

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

How Teamsters union organized owner-drivers in the 1930s
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 84/NO. 20 MAY 25, 2020

‘Militant’ gets out the truth about working class struggles

BY SETH GALINSKY

“This is for the *Militant*, you take donations, right?” trucker Crystal McIntosh told James Harris at a truck drivers protest in Washington, D.C., May 10. Like others at the action she appreciated the coverage of their fight in the *Militant* — the only newspaper that provides a voice for working people’s struggles and explains how we can extend and advance them.

Harris, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for delegate to Congress from D.C., had joined the action to offer solidarity, learn more about what drivers face and introduce them to the *Militant* and the party. McIntosh, from Wessington Springs, South Dakota, is one of more than 100 truckers who have been protesting against sharpening attacks by brokers and the government on their livelihoods. Many have been there since May 1. She kicked in \$20 to the Militant Fighting Fund.

Militant editor John Studer announced May 6 that the six-week drive to win new readers to the *Mili-*
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From Panama to El Salvador workers fight for jobs, relief

BY SETH GALINSKY

Capitalist rulers across Latin America are using coronavirus outbreaks in their countries as a pretext to attack the wages, living conditions and political rights of working people. From Chile to Panama to El Salvador these attacks are meeting resistance as workers hold protests demanding jobs, lifting of government restrictions on free movement and democratic rights and aid for those blocked from working.

The same types of class conflicts are developing in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

Dozens of protests have taken place across Panama against the inadequate compensation offered those thrown out of work as a result of the government-ordered shutdown.

Panama President Laurentino Cortizo had claimed that “we are not going to leave people on their own” and announced a “Panama in Solidarity” aid program. Unemployed workers were supposed to get a monthly \$80
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Fight for jobs! Act now to protect wages, conditions



City Waste Union

New Orleans “hoppers,” workers who jump on and off sanitation trucks to collect garbage, went on strike May 5, protesting unsafe conditions, long hours and low wages.

Fight for gov’t-funded public works program to create jobs

Alyson Kennedy, the Socialist Workers Party 2020 candidate for president, issued the following statement May 13. Malcolm Jarrett is the party’s candidate for vice president.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

Growing numbers of workers, farmers and small-business people are taking to the streets and fighting on the job against the efforts of the bosses and their governments worldwide to attack our wages, working conditions and our rights. Those of us still at work in factories, mills, transportation, retail outlets and other jobs have faced hours cut, wages slashed — increasing pressure to work faster
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Protests spread against attacks by bosses, gov’t

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Every day brings new evidence of the depth of the social crisis being visited on hundreds of millions of workers, farmers and small proprietors in the U.S. and around the world, a growing calamity not of their making.

Working people, who transform natural resources to produce all the wealth in society, and who are the guardians of all culture today, are the ones being pressed to bear the burden for the capitalist rulers’ efforts to preserve their dog-eat-dog system of exploitation and oppression.

This historic crisis, brewing for decades, was triggered this winter by the far-reaching lockdowns on production and trade imposed by capitalist governments around the world. Workers increasingly realize this is
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Vigilantes charged for killing Ahmaud Arbery as cover-up comes apart in Ga.



Reuters/Dustin Chambers

Over 1,000 protested May 8 in Brunswick, Georgia, demanding justice in vigilante killing of Ahmaud Arbery. Cover-up by cops, prosecutors was exposed by release of suppressed video.

BY JANICE LYNN

ATLANTA — A multinational crowd of over 1,000 rallied in front of the Glynn County Courthouse in Brunswick, Georgia, May 8 to demand the prosecution of Travis McMichael, 34, and his father, Gregory McMichael, 64, a former cop and investigator for the prosecutor’s office, the men who shot and killed Ahmaud Arbery. He would have been 26 years

old that day.

The two McMichaels were arrested and charged with murder and aggravated assault the day before, more than two months after the February 23 shooting took place. It wasn’t until a video was leaked to the media May 5, and the outcry that followed, that the arrests were made.

The video, shot by an associate
Continued on page 3

Victory! Florida prison officials ban on ‘Militant’ is overturned

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The *Militant* was informed May 12 by Florida’s Department of Corrections that the prison ban on issue no. 13 had been overturned. This victory is important for the rights of both the working-class paper and of prisoners.

After receiving numerous protest letters and an appeal filed by the *Militant*’s attorney, David Goldstein, the DOC’s Literature Review Committee informed him that they had reversed the impoundment of the April 6 issue at their meeting May 7. “As a result of that decision the issue will be allowed into Florida correctional institutions,” wrote committee administrator Dean Peterson.

“I’m not surprised we won this,”
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—On the picket line, p. 7—

School, municipal, cleaning workers win strike in Iceland

Truckers protest in DC against brokers’ rates, gov’t red tape

Opponents of Syria's Assad protest Islamist rule in Idlib

BY TERRY EVANS

Residents of several towns and villages in Idlib province in Syria organized protests April 30 against Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), the former al-Qaeda affiliate that controls the area. They demanded that the reactionary sect's forces halt moves to reopen to commercial traffic the borders between Idlib and territory held by the country's dictatorial Bashar al-Assad regime.

Idlib is the only area of the country west of the Euphrates River that Assad and his allies in Moscow and Tehran have been unable to recapture during Syria's civil war.

HTS took control over Idlib last year at the expense of other opponents of Assad that were backed by the Turkish government. The group has used its control of provincial border crossings to impose taxes and enrich its coffers.

Protesters told the Iraqi Kurdish news agency Rudaw that they strongly oppose HTS normalizing border relations with Assad. His regime brutally suppressed a popular uprising for political rights in 2011 that led to a civil war, uprooting or killing millions of people.

During that conflict rebel groups forced Assad to retreat. But his forces were reinforced by Tehran-backed militias and from 2015 by Moscow's air power. Assad and the Russian military have repeatedly sent bombers to conduct airstrikes in Idlib.

Hundreds of thousands of Syrians have returned to their homes in Idlib since Moscow signed a cease-fire March 5 with the Turkish government, another of the powers intervening in Syria's civil

war for its own ends. Assad's forces regularly breach the agreement by firing at refugees returning home.

The week before the current round of actions, dozens of Syrians returning to Idlib protested at a border crossing, demanding HTS abolish the exorbitant tolls they charge.

"We have to pay more than 100,000 Syrian pounds [\$195]," Salwa Mahmoud said to Al-Monitor. She was trying to get back home with her three children after fleeing to live in a tent in the Aleppo countryside to escape Assad's bombing. The rulers in Turkey have closed their border to refugees from Idlib.

"Sitting here under the bombing is better than being displaced in the camps and not having a home," Zakaria Shawish told the Daily Sabah.

Protests in Idlib had been organized earlier against both HTS arrests of members of opponent rebel groups and the Assad regime's bombings.

Over half of the 3 million people living in Idlib had been forced to flee other parts of Syria after Assad's forces carpet-bombed and seized their homes.

