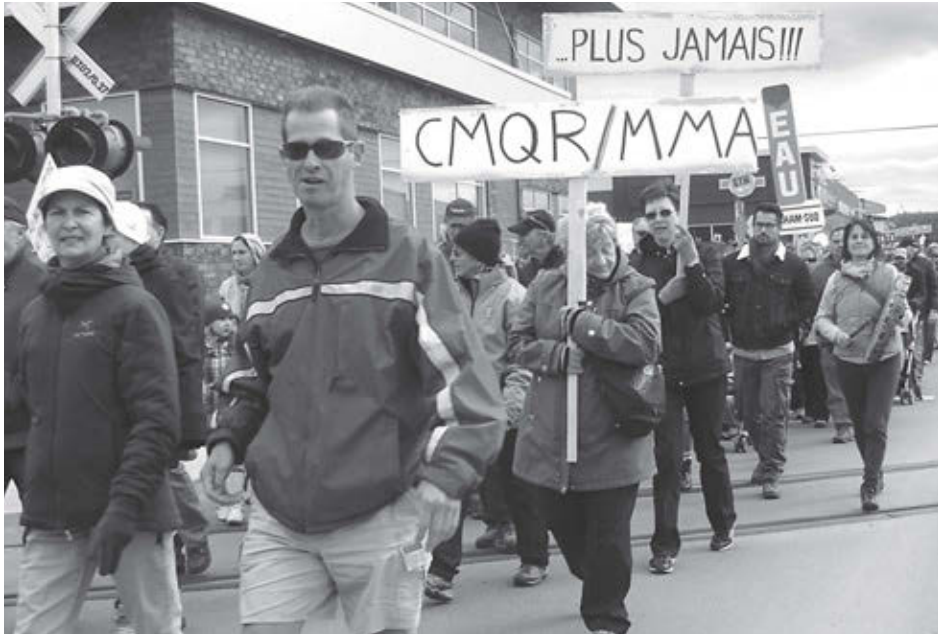


Lac-Mégantic action demands rail safety, condemns frame-up



Militant/John Steele
 “Never again!!!!” reads sign at Oct. 11 march in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, where 2013 oil train derailment, explosion and fire killed 47. Protesters blamed rail bosses, government for disaster.

BY JOHN STEELE
 LAC-MÉGANTIC, Quebec — “In June 2014, the municipality of Lac-Mégantic signed an agreement with the Central, Maine and Quebec Rail-

way stipulating that there will be no transport of crude oil through Lac-Mégantic before January 2016,” Robert Bellefleur, a leader of the Citizens and Community Groups Rail Safety Coalition, told a crowd of almost 1,000 people at the Grand March for Rail Safety here Oct. 11. “Well, January is now approaching.”

The demonstration was organized to press the authorities to bar the company, which took over the railroad last year, from transporting dangerous goods through the town until the tracks are repaired and rebuilt so

Continued on page 4

Campaigning for Socialist Workers Party with the ‘Militant,’ fund

BY NAOMI CRAINE

The next three weeks are an opportunity to campaign for the Socialist Workers Party — the working-class alternative to Donald Trump, Bernie Sanders and all the others scrambling to replace Barack Obama as the mouthpiece for U.S. capital — as we organize the final weeks of the party’s drives to win new readers of the *Militant*, expand the reach of books by Pathfinder Press on revolutionary politics and the lessons of past working-class battles, and to raise \$100,000 to

Continued on page 3

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National day of action
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Turkey: Bombing of rally met with protests, strikes

U.S.-allied gov’t keeps up assault on Kurds



Reuters/Sertac Kayar
 Funeral in Diyarbakir, Turkey, Oct. 12 for Abdullah Erol, one of more than 100 killed in Ankara in bombing of rally opposing government attacks on Kurds. Protests erupted across country.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Protests and strikes spread across Turkey after two bombs tore through an Oct. 10 rally in the capital Ankara opposing government attacks against Kurds. More than 100 demonstrators were killed and hundreds wounded.

Kurds, an oppressed nationality throughout the region, make up about one-fifth of the population in Turkey.

Kurdish fighters have driven the forces of Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad out of Kurdish regions and have been the only effective force pushing back Islamic State and other reactionary Islamist forces in Iraq as well as Syria. Since July, the Turkish government, fearful of the growing confidence Kurds in Turkey have gained

Continued on page 6

Russian airstrikes, Syrian ground offensive back Assad dictatorship

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Russian airstrikes pounded opponents of the dictatorial Bashar al-Assad regime for a second week as Iranian-backed Hezbollah troops and the Syrian army launched a ground offensive in western Syria.

At the same time the Pentagon, which has led 7,300 airstrikes in Iraq and Syria over the past year, acknowledged that its attempts to train Syrian opposition forces to fight Islamic

State but not the Assad government failed. These events have intensified the debate in Washington over how best to defend the U.S. rulers’ interests as the old imperialist order in the region unravels.

The toilers of Syria have been battered by four and a half years of civil war that has killed 250,000 and driven millions from their homes since the Assad government moved to crush growing popular protests for political

Continued on page 6

Autoworkers’ rejection of Fiat two-tier deal forces new offer

BY ILONA GERSH

CHICAGO — One week after Fiat Chrysler workers overwhelmingly rejected a new contract because it maintained the widely hated two-tier wage scheme, a revised proposal from United Auto Workers union officials and the auto bosses was announced Oct. 9.

Autoworkers had surprised both the bosses and union officials by vot-

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NZ meat workers reject individual ‘contracts,’ lockout

Farmworkers: We get respect, dignity with the union

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*Raised quota

‘Jail Chicago cops who killed my son and lied!’

BY JOHN HAWKINS

CHICAGO — “I want the cops who killed my son Darius to be indicted for murder and those who helped cover it up to lose their jobs,” declared Gloria Pinex at a news conference outside the 7th District police station here Sept. 28. “I always knew they were lying, but I never knew the lengths they had gone to to cover it up.”

Pinex was responding to the results of an investigation launched in the wake of a federal wrongful death suit she had filed against the police and the city of Chicago. In March a jury ruled in favor of officers Gildardo Sierra and Raoul Mosqueda. But in light of the cops’ possible false testimony and misconduct on the part of the city’s attorney that surfaced during the trial, Judge Edmond Chang ordered the inquiry.

On Jan. 7, 2011, Sierra and Mosqueda fired at least eight bullets into the car Pinex was driving, killing him and injuring passenger Matthew Colyer. At the time they told police investigators they stopped the car because it matched the description on a police radio dispatch of the vehicle driven by a suspect in a shooting earlier that night. They continued to tell that story for the next four years.

But in court the tale began to unravel. It came out that the two cops did not hear the dispatch as they claimed, because it aired over a different police radio zone, calling into question their justification for stopping the car, and even more approaching it with guns drawn.

Court records also revealed that the city’s lead attorney, Jordan Marsh, knew

about this discrepancy at least a week before the trial began but did not inform Pinex’s attorney of this.

The cover-up appears to have begun minutes after Sgt. Jeffrey Siwek, the two cops’ superior, arrived on the scene. Siwek called an emergency dispatcher over his police radio to ask if the car Pinex was driving was wanted. After a brief exchange, the two moved the conversation off an official radio frequency, which is monitored and recorded, onto private cellular phones.

“If they had pulled these two cops off the streets after Darius was killed, Flint Farmer would be alive today,” Pinex told the press. Six months after gunning down her son, Sierra killed Farmer, firing three bullets into his back as he lay on the ground.

Among those joining Pinex at the



Gloria Pinex, Darius Pinex’s mother, with grandmother Gloria Johnson (right) and anti-police-torture fighter Wallace Bradley Sept. 28 demanding charges against cops who killed her son.

news conference were Darius Pinex’s grandmother Gloria Johnson and brother Demarlon Simpkins; Wallace Bradley, a leader in the fight to jail cop John Burge, infamous for torture;

Panzy Edwards, mother of Dakota Bright, killed by Chicago cops Nov. 8, 2012; and Freddy McGhee, father of Freddy Wilson, killed by police in 2007.

