

‘Militant’ part
of working-
class actions,
discussions

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Militant readers active in the rising Black struggle in response to cop violence, labor resistance and discussions on how to build and strengthen these fights are finding real interest in the *Militant*.

John Hawkins and two other fighters against police brutality drove from Chicago to Madison, Wisconsin, May 14, two days after the district attorney’s decision not to indict the cop who killed Tony Robinson March 6.

“We went to the neighborhood where the shooting took place to hear what people had to say,” Hawkins reported. “A large banner carried in

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Hundreds protest decision
to let Wisconsin cop walk

Madison DA lets cops ‘get away with murder’



John Hart/Wisconsin State Journal via AP

Hundreds march to state Capitol May 12 in Madison, Wisconsin, the day district attorney announced cop Matt Kenny would not face charges for shooting death of Tony Robinson.

BY JOHN HAWKINS

MADISON, Wis. — The May 12 announcement by Dane County District Attorney Ismael Ozanne that he would not pursue charges against Madison police officer Matt Kenny for the killing of Tony Robinson, 19, has fueled outrage here. Kenny shot the Black youth seven times on March 6.

There have been numerous protests both after Robinson was killed and again since Ozanne’s announcement, including one of hundreds to the state Capitol here led by his family May 12.

“This isn’t only about race,” Sharon Irwin, Robinson’s grandmother, told

the *Militant* May 14. “It’s about them letting police officers get away with murder. All they have to say is that they feared for their lives and they’re given the benefit of the doubt.”

According to the police, they received calls that an unarmed youth had assaulted at least two people and

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Arrest of Somali
youth in Minn.
sparks debate
on FBI spying

BY HELEN MEYERS
AND DAVID ROSENFELD

MINNEAPOLIS — The April 19 arrest of six Somali youth from Minnesota has prompted discussion and debate about the role of FBI spying in the Somali community. The young men are accused of making plans to travel to Syria to join Islamic State. For years the FBI and other federal cops have targeted the democratic right of Somalis here, claiming dozens of youth have left to join al-Shabab — an Islamist group in Somalia linked to al-Qaeda — and more recently Islamic State.

Zacharia Abdurahman, Adnan Farah, Hanad Musse and Guled Omar are jailed here. If convicted of conspiring to provide material support to a for-

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Gulf state monarchs snub Obama
as Washington shifts foreign policy

BY SETH GALINSKY

As part of a strategic shift in U.S. foreign policy, the administration of President Barack Obama is pushing for a nuclear deal and new relationship with Iran, angering the rulers of Saudi Arabia and other monarchies in the Arab-Persian Gulf.

It is also worrying the Israeli regime of Benjamin Netanyahu and threatens the decades-long close relationship between Washington and Tel Aviv.

Obama invited the Gulf rulers to join him for meetings in Washington and Camp David, Maryland, May 13-14, aiming to reassure them of the wisdom of his course. But Saudi King Salman announced he wouldn’t attend just days before the meetings.

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Conservatives
keep power in
weaker, less united
United Kingdom

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — The Conservative Party victory in the May 7 general election, returning the Tories to power with a small parliamentary majority, reflects neither a shift to the right by working people nor a mandate for deeper assaults on workers’ living standards and rights.

What the results do reflect is a less united and weaker “United Kingdom.” They also point to a further strengthening of the two-party system in the U.K.

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Rail unions
demand two
workers on
train cabs

BY JANET POST

PHILADELPHIA — The May 12 derailment of Amtrak Northeast Regional Train 188 here that killed eight and injured more than 200, one of the most serious U.S. passenger rail crashes in recent years, is an indictment of the capitalist rail bosses’ contempt for safety, which they view as just one more cost.

In a joint statement May 19, Dennis Pierce, president of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, and John Previsich, president of the SMART Transportation Division, pointed squarely at what was responsible for the derailment — Congress and Amtrak’s decisions that mandated a single crew member on the railroad’s engines. “Safe transportation service demand[s] a crew of at least two fully trained and qualified employees in the control cab of every train,” they said.

The northbound train accelerated from 70 to 106 mph just moments before entering the Frankford Junction curve outside the city, which has a 50

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Chicago	155	111	72%
New York	355	238	67%
Washington	100	67	67%
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*Raised goal			

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Workers fight for safety after fire in Greek refinery	

1,000s protest gov't attacks on Aborigines in Australia

BY LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY — Carrying signs reading “Our land, our rights, our life,” thousands took to the streets in cities and towns across Australia May 1 to protest plans by the Western Australia government to shut down some 150 Aboriginal communities there. Solidarity rallies took place around the world from London to Hong Kong, Berlin to Honolulu, and in neighboring New Zealand. (See article below.) The Liberal Party government announced last September it would cease funding essential services in remote indigenous communities. West Australian Premier Colin Barnett said two months later that nearly half of the 274 Aboriginal communities on traditional lands in the state, home to some 12,000 people, were not “viable” because the government could not provide services to them.

On March 10, Prime Minister Tony Abbott backed Barnett’s decision to shut the communities down, saying it was not the “taxpayers”’ job to subsidize “lifestyle choices” if indigenous people insisted on living in remote areas. His remarks fueled the protests.

Women from the Kimberley region in northern Western Australia set up SOS-BlakAustralia and called protest actions on March 19 and April 10, with thousands marching across the country.

“The union movement supports, and will defend, the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to live on traditional lands and continue their cultural connection,” Australian Council of Trade Unions President Ged Kearney said, backing the May 1 actions. The

Torres Strait separates Australia from Papua New Guinea.

The Maritime Union of Australia encouraged members to join the rallies. Northern Territory branch secretary Thomas Mayor said that the Darwin Aboriginal community would be turning out in force “and the unions will be walking alongside them. This government is a common enemy of the community and maritime workers.”

“The government is denying us our human rights,” Michael Willis from SOSBlakAustralia told the annual May Day march on May 2 in Wollongong, an industrial city south of Sydney. Several hundred marched there the night before in opposition to the closures.

“It’s a basic human right, not a lifestyle choice,” Wiradjuri elder Jenny Munro told some 2,000 people here May 1. Other speakers included Aboriginal actor Ernie Dingo, a Yamatji man from the south of Western Australia, who said his community could be closed, and journalist John Pilger.

Chanting “Always was, always will be Aboriginal land!” protesters marched through city streets with placards saying, “Close the gap, not the communities.” The “gap” refers to the wide difference in living standards between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

Indigenous Australians can expect to live 10 to 17 years less than other Australians. Babies born to Aboriginal mothers die at more than twice the rate of others. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience substantially higher rates of heart and kidney disease, as well as diabetes.

Report documents Moscow’s troops are in Ukraine



Russian opponents of Moscow’s military intervention in Ukraine May 12 released “Putin. War,” a report documenting the death of at least 220 Russian soldiers fighting as part of separatist forces in eastern Ukraine. Politician Boris Nemtsov had been working on the report before being assassinated in February. While Russian President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly denied that Russian troops are fighting in Ukraine, saying any Russian combatant there is a “volunteer,” the report says Moscow has 8,000 to 10,000 troops in Ukraine and has spent more than \$1 billion for military hardware there.

Nemtsov’s report includes interviews concerning 17 paratroopers from the city of Ivanovo who were killed in the battle for the Ukrainian town of Debaltseve. The soldiers were compelled to resign, the report states, but were assured they would remain eligible for death or disability benefits.

Reuters reported interviews with several Russian soldiers who had recently quit. “After we crossed the border, a lieutenant colonel said we could be sent to jail if we didn’t fulfil orders,” said a member of an elite tank division sent to Ukraine last year. “Some soldiers refused to stay.”

Above, Dorji Batomunkuev, a Russian soldier from Ulan-Ude near the Mongolian border, whose tank unit was deployed in Ukraine. At right, Batomunkuev in hospital burn unit after he was injured near Debaltseve in February.

— NAOMI CRAINE

Actions in New Zealand stand in solidarity with Aboriginal Australia

BY ANNALUCIA VERMUNT

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Chanting “Always was, always will be Aboriginal land,” more than 400 people marched here May 1 to back demands that the Australian government stop the forced closure of Aboriginal communities.