Assad now also faces a deepening economic crisis and a splintering of his regime from within. Under pressure from Moscow to cover the cost of its military support, Assad began seizing the businesses of Rami Makhlof, his cousin and Syria's richest person. Assad placed Makhlof, who had been a crucial financial backer of his regime, under house arrest. Makhlof has publicly challenged Assad's attacks on his fortune and other family members have spoken out in his support.

DC picket protests US rulers' attacks against Cuba



Militant/Glova Scott

WASHINGTON — Following an April 30 shooting attack of over 30 rounds with an AK-47 assault rifle that damaged the Cuban Embassy here, the D.C. Metro Coalition in Solidarity with the Cuban Revolution sponsored a solidarity picket line there May 7. While the shooter has been taken into custody, U.S. authorities have not condemned the attack nor have they provided information about him to the Cuban government.

The attack came as Washington has been tightening its economic war against Cuba and its revolution.

Participants also carried signs protesting the U.S. rulers' efforts to bring down the government of Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela. On May 3 a motley group of a couple dozen would-be invaders, led by two former U.S. special forces soldiers, were captured — and some killed — by fishermen and Venezuelan troops when they attempted to land on shore. "The U.S. criminal year-long effort to overthrow President Maduro is ongoing and must cease," the coalition said in a news release announcing the action.

Over 25 partisans of the Cuban Revolution participated in the spirited protest, including members of the All-African People's Revolutionary Party (GC); FMLN of Washington, D.C.; metro-area Foro de Sao Paulo group; National Lawyers Guild; One DC Black Workers & Wellness Center; and the Socialist Workers Party.

— ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

Their Transformation and Ours

Resolution of the Socialist Workers Party

"What is often called 'Islamism,' 'Wahabism,' 'jihad Islam,' 'Salafism,' or 'Islamic fundamentalism' (as distinct from the Islamic religion) has no revolutionary, let alone proletarian, content of any kind. Nor is it the future anywhere in the Arab or Muslim world. Its high point is behind us, not ahead."

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Condemn Jew-hatred, anti-Semitic attacks

In a slanderous attack, Mayor Bill de Blasio singled out New York's 1-million-strong "Jewish community" for spreading COVID-19 and endangering other people.

The 'Militant' condemns all forms of Jew-hatred, a deadly threat to Jews, and to the whole working class.



Todd Maisel
Cops break up N.Y. Hasidic funeral service April 28 on orders of Mayor Bill de Blasio.

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

Cops’ brutalities ‘serve and protect’ capitalist exploitation



Cellphone video shows Ariel Roman being tackled, pepper-sprayed by two cops on Chicago subway station Feb. 28, then they shot him twice. His crime? He walked between cars.

BY NAOMI CRAINE

CHICAGO — The videos were shocking enough to briefly break through the coronavirus media barrage and make national headlines. Two Chicago cops used a Taser, pepper-sprayed and then shot an unarmed man in a downtown subway station during rush hour Feb. 28. His “crime?” Walking between cars on a moving train.

Ariel Roman, a 33-year-old short-order cook who is Latino, was suffering a panic attack, his attorneys say. Surveillance videos show police officers Melvina Bogard and Bernard Butler, both of whom are Black, pursuing Roman as he gets off the train, grabbing him as he tries to walk away, and tackling him to the ground. A bystander recorded much of the struggle that ensued with his cellphone.

Trying to handcuff Roman, both of officers stun him with their Tasers. Butler can be heard at least twice telling Bogard to “shoot him.” At one point Roman stands up, apparently wiping pepper spray from his eyes, and Bogard shoots him in the stomach at close range. Roman then breaks free and runs up a nearby escalator. The cops follow, and a second shot rings out. That bullet lodged in his buttocks. Amazingly he wasn’t killed, but suffered major injuries.

The video rapidly went viral when it was posted on social media. Two months later, the Civilian Office of Police Accountability released additional footage from surveillance and police body cameras, drawing national attention to the case.

Roman is suing the City of Chicago and the two cops. Bogard and

SWP ‘stimulus’ appeal fund at \$71,717 and growing

In the last three weeks 64 contributors have brought the special Socialist Workers Party “stimulus” appeal fund to \$71,717. The total keeps increasing! These contributions significantly augment the resources of the SWP for its long-term use.

The funds are allocated for capital, a stake for the party, not just for immediate needs. This aims to ensure the ongoing work of building a proletarian party as developments unfold in the class struggle and in the worldwide social and economic crisis of capitalism.

It is a fitting use of contributions from a “stimulus.” Big changes are underway in what the working class faces, and in the offing for the working class itself.

The contributions are often sent with enthusiastic notes.

Morrie Dietrich, a Walmart worker in Minneapolis, wrote, “They say ‘we’re all in this together.’ We’re sending this so that the LIE can be TRUTH for All Humanity with the overthrow of the dictatorship of capital.”

Jim Altenberg from Oakland wrote, “Enclosed is our check for the fund. Our modest contribution will be put to good use in furthering the work of the SWP, and a revolutionary way forward for working people in face of capitalism’s worldwide social, economic and moral dead end.”

Alyson Kennedy sent the following note, “I have met many workers on the campaign trail [Kennedy is the SWP candidate for president] who told me they haven’t received anything so far — neither unemployment checks nor the stimulus money. I am contributing this to a party that stands for building a massive revolutionary movement of working people so we can rid the world of the devastating consequences of a capitalist system that puts profits of a tiny minority first.”

If you’d like to join in donating your government payout, send a check to the Socialist Workers Party at 306 W. 37th Street, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018, marked “Special Fund.”

— EMMA JOHNSON

Butler were pulled off the street and put on paid administrative duty. But no criminal charges have been filed against them so far.

Role of cops in capitalist society

On Feb. 29, the day after the shooting, a previously planned rally against police brutality was moved to the entrance of the subway station where Roman was shot. Many of the protesters called for the city to form a new Civilian Police Accountability Council, supposedly to rein in the cops.

“There’s no reform that’s going to change the fundamental character of the

police in capitalist society, which is to ‘serve and protect’ the ruling class at the expense of working people,” I said when I spoke there as the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate. “We need to mobilize working people to demand the prosecution of the cops who carried out this outrageous attack.”

In the weeks since then, statewide “stay at home” lockdown orders have put obstacles in the way of more protests. What the cops visited on Roman is daily fare for working people in the largely African American and Latino neighborhoods on the South and West Sides, who face neighborhood checkpoints and harassment in the name of enforcing the lockdown.

At the same time, the cops make no serious attempt to stop the ongoing gang violence that costs hundreds of lives every year in Chicago. In fact, many cops profit from involvement with gangs and drugs.

The night of May 2 cops broke up several house parties where young people had gathered on the South and West Sides. At the same time at least 21 people were shot across the city that night, two fatally. No arrests have been made.

This is business as usual here. The cops’ attitude is “let them kill each other.”

“Chicago Police have failed to make an arrest in 85 percent of the violent crimes committed with firearms that have taken place in the city since 2001,” *The Trace* paper and TV station WTTW reported last November. During the same period “police data shows 610,000

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Vigilantes charged for killing Ahmaud Arbery

Continued from front page

of the McMichaels, shows Arbery, dressed in shorts and a T-shirt, jogging through the Satilla Shores neighborhood. He attempts to run around a pickup truck where the armed McMichaels, who are Caucasian, confront him, telling him arms in hand they want to question him. He resists, and is shot to death by Travis McMichael.

