctor in the Army, Rasmussen moved to Beckley, West Virginia, in 1962 to work at the Miners Memorial Hospital. Many of his patients were miners with respiratory illness.

Coal mine operators long argued that only an X-ray could prove a miner had black lung. Rasmussen developed testing that showed the disease could be present even though it wasn't visible in an X-ray.

Rasmussen took this knowledge public. Along with doctors Isadore Erwin Buff and Hawey Wells, Rasmussen created Physicians for Miners' Health and Safety in 1968. Jeanne Rasmussen, a photo-journalist who was married to Rasmussen at the time, was their press representative.

The doctors traveled the coalfields speaking at UMWA union halls, churches and schools about the causes, progression and diagnosis of black lung.

His expert testimony when the coal operators challenged claims for compensation won thousands of miners and their survivors the benefits they deserved, and their respect and admiration. This reporter witnessed this when I attended a big meeting of miners and their families to discuss black lung in Pursglove, West Virginia, around 1980. When Rasmussen entered everyone stood. Men removed their caps and waited silently till the doctor took his seat on the podium.

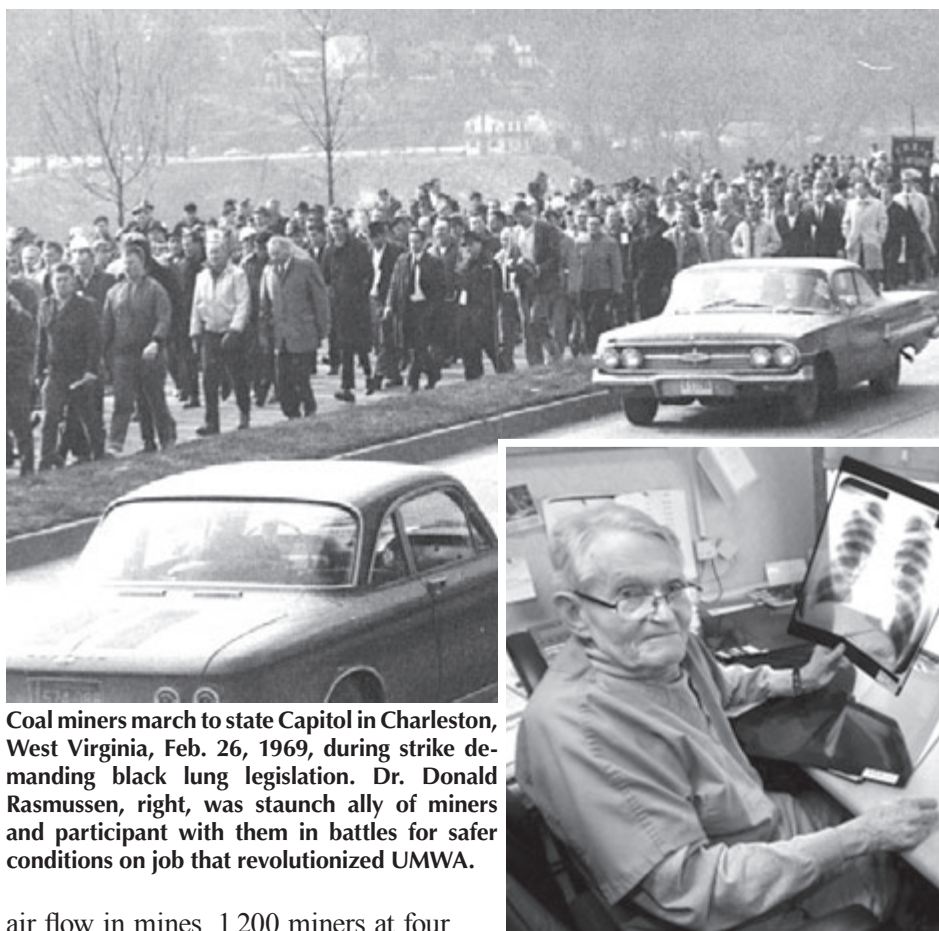
## Backed revolution in miners union

In November 1968 Consolidation Coal's Number 9 mine exploded in Farmington, West Virginia, killing 78 miners. The blast was caused by an entirely preventable buildup of methane gas and coal dust. When UMWA President Tony Boyle praised the company as a safe employer, it spurred those organizing to fight for safety and democracy in the union. The activities of Rasmussen and the other doctors became part of a broader social movement.