The protest was called by the Maori women’s organization Te Wharepora Hou. It was one of seven across the country, including in Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, Hamilton, Tauranga and Napier. They were held in response to a call for international

protests by SOSBlakAustralia.

“The move by the Western Australia state government to close sacred Aboriginal sites will open the road for private mining activities,” John Councillor of the Aboriginal Yamatji people told the crowd.

The Aboriginal people are taking action “on all of our behalf to make sure that they protect their land and waters from exploitation,” said Marama Davidson, one of the protest organizers. “So it’s really important that we all support what they are doing.”

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

THE MILITANT

‘Step up fight to end US embargo on Cuba’

Delegates from 70 countries in Havana May 2 called for stepped-up actions worldwide to protest the U.S. economic, financial and commercial embargo of Cuba. The ‘Militant’ backs this fight and defends Cuba’s sovereignty and socialist revolution.



Ismael Francisco/Cubadebate
Gerardo Hernández, one of Cuban 5, at international solidarity conference May 2.

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‘Militant’ part of actions

Continued from front page
the protest march the day of the DA’s decision was draped on the building where Robinson was shot.”
While the three stood looking at the banner, Sharon Irwin, Robinson’s grandmother, passed by. Hawkins recognized her from TV coverage and they talked for half an hour.

“Then we went door to door in the area,” he said. “It’s a predominantly Caucasian neighborhood. The three of us are Black. Overall we got a good response. Those who weren’t interested or didn’t agree with what we said were by and large polite.” Two residents signed up for *Militant* subscriptions and three got single copies of the paper.
“Remember me? I got a copy the last time you were here. Now I want to subscribe,” Matthew Carter, a worker at the Ford assembly plant in Chicago and member of United Auto Workers Local 551, told Dan Fein in the parking lot outside the plant. He was one of five Ford workers who subscribed last week. Another 31 bought single copies.

Communist workers have gone to the plant gate several times recently. Articles about the discussion on how to end two-tier wages in the upcoming UAW contract and the protests against police brutality in Baltimore have led about a dozen Ford workers to subscribe.
“There have been many actions against police brutality in Omaha,” reported Jacquie Henderson May 19. “We’ve joined them and met people, then met them again at the next action and continued the discussion where we left off. This is ongoing. Over time we have won several new subscribers.”
Three of the new readers attended a May 9 Militant Labor Forum where Frank Forrestal, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, spoke on “Ukraine: The Fight for Workers’ Rights and the Example of Cuba’s Internationalism.”
Forrestal, a former coal miner and packinghouse worker, visited both Ukraine and Cuba last year reporting for the *Militant*. He and editor John Studer will leave for Ukraine again May 28.
Nebraskans for Peace held a forum on



Militant/Ted Leonard

Sarah Ullman shows *Militant* to school bus driver outside Transdev bus yard in Boston May 4.

U.S.-Cuba relations April 26 in Grand Island, a city of 50,000 west of Omaha. Going door to door there to build the meeting, *Militant* supporters met Lisa Goff, who suffered a brain injury in 2013 when she fell while working for Pizza Hut. The company fired her.
“No one will hire me because of the

ongoing treatment for my injury,” she said. “I need a job that is safe and pays enough to live on. We have to stand up, because what will our kids face if we don’t do something.” Goff subscribed and came to the program on Cuba.
During the last week new subscribers in Nebraska got 19 Pathfinder books offered at half price, ranging from titles by Malcolm X to *The Jewish Question* by Abram Leon and *New International* no. 10, featuring the article “Imperialism’s March Toward Fascism and War.”
Contributions to the Militant Fighting Fund picked up pace considerably last week with \$20,000 collected. Oakland rose on the chart with \$4,695 sent in last week. Pledges are \$4,540 short of the \$115,000 goal, so increases are needed.
Join in the campaign to win new readers and please make a generous contribution to the fund. Contact a distributor listed on page 8.

Arrests of Somali youth spark debate on FBI spying

Continued from front page
eign terrorist organization they face sentences of up to 15 years in prison. Two other youth accused of conspiring with them were arrested the same day in San Diego.
The government’s case is based on a paid informer and wiretapping. At an initial court hearing April 23, FBI Special Agent Harry Samit said the informer, a former friend of the defendants, was paid \$12,700 and was directed by the cops to tell the men he had a connection that could provide false passports.
This description “prompted murmurs in the courtroom and outrage on social media,” according to the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*. More than 200 people packed the courtroom for that hearing, and 100 rallied at the state Capitol two days later in protest.
Some 120 family members and supporters attended a second hearing for the four May 12, where U.S. District Judge Michael Davis upheld an earlier decision

to deny bail. Many more people were turned away, even though many empty seats were available.
Nearly 100 people participated in a town hall meeting May 9 to question Andrew Lugar, U.S. attorney for the district of Minnesota, and Richard Thornton, FBI Special Agent for Minneapolis.
“Many Somali residents believe that the government was involved in entrapment with respect to the six arrested,” said Sadik Warfa, a local leader of Global Somali Diaspora, who moderated the meeting. “How do you expect the community leaders to respond when we lack the facts in the case before us?”
Lugar refused to discuss any specific details of the arrests. He repeatedly maintained, “We do not entrap people.”
There was also debate over the Countering Violent Extremism pilot program, which promotes collaboration between the FBI and other police agencies and schools, community organizations and local officials to head off recruitment by

terrorist groups.
“We need resources but not from the FBI,” said Kamal Hassan from the audience. “If you give me money today, you will expect me to spy tomorrow.” The pilot program is “mixing law enforcement and social services,” he complained.
“I support the CVE program,” said another participant. “At the airport I am dealt with differently,” he said, but “I don’t feel discriminated against because there are criminals in our community.”
There are 75,000 Somalis in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. About 21 percent of them are unemployed, the highest rate for Minnesota’s five largest immigrant groups.

— CALENDAR —

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Justice for Walmart Workers Rally. Thurs., May 28, 5:30 p.m. Cesar Chavez and Broadway. (213) 494-1949. tgalbert13@gmail.com

Richmond

Absolved by Solidarity: Exhibit and Book Presentation. Paintings by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five, recently freed after 16 years in U.S. prisons. Sat., May 30, 2-4 p.m. Richmond Public Library, Whittlesey Room, 325 Civic Center Plaza. Sponsored by the Friends of the Richmond Public Library. Tel.: (510) 620-6561.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

Cuba, the U.S. and the Future of the Revolution. Speaker: Kenia Serrano, member of Cuba’s National Assembly and president of Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples. Sat., June 6, 7:30 p.m. Teachers Federation, 23-33 Mary St., Surry Hills. Tel.: 0413-450-981.

CANADA

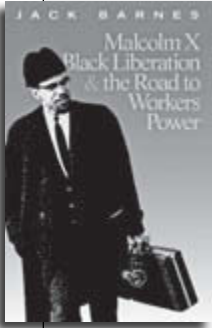
Montreal

Africa Called, Cuba Answered: Cuba’s Critical Contribution to the Fight Against Ebola. Mon., May 25, 7 p.m. Speaker: Cuban doctor José de Jesús Portilla. Centre St-Pierre, Laure-Gaudreault Hall. 1212 Parnet. Tel.: (514) 991-4388 or (514) 298-6820. info@solidaritequebeccuba.qc.ca.

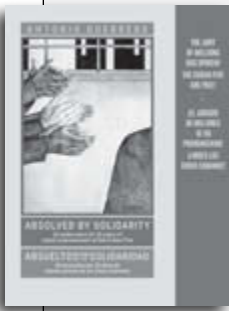
Toronto

Cuba in the Struggle for a Better World. Speakers: Fernando González, one of Cuban Five, vice president of Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples; Dr. José de Jesús Portilla. Sat., May 30, 7:30 p.m. Steelworkers Hall, 25 Cecil St.