This was a vigilante killing in which the two men took it upon themselves to act as judge, jury and executioner. This kind of vigilante thuggery has a long history against working people, the labor movement and fighters for Black rights.

No charges were filed initially in the case. Instead, local officials did everything they could to cover up the facts in the killing to prevent the arrest of the McMichaels. Waycross Judicial Circuit District Attorney George Barnhill, who was assigned the case after the Brunswick DA recused herself, claimed the McMichaels acted in self-defense. He said they were trying to make a “citizen’s arrest,” believing Arbery was involved in burglaries in the area.

But as Brunswick attorney James Yancey told the media, “You can’t argue self-defense if you instigated the event. No Black man being chased by two white men in a pickup truck with guns is going to stay and talk to them. He [Arbery] had every right to defend himself.”

“Your son was involved in a robbery,” was how the cops reported Arbery’s death to his mother Wanda Cooper-Jones. She told the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* that they claimed, “There was a confrontation with a homeowner. There was a fight over the handgun. Your son was shot, and he was shot multiple times.”

“It’s hard when you can’t really believe what authority tells you,” she said later as the facts of the killing finally came out.

Arbery’s first cousin Kevin Smith, along with two of his aunts, led a protest of several hundred May 5, the day the video was released. They marched on the street where Ahmaud was gunned down, calling for the prosecution of the two vigilante killers.

“My kid was murdered,” Arbery’s father, Marcus, told the media. “That’s all I can say. He ran like that every day — all his life.” Demonstrators at the May 8 protest rally sported T-shirts and carried signs with the words, “I Run With Maud.”

Investigate the cover-up

“I won’t be satisfied until everyone involved is gone,” Richard Nixon, president of Local 1423 of the International Longshoremen’s Association, told the May 8 rally, calling for the firing of all those implicated in the cover-up. Brunswick is the second largest “roll-on/roll-off” port in the U.S., a major hub for

import and export of cars, trucks and tractors. The ILA organizes the port.

James Woodall, president of the Georgia NAACP, called for the resignations of both the Brunswick and Waycross DAs. “Ahmaud was shot down like a dog,” he said. “We are here to support this family.”

Protests have been held in a number of other cities. Support for prosecution of the McMichaels has come from a host of celebrities, politicians and sports figures.

On May 10 Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr asked the U.S. Justice Department to investigate the local authorities who handled the case.

There is a long history of police cover-ups in Glynn County. Cops there have been “accused of covering up allegations of misconduct, tampering with a crime scene, interfering in an investigation of a police shooting and retaliating against fellow officers who cooperated with outside investigators,” the *New York Times* reported May 9.

“All working people should speak out against vigilante assaults like this and demand the indictment and prosecution of all those involved, including those who engineered the cover-up,” Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Georgia, told the *Militant*. “My campaign supports all fights against police brutality, racist discrimination and the entire capitalist injustice system.”

In Defense of the US Working Class by Mary-Alice Waters

“Through the coming battles, class consciousness, confidence, and leadership capacity will develop among working people, unevenly but apace.”

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Militant/Vivian Sahner

Candace Wagner, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in New Jersey, speaks at May 13 protest in Newark against vigilante killing of Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia.

Continued from front page

tant and books by Socialist Workers Party leaders and other revolutionists and for contributions to the \$115,000 Militant Fighting Fund had been ex-

tended two weeks to run through June 2. The extension allows supporters of the paper to take advantage of opportunities to expand the reach of the paper and its coverage of workers'

Victory! Florida prison ban on 'Militant' overturned

Continued from front page

said *Militant* editor John Studer. "Barring the paper because it showed pictures of nurses, shipyard workers and meatpacking workers raising a fist as part of their struggles was particularly egregious.

"Workers behind bars have the same rights as those outside prison walls, to read about the world, consider different views and form their own opinions without interference by prison authorities.

"We'll fight every time prison officials anywhere try to ban us," he said.

The paper has had to fight Florida prison efforts to suppress the *Militant* for the last few years and has won the lion's share. With this victory the *Militant's* 53 subscribers in 24 prisons in Florida, and many others who read it as the paper makes its way around the prisons, will now have access to this issue.

Prison authorities at the Jefferson Correctional Institution in Monticello, Florida, attempted to justify the ban by claiming the photos of raised fists by workers in struggle were just "gang signs."

Many letters from prominent civil liberties organizations and by individual workers and others alike were sent to the Literature Review Committee and they helped win the decision to overturn the ban.

They included protests from Amnesty International USA, National Lawyers Guild, American Civil Liberties Union of Florida, Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, union officials and many others.

"I recently became aware the *Militant*

newspaper is, again, being suppressed in a Florida state prison," wrote Vonie Long, president of United Steelworkers Local 1165 in Coatesville, Pennsylvania.

"The raised fist is a long recognized symbol of solidarity in the labor movement and is not a gang sign," he said. "The steelworkers union, the labor movement and our partnerships strive every day for unity and solidarity in the working class and our communities and I ask the Jefferson Correctional Institution to end the suppression."

Long attached a photo of himself holding a steelworkers placard, raising his fist.

"The justification offered for the ban is unsupported by the contents of the impounded issue," wrote Samuel Morley, general counsel for the Florida Press Association, which represents all the daily and most of the weekly newspapers in Florida. The impoundment "infringes upon the First Amendment rights of both the *Militant's* publisher and its incarcerated subscribers."

In his appeal Goldstein pointed out

'Militant' gets out the truth ...

struggles to defend wages and working conditions.

SWP campaigners talk to working people in small towns and rural areas as well as big cities, at their doorsteps, Walmart parking lots, on taxi lines, at truck stops and at protest actions. They learn about what fellow workers face and discuss together what is needed to unite working people so we can stand up to the bosses' attempt to make us pay for the capitalist crisis.

Party members who work at retail stores, on railroads and at other workplaces use the drive to advance discussions with fellow workers about what can be done and to strengthen fights they are part of on the job.

Resistance and discussion

Fights by truckers and other working people show it is possible to resist the bosses' assaults. More workers are refusing to accept the myth ped-

dled by Democratic and Republican politicians that in today's depression conditions, workers and bosses "are all in this together."

Sanitation workers in New Orleans are refusing to back down from their strike over low pay, long hours and dangerous working conditions despite the bosses' attempt to bring in prisoners to act as strikebreakers.

Protests of several hundred in Georgia against the killing of Ahmaud Arbery — a Black man murdered by vigilantes while he was jogging — are another example of working people refusing to subordinate struggles against injustice to government lockdowns imposed in the name of combating coronavirus. SWP members and other distributors of the *Militant* report a thirst for discussing the road forward to defend the interests of working people.

In Albany, New York, in mid-May, several workers came out of a Walmart there after work to greet SWP presidential and vice presidential candidates Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett. One worker described working in the freezer stocking shelves without any gloves.

