

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Syria civil war uproots millions, ripples across Middle East
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 77/NO. 40 NOVEMBER 11, 2013

Join 8-week drive to expand readership of the 'Militant!'

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Militant supporters in Manchester, England, and Lincoln, Neb., are in the lead after the second week of the fall subscription and books campaign, with the goal of selling 2,500 subscriptions by Dec. 10.

"Whatever the government says about recovery, we're not surviving," John Newsome, a school bus driver, told Hugo Wils and Paul Davies when they knocked on his door in the Baguley neighborhood in the working-class suburb of Whythenshawe, south of Manchester Oct. 26.

"The owners of energy companies get massive dividends and then put up the prices we have to pay," said Newsome. "And now Chinese com-

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Contribute to the Socialist Workers Party Building Fund
 — See article p. 4

Fall 'Militant' subscription campaign Oct. 12 - Dec. 10 (week 2)

Country	quota	sold	%	2,500
UNITED STATES				
Lincoln	22	6	27%	
Atlanta	160	41	26%	
Seattle	160	40	25%	
Chicago	180	43	24%	
Philadelphia	130	25	19%	
New York	380	71	19%	
Twin Cities	135	24	18%	
Boston	65	11	17%	
Houston	110	15	14%	
San Francisco	180	24	13%	
Des Moines	160	21	13%	
Los Angeles	160	21	13%	
Omaha	220	17	8%	
Miami	95	7	7%	
Washington		9		
Total U.S.	2157	375	17%	
PRISONERS	15	3	20%	
UNITED KINGDOM				
London	150	37	25%	
Manchester	100	34	34%	
UK Total	250	71	28%	
CANADA	110	24	22%	
NEW ZEALAND	80	17	21%	
AUSTRALIA	75	13	17%	
Total	2687	503	20%	
Should be	2500	625	25%	

States place new obstacles on workers' right to vote

BY SETH GALINSKY

At least half a dozen states have put in place new obstacles to the ability of working people to vote in the wake of the June decision by the Supreme Court striking down a key section of the Voting Rights Act. That section required states and local governments with a long history of racist discrimination to get prior approval from the Justice Department before making any changes in voting laws.

The Voting Rights Act was first passed in 1965, a conquest of the fight for Black rights in the 1950s and '60s. It banned literacy tests, poll taxes and other measures designed to prevent Blacks from voting or running for office. The Voting Rights Act uses the power granted Congress by the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, itself a conquest of the Civil War that ended slavery, to ensure that the "right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged ... on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

The act was last extended for a 25-year period in 2006 by a large majority in Congress and signed by President George W. Bush.

The North Carolina legislature has approved some of the most onerous restrictions. Signed in August by Gov. Patrick McCrory, a Republican, the new law requires all voters in the state to present a photo ID; shortens the early voting period by seven days; eliminates same-day registration; prohibits extend-

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Students walk out to protest cop's killing of 13-year-old boy in Calif.



Militant/Joel Britton

Demonstration Oct. 25 against killing of Andy López by police officer in Santa Rosa, Calif.

BY JOEL BRITTON

SANTA ROSA, Calif. — Hundreds of middle and high school students walked out of classes Oct. 25 to march from City Hall to a rally at the Sonoma County sheriff's office to protest the

Vote SWP! The socialist, working-class campaign



Militant photos: top, Naomi Craine; left, Seth Galinsky
 Above, Tom Baumann, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Miami mayor, campaigns door to door Sept. 28. Left, Sara Lobman, SWP candidate for Manhattan borough president, signs up TWU member Thomas McNally for *Militant* subscription during transit workers' rally in New York Oct. 29.

BY STEVE WARSHELL

HOUSTON — "Millions of workers are facing attacks similar to those you are today," Michael Fitzsimmons, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor, told longshore workers at an Oct. 12 meeting of Latino members of the International Longshoremen's Association at the union hiring hall here. "The bosses are pushing harder and harder against us to make the working class pay for the deepening crisis of capitalism."

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EDITORIAL

Socialist Workers Party candidates are running for a wide range of municipal offices as tribunes of the working class and its allies. They are joining strike picket lines, opposing deportations of immigrant workers, protesting killings by cops, standing for women's right to choose abortion.

The socialist candidates have been

Continued on page 9

'Militant,' other publications fight prison censorship

BY JOHN STUDER

The *Militant's* fight against attempts by prison officials to deny the paper to its subscribers behind bars is one front in a much broader battle against censorship and for the right of prisoners to read and think for themselves.

Working with the Florida ACLU,
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Oppose Charter of Quebec Values, Montreal socialist says 5

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'Malcolm X: Revolutionary Leader of the Working Class'

Farsi edition of book reviewed by Iran Book News Agency

Below is a translation of an Oct. 15 review by the semiofficial Iran Book News Agency of Malcolm X: Revolutionary Leader of the Working Class, translated and published in Iran by Talaye Porsoo. The book is the second volume in a three-part Farsi edition of Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, published in 2009 by Pathfinder Press.

Malcolm X: Revolutionary Leader of the Working Class presents the political legacy of Malcolm X for political activists.

Malcolm X: Revolutionary Leader of the Working Class by Jack Barnes, with an overview of the life of Malcolm X, describes the political practice of this revolutionary leader in the social and political struggles of the proletariat in the United States of America.

According to the report by the Iran Book News Agency, what established the foundation of the explosive rise of the Black liberation struggles in the United States in the 1950s was the mass migration of people of color from the rural south to cities and factories across the continent. What prompted this migration was the insatiable need of capital for labor power and cannon fodder for its wars. Malcolm X emerged from these struggles as an unrivaled leader.

Jack Barnes explains in this work that Malcolm X insisted that the explosive

movement was part of a global revolutionary struggle for human rights.

Malcolm X: Revolutionary Leader of the Working Class, on the basis of the experiences of a century and a half of struggle, helps us to learn why the revolutionary conquest for power by the working class is the final battle that makes the emancipation of Blacks possible and opens the road to a world built, not on the basis of exploitation, violence and racism, but on the basis of human solidarity.

As the publisher notes in its preface, in this book the reader becomes acquainted with Malcolm's youth and his family, within the framework of social relations dominant in the United States in that period. The book tells the story that Malcolm's father was a Black man who did not accept that the place of Blacks is what is dictated to them, did not accept, like many others, to be threatened and assaulted by white racist organizations.

Malcolm X was the outstanding example of a revolutionary leader who rose up in the second half of the 20th century in America and converged with other revolutionaries around the world. Barnes writes, "Don't start with Blacks as an oppressed nationality. Start with the vanguard place and weight of workers who are Black in broad proletarian-led political struggles in the United States. From the Civil War to today, the record is mind-boggling. It's the strength and resilience, not the oppression, that bowls you over."

Protests force Tunisia gov't to agree to resign



Reuters/Anis Mili

Thousands of protesters in Tunis, the capital of Tunisia, chanted "Government of traitors, resign" Oct. 23 after Islamist Prime Minister Ali Larayedh reneged on an earlier promise to step down.

The rally was organized by the opposition National Salvation Front and backed by many trade unions. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, high school students joined after the teachers union gave them the day off. A pro-government demonstration called in response never took place.

On Oct. 25 it was announced that an agreement had been reached between the ruling Ennahda party and opposition groups for the government to resign within three weeks. A caretaker government of "technocrats" will be appointed and a timetable for new elections put in place.

After mass protests in 2011 forced the ouster of Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, who assumed the presidency in a 1987 coup d'état, the Ennahda party won elections with 40 percent of the vote. But support for Larayedh and his Ennahda party soon plummeted once in power as workers bore the brunt of the deepening capitalist crisis and the Islamist party sought to impose its sectarian views on society.