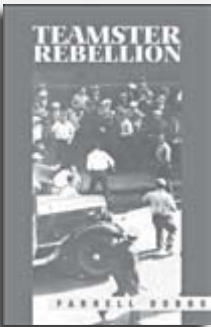
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Militant Fighting Fund			
April 11- June 2 (Week 5)			
Country	Quota	Paid	%
UNITED STATES			
Twin Cities	\$3,600	\$2,980	83%
Houston	\$1,000	\$765	77%
Oakland	\$13,500	\$9,855	73%
Philadelphia	\$3,200	\$2,140	67%
Atlanta	\$8,600	\$5,410	63%
Chicago	\$10,000	\$6,230	62%
Nebraska	\$3,500	\$2,020	58%
Omaha	\$3,300	\$1,920	58%
Lincoln*	\$200	\$100	50%
Washington	\$8,000	\$4,569	57%
Boston	\$3,750	\$2,050	55%
Los Angeles*	\$8,000	\$3,510	44%
New York	\$20,000	\$8,586	43%
Miami	\$2,000	\$810	41%
Seattle	\$8,600	\$2,805	33%
Total U.S.	\$93,750	\$51,730	55%
CANADA			
Calgary	\$2,900	\$2,300	79%
Montreal*	\$5,160	\$3,053	59%
Total Canada	\$8,060	\$5,353	66%
NEW ZEALAND			
	\$4,400	\$3,782	86%
UNITED KINGDOM			
Manchester	\$600	\$490	82%
London	\$2,000	\$1,153	58%
Total U.K.	\$2,600	\$1,643	63%
AUSTRALIA			
	\$1,350	\$1,025	76%
FRANCE			
	\$300	\$295	98%
Total	\$110,460	\$63,828	56%
Should be	\$115,000	\$82,143	71%
*Raised goal			

Family protests after judge frees cop who shot Rekia Boyd

BY JOHN HAWKINS

CHICAGO — Dante Servin, the Chicago police detective who shot and killed 22-year-old Rekia Boyd in March 2012, walked out of the courtroom a free man April 20 after Associate Judge Dennis Porter dismissed the charges against him.

In November 2013 Servin was stripped of his police powers and charged with involuntary manslaughter, reckless discharge of a firearm and reckless conduct.

He is only the second Chicago cop to be charged with a crime for shooting someone in the last 17 years.

“The judge’s decision was outrageous,” said Boyd’s mother Angela Helton on the steps of Leighton courthouse after the verdict. “Servin gets to go home and be with his family and I’ll never see my daughter again.”

“We didn’t expect anything else,” Pat Jordan, Boyd’s cousin, told the *Militant*. “If you’re a white cop most of the time you can get away with killing Black

people. But if it was reversed and I killed a cop I’d be charged with first-degree murder.”

Servin, who was off duty, was in his car when he got into a verbal altercation with a group of youth near his home. One of the men allegedly walked toward Servin’s vehicle holding a cellphone. Servin pulled his gun, stuck it out of the driver’s side window across his body and fired five shots.

One shot struck Antonio Cross, who was holding the cellphone. Another struck Boyd in the back of the head. She died the next day.

The trial began April 9. After the prosecution rested its case following three days of testimony, Servin’s attorneys moved for a directed verdict.

Before a packed courtroom April 20 — more than 50 relatives of Boyd and supporters of her family on one side and roughly the same number of cops and others supporting Servin on the other — Porter said Servin’s act was deliberate, not reckless. Because of that, the judge said, he couldn’t convict him of involuntary manslaughter. He said he also couldn’t convict him of a more severe crime such as first- or second-degree murder, implying that the Cook County State’s Attorney had filed the wrong



Militant/Alyson Kennedy

Martinez Sutton, brother of Rekia Boyd, speaks outside courthouse April 20 after judge dismissed charges against Chicago police detective Dante Servin, who killed Boyd in 2012.

charges against the killer cop. Therefore, he said, he was dismissing the charges.

Porter’s ruling sparked a spontaneous outburst in the courtroom and among those gathered on the courthouse steps. Speaker after speaker denounced the ruling. That evening a handful of demonstrators marched peacefully through the neighborhood where Boyd was shot. The following day close to 100 rallied to denounce the verdict at Daley Plaza.

The ruling means that “when a person is very, very bad, they can’t be found guilty of being merely bad,” Leonard Cavisse, a former DePaul University

law professor, wrote in the *Chicago Sun Times*. “That’s a miscarriage of justice.”

“Cook County State’s Attorney Anita Alvarez told us the officer was going to be charged with second-degree murder, then the day he was charged it was switched, without consulting us, to involuntary manslaughter,” Martinez Sutton, Boyd’s brother, told the *Militant*. “Now the judge and the State’s Attorney are pointing fingers at each other. Meanwhile, another killer cop got off.”

Alyson Kennedy contributed to this article.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

The Growing Movement for Increased Wages and a Union. Fri., May 29, 7:30 p.m. 2826 S Vermont Ave., #1. Tel.: (323) 643-4968.

FLORIDA

Miami

Behind Washington’s ‘Reset’ of Policy Towards Russia and the Struggle for Ukraine’s Sovereignty. Speaker: Anthony Dutrow, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., May 29. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5 dinner, \$5 program. 7911 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 2. Tel.: (305) 757-8869.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Social Disaster in Nepal Magnified by Capitalist Exploitation. Fri., May 29, 7:30 p.m. 777 Cleveland Ave. SW, Suite 103. Tel.: (678) 528-7828.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Support Ukraine Sovereignty! No to Embargo Against Russia! Speaker: Ilona Gersh, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., May 29, 7:30 p.m. 2018 S. Ashland Ave. Tel.: (312) 455-0111.

NEBRASKA

Omaha

Free Oscar López! Independence for Puerto Rico! Fri., May 29, 7:30 p.m. 3302 Q St., 2nd Floor. Tel.: (402) 779-7697.

CANADA

Calgary

‘Push for Profits Before Safety’ Leads to Derailments. Speakers: Jim Young and Francois Bradette, Communist League. Fri., May 29, 7:30 p.m. 4909 17th Ave. SE, Unit 154. Tel.: (403) 457-9044.

Montreal

U.S.: Labor, Immigrant, Cop Brutality Fights Strengthen Each Other. Speaker: Philippe Tessier, Communist League. Fri., May 29, 7:30 p.m. 7107 St. Denis, Suite 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

UNITED KINGDOM

Manchester

Defend Cuba’s Socialist Revolution, End U.S. Embargo! Speaker: Caroline Bellamy, Communist League. Sun., May 31, 4 p.m. Donation £2.50. Room 301, Hilton House, 26-28 Hilton Street. Tel.: (016) 1478-2496.

Exhibit shows cell, ‘dream house’ of Angola 3 prisoner

BY LANIE FLEISCHER

NEW YORK — “#76759: Featuring The House That Herman Built,” an exhibit at the Brooklyn Public Library, includes a full-scale model of the 6-by-9-foot cell where Herman Wallace lived in solitary confinement in the notorious Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola. Wallace, who the jailers called #76759, was imprisoned there for more than 40 years, fighting a frame-up murder conviction. Released on Oct. 1, 2013, he died of cancer three days later.

Wallace and fellow prisoners Albert Woodfox and Robert King, who helped organize a Black Panther Party chapter at the prison, became known as the Angola Three. Their imprisonment and treatment became a focus for protests all

across the country. King was released from prison in 2001 after a separate murder conviction was overturned. Woodfox continues to be held in solitary confinement in West Feliciana Parish Prison, despite the fact his conviction has been overturned three times.

Counterposed to the prison cell, the exhibit features a model of Wallace’s “dream house” — developed over 12 years working with visual artist Jackie Sumell — that includes a display of 108 books Wallace picked for his library.

The selection includes *The Wretched of the Earth* by Frantz Fanon; books by Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, V.I. Lenin, Joseph Stalin and Leon Trotsky; books by and about Marcus Garvey; and a large number of books from Pathfinder

Press, including *Democracy and Revolution* by George Novack, *Is Biology Woman’s Destiny?* by Evelyn Reed and collections of speeches by Malcolm X.

Many of these books can be checked out from the library.