"Walmart should be supplying gloves," Kennedy replied. "Working people can come together and stand up to the bosses to make sure they don't get away with this." She pointed to recent examples where workers at the retail giant had organized to resist the bosses' demands.

Kennedy and Jarrett also went to

that attempting to ban the *Militant* based on its pictures of workers' struggles was unconstitutional. "The raised fist has a long and proud political history," wrote Goldstein, "from at least as early as 1848 worker protests, early 20th century worker protests, and anti-fascist protests in the 1930s, to modern political protest movements, especially in the civil rights movement that overthrew Jim Crow segregation. For over a century, the raised fist has been a symbol of worker solidarity, just as it is commonly used by workers today."

"Too many times prison authorities have arbitrarily and unjustly trampled upon rights of the incarcerated," wrote retail workers Joye Beaman and Salm Kolis from Chicago. "The Bill of Rights is not void within prison walls."

To contribute to the *Militant* Prisoners' Fund, which makes it possible for the paper to send workers behind bars reduced price subscriptions, send a check payable to the *Militant* to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018, or donate at themilitant.com.

Socialist Workers Party campaign button



Available from campaign offices listed on page 8

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 29, 1995

Hundreds of thousands of workers across South Africa joined demonstrations during a national day of mourning May 17 to commemorate the May 10 disaster at Anglo-American Corp.'s Vaal Reefs mine, in which 105 gold miners were killed. Working people held mass rallies in eight regions of South Africa.

"This was a turning point in the transformation of South Africa — and it was written in the blood of the workers," said Pat Matosa, a former miner and provincial chairperson of the African National Congress. "This was a terrible tragedy. But it has introduced a huge space to fight for change."

The accident occurred as workers were descending the 7,000-foot shaft on their way to work. A 12-ton locomotive and a mine car fell down the shaft, causing the cage to fall more than 1,500 feet to the mine floor. Moments later the train crashed down on top of the cage.



May 26, 1970

JACKSON, Miss., May 17 — Two unarmed Black students were shot to death here by state troopers and city police May 15. Fourteen others were wounded. The murders came on the second night of antiwar demonstrations at Jackson State. The dead were Philip L. Gibbs and James Earl Green. Gibbs was shot in the head. Green was shot in the back.

"They were trying to kill," says James Meate, 19. "And they did kill. It was nothing but a massacre. They killed two and kept trying to kill more."

Jackson State was closed for the remainder of the school year. But angry students, with community support, held a memorial service for the slain victims. More than 1,000 persons marched to the campus.

Charles Evers, mayor of Fayette, labeled it "outright murder." He said the president, the vice president and the governor must be held responsible.



May 26, 1945

Twentieth century barbarism tightened its rule over Europe this week as the Allied conquerors began imposing their "peace" on Germany in accordance with the secret agreements of the Yalta conference. It is an ugly, sinister "peace," sentencing tens of millions of workers and poor people to slavery, starvation and death. Outright "annexation" of portions of Germany was agreed upon.

The "iron control" of the Allies sounds more brutal than that imposed by the Nazis on occupied countries. All entertainment is outlawed. Postal circulation is forbidden. Use of telephones is banned. The curfew is enforced. Travel is prohibited by any means except foot and bicycle. Shops outside those who handle food remain closed.

Allied policy in Germany is clearly aimed to suppress any revolutionary tendencies of the German workers.

America's Revolutionary Heritage

by George Novack

How capitalism's development into an imperialist world produced the insoluble contradictions that make inevitable the transformation of society into one ruled by the majority, the toiling producers.

\$23

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... about workers' struggles

Vermont, where they helped sign up the three presidential electors needed to get the Socialist Workers Party ticket on the ballot there in November.

Merylyn Griffith, a retired teacher and one of the electors, joined Kennedy talking to workers outside a local Walmart.

Retired rail worker Walter Klinger agreed to be an elector after speaking with Kennedy in Pownal. He described how wide layers of working people in the area had never recovered from the impact of the financial crash and social crisis in 2008. "This system doesn't work, we need a new system," Klinger said.

In Millerton, New York, a village of less than 1,000 people, train engineer and conductor Travis Zuluaga told the two SWP candidates how rail bosses have increased the length of freight trains over the last eight years.

"One hundred cars was considered a long train when I hired out, today it's not uncommon to have trains over 200 cars in length even as more rail workers are being laid off," Zuluaga said.

Down from the standard five-man crews 40 years ago, many trains today run with just an engineer and a

conductor. Rail workers have fought against these cuts, which jeopardize the safety of both train crews and surrounding communities.

Fight for rail safety

"My campaign calls for limiting the train length to no more than 50 cars, and having four person crews," Kennedy said.

"How can we get everyone to unite?" Zuluaga asked.

"It starts with standing up," Kennedy replied "The more we get some victories, the more confidence we gain."

Kennedy told Zuluaga about battles by truck drivers in Minneapolis in 1934 that beat back cop and employer assaults to win a union and how SWP members in the union leadership helped lead the union to fight for farmers, independent truckers and the unemployed. That struggle shows that with leadership they deserve, working people gain confidence in themselves, build fighting unions and extend a hand to others fighting boss and government attacks.

Zuluaga renewed his subscription



Garrett Bell picks up copy of Militant from Alyson Kennedy at Dallas area Walmart parking lot.

to the Militant and picked up Teamster Rebellion by Farrell Dobbs, a central leader of those union battles and of the Socialist Workers Party. He also got copies of The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party and Are They Rich Because They're Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalist

exploitation by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. Both titles explain how working people can transform ourselves in the course of revolutionary struggles and the kind of party we need to build to lead millions to put an end to capitalist rule. (See ad on page 7 for special book offers during the drive.)

Contribute to the Militant, help win new readers

Help show the Militant and books to co-workers, neighbors, friends and relatives. See page 8 for a distributor near you. Or contact themilitant@mac.com.

Send contributions for the fund to the Militant, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Online at: www.themilitant.com

Socialist Workers Party 2020 campaign platform

This is the SWP's fighting campaign platform to confront the economic, social and moral crisis caused by capitalism:

UNIONS/FOR A LABOR PARTY Support workers' struggles to organize to defend themselves, to use union power on behalf of ourselves and all working people. Workers need their own party, a labor party. One union for all drivers — taxi, Uber, Lyft, other app-based and car service drivers! Support farmworkers in their fight to organize unions and for safe working conditions.

talist exploitation.

HEALTH CARE FOR ALL Fight for universal, government-guaranteed cradle-to-grave health care, and retirement income for all.

ABORTION Defend women's right to unrestricted access to family planning services, including the right to safe, secure abortions.

ISRAEL & PALESTINE For the recognition of Israel and of a contiguous Palestinian state. For the right of Jews to return to Israel as a refuge in the face of capitalist crisis, Jew-hatred and murderous violence.