In January 1969 working miners in southern West Virginia formed the West Virginia Black Lung Association to campaign for government action on the disease. A large rally was held in Charleston that month. In February a bill was introduced in the West Virginia legislature that would force coal companies to pay compensation for black lung. When it looked like it might not pass, 40,000 of the state's 43,000 miners went on strike.

Thousands marched on the state Capitol, saying, "No law, no coal." The doctors were with them. Miners returned to work three weeks later, the morning after Gov. Arch Moore signed the first black lung legislation into law.

When President Richard Nixon threatened to veto the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act, which established standards for dust limits and



Coal miners march to state Capitol in Charleston, West Virginia, Feb. 26, 1969, during strike demanding black lung legislation. Dr. Donald Rasmussen, right, was staunch ally of miners and participant with them in battles for safer conditions on job that revolutionized UMWA.

air flow in mines, 1,200 miners at four mines struck in West Virginia. Nixon signed the act Dec. 30, 1969.

In response to the ferment in the union and the coalfields, Jock Yablonski in 1969 ran against Boyle for union president. In a 2002 interview with Betty Dotson-Lewis, Rasmussen said, "I was with Yablonski at every rally he had between Fairmont, West Virginia, and Pikeville, Kentucky, at every single rally. I would do it again."

Yablonski was assassinated along with his wife and their daughter on New Year's Eve in 1969, at the direction of Boyle. At Yablonski's funeral, Miners for Democracy was founded. A revolution inside the union followed. Miners made their union the most democratic and powerful union nationwide over the following decade.

Although Rasmussen was in the thick of all this, he told the *Beckley Register-Herald* in 2013, "I never saw myself as a crusader or advocate. I saw the coal miners who needed help and I just told what I had learned while working with them. ... I was just a physician performing my duty."

## Fight continues today

The use of union power to enforce safety led to a 90 percent drop in incidents of black lung from the 1970s to the mid-90s. But the bosses' anti-labor offensive and weakening of the union have led to a resurgence.

"We're seeing a very distinct increase in advanced cases that we hadn't seen in quite a long time," Rasmussen told the *Militant* last year, including among much younger workers. Bosses have ramped up production using machines that cut through rock, he said, creating "silica dust, which is more toxic than coal dust itself."

"Nonunion operators hire fewer workers and work them 10-12 hours a day, 6-7 days a week," said Wills, who works at a clinic in Cedar Grove, West Virginia. "Miners respected Dr. Rasmussen because he respected them."

Wills said what so many who met Donald Rasmussen say, "He was the most kind and gentle person I ever met, but when he believed in something he never gave up."

## How coal miners' struggles transformed union

The following selection is from the pamphlet *Coal Miners on Strike*, containing articles from the *Militant* on battles waged by the United Mine Workers from 1977 to 1981. This excerpt is from an English-language broadcast on the Cuban station Radio Havana, aired March 27, 1981, on the first day of a nationwide miners strike. Copyright © 1981 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

The Black Lung Association, which rank-and-file miners formed in January 1969 to sponsor and push for the West Virginia law, soon became an advocate for the interests of working and retired miners within a union whose leaders had sold out to the companies.

The strike also inspired Joseph "Jock" Yablonski to challenge Tony Boyle for the union's presidency. Running on the slogan "Boyle's in bed with the coal operators," Yablonski ran a strong campaign and vowed to continue the fight beyond the December elections. He was assassinated by Boyle-hired gunmen on the last of the year, but at his funeral, Miners

for Democracy was formed.

In June 1970, a third rank-and-file organization was born out of another strike in southern West Virginia, the Disabled Miners and Widows of Southern West Virginia.

These three groups united to back the Miners for Democracy slate at a West Virginia convention in May 1972. In December UMW members elected nine rank-and-file miners [from the MFD slate] to the international office for the first time in the union's history. ...