Gap in life expectancy widens between workers, wealthy

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Life expectancy is rising — not so much for working people, but for those with the most money, said a recent study by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine.

For men in the top 20 percent by income, life expectancy rose by 7.1 years, to nearly 89 years, for those born in 1960 compared to those born in 1930. Over the same period it *fell* for the 20 percent of men with the lowest wages, to 76 years — a 13-year gap. There is a similar, but smaller, differential for women.

As a result, those with the highest incomes collect significantly more in Social Security benefits over a life-

time, the report’s authors conclude.

“We are spending the most money for the longest periods to protect people who need the least protection,” economist Robert Samuelson commented on the study in the *Washington Post* Sept. 27. Pitting the young against the old, he added, “We are penalizing the future to pay for the past.”

His answer? Make workers wait longer to collect Social Security, and cut benefits for those at the top.

This isn’t a new idea. Democratic and Republican legislators have been chipping away at Social Security for decades, including raising the eligibility age from 65 to 67, increasing payroll taxes and periodically issuing warnings that funds will soon run out.

Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes presents an opposite view in the book *Capitalism’s World Disorder*. The capitalist crisis today is not “primarily an economic crisis,” he wrote in 1993. “It is the great *political and moral* crisis of our time.”

“Social Security was an initial step by our class — by those who produce wealth — toward conquering the social organization of conditions necessary for

life, such as education and health care, *for a lifetime*,” he continued.

The Social Security Act was adopted in 1935, a concession by the capitalist rulers in response to increased working-class struggles spearheading a rising industrial union movement during the Depression years. Out of the Black rights battles of the 1950s and early ’60s, the working class won its extension to include Medicare for the elderly and Medicaid for workers with low incomes.

When the bosses’ economists and pundits start making coldly actuarial arguments to turn Social Security from an entitlement into a means-tested charity, it’s an attack on the solidarity and unity of the working class. It undermines the fight to establish a universal social wage as a right for all — regardless of class or income.

“Workers think of each other in terms of a lifetime. We cannot think of each other the way capitalists think of us. We cannot make ourselves think of other human beings as though they do not exist up to the age of thirteen or after the age of sixty-five,” Barnes said. “We have a different class view, a different moral view of society.”

THE MILITANT

Solidarity with Syrian working people

Since 2011 when mass protests demanding political rights began in Syria, the ‘Militant’ has taken the side of working people there — against the brutal regime of Bashar al-Assad, the reactionary Islamic State and threats from U.S. imperialism and Moscow.



2011 demonstration in Idlib, Syria, against Assad regime demands political rights.

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

Campaigning for SWP

Continued from front page
fund the party’s work.

Members and supporters are taking these efforts to workers’ doorsteps in cities and small towns, and with those involved in labor and social struggles.

In today’s slow-burning capitalist crisis, many workers are looking for an explanation of why things are as they are, how we can fight effectively and for a party with a program and continuity to point a road forward.

The *Militant* is the weekly voice of the party. So subscribing to it, and gaining access to Pathfinder books and issues of the Marxist magazine *New International* on special offer to those who take the paper, is one obvious step for those attracted to the Socialist Workers Party and its program.

The Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom are doing the same.

“The overwhelming bulk of our subscriptions have been sold door to door,” writes Hugo Wils from Manchester, England. “And we’ve had some wind in our sails from political events, including a meeting on how to advance the fight to organize fast-food workers in the U.K. and a rally Oct. 11 to protest the Turkish government assault on the Kurds and the bombing of the demonstration in Ankara.” In addition to 79 subscriptions, Communist League members there have sold 44 books and copies of *New International* over the last five weeks.

“We’ve had wide-ranging discussions on doorsteps about how to advance our interests as workers,” Wils said. “Demi Jackson, a self-employed cleaner, said immigration is a problem because ‘it lowers wages and there aren’t enough houses as it is.’ But she agreed that people won’t stop coming to

the U.K. and that the unions should organize all workers in order to lessen the competition that pushes wages down.

“The same day we met Jean Risby, who works with tutors at the Open University, which many workers and women with children use to extend their education. She described cuts there and plans to move to 12-hour shifts. She bought a copy of *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning: The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism* along with her subscription.”

“Socialist Workers Party members went to the BNSF Railway yard in Minneapolis to get out the facts and win support for rail workers Tom Harding and Richard Labrie against the Canadian government’s move to frame them up for the Lac-Mégantic rail disaster,” said Helen Meyers. “We distributed leaflets with a *Militant* editorial on the case. One switchman pulled his car over and said he was glad to see the *Militant* again. He got a subscription.”

“If you don’t read you’re in trouble,”



Militant/Andrés Mendoza

Catharina Tirsén, left, with Jean Risby on her doorstep in Manchester, England, Oct. 10.

Kirk Nervis, a new subscriber in Oakland, California, told SWP members there. Nervis is a butcher and long-time member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union. When he signed up for the subscription he got a copy of *Teamster Power* by Farrell Dobbs — a timely book for workers considering how we can act politically

independent of the bosses and their parties today. The next week he added three other titles to his collection. Arming yourself with books is the way “to learn how to fight and win,” he said.

To join in campaigning with the Socialist Workers Party, contact the party in areas listed on page 8.

Help make Socialist Workers Party-Building Fund

BY JOHN STUDER

“Our Party-Building Fund goal is bumped up again to \$3,645,” Frank Forrestal wrote Oct. 8 from the Twin Cities. This is the second increase Socialist Workers Party fund organizers there have made, totaling an additional \$500 toward the national goal.

Overall local pledges still fall \$6,000 short of meeting the \$100,000 needed to help fund the work of the SWP. The funds are crucial to take advantage of growing opportunities to join in union and social struggles, spread the reach of the party’s press and books and expand

its contacts and support. We need more areas to respond like the Twin Cities.

“We sent out a supplementary mailing to long-term readers of the *Militant* in the area,” Joel Britton from Oakland, California, said Oct. 12. “So far three have responded. One, who gave \$75, is someone we’ve never met.” Party members and supporters in Oakland have helped lead the drive from the beginning and raised their goal. “The mail just arrived with three contributions for \$600 more,” Britton wrote later the same day.

His report was just one example of combining work on the fund drive with efforts to meet and strengthen collaboration with new and old readers of the paper and others, who are attracted to the SWP today by new openings in the class struggle.

The growing response by workers and youth to explosive world developments — from the devastating consequences for toilers in Syria and throughout the Middle East caused by the U.S. rulers’ desperate efforts to hold together their crumbling imperialist “world order,” to

the spread of the \$15 and a union movement and other labor resistance to growing employer attacks generated from the deepening world crisis of capitalist production and trade, to greater interest in the international course of the Cuban Revolution today — mean growing opportunities for expansion of the communist movement.

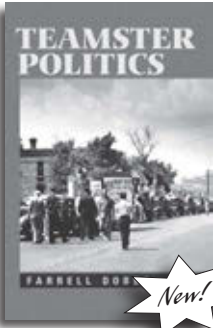
The SWP’s timely and audacious response to these openings depends on success in the party’s annual fund effort.

“Next weekend supporters of the Party-Building Fund in the area are holding a cook-out,” Bill Arth said by phone Oct. 14 from Los Angeles. “We’re inviting people we’ve met recently as well as subscribers to the *Militant*. It’s part of a battle plan we’ve decided on for the next three weeks to make our goals in both the subscription and fund drive.