The exhibit shows “not only what’s wrong with the world, but also what’s possible — to end solitary confinement,” Sumell said at the April 15 exhibit opening. “Not only *can* we do it, we *have* to do it. Don’t get bogged down in the tragedy. Use art as a vehicle or whatever you use. Use your own power to talk about how to make the world more beautiful.”

The exhibit will be open to the public through June 5. For more information visit: bklynlibrary.org/events/exhibitions.

Hundreds protest decision to let Wisconsin cop walk

Continued from front page

jumped in and out of traffic. Madison officials have released toxicology tests that found traces of hallucinogenic mushrooms, marijuana and Xanax in Robinson’s system.

The police say that Kenny, a Caucasian officer, entered the building where Robinson died when he heard what sounded like an altercation. As Kenny got to the top of the stairs, Robinson punched him in the head, the cops claim.

In a police dash cam video, Kenny is seen entering the house. Then shots are fired and Kenny backs out of the house and shoots several more times. Two cops come to back Kenny up and walk over the youth’s body and into the house.

“We’ve seen the video of the shooting,” Irwin said. “And it clearly shows Kenny pointing his gun downward as he fires. He’s changed his story a number of times.

“I don’t care if Tony was high, that doesn’t carry the death penalty,” Irwin said. “That’s what Kenny meted out to

my grandson. If someone is intoxicated or having psychological problems they should be helped, not killed.”

Following the DA’s decision, Robinson’s mother, Andrea Irwin, who is Caucasian, other relatives, and a notably multinational group of hundreds of protesters marched to the Capitol.

“When they decided that officer Matt Kenny was not going to be indicted for brutally murdering my 19-year-old son, they thought this battle was over,” Andrea Irwin told the crowd. “I am not the type to be defeated, and I am not but just beginning to fight. My son dying will forever be remembered as the day that we are going to change history and not be the ones that are going to be put down and killed anymore. This is not over.”

The family plans to file a civil lawsuit against the Madison Police Department. “They have done a smear campaign against my child and against me since this all began,” Irwin told CNN.

On May 13 nearly 200 demonstrators, many of them high school students or-

ganized by the Young, Gifted and Black Coalition, marched from the apartment where Robinson was killed to the Dane County Courthouse, where they held a mock trial of Kenny.

Madison, with a population of 240,000, is nearly 80 percent Caucasian and 7 percent African-American. Ozanne is the first African-American district attorney in the state.

Working people from the predominantly Caucasian working-class neighborhood where Robinson was killed have made up a large part of the protests.

“I haven’t been part of the marches myself,” said Sara Osten, who is Caucasian and lives a block away from the building where Robinson was killed. “I’m amazed at how calm and determined his mother is in this situation. This fight is important because it will help make it a little less likely that something like this will happen again.”

Mark Clements and Tony Powell contributed to this article.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

MAGGIE TROWE, EDITOR

Help make this column a voice of workers' resistance!

This column is dedicated to spreading the truth about the labor resistance that is unfolding today. It seeks to give voice to those engaged in battle and help build solidarity. Its success depends on input from readers. If you are involved in a labor struggle or have information on one, please 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

Walmart workers protest store closure in Pico Rivera, Calif.

LOS ANGELES — More than 150 Walmart workers and supporters marched and rallied in front of Walmart's Pico Rivera supercenter April 20, accusing the giant retailer of retaliating against labor organizing by abruptly closing that and other stores.

A week earlier Walmart shut down five stores — the one in Pico Rivera and four others in Florida, Oklahoma and Texas — citing “plumbing issues.” Pico Rivera City Manager René Bobadilla said that the city had not received any permit requests to do such work. The stores were all closed with no advance warning.

OUR Walmart is a nationwide organization of Walmart workers fighting for \$15 an hour, full-time hours and an end to retaliatory disciplinary measures and firings.

Pico Rivera workers were told they could apply for positions at other area stores, with no guarantee of being hired or maintaining their job and pay level, and that when the Pico Rivera store reopened, they would have to reapply.

The store closings have left 2,200 workers unemployed, including 530 in Pico Rivera.

“We know Walmart is scared of all we have accomplished as members of OUR Walmart so they're targeting us. Through OUR Walmart, we're going to keep fighting back until the company gives us our jobs back,” said Luna, according to the United Food and Commercial Workers website.

Workers at the Pico Rivera store held a strike in October 2012 and the first large sit-down strike, the website reports.

Pico Rivera OUR Walmart members filed a complaint with the National Labor Relations Board April 20 demanding Walmart be ordered to rehire the workers terminated in all five stores and reinstate them to the stores where they were employed or transfer them without loss of pay until they can be reinstated at the stores where they worked.

Workers are planning another rally May 28 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the corner of Broadway and Cesar Chavez.

—Danielle London

San Francisco rally: 'Reinstate fired Walmart workers!'

SAN FRANCISCO — “Plumbing problems ain't legit, Walmart is full of it!” chanted more than 50 workers from the retail giant and supporters. They were picketing in front of the Fairmont Hotel here April 30 demanding that Walmart reinstate the 2,200 workers who lost their jobs at the Pico Rivera store near Los Angeles and at four others in Texas, Oklahoma and Florida when Walmart bosses shut them down in April.

The target of the protest was Aida Alvarez, a member of Walmart's board of directors, who was attending the Latino Community Foundation Gala

at the Fairmont. Carrying toilet plungers, members of OUR Walmart chanted, “Stand with our community. Tell Walmart to reinstate the fired workers!”

“We were given five hours notice,” Silvia Anguiano, one of the 530 workers fired at the Pico Rivera store, told the *Militant*. “It was a huge surprise, very frustrating. Plumbing problems? No!”

Eduardo, a worker at a Walmart store in the East Bay, told the *Militant* that he had traveled with other Walmart workers to the Pico Rivera store last fall to support a sit-down action demanding \$15 an hour and full-time work.

—Joel Britton

Workers fight for safety after fire in Greek refinery

ATHENS, Greece — A fire broke out May 8 at the Ellinika Petrelaia (ELPE) oil refinery in nearby Aspropyrgos following an explosion of an old unit during maintenance. Six workers were seriously injured.

Workers who were present say the fire



Militant/Miguel Pendás

Walmart workers and supporters picket Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco April 30, where Walmart board of directors member was attending gala. They demanded reinstatement of workers at Pico Rivera store, a center of labor organizing, and at other recently closed stores.

alarm never sounded and there was no adequate evacuation plan. Employees were then grouped together in one of the parking lots and told not to leave. When some tried to exit, company security personnel chased them down and took away their IDs.

In previous years maintenance shutdowns took more than 45 days, but the company wanted it finished in a month this time, said contract worker Nasos Pavlakis in a phone interview.

The permanent workforce at ELPE has been reduced from 2,700 in 2003 to 1,600 today. There are some 700 contract workers, hired for a month and paid six or less euros per hour (\$7). “People

frequently work 12 to 16 hours a day with no days off,” said Pavlakis.

After the fire some of the contract workers called in representatives of the Attica Metalworkers and Shipbuilding Industry union and the Energy Sector union, who organized a general assembly May 9 and a three-day strike.

The general assembly demanded that the company pay for all medical expenses of the injured workers, give compensation to the families, reduce overtime and increase wages for contract workers. According to a statement by the metal workers union, ELPE agreed to some of the workers' demands.

—Sofia Roditi and Natasha Terlexi

Postal workers rally to oppose job, service cutbacks

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

NEW YORK — On May 14, six days before their national contract expires, American Postal Workers Union members organized “I Stand With Postal Workers” pickets and rallies around the country to oppose U.S. Postal Service cutbacks in jobs and services. APWU locals held more than 130 events in 42 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, according to the union's website.

The Postal Service plans to close or consolidate 82 mail processing facilities this year, in addition to the 140 processing plants closed or consolidated in 2012.

“Help Save Our Public Postal Service!” read a flyer being distributed

to passersby at a picket line of some 50 APWU members and supporters at the Main Post Office here. Postal bosses are using the financial crisis to “cut service, privatize operations, and convert living-wage, union jobs into low-wage non-union jobs,” it stated. One such move includes transferring some postal operations over to Staples, where workers earn substantially less than postal union members.