WORKERS CONTROL OVER PRODUCTION The bosses and their government lie to working people about their production costs and profits, while they insist they can't afford to pay higher wages. Demand they open their books for inspection by workers and consumers. To prevent capitalist collusion and thievery — and their production of shoddy and dangerous goods like the Boeing 737 MAX — workers in their millions will need to fight for control of production, a step towards taking political power and a school for running the economy for ourselves in the interests of all.

"JUSTICE" SYSTEM Fight against police brutality, racist discrimination and the entire capitalist injustice system with its frame-ups, "plea bargains," onerous bail and outrageous prison sentences, all of which disproportionately hit workers who are Black. For

the right to vote for ex-prisoners and all workers behind bars.

POLITICAL RIGHTS Defend democratic rights — the right to vote, to free speech and assembly and to bear arms, under attack from Democrats and Republicans alike. Stop FBI and other government spying, harassment and disruption.

PRISONER RIGHTS End solitary confinement. End suppression of the Militant, books and newspapers by prison authorities. Abolish the death penalty, an anti-working-class weapon in the hands of the rulers.

FARMERS — WORKERS ALLIES ON THE LAND To put a halt to farm foreclosures, bankruptcies and skyrocketing rural debt, we demand nationalization of the land. This puts the soil at the service of the farmers who till it, as opposed to control by the banks and landlords. We demand the government guarantee farmers their costs of production, including their living expenses.

Working people must organize and act independent of the ruling capitalists and break from their political parties — the Democrats and Republicans. For a labor party and a movement of millions to fight for these demands along a course to replace the rule of the exploitative capitalist class with a workers and farmers government.

Join the Socialist Workers Party campaign!

Campaign to expand reach of 'Militant,' books, fund

April 4 - June 2 (week five)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	Received
UNITED STATES						
Albany	45	38	45	30	\$5,600	\$2,975
Atlanta	45	33	45	33	\$9,750	\$8,510
Chicago*	80	72	60	38	\$11,400	\$8,130
Dallas	20	19	20	18	\$2,500	\$1,787
Lincoln	10	6	10	9	\$250	\$270
Los Angeles*	70	54	60	30	\$10,800	\$7,783
Louisville	40	35	40	25	\$3,200	\$3,472
Miami	20	8	20	7	\$3,500	\$2,629
N. New Jersey	35	36	40	22	\$3,500	\$3,874
New York	50	41	50	31	\$13,500	\$11,795
Oakland *	60	51	65	53	\$12,000	\$9,320
Philadelphia	20	17	20	18	\$3,000	\$2,305
Pittsburgh*	25	21	20	9	\$2,250	\$2,015
Seattle*	45	29	40	21	\$10,500	\$5,038
Twin Cities	20	20	20	13	\$3,500	\$3,065
Washington*	30	29	30	19	\$5,500	\$5,030
Other		1				\$100
Total U.S.	615	510	585	376	\$100,750	\$78,098
Prisoners	25	22				
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	30	27	30	18	\$3,000	\$860
Manchester*	27	20	37	32	\$1,722	\$1,503
Total U.K.	57	47	67	50	\$4,722	\$2,363
Canada*	60	49	75	63	\$9,000	\$7,260
New Zealand*	15	8	15	11	\$3,000	\$3,000
Australia	15	11	15	10	\$800	\$950
Total	787	647	757	510	\$118,272	\$91,671
SHOULD BE	700	438	700	438	\$115,000	\$71,875
*Raised goal						

AMNESTY FOR ALL UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS in the US, a life-and-death question for the unions to unite workers and cut across divisions the bosses use to drive down wages. For access to driver's licenses for all.

JOBS Fight for a federal government-financed public works program to put millions to work at union-scale wages building roads, bridges, hospitals, child care centers, mass transportation and quality affordable housing workers need. Set the minimum wage to allow workers to have a home and support a family.

OPPOSE WASHINGTON'S WARS US hands off Iran, Venezuela and Cuba. US troops out of Afghanistan, Korea, the Middle East. End US colonial rule in Puerto Rico.

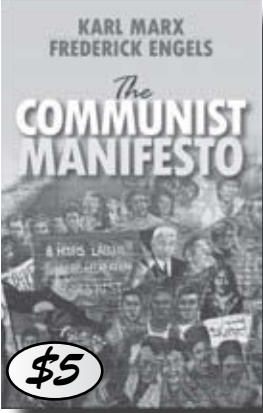
CUBA'S REVOLUTION — AN EXAMPLE End the US rulers' economic war against Cuba; US out of Guantánamo. The Cuban Revolution in 1959 showed it is possible for workers and farmers to transform themselves in struggle, to take political power and uproot capi-

"Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever expanding union of the workers."

— Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

Written in 1848, the Communist Manifesto explains why communism is the line of march of the working class toward power, "springing from an existing class struggle, a historical movement going on under our very eyes."

Order at pathfinderpress.com



Protests spread against attacks by bosses, gov’t

Continued from front page
the real cause of what we confront, not a virus.

The cause of the crisis lies in decades of decline in the profit system, and the national conflicts and wars it has spawned.

The latest measure of the social disaster in the U.S. is the loss of 20.5 million jobs in April, a loss unprecedented since the Great Depression of the 1930s. But the jobs crisis reflected in official figures seriously understate the reality. They ignore the millions of part-time and so-called independent contract workers, undocumented immigrants, self-employed and under-the-table workers who don’t qualify for any government aid.

Workers are also saddled with increasing layers of debt — from credit cards, car loans, college loans, mortgages and more. The federal government reported May 12 something every worker knows from their own experience — grocery store prices, especially for food, jumped in April, the largest one-month increase in nearly 50 years.

Despite the panic constantly peddled by the capitalist media in an effort to reconcile workers to the crisis unloaded

upon them, working people need to get out of atomizing and demoralizing social isolation and back to work. It is there where crucial battles with the bosses are beginning to unfold and where future class relations will be shaped.

When workers, who are forced to sell their labor power to survive, are stuck in their homes, idle, separated from co-workers, they begin to lose their class identity. Only on the job can we build solidarity and class consciousness as we join in the fight to defend our wages and working conditions.

The only long-term solution to this crisis of capitalism is in the hands of the working class. Working people have the power to mobilize millions to defend our class interests and chart a course to wrest political power into our own hands, to transform both society and ourselves.

Forging an alliance with working farmers and other exploited producers, increasingly crushed by the workings of capitalism, is vital to this perspective. Workers also need to extend solidarity to toilers worldwide. We all face devastating conditions from the crisis of capitalism.



Augustin Lopez, strike committee leader, addresses 50 Allan Brothers Fruit warehouse workers in Naches, Washington, May 12. Walkout began May 7 demanding 40-hour workweek, \$2 per hour pay raise, end to bosses’ abuse, respect for seniority, dignity, safe working conditions.

Under the big-business medical system in the U.S., about 160 million people, almost half the population, are forced to rely on “health insurance” through their jobs. The families of the jobless, up to 43 million people so far, face losing this health coverage.

Extended shutdowns — some now being expanded through the summer — are turning temporary furloughs into permanent layoffs. Among workers who’ve lost jobs, young people, Latinos, Blacks and Native Americans are hit hardest.