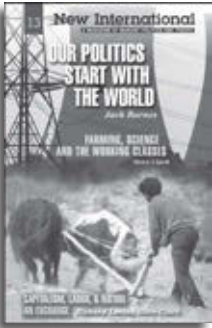
If you like what you’ve been reading in the *Militant* and want to see the Socialist Workers Party deepen its involvement in working class resistance here and around the world, please get out the word about the Party-Building Fund. And send as generous a contribution as you can!

John Studer is the 2015 SWP Party-Building Fund director.

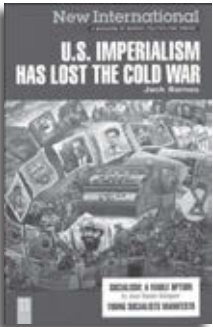
Special book offers for *Militant* subscribers



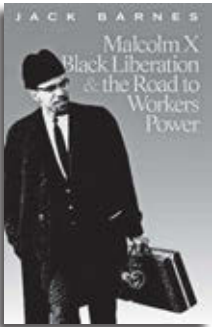
Teamster Politics
by Farrell Dobbs
Third in four-volume series
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Our Politics Start with the World
by Jack Barnes
In New International no. 13
\$7 with subscription
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Also in Spanish, French, Swedish, Greek, Farsi, Arabic



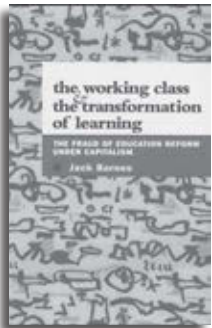
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—MILITANT
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CALIFORNIA

Oakland

The Capitalist Economic Crisis, the Continuing Attacks on Working People and the 2016 Presidential Election. Speaker: Betsey Stone, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Oct. 23, 7:30 p.m. 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Tel.: (510) 686-1351

NEW YORK

New York

Moscow Props Up Brutal Assad Regime. Defend Syrian People and Fighters for Kurdish Freedom! Speaker: Dave Prince, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Oct. 16, Dinner, 6:45 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 520 8th Ave., Room 16T. Tel.: (646) 434-8117.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Fight Frame-Up of Rail Workers in Quebec, Canada. Speaker: Janet Roth, Communist League. Fri., Oct. 23, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5 waged, \$2 unwaged. 188 Onehunga Mall. Tel.: (09) 636-3231.

Party-Building Fund Week 5			
Area	Quota	Collected	%
Omaha*	\$1,400	\$1,911	137%
Atlanta	\$8,600	\$5,980	70%
Lincoln	\$175	\$110	63%
Oakland*	\$14,500	\$9,065	63%
Philadelphia	\$3,200	\$1,445	45%
Twin Cities**	\$3,645	\$1,270	35%
Boston	\$3,250	\$1,035	32%
Los Angeles	\$8,000	\$2,468	31%
Miami	\$3,000	\$867	29%
Washington, DC	\$7,700	\$2,210	29%
New York	\$20,000	\$5,555	28%
Seattle	\$8,300	\$1,775	21%
Chicago*	\$11,000	\$2,120	19%
Other	\$1,200		0%
Total	\$93,970	\$35,811	36%
Should Be	\$100,000	\$62,500	63%
*Raised Goal			

If you subscribe or renew, these special offers are for you.
Contact a distributor listed on page 8.

Lac-Mégantic protest

Continued from front page
trains can run safely on them.

On July 6, 2013, a runaway oil train parked at the town of Nantes rolled down a seven-mile incline in the early morning hours, derailed and exploded, killing 47 people and destroying Lac-Mégantic's downtown area.

The train was parked there because the Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway, the previous owner, had gotten special dispensation from Transport Canada, the federal government's regulatory agency, to run with a one-man "crew." When engineer Tom Harding completed his 12-hour shift, he followed instructions to park the train. He left the engine running, powering the air brakes, and set a number of hand brakes, to prevent the train from rolling.

But a fire broke out on the engine, the result of poor company maintenance. It was extinguished by a crew of volunteer firemen, who turned the engine off, not knowing what the result would be.

Woken up by the company and informed of the fire, Harding volunteered to go back to the train and make sure everything was OK, but the company told him not to worry about it, they had dispatched someone else to look things over. With the engine off, the air brakes bled out and the train began rolling down the incline.

The government has charged Harding and train controller Richard Labrie, both members of the United Steelworkers union, in an effort to frame them up for the disaster. They both face possible life in prison on 47 counts of criminal negligence causing death, along with Jean Demaître, then a manager with the now-defunct Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway.

Harding is viewed by most everyone in the town as a scapegoat for those really responsible for the disaster — the rail bosses and their compliant ally, Transport Canada.

"Railway workers have concern both for their own safety and the safety of others," Thomas Walsh, attorney for Harding, told the rally to cheers. Walsh was one of the featured speakers. "They join in these demands with citizens here and environmentalists."

Walsh introduced retired Amtrak locomotive engineer Fritz Edler from Washington, D.C., who had served as an official of the rail union SMART there.

Edler is also an executive member of Railroad Workers United, a cross-craft group that fights for rail safety. The or-

ganization adopted a resolution Oct. 7 detailing the dangerous working conditions imposed on railroad workers by the profit-hungry rail bosses and demanding the government drop all charges against Harding and Labrie.

"Our goal is not to stop the trains, or even to stop the transport of oil," said André Blais, of the Citizens Coalition that called the action. "Our goal is to force the rail company and the government to take responsibility for what happened in 2013 and to force them to stop it from happening again."

"I left the Musi-Café one minute before the explosion," said Jean Paradis, a computer technician. Twenty-seven of those killed were in the café. "Twenty-five years ago you had a whole bunch of guys on a railway crew. Now it is down to one or two. It doesn't make sense."

One contingent was made up of women in white T-shirts with the names of relatives who were killed in the inferno. "My loved ones died. The reason this can't happen again," the shirts said on the back.

Jacques Breton, the mayor of Nantes, helped to marshal the demonstration. He recently drafted a resolution that was passed by the Nantes Municipal Council saying that the catastrophe "was the result of several breaches and negligence by the MMA company and to the non-rigorous surveillance by Transport Canada."

The resolution was endorsed unanimously by a conference of delegates from 300 Quebec municipalities last month.

"Transport Canada has to act and change the regulations," Breton said. "We need real inspection of the tracks here."

'July 6, 2013, Never again!'

"The tracks are not safe — CMQR we don't believe you," "July 6, 2013, Never again," "So, so, so, solidarity" and many other chants punctuated the march. People came in buses from environmental and rail safety groups from other Quebec municipalities where oil train traffic is seen as an immediate threat.

Citizens Coalition spokespeople encouraged participants to attend a previously scheduled meeting at the Sports

Communist League: 'Workers need a labor party'



Militant/John Steele

MONTREAL — Beverly Bernardo, right, Communist League candidate for parliament in Montreal's Papineau riding in the Oct. 19 federal elections, attended the march for rail safety Oct. 11 in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec. Above, she joins a teachers' demonstration against government cuts in downtown Montreal Sept. 30.

Bernardo built the Lac-Mégantic protest and spoke in defense of Tom Harding and Richard Labrie at an Oct. 5 candidates meeting organized by local community groups. "Working people need to build a mass working-class labor party based on our unions," she said.

— JOHN STEELE

Centre for area candidates in the Oct. 19 federal election to debate issues posed by the disaster.

Some 300 people, many of them who had joined the march, attended the debate, which featured candidates from the ruling Conservative Party, the Greens, the New Democratic Party, the Liberal Party and the Bloc Québécois.

Things were pretty tame until the floor was opened to questions and comments. One speaker after another took the floor to blast the government and railroad officials.

As the chairperson tried to shut down the meeting, Danielle Champagne, one of those who marched with a white shirt, grabbed a microphone.

"The families of the victims are trying to rebuild our lives," she said. "The government needs to remove our concerns about rail safety. This is a cry from the heart."

She got a standing ovation.