Postal workers demand “extended hours at post offices to shorten customers' wait time in line,” the union flyer said, “an end to the closure of mail sorting centers, restoration of prompt mail delivery, and the addition of postal banking.”

“I came out to support what I be-

lieve in — unions, workers' rights and fair wages — all of which will be weakened by privatization,” Mary McQuillar, a window clerk at a post office in Berkeley, California, told the *Militant*. She was among the couple dozen workers who held an informational picket outside the main post office in Walnut Creek, California.

They were joined by United Steelworkers members who work at nearby oil refineries. “I'm here today because the Postal Workers union supported us on the picket line during our strike,” said Tracy Scott, staff representative for Tesoro refinery workers.

Patti Iiyama in Walnut Creek, California, contributed to this article.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



June 1, 1990

HOUSTON — On May 4 a police chief and two county deputies from the small East Texas town of Hemphill were found guilty of murder in the death of Loyal Garner, Jr. Garner, a 34-year-old Black truck driver, was beaten in the Hemphill jail on Christmas Day 1987. A jail guard found him comatose on the cell floor the next morning. He died December 27.

Garner, a Hemphill resident, was on his way to a nearby town with two buddies to pick up a car he was going to overhaul. Hemphill Police Chief Thomas Ladner pulled him over for drunk driving. Garner was beaten with a blackjack by Ladner after demanding to make a phone call.



May 31, 1965

“The Yankee government wants to make Bolivia a second Dominican Republic!” This was the theme of broadcasts from the radio stations of the Bolivian miners beginning May 16. Like the Dominicans, the Bolivian workers are waging a heroic armed resistance against a frontal assault by a U.S.-instigated military junta, that of Gen. René Barrientos.

The eruption of this conflict, which has been simmering since the overthrow of Paz Estenssoro last November, comes at a time not so favorable for Washington; the battle could result in a major advance of the Bolivian revolution, and thus of the Latin American revolution.



June 1, 1940

MEXICO CITY— Mexican police are seeking George Mink, agent of Stalin's G.P.U. (secret police) as the chief of the G.P.U. murder squad which attempted to assassinate Leon Trotsky and his wife. Planned down to the last detail on a scale possible only to people commanding enormous resources, it was clearly the result of long preparation under direct orders of Stalin himself.

More than twenty Stalinist assassins armed with machine guns, rifles, and incendiary bombs, succeeded in breaking inside the walls surrounding the residence of Leon Trotsky and sprayed fusillade after fusillade through the doors and windows where Trotsky and his wife were sleeping.

Amtrak derailment in Phila.

Continued from front page
mph speed limit.

The disaster could have been even worse if the train had crashed into nearby tank cars that can hold anything from oil and chemicals to corn syrup. A Conrail spokesperson refused to disclose the contents of the cars.

“This crash only missed the tank cars by 50 feet,” Kuyanna Wells, who lives with her children close to the rail yard, told the *Militant*. “They could have burned us all up.”

Brandon Bostian, 32, the train’s engineer, who was injured, has told investigators he does not remember the crash. His last memory before calling 911 at the derailment site is ringing the train’s bell as it went through the North Philadelphia station, Bostian’s lawyer said.

Some city officials and daily papers rushed to blame Bostian. “Clearly he [the engineer] was reckless and irresponsible in his actions,” Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter told CNN May 13. “But there’s really no excuse that can be offered, literally, unless he had a heart attack.”

Paul Pokrowka, a former engineer and legislative director for SMART, the Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Union, took issue with the mayor, saying Bostian has “already been pinned as the scapegoat. Mayor Nutter called this man reckless before we had any facts.”

When the government-funded passenger line was created in the 1970s, Amtrak trains were required to have at least two crew members in the control cabin, an engineer and a fireman. But in the name of reducing costs, “Amtrak has since 1983 refused to crew Northeast Corridor trains with more than one employee in the cab,” said the union officials’ statement.

“Why aren’t there, routinely, two people in the cab, as there are two pilots [on a plane]?” MSNBC reporter Andrea Mitchell asked Fritz Elder, former chairman of BLET Division 482 on May 15.

Rail workers have asked that question for a long time, Elder said. “From the point of view of operating engineers, we think that these kinds of decisions always get made by others — supposed experts. They never get made by those who actually do the work.”

Crew size the key question

Last September workers on BNSF Railway, members of SMART, mobilized and voted overwhelmingly to defeat a one-person crew proposal on freight trains. They held public protests and won support from other unionists and people who live near the tracks.

The National Transportation Safety Board and the Federal Railroad Administration have pointed to the need for safety devices. On the southbound track heading into the curve where Train 188 derailed, Automatic Train Control — which automatically brakes a train that exceeds the limit if the engineer does not respond — has been in place for years. But Amtrak didn’t install it for the northbound track. It has been ordered to do so by the Federal Railroad Administration after the latest disaster.

The administration also ordered Amtrak to install speed limit signs along the track.

Amtrak has now promised to speed up installation of Positive Train Con-

trol, a more comprehensive system than Automatic Train Control. Positive Train Control currently operates in three segments of the Northeast Corridor lines, but only on 50 of the 226 miles from Washington, D.C., to New York.

“PTC is only a safety overlay that ensures a safer operation,” the May 19 joint union statement said, “and no technology can replace the level of safety provided when two crew members are on board and can serve as a check and balance to one another.”

Fatigue could be a factor

Many believe that fatigue was a factor in this derailment. Union representatives have pointed to new schedules on Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor, noting that many workers now work 13 to 16 hour days with reduced rest periods.

A Sept. 20 letter from the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen Division 482 to Amtrak said new schedules make it difficult for workers to plan their rest and said bosses must stop “pressuring crews to sign up ‘on their rest’ in an effort to avoid compliance with Hours of Service Law.”

NTSB member Robert Sumwalt reported May 15 that the train might have been hit by a projectile. Just minutes before the derailment, two other trains in the same area — a SEPTA commuter train and an Amtrak Acela train — reported being hit. The SEPTA engineer’s window broke and the Acela’s was shattered. Sumwalt said the investigation of the derailment will take months.

The discussion about the crash has drawn attention to the dangerously deteriorating infrastructure of the 100-year-old rail system. Nonetheless, the day after the disaster the House Appropriations Committee voted to cut the Amtrak budget from \$1.4 to \$1.13 billion.

Conservatives keep power in weaker, less-united UK

Continued from front page

The Liberal Democrats, whose bloc with Prime Minister David Cameron’s Conservatives was the backbone of the previous government, lost 49 Members of Parliament, ending up with eight. The Labour Party suffered a net loss of 26 MPs. In Scotland the Scottish National Party won 56 of the 59 seats, including taking 40 from Labour.

Despite these losses, across the U.K. both the Conservative and Labour parties increased their percentage share of the total vote.

The Communist League ran a vigorous working-class campaign in London and Manchester, joining in strike picket lines and workers’ demonstrations, demanding cops be held accountable for beatings and murders, and organizing protests demanding the U.K. open its borders to refugees fleeing war and destruction from Syria to Libya.

CL candidates explained workers face growing attacks from the bosses and their government as the crisis of the capitalist system deepens. They said that the labor movement must unite the working class, champion the struggles of farmers and other allies, and point to the need to break from the capitalist political parties and chart a course toward the fight for a

Cuban doctor says ‘Africa called, Cuba answered’



AIN Photo/Marcelino Vazquez Hernandez



Inset, TML

TORONTO — “I am proud of what my country has done for others,” Dr. José de Jesús Portilla, inset, director of revolutionary Cuba’s medical missions in 15 countries, told some 35 people at a meeting here May 15 to kick off a cross-Canada tour titled “Africa Called, Cuba Answered: Cuba’s Critical Contribution to

the Fight Against Ebola.” He will speak in six other cities and return here at the end of May.

Portilla, a professor of International Health who was chief of Cuban medical personnel during Cuba’s mission in the former Republic of Congo (1974) and Angola (1983-85), spoke as Cuban medical personnel, above, headed to Nepal to treat earthquake victims.