—SETH GALINSKY

The contents of the book are in three parts: He Spoke the Truth to Our Generation of Revolutionists; In Tribute to Malcolm X; The *Young Socialist* interview with Malcolm X; Malcolm X, Revolutionary Leader of

the Working Class.

Talaye Porsoo Publications has brought out the first edition of *Malcolm X: Revolutionary Leader of the Working Class*, with a run of 1,000 copies, 199 pages, 9,000 Tomans [\$3].

Volunteers sell Pathfinder books at Mideast Studies conference

NEW ORLEANS — A team of volunteers with Pathfinder Press joined hundreds of others here Oct. 10-13 at the annual conference of the Middle East Studies Association of North America to discuss a wide variety of topics related to political and social developments in the Middle East, from Syria to Egypt.

Pathfinder Press, which publishes books on revolutionary working-class politics, had a booth at the exhibit hall. Forty professors and students from universities across North America, the Middle East and Europe signed up for more information on Pathfinder publications. Seven signed up for subscriptions to the *Militant*.

Among the top sellers were *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free* and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*.

— PAUL KOURI

THE MILITANT

Halt criminalization of immigrant workers!

Governments in Europe and elsewhere are tightening their borders seeking to restrict immigrant workers fleeing wars and impoverishment from living and working in their country. The 'Militant' covers the fights against deportations and those of refugees.



Reuters/Benoit Tessler

High school students march in Paris Oct. 17 for return of two deported classmates.

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France: Send 76 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, P.O. Box 175, 23 rue Lecourbe, 75015 Paris.

New Zealand: Send NZ\$50 for one year to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland 1140, New Zealand.

Australia: Send A\$50 for one year to P.O. Box 164 Campsie, NSW 2194, Australia.

Pacific Islands: Send NZ\$50 for one year to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland 1140, New Zealand.

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

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

Subscription campaign

Continued from front page

panies, which have a bad health and safety record, are investing in the Manchester airport.”

“Whatever the nationality of the bosses, they will exploit us and the profits go into their pockets, Davis told Newsome, who got an introductory subscription. “What we need to do is stand together against the bosses, wherever they come from, and support fellow workers around the world doing the same.”

Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Atlanta City Council president, met Candy McBride, a pharmacy worker, while campaigning Oct. 20 in her apartment complex in Jonesboro, Ga. “I’d like to learn about the Cuban Five,” McBride told Fruit. “I grew up in Miami and I have a lot of Cuban friends. I’d like to hear another point of view.”

McBride bought a subscription and said she has a friend who might be interested. “We talk all the time about how you can’t rely on mainstream media.”

Ron Poulsen wrote from Sydney that John Ryan, a retired seaman, called him to talk about a subscription he recently got for a friend in prison. Ryan said it takes 10 days for even a letter to get past prison censors, so he doesn’t yet know if his friend has gotten his first issue. “We’ll keep you posted and be ready to press the issue if his subscription is not delivered,” Poulsen wrote.

The *Militant* has adopted a goal of adding 15 subscribers behind bars during the eight-week drive. We have 12 more to go.

Beatrice Ballard Elauria, a former lab assistant, decided to renew her subscription Oct. 27 when Andrea Morell and Betsey Stone stopped by her place

near the Militant Labor Forum hall in San Francisco.

“I like the coverage from around the world, which you don’t see much of in the papers here — like from the Middle East, Egypt,” she said. “I think what happens there will affect us here, and I’d like to know about it before it happens.”

“The health care is a mess, it’s feeding the insurance companies,” Rosetta Lewis, a school nurse who bought a subscription in the East New York section of Brooklyn Oct. 27, told Willie Cotton. “I worked in a hospital, but switched to a school because it was so bad. The emergency rooms are horrible, if you don’t have money they just put you in a corner and forget about you.”

“The rulers don’t care about us, health care is a profit-making business and any improvement for us cuts into their profits,” said Cotton. “If we want to defend our interests, we need to build a fighting movement of working people.”

“I don’t see that happening,” said Lewis, who signed up for a three-month subscription. “I think we are too hard-pressed and the crisis is really getting to us. I’m going to vote for [Democratic mayoral candidate] Bill de Blasio. I hope he will do more for the schools, he has promised that. I do agree it’s the capitalists that decide, but I don’t think he’ll make it worse anyway.”



Militant/John Steele

Supporters of Communist League campaign in Montreal sell *Militant* subscriptions and revolutionary literature at Oct. 27 protest opposing “secular” chauvinist Charter of Quebec Values.

“The SWP candidates don’t make such promises, because no individual politician can solve our problems, even if they weren’t beholden to the capitalist rulers as all Democratic and Republican party politicians are,” said Cotton, who gave Lewis a flyer on the SWP election campaign ticket in New York that includes Dan Fein for mayor. “What the socialist candidates do promise is to join and help strengthen the struggles of working people. Without a fight it will definitely get worse.”

The subscription drive slipped a little behind schedule, so we need to map out

plans to catch up over the coming weeks. And we should pay attention to how we can increase sales of Pathfinder books as we sign up *Militant* readers. Last week campaigners sold one book for every five subscriptions. (See ad on books specials with a subscription below.)

Send reports and photos on the campaign by Monday morning. And be sure to include sales of books when you do.

Join the effort to expand the *Militant*’s readership. See page 8 for a distribution center near you or contact the *Militant* at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018 or call (212) 244-4899.

Students walk out to protest killing by cop in Calif.

Continued from front page

where he and friends often played, carrying an air gun that shot plastic projectiles when an officer yelled at him. Within seconds, as López was turning around to see who was yell-

ing, another officer fired eight bullets, seven of which struck the child.

The cop “should definitely be charged” said protest participant Alondra Guerrero, 14, a student at Santa Rosa High School. One student

carried a sign saying, “Death penalty for BB gun?”

Students told the *Militant* that they are raising money to help López’s parents, who have led several protests.

A large memorial with photos of López and dozens of candles, flowers, a Mexican flag and balloons is at the site where he was killed. More protests are planned, including an “All Communities Mass Demonstration & Vigil” Oct. 30 sponsored by 100 Thousand Poets for Change.

Special offers with ‘Militant’ subscription

The Cuban Five

Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free
from pages of the ‘Militant’
\$3 with subscription (regular \$5)

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions
by Jack Barnes
\$10 with subscription (regular \$24)

The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning

The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism
by Jack Barnes
\$2 with subscription (regular \$3)

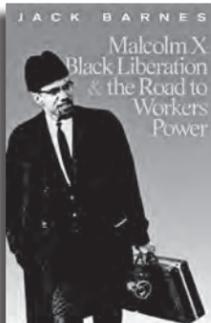
We Are Heirs of the World’s Revolutions

by Thomas Sankara
Speeches from the Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87
\$5 with subscription (regular \$10)

Thomas Sankara Speaks

The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-1987
\$10 with subscription (regular \$24)

See distributors on page 8



Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power

by Jack Barnes
\$10 with subscription (regular \$20)



Cuba and Angola

Fighting for Africa’s Freedom and Our Own
by Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro; Cuban generals and combatants; Gabriel García Márquez
\$6 with subscription (regular \$12)



Women in Cuba

The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution
by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer
\$10 with subscription (regular \$20)



Women and Revolution

The Living Example of the Cuban Revolution
by Asela de los Santos, Mary-Alice Waters and others
\$3 with subscription (regular \$7)

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco
Korean War: First Defeat of American Imperialism. Speaker: Andrea Morell, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

FLORIDA

Miami
Freedom of Speech and the Fight Against Censorship. Speaker: Naomi Craine, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 7100 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 306A. Tel.: (305) 757-8869.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis
A Working-Class Answer to the Increasing Violence and Coarsening of Life Under Capitalism. Speaker: Diana Newberry, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m. 416 E. Hennepin Ave., Suite 214. Tel.: (612) 729-1205.