"I was encouraged to see the turnout of 1,000 yesterday," said Blais the day after the demonstration in a discussion that included André Lachapelle of the Sécu-Rail Committee, which has wide-

ly circulated photographs of the rotted tracks. "I think we should go to Harding's next court hearing here to show support," said Blais.

The Dec. 1 hearing in Lac-Mégantic will discuss proposals from the government to move the trial. Crown prosecutors argue that too many people in the area speak only French while Harding's mother tongue is English. Their real concern is the widespread backing for the two framed-up rail workers.

"The companies try to do the most they can with the fewest workers possible," Richard Bolduc, a member of Local 299 of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union, told socialist workers introducing the *Militant* to workers in the neighborhood. He works at the Tafisa factory here, the largest particle-board plant in North America. "The top leaders are responsible for what happened here, not the two train workers charged. We can't live without the railroad — but it has to be safe."

Beverly Bernardo and Michel Prairie contributed to this article.

Solidarity rally in Chicago backs Quebec safety fight

BY DAN FEIN

CHICAGO — Some 20 people representing more than a dozen environmental, political and labor groups gathered here Oct. 12 near the office of the Consulate General of Canada in solidarity with the people of Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, who protested the day before demanding all rail transport of dangerous cargo there be stopped until rotted and dilapidated tracks through the area are repaired.

They also joined the Lac-Mégantic marchers in demanding a halt to efforts of the Canadian government to frame up rail workers Tom Harding and Richard Labrie, scapegoating them for the train derailments and explosion in Lac-Mégantic in July 2013 that killed 47 people. Both are members of Local 1976 of the United Steelworkers union, which has been collecting funds for their defense.

"The coalition of groups endorsing this action are determined to send the message that we stand with the railroad workers in their efforts to keep

our communities safe from the inherent dangers of these volatile oil trains," the groups' flyer calling the action said. "The railroad and oil corporations involved in the tragedy of July 6th, 2013, in Lac-Mégantic are the principal offenders."

Lora Chamberlain, leader of Chicagoland Oil by Rail, chaired the rally and led chants of "Free Tom Harding!"

"The companies need to de-gasify the oil to make it less volatile like they do in Texas," she said.

"Harding warned of smoke coming from the engine before he left the train. His warning was ignored," said Vince Hardt, speaking for Chicagoland Oil by Rail. "Harding offered to return to the train when the fire broke out on the engine. They told him 'no.'"

The groups presented a letter to Consul-General Roy Norton urging the government to reconsider its charges against Harding, train controller Richard Labrie and Jean Demaître, a company manager.

"We do not believe that the three

lowest-level railway employees in the chain, including the engineer who offered to help and who could potentially have prevented the disaster, should be made scapegoats in this tragedy," the letter said.

"Disasters like Lac-Mégantic will happen again," said Mark Burrows, an engineer on the Canadian Pacific, speaking for Railroad Workers United, "until the rail unions are strong enough to exercise control over safety on the job, backed by support from a broader movement for rail safety."



Militant/John Steele

Danielle Champagne, whose daughter Karine was killed in Lac-Mégantic disaster, demands government enforce rail safety.

**Tell the ATI:
End the Lockout!**
*Delegation to ATI Corporate
Headquarters*
**Meet at USW Headquarters
Tuesday, Oct. 20, 8 a.m.**
60 Blvd. of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA
*For more information:
www.usw.org*

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

MAGGIE TROWE, EDITOR

Help the *Militant* cover labor struggles across the country!

This column is dedicated to giving voice to those engaged in battle and helping build solidarity. ATI Steelworkers are locked out; major contracts in rail, auto, basic steel and East Coast Verizon have expired or are approaching expiration. I invite those involved in fights against concessions to contact me at 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018; or (212) 244-4899; or themilitant@mac.com. We'll work together to ensure your story is told.

—Maggie Trowe

NZ meat workers reject individual 'contracts,' fight company lockout

WAIROA, New Zealand — Workers locked out by the AFFCO meat processing company a month ago are holding regular protests on the main highway through town and attracting broader support.

The company locked out 170 of the 450 workers at the plant here because they refuse to sign "Individual Employment Agreements." The agreements include cuts to seniority, shift changes without consultation, compulsory overtime, fewer breaks and less pay. AFFCO refuses to renew the collective union contract, which expired in 2013.

"If we hadn't made a stand, no one would be aware of these cutbacks," Peter Amato, shop steward for the beef slaughter department, told the *Militant* at the Oct. 9 protest. The company has imposed the agreements at four of its five largest plants. Workers at the Mo-

erewa plant in Northland have yet to be called back from the off-season.

Donations of money and food are coming in, and the dispute is a big talking point in this small rural town.

Members of the teachers union NZEI have joined protests and collected NZ\$2,500 (US\$1,680) to support the meat workers.

The local Maori tribe has donated space for an organizing center. Sue Watson, who works in lamb cuts at AFFCO, helped organize a food bank during a lockout in 2012. "We've got the local supermarket to discount some items" for a food bank this time, she said.

Workers were upbeat after 19 of them traveled to Auckland to back a court case brought by the union against AFFCO charging the lockout is illegal. "Auckland embraced us," said Amato Oct. 9. As they walked around the city center wearing union T-shirts, "people were saying to us 'go



Militant/Bernie Senter

Warehouse workers at California Cartage in Long Beach rally Sept. 23 during three-day strike for higher wages and safer working conditions. Vast majority work through temp agencies.

the union' and 'go Wairoa,'" he said.

Employment Court judges have yet to rule in the case.

—Felicity Coggan

Calif. warehouse workers strike for higher wages, safety

LOS ANGELES — California Cartage warehouse workers at the port here went on strike Sept. 22-24 to protest low wages and dangerous working conditions. "I've been working at Cal Cartage for 22 years," Manuel Reyes told a Sept. 23 rally. "In the last six years I've gotten a 30-cent raise. They treat us bad, humiliate us."

Reyes makes \$11.70 an hour and when he had an accident and was off work for a week, he didn't get paid, Reyes told the *Militant*. "They told me, 'You've worked here a long time, you need to know where all the holes in the floor are,' instead of repairing them," he said.

The workers do not have a union but are supported by the Warehouse Workers Resource Center and the Teamsters union. Some 80 percent work through temp agencies.

"It's like day labor work," one of them said. "You go in and don't know if you will work that day. If you say something to the supervisor, they don't call you in for a few days. During the holidays, they hire lots of people and if they want to get rid of them, they ask for papers. Temp agencies change names three times a year to avoid paying holidays. They sell back braces for \$20 and gloves for \$1 that last one day."

Several unions and organizations attended the rally, including members of OUR Walmart, United Food and Commercial Workers union, UNITE HERE and Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice.

"I'm here because there is a lot of injustice," said Salomon Fuentes, who has worked at Walmart for nine years and is active with OUR Walmart, which is fighting for higher wages and full-time hours. "It's the system, not one business. Alone we are powerless. It's more possible to win something if we are united. Where I work they want us to do the same work with 40 percent less people."

—Deborah Liatos

Farmworkers: We get respect, dignity with the union

BY BETSEY STONE
AND GERARDO SÁNCHEZ

DELANO, Calif. — More than 100 veterans of the historic grape strike that transformed the struggle of farmworkers in California were guests of honor at the celebration of the 50th anniversary of that battle. The Sept. 26 gathering at the United Farm Workers complex here drew 1,000 people.

"I was a striker and later a boycotter," Tillie Ahumada told the *Militant*. After going on strike in 1965, she and her husband traveled to Montreal where they organized support for the international boycott of table grapes that helped force the growers to sign contracts with the union in 1970.

Adequate water, shade and bathroom facilities in the fields were key demands along with higher pay and a union contract. "What broke the camel's back for me," Ahumada said, "was when we were forced to work with the plants still dripping with pesticide spray."