And government officials at all levels increasingly claim that their growing debts mean workers have to look forward to aid programs being slashed.

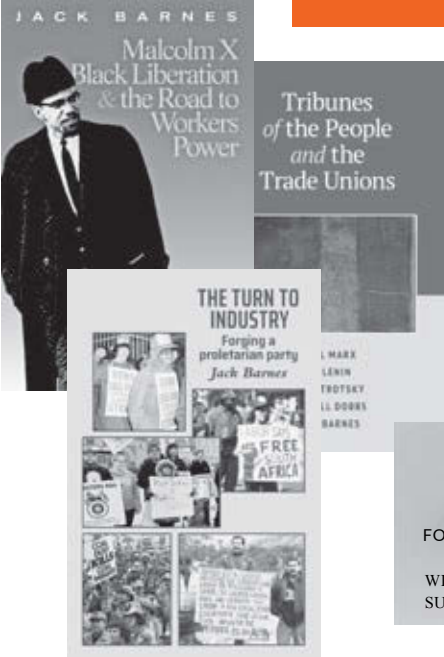
Social crisis deepens

The bosses, desperate to get profits flowing again, want to see industry and business reopen, but are determined to do so “profitably.” That means on the backs of workers, with attacks on pay and conditions, meaning less workers do more, faster and less safely, for less pay. And the bosses then use a larger permanent army of the unemployed to keep wages lower.

British Airways bosses announced they will cut 12,000 workers. Similar deep cuts are in store at other airlines, plane builders like Boeing and General Electric, in auto and steel plants, and more, to say nothing of what faces bank-

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...ABOUT BUILDING THE ONLY KIND OF PARTY WORTHY OF THE NAME “REVOLUTIONARY”



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Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions

by V.I. Lenin, Farrell Dobbs, Karl Marx, Leon Trotsky and Jack Barnes
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From Panama to El Salvador workers fight for jobs, relief

Continued from front page

“bonus” plus a free food bag — but the government hasn’t delivered.

In response, residents in San Miguelito and in Pacora, east of Panama City, blocked roads with tires, branches and stones, including on some of the most heavily transited highways, ignoring government orders to “stay in your home,” reported *Crítica* newspaper. Similar actions took place in Chiriquí in the far western part of the country.

“The slogan was the same everywhere,” the paper reported. “The lack of delivery of the bonuses and food bags.”

Some of the roadblocks stayed up for 12 hours. CNN showed the cops attacking protests and arresting participants. Edith de Bonilla, a community leader in San Miguelito, told the press that officials insulted them for demanding aid. The residents aren’t “parasites,” she said, but street vendors and other “informal workers” who have been blocked from their livelihood by the government measures.

Hundreds of thousands have been unable to work since March 18 when the government imposed a nationwide curfew and shut down most businesses, including restaurants, hotels, small businesses and mines.

“We are more afraid of hunger than the virus,” protesters told CNN reporter Elizabeth González May 4.

“The bag of food isn’t even worth \$15. It only lasts one day,” said one woman. “They want to give us one bag of food for each house. But in that house there are seven families!”

CNN reported that almost half of Panamanians work in the “informal sector,” ineligible for the bonus.

In an attempt to cow working people, the government has been stepping up its enforcement of the curfew. TVN-2 news reported 561 people were arrested May 7 alone.

In Chile, President Sebastián Piñera used the virus to push back the nearly daily demonstrations that exploded

against his regime in October over low wages and the high cost of living. Chilean health officials have banned gatherings of more than 50 people, closed bars and restaurants, and imposed nightly curfews.

On April 3, soon after lockdown was declared, Piñera had himself photographed posing in an empty Plaza Italia, a central rallying point in the capital Santiago for many of the mass demonstrations organized against his regime, as if celebrating the end of the protests.

On April 27 some 200 people tried to protest in the plaza and were dispersed by police using high-pressure water and teargas. At a May Day protest there the cops arrested 57 people, including some members of the news media.

One popular sign at some of the actions was “the Piñeravirus is more dangerous than the coronavirus.”

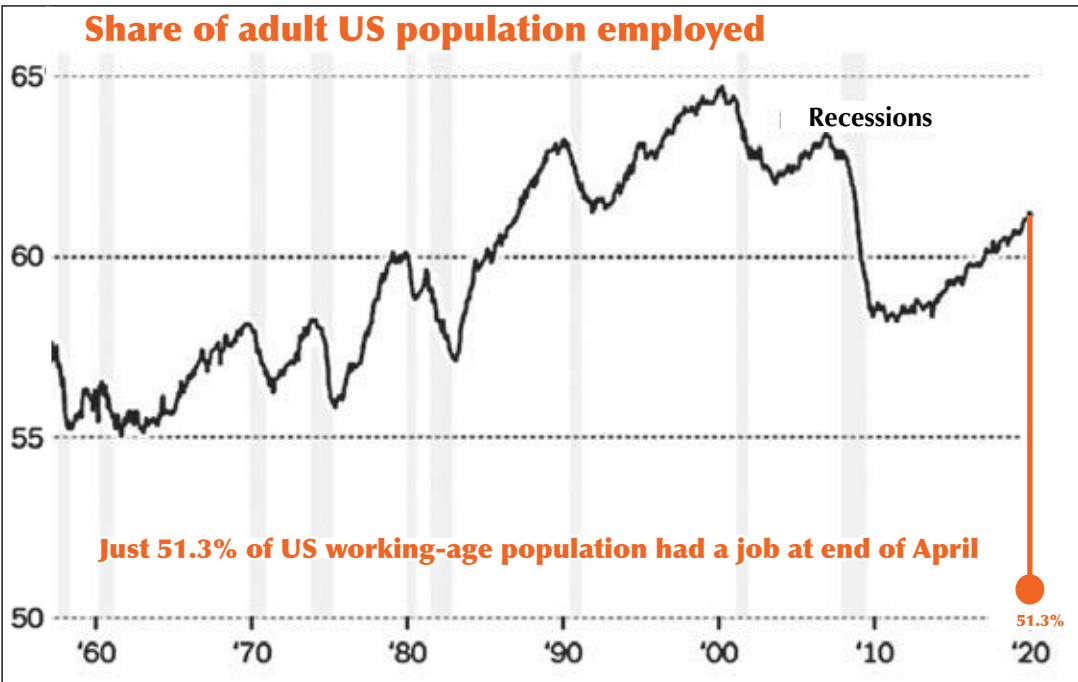
Draconian measures in El Salvador

El Salvador has imposed some of the most draconian anti-worker measures since the start of the pandemic. Cops have detained more than 2,300 people on charges of violating the mandatory home quarantine decreed by President Nayib Bukele — despite a Supreme Court ruling against the decree.

Some 160 people locked up at a sports center in San Salvador protested May 4. They complained they hadn’t been allowed to return home even though they have been locked up for 40 days.

At another detention center in a Baptist church in San Salvador, those detained shouted from the windows, “We just want to be with our families.” They also complained about overcrowding and unsanitary conditions. Cops with shields and billy clubs pushed the quarantined prisoners back.

