

SWP drive expands reach of ‘Militant,’ Fighting Fund

BY MARY MARTIN

The heart of the Socialist Workers Party spring campaign to introduce the party, the *Militant* newspaper and books from Pathfinder Press to working people is discussing with workers on their doorsteps the effects of the capitalist economic and social crisis and Washington’s foreign policy and wars abroad on our jobs and lives. This week party members joined those marching in May Day actions for amnesty for all immigrant workers here and an end to deportations.

SWP members also debated how only the working class can protect and improve the air, land and seas from rapacious destruction by the profit system of capitalism at April 29 “climate marches.”

At the end of week four, the drive is on schedule.

The party-building drive aims to meet and join actions with working people interested in finding a revolutionary course for the working class. The drive runs concurrently with the \$112,000 Militant Fighting Fund.

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Spring Campaign to expand the reach of ‘Militant,’ books

April 1–May 23 (week four)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold
UNITED STATES				
Albany	60	47	60	33
Atlanta	65	51	65	35
Chicago	80	52	80	32
Denver	25	17	25	9
Lincoln	20	18	20	14
Los Angeles	110	70	110	49
Miami	35	12	35	17
New York	135	86	135	107
Oakland	80	61	80	112
Philadelphia	50	43	50	24
Seattle	70	70	70	39
Twin Cities	50	28	50	20
Washington	50	44	50	30
Total U.S.	830	599	830	521
Prisoners	15	14		
UNITED KINGDOM				
London	50	38	50	54
Manchester	45	35	45	21
Total U.K.	95	73	95	75
CANADA				
Montreal	40	19	40	23
Vancouver	30	23	30	12
Total Canada	70	42	70	35
New Zealand	40	25	40	16
Australia	35	26	35	17
Total	1,085	779	1,070	664
SHOULD BE	1,100	629	1,100	629

Washington, Beijing put squeeze on North Korea

BY TERRY EVANS

Washington is continuing to press for an alliance with Beijing as it pursues its decades long efforts to force the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to abandon its nuclear and long-range missile programs. It is preparing a new round of punishing sanctions on the DPRK, sanctions that hit working people the hardest.

Washington tries to paint North Korea as a pariah regime and the war threat in the region. But it is the U.S.

US HANDS OFF KOREA! FOR A NUCLEAR FREE PACIFIC!

— SWP statement page 9

rulers who have an over 70-year record of aggression and violence against the people of the Korean Peninsula.

Washington invaded and occupied Korea at the end of World War II, dividing it in half over the opposition of the vast majority of the population North and South; led a devastating war against the people of the North that ended in a stalemate; and to this day stations over 28,000 troops in the South, backed up by 49,000 in Japan.

North Korea attempted a ballistic missile test flight April 28, but the launch failed.

Washington has a formidable ar-

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Advances in Kurdish struggle shake up wars in the Middle East

BY JIM BRADLEY

Just weeks before a scheduled May 16-17 White House meeting between President Donald Trump and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Ankara used warplanes and artillery to attack Kurdish fighters in northern Syria, northern Iraq and southeastern Turkey. The April 25 assaults killed over 100.

Ankara’s attacks reflect the increasing weight of the Kurdish national struggle in the region. Some 30 million Kurds are divided between Turkey, Iraq, Syria and Iran. They’re the largest nationality worldwide without their own country.

Ankara’s target in Syria was the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG), which is backed by Washington in leading the ground effort of the multinational Syrian Democratic

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Tens of thousands march, demand, ‘No deportations!’ Socialist Workers Party: ‘Amnesty now!’



Thousands march in Grand Rapids, Michigan, May 1. Marches, rallies and work stoppages took place in over 200 towns and cities, reflecting growing unity of workers against deportations.

BY SETH GALINSKY

In more than 200 U.S. towns and cities small and large, tens of thousands joined marches, rallies and strikes protesting deportations of immigrant workers May 1 and standing up to attempts to pit native-born and foreign-born workers against each other. Many also protested against attacks by the bosses on wages and working conditions and government assaults on the rights of unions and workers.

Several thousand workers marched down the Las Vegas Strip led by Culinary Union Local 226. They were joined by contingents from the Teamsters and Service Employees International Union; university students; Jewish, Muslim and Christian clergy; the NAACP; the National Organiza-

tion for Women; and others.

“The Culinary Union is not only Nevada’s largest union,” Local 226 spokesperson Bethany Khan told the *Militant* by phone May 2. “We are the largest immigrant organization in the state. We represent 57,000 workers from 167 countries who speak 40 different languages. We wanted to celebrate International Workers’ Day bringing together immigrants and the native-born.”

“With workers at more than 90 percent of the restaurants and casinos in the union, we’re truly a union town,” Khan said, “but we have to fight every day to preserve the gains we made. Presidents and other elected officials come and go, but the union is here to stay.”

Members of the Socialist Workers

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May Day march shows support for Cuba’s socialist revolution

BY MAGGIE TROWE

HAVANA — “Our strength is in unity” was the slogan of the banner at the front of the massive May Day march here, carried at the lead of the Cuban youth contingent of some 50,000. There were reminders everywhere of the legacy of Fidel Castro, the historical leader of the Cuban Revolution, visible in handmade placards and photos carried by marchers in the first May Day march to take place since his death last November.

“We reiterate once again our legitimate demand for the elimination of the economic, commercial, financial blockade imposed by the United States government, which has caused

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Trial set for rail workers facing frame-up in Quebec

NJ march commemorates Workers’ Memorial Day

Communist League debates class lines in UK election

BY TONY HUNT

MANCHESTER, England — “There’s not one Britain, it’s class divided. In or out of the European Union, the crisis coming down on working people is not going away,” Peter Clifford, Communist League candidate for Member of Parliament in the Manchester Gorton constituency, told over 200 people at an April 22 candidates’ debate organized by the Levenshulme Community Association here.

“Working people are looking for change. The answer is not promises to soften the blows, promises that will go nowhere,” he said. “We need to build a party among working people that can lead a revolution and end capitalism.”

Clifford is one of three Communist League candidates running for Parliament in the June 8 election. The CL in London is standing Andrés Mendoza in Islington North and Ólof Andra Proppé in Harlow, Essex.

Clifford’s comments came after Liberal Democrat candidate Jackie Pearcey had said that the central issue in the election was who could win the best terms in Britain’s exit from the EU. “*We* shouldn’t be forced to accept what is second best,” she said. Her “get the best for Britain” framework was echoed by the other candidates — except Clifford.

On April 18 Prime Minister Theresa May called the June snap general elections. Riding high in the polls, her goal is to bolster the Conservative Party in Parliament as the next government engages in protracted negotiations with rival capitalist governments on the continent over terms of Britain’s exit from

the EU.

May replaced David Cameron as prime minister after passage of the Brexit referendum, which he opposed. She told the Conservative Party conference last October that she would “put the power of government at the service of ordinary working-class people.”

As the opposition Labour Party’s veneer of being a party fighting for working people fades, its working-class vote is ebbing away. Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn launched the party’s campaign April 20, saying he shouldn’t be counted out even though the party’s poll numbers were very low.

The Scottish National Party, which favors staying in the European Union, won a vote in the Scottish Parliament March 28 for a second referendum on independence, to be held after the terms of the U.K.’s exit from the EU are known.