Recognition was given to the 1,000 Filipino farmworkers from the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee who were the first to go on strike over the growers' refusal to grant higher wages. Members of the mostly Latino National Farm Workers Association, led by Cesar Chavez, joined the strike and in 1966 the two groups merged to form the United Farm Workers union.

"The farmers had always played the Filipino and Mexican workers against each other," Lorraine Agtang, who at the age of 13 was one of the 1965 strikers along with her parents, told the gathering. "The UFW was successful because the Mexicans and Filipinos united."

"We ate together and met in the Filipino center," said striker Mary Herrera. "Unity was important."

The daylong event included speeches by UFW President Arturo Rodriguez,

UFW co-founder Dolores Huerta, Robert Kennedy Jr., and activists in the strike and boycott, as well as a display of photos.

"We made history," said Roberto Bustos, who began working in the fields at age 10. He was an organizer of the 340-mile march by farmworkers from Delano to the state Capitol in Sacramento in 1966 that brought national attention to the struggle.

Rodriguez introduced representatives from some of the ranches currently organized by the UFW. They included workers at Dole Food, one of the largest strawberry growers; D'Arrigo Brothers, a giant lettuce and vegetable company; and workers who are part of the fight for a contract at Gerawan Farming, a tree fruit and grape com-

pany that employs 5,000 workers.

"The most important thing for us is the respect and dignity we get with a union contract," said mushroom worker Rogelio Lona, secretary general of the union ranch committee at Monterey Mushroom in Morgan Hill. Lona described wage increases, dental, vision and medical plans won by mushroom workers over decades of struggle, including a 96-day strike in 1981.

Tomato picker Florentino Reyes represented 170 workers who carried out a two-day strike at Gargiulo Inc. in Firebaugh in 2012, winning union recognition and a contract. Since 2012 workers at four companies with a total of 1,500 employees, mostly tomato pickers, have won union contracts in the San Joaquin Valley.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



October 26, 1990

Washington would like the world to forget that only 45 years ago there was no North Korea and South Korea — only Korea. But the growing struggles by Koreans on the peninsula and around the world for reunification are making Washington's job increasingly difficult.

The main obstacle to a unified Korea is the U.S. government. Washington is worried that without its 45,000 U.S. troops and 1,000 nuclear-tipped missiles, the South Korean regime wouldn't have a chance.

Working people in the United States have no interest in the continued division of Korea. We should demand that U.S. troops and nuclear weapons be withdrawn from Korea now.



October 25, 1965

Tens of thousands of people across the country joined the largest protests against the Vietnam war to date during the International Days of Protest on Oct. 15 and 16. The coordinated demonstrations were an important blow to the government's dirty war in Vietnam. They raised the enthusiasm and confidence of the participants, and were a big step forward for the antiwar movement.

Demonstrations took place simultaneously in other parts of the world, indicating the potential the movement has to develop on a world-wide scale.

In most cities, all those who opposed the war and wanted to demonstrate against it were able to do so together and build the largest possible actions.



October 26, 1940

MORRISVILLE, Pa.— Led by a group of youth ranging in age from 16 to 22, a "blitz strike" of several hundred Pennsylvania Joads employed on the vast Starkey Farms near here, won them a complete victory in 48 hours.

As a result of the workers actions wages were increased 25 percent and more. Though the new wages range only from 25-30 cents an hour, that represents a great gain for a group of workers who have been accustomed to 17-21 cent rates and 80 to 90 hour weeks.

Only a few had been in on the plans or had advance warning, but not a single worker scabbed, as the strike caught the Starkey Farms Co. by surprise in the midst of a rush to get vegetables picked for the markets.

Protests, strikes in Turkey

Continued from front page
from this struggle, has intensified attacks against them with the tacit support of Washington.

The Oct. 10 protest, which attracted thousands, was backed by the Confederation of Public Sector Trade Unions (KESK), Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey (DISK), Turkish Medical Association (TTB), and Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (TMMOB).

These unions called a two-day strike Oct. 12-13 in response to the massacre.

“The blasts were at the two sides of the exit of the main train station in the city where the People’s Democratic Party [HDP] supporters were gathering,” reported *Hurriyet Daily News*. The HDP, a sponsor of the action, is a Kurdish-based party whose substantial gains in June elections, including beyond Kurdish areas, won over 10 percent of the vote, gained seats in parliament for the first time, and denied President Recep Tayyip Erdogan a majority.

“I believe the state organized the explosion,” Ali Sogut, 32, a former Soma miner who was at the protest, told the *Militant*. “Every time we have gone to a rally the police stopped the buses and asked for IDs, and did body searches when we entered the rally area. This time there was not a single policeman and the buses were never stopped on the way to Ankara.”

So far no group has taken credit for the bombing. Government officials at first floated the outlandish claim that the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) could have been involved, but now say that Islamic State is the prime suspect.

The blast occurred 20 days before Nov. 1 elections, in which Erdogan seeks to regain a majority for his Justice and Development Party (AKP).

“Police teams showed up soon after the blast, as if they had already been prepared in advance,” Nursel Demir, district co-chair of the HDP in Mezitli, told *Firat News*. “Many of the wounded lost their lives due to the police attack.”

Within hours hundreds of protesters took to the streets of Istanbul, condemning Erdogan and the AKP for the massacre. Another march and rally three days later involving unionists and others was banned by Istanbul authorities, but hundreds showed up anyway.

On Oct. 11 thousands chanting an-

ti-government slogans who marched again to the train station area where the blasts took place, were met with police attack.

As bodies of those killed were brought back to cities and towns throughout the country, protesters joined those carrying the coffins in anti-government demonstrations. “About 10,000 participated in the funeral ceremony in Izmir province for two women killed in the blast,” Cafer Alp, an electrician and member of the DISK union who attended the Oct. 12 event, told the *Militant*. “Many then joined a demonstration that afternoon.”

Thousands marched through the southeastern city of Diyarbakir the same day; nearly 1,000 in Mersin in the south; 500 in Bursa in the west. Other solidarity rallies included 1,000 in Toronto and 500 in Paris.

Turkish gov’t deal with Washington

The Turkish government’s attacks on the Kurdish people in both Iraq and southeastern Turkey have accelerated since July, when Washington and Ankara announced a deal to allow U.S. warplanes to use Turkey’s Incirlik air base to conduct airstrikes against Islamic State in Syria. The government said it was joining Washington’s “coalition,” but its focus has been on targeting Kurds. About 15 million Kurds live in Turkey, with millions more in Syria, Iraq and Iran. They have a long history of fighting for a homeland and against national oppression.

The attacks are carried out under the pretext of fighting the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), branded terrorist



Militant/Toni Gorton

More than 1,000 people rallied in Toronto Oct. 11 to denounce massacre in Ankara and Turkish government’s assaults on Kurdish people. Banner lists names of those killed in bombing.

both by Ankara and Washington.

Erdogan’s government and the PKK, which had fought Ankara’s oppression for decades, reached a cease-fire agreement in 2013. The president abrogated it in July. Since then the PKK has targeted government troops and police while the government has opened up a broader assault. On Oct. 10 the PKK announced a pre-election cease-fire, saying it would only respond if attacked.

In the Kurdish region, 113 people have been killed since the government offensive began, the great majority of them civilians, Turkey’s Human Rights Association reported Oct. 9. Hundreds have been arrested, curfews imposed on entire cities, and HDP offices attacked.

Day- and weeklong curfews have also been imposed in a number of cities, with phone and electricity services cut out. The highest number of civilian deaths

have occurred in these towns, including many who were denied access to medical care, Human Rights Association President Ozturk Turkdogan told *Firat News*.

Erdogan hopes these attacks and acts of intimidation against Kurds will result in the AKP winning an outright majority in the November elections, enabling him to expand the executive powers of the presidency.