Boyle was ousted by MFD candidate Arnold Miller, a victim of black lung and a former miner, an electrician with twenty-four years on the job. A new regime set in.

In 1974, miners voted to ratify their contract for the first time in the union's eighty-four-year history. A small group of handpicked negotiators could no longer sell out the interests of thousands of miners in smoke-filled rooms, hundreds of miles from the coalfields.

Coal miners continued to demonstrate their militancy during the summers of 1975, '76, and '77. Local disputes which began in southern West Virginia in 1975

and 1976 flared up into coalfield-wide strikes both years, because miners were so dissatisfied with the way the operators were refusing to deal with grievances at the mines. Instead of discussing disputes, the companies tried to force miners back to work with federal injunctions, fines, arrests, and threatened firings.

In 1975, 80,000 miners struck. In 1976, 120,000 did — nearly every union miner east of the Mississippi. The 1976 strike was so effective that federal judges in Charleston withdrew their fines and injunctions, an event almost unique in modern labor history.

Then in 1977, miners struck again in protest over cutbacks in their medical benefits, so important in a dangerous industry centered in southern Appalachia, where hospitals refuse to admit patients without cash on the spot to pay for emergency care.

Then in 1978, the UMW strike emerged as the central class question in the United States. The coal miners were fighting for the very existence of their union and every other union in the nation.

### The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions

by Jack Barnes

Building the kind of party working people need to prepare for coming class battles through which they will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and all society. \$24 Also in Spanish, French, Farsi, Swedish, Greek

### Coal Miners on Strike

Articles from the 'Militant' on the 111-day 1977-78 strike, the 1981 strike and contract rejection vote, the fight for health benefits and compensation to black lung victims, and more. \$7

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# NY exhibit, program win support for Cuban Revolution

US frame-up of Cuban Five, successful fight to win their freedom show character of capitalist ‘justice’

BY SARA LOBMAN

NEW YORK — “Without your solidarity, the victory we were able to win on Dec. 17 with the return to Cuba of the three compañeros who remained in U.S. prisons would not have been possible,” Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five, said in a videotaped message to an Aug. 22 program at the Hudson Guild Fulton Center here.

Freedom for the Five, Guerrero said, was also a victory for the Cuban Revolution, for “the steadfastness of our people, who refused to surrender an inch in our principles,” and for “the historic leadership of the revolution,” led by Fidel Castro.

The message was the highlight of the meeting, and everyone received a copy of it in English or Spanish.

Sixteen watercolors painted by Guerrero just months before his release, titled “Absolved by Solidarity,” have been exhibited since July at a gallery at this housing project in New York’s Chelsea neighborhood. Three paintings from an earlier series, “I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived,” are also on display. The exhibit is up until Sept. 11; the gallery is open Wednesday-Friday from 3 to 6 p.m.

The paintings portray the 17-month pretrial incarceration of the Five in the hole and their seven-month frame-up trial in Miami. Two catalogs of the watercolors and other books on the Cuban Five published by Pathfinder Press were available at the event.

The five Cuban revolutionaries were arrested in 1998 by federal police and imprisoned, framed up and convicted on multiple counts, including conspiracy to commit espionage and murder. Three were initially sentenced to life without parole. In reality, they were keeping tabs on paramilitary groups in Florida that carried out violent attacks on the Cuban Revolution and its supporters.

Last December the 16-year-long international campaign to win the freedom of the Five succeeded when Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández and Ramón Labañino were released from federal prison and returned to Cuba. René González and Fernando González had been released previously after serving their entire sentences.

Jim Furlong, Hudson Guild Director of Arts, opened the program, which was chaired by Martín Koppel, editor of the Spanish-language text of the catalogs. Koppel recognized Santiago Castillo, counsellor, and Armando Fernández, second secretary at the Cuban Mission to the United Nations, who were in the audience. Iris Colón, a leader of 34 Women NYC for Oscar spoke about the fight to free Puerto Rican independence leader Oscar López, who has served more than 34 years in U.S. prisons.