Health care in Cuba is not a business, Portilla said. The Cuban constitution states that health care must be universal, free, accessible, comprehensive and internationalist. The national health system concentrates on prevention, promotion of healthy living and rehabilitation.

Today there are 25,000 Cuban medical doctors active in 67 countries with another 52,000 support staff, he said.

Cuba sent 256 volunteers to Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Conakry last year to combat the Ebola epidemic. “Their experience broke the myth that 90 percent of Ebola victims die,” Portilla said. “Where the Cubans were working, with good treatment and hard work — primarily rehydration — less than 20 percent died.”

— TONI GORTON

workers and farmers government.

The Conservative Party today is a free-market bourgeois party that makes a populist appeal to workers as the party of job creation. Following on the victory, Chancellor George Osborne announced that he will present a budget for “working people” in July.

The Labour Party, founded in 1900 based on the Trades Union Congress, has been transformed over the last four decades in the midst of a continuing decline of the labor movement. While keeping the Labour Party name, today it is an ideological party where the unions have much less influence, similar to the Democratic Party in the U.S.

“I’ve voted Labour in the past, I’m from a family that voted Labour before,” Jody Hall told the *Financial Times*, “but I was worried that they left this country with no money.” Hall voted in Nuneaton, in the center of England, where a slim Conservative majority nearly doubled. Her father, a former miner, “was worried about how the economy would be under Labour,” she said.

“On balance, the Tories are stronger in a politically unstable world,” said Robert Fox, a local soccer coach in Dagenham, East London.

The party to register the most substantial gains in England was the U.K.

Independence Party. It got nearly 4 million votes, though it won just one seat in Parliament.

Across northern England, once considered Labour’s heartland, many workers disaffected by years of Labour Party anti-working-class policies turned to UKIP.

“Workers voted UKIP for different reasons,” said Cheryl Farnum, an administrative worker in London. “The main one was that UKIP wasn’t either Labour or Tory and claimed to speak for working people.”

While the Scottish National Party and UKIP gained votes, the Conservative and Labour parties maintained their positions as the cornerstone of two-party rule in the U.K.

Following the election UKIP has been gripped by a crisis over who should lead the party. Prominent figures have called for the resignation of incumbent Nigel Farage for focusing too much on restricting immigration and not preparing a broad coalition to campaign against U.K. membership in the European Union.

EU membership is a key question in bourgeois politics in the U.K. Its importance is heightened as the EU increasingly comes apart. Greece’s imminent exit — or “Grexit,” as many say — appears inevitable. What this

Continued on page 9

Oscar López: ‘Emulate revolutionary Cuba!’

Oscar López Rivera, a Puerto Rican political prisoner who has spent 34 years in U.S. prisons for his actions in support of independence of Puerto Rico (see box below), sent this letter to a supporter on May 8.

For those of us who love justice and freedom, want a better and more just world free of colonialism and imperialism, Revolutionary Cuba has been and will continue to be a beacon of hope and an example to emulate. It is admirable that Cuba has achieved so many accomplishments in spite of the many attacks the US government has carried out against its government and what it represents, including an invasion, terrorism, the killing of over 3,000 Cuban citizens, and a criminal economic embargo.

Revolutionary Cuba has been able to set an example of the importance of the development of the human resource, of solidarity, and of the need to defend just and noble causes. It started with a nation in shambles, with an economy in chaos and responding primarily to the economic interests of the USA, a poor educational system, and a deficit in many important professions. But today Cuba

can send doctors and other medical professionals, engineers, teachers and military personnel to help other countries all over the world. And its literacy program is being used in many parts of the world in order to eradicate illiteracy. It is the most literate country in all the Caribbean and Latin America.

Its praxis in solidarity is unique in the world. One act of solidarity that really reflects the generosity and commitment of Cuba and its government is what it did in Angola in order to stop the invasion of the racist army of South Africa. As many as 50,000 Cuban soldiers participated in that military operation. And thanks to the Cubans, the South African army was defeated and the back of the apartheid regime broken. This was the reason why Nelson Mandela let the world know that the Cuban people and its government were the best friends he and his people had. And for us Puerto Ricans, Cuba has always been the other wing of the same bird, and the greatest supporter helping us defeat and eradicate colonialism. Cuba is the place where so many of us feel as if we were home.

On a personal level, I feel deeply indebted to the Cuban government and to the Cuban people. As another Puerto Rican political prisoner, I have been the



May 13 protest in San Juan against government plan to cut funding to University of Puerto Rico or raise taxes on working people. Many students have joined fight to free Oscar López.

beneficiary of its generous and enormous support. I have had the honor and privilege to have spent over four years in prison with Fernando González — one of the Cuban Five. Those four years have been the best and most meaningful time I’ve spent in prison. Fernando was not only a compañero but also a brother. He incarnated the very best of what the Cuban revolution has achieved. He earned the respect and admiration of many prisoners. They often approach me to ask how he is doing and want me to send him their love and respect.

Since Radio Habana Cuba just celebrated its 54th anniversary, I must

mention how important the station has been to me. For many years — before coming to prison and while in prison — I have been a listener of many of its programs. I want to congratulate the workers of Radio Habana Cuba for the great work it has done and continues doing. I want to thank Comandante Fidel Castro, President Raúl Castro, the Cuban government and its people for all it has done and for all it has given us.

Let’s keep on demanding that the embargo be lifted and that Guantánamo be returned to Cuba.

Oscar López Rivera

**Join actions to
Free Oscar López!**

Puerto Rican independence fighter
jailed in U.S. for nearly 34 years

**Sat. May 30, 11 am
New York City
East Coast March**

**Assemble at 125th St. and
Adam Clayton Powell Blvd.**

For more info: www.freeoscarnycmay30.org

**Fri. May 29, 3 pm
San Juan, Puerto Rico**

**Assemble at Roberto Clemente
Coliseum, march to Federal Court,
Calle Chardón Hato Rey**

For more info: (787) 329-1181

Puerto Rico students protest cuts, tax hike

BY SETH GALINSKY

Thousands of students, professors and campus workers filled the streets in front of the Capitol in San Juan May 13 on the eve of a 48-hour strike protesting an ultimatum to accept budget cuts at the state-run University of Puerto Rico or tax hikes that would hit working people the hardest.

The government of Puerto Rico — a U.S. colony since 1898 — has a \$1.5 billion budget deficit and is \$73 billion in debt, mostly to U.S. bondholders. Under Puerto Rico’s constitution, bondholders must get paid first.

Gov. Alejandro García Padilla says students and workers must choose between a steep “value-added” sales tax

of 13.25 percent or face cuts of \$500 million in social programs, including \$166 million at the university.

“Many students are working two or three jobs to pay their tuition,” university student Tania Hernández said by phone from San Juan May 15.

“We never took out the loans. It was the government,” Hernández said. “The \$70 billion debt is unpayable. Why should an entire island be put in danger so that the bondholders get paid? We are always left out of the decision-making. They say Puerto Rico is autonomous, but we’re a colony.”

Because of the possibility of default, bond yield is “unbelievably high,” Jeffrey Gundlach, founder of DoubleLine Capital, told Bloomberg News. The fund doubled its holdings in Puerto Rico debt to \$45 million from March to April.

Puerto Rico’s colonial subjugation has worsened the impact of the worldwide capitalist economic crisis on the island. Official unemployment is above 13 percent, more than double the U.S. rate. Over the past five years the government has laid off some 30,000 workers, slashed pensions, raised the retirement age, sold control of the airport and toll roads to foreign corporations, and closed more than 150 schools and says it may close hundreds more.

Workers and professionals are leaving the island in droves. From 2010 to 2014 the population dropped 5 percent to 3.5 million. More Puerto Ricans live in the U.S. than in Puerto Rico.