Meanwhile, the Kurds have been continuing protest actions against the government’s discriminatory practices. More than 80 percent of teachers and students across the Kurdish provinces boycotted Turkish schools on opening day demanding the right to education in the Kurdish language.

Yasemin Aydinoglu contributed to this article.

Russian airstrikes back Assad dictatorship

Continued from front page
rights in 2011. That defeat is the result of decades of betrayals of the fight for national liberation and the interests of working people by bourgeois nationalist, Stalinist and Islamist forces.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, who initially presented Moscow’s intervention in Syria as directed against the reactionary Islamic State, now openly acknowledges that the aim is to prop up Assad. Moscow’s task is to “stabilize the legitimate authorities,” he said on Russian television Oct. 11.

In addition to daily airstrikes and combat helicopters strafing villages, like areas around the city of Hama, Moscow fired 26 cruise missiles from its naval vessels in the Caspian Sea Oct. 7. Traveling 900 miles over Iran and Iraq, most of them reached Syrian soil.

Moscow is also sending ground forces. Russian “volunteers” on their way to Syria “cannot be stopped,” Adm. Vladimir Komoyedov, the government’s top military liaison to parliament, told the media Oct. 5, echoing claims used by Moscow to cover for its previous dispatch of soldiers to Ukraine. Tents for nearly 2,000 soldiers have been set up at Russia’s air base near Latakia in northwest Syria.

A prominent Iranian general, Hussein Hamedani of the elite Revolutionary Guard, was killed Oct. 8 near Aleppo, Syria’s largest city, highlighting Tehran’s stepped-up efforts to back Assad.

Taking advantage of Moscow’s attacks on opposition forces, Islamic

State Oct. 9 advanced to the outskirts of Aleppo, seizing several villages and a former army base from opponents of Assad’s regime. Islamic State now controls territory a little more than a mile from a government-held industrial zone in the north of the city.

Debate in Washington

“Putin is playing a weak hand extraordinarily well because he knows exactly what he wants to do,” former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and former Defense Secretary Robert Gates wrote in the *Washington Post* Oct. 8. “He is defending Russia’s interests ... including securing the Russian military base at Tartus.”

They proposed that Washington should create its own “facts on the ground” in Syria by creating “no-fly zones and safe harbors.” Many Republican politicians and Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton also promote this idea, which Obama has rejected as “half-baked.”

The Obama administration Oct. 9 announced it was ending its program to vet and train opposition Syrian fighters in camps in Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia or the United Emirates. The results of this operation were disastrous for the Pentagon, with only a handful of “graduates” still stationed on the battlefield since it began earlier this year. Very few of those who wanted to get rid of Assad would agree that weapons provided would only be used against Islamic State.

Now, officials say the Pentagon will

provide more light weapons, ammunition and communications gear to commanders of unnamed Syrian opposition groups approved by Washington, and train them to call in U.S. airstrikes.

Washington has been requesting discussions with Moscow on coordinating use of airspace over Syria as both countries conduct bombing operations there. Not wanting to inflame tensions with Moscow, U.S. warplanes have begun altering their flight paths to avoid proximity to Russian jetfighters.

The Cuban Revolution in Today’s World

Hear **Kenia Serrano**, president, and **Leima Martínez**, representative, North American division, of the **Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples**

NEW YORK CITY

Wed., Nov. 4
Reception 6:30 p.m. Program 7:30 p.m.
Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center
3940 Broadway, near 165th St.

WASHINGTON, DC

Sat., Nov. 7, 7 p.m.
Evening rally during meeting of National Network on Cuba
UDC-David A. Clarke School of Law
4340 Connecticut Ave NW
For more information: 202-986-5839

RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA

Fri., Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m.
East Bay Center for the Performing Arts
339 11th St.

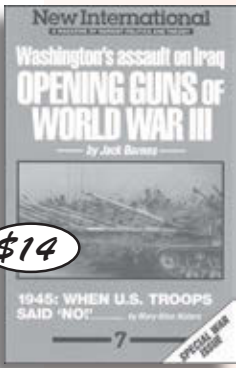
Further reading...

“The U.S. rulers have no interest in the national rights of the Kurds. The depth of the national pride and determination of the Kurdish

people is a mystery to them; it will always catch them by surprise.”

— Jack Barnes from ‘Opening Guns of World War III’ in *New International* No. 7

pathfinderpress.com



Washington promotes Pacific trade pact as counter to China

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Washington joined the rulers of 11 other capitalist nations in Asia and the Americas Oct. 5 to announce they had signed the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement. The deal has been a key component of the U.S. rulers' "pivot" to Asia. Washington seeks to counter China's growing economic influence and territorial encroachments in the South China Sea. The propertied rulers hope to defend U.S. imperialist dominance in the Pacific, the spoils of their blood-soaked victory in World War II.

Described in the media as a "potentially legacy-making achievement" and a "win" against China by the Barack Obama administration, the deal aims to bind co-signers in a web of common interests while defending markets for exploitation by U.S. capital.

TPP's 12 signers — U.S., Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Mexico, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam — control 40 percent of the world's gross domestic product and one-third of the world's trade. It's the largest U.S. trade pact since the North American Free Trade Agreement with Canada and Mexico in 1993.

The Obama administration also hopes to use TPP as a precedent for cobbling together the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership between the U.S. and the European Union.

These trade deals are part of a package of moves the Obama administration is making today, including the nuclear deal with Iran and "reset" with Moscow, aimed at defending Washington's weakening grip as the preeminent power in the capitalist "world order."

"When more than 95 percent of our potential customers live outside our borders, we can't let countries like China write the rules of the global economy. We should write those rules," Obama said Oct. 5.

The U.S. Congress and legislatures in the other countries must ratify TPP. There is substantial opposition from spokespeople in Congress for those who fear they will lose protection from foreign competition. Of course, bosses on all sides argue their case based on "what is best for America."

Beijing has continued to expand its economic influence, becoming the biggest trade partner with a number of Asian nations. The China Development Bank and Export-Import Bank of China provide more loans to regimes in the region than the World Bank and the Tokyo-controlled Asia Development Bank combined.

For years Washington has blocked Beijing from getting a position in the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. In June, the Chinese government responded, launching the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank. Many of Washington's traditional allies in Europe and Asia signed up as shareholders — over Washington's opposition.

Beijing has also continued to assert its military presence in the region, including construction of several artificial islands in the South China Sea, complete with runways, harbors and new military installations.

TPP is "as important to me as another aircraft carrier," Defense Secretary Ash-

ton Carter said in April.

Obama and other backers say the TPP will spur growth and exports that can counter the continuing worldwide economic crisis. But TPP won't touch the roots of the capitalist crisis of contracting production and trade and tightening profit margins.

Negotiations went down to the wire, as the bosses of each country fought for special protections for key industries at home while seeking to lower obstacles to expanding profitable trade at the expense of fellow "partners."

As is true for all capitalist agreements, this is not a pact of equals. The 12 countries have vastly different economic and cultural development, different levels of productivity, different military and political strength.

The trade union officialdom in the U.S. has campaigned against TPP, arguing along nationalist and class-collaborationist lines that "free trade" competition will not "protect American jobs." Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump as well as Democratic candidates Bernie Sanders and, after originally helping promote it, Hillary Clinton, have spoken against it.

Meanwhile, Washington continues to expand its military ties to counter China in the Pacific. A recent drill with the Philippine armed forces was the third major exercise this year off that country's coast. Manila is building facilities at Subic Bay. Popular opposition cost U.S. forces access to the naval base there in 1992 after almost 100 years of occupation, but Washington hopes to place warships and troops there again.

SWP celebrates rich political history in Omaha

BY RUTH ROBINETT

OMAHA, Neb. — "Socialist Workers Party members here are being deployed to other cities across the country as part of strengthening the work of the party," said Norton Sandler, a member of the Socialist Workers Party National Committee, at an Oct. 3 meeting here. Through this redeployment several SWP branches and the party center in New York will be strengthened, he said.