Mary-Alice Waters, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, president of Pathfinder Press and editor of the books of Guerrero’s paintings, was the final speaker. She had just returned from Cuba where she and Róger Calero had interviewed the Cuban Five on their experiences as part of the working class in the U.S., both as immigrant workers before they were arrested and while they were in prison. Waters and Calero brought the special message from Guerrero back with them.

The more than 60 people at the meet-



Inset, Militant/Arthur Hughes

Above, Director Jim Furlong welcomes everyone to Aug. 22 program at N.Y. Hudson Guild Art Gallery displaying Antonio Guerrero’s paintings. From left, Puerto Rican independence fighter Iris Colón, SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters and chair Martín Koppel. Inset, participants taking part in discussion.

ing included residents from the apartment complex, long-time supporters of the Cuban Revolution, participants in the fight against police brutality, activists in the Puerto Rican independence struggle and members of the Hudson Guild. A reception at the center’s outdoor patio allowed time for plenty of informal discussion.

In his welcoming remarks, Furlong said, “From the beginning the arts have been a part of the mission of the Hudson Guild, which opened its doors in 1895 to offer cradle-to-grave services to those in the community.”

He explained that Guerrero’s “poetic and beautifully wrought artwork” and the fight of the Cuban Five came to his attention last year when a supporter of the *Militant* newspaper, taking the paper door to door at the apartment complex, knocked on the door of Miriam Green. Green grew up there and taught at the Hudson Guild children’s program for 40 years. She saw the book of Guerrero’s paintings and suggested contacting the center about an exhibit. Furlong introduced Green from the audience.

“The paintings displayed here tell a compelling story,” Furlong said. “And it’s a story with a happy ending,” he concluded to laughter and applause.

## Victory for the Cuban people

“The release of the Cuban Five and the agreement of the U.S. and Cuban governments to open embassies in Washington, D.C., and Havana registers a big victory for the Cuban people and their leadership,” Koppel said.

“It has increased interest in the Five. Who are these men who spent so many years in U.S. prisons and returned with their heads high? These paintings are a good place to start. They show the dignity, humanity, creativity and sense of humor of the Five.”

The Cuban Five are fighting to free Puerto Rican leader Oscar López, Koppel said in introducing Iris Colón.

“They charged Oscar with conspiring to overthrow the U.S. government in Puerto Rico and accuse him of being a terrorist,” Colón said. “But Oscar is in prison for only one reason — fighting for the independence of his country.”

“When the Cuban Five were released,” Colón said, “I felt unadulterated joy, as if Oscar had been freed.” She noted that he had shared a cell for four years at Terre Haute federal prison in Indiana with Fernando González.

In the fight for independence and sovereignty, she said, the peoples of Cuba and Puerto Rico “have had a pact of solidarity for hundreds of years, ever since Spain was the colonizer.” In response to a question, she said there has been growing receptivity the past year to the fight to free López, including a contingent in New York’s Puerto Rican Day Parade in June that got substantial media coverage.

“With the economic crisis on the island,” Colón said, “more people are realizing that being a U.S. colony is not good for Puerto Rico. Supporters of statehood and of the status quo, as well as the independence movement, are all saying, ‘We need Oscar home!’”

After the meeting, Green, who is Puerto Rican, remarked that before the program, “I never really thought about the connections between the Cuban Revolution and Puerto Rico. In fact, earlier this year I ran into one of the demonstrations by the 34 Women for Oscar López, but I didn’t really know what it was about.”

Colón invited participants to join the next protest in Queens Aug. 30. (see calendar on p. 4).

## U.S. efforts to crush revolution failed

“The return of Gerardo, Ramón and Antonio to Cuba is one part of a tremendous victory,” Waters said in closing the program.

“It is part of the recognition by the U.S. government that their efforts over 55 years to isolate and crush the Cuban people and their revolution through an economic war have failed,” she said. “As President Barack Obama explained last Dec. 17, however, when he announced the decision to move toward re-establishing diplomatic relations with Cuba, the U.S. government’s objectives haven’t changed.”

“They will never forget and will never forgive the Cuban people for making a socialist revolution on their doorstep. They will keep trying to undermine and destroy it.”