NEW YORK

Manhattan
The Civil War in Syria and Ongoing U.S. War Threats. Speaker: Sara Lobman, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m. 307 W. 36th St., 10th floor (north set of elevators). Tel.: (212) 629-6649.

NY events help win support to free Oscar López Rivera

BY PETER THIERJUNG

NEW YORK — Supporters of Puerto Rican political prisoner Oscar López Rivera spoke to hundreds of people here at the end of October, gaining support for the campaign to win his freedom. López, 70, has been in jail in the U.S. for 32 years, 12 of those in solitary confinement.

López, who moved to Chicago when he was 14, was drafted into the U.S. Army and sent to Vietnam in 1966. He returned to the city in 1967 and participated in fights against discrimination in jobs and housing, against police brutality and for bilingual education.

The U.S. government later said López was a member of the Armed Forces for National Liberation, which claimed responsibility for bombings of some businesses and U.S. government offices in the 1970s. Without evidence that he played a part in any bombings, he was arrested in 1981 and convicted on trumped-up charges that included seditious conspiracy and sentenced to 55 years in prison.

Four former Puerto Rican political prisoners who were arrested and convicted in 1980 on similar charges — Luis Rosa, Ricardo Jiménez, Elizam Escobar and Adolfo Matos Antongiorgi — each of whom spent 19-and-a-half years in prison, toured the New York area Oct. 24-26 to campaign for his release.

Students 'go to prison' for Oscar

The three days of events, organized by the New York Coordinator to Free Oscar López, began at Hostos Community College.

"More than 150 students showed up for a *conversatorio* with the four former political prisoners," Ana López, a professor at Hostos and a central organizer of the events for the New York Coordinator, told the *Militant*. After the event hundreds of students took turns "going to prison for Oscar" in a mock 6-by-9-foot cell set up in the lobby of the college's main building.

The next day the former political pris-

oners spoke to more than 60 people at a senior citizen center in East Harlem.

At a Militant Labor Forum that evening, Rosa, Jiménez, Matos and Escobar spoke about their experiences in prison and the importance of the fight to free López Rivera. They were joined on the panel by Seth Galinsky from the Socialist Workers Party.

"Oscar's case is not just about independence for Puerto Rico," Rosa told the meeting. "It is a case for all of us and we need to be a voice for the voiceless, those inside."

Rosa said López's fight is part of the same struggle as the effort to win freedom for the Cuban Five and others imprisoned in the U.S. and worldwide for political reasons. "There are many fronts and we have the same enemy," he said.

Matos said that López's 12 years in solitary was a form of torture. "They have tried to destroy him, and turn him into an object." But they failed, Matos said, "he turned to painting and writing to strengthen his humanity."

The four independence fighters were released from prison in 1999, part of a group of 13 Puerto Rican political prisoners whose sentences were commuted by President Bill Clinton. But in the case of López, Clinton required that he serve 10 more years with a "clean" record before his release.

In a reflection of growing international support for their freedom, prison authorities allowed the independence fighters to hold a phone conference to discuss the offer, Escobar said. The prisoners decided that 12 of them would accept the commutation, explained Escobar. López declined because of the additional conditions placed on him and in protest that two prisoners, Carlos Alberto Torres and Haydée Beltrán, were not included in the offer.

If he had accepted the commutation offer and authorities decided to deem his record "clean," López would have been released in 2009. But in 2011 he was nonetheless denied parole. There won't be another hearing until 2023. "A decision by Obama is the only way now to liberate Oscar," Escobar said.

Won respect from fellow prisoners

Two institutions in Chicago that López helped found, the Albizu Campos High School and the Puerto Rican Cultural Center, continue to play a prominent role in the Puerto Rican community today, Jiménez said. He is currently the director of Vida/Sida, a project of the cultural center that promotes HIV/AIDS education.

"The political prisoners won a lot of respect from fellow prisoners of all nationalities," Jiménez noted.

The fight to free López and for an independent Puerto Rico is in the interest of all working people, Galinsky said, because we face the same enemy. He noted that Puerto Rico's deep economic crisis is exacerbated by being a colony that is under the boot of U.S. imperialism.

"What kept you going all those years in jail?" one forum participant asked the former prisoners during the discussion period.

"It was the same thing that keeps us and others involved in political



Iván Torres/New York Coordinator to Free Oscar
Marlon Guzman, vice president of Hostos Community College student government, speaks at Oct. 24 meeting to demand freedom for Puerto Rican political prisoner Oscar López.

struggle going on today," Rosa replied. "We kept up the fight because there is a need. Because it's central to our survival. And because we wanted to come out better than when we went in."

On Oct. 26 more than 500 people attended a "Cantata pa Oscar López," held at Hostos.

A wide range of musicians and poets from New York and Puerto Rico performed, including many original works about the fight to free López. Master of Ceremonies Ponce Laspina announced that Julio Escalona, Venezuela's deputy ambassador to the United Nations; Ariel Hernández, first secretary of the Cuban Mission to the U.N.; and a delegation from hospital workers union Local 1199 were in the audience.

Organizers of the event presented the "Oscar López Rivera Human Rights Award" to New York state Assemblyman José Rivera and to Wally Edgecombe, former director of the Hostos Center for the Arts and

Culture, for their work in backing the fight to release the Puerto Rican political prisoners. They also gave awards to the four former political prisoners who were welcomed at the event.

López Rivera's niece, Lourdes Lugo, read a letter he sent recently to Ana López.

"I have no doubt that Puerto Rico will become an independent and sovereign nation," he wrote. "We know a better and more just world is possible if we dare to struggle for it."

March to Free Oscar López Rivera
Sat. Nov. 23 New York City
Assemble: 11 a.m.
Clemente Soto Velez Cultural Center, 107 Suffolk St., Manhattan
March: to Continental Army Plaza, Brooklyn

Support Socialist Workers Party, contribute to Party-Building Fund

BY TONY LANE

As the chart shows, local quotas adopted for the Socialist Workers Party fund drive exceed the \$100,000 target.

The fund is a way readers can support the party as it responds to the openness among working people to communist politics and the need for a revolutionary fighting course to confront growing assaults by the bosses and their government on our living standards, unions, rights and very dignity.

Socialist Workers Party branches are looking to win new contributors as they sign up readers to the *Militant* and sell Pathfinder books during the subscription campaign that runs concurrent with the fund drive.

Helen Myers reports from Des Moines, Iowa, on a recent visit with a *Militant* subscriber. After discussing the speedup at his plant, and the ongoing obstacles imposed on immigrant workers to live and work in the United States, he renewed his subscription for a second time and gave \$10 to the Party-Building Fund.

San Francisco has received two first-time donations out of a goal of 30 new contributors, reports Joel Britton. One came at a meeting of owner-operator truckers, where Socialist Workers campaigners went to talk with drivers and sell the *Militant*. A trucker kicked in \$4 for the fund, saying that he knew we supported the paper through our own efforts and he wanted us to keep up the good work.

During the first week of the drive, \$4,815 has been collected. Local areas need to make plans to increase the pace of collections to get on schedule. Payments need to reach the SWP National Office by Monday to be reflected in the weekly scoreboard.