"Working people know the job situation is not getting better. Their standard of living has been steadily eroded," Sandler said. "The SWP calls this 'a slow-burning depression.' There are not long bread lines on the scale of the 1930s, but this is what a depression looks like today. Only 62.4 percent of adults of working age are employed. And the figures in the Black community are much worse.

"In this context, the fight for \$15 an hour and a union movement is having an impact everywhere, giving workers confidence. A new vanguard of the working class is being forged," he said. Many leading this are young and they are having an impact. As an example, Sandler pointed to a recent National Labor Relations Board ruling that grants a union the right to negotiate with a parent company as well as a contractor. The airlines, fast-food companies, hotels and many other employers have

Cubans demand US extradite 1976 plane bomber



Ismael Batista

Commemorations of the 39th anniversary of the bombing of Cubana Airlines Flight 455 were held in Barbados, Cuba, Guyana and Venezuela Oct. 6. Two bombs exploded on the flight shortly after it took off from Barbados that day in 1976, killing all 73 people on board. They were planted under the orders of Orlando Bosch and Luis Posada, right-wing opponents of the Cuban Revolution who directed the operation from Venezuela.

Among those murdered were 57 Cubans, including 24 members of the Cuban youth fencing team; 11 Guyanese, six on their way to study medicine in Cuba; and five North Koreans from a cultural delegation.

Both Bosch and Posada had ties to the CIA, although the spy agency denied it had anything to do with the bombing. They later moved to the U.S. Despite their well-known role in the attack, Washington refused to extradite them to Venezuela. Bosch died in Miami in 2011; Posada still lives there today.

In an open letter to President Barack Obama Oct. 6 demanding Posada's extradition, the Cuban Barbadian Friendship Association noted that the Cuban Five — Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González — were on a mission "to monitor the terrorist activities of those mercenaries and report their planned threats back to Cuba" when they were arrested by the FBI in 1998. The frame-up of the Five on charges of conspiracy to commit espionage and the refusal to extradite Posada show Washington's hypocrisy, the letter said. The last of the Five were freed and returned to Cuba in December.

Nile Jorge Prats Reyes, grandson of one of the attendants on Flight 455, read a message from the Cuban Five at the event at Havana's Colón Cemetery (above).

To avoid further attacks "many Cubans left their homes and silently, in the enemy's lair, wove with their hands the defense of the homeland," the message said.

— SETH GALINSKY

tried to say they are not responsible for abuses and grievances imposed on workers by contractors.

Black-led, but broad, mobilizations in the streets have impacted the U.S. ruling class and resulted in them reining in the cops somewhat. "We have to know, discuss and organize to expand these victories for the working-class," Sandler said.

"The SWP has had branches in Omaha a number of times dating back to the 1930s," said Joe Swanson a longtime leader of the SWP from Lincoln, who also spoke. "Pick up a copy of *Teamster Power*," he said. "Farrell Dobbs, a leader of the fight that organized tens of thousands in the over-the-road trucking industry in the 1930s throughout the Midwest and of the SWP, writes about the 'Siege of Nebraska' in 1938 and other battles across the state.

"We may be leaving Omaha for now, but that won't stop the party's political work in Nebraska," Swanson said. "Talking and working with workers and farmers in small towns, cities and working-class neighborhoods in every corner of the state, we've gotten a real hearing for communist politics."

"I say to party members in the Twin Cities and Chicago who came to join us here today, keep your cars in shape because we will be calling on you for help," he said. Swanson noted that "from the beginning we have been in-

volved in the defense of Ed Poindexter and Mondo we Langa (David Rice) — the Omaha 2 — who have been imprisoned in the Nebraska state penitentiary for 45 years.

"Ed and Mondo, who were leaders of the Black Panther chapter here, were framed up by the cops in 1970 because they called for the arrest, prosecution and punishment of cops who beat and kill working people," Swanson said. "We took part in two meetings in Omaha and Lincoln over the last month demanding Nebraska officials free them."

"Coming here I read how in Midlothian, Illinois, police officer Steven Zamiar was sentenced to 15 months in prison yesterday for repeatedly striking a man with a metal baton outside a bar four years ago," Alyson Kennedy from Chicago pointed out in the discussion.

"This shows how much has been won by the fight against police brutality," she said. "This cop would not have been arrested, much less convicted, a few years ago."

"One of the reasons the party is important to me is that it keeps grassroots people involved and informed," Carl Tyler, from North Omaha, said after the meeting.

Among the 32 participants another \$735 was pledged to the SWP Party Building Fund, bringing contributions from the area to \$2,001, well over the Omaha branch's initial goal of \$1,400.

Why capitalism extended marriage to the working class

Problems of Women's Liberation by Evelyn Reed is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for October. In her writings Reed explores the economic and social roots of women's oppression from prehistoric society to modern capitalism. An active participant in the women's liberation movement of the 1960s and '70s, she spoke and debated on this topic in cities throughout the world. This piece is from the chapter, "How Women Lost Control of Their Destiny and How They Can Regain It," a talk given to some 250 participants at the Southern Female Liberation Conference held at Mt. Beulah, Mississippi, in May 1970. Reed joined the socialist movement in 1940 and remained a leading member of the Socialist Workers Party until her death in 1979. Copyright © 1969 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY EVELYN REED

Universal marriage, covering all classes, became prevalent in Western civilization along with the rise of bourgeois relations. Even then it took some time to mature as a legal mandate. The poor and propertyless passed through a period of "common law" marriage before they achieved the same kind of legal marriage ties, sanctioned by



Evelyn Reed on speaking tour in early 1970s. Institutions of marriage and family are neither "sacred" nor "natural," but serve interests of capitalist class foisting upon workers all economic and social responsibilities for their own nuclear family. "The only thing sacred to the capitalist ruling class is the almighty dollar and the rights of private property," Reed wrote.

the state, as did the wealthy classes. Today, with or without a church wedding, all classes of married couples receive the same state-authenticated marriage certificates which make them officially and legally married.

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

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

Capitalism brought into being large-scale industry and along with it masses of the proletariat packed into

factory towns and cities. This brought about a change in the economic position of women. So long as agriculture and household crafts remained dominant in production, all the members of the family, women and children included, helped in the work that sustained the family and the community. Cooperative labor within the family framework was the characteristic mode of life on the farms, in the small shops, and in the home enterprises.

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

Under these circumstances somebody had to be saddled with the lifetime responsibility for taking care of dependent women and children. This was fixed, through universal marriage, upon the husbands and fathers, although no guarantees whatever were given to these wage earners that they would always have jobs or sufficient pay to fulfill their family obligations.

To conceal this economic exploita-

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

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

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

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No such thing as an ‘American job’

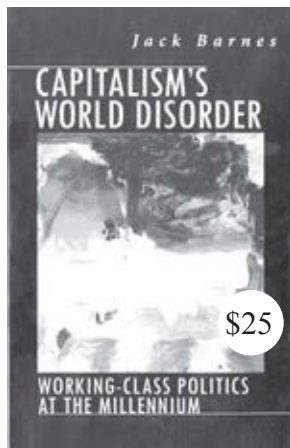
As debate unfolds on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, with both supporters and opponents of the trade agreement arguing in a nationalist “American interests” framework, it’s useful to look at how the communist movement has addressed the questions of other economic and military pacts by imperialist governments. The excerpt below from Capitalism’s World Disorder by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, takes up a working-class approach to the North American Free Trade Agreement. Copyright © 1999 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY JACK BARNES

How do class-struggle-minded workers answer the trade union bureaucrats’ demagogic cry that NAFTA will result in losing “American jobs” to Mexico? There is only one answer: There is no such thing as an “American job” or a “Mexican job,” only workers jobs. Workers in the United States have to get together with workers in Mexico and with workers in other countries and organize ourselves to defend our interests as a class, as part of the vast toiling majority of humanity. We must not support policies that strengthen our common class enemy. If workers give any other answer, the bureaucrats and the liberals and the reactionaries

will win the argument. If workers give any *national* answer, our exploiters will only strengthen their power over all those who work for a living.