Since their release from prison, the Five have not only spoken widely throughout Cuba. They have traveled worldwide to thank those who joined in the campaign for their freedom: to Venezuela, South Africa, Namibia, Angola, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Japan — and one will soon be on his way to Vietnam.

The Five feel enormous gratitude for people around the world who, like those at the meeting, worked to win their release, Waters said. They point out that books such as those available at the exhibit and newspapers like the *Militant* that told the truth about their case helped protect them during the years they were incarcerated — they became known to fellow prisoners throughout the federal system.

“The U.S. has the highest rate of incarceration in the world,” Waters said. “And the Cuban Five are in a unique position to explain the character and workings of ‘justice’ under capitalism.”

“They understand and clearly explain the illusion of the ‘American Dream,’ an illusion that exists not only in the United States but in Cuba as well,” she said. “That’s why the Five have been speaking especially to young people in Cuba who’ve never lived under capitalism. They talk with Cuban youth and workers about the myriad forms of exploitation and oppression facing working

Continued on page 9

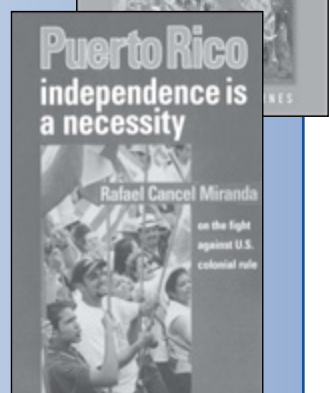
## Books for working-class fighters ...



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**Puerto Rico: Independence Is a Necessity**  
by Rafael Cancel Miranda \$6  
Also in Spanish and Farsi  
See distributors on page 8 or visit:

[www.pathfinderpress.com](http://www.pathfinderpress.com)

# 'Kurds enter world politics as fighters, not victims'

Following is an excerpt from "Washington's Assault on Iraq: Opening Guns of World War III," by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. Published in issue no. 7 of the Marxist magazine New International, it describes the consequences of the 1991 Gulf War on the Kurds and their long-time struggle for national rights and a homeland. After Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, the U.S. rulers launched a war drive with the aim of establishing in Baghdad a reliable regime subservient to Washington. A six-week bombardment launched in January 1991 and a 100-hour invasion left hundreds of thousands dead, millions of refugees and widespread destruction. The bloody U.S. invasion stopped short of Baghdad, leaving Saddam in power. Copyright © 1991 by New International. Reprinted by permission.



Members of Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan founded in Mahabad, Iran, August 1945. Independent Kurdish Republic of Mahabad was formed in January 1946. Although it was crushed by Iranian monarchy a year later, Kurds have continued their struggle for a homeland.

## BY JACK BARNES

The U.S. rulers' military "victory" put an international spotlight on another unresolved fight for national self-determination in the region — that of the Kurdish people. Prior to the Gulf war the Kurdish struggle had largely been in retreat, having been dealt repeated defeats over the past half century by the Iraqi, Turkish, Iranian, and Syrian ruling classes, with the complicity of Washington, London, Paris, and Moscow. The consequences of the Gulf war have now posed Kurdish national self-determination more sharply than

at any time since the close of World War II and the years just after the 1958 revolution that overthrew the monarchy in Iraq.

Some twenty million to thirty million Kurds are divided between southeastern Turkey, northeastern Syria, northern Iraq, and northwestern Iran, as well as a small region in the southern part of the USSR. An independent Kurdish republic [Republic of Mahabad] came into existence in northern Iran after the establishment of a workers' and peasants' government in neighboring Azerbaijan in December 1945.

Although the Kurdish republic was crushed by the Iranian monarchy a year later, the Kurds continued their struggle during the decades that followed. The U.S. rulers have alternately doled out aid with an eyedropper to Kurdish nationalist groups, and then abruptly cut off this backing, depending on Washington's shifting relations with regimes in the area, especially Baghdad and Tehran.

The Kurdish people took advantage of the weakening of the Saddam Hussein regime as a result of the war to press forward their struggle once again, holding many villages and towns — including the major city of Kirkuk — for a week or more in March. Baghdad used helicopter gunships and heavy armor to crush the Kurdish rebellion with ruthless brutality, causing

two million or more Kurdish refugees to attempt to cross the Turkish and Iranian borders.