Communist League campaign

“The elections will change nothing of what working people face, nor will it solve the problems facing the U.K.’s rulers from their declining position in the world, or from the fracturing of the U.K. under the impact of the worldwide capitalist crisis,” Clifford told people after the debate. “The deepening insecurity of workers’ living standards and working conditions will continue as capitalist bosses drive to rein in costs and increase ‘labor flexibility’ in an effort to boost profits. The U.K. rulers will continue their military participation in Washington’s never-ending wars.”

Clifford was joined by six other can-



Militant /Hugo Wils

Peter Clifford, Communist League candidate for Parliament, speaking at April 22 debate. Left, candidate George Galloway, independent, and right, Jackie Pearcey, Liberal Democrat.

didates at the April 22 debate, among them Liberal Democrat Pearcey, Labour’s Afzal Khan and former Labour MP George Galloway, standing as an independent. The Conservatives and U.K. Independence Party declined to participate. Asked about the possible election of National Front leader Marine Le Pen in France, Clifford pointed out the parallel with the election of Donald Trump as U.S. president. Most workers in France “have no confidence” that the main bourgeois parties could offer “change” workers badly need as they, like their counterparts in Britain, feel the brunt of the capitalist crisis.

Jess Mayo for the Green Party said the prospect of a Le Pen victory demonstrated “the rise of a narrative of hate.” Her comment was echoed by all the other bourgeois candidates.

Marine Le Pen winning the French presidency would no more signify a rise in racism among working people than did Trump’s election, Clifford said. Her support is based on workers’ anger over the assaults they face and a search for different answers. “But neither of them can deliver change, as workers will find out,” he said.

Clifford said he and other Communist League members campaign knocking on doors in working-class communities. “We find interest in the need for a revolutionary working-class party.”

In response to a question on the “creeping privatization” of the National Health Service, Khan claimed that “La-

bour is the party of the NHS.”

“Working people face more than creeping privatization of the NHS,” Clifford said, “because health care is a commodity. There will always be a crisis of health provision for working people under capitalism. It’s a Labour Party myth that they were responsible for bringing in universal free health care. It was a concession by the capitalist class to the deepening struggles and ferment within the working class in the closing years of the Second World War.

“In Cuba health care is not a commodity, because they made a revolution and overthrew the dog-eat-dog capitalist system. That’s why doctors there are able to start from solidarity, not running a business,” Clifford said. He pointed to the Cuban volunteer doctors and other health care workers who played a decisive role in eliminating Ebola in West Africa.

“As Nelson Mandela explained, history is not made by kings and generals but by the masses of the people,” Clifford said. “We have to look to ourselves, get organized, unite, and develop solidarity in order to move forward.”

The Communist League calls for the unions to fight for a national public works program to create jobs for the growing number of unemployed and unorganized workers, Clifford said. And the party calls for an amnesty for all undocumented workers and an end to restrictions on immigrant workers’ right to work.

THE MILITANT

Solidarity with prisoners’ fight for rights

Immigrants at Tacoma, Wash., staged a hunger strike against prison conditions and authorities’ efforts to hamper their defense against deportation. The ‘Militant’ explains that fights by workers behind bars to defend their rights are in the interest of all workers.



Militant/Clay Dennison

Supporters of immigrant prisoners on hunger strike at Tacoma, Wash., in April.

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306 W. 37TH ST., 13TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018.

The Militant

Vol. 81/No. 19

Closing news date: May 3, 2017

Editor: John Studer
Managing Editor: Naomi Craine

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Emma Johnson, Jacob Perasso, Maggie Trowe, Brian Williams.

Published weekly except for one week in January, one week in June, one week in July, one week in December.

Business manager: Lea Sherman
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018. **Telephone:** (212) 244-4899
Fax: (212) 244-4947
E-mail: themilitant@mac.com
Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: For one year send \$35 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Africa, Asia, and the Middle East: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

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Expand reach of ‘Militant’

Continued from front page

This annual fund is essential to raise the money needed to keep the paper coming out (see chart below).

Martin Koppel from New York participated in the Eighth Asia-Pacific Regional Conference of Solidarity with Cuba April 8-9, in Manila, Philippines. “Conference participants picked up a total of 16 subscriptions and 24 of the Pathfinder books we are offering at special discount as part of the drive,” he said.

Terry Evans reports from New York that he and Candace Wagner met plumber Edward Paladino when they knocked on his door on Staten Island. “Hurricane Sandy devastated this area,” Paladino told them. “I’ve lived here for 30 years, but after the storm was the first time I’ve really seen people pull together. I’m glad I never asked for government relief because I’ve heard that the government is trying to take it back from people who got it.”

Evans and Wagner described how the revolutionary government of Cuba prepared before the same hurricane hit that island and led the mobilization of tens of thousands of working people to protect the population and then repair the damage. Paladino got a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes.

The two other books each on special for \$5 with purchase of a subscription are *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record*, also by Barnes, and *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters.

Edwin Fruit reports that party members had nonstop discussions at the May Day marches and on workers’ doorsteps in both Seattle and Ya-

kima, Washington.

Some 600 workers marched in Yakima, including a number of farmworkers. Seven people signed up for subscriptions to the *Militant* and three took advantage of the special price on campaign books.

Going door to door in Yakima, Fruit and fellow SWP member Clay Dennison met Robert Cooley, a truck driver concerned about safety conditions on the job. “When we showed him the headline in the *Militant* calling for amnesty,” Fruit explained, “he said ‘I don’t know about amnesty. I’ve worked all my life and I know poverty. It’s alright if people come and work and obey the laws, but not if people come and take advantage of the system or expect to be taken care of without working.’

“After we talked for awhile, he said, ‘The whole mess was created by the politicians and the employers,’ and decided to try a subscription.”

Solidarity with rail workers

In British Columbia, Katy LeRougetel reports Communist League members organized to go to Vancouver Island and bring solidarity to the workers there following a logging train derailment accident that killed three workers.

“This is a tragedy. This is three lives that just can’t be forgotten, and many more people were affected,” said Brianna Masters, who works as a server in a restaurant in Campbell River and is studying to be an elder care worker. “Those responsible should be held accountable. To me this goes back to the kind of government we have.”

“We have a capitalist government where profits come before human needs and safety,” said LeRougetel. Masters subscribed to the *Militant* and got a copy of *The Clinton’s Anti-Working-Class Record*. A total of five subscriptions and four of the books on special were bought by workers in Port McNeil, Nanaimo and Campbell River.

Alex Huinil reports that several hundred demonstrators rallied against deportations outside the Connecticut Capitol Building in Hartford April 29. The rally was organized by Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ, and area immigrant rights and student groups. Demonstrators carried signs saying, “Here to stay,” and “Yes we can

State of Arkansas executes 4 prisoners over 8 days



The state of Arkansas conducted its fourth execution over eight days April 27, putting to death Kenneth Williams, 38, through lethal injections.

The Arkansas Supreme Court and U.S. Supreme Court turned down an appeal to halt the execution, as they did in the killings of Jack Jones, 52, and Marcel Williams, 46, three days earlier and for Ledell Lee, 51. The executions are the first in the state in 12 years.

Protesters, above, gathered at Arkansas state Capitol in Little Rock April 14 to demand a halt to the executions.

With the state’s supply of the drug midazolam set to expire at the end of the month, Gov. Asa Hutchinson had ordered the killings of eight inmates in an 11-day period in April. Four of these were stopped by court orders.