Militant readers and supporters can send contributions to the SWP office nearest you (see directory on page 8) or directly to the SWP National Office at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Party-Building Fund Week 1 of 9

Area	Quota	Collected	%
Lincoln	\$200	\$50	25%
San Francisco	\$13,000	\$2,400	18%
Twin Cities	\$5,750	\$1,000	17%
Boston	\$3,500	\$500	14%
Des Moines	\$2,600	\$341	13%
Atlanta	\$8,800	\$203	2%
Chicago	\$9,200	\$191	2%
Los Angeles	\$8,200	\$100	1%
Miami	\$3,000	\$30	1%
Houston	\$3,000	\$0	0%
New York	\$20,000	\$0	0%
Omaha	\$2,500	\$0	0%
Philadelphia	\$4,200	\$0	0%
Seattle	\$8,800	\$0	0%
Washington	\$7,500	\$0	0%
Other			
Total	\$100,250	\$4,815	5%
Should Be	\$100,000	\$11,111	11%

"Our people are becoming aware of their own strength, which is what the colonial powers fear"

—Rafael Cancel Miranda

Puerto Rico independence is a necessity

Rafael Cancel Miranda
on the fight against U.S. colonial rule

\$6

pathfinderpress.com

Oppose Charter of Quebec Values, Montreal socialist candidates say

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL — “He calls for a large increase in the minimum wage and says he is opposed to the Charter of Quebec Values as well as military interventions by the American army” in Syria and elsewhere, the Montreal daily *La Presse* wrote about Joseph Young, Communist League candidate for mayor of Montreal in an Oct. 5 article profiling the 12 mayoral candidates in the Nov. 3 election.

“The candidates of the Communist League are in solidarity with the millions of Syrian workers who have been mobilizing for two and a half years against the attacks of the brutal Bashar al-Assad regime,” said the paper, the largest French-language daily in Montreal, quoting Young.

Young, a 66-year-old factory worker, is campaigning with Katherine LeRougetel, a 55-year-old food processing worker, who is the Communist League candidate for mayor of the borough of Verdun.

On Oct. 11, Young spoke to about 50 people at the Megaphone, a free-speech installation at a busy downtown corner, along with nine of the other mayoral candidates.

“Malcolm X, a revolutionary in the U.S. in the 1960s said something I agree with. Working people need to wake up to our own worth,” Young told Radio-Canada moderator Michel Désautels, “to see ourselves as actors

and not just the objects of history. It is through struggle that we can transform ourselves and fight for revolutionary change.”

LeRougetel joined Silicium Bécancour workers on their picket line Oct. 13, 90 miles east of Montreal. Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union Local 184 members were locked out May 3 after rejecting a concessions contract demanded by the bosses.

Sylvain Desrosiers and Dominic Doyon told the socialist candidate that some family members say that they get good wages and benefits and should stop complaining and picketing.

“That’s why unions need to fight for pensions that aren’t tied to their employer, but for retirement pensions for everyone,” LeRougetel said. “That’s what our class needs, and such a union-led fight would draw in workers from everywhere, as opposed to making unions appear as groups that only fight to defend a privileged few.”

LeRougetel also told the locked-out workers that the Communist League campaign opposes the proposed Charter of Quebec Values, which would ban Quebec’s 700,000 government workers from wearing “ostentatious” religious symbols like the Muslim hijab, Sikh turban, or Jewish kippah.

“The government is cynically ap-



Militant/Félix Vincent Ardea

Joseph Young, Communist League candidate for mayor of Montreal, speaks with participants in Megaphone event there Oct. 11 where 10 of 12 mayoral candidates spoke.

pealing to the nationalist sentiments of the Quebecois in order to use the charter to divide working people, to weaken their ability to unite to defend themselves in face of the attacks by the propertied rulers as the economic crisis of their system deepens,” she said.

“I am against big government interfering in our private lives, telling us what we can and cannot wear,” LeRougetel added.

“You said you are for less government interference in our lives,” Jean-Sebastien Thériault commented. “But you are a Communist League candi-

date. Isn’t what you said the opposite of communism?”

“Not at all,” LeRougetel said. She pointed to the example of the revolutionary process in Cuba, where Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement fought to reduce the weight of government bureaucracy. Instead they fought to unleash and mobilize the workers and peasants, who have been transformed through the process of making their revolution, to take on the challenges before them — from a massive literacy drive to building needed housing through voluntary labor.

On Oct. 20, LeRougetel and supporters of the Communist League campaign participated in a demonstration of several hundred organized by a Coalition Against the Xenophobic Charter of Quebec Values. A brief interview with her on why her campaign had joined the protest was run on TVA television.

The next morning LeRougetel was approached by a number of co-workers who stopped to say they agreed with what she said. “Thank you,” one said, “and I’m not saying this because I’m Arab — What you said was right.”

Beverly Bernardo contributed to this article.

Baltimore port workers strike two days over safety

BY NED MEASEL

BALTIMORE — Longshore workers shut down the Port of Baltimore, one of the busiest ports in the country, Oct. 16-18 in a dispute over safety and wage issues.

A master agreement was signed between the International Longshoremen’s Association and shipping companies on the East Coast in April, but negotiations for local contracts over work rules and other issues have continued at the port.

After ILA Local 333 voted 517-25 to strike Oct. 15, three other ILA locals, which together organize 2,000 of the port’s 14,000 workers, honored

their picket lines.

Workers on the picket line at Dundalk Marine Terminal here, who did not want to give their names to avoid retaliation by bosses, told the *Militant* there is a wide range of disputed issues with the shipping companies.

Job safety is a big issue. One picket said that just before the strike started he was required to work 24 hours straight.

Local 333 Vice President Aaron

Barnett told the *Militant* that after union officials decided to suspend the strike, a federal arbitrator ruled that the local had violated a no-strike clause by striking over work covered by the master contract. The arbitrator said that it would be OK to strike over “local” issues, but did not spell out what those issues would be.

According to the *Journal of Commerce*, the Steamship Trade Association of Baltimore and the ILA are continuing negotiations.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



November 11, 1988

The British government, headed by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, has launched an attack on one of the most fundamental democratic rights, one that was established and defended by working people in the course of centuries of struggle.

The government is moving to overturn the right of persons in police custody or on trial to remain silent — a right asserted in Britain about three centuries ago and written into the statutes there in 1899.

The rulers are constantly attempting to chip away at these rights as part of efforts to reduce the political space within which working people can act to defend their interests. If Thatcher is successful in overturning the right to silence in Britain and Northern Ireland, the U.S. rulers’ attack on the Bill of Rights will get more wind in its sails.



November 11, 1963

No civilized person concerned with social progress will mourn the end of the Diem tyranny in South Vietnam. But the military junta that has replaced it will not bring any improvement for the oppressed people of that country.

Embarrassed before the world by the Buddhist revolt, Kennedy dumped Diem not so much because he was a tyrant as that he had become an unreliable one, unable to control his own oppressed people. The figureheads have changed, but the aim of the Washington masters remains the same — hold on to that piece of real estate.

The American people should demand an end to U.S. intervention in a war that has nothing to do with “democracy.” Let the Vietnamese people decide their future for themselves. Bring the GI’s home!



November 12, 1938

President Roosevelt welcomes to the White House this week Col. Fulgencio Batista, dictator of Cuba and assassin of hundreds of Cuban working class militants.

Batista is welcomed by Roosevelt as an ally in the Pan-American system dominated by Yankee imperialism.

He also comes to this country hailed as a “democrat” and a “man of the people” by the Communist Party.

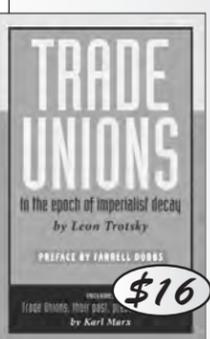
We say: Out with Batista! Our solidarity is with the Cuban working masses whom he rules by naked terror, by the gun, the knife, the whip. Let workers who still have illusions about Roosevelt, “friend of the working class” realize that Wall Street’s dollars in Latin America are Roosevelt’s main concern, not the interests of the workers there or at home.

TRADE UNIONS in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay

by Leon Trotsky

“More food for thought (and action) than will be found in any book on the union question.”

—FARRELL DOBBS



INCLUDES: “Trade Unions: Their Past, Present and Future” by Karl Marx

PathfinderPress.com

Vote Socialist Workers!

Continued from front page

Fitzsimmons is one of two dozen socialist candidates running in city elections across the country. With a week to go before the Nov. 5 vote, candidates and supporters of the SWP campaigns are taking advantage of a range of opportunities to talk with working people about the need to organize and chart a fighting course independent of the bosses' Democratic and Republican parties.