As we discuss here today, the U.S. and European imperialist powers have declared a temporary refugee "enclave" for the Kurds north of the thirty-sixth parallel in northern Iraq near the Turkish border. Washington is sending troops, Special Forces units, into northern Iraq to function as what amounts to little more than a police force for Saddam Hussein. Along with Turkish soldiers, the U.S. troops are forcing the refugees out of Turkey and off nearby mountains into ill-provisioned and barren transit camps. Washington's aim is to push the Kurds back to the towns and villages from which they fled.

At best, this enclave will be the temporary equivalent of an Indian reservation in the United States or one of the many blocked-off areas near Israel's borders containing Palestinian refugee camps. The imperialists share a common interest with the capitalist regimes in Baghdad, Ankara, Damascus, and Tehran in ensuring that such a "haven" for the Kurds is short-lived. All of them know that any more-or-less-permanent Kurdish area can only breed aspirations for more land that is justly theirs, as well as potential "intifadas" among young generations of Kurdish fighters. Bush will have nightmares about setting up a very large reservation, nightmares about a modern-

day Geronimo leading a new breakout.

This is another of the unresolved and uncontrollable social forces in the Gulf that has been unleashed, rather than contained, by the results of Washington's war against Iraq.

As we continue campaigning against imperialism and war today, we must call not only for "All foreign troops out of Iraq!" but also "Open the U.S. borders!" — to the Kurdish people and to all Iraqi and Kuwaiti refugees fleeing the Baghdad regime and the al-Sabah monarchy.

For the ruling class in Turkey, which joined Washington in the war against Iraq in hopes of winning trade favors and military aid and hardware, the results so far — nearly one million refugees pounding at its borders — are nothing short of a catastrophe. (The Turkish regime is also suffering major economic blows from honoring the continuing blockade, which shuts off Turkey's oil pipeline with Iraq and the resulting flow of funds into the state treasury.) These events have brought to greater world attention once again the Turkish rulers' own suppression of the Kurdish people, until recently legally denied the right even to speak their own language in Turkey — and they are still denied the right to read, write, or be educated in Kurdish.

Above all, the Kurdish people have come to the center stage in world politics as never before, not primarily as victims, but as courageous and determined fighters for national rights.

## August BOOKS OF THE MONTH

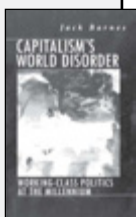
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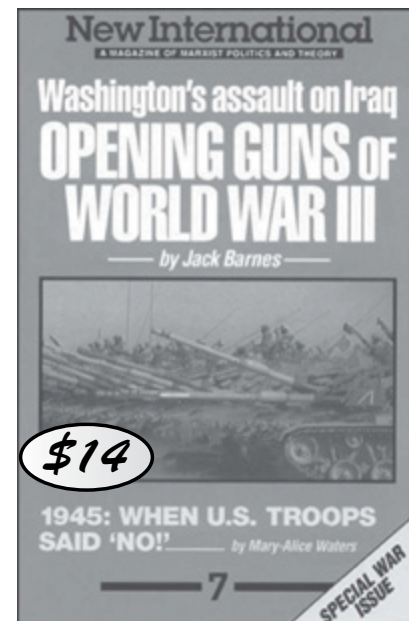
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## SWP leads drive for new readers

Continued from page 3

working class to take political power out of the hands of the ruling class. The transformation of working people, as we fight alongside each other to transform our conditions of life and work, opens the road to socialism here and the world over. Regular readers of the *Militant* will find articles most weeks pointing to the example workers and farmers in Cuba have set since they took power and made a socialist revolution some 55 years ago.

A half-dozen titles presenting the party's program are on special for new and renewing *Militant* readers. These include *Teamster Politics* by Farrell Dobbs; issues of the Marxist magazine *New International* featuring the articles "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War," "Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun," and "Our Politics Start with the World"; and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* by Jack Barnes, national secre-

tary of the Socialist Workers Party. (See ad on page 3.)