Midazolam is a sedative that is supposed to render inmates unconscious while two other drugs administered afterwards paralyze and kill them. Use of midazolam has resulted in prolonged agony in executions in several states, including Alabama, Arizona, Ohio and Oklahoma.

After being administered midazolam, witnesses report Kenneth Williams’ body jerked about 20 times. He was “lurching, jerking, convulsing and coughing,” The Associated Press reported.

Kenneth Williams had been on death row for 17 years for the killing of former deputy prison warden Cecil Boren after escaping from prison. In the getaway, he crashed into a water-delivery truck, killing the driver, Michael Greenwood.

“When he took my father from us, Mr. Williams caused us all a great deal of pain,” Michael Greenwood’s daughter Kayla wrote to the governor. “That does not mean that asking you [to] spare Mr. Williams is not the right thing to do. It is.”

She had heard that Williams’ daughter Jasmine was trying to raise funds to see her father before the execution. She got Jasmine’s phone number from Williams’ lawyer and called her. Greenwood’s family paid for her ticket to come see her father, and Kayla and other family members drove her to the prison where the meeting took place. Prison officials refused to allow the Greenwood family members to meet with Williams.

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

— We need to stay united.”

“We need to go out on the street against deportations. This is why we are here today,” said cleaning worker Aura Duarte, who subscribed to the *Militant*. “Twenty-eight co-workers decided to come. We have been fighting for higher wages and good benefits and we won a contract six months ago. We need to fight together, no matter where

we come from.”

Some workers party members have met during the drive have joined in the effort. For those interested in working with the party, the SWP is organizing an Active Workers Conference June 15-17. For more information, or to join in the party-building drive, contact the SWP party office nearest you, listed on page 8.

Militant Fighting Fund			
April 1- May 23 (week 4)			
Country	Quota	Paid	%
UNITED STATES			
Albany	\$4,100	\$3,120	76%
Atlanta	\$10,725	\$6,044	56%
Chicago	\$11,850	\$2,583	22%
Denver	\$750	\$455	61%
Lincoln	\$350	\$294	84%
Los Angeles	\$8,450	\$3,810	45%
Miami	\$3,200	\$1,400	44%
New York	\$16,600	\$7,570	46%
Oakland	\$13,700	\$6,961	51%
Philadelphia	\$3,600	\$936	26%
Seattle	\$7,300	\$4,183	57%
Twin Cities	\$4,100	\$467	11%
Washington	\$7,350	\$2,708	37%
Total U.S.	\$92,075	\$40,531	44%
CANADA			
Montreal	\$5,100	\$2,880	56%
Vancouver	\$3,000	\$161	5%
Total Canada	\$8,100	\$3,041	38%
NEW ZEALAND			
	\$4,575	\$2,280	50%
AUSTRALIA			
	\$1,175	\$1,015	86%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	\$2,450	\$1,180	48%
Manchester	\$925	\$440	48%
Total UK	\$3,375	\$1,620	48%
FRANCE			
	\$450	\$288	64%
Total	\$109,750	\$48,775	44%
Should be	\$112,000	\$64,000	57%

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by Mary-Alice Waters

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To subscribe or purchase books at these prices, contact Socialist Workers Party or Communist League branches listed on page 8.

The fraud of capitalist ‘electoral reform’ laws

On April 20 the Federal Election Commission denied an extension for the exemption the Socialist Workers Party has had for over 35 years from filing the names of contributors to its election campaigns. The following excerpts from an April 5, 1974, article from the *Militant* by Larry Seigle discuss the decision of the U.S. capitalist rulers to promote “campaign reforms” — like disclosure — in an effort to regain weakening support for bourgeois politics at the time.

Going into the 1970s, demonstrations against the war in Vietnam, for Black rights, for women’s right to choose abortion and other social protests and union battles were spurring growing distrust in capitalist rule and its two parties, the Democrats and Republicans.

The widespread outrage at what became known as the Watergate burglary, organized by the reelection campaign of President Richard Nixon led to his resignation in 1974.

The Socialist Workers Party seized the opportunity in 1973 to launch a far-reaching political campaign, including legal action, against government spying and disruption against the SWP and Young Socialist Alliance by the FBI and other government agencies.

The rulers sought to deflect popular attention from the revelations of the workings of the capitalist system by adopting a series of “campaign reforms.” One of their first moves was the 1971 Federal Election Campaign Act, which ordered political campaign committees to report the names of their contributors. This was ballyhooed as a tool to establish “transparency” in elections.

This effort was promoted by Common Cause, a liberal outfit that promoted disclosure. They led a national effort to prevent the SWP from winning exemption precisely when the party’s campaign was forcing out increasing evidence of government spy-

ing and harassment of the party.

Future issues of the *Militant* will cover how the SWP won this fight and the stakes for the working class.



BY LARRY SEIGLE

A grand fraud is being cooked up in Congress. The master chefs are the leaders of both capitalist parties, and they are advertising the recipe as “The Answer to Watergate.”

The dish? Reform of campaign financing, including tougher reporting laws, new restrictions on raising and spending funds, and some form of public financing.

The promoters are ecstatic. “At a single stroke,” promises senator Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), “we can drive the money-lenders out of the temple of politics. We can end the corrosive and corrupting influence of private money in public life.”

Unfortunately there is no Truth-in-Packaging-Law that applies to the fast-sell doubletalk of politicians promoting new legislation. If there were, the proposals being talked about so glibly by Kennedy and his colleagues would be required to bear a notice: “‘Reform’ value — nil. And watch out! This bill is hazardous to your political rights....”

Stiffer reporting requirements

One who still believes that the politicians are, under public pressure, trying to clean up politics might say at this point, “Okay, the public financing proposal is unfair. But surely some progress will come from forcing public disclosure of campaign contributions, won’t it?”

No it won’t. Moreover, the disclosure provisions will hurt smaller parties even more than the unfair public financing.

Let’s take one example. Under this law, the Socialist Workers Party has had to report to the government the name, address and workplace of all contributors of more than \$100 to SWP election campaigns. At the same time, the government claims that because the SWP is “subversive,” anyone who is “affiliated” to the SWP is fair target for FBI surveillance and harassment. And “subversives” can be fired from government employment and many private companies with government contracts or their own version of the blacklist.

Thus, anyone who contributes has got to be ready to accept this harassment.

“But,” our friend might argue, “the law applies equally to everyone.” That’s the catch. There is no “equality.” Contributing to the democrats and the republicans is not going to lose anyone a job, or get a file opened by any of the multitude of snooping agencies in Washington. But donating money to the SWP, or the Communist Party, or the People’s Party or the Raza Unida Party may very well.

“Cleaning up politics”

And as for “cleaning up” politics through forcing disclosure, this is the biggest fraud of all. As experience has shown, the only result of tightening controls on campaign financing is to drive the corruption further underground, not to end it.

Illicit financial deals are diverted to more indirect routes. Money is “laundered” through Mexican banks or for-



Tony Savino

On March 17, 1988, from left, Jack Barnes, national secretary of Socialist Workers Party; noted civil liberties lawyer Leonard Boudin, the party’s attorney; and John Studer, executive director of the Political Rights Defense Fund, read final decision by Judge Thomas Griesa ruling in favor of 1973 lawsuit filed by SWP and Young Socialist Alliance, holding decades of spying and disruption by FBI, CIA and other government agencies to be unconstitutional.

eign subsidiaries of U.S. corporations. If limits are put on contributions, big donors simply break them down and have 10, 50 or 100 “friends” make the gifts.