Bukele won the presidency by presenting himself as the alternative to widespread political corruption. He got some support among workers by



Graph shows precipitous drop in proportion of US population with a job to just over half at end of April.

rupt department stores and restaurants.

Billionaire Elon Musk is in a war with California authorities as he moves to restart his Tesla electric car factory, which employs 10,000 workers.

Under these conditions, workers have organized strike actions in recent weeks around the U.S. against onerous and dangerous work conditions and paltry pay rates. More than 50 workers struck May 7 at Allan Brothers Fruit packing warehouse in Naches, Washington. Some 20 workers walked off the job May 6 at the House of Raeford chicken processing plant in West Columbia, South Carolina. Over 60 workers at United Scrap Metal in Cicero, Illinois, went on strike April 28. Hundreds of independent truckers have organized “slow roll” protests across the country.

Deep contraction of world trade

In March, U.S. imports fell 6.2%. Exports fell even more, 9.6%, the sharpest drop on record.

With falling demand and surplus productive capacity, the deep global contraction is driving sharper competition

among the big auto firms and between companies like Amazon and Walmart. It is also fueling sharpening trade and other conflicts between rival capitalist powers. The sharpest rivalry is between Washington and Beijing. The European “Union” is fraying ever faster.

Around the world from Hong Kong to Panama, Iraq to Afghanistan, anti-government protests have erupted after weeks of deepening economic crisis and the rulers’ isolation clampdowns imposed under the pretext of coronavirus.

“In a full day’s work, I can’t earn enough for five pieces of bread,” Noor Haidar, one of many children in Jalalabad, Afghanistan, who support their families by collecting recyclable material in the streets, told Ruply TV May 2. “If the situation continues like this, we will die from hunger.”

Seven Afghans were killed and 14 injured May 9 when police opened fire on 300 toilers, mostly day laborers, who gathered to protest inadequate and unfair distribution of food aid.

Working-class struggles will grow worldwide. This is the road forward.

Independent truckers protest in DC against brokers’ rates, gov’t red tape

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

WASHINGTON — A national protest by independent truckers that began May 1 is now in its 13th day. More truckers arrive daily to join the over 100 trucks parked on the National Mall by the U.S. Capitol.

“There’s a rotation. If a trucker leaves for a job, or for whatever reason, we try to get a replacement,” said Linda Stockton from Oklahoma City. She has been driving since she got out of the Navy and told the *Militant* she has joined protests like this for the last four years. “I like the camaraderie out here with my brothers and sisters.”

“We are not going until we get a hearing — and some answers,” Greg Anderson, a Bardstown, Kentucky, trucker and former coal hauler, told the *Militant*. “Farmers held tractorcades. I went with my grandfather.”

“We have a right to be here. We have to learn how to exercise our rights,” he said. “So much of the Constitution has been shredded.”

The protesters demand a meeting with President Donald Trump to discuss relief they need as they face the disastrous impact on their livelihoods from the government-mandated economic shutdown. As jobs have dried up, brokers they get work from have slashed the drivers’ share of the pay — when they can get work at all.

Trump has praised the truckers, telling Fox News that they “are price-gouged.” Some were satisfied that they had made their point and decided to leave the Mall. “The majority decided to stay and stand firm. It really makes you change when you are standing together in unity,” said Janet Sanchez, an Ocala, Florida, dispatcher who is part of the fight.

“We demand immediate relief and reform,” Trenton, New Jersey, trucker Rick Santiago told the *Militant*. “The brokers are not being transparent. In the current situation, that’s immoral.”

“Things need to change. You don’t see the brokers protesting. They use the crisis to push further against us,” said Felipe Velez. Felipe and his wife Dorys had participated in the “slow roll” protest in Los Angeles May 1. A few days later, the couple picked up a load and took it to New York. From there, they headed here to join the action May 10.

“Millions of working people have been thrown out of work. The virus didn’t do it, the bosses and the government did. The Socialist Workers Party says, ‘Build the truckers protest.’ Your fight is in the interests of all working people,” James Harris told Velez. Harris is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for D.C. Delegate to Congress and a Walmart worker. He is a regular at the protest. “You are workers — just workers with expensive tools.”

School, municipal, cleaning workers win strike in Iceland

BY SIGURLAUG GUNNLAUGSDOTTIR

REYKJAVIK, Iceland — “I’m fighting for better wages and better conditions. If not now, then when?” home care worker Dogg Asgeirsdottir told the National Broadcasting Service May 5. Along with 270 other workers in schools and kindergartens, cleaners and other municipal workers in several towns, she went on strike that day. The walkout ended May 11.

The Efling trade union members, a majority women, had been without a contract for over a year and demanded a 30% wage raise over three years. They are among the lowest paid workers in the union.

Frida Hammer, a home care worker in Kopavogur, told the *Militant* she was satisfied with the strike’s outcome. The 34 striking home care workers in her municipality met in the morning on each workday to follow the strike’s progress.

“If anyone thought that the coronavirus epidemic and the economic downturn would justify cutting the pay of low-wage workers and beat down their fighting spirit, then our municipal union members have shown that this is a big misunderstanding,” Efling Chair Solveig Anna Jonsdottir, told *Morgunbladid* newspaper.

On March 25, two weeks into an initial strike, union officials postponed the action, citing the COVID-19 outbreak. In April the union balloted to resume the action and 90% of those who voted were in favor of striking May 5 after the government loosened the restrictions on gatherings.

“The right to strike has not been restricted because of COVID,” Jonsdottir



Visit/Vilhelm

Solveig Anna Jonsdottir, chair of Efling Union and a cleaner, holds sign at May 5 union meeting: “I work at home ... other people’s homes, without a contract for 13 months.”

told the press.

Aldis Hafsteinsdottir, chair of the Association of Local Authorities, had said she wanted parliament to declare the strike illegal. Finance Minister Bjarni Benediktsson also weighed in against the fighting workers, saying that there is no room to meet their demands.

Unemployment has shot up since March and bosses are preparing to use the rising competition for jobs among workers to go after wages.

According to negotiators from the Cabin Crew Association Icelandic is pushing for a 40% wage cut. CEO Bogi Nils Bogason claims workers are standing in the way of saving the company from shutting down. This wage cut is “something we cannot accept,” Gudlaug Liney Johannsdottir, chair of the association, told the National Broadcasting Service.

Olof Andra Proppe in Manchester, England, contributed to this article.

Mall. “We are protesting unsafe conditions of work,” Crystal McIntosh from Wessington Springs told a woman, as she held up a copy of Federal Motor Carriers *Safety Regulations*, a 736-page manual. “These rules were written by someone who has never driven a truck.”

Initiatives by the truckers themselves help keep the protest going. Christian Bedoya from Ephrata, Pennsylvania, and Tony Cammarasana from Miami cook hot meals daily. “I drove down with 500 eggs, 300 buns and \$1,300, with the idea to feed every trucker a bacon, egg and cheese breakfast. Tony and I teamed up — with two small plug-in hot plates,” he said.