### Socialist Workers Party fund drive

Contributions to the Socialist Workers Party's \$100,000 fall fund drive are an essential part of the yearly budget for the party's political activity, which is reported week in and week out in the pages of the *Militant*. Like the subscription campaign, the fund drive continues through Nov. 3.

SWP members set an example, contributing generously to the fund and urging workers we are fighting alongside and new and long-term readers of the party press to contribute.

### SWP Party Building Fund

To help, contact a party branch near you (see directory on p. 8) or send your contribution to Socialist Workers Party National Office, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

## Immigrants pour into Europe, driven by crisis

Continued from page 3

Jungle itself, they move in against people attempting the crossing with batons, tear gas and pepper spray. Cops have also entered houses of Calais residents they accuse of illegally giving food and shelter to undocumented immigrants.

### Wave of migration to Europe

The vast majority of the new arrivals in Europe head for Germany or Sweden, travelling up through Greece and Hungary. The German government estimates that some 800,000 will arrive this year.

En route immigrants face riot police in Greece, cops and soldiers in Macedonia, increased border controls in Hungary and the U.K. and intensified anti-immigrant propaganda by the propertied rulers.

The drive by some European Union member governments to shore up their borders and political disagreement among them on how to respond to the wave of immigration is accelerating the erosion of the "ever closer union" enshrined in the EU's founding treaty.

Rightist organizations have held anti-immigrant protests in Germany, where there have also been dozens of reported arson attacks. Anti-immigrant actions in France and Britain have drawn few participants.

At the same time, many working people across Europe have expressed solidarity. In response to the Hungarian government's decision to build an anti-immigrant fence along its southern border with Serbia, 100 volunteers in Szeged, the country's third largest city, have formed "Migrant Solidarity." The group provides food, health care and help with asylum applications for those who want to stay.

The U.K. government continues to ramp up its anti-

immigrant stance. "Europe can't protect itself, preserve its standard of living and social infrastructure if it has to absorb millions of migrants from Africa," Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond told the BBC Aug. 9.

The opposition Labour Party has also pushed for restrictions on immigration.

The government has announced plans to jail landlords renting accommodation to undocumented workers, and step up raids against immigrants who work illegally and bosses who knowingly employ them.

There have been actions in the U.K. in defense of immigrants. The Movement for Justice mobilized 400 people outside the Yarlswood immigration detention center in Bedfordshire Aug. 8 to demand its closure, the second such action in three months.

Some 200 people, including 20 rabbis, signed a letter from the Jewish Council for Racial Equality condemning the government's approach. "Our experience as refugees is not so distant that we've forgotten what it's like to be demonised for seeking safety," they write, referring to the plight of Jews fleeing Nazi terror following Hitler's rise to power in 1933.

The immigration question is a hot topic of discussion in workplaces up and down the country. Many echo the government's stance. Others disagree.

"Immigration nowadays is forced immigration," said Teame Berhe, a worker at the McVitie's cookie factory in London originally from Eritrea. "And the main contributors to the problem are countries like Britain and the U.S. that directly or indirectly interfere or create political upheaval. These countries have to take responsibility for refugees rather than preventing them from coming."

## NY event wins support for Cuban Revolution

Continued from page 7

people in the U.S. and around the world, conditions that were changed forever by the Cuban Revolution."

"The U.S. prison system is designed for retribution and punishment," Waters said. "But you don't often hear about the solidarity among the prisoners themselves. Each of the Five treated fellow prisoners with respect, and they were treated with respect in return."

"It's this solidarity that comes through in the paintings we see here," Waters said.

Several participants commented on that aspect of the watercolors after the meeting. Norma Abiles said how moved she was by the painting of "The Air Vent," which pictures one of the ways the Five communicated between their cells. "I got a new insight into prisoners organizing solidarity with each other," said Abiles, who volunteers with the Chelsea Organization on Housing. She has lived in the neighborhood her whole life and has been active in defending the Cuban Revolution since visiting Cuba with the Venceremos Brigade in 1970.