Illegal? Of course. But equally uncontrollable. And after all, the administrators of the law are the very same politicians and parties who are supposedly being controlled.

More important. No amount of “campaign reform” is going to change the fact that the capitalist parties serve the interests of the capitalist class and do its bidding. The class loyalties of the Democratic and Republican politicians can’t be “reformed.”

An additional unfair burden falling on the smaller parties is the monumental job of bookkeeping and paperwork that compliance with the new law requires. This is no problem for the capitalist parties, who have teams of lawyers and accountants at their disposal. But complying with the law is a huge task for smaller parties.

However, all the existing inequalities pale by comparison to what may happen in the future. The likelihood is that the

Democrats and Republicans will soon be getting public financing, bringing an end to their private fundraising. *This means that the reporting provisions may soon apply only to opponents of the two capitalist parties.*

Are these considerations merely accidental side effects that the “reformers” in congress didn’t foresee? I don’t think so. I think the capitalist parties have been taking advantage of the widespread revulsion at the corruption revealed by Watergate to sneak through some additional obstacles to independent political action.

While posing as crusading opponents of corruption to strengthen their public image, these shysters are reinforcing the most corrupt aspect of U.S. politics — the virtual stranglehold maintained by the two capitalist parties.

The fake reform bills now on the books, and the new ones likely to be passed, should be exposed and opposed by all those who believe in freedom of political expression and choice, and especially by those who support parties directly hurt by the new legislation.

Puerto Rico: Tens of thousands join strike, march on May Day

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — This year’s protest was the largest May Day action here in more than 20 years. Tens of thousands participated in a march that shut down much of the city’s center, including the Milla de Oro banking district.

Tens of thousands more who didn’t march took the day off work in response to union calls for an island-wide strike. The Department of Education admitted to a 90 percent absentee rate at public schools.

Puerto Rico, a U.S. colony, is awash in debt to hedge funds and banks abroad. Two days before the march, Gov. Ricardo Rosselló signed a bill that suspends collective bargaining agreements and lowers benefits for public employees, carrying out the demands of the Financial Control Board, appointed by President Barack Obama. The board has full power over the island’s budget. It is pushing lower wages and benefits; massive budget cuts to schools, health care and pensions; and increased utility rates.

Marchers said No! to the anti-worker

measures and demanded an audit of the debt to determine where the money went.

Five marches converged on the banking district. Students and employees of the University of Puerto Rico — most of whose 11 campuses have been shut down by a student strike since April 5 — marched from the Río Piedras campus. Members of UTIER, the electrical workers union, marched from the baseball stadium. Protesters included water workers, bus drivers, teachers, artists and feminist groups.

Many of the high-rise bank building owners had installed special fences to keep marchers away. As the protest ended a small group wearing masks and carrying stones broke windows at the corporate office of Banco Popular de Puerto Rico. This opened the door for cops to fire tear gas and rubber bullets, dispersing all remaining marchers.

Within three hours lawyers for the bank had filed for an injunction against 42 people and groups, including union leaders and activists who organized the march.

50 Years of Covert Operations in the U.S. Washington’s Political Police and the American Working Class

by Larry Seigle, Steve Clark, Farrell Dobbs

Traces the origins of bipartisan efforts to expand presidential powers and build the “national security” state essential to

maintaining capitalist rule. \$12 Also in Spanish, Farsi

FBI on Trial

The Victory in the Socialist Workers Party Suit Against Government Spying

by Margaret Jayko

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Sept. trial set for rail workers facing frame-up in Quebec

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

SHERBROOKE, Quebec — During a five-day court hearing that began April 10, Superior Court Judge Gaétan Dumas decided the trial of locomotive engineer Tom Harding and dispatcher Richard Labrie will take place here beginning Sept. 11. The rail workers are being framed up by the Canadian government for the July 2013 derailment and explosion of a runaway Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway train loaded with crude oil in downtown Lac-Mégantic, a city of 6,000 near the Quebec-Maine border. Harding and Labrie are members of United Steelworkers Local 1976. Jean Demaitre, a former company manager, is also charged.

All three face 47 counts of criminal negligence and could serve life in prison if convicted. The disaster killed 47 people and leveled the town center.

When Harding learned about the derailment, which took place in the middle of the night while he was asleep, he rushed to the site and risked his life to help firemen depressurize brakes on some of the oil cars that had not yet caught fire so they could be moved. Harding is viewed as a hero by many in the town, who think the bosses, not the rail workers, should be in the dock.

The judge placed his decisions on motions by Harding's lawyer Thomas Walsh on proposed evidence — including the government Transportation Safety Board report on the causes of the derailment — under a ban from being covered by the media.

"This isn't unusual," Walsh said. "It's intended to prevent potential jurors from forming opinions before the trial."

During an earlier hearing in January, the judge had ruled that the bankrupt and dissolved railroad, which has no assets or legal counsel, will also face a separate trial on similar charges. "The prosecution has absolutely no intention of going after the MMA," Walsh said. "They want to go after Tom Harding. The charges against the MMA are window dressing."

"No date has yet been set for MMA's

trial," he said.

An exposé in the Toronto *Globe and Mail* and the Transportation Safety Board report make clear that it was the railway bosses' profit-driven disregard for safety, and complicity of the federal government agency Transport Canada, that were responsible for the disaster.

Under a strict Montreal, Maine and Atlantic policy designed to save time and money, the *Globe* showed, Harding was barred from activating the train's automatic air brakes when he parked the train, which would have prevented it from rolling into Lac-Mégantic that night. And Transport Canada gave the rail company approval to run their dangerous oil trains with a bare-bones one-person "crew."

"The trial in September will establish the criminal responsibility of the top managers of MMA, of Transportation Canada, and the minister of transportation who were all aware of the breach of the most elementary rules of rail safety by MMA and who did nothing to correct them," Robert Bellefleur, spokesperson for the Citizens' and Groups Coalition for Rail Safety in Lac-Mégantic, told the *Militant* April 21. "This is what's called for under law C-21."

Passed after the 1992 Westray coal mine disaster in Nova Scotia that killed 26 miners without a single company executive being charged, Law C-21 extended criminal liability for negligence in the federal criminal code to make it easier to hold company officials accountable for injuries and deaths on the job. It was adopted after a public outcry by the miners' families, their union and publication of an official report that pointed the finger squarely at the negligence of the bosses.

"Will the population be protected from tragedies like that of Lac-Mégantic if the three employees are found guilty? The answer is no," Anne-Marie Saint-Cerny, a writer who is working on a book about the Lac-Mégantic disaster, told the *Militant* after attending the hearing. "The system of public safety, put in place by the government, consists of let-

NJ march commemorates Workers' Memorial Day



Militant/Tamar Rosenfeld

Carrying signs in English and Spanish saying, "We came here to work, not to die" and "Not one more death," more than 100 people marched in New Brunswick, New Jersey, April 23 as part of Workers' Memorial Day, an international event that commemorates workers who have died on the job. Similar actions took place April 28 across Canada, the U.S. and beyond.