By the sixth day as word spread they began to get donations. They upgraded their equipment and started cooking dinner. “This is a peaceful and dignified protest,” Bedoya said. “Everyone is welcome.”



Caroline Brehman/CQ Roll Call/Pool

Truck drivers in Washington, D.C., May 11 demanding end to brokers’ illicit price-gouging, stifling gov’t regulation.

How the Teamsters union organized owner-drivers in 1930s

Beginning May 1, hundreds of truckers in their rigs converged on Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and Chicago to fight to defend their livelihoods. As part of discussions about how to organize owner-operators alongside fleet drivers to fight the bosses and brokers, the Militant is running excerpts from "How the Teamsters Union Organized Independent Truckers in the 1930s" by Farrell Dobbs. It is an appendix to Teamster Politics, part of his four-volume series on the history of the Teamsters and their class-struggle leadership in Minneapolis. Dobbs emerged from the ranks to become a leader of the 1934 Teamsters strikes and of the Communist League of America, forerunner of the Socialist Workers Party. He became the central organizer of the 11-state over-the-road campaign that brought tens of thousands of truckers into the union. Copyright © 1975 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY FARRELL DOBBS

During the depression of the 1930s individually owned trucks appeared in the transportation industry in ever-increasing numbers. A major factor in this development was an intensive sales campaign by the auto corporations. Their caper was to induce the unemployed to buy themselves a job by buying a truck. Workers who could scrape up the down payment were allowed to meet the balance of the purchase price on a long-term installment basis. Incentive for such purchases was given by the federal government, which used individually owned trucks on its "make-



Rebecca Doty

Truckers protest in Washington, D.C., in May, demanding an end to brokers' price gouging.

work" projects for the unemployed of that period. State, county, and city engineering departments followed suit, especially in connection with road work.

Comparable trends developed within private industry. Firms having their own fleets of trucks often kept a surplus of rigs on hand by hiring independent owner-operators, who usually found themselves payless — despite the time put in — when they were not actually hauling something. Fluctuations in business volume were thus compensated for at the expense of the owner-operators and to the profit of the fleet owners. Broker setups appeared in the form of companies that relied entirely on individual truck owners to move goods. In such cases virtually the entire overhead cost of trucking operations was shoved on to the owner-operators, thereby impairing their capacity to earn a living. ...

Immediate profit-taking along these lines was not the only object the capitalists had in mind. Advantage was sought from ambitions that developed among independent owner-operators to expand their holdings and go into business for themselves. Illusions were fostered that such prospects were open to all individual owners, so as to trick them into identifying themselves with the problems of management. To the extent that the scheme worked, divisions were sown between owner-operators and the drivers of company fleets. Unionization of the industry was thereby impeded; the laws of the open-shop jungle could better prevail; and the trucking bosses were able to wax fatter in all respects. ...

In shaping our overall class-struggle policy, close attention to the indepen-

dent owner-operator question was included. We began by taking full account of the realities of the existing situation. Drivers owning their own trucks had become a factor of major dimensions within the industry. To consolidate the union power, they had to be brought into an alliance with the fleet drivers. Before that could be done, however, a course had to be developed that would serve the owner-operators' interests.

Careful examination of all the factors involved convinced us that those owning one truck, who did their own driving, should be approached by the union as fellow workers. Proceeding accordingly, we set out to organize as many of these individuals as possible. They were then extended the democratic right to shape the demands that were made upon their employers, the leasing companies. On that basis the union as a whole followed through by backing them in struggles to improve their take-home pay.

The validity of that policy was confirmed by its results. In the major struggles of that period against the trucking employers generally, the union's owner-

operator members served loyally. They volunteered their trucks to transport pickets and shared in the picketing. A significant number of our casualties in battles with the cops were from among this category of workers. After the union had been consolidated, they continued to play a constructive role. ...

Our course had checkmated the divisive schemes of the bosses. In Minneapolis the truck drivers and allied workers had emerged as a power, and the union was able to march forward in advancing the interests of all its members. ...

A man who owns the truck which he drives is merely an employee who is required to furnish his own tools as a condition of employment. He has a full legal right to be represented by a labor organization. ...

We approached the equipment as expensive tools the individual owner-operators had been required to provide in order to get jobs as drivers. This served our objective, which was to make the leasing companies pay for the use of those tools, as though they were the owners. That would reduce their advantage down to having the owner-drivers buy the equipment initially, and there wouldn't be much percentage for the operating companies in such an arrangement. To the extent that we could succeed in that course, the trend toward an increase in the use of owner-operated rigs could be reversed; and a healthier situation could be established, with trucking firms again using their own fleets, operated by drivers paid on a regular wage basis.

In striving toward that goal we were aided by gains registered in securing higher wages and better conditions for fleet drivers. Those accomplishments were noted by the owner-operators, many of whom began to realize that they, too, would be better off as fleet drivers.

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— SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT —

Fight for public works program for jobs

Continued from front page

with little regard for our safety and health.

Our problem is the dog-eat-dog profit drive of the capitalist rulers and their system of exploitation and oppression, not a virus. Many workers recognize the depression conditions we face are caused by the bosses’ push to protect their profits at our expense, and are discussing how to fight back effectively.

Independent truck drivers camped out in Washington, D.C., sanitation workers in New Orleans, Asarco miners in Arizona and Texas, farmworkers in Washington state and many thousands more, including Socialist Workers Party members organizing with their co-workers at Walmart and elsewhere, are standing up and saying “Enough!”

The party promotes an action program to unite working people and break down the barriers between those of us employed and unemployed. We call for:

- A massive government-funded public works program to put millions to work at union-scale wages to build the hospitals, schools, affordable housing and all the other things we sorely need. We need to get workers back to work to strengthen our class consciousness and fighting capacity.

- To further unite working people, we back a fight for amnesty for all undocumented workers in the U.S. We are all workers!

Joblessness results from the ceaseless competition for profits that is the heartbeat of the capitalist system. When the rulers and their Democratic and Republican shills call on us to join forces with them to “save our company” or “our country,” or tell us “we are all in this together,” we reject this as a lie.

Our class interests are diametrically opposed to those of the bosses. They are driven to exploit our la-

bor to extract their profits; we have to come together and fight to defend ourselves.

SWP candidates and the *Militant* publicize and build all struggles by workers and others oppressed by capitalism and its ruthless dog-eat-dog morality. We say:

- As working-class struggles deepen and we build — and rebuild — fighting unions, workers will fight to reduce our workweek to prevent layoffs and spread the work around, while making sure there is no cut in our pay — 30 hours work for 40 hours pay!

- In the course of such struggles more workers can be won to take steps to wrest more and more control of production from the bosses, who don’t give a damn what it is they make or whether it kills people — like the Boeing 737 MAX, or whether it destroys the land, air and sea we depend on. They only care if they make profits.

Through deepening labor battles we can build committees of workers and consumers to force the bosses’ business secrets and financial chicanery into the light of day, allowing us to take control over the conditions we work under, and the quality of the goods we produce and how they fit with a national plan of production that truly meets human needs. This will be a school as we learn how to run the whole economy ourselves.

To