Fitzsimmons and Steve Warshell, SWP candidate for City Council at-large, took part in the union meeting on the invitation of ILA member Andrés Peña, who works at the Port of Houston and met Fitzsimmons at an Oct. 5 march downtown against deportations and criminalization of immigrant workers.

The informal meeting took up a number of questions, from the bosses' denial of lunches and breaks, arbitrary firings and suspensions, and unsafe conditions on the job. "Members of the ILA invited us to join in their discussion and to say a few words on the campaign," Fitzsimmons told the *Militant*.

Fitzsimmons, a mechanical assembler, and Warshell, a forklift operator, spoke about their experiences in working-class struggles, including the 2006 May Day political strikes in defense of immigrant workers, on-the-job skirmishes with the bosses, protests against imperialist wars from Iraq to Afghanistan, and support to the Cuban Revolution and the international campaign to free the Cuban Five.

Fitzsimmons encouraged ILA members to extend solidarity with the "more than 250 workers on strike against Maximus Coffee up the street from the union hall against bosses' drive to cut wages by as much as 50 percent, eliminate overtime pay, and wrest concessions in health care and retirement plans." The strikers, most of whom are members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 455, have been on the picket line since Oct. 10. They haven't received a pay raise since 2009.

At the end of the meeting Peña asked what the longshoremen could do to help spread the word about the campaign.

"Help expand support for the Cuban Five," Warshell said. "Talk with others you know about the campaign and join candidates and other campaign supporters taking the *Militant* and revolutionary literature to workers in neighborhoods, on picket lines and in social protest actions throughout the city."

SEATTLE — "I'm going to stand in solidarity with the working people of Egypt who are doing the same things people are here. They're fighting against the effects of the capitalist system," Mary Martin, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor, told radio host Florangela Davila when asked why she was joining a fact-finding and SWP campaign trip to Egypt after mass mobilizations led to the downfall of the Muslim Brotherhood regime of Mohamed Morsi.

The radio program aired in July on KPLU, the local affiliate of National Public Radio.

"During an interview that is supposed to be about *her*, she talks about the longshoremen in Portland, the coal miners in Kentucky, the striking workers at Belshaw Adamatic in Auburn," Davila wrote in a KPLU news article.

Martin, 60, works at a popcorn factory and previously worked in a steel mill, the article points out.

"I've worked in sewing factories. I've worked in meatpacking plants. All kinds of basic industry," Martin said. "You know, working people make all the wealth in this country, but we don't get to decide how it's utilized."

Martin became politically active while attending college in Georgia in the 1960s and '70s. "We were looking for ways to change the world, not just accept the conditions we were born in," Martin said.

In 1972, she joined a campaign to fight for the right of African-Americans to register to vote.

"We would go down to the Statesboro courthouse on Monday," Martin said. "And we'd say, 'We're here to register to vote.' And they'd close the window in our face, and say, 'We don't vote. We don't register on Mondays.' We'd go back Tuesday, they'd say 'We're short-handed today.'"

They kept getting the same response day after day, until their numbers got larger and larger, attracting press coverage and authorities gave up trying to prevent the registration.

"It was an important victory for the working class," said Martin.

"The event taught her about the power of speaking out," Davila wrote, "and the importance of mobilizing in order to effect change. She hasn't stopped agitating since."

'Only working class can protect life and limb on the job'



Militant/Betsey Stone

SAN FRANCISCO — Gerardo Sánchez (right), Socialist Workers Party candidate for treasurer here, and campaign supporter Ashley Chasuk talk with striker (left) at picket line in front of Bay Area Rapid Transit station at El Cerrito del Norte Oct. 18. A day after this photo was taken, transit workers Laurence Daniels and Christopher Sheppard were killed after being struck by a train being run by managers for training purposes during the four-day walkout.

The strike ended Oct. 21 with a tentative agreement that members of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1555 and Service Employees International Union Local 1021 are scheduled to vote on Nov. 1.

"These two workers were killed because bosses place a much higher priority on strikebreaking than our safety," Sánchez, who is a janitor and member of UNITE HERE Local 2, told the *Militant*. "Only the working class is interested and capable of protecting life and limb on the job."

Under public pressure following the deaths, BART management announced policy changes, ending the practice that ground crews are responsible for their own safety and allowing for one worker on track crews to watch for coming trains. Also, under new rules, trains must be kept under a speed of 27 miles per hour in all work areas or rerouted if crews are on the tracks.

—BETSEY STONE

"Wouldn't it be easier to just think about yourself?" Davila asked at the end of the interview.

"Well, but what's the point of that?" Martin responded.

— John Naubert

"Trowe, a member of the Socialist Workers Party, is one of three candidates on the November ballot running to promote development of a large government jobs program and a substantial increase to the federal minimum wage," the *Des Moines Register* wrote Oct. 17, describing an interview with Margaret Trowe, a 65-year-old auto parts worker who is the party's candidate for City Council at-large, running on the socialist ticket with David Rosenfeld for City Council in Ward 3 and Ellen Brickley in Ward 1.

Trowe explained that the SWP candidates and their supporters regularly knock on doors to talk with working people about the party's fighting perspective to confront the growing assaults by the bosses and their government and to sell the *Militant* and books on revolutionary working-class politics.

"Last night a woman invited me and a campaign supporter into her living room," Trowe said. Her situation is typical. "'Here's my problem,' she said. 'I've worked for several years for a big medical instrument manufacturer on the south side, but I'm only making \$8 an hour. I can't support myself and my four children on that.'"

"Workers need to fight for a far higher minimum wage from the current starvation level of \$7.25 an hour," Trowe said. "I support union organizing and mobilization and would use the mayor's office to support workers' struggles."

"We oppose the FBI dragnet in the Somali community in Minneapolis in the wake of the al-Shabab attack in Kenya," she said, referring to the group's massacre at the Westgate shopping mall there. "We have been campaigning in a big apartment complex full of workers born in Somalia and other African countries. One Somali-born worker who signed up for a subscription to the *Militant* said he hates al-Shabab and what they do, but thinks it's no excuse for the FBI to treat all Somalis in the U.S. like criminals."

"We stand shoulder to shoulder with workers everywhere fighting to defend their rights," Trowe said, "from Somali workers in Minneapolis to Syrian toilers facing imperialist threats of military intervention as they fight for political space against the repressive regime of Bashar al-Assad."

— Helen Meyers

Socialist Workers Party candidates in US and Communist League in Canada

Atlanta

John Benson for Mayor
Rachele Fruit, City Council

Des Moines

Ellen Brickley, City Council, Ward 1
David Rosenfeld, City Council, Ward 3
Margaret Trowe, City Council At-Large

Houston

Michael Fitzsimmons for Mayor
Cindy Jaquith, City Council At-Large Position 2
Steve Warshell, City Council At-Large Position 1

Miami

Tom Baumann for Mayor

New York

Dan Fein for Mayor
John Studer for Comptroller
Deborah Liatos for Public Advocate
Róger Calero for Bronx Borough President

Seth Galinsky for Queens Borough President
Sara Lobman for Manhattan Borough President