"We demand safe workplaces and the right to organize," Maria Luisa Almanza, a member of New Labor, a group that initiated the action, told the *Courier News*. The march was endorsed by the Middlesex/Somerset Central Labor Council, United Steelworkers District 4, and more than a dozen other unions and organizations, including the NAACP and immigrant rights groups.

Forty-five workers were killed on the job in New Jersey in 2016, nine more than the year before. According to the most recent figures available from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 4,836 died on the job nationwide in 2015. On average, at least 11,000 workers are taken to the emergency ward every day from injuries at work in the U.S.

In New York City the majority of the 25 workers who died on construction sites in 2015 were immigrants, mostly from Mexico and Central America.

The march here paid tribute to Daniel Comerie, a refinery worker who died after being crushed by a concrete slab in Linden; Alvaro Esteban, who lived in Freehold and was killed in December by a trash compactor; and others killed on the job.

Marchers also protested immigration raids and deportations. "We are going to stand hand in hand, side by side against these vicious attacks on people who come to this country, who work hard and try to work safely," said Steelworkers official John Shinn at the rally.

— SETH GALINSKY

ting the companies be responsible for our safety. But the priority of these companies is making a profit, not our safety. This is as true in 2017 as it was in 2013."

"The fight against the frame-up of Harding and Labrie is important for working people across Canada and beyond," Philippe Tessier, Communist League candidate for mayor of Montreal, said after the hearing. "I'm campaigning to build support to defeat the

frame-up of the two rail workers as part of the ongoing fight by rail workers for safety — for themselves and all those who live and work along the tracks."

Messages in support of Harding and Labrie can be sent to USW Local 1976 / Section locale 1976, 2360 De Lasalle, Suite 202, Montreal, QC Canada H1V 2L1. Copies should be sent to Thomas Walsh, 165 Rue Wellington N., Suite 310, Sherbrooke, QC Canada J1H 5B9.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 15, 1992

The acquittal of the cops who beat Rodney King caused outrage across the United States and around the world. High school students walked out of classes in protest, university students organized demonstrations, and working people and youth discussed what can be done to fight police violence.

Opposing the acquittal is "not a Black thing or a white thing, but the right thing," stated a high school student to applause at a May 1 rally in Durham, North Carolina. She was one of dozens of students from the School of Science and Math who spoke at an event attended by 250.

A leaflet was distributed explaining the aims of the organizers: "To declare that justice was not served"; "that such abominations could happen to anyone in this country regardless of race or the region" they live in; and to hold a non-violent, open, and orderly discussion.



May 15, 1967

NEW YORK — A new attack on the ballot rights of minority political parties was signed into law on April 22 by Governor [Nelson] Rockefeller. Aimed explicitly at the Socialist Workers Party, the law was described by the *New York Times* as the "anti-Judy White bill." Specifically the law bars an "ineligible" person from being nominated for public office, or appearing on the ballot.

The SWP is especially singled out for its uncompromising fight against the war in Vietnam, which its candidates have carried to the people of this state. Judy White was the only candidate for governor who called for the immediate withdrawal of American troops.

As a conscious protest against the brutal aggression the U.S. government is committing in Vietnam, the 12,000 New Yorkers who voted for Judy White were making the most effective use of their votes.



May 16, 1942

"In the next twelve to fifteen months we will get a civilian standard of living equivalent to 1932, which was the lowest of all lows during the depression."

That is the immediate future for the masses of American people, as forecast on May 7 by Leon Henderson, Price Administrator.

In other words, the administration's program for financing the war is to pay for it out of the living standards of the workers and low income earners.

The masses are to get a drastic reduction in the necessities of life, food, clothing, etc. In the literal sense, their flesh and blood is to pay the war bill. And this is happening at the very time when the financiers and industrialists are making profits.

The workers must demand a rising scale of wages to meet price rises, as the only means of protecting themselves from capitalist inflation.



"Unionism and politics cannot be separated. Power generated at the trade union level can be shattered by government blows. Workers must enter the political arena as an independent class force, with their own party."

— Farrell Dobbs

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Tens of thousands march, demand ‘No deportations!’



Continued from front page

Party built and joined the actions, distributing a statement by Mary Martin, SWP candidate for mayor in Seattle. “No to deportations! Amnesty for all immigrants in the U.S.! Join the fight to unify the working class and build our unions,” Martin said. “Working people don’t like deportations and raids. Over decades they’ve gotten to know their immigrant co-workers, some with and others without papers.”

“I think that’s right,” Marcelos Torres said at the May Day protest in Reading, Pennsylvania. “I don’t think the majority of people in this country are against immigrants. Everyone needs a job.”

Some 4,000 marched in Grand

Rapids, Michigan, a city of less than 200,000. Nearly one-quarter of students stayed home from public schools. “We’re the foundation because we are the ones picking the produce. We are the ones working in restaurants,” Gema Lowe, a member of Cosecha Grand Rapids, one of the groups organizing the march, told Channel 13 TV. “We are already part of the fabric.”

Lorena Cruz, a student, told Channel 13 that she was glad to have received a work permit under DACA — a government program that put a moratorium on deportations for many immigrant youth — but that all the undocumented should be free from fear of being thrown out of the coun-

Militant photos, above, Clay Dennison; right, Naomi Craine
May Day actions from left, Las Vegas; Yakima, Wash.; Milwaukee, protest deportations, attacks on workers’ wages, conditions.

try. “We are here to stay and here to make a change,” she said.

Some of the protests were spearheaded by farmworkers, including in Yakima, Washington, where many of the 500 marchers were farmworkers or fruit processing plant workers. The United Farm Workers had a contingent of over 50 people, including workers from the Chateau St. Michelle winery.

“Stop Clarke” and “No 287g” were slogans on many signs and T-shirts at a march of thousands in Milwaukee, referring to notoriously anti-immigrant County Sheriff David Clarke. In March, Clarke requested authorization to join the federal 287g program — which authorizes local cops to function as immigration agents. It was adopted as part of the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act signed into law by President Bill Clinton.

Some 160 businesses closed for the day, according to Voces de la Frontera, which organized the demonstration. Miguel Villegas told the *Militant* the muffler shop where he works shut down, and he and his co-workers attended the march.

“I work with immigrants every day,” Sharon Scott, a house cleaner

who is African-American, told the *Militant* at a rally of 250 in Atlanta, organized by the Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights. “They work very hard. Whenever I hear about a protest for immigrants I will be there.”

Jason Miller, 20, a student at Georgia State University, said, “It’s great that there are all kinds of people here, Latinos, Blacks and whites.”

Chanting “Si se puede,” contingents of SEIU Local 32BJ airport workers, janitors and others joined the march of 3,000 in Washington, D.C., which was organized by Casa Maryland.

“Workers with papers must fight for those without them to organize unions,” said Santos Carranza, a union carpenter. Over 100 of his co-workers skipped work, he added with a smile.

Some two dozen Metro workers, members of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 689, brought solidarity. “Immigrants have a right to be here,” said Jackie Jeter, Local 689 president. This was the first year the ATU joined a May Day action.

One of the largest actions was in Los Angeles, where tens of thousands marched, many with signs saying, “No human being is illegal.” Unionized janitors, health care workers and hotel workers had sizeable contingents in the march.

“That some people have been here all their lives and are threatened with being sent back is appalling,” said Sharlene Ruvalcaba, a Kaiser worker and member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 770.