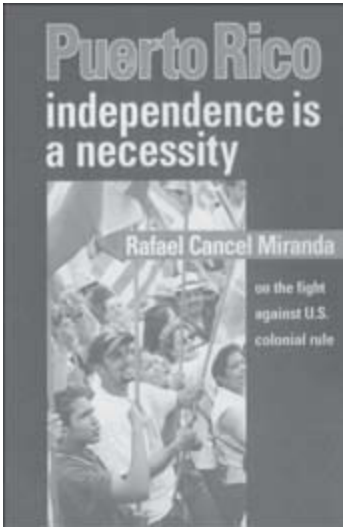
“The multinational corporations, the banks, they’re the ones who are responsible for this crisis,” Karla Sanabria, a spokesperson of the General Council of Students at the Río Piedras campus, told the *Militant*. “This government works for the rich, while the poor are practi-

cally forced out of the country.”

Many students have also been part of the fight to free Puerto Rican independence fighter Oscar López, jailed in the U.S. for nearly 34 years. Before his arrest López was active in Chicago fighting for bilingual education, ending discrimination in jobs and hiring and against police brutality.

“Many of us see Oscar as a fighter for Puerto Rico,” Sanabria said. “What he was doing in Chicago is what we are doing today in Puerto Rico.”

Recommended reading



Rafael Cancel Miranda — one of five Puerto Rican Nationalists imprisoned by Washington for more than 25 years until 1979 — speaks out on brutal reality of U.S. colonial domination, campaign to free Puerto Rican political prisoners, example of Cuba’s socialist revolution.

**\$6 (\$3 with Militant subscription)
See distributors on page 8 or visit**

pathfinderpress.com

May 30: March to free independence fighter Oscar López

Oscar López Rivera, a Puerto Rican independence fighter, has spent nearly 34 years imprisoned in the U.S. — 12 of them in solitary confinement.

López, 72, was born in Puerto Rico, a U.S. colony since it was invaded in 1898. His family moved to Chicago when he was 14. He was drafted into the army in 1965 and served as an infantryman in the U.S. war against Vietnam.

When he returned to Chicago, López became active in struggles opposing discrimination against Puerto Ricans and against police brutality. He was won to support for independence for Puerto Rico.

In 1980, 11 people were arrested and accused of belonging to the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN), a group that claimed responsibility for bombings at banks and businesses with investments in Puerto Rico. López, accused of being a leader of the group, was arrested on May 29 the next year, and framed up along with the others, convicted of “seditious conspiracy” and other charges and sentenced to 55 years in prison. In February 1988 he was framed up again on charges of conspiracy to escape and sentenced to 15 additional years. In February 2011 the U.S. Parole Commission denied López parole, ruling he cannot reapply for 15 years.

Support for his release is widespread among working people in Puerto Rico, and has won the backing of the governor, 15 mayors and 22 municipalities.

Supporters of the fight to free López are organizing actions May 30 in New York and May 29 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, to mark the 34th anniversary of his arrest.

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

Class-struggle policy guided growth of Midwest Teamsters

Below is an excerpt from Teamster Power, which tells how Minneapolis Teamsters Local 574 used the power won through three strikes in 1934 to extend the union throughout the Upper Midwest, back organizing efforts by the unemployed and combat employer frame-ups. The Spanish-language translation, Poder Teamster, is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for May. The book is the second in a four-volume series by Farrell Dobbs, the central organizer of an 11-state campaign to unionize over-the-road truckers. Dobbs later served as national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party from 1953 to 1972. Below is an excerpt from the chapter "Class-Struggle Policy." Copyright ©1973 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FARRELL DOBBS

Local 574's leadership flatly repudiated the bankrupt line of the class collaborationists. There can be no such thing as an equitable class peace, the membership was taught. The law of the jungle prevails under capitalism. If the workers don't fight as a class to defend their interests, the bosses will gouge them. Reflecting these concepts, the preamble to the new by-laws adopt-

ed by the local stated:

"The working class whose life depends on the sale of labor and the employing class who live upon the labor of others, confront each other on the industrial field contending for the wealth created by those who toil. The drive for profit dominates the bosses' life. Low wages, long hours, the speed-up are weapons in the hands of the employer under the wage system. Striving always for a greater share of the wealth created by his labor, the worker must depend upon his organized strength. A militant policy backed by united action must be opposed to the program of the boss.

"The trade unions in the past have failed to fulfill their historic obligation. The masses of the workers are unorganized. The craft form has long been outmoded by gigantic capitalist expansion. Industrial unions are the order of the day.

"It is the natural right of all labor to own and enjoy the wealth created by it. Organized by industry and prepared for the gruelling daily struggle is the way in which lasting gains can be won by the workers as a class."

As these views set forth in the preamble affirm, there was no toying with reactionary ideas about stable class relations in the trucking industry. Stability was sought only for Local 574 itself, so that membership needs could better be served. Relations with the employers were shaped according to the realities of class struggle. The concepts involved are illustrated by the union's approach to the question of working agreements with the trucking companies.

It was recognized that contracts between unions and employers serve only to codify the relationship of class forces at a given juncture. More precisely, they merely record promises wrung from employers. If a union is poorly led, the bosses will violate their promises, undermine the contract



Strikers celebrate victory forcing Arrow Motor Freight in Omaha, Nebraska, to sign closed-shop agreement with union, June 4, 1937, in front of first truck to load and leave on its run with union sanction.

in daily practice, and put the workers on the defensive. Conversely, a properly led union will strive to enforce the contract to the letter. It will also undertake to pass beyond the formal terms of agreement to the extent this may be practical in order to establish preconditions for improved written provisions when the contract comes up for renewal. In every case, either the unions will press for greater improvement in the workers' situation, or the employers will be able to concentrate on efforts to nullify gains the workers have made.

Another matter related to these basic considerations is the length of time working agreements are to remain in effect. Class-collaborationist union officials, who yearn for stable worker-employer relations, favor long term agreements. They want to keep the membership locked up in a given status-quo situation for the longest possible time. Militant union leaders, on the other hand, prefer relatively short term contracts, so that gains for the membership can be registered more frequently.

In Local 574's case the general practice was to limit agreements to a period of one year. This applied both to the negotiation of renewal terms when the August 1934 strike settlement expired later on and to the signing of contracts

with companies whose employees were newly organized.

On the question of making employers keep their promises, the handling of grievances becomes vital. Here again class-collaborationist policies entrap the workers. Union bureaucrats are quick to include a no-strike pledge in contract settlements and refer grievances to arbitration. The workers lose because arbitration boards are rigged against them, the "impartial" board members invariably being "neutral" on the employers' side. Moreover, the bosses remain free to violate the working agreement at will, as grievances pile up behind the arbitration dam.

In a similar vein, conservative union officials are prone to make a general no-strike pledge when the capitalist government proclaims a "national emergency." They do so by bureaucratic fiat, giving rank-and-file workers no voice in the decision. Such "labor statesmanship" amounts to proclaiming an overall "truce" between the workers and the bosses. Actually no truce results at all. The capitalists simply use their government to attack the trade union movement under the guise of a "national emergency"; and the workers, deprived in such a situation of their strike weapon, get it in the neck.

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Oppose attacks on rights of Somalis!

Below are excerpts from a May 14 statement by Frank Forrestal on behalf of the Socialist Workers Party in Minnesota. Forrestal was the SWP candidate for Minnesota governor in 2014.

The investigation and arrest of six Somali young people for “conspiracy and attempt to provide material support” to Islamic State is the latest attack on the rights of Somalis. The U.S. government has seized on these arrests and the recruitment efforts of Islamic State, al-Shabab and similar organizations to intensify its investigation of the Somali community. Islamic State is a reactionary, anti-working-class, terrorist organization.

The U.S. government and its political police are setting a dangerous precedent that can be used against the constitutional rights of all working people. The case is built on wiretapping and the use of a FBI informant, who was paid nearly \$13,000.

Many Somalis in the U.S. are outraged at the FBI’s deepening involvement in their lives and the appearance of entrapment of the six young people.

For years, members of the Minnesota Somali community have been subjected to assaults on their rights — from FBI informers, wiretaps, grand jury investigations, no-fly lists and harassment at the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport to intelligence gathering FBI-funded community outreach programs and shutting down money-transfer businesses (*hawalas*).

The latest government intrusion is the Countering Violent Extremism pilot program jointly run by

the Justice Department, National Counterterrorism Center and the Department of Homeland Security. Some Somalis are justifiably suspicious of money being doled out to community organizations through the CVE program by the same agencies that spy on, harass and trample on the constitutional rights of many in their community.