Philadelphia

Chris Hoepfner for City Controller
Janet Post for District Attorney

San Francisco

Eric Simpson for City Attorney
Gerardo Sánchez for Treasurer

Seattle

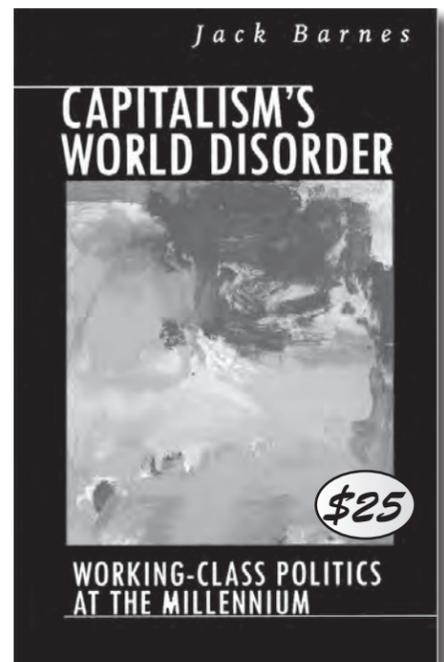
Mary Martin for Mayor
Edwin Fruit, City Council Position 6
John Naubert, Port Commissioner Position 2

Minneapolis

Tony Lane for Mayor
Diana Newberry, City Council Ward 2

Montreal

Joe Young for Mayor
Katherine LeRougetel, Mayor of Borough of Verdun



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Syria war uproots millions, ripples across Middle East

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Two and a half years of civil war in Syria have taken an enormous toll on workers and farmers there, who face the menace of possible U.S. military intervention and relentless bombardments by the Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad. Meanwhile, the social ramifications spill beyond the country's borders, fueling tensions between and within nation states and compounding burdens foisted on working people throughout the region.

Well over 115,000 Syrians have been killed. Millions have been driven from their homes, scattered throughout Syria and the Middle East.

Hundreds of thousands are trapped in areas under siege and face acute shortages of food, medicine and other basic necessities. More than 1 million are in areas where aid deliveries are blocked and residents cannot leave as part of what one Syrian official is quoted in Reuters as calling a "starvation until submission campaign." About half are reportedly in the region outside Damascus and more than 300,000 in Homs province in central Syria.

While open threats of military action from Washington have subsided, U.S. troops and warships remain poised near Syria. The aircraft carrier USS Nimitz, which was diverted to the Red Sea in September and escorted by the guided missile cruiser USS Monterey, sailed through the Suez Canal Oct. 20 into the Mediterranean Sea, "keeping U.S. options for responding to future crises open," *Stars and Stripes* reported.

Since Assad announced Sept. 29 he would comply with the deal brokered between Moscow and Washington to divulge and dismantle the Syrian military's chemical weapons arsenal, his regime has stepped up attacks against working-class areas under rebel control.

Government forces bomb between 60 and 100 locations across the country every day, according to *Der Spiegel*.

Seven million people, almost one-third of the population, have been displaced. More than 2 million have fled

the country, most of them crossing borders into neighboring Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq, as well as Egypt.

In addition to attacks by pro-government forces, working people in parts of the country face growing brutality from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, the al-Nusra Front and other al-Qaeda-linked groups whose goal is not to overthrow Assad, but to seize territory and influence amid chaos and impose their extreme, sectarian views on others.

Reports of these groups killing civilians trying to flee, destroying Christian and other non-Muslim religious sites and holding civilian hostages have become more frequent. Some estimates put their numbers at 5,000 to 7,000 men. The Free Syrian Army, an umbrella of heterogeneous anti-government militias, is estimated to have some 90,000 members.

Refugees destabilize region

Huge camps have grown up in neighboring countries near Syrian border areas. But 75 percent of Syrian refugees who fled the country end up in towns and cities where they and other working people face shortages of housing, schools, health care and other social services.

Mafrqa, Jordan, doubled its population in the last year to 250,000. Rents have doubled, as have prices for garbage pickups and water delivery. Competition for jobs is acute. Streets are littered and sewers clogged. Up to five families often share one-room apartments.

Lebanon, with a population of 4 million, is now home to well over 1 million Syrian refugees.

Hezbollah, an Iranian-backed military and political organization that control parts of southern and eastern Lebanon, has about 10,000 fighters in Syria backing the Assad regime.

In addition to social tensions created by the massive influx of refugees, the Syrian civil war is spilling over into parts of Lebanon. Reuters reported Oct. 28 that 17 people had been killed and

Meeting, exhibit build support for Five in Albany, NY



Militant/Tim Craine

ALBANY, N.Y. — Thirty-five people gathered at the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany Oct. 24 to hear a presentation by Pepe Rossy on the international campaign to free the Cuban Five. Rossy is a long-time fighter for Puerto Rican independence. He spoke about the decades-long history of assassinations, bombings and other assaults and acts of sabotage directed against Cuba and supporters of the Cuban Revolution by paramilitary groups that operate from U.S. soil with tacit backing from Washington and its cop agencies.

Rossy described how Carlos Muñoz Varela was gunned down by rightists in 1979. Muñoz — a friend of Rossy and a fellow fighter for Puerto Rican independence and supporter of the Cuban Revolution — was organizing trips where young people of Cuban descent could go to the island and learn the truth about the revolution. Recently released and heavily redacted FBI documents provide proof of Washington's knowledge and complicity in the assassination, for which no one was ever charged.

It's the long record of attacks such as these, Rossy explained, that led the Cuban Five to take on a mission to gather information for the Cuban government about the plans and activities of rightist paramilitary groups in Florida to prevent future attacks and provocations.

The program was held in conjunction with "Humor from My Pen," an exhibit of cartoons drawn in prison by Gerardo Hernández, one of the Five.

The cartoons were displayed in the hall for two weeks and viewed by more than 100 members of the congregation, as well as numerous students who attend Rockefeller College of the State University of New York across the street. Following the exhibit here, the cartoons traveled to New Paltz, where they were put on display in the library of the state university campus.

— TIM CRAINE

Who are the Cuban Five?



Fernando González, Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino and René González are Cuban revolutionaries who during the 1990s accepted assignments from the Cuban government to gather information on the operations and plans of Cuban-American paramilitary groups based in southern Florida. These rightist outfits, organizing on U.S. soil with virtual impunity, have a long record of carrying out bombings, assassinations and other deadly attacks, both against targets in Cuba and supporters of the Cuban Revolution in the United States, Puerto Rico and elsewhere.

On Sept. 12, 1998, the five were arrested by the FBI. They were framed up and convicted on a variety of charges, which included acting as unregistered agents of the Cuban government and possession of false identity documents. Without a shred of evidence, three were charged with "conspiracy to gather and transmit national defense information."

Hernández was also convicted of conspiracy to commit murder, based on the pretext that he bore responsibility for the Cuban government's 1996 shoot-down of two Brothers to the Rescue aircraft that had invaded Cuban airspace in disregard of Havana's repeated warnings. He is serving two life terms plus 15 years. His wife Adriana Pérez is barred from entering the United States.

All but René González remain in prison. He was allowed to return to Cuba in May this year, halfway through a three-year term of supervised release.

more than 100 wounded in the northern city of Tripoli in fighting that started Oct. 22 between Hezbollah and opponents of Assad. Tripoli is majority Sunni and support for the Syrian opposition is strong there. Two months ago, two car bombs at Sunni mosques killed 42 and wounded hundreds.

In August, the al-Qaeda-linked Abdullah Azzam Brigade in Rashidiya, near the city of Sur, took responsibility for firing four rockets aimed at Israeli territory. One was intercepted and three fell into the Mediterranean Sea. The retaliatory air attack from Israel hit military targets near the Lebanese town of Naameh, according to Israeli sources.

More than 300,000 Syrians have made their way to Egypt. They were initially welcomed by President Mohammed Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood, who backed the rebellion against Assad. But when Morsi was ousted, army and political figures scapegoated Syrians for growing social problems and painted them as backers of the toppled Brotherhood. "My kids can't play outside anymore," one Syrian refugee living in a suburb of Cairo told BBC News Oct. 17. "There were 1,700 refugees living in the area, but now there are no more than 500."

The weakening of the Assad regime has boosted the Kurdish fight for self-determination in northeastern Syria, where they set up their own government in 2012. Kurds are an oppressed nationality of 25 to 30 million residing in parts of Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and Syria. The

Kurds represent the largest nationality in the world without their own state.