Waters also pointed to some of the battles working

people in the U.S. are waging today: by fast-food workers for a \$15 minimum wage and a union; by families of those killed by the police and the Black Lives Matter protests; and others.

Among those at the meeting was Davon Blank, who attended the Movement for Black Lives Convening conference in Cleveland in July. Now 22, he first got involved in the fight against New York City's "stop-and-frisk" laws as a high school student.

"I really loved the exhibit," he said. "The fact that Antonio Guerrero and the others were able to use their revolutionary mindset to create artwork and poetry is part of how they resisted. It's very powerful."

In Guerrero's videotaped message to the meeting, he assured participants that "our hearts are full of energy to continue taking on new battles. Cuba faces huge challenges in a world we know is complex. We still have the unjust embargo that has been imposed against Cuba, and the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo."

"We know the road is not easy," Guerrero said, "but we know our friends, wherever they are, will continue waging these battles alongside Cuba."

## Stock market plunge

Continued from front page

2009. Steel, oil, iron ore, copper, aluminum and nickel are contracting. The Bloomberg Commodity Index, which follows a basket of 22 raw materials, is at its lowest point in 16 years.

Some bourgeois commentators say this is all about China. "What we're seeing is not a U.S. problem," William Dudley, head of the Federal Reserve's New York branch, said Aug. 26, while admitting that the market turmoil means the Fed will now likely drop plans to raise interest rates at its September meeting. "This is very different to the financial crisis. The financial crisis was very much about us. This isn't about us."

But others admit it *is* about U.S. capitalism. "The trigger was most likely the sudden deterioration of leading economic measures, energy prices, and industrial commodities, both in the U.S. and globally," investment analyst John Hussman wrote in his weekly column Aug. 24.

When overvalued stocks hit "internal deterioration," with industries and other sectors breaking down, he said, they "become vulnerable to airpockets, free-falls, and crashes."

On Aug. 23, former Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers urged the Fed not to "make a dangerous mistake" and instead keep interest rates at zero. He said the current production crisis and its effect on jobs will last at least another decade.

Working people feel the brunt of the capitalist crisis, as bosses push to lower wages, cut the workforce to the bone and speed up production. The government released figures at the end of July showing that wages are stagnant, posting the lowest quarterly growth in more than three decades.

Capitalist bosses in the U.S., Europe, Japan and Australia had looked to China as a possible way out of the crisis of their system. But Chinese capital is integrally part of the world capitalist system and subject to the same pressures and vulnerabilities. The "Chinese miracle" of expanding production and trade is imploding, with no buyers, leading to extensive overproduction of basic commodities both there and around the world.

China's Shanghai Composite dropped 8.5 percent Aug. 24, its biggest daily decline in eight and a half years. This happened despite efforts by China's capitalist rulers to boost market prices — cutting interest rates, betting greater amount of bank funds on stocks and devaluing the country's currency, the renminbi. None of them had much impact.

In China, where production is mostly geared for export, exports dropped 8 percent in July from a year earlier, and auto sales dropped 7 percent. Manufacturing in August shrank at the fastest pace since 2009.

The Chinese government announced Aug. 23 that workers' pension funds for the first time will now be invested in stocks.

### 'Stimulus' to boost stock prices

The propertied rulers have no answers to the worldwide economic crisis. They target workers wages, benefits and safety on the job, hoping to raise profit margins.

Coming out of the 2007-2008 steep economic downturn, "stimulus" measures were implemented in hopes of getting production going again. In December 2008 the Fed slashed interest rates to nearly zero and began a "quantitative easing" money-printing scheme in which the government bought \$3 trillion in government bonds and largely worthless mortgage-backed securities to pump money into the financial system over the next six years. But these measures had little effect, except providing easy money that helped fuel the giant rise in stock market prices to record overvalued levels.

But the continued rise in the stock market prices was simply based on investors' belief that their market value would keep going up and up.

"This is a confidence game, Chris Weston, chief markets strategist at IG in Melbourne, Australia, told the *Washington Post*, "and when you don't have confidence, you press the sell button."

Whether the stock market will continue to tumble this week, or take a breather, the capitalists have no answer to the crisis of their system. The crisis will deepen.