There were also International Workers Day protests around the world, from Puerto Rico to Kurdistan in Iraq to Ukraine. In Turkey workers faced cop attacks when they tried to march in Istanbul to demand better pay and working conditions.

In Berlin 14,000 marched, calling for restricting the use of temporary workers. Thousands of members of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions rallied in Seoul with similar demands.

Edwin Fruit from Yakima, Washington; Naomi Craine from Milwaukee; Sam Manuel from Chicago; Arlene Rubinstein from Washington, D.C.; Janet Post from Reading, Pennsylvania; and Deborah Liatos from Los Angeles contributed to this article.

May Day mobilization in Cuba

Continued from front page

our country so much damage and deprivation, and is the principal obstacle to the economy’s development,” said Ulises Guilarte de Nacimiento, leader of the Cuban Workers Federation (CTC) and a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, who delivered the speech that kicked off the procession. “We likewise demand the return of territory illegally occupied by the United States Naval Base in Guantánamo, against the will of the government and people of Cuba.”

Cuban President Raúl Castro presided over the march, surrounded by leaders of the Communist Party and the government, leaders of mass organizations and hundreds of international guests from countries around the world, including a 300-strong May Day brigade of participants from 26 countries. For the first time there is a 45-person brigade from the United States.

The march will be followed by an international conference to plan stepped-up work in solidarity with the Cuban Revolution.

Brigade members spent the previous week doing voluntary agricultural labor, meeting with representatives of Cuban mass organizations and in discussions on Cuba’s relations with Washington and the island’s socialist economy.

After the conference, most brigadistas will travel to Santa Clara province to learn more about the revolution. A few will join some 200 other delegates at the International Seminar

for Peace and the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases, to be held May 4-6 in Guantánamo province.

The U.S. base there, notorious for its prison, is the only military base in the world that exists against the will of the people and government of the land on which it is located. Washington has over 850 military bases over five continents.

The conference will conclude in Caimanera, located next to the U.S. base, where delegates will read its final declaration.



Massive May Day march, Havana, Cuba, demanded halt to U.S. embargo, end of U.S. occupation of Guantánamo; showed broad support for defense of Cuba’s socialist revolution.

100,000 visit international book fair in Kurdistan

As Kurdish parties call 2017 independence vote



Erbil International Book Fair

BY CATHARINA TIRSÉN

ERBIL, Kurdish Region, Iraq — The 12th Erbil International Book Fair took place here April 5-15. More than 100,000 people from Kurdistan, the rest of Iraq, and elsewhere in the region visited the event, at which more than 200 publishers had booths to sell their books. Visitors included Kurds, Arabs, Iranians, Yazidis, Assyrians, and Turkmen, including refugees now living in the area from Syria, Mosul, and other battle-torn areas nearby.

Inaugurated by Masoud Barzani, president of the Kurdistan Regional Government, the fair was a display of the growing numbers of books written or translated into Kurdish, as well as a chance for workers and youth to purchase titles in Arabic, English, Farsi and other languages. Publishers, most from the Middle East, also met here to make translation and distribution agreements.

Kurdish bands and dancers, as well as artists and performers from elsewhere in Iraq, added to the festive atmosphere.

Independence referendum

The cultural event opened less than a week after the KRG's two main parties, Barzani's Kurdish Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, announced a joint call for a referendum in 2017 on Kurdish independence from Iraq. Governments and ruling classes across the region — from Baghdad to Ankara, Tehran to Damascus — condemned the planned vote. Meeting in Italy, the "G-7" alliance of Washington and other imperialist governments — the same regimes that have spearheaded Iraq's brutal pulverization since 1991 — hypocritically called for its "unity and territorial integrity."

The more than 30 million Kurdish people in the region are spread over parts of Iraq, Iran, Syria, Turkey and the Caucasus. They are the largest nationality in the world without their own country.

Since 2015 the Iraqi government has slashed the 17 percent of its budget due to the Kurdish region, on the pretext that the KRG sells oil directly on world markets instead of through Baghdad. In face of declining crude oil prices, spreading war and the global capitalist crisis, the KRG has cut wages and delayed payments to teach-

ers and other government employees. Workers have organized strikes and other protests against both KRG and Iraqi government policies. Several teachers said they couldn't buy as many books this year due to salary cuts.

Some 2 million refugees, mostly Syrians, also live in the region.

Less than two weeks before the fair opened, U.S. airstrikes killed nearly 300 residents of a neighborhood in nearby Mosul, some 50 miles east of here. The second day of the event, Washington sent 59 missiles against a Syrian government air base in northern Syria, killing both Syrian soldiers and civilians, including children. These developments were a topic of discussion, and often heated debate, over the 11 days.

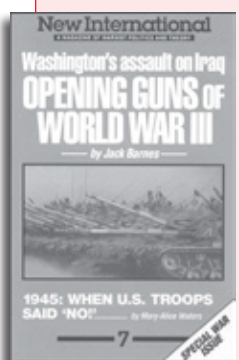
Pathfinder booth

For the first time, Pathfinder Books of London participated in the fair. Although books in English were on sale at quite a few booths by bookstores from Kurdish cities such as Erbil and Sulaymaniyah, Pathfinder was one of a handful of exhibitors from outside the Middle East. Under the boot of the Saddam Hussein regime until the early 1990s, Kurds in Iraq were educated from childhood mainly in Arabic, not their own tongue. For the past quarter

Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq

by Jack Barnes

In *New International* no. 7



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

—Jack Barnes

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Center, Endese; above, Militant

Erbil book fair, far left, drew visitors from Kurdistan, rest of Iraq, and region. Pathfinder booth, above, displayed 200 titles on communist and revolutionary politics. Discussions at booth ranged from U.S. and world politics, to region's wars and call for Kurdish independence referendum. Pathfinder signed license with publisher Endese to translate 10 titles into Kurdish. Center, Endese bookshop in Sulaymaniyah.

several shelves of translations of books into Farsi, a language widely read in Iran and Afghanistan. Some 45 Pathfinder

titles have been translated into Farsi by the Tehran-based Talaye Porsoo, one of several publishers in Iran producing such translations.

During the book fair Pathfinder signed a license with Endese, a major publisher here of Middle Eastern and European literature, to translate 10 titles into Kurdish. The agreement includes books by Jack Barnes, Fidel Castro, Vilma Espín, Che Guevara, V.I. Lenin, Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela and Mary-Alice Waters.

"We want to encourage reading," explained Hazhar Majeed, owner of Endese, which has a large bookshop in Sulaymaniyah, the Kurdish region's second largest city, and a smaller store in Erbil. "So we hold festivals where writers can meet their readers and organize children's activities. It is important for us to have relations with other publishers, especially from the U.S."

Rwafaed, a publishing house based in Cairo, Egypt, has participated in the fair since 2007, except two years due to Islamic State and the war. "It's been a very good book fair over the years," said owner Islam Abd El Moady. "Apart from general sales, the KRG used to buy five copies of 20 titles for the schools." This year, however, he and other exhibitors of books in Arabic said sales were down.

Rwafaed reached an agreement with Pathfinder to publish five of its titles in Arabic.

Political discussions

Discussions at the Pathfinder stand were wide ranging.

A journalism student visited the stand the first day and bought *The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record* and three other books, following a discussion of the domestic and military policies of the two main U.S. capitalist parties, the Democrats and Republicans. "I always attend the book fair," she later said. "I go the first hour it's open, and then maybe four more

century, however, schools in the KRG teach in Kurdish, and the speaking and reading of English is rising as use of Arabic declines.