Fighting has recently increased in the Kurdish region of Syria between the military wing of the Democratic Union Party (PYD), the leading Kurdish group, and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. ISIS has attacked Kurdish villages, seeking to grab turf and power, driving tens of thousands toward the border with Iraqi Kurdistan.

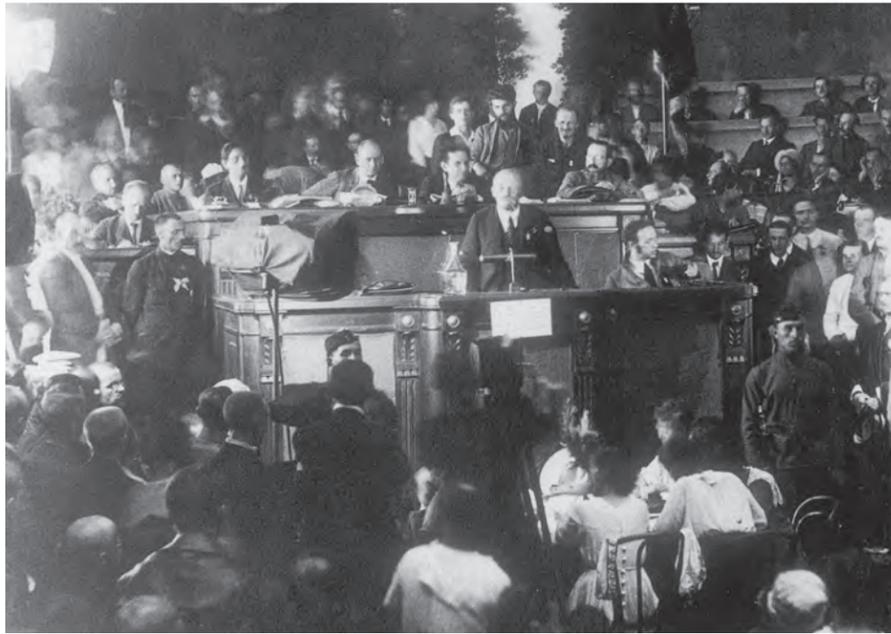
When Iraq opened a single border crossing in August, more than 46,000 flooded across in 10 days. More than 200,000 Kurdish refugees from Syria are now in the largely autonomous region of Iraqi Kurdistan.

Over 600,000 Syrians have fled to Turkey, where half of all Kurds live and where they have been pressing and gaining ground in their fight against discrimination.

See special offer on page 3

Increasing weight of financial speculation is feature of imperialism

Below is an excerpt from *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. The French edition is one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* for November. The piece is from a report entitled, "So Far from God, So Close to Orange County: The Deflationary Drag of Finance Capital," based on a talk given by Barnes at a socialist educational conference in Los Angeles over the 1994-95 New Year's weekend. Copyright © 1999 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Humbert-Droz Archives

V.I. Lenin speaks at Second Congress of Communist International July 26, 1920. "Income of bondholders is five times greater than income obtained from foreign trade of the greatest 'trading' country in the world," Lenin wrote in *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* in 1916.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JACK BARNES

No Third World country can or will develop today into an economically advanced industrial power with the class structure of the United States, Canada, the countries of Western Europe, Japan, Australia, or New Zealand. No new centers of world finance capital are going to emerge. That has been settled by history. That is one of the great lessons of the twentieth century. It hasn't changed since Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin summed up the scientific conclusion of the communist workers movement seventy-five years ago. The imperialist world, Lenin said, has been "divided into a large number of oppressed nations and an insignificant

number of oppressor nations, the latter possessing colossal wealth and powerful armed forces." ...

Capitalism by its very laws of motion operates to take tools and land away from working farmers and other small producers. It operates to amass the wealth produced by the toiling majority in the hands of the propertied minority. It operates to produce and reproduce not only commodities and the profits from their sale, but also the entire class structure and social relations of subordination that make this system of exploitation possible.

As I was leaving to catch the plane to come out here this morning, a comrade in New York handed me a copy of Lenin's *Imperialism*. He urged me to reread it during the flight. Given what had begun happening in Mexico, he said, I was bound to find something useful in preparing for this meeting. He was right.

When Lenin used the term "imperialism" — and Marxists still use the term the same way — he was not just speaking in a political and military sense about the aggression and oppression imposed by the rulers of a handful of wealthy and powerful nation-states on colonial peoples. He was not just referring to the colonial system and related forms of semicolonial exploitation. That

is a permanent aspect of imperialism, but Lenin was referring to something more fundamental.

Imperialism, Lenin explained, is the final stage of capitalism. He described its features. Reading *Imperialism*, I discovered once again, is well worth the effort. The chapter that struck me in a new way this time is the one entitled "The Parasitism and Decay of Capitalism."

Lenin wrote the booklet in 1916, just a year before the Russian revolution. At that stage in the development of world capitalism, he explained, "The income of the bondholders is five times greater than the income obtained from the foreign trade of the greatest 'trading' country in the world [Britain].

"This," Lenin said, "is the essence of imperialism and imperialist parasitism."

For that reason, Lenin added, Marxists should not object to those at the time — including some bourgeois commentators — who had begun to refer to the major capitalist industrial powers of the day as "rentier states" or "usurer states." The rival imperialist powers remain industrial giants and fight over markets for their exports, Lenin said. But at the same time, "The world has become divided into a handful of usurer states on the one side, and a vast major-

ity of debtor states on the other."

Since Lenin's time, of course, the absolute increase in the industrial output and exports of manufactured goods by the imperialist powers has been enormous. But Lenin would not have been at all surprised by the even greater relative increase, especially over the past two decades, in the income capitalists derive from interest, dividends, commissions, royalties, and returns on a widening range of paper securities — what Marx called "fictitious capital."

Lenin would not have been surprised that the world's quantity of bonds, stocks, and other paper values since 1980 has grown two and a half times faster than the national income of the major imperialist countries, and that the volume of trade in these securities has accelerated even more. He would not have been surprised that international sales and purchases of U.S. Treasury bonds alone shot up from \$30 billion in 1983 to \$500 billion in 1993, nor that the ratio of international currency transactions to world trade in actual industrial and agricultural goods rose from 10 to 1 in 1983 to 60 to 1 in 1992.

Nor would Lenin have been at all surprised by the much-talked-about proliferation of "derivatives" on Wall Street in recent years — basically, bets placed on the future rise or decline in the prices of stocks, bonds, or other pieces of paper — whose total value has now reached some \$20 trillion. In fact, he would remind us that such speculative devices always become necessary to the capitalist rentier class at a certain point. When the total yield from their bonds goes down, they always attempt to float new kinds of paper that turn a heftier profit.

Yes, bonds are just pieces of paper. But as long as capitalism exists, they are the most important pieces of paper in the social world. And if you want to know what happens when you do not show the bondholders the proper respect, just ask the Mexican bourgeoisie or the officials of Orange County!

"The creditor is more permanently attached to the debtor than the seller is to the buyer." Lenin approvingly cites that assessment from a book on British imperialism by a bourgeois writer. And it remains true today.

November BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Vote Socialist Workers Party!

Continued from front page

raising the need for workers to fight for a government-funded public works program to put millions of jobless to work building and repairing the things we need — schools, hospitals, day care centers, libraries, and deteriorating infrastructure. And to fight for a big increase in the minimum wage to raise the living standards of all working people being chipped away by the bosses' offensive and by rising prices.

These immediate demands are aimed at putting us in a stronger position to fight back against the bosses' drive to restore their profit rates on our backs and at breaking down divisions and competition among working people and raising our self-confidence and combative spirit.