The Socialist Workers Party stands with those who say, “Don’t talk to the FBI.” Talking to the FBI lends legitimacy to their methods, which have been and will be used to target workers and their unions, the Black movement and all those who stand up for working-class rights or oppose government policies.

The way to stay the hand of the rulers’ political police and to advance the interests of workers and farmers around the world is to build a powerful, disciplined working-class movement. This course is the opposite of Islamic State, al-Shabab and similar terrorist groups.

To defend democratic rights, we must look to the organized power of the working class and its allies, not the capitalist government or the bosses’ parties — Democrats, Republicans and “independents” who trail after them. We need to build a labor party based on the unions that will unite workers and our allies fighting cop brutality, for \$15 and a union, against capitalism’s wars and social catastrophes and in defense of our political rights.

The capitalist rulers think that if they can weaken the rights of one group of workers, they can weaken the rights of all workers. But our rights are indivisible. An injury to one is an injury to all!

Washington shifts foreign policy in Mideast

Continued from front page

Longtime U.S. ally King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain chose to go to a horse show in Britain and meet with Queen Elizabeth instead. Salman and Hamad sent lower level officials, as did the rulers of the United Arab Emirates and Oman.

The emirs fear Obama’s drive for an accord with Iran will allow Tehran to move closer to developing nuclear weapons. “Whatever the Iranians have, we will have, too,” former Saudi intelligence chief Prince Turki Al-Faisal said April 29.

Representatives of the emirates at the summit pressed Obama to commit the U.S. military to react to any Iranian-backed attack on a Gulf state as an attack on the United States. Obama “stopped short, and wisely so, of offering a formal pact similar to the NATO treaty that some Arab leaders had wanted but that could drag the United States into Middle East conflicts,” the *New York Times* editorialized May 16.

Obama hopes to cement his historic legacy by forging a working relationship with Tehran and making other foreign policy moves that he anticipates will reduce the threat of war and revolution in the Middle East. His expectation is the Iran deal will advance the ability of more progressive-minded bourgeois leaders there — his meritocratic counterparts — to nudge the Islamic mullahs out of power.

The agreement with Tehran “could lead to more investments in the Iranian economy and more opportunity for the Iranian people, which could strengthen the hands of more moderate leaders,” Obama told London-based Arab language *Asharq Al-Awsat*.

His course toward a bloc with Iran fits with Obama’s belief that he can forge world peace by finding like-minded “brights” to dialogue with, a view shared by meritocratic academics, nongovernmental organization staffers and other professional layers worldwide.

Washington’s Gulf State allies — Sunni Muslim regimes that compete economically and politically with Tehran and see Iran’s Shia rulers as a deadly threat — sharply disagree.

Henry Kissinger and George Shultz, former secretaries of state, published a critique of Obama’s Iran move in the April 8 *Wall Street Journal*.

“For the U.S., a decade-long restriction on Iran’s nuclear capacity is a possibly hopeful interlude,” they wrote, pointing to restrictions in the deal on Iran’s nuclear industry. “For Iran’s neighbors — who perceive

their imperatives in terms of millennial rivalries — it is a dangerous prelude to an even more dangerous permanent fact of life.” But Kissinger and Shultz don’t offer a significantly different course that would better serve Washington’s interests.

The U.S. rulers claim, incorrectly, that the Shia Muslim-dominated Islamic Republic of Iran represents the 1979 revolution, when popular revolutionary mobilizations of millions of workers and peasants overthrew the U.S.-backed Shah there.

But working people were unable to consolidate their advances by taking political power and establishing a workers and farmers government in Iran.

Instead, Islamist forces pushed aside bourgeois political figures who were not strong enough to rule in their own interests, and carried out a bloody counter-revolution, establishing a Bonapartist regime that has lasted for more than 30 years. The idea they can be “nudged” out of power seems far-fetched.

Russian ‘reset’

Despite continuing conflict in Ukraine, Secretary of State John Kerry visited with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Sochi May 12 to “explore new avenues of collaboration,” the *Times* reported. The move was seen by Moscow as “an olive branch from President Obama,” the *Times* said, “and an acknowledgement that Russia and its leader are simply too important to ignore.”

Obama is willing to live with Putin’s insistence on a “buffer zone” between Central Europe and the Russian border if it means they can work together to crush Islamic State in Syria. Moscow is a key ally of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, who has carried out a murderous war against the toilers of Syria for the last four years that has left more than 200,000 dead and 11 million displaced. While bemoaning Assad’s atrocities, the Obama administration sees stabilizing his regime as the lesser evil in the interests of U.S. imperialism.

“It’s clear that Obama is thinking about his legacy, his place in history,” Alexander Baunov, from the Carnegie Moscow Center, told the *Times*. “Not to achieve the final deal with Iran will be a big defeat for him, so he needs Russia for this.”

Such a “reset” would be accompanied by lifting the sanctions imposed on Russia after Moscow’s seizure of Crimea last year and support of separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine.

Elections in UK

Continued from page 6

means for Portugal, Spain and even Italy — with soaring debts and battered economies — remains an open question.

At the same time, the U.K. has less weight in world politics. The Feb. 6 *Financial Times* highlighted a report by a parliamentary committee that “lambasted the UK for its ‘strikingly modest’ contribution to the US-led coalition against the Islamic State.” The same week, the article said, Richard Shirreff, former top NATO commander in Europe, called Cameron a “foreign policy irrelevance” on Ukraine.

Behind the accelerated decline lies the continuing crisis of profit rates, government debt and a budget deficit that have been coupled with reductions in the U.K.’s military capability.

“This is not a momentary blip, but a trend,” Ivo Daalder, president of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, told the *New York Times* April 27. “A country that for decades punched well above its weight is not at its weight, or even below it.”

For London, the “special relationship” to the U.S. will be the decisive question for its place in the world, not its relations to the EU.

The Conservative government says it will hold a referendum on whether to remain in the EU by 2017, after negotiations to secure repatriation of additional powers from Brussels.

Capitalist crisis wracks UK

Government representatives have made much of figures that supposedly point to U.K. economic growth. But per capita gross domestic product remains well below its pre-recession peak and the manufacturing picture is bleak. U.K. labor productivity lags behind that of its major competitors. Investment in capacity-expanding plant and equipment has been in the doldrums for decades.

The corporate bond market and property prices have soared, encouraged by the Bank of England’s “quantitative easing,” and the stock market is booming. What’s stoking so-called growth is speculation — exactly what led to the crash of 2008.

For working people the economic upturn has been a mirage. The drop in official unemployment is accounted for almost entirely by a rise in self-employment and part-time work. There are now 1.8 million “zero-hour contract” jobs, where workers average 25 hours a week. Two-fifths of these workers earn less than £111 per week (\$170).

Also before the government is how to proceed in the face of the landslide by the Scottish National Party. While SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon said accurately that it was not a vote for independence, her party’s rhetorical claims to protect Scotland from London’s austerity measures led to gains at Labour’s expense.

In a meeting May 15, Cameron told Sturgeon that the government will implement in full the recommendations of the Smith commission on “devolution,” which proposed extending greater powers to the Scottish Parliament, including the power to set income tax rates, keep a proportion of value-added tax raised there and some control over social benefits.

As the “devolved” powers of Scotland and Wales have grown, some political figures, especially from the Conservative Party, have called for English-only parliament votes on laws that affect England, a proposal included in the Conservative Party election manifesto. London Mayor Boris Johnson has proposed a federal setup for the U.K., more like the U.S. and Canada, a proposal likely to succeed.

Correction

In the article “Cuban Health Workers Aid Nepal Earthquake Victims” in the May 25 issue, Henry Reeve, who the Cuban internationalist contingent of health care workers is named for, is misidentified as a doctor. The Brooklyn-born Reeve was not a doctor. He served in the Union Army in the U.S. Civil War to overthrow slavery, and then joined Cuba’s 19th-century war of independence as a combatant, rising to the rank of brigadier general.