Among the some 200 titles Pathfinder had on display was communist and other revolutionary literature on politics, the class struggle and the labor movement in the United States and Europe; Malcolm X and the struggle for Black rights; Cuba's socialist revolution; women's emancipation; Marxism and the Bolshevik Revolution; and much more.

Although Kurdish national confidence pervaded the fair, it was uncommon for visitors to the Pathfinder booth to start out by asking, "What do you have on Kurdistan?" Or, "Do you have any books about the Middle East?" Most were either attracted by the breadth of Pathfinder's political titles, or were directed elsewhere in search of Ernest Hemingway or Agatha Christie novels, an English dictionary, or titles on science, computers or business.

Pathfinder's best seller was *Are They Rich Because They're Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning under Capitalism* by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party in the U.S.

That was followed by *The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record: Why Washington Fears Working People*, also by Barnes; *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible? A Necessary Debate Among Working People* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters; and *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. Other titles that sold well included *Cuba and Angola: The War for Freedom* by Cuban Gen. Harry Villegas ("Pombo"); *Is Biology Woman's Destiny?* by Evelyn Reed (both in English and Arabic); *Che Guevara Talks to Young People; How Far We Slaves Have Come!* by Fidel Castro and Nelson Mandela; *Lenin's Final Fight* by V.I. Lenin; and *My Life* by Leon Trotsky.

The Pathfinder booth also featured

Continued on page 8

Only the working class can defend the environment

BY PATRICIA MARSHALL

WASHINGTON — Tens of thousands rallied here April 29 and in other cities across the country in what was called the People's Climate March. The action was organized for the 100th day of the Donald Trump presidency, focusing on him as the main problem in the U.S. today, saying his administration was

COMMENTARY

dismantling former President Barack Obama's "climate legacy." Many of the placards people carried reflected middle-class panic and catastrophism about the environment.

"Resist Trump," "If you're not terrified you don't understand the situation," "Keep fossil fuels in the ground" and "Do you want to survive or not?" were signs reflecting the mood.

The action was one of a series of public activities that have revolved around blaming Trump for today's ills — including a women's march shortly after his election, mobilizations on tax day and a so-called march for science. The classless framework for the protest was "what we as a nation need to do" and building support for Democratic Party candidates with "strong environmental records" in the run-up to next year's midterm elections and the 2020 presidential race.

At the same time, there were contingents attracted to the march that raised concrete problems workers faced and

pointed to the workings of capitalism as the root of the problem, demanding action. Over 200 came from East Chicago where residents from the West Calumet Housing Complex are being forced out of their homes because of lead and arsenic contamination of the soil from factories that closed decades ago. They are demanding government assistance to relocate.

Members of the Socialist Workers Party joined the action to discuss and debate perspectives with fellow participants and introduce the party's revolutionary working-class program. They offered the May 8 *Militant* containing an excerpt from "The Stewardship of Nature Also Falls to the Working Class," a statement by the SWP printed in *New International* no. 14.

"Workers must not fall into accepting the common view — that is, the bourgeois view — that the environment ... is a 'scientific' question, a 'natural' question, that somehow hovers above classes and outside the class struggle," the SWP statement says. "Many who call themselves environmentalists say the problem is 'consumerism,' or industrial development per se. But the workers movement has to explain the source of ecological destruction and why the answer lies along the revolutionary line of march of the working class."

Anyone interested in getting a copy of the statement can contact the SWP in their area, listed in the directory below.



Militant/Glova Scott

Sherry Hunter, right, from West Calumet in East Chicago, Indiana, tells Socialist Workers Party member Candace Wagner about how industrial contamination fouled their housing development, affected their children, and their fight for adequate housing as the complex is torn down.

Jerome McCabe, a 37-year-old barber from New York, was interested in this point of view. He said he was attracted to the march because "global warming is wiping out species and the fossil fuel industry is just about chasing profits."

"Making profits is what capitalism is about," I responded. "It's only the working class — whose interests are human solidarity, not private profit — that has an interest in protecting our environment and ensuring safety on and off the job."

"You can't just say fossil fuels are

the problem," I said. "What about the need of workers and farmers in Asia, Africa and elsewhere for electricity? What about conditions of life in the coal mining regions as jobs have been slashed and pensions and health care come under threat?"

"It's only when we get rid of the capitalist system and take political power in our own hands that we can take decisions to use resources to meet the needs of humanity and protect the environment," I added. "To do that, workers need our own independent party leading a movement of millions."

Thousands visit book fair in Kurdistan

Continued from front page 7

times." She came back to the stand several other days to buy more books, bringing others along with her.

"Just what they told me could happen is happening right now," she told a friend, after Washington launched its air assault on Syria.

Another student picked up *An Introduction to the Logic of Marxism* by George Novack. "I've read about many philosophies but not Marxism. How is Marxism different?" he asked. A Pathfinder representative showed him a section from *The Communist Manifesto* explaining that the conclusions of Marxists aren't a philosophy

but "merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes."

That's different from Marxism as he'd heard it explained before, the student said, as he bought Novack's book.

Another visitor identified himself as Yazidi, a religious minority among the Kurds who were massacred and dispossessed by Islamic State a few years ago and have faced persecution for centuries. Picking up *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation* by Abram Leon, he said, "I'm Yazidi,

so you'll understand why I'm interested in this title."

A young man took four books on women's liberation from the shelves. Ribbed by one of his buddies, "You're not a woman," he put one back and bought the other three. Advances in the fight for women's equality is a point of pride among Kurds of both sexes.

Nearly 500 books in English, Farsi and a few in other languages were sold from the Pathfinder booth during the book fair.

Catharina Tirsén represented Pathfinder Books of London at the book fair.

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US hands off Korea! For nuclear free Pacific!

The following is a statement by Mary Martin, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Seattle was released May 3.

The Socialist Workers Party calls for an immediate end to Washington's economic and financial sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We demand that the U.S. government withdraw its more than 28,000 troops from the Korean Peninsula, and U.S. planes and ships from Korea's skies and waters. We stand in solidarity with the more than 70-year-long struggle to reunify Korea, ripped apart by U.S. imperialism at the end of World War II, as well as the Korean people's aspirations for a nuclear free Korean Peninsula and Pacific.

Ever since 1945, the Socialist Workers Party has never stopped fighting to rid the world of the U.S. rulers' murderous nuclear arsenal, demanding that Washington dismantle its stockpile *unilaterally*. The SWP has long called on Moscow and all others who hold nuclear arms to do so, as well.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, the U.S. capitalist rulers have made some nuclear arms reductions to bolster the deception they're on a path to nuclear disarmament. That's a self-serving lie. They have no such intention.

Today Washington deploys *thousands* of nuclear weapons — more than enough to incinerate every person on earth many times over. So does Moscow. The U.S. rulers are modernizing their nuclear delivery systems. The Barack Obama administration planned to build a new arsenal of smaller nukes, claiming they would be easier to use and "more ethical!" Democratic and Republican administrations alike claim that Washington's nuclear arsenal defends "our American interests." But there is no "we." *Their* military forces defend the propertied rulers' interests against *us*, the working classes, both here and abroad.