The bosses are backed by the cops, the courts and government agencies at every level. Just as the unions need to be transformed through struggle into organizations that can push back the bosses and champion the interests of all working people, the workers' movement needs to break politically from the bosses' parties, the Democrats and Republicans, and set out on an independent, revolutionary course toward workers power.

The candidates point out the need for working people in the U.S. to see ourselves as part of an international working class, with the same interests and a common enemy. They oppose U.S. threats of military intervention in Syria as part of backing the struggles of workers there against government repression and for political space to act in their interests. They stand in solidarity with garment workers fighting in

Bangladesh for the right to a union and safety on the job.

They point to the example of the socialist revolution in Cuba for workers everywhere. Workers and farmers there, under the leadership of Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement, were drawn by the millions into the battle to throw off the dog-eat-dog values and social relations of capitalist society — and transform themselves in the process. The SWP candidates help build support for the international campaign to free the Cuban Five, themselves products of the Cuban Revolution worthy of emulation by working-class fighters in the U.S. and throughout the world.

Vote Socialist Workers! Pull the lever or write in the SWP candidates running in your city listed on page 6.



Militant/Shirelynn George
Dan Fein, SWP candidate for mayor of New York, talks with Carlos Stanley while campaigning in Brooklyn Sept. 21.

New obstacles on workers' right to vote

Continued from front page

ing voting hours; bans provisional voting if someone goes to the wrong precinct; ends pre-registration for 16- and 17-year olds; and allows any voter to challenge ballots of other voters.

"They're cutting down the number of days for early voting and banning voting on Sunday," Rev. Donald Matthews, president of the Randolph County NAACP, said by phone Oct. 28. "What was good about Sunday is that after church service you could get your congregation together and all go down to vote together.

"It used to be if I was in line they could not shut the door until the last man voted. Now when the poll closes, that's it, no matter how many are in line," Matthews said. "And now you also have what they call vigilante challenges. Any person can challenge another person's vote. That's not going to sit well.

"There's no way around it, this was directly aimed at people of color. Blacks, Latinos and poor people period," he said.

The NAACP has held "Moral Monday" protests in more than a dozen cities in the state since August, with the attack on voting rights a central focus, along with police brutality, women's rights and other issues.

At the end of September, Attorney General Eric Holder announced that the U.S. Department of Justice was suing to overturn the North Carolina law under a section of the Voting Rights Act that was not affected by the Supreme Court decision. The League of Women Voters, the A. Philip Randolph Institute and other groups have filed similar suits.

Photo IDs required in Texas

The Texas government immediately imposed photo ID requirements after the Supreme Court's ruling. Like North Carolina, only certain photo IDs are accepted. The government says that anyone can get one for free if needed, Kenneth Davidson, president of the Palestine-Anderson County NAACP in Texas, told the *Militant* Oct. 28. "But in small towns the office is only open from 8 to 5," he said. "And you need a copy of your birth certificate to get it and that office is only open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. That's hard to do if you're working, you can't just go and do it on your lunch break. If you were delivered by a midwife, most likely there's no record of you being born.

"It's going to affect the elderly, the Hispanics and Blacks," Davidson said.

In August the Justice Department sued to overturn the Texas requirement.

In October the state governments of Arizona and Kansas announced plans to circumvent a Supreme Court ruling against requiring additional proof of U.S. citizenship in federal elections by setting up a two-tiered voting system with extra citizenship documentation needed to vote in state and local races.

More than 18,000 Kansas residents who registered to vote since January have been turned down, according to Bloomberg News.

Supreme Court Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg in her dissent to the 5-4 decision demonstrated with numerous examples that the Voting Rights Act remains indispensable for preventing voter disenfranchisement around the country. The court has no jurisdiction to overturn any part of the law under the U.S. Constitution's 15th Amendment, she said, which established Congress's "obligation to enforce the post-Civil War Amendments 'by appropriate legislation.'"

The Supreme Court's June decision eliminated the list of states and local governments that have to get Justice Department approval for any changes to voting laws. The majority declared the list obsolete on the basis that voter registration rates of Blacks and Caucasians are roughly equal and a large proportion of minorities are elected to office today.

"True, conditions in the South have impressively improved since passage of the Voting Rights Act," Ginsburg wrote. "Congress noted this improvement and found that the VRA was the driving force behind it. But Congress also found that voting discrimination had evolved into subtler second-generation barriers."

The numerous and growing examples of these new obstacles, she said, "is powerful evidence that a remedy as effective as preclearance [prior approval] remains vital to protect minority voting rights."

"Throwing out preclearance when it has worked and is continuing to work to stop discriminatory changes is like throwing away your umbrella in a rainstorm because you are not getting wet," Ginsburg wrote.

Correction

The article "Strikebusting by Transit Bosses Kills Two Workers" in the Nov. 4 issue should have said on strike was Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1555, not Local 155.

Prison censorship

Continued from front page

the *Militant* won an appeal Oct. 11 against the impoundment of one of its issues that reported on the hunger strike of prisoners in California by the Santa Rosa Correctional Institution. That effectively banned the issue for all Florida state inmates.

A number of defenders of freedom of the press and publications that speak out for prisoners' rights backed the *Militant's* fight, including the *San Francisco Bay Voice*, the Reporters Committee for the Freedom of the Press and supporters of the hunger strikers in California.

"*Prison Legal News* has faced censorship since it put out its first edition in 1990," Paul Wright, who was incarcerated in 1987 and began putting out the newsletter from prison in Washington state, told the *Militant* in an Oct. 30 interview. "If anything, it has intensified since then.

"When I first went into prison in Washington, the list of reasons for denying material to prisoners was eight pages," he said. "Today it's 35 pages long."

The newsletter currently has 7,000 subscribers. "More prisoners are interested today. At the same time, when Florida decided that we were banned, we lost 300 readers."

"Everything that is critical of the status quo is likely to be targeted," Wright said. "But lots of generic mail gets censored as well. In a number of states we are kept out because institutions are adopting blanket policies that everything except postcards are barred.

"We've been very successful challenging censorship, but we don't have the resources to meet every move," he said.

"What the *Militant* faced in Florida is part of the effort of the authorities to contract political space for everyone," said Wright.

The *Militant* is currently pressing to get prison authorities to deliver the paper to an inmate in Florida who wrote that he hadn't received it for six weeks and another prisoner in Washington state who wrote to say prison officials came to his cell and removed issues that had coverage of the California hunger strike.

Prison censorship widespread

"Sadly, it seems things haven't gotten any better as far as this prison giving us [the *San Francisco Bay View*]," Richard Garcia, who is imprisoned at Pelican Bay State Prison in California, wrote in a letter printed in the Sept. 12 issue of that paper. "I never did receive your April or May issue. On Aug. 1, they gave me your June and July issues and explained they were held pending investigation. But now they're also holding your August issue."

The *Bay View* has published statements by leaders of the hunger strike, as well as letters and articles by inmates describing prison conditions. "Fighting censorship in prisons is fighting for the human rights and dignity of captives whose very humanity is regularly denied by their 'keepers,'" Dr. Willie Ratcliff, publisher of the *Bay View*, wrote in the same issue.

Garcia, one of the 30,000 who went on hunger strike, wrote that he was also denied *Prison Focus* and other publications.

Prison Focus, based in Oakland, Calif., is a publication for and on behalf of prisoners edited by Ed Mead, a former prisoner in Washington state.

"It is only the existence of an active movement for change that will ensure enforcement of the rights of prisoners," Mead wrote in the summer 2013 issue, "not the mere promises of prisoncrats nor the mood of the courts."

JOIN THE FIGHT

Get statements of support from defenders of workers rights and free speech.

Send a check or money order to The Militant, 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018, earmarked "Prisoners Rights Fight."

If you are a prisoner let the *Militant* know if you haven't been receiving your subscription.



Contribute to the Militant Prisoners' Fund. Send a check or money order to the *Militant* earmarked "Prisoners' Fund."