Class-conscious workers oppose NAFTA, as we oppose all economic and military pacts entered into by the imperialist government at home with other capitalist regimes. But we do so from an internationalist standpoint, rejecting any notion of common interests with the employing class in bolstering their competitiveness against their rivals or helping them reinforce the pariah status and superexploitation of immigrant workers. The only “we” we recognize is that of working people and our allies in the United States, Canada and Mexico — and the rest of the Americas and the world. Not “we” Americans,” “we” English speakers, “we” the white race, or anything else that chains us to the class that grows wealthy off the exploitation of our labor and that of our toiling brothers and sisters the world over.



Rejection of Fiat two-tier deal forces new offer

Continued from front page

ing down the first proposal by nearly two to one. It was the first time a national contract negotiated between UAW officials and a major carmaker was rejected in more than 30 years.

Currently new hires start out at just over half the pay of workers hired before 2007. Under the rejected contract, they would have topped out at \$25.35 an hour, well below the \$29.76 top pay of the so-called traditional workers. The new offer says they would receive the same wage as “traditional workers” after eight years.

The proposal divides “in-progression workers” — those hired in 2007 or later — into eight groups, each one at a different pay rate.

“Traditional” workers would get a \$4,000 signing bonus; workers on the second tier would get \$3,000.

The first-tier workers will get raises of 3 percent in the first and third years of the contract, with 4 percent productivity bonuses in the second and fourth years.

“Tier-two workers get a lot in this contract, and they deserve it,” said Rich Cahalane, a tool store crib attendant in a Kokomo, Indiana, transmission plant, in a phone interview Oct. 12. “The company has made a lot of money today because it paid second-tier workers so little.” Cahalane has worked for the company for 30 years.

Workers were told the second wage tier would be capped at 25 percent of the workforce after the 2011 contract. But almost 45 percent, or approximately 16,500, of Fiat Chrysler’s 36,600 union production

workers are second tier.

“Second-tier workers may be the majority here,” Cahalane said. “They opened a new transmission plant in Tipton, Indiana. Most of those workers were new.”

“They made some improvements in the wage proposal for workers in the second tier,” Alan Epstein, who has worked at the Toledo Jeep plant for more than 30 years, said by phone Oct. 12. “They promise that second-tier workers will be at top pay in eight years. Chrysler clearly does not want to see a strike. But it’s a four-year contract, so it will all be up for grabs during the next contract negotiations.”

Many workers interviewed during a shift change at the Belvidere, Illinois, Chrysler plant said they expected the new contract proposal to pass.

The UAW uses pattern bargaining to negotiate contracts with the Big Three auto companies: Fiat Chrysler, Ford and GM. Once the first contract is achieved, the idea is that the other two will follow suit. Fiat Chrysler, while increasing sales for 44 straight months, is seen as the weakest of the three.

Suggesting that Ford workers will get a better deal than those at Fiat Chrysler, UAW Vice President Jimmy Settles told the *Detroit Free Press* that the Fiat Chrysler accord “is only a pattern and the tentative agreement reached with Ford will be UAW-Ford specific, aimed at addressing concerns with the current agreement and securing gains for our membership.”

Voting on the Fiat Chrysler accord is scheduled in each plant on Oct. 20 or 21.

LETTERS

‘Open’ borders closed

To have borders between European countries “open,” the Schengen agreement [the passport-free zone in Europe] moves the borders to every street inside the countries. The Swedish social democratic government gives a green light to the cops to arrest immigrants who haven’t registered for or been denied asylum.

When 60 stateless Palestinians recently camped outside the Migration Office in Malmö demanding asylum, the cops moved in and tore down their tents.

Lasse Erlandsson
Stockholm, Sweden

Finally out of solitary

I’m writing to let you know I’ve moved *out* of the SHU [Security Housing Unit]. *Finally!* So please change my address.

I also wanted to commend you on providing your newspaper dur-

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ing the nine years of SHU torture that I endured. Through papers like yours I drew strength to get through solitary confinement. Continue your work of providing a revolutionary perspective to what we experience living under U.S. imperialism.

A prisoner
California

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

Rally spurs discussion on fight against racism

BY JAMES HARRIS

WASHINGTON — Many tens of thousands gathered at the National Mall here for the “Justice or Else” demonstration Oct. 10. Called by Louis Farrakhan, the leader of the Nation of Islam, it was also billed as a commemoration of the 1995 Million Man March.

Many of those participating saw the action as a way to advance the fight against police brutality. Signs and T-shirts with photos of people killed by the cops dotted the crowd.

Others came to reaffirm the theme of the Oct. 16, 1995, rally when hundreds of thousands of African-American workers, youth and middle-class men turned out to demonstrate Black pride and reject an image of Black men as violent criminals and an irresponsible “underclass.”

The Justice or Else website opened with the demand, “We want Justice for Blacks in America who have given America 460 years of sweat and blood to make her rich and powerful.” The second demand was for “an immediate end to police brutality and mob attacks” followed by calls for “justice” for Native American Indians, Mexicans and Latinos, women, the poor, the incarcerated and veterans. The overwhelming majority of participants were Black men and women.

On stage were family members of many of those killed by the cops or vigilantes, including Michael Brown, Sr., father of Michael Brown; Sabryna Fulton, mother of Trayvon Martin; and Sharon Cooper, sister of Sandra Bland, who died in police custody in Texas. “The world has shown us that we have to control our own narrative. I want to thank you and if I could ask you to do one thing, say her name,” said Cooper. “Sandra Bland,” responded the crowd.

Farrakhan spoke for two hours, denouncing racist discrimination, but also raising demands and politics that undermine the interests of the working class. Among his reactionary themes was opposition to women’s right to choose abortion, the notion that the road forward for Blacks in the U.S. is “for America to let us go, not integrate us,” and conspiracy theories that take the eyes of fighters off the real enemy, the capitalist class and their politicians.

At one point Farrakhan criticized those in Charleston, South Carolina, who took the moral high ground when they refused to call for vengeance against Dylann Storm Roof, the white supremacist who killed nine people at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church. Farrakhan said that those who forgave Roof showed “cowardice.”

Near the end of the speech the Nation of Islam leader also slandered Malcolm X.

The month before the rally, the U.S. Capitol Police sent out a provocative email to its 1,800 officers claiming that there was potential for violence from participants in the rally. But that attempt to bait the event backfired and the cops were forced to disavow the slander.

“I came to find others who want to fight against police injustice as well as other injustices and to let people know what happened to my son,” said Delphine Matthews, mother of Frank McQueen, who was killed by the cops in Chester, Pennsylvania, on June 2, 2014. She distributed leaflets about his death and an organization she formed to fight against police injustice called “Direction, Voice and Light.”

Kwame Rose, 21, came with a group from Baltimore. Rose said he was recently arrested at the second pretrial hearing for the police who killed Freddie Gray in Baltimore. “It was what I call a ‘targeted arrest’ because I was protesting,” he said. “Marching in the streets is the kind of action that’s needed.”

“Probably the best thing that happened in 2015 was taking down the rebel flag,” said Todd Barber, who drove up with 11 friends from Forest, Mississippi. “You have to remember the violence it stood for. I’m here to show unity, with my people.”

“For me, it’s necessary that we try to show young folks the legacy of the struggle,” said Warren Price from Laborers Local 332 in Philadelphia, who helped organize two union buses to the rally. “They are the ones who hold the future.”

Janet Post and Arlene Rubinstein contributed to this article.