Washington's campaign that North Korea get rid of nuclear weapons, and insistence that Tehran renounce them, is both cynical and hypocritical, to



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say the least. But the development of nuclear arms and delivery systems by these governments *weakens* the defense of the Korean and Iranian people against Washington. It saps the fighting capacities of the toilers in face of imperialism's dictates, depriving them of the political and moral high ground in the eyes of working people worldwide.

The leadership of Cuba's socialist revolution provides an example to emulate.

"We have never considered producing nuclear weapons because we don't need them," explained Cuban communist leader Fidel Castro in 2005. Having such arms, he said, "would mean joining the game of nuclear confrontation."

The Cuban government doesn't take this position because the revolution faces no enemies or military threats. From day one of the revolution in 1959, Washington has worked ruthlessly and relentlessly to overthrow it.

"The one weapon we haven't renounced," Castro said, "is the 'war of the entire people'" — the mobilization and arming of the Cuban people, politically and militarily. Counterposed to this, Fidel said, "a nuclear weapon is a good way to commit suicide at a certain point."

Working people in Cuba have something worth defending. "We possess a weapon as powerful as nuclear power," Castro said, "and it is the immense justice for which we are struggling."

Washington's refusal to get rid of its nuclear stockpile is another powerful reason to build a working-class leadership in the United States that fights to overturn the rule of the capitalist warmakers and to replace it with a workers and farmers government.

Washington, Beijing squeeze on North Korea

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senal of nuclear weapons worldwide, capable of travelling thousands of miles, as well as one of its aircraft carrier fighting groups in the region.

But contrary to the hysteria of much of the liberal media, this display of U.S. firepower is not aimed at starting a military conflict, but is just one component of Washington's broader efforts aimed at getting North Korea to back down. President Donald Trump is "doing everything diplomatically, economically and militarily" to achieve Washington's goals, White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer said May 1.

Washington used the April 28 meeting of the United Nations Security Council to increase the isolation of the DPRK. Since 2006, the U.N. has maintained sanctions against North Korea. Washington needs China on board if it is to tighten the noose further. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson urged rigorous enforcement of existing sanctions and the imposition of new penalties. He threatened to add U.S. sanctions on companies and individuals that violate U.N. measures by trading with the DPRK.

The U.S. rulers see North Korea's development of nuclear weapons as an obstacle to imposing their dictates across the region. Washington has an estimated 6,800 nuclear weapons and the DPRK has 10.

As part of their discussions on joint measures against North Korea, Beijing keeps pressing the U.S. to abandon the Terminal High Altitude Aerial Defense radar and anti-missile system it has installed in South Korea. The Pentagon announced the system was operational as of May 2.

Beijing sees the missile system as a spy station that violates Chinese sovereignty. On April 28, Trump demanded that South Korea pay for the system. Moon Jae-in, the leading candidate in South Korea's upcoming presidential election, says THAAD unnecessarily

antagonizes China and if elected he will review its installation.

In recent years Beijing has accelerated the construction of military bases on islands across the South China Sea in the face of disputed sovereignty claims made by Vietnam, the Philippines and a number of other governments in the region. Trillions of dollars of world trade passes through this sea.

Asked if the U.S. Navy would resume "freedom of navigation" patrols it has conducted in these waters to counter China's threat to Washington's domination of trade there — a key plum from the U.S. rulers' victory in World War II — a government official told Reuters the administration would wait to see what backing it got from Beijing in pressing North Korea.

Beijing is relentlessly expanding its interests in other parts of Asia. The *Financial Times* warned that the U.S. should not "cede its influence over its unreliable ally [Pakistan] to Beijing." China is constructing railways, roads and pipelines from its western border to Pakistan's southern ports. With International Monetary Fund creditors breathing heavily down their necks, the Pakistani rulers were able to stave off a currency crisis last year with Chinese loans.

No power can challenge Washington's dominant place in the imperialist world order, but it is in decline and increasingly needs allies to advance its interests. Washington remains determined to try and contain China's growing power, but needs its backing today to squeeze the North Korean regime.

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Kurdish struggle

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Forces to drive the reactionary Islamic State out of its de facto capital in Raqqa.

Washington, Baghdad and Damascus condemned the attacks. To the chagrin of Ankara, the U.S. military, using armored cars flying large U.S. flags, launched joint patrols with the YPG near the Syrian-Turkish border.

Washington's overall aim is to maintain its imperialist interests in the Middle East as a variety of wars and conflicts roil the region.

Erdogan's military assaults on the Kurds reflect his failure to persuade Washington to drop its alliance with the YPG and instead turn to Ankara to capture Raqqa. The YPG has consistently shown its fighting capacity with a track record of pushing Islamic State out of Kurdish regions in Syria.

The YPG now controls 20,000 square miles in Syria along the Turkish border — home to about 2 million Kurds. In so doing, they have driven the reactionary Islamic State out of cities like Kobani and Manbij. The YPG seeks to link together territory it controls in northeastern and northwestern Syria in order to establish a contiguous autonomous Kurdish region. Last February Ankara, along with the Free Syrian Army — a force the Turkish government recruited and trained among Syrian refugees in Turkey — invaded Syria to prevent this from happening.

The YPG-led Syrian Democratic Forces recently announced formation of civilian and military councils to administer Raqqa after Islamic State is defeated there. Erdogan is terrified that the development of a Kurdish autonomous region in Syria will encourage the struggle for national rights and autonomy of the 15 million Kurds in Turkey.

Washington and all the capitalist regimes in the Middle East except Israel are opposed to the centurieslong struggle of the Kurds for a homeland.

Erdogan on April 28 said he cannot accept U.S. "cooperation with a terror organization." He charges the YPG with being the Syrian arm of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) — an armed party based in Turkey with Stalinist roots that has fought a guerilla war against Ankara for most of the last three decades.

Erdogan barely won an April 16 referendum for a stronger central government. Brushing aside calls by opposition parties and international observers for a recount or revote, his administration moved rapidly to deepen its crackdown on those they see as opponents.

In the last week the government fired almost 4,000 more people from army, university, media and government jobs. They closed down 45 political groups and foundations. They threw another 2,600 people into prison. And they said they carried out 579 attacks against the PKK.

Ankara, Washington and the European Union have all branded the PKK as a "terrorist" organization.

Over many years the PKK has established sanctuary bases in the mountainous Sinjar region of Iraq near Turkey's border. It is part of the Kurdish region of Iraq, a semi-autonomous area of 8 million Kurds administered by the Kurdish Regional Government.

During airstrikes in Sinjar, Turkish warplanes killed six KRG peshmerga soldiers. Erdogan issued an apology to the KRG government in Erbil, with which he has tried to maintain collaborative relations.

The KRG was formed as one of the unintended consequences of Washington's 1991 and 2003 invasions and wars against Iraq, part of its campaign to replace the Saddam Hussein regime with one more pliable to the interests of U.S. imperialism. Iraqi Kurdistan has significant oil resources. The KRG peshmerga is playing an important role, along with the Iraqi army and U.S. air power, in the monthslong battle to capture the major Iraqi city of Mosul from Islamic State, the last major urban center the Islamist outfit holds in Iraq.

At the beginning of April the two main parties in the KRG parliament agreed to hold a KRG-wide referendum on forming an independent Kurdistan, including in disputed areas like Kirkuk. They predict overwhelming support.

But Washington and Baghdad oppose such a move, fearing an independent Kurdistan would be the prelude to the complete breakup of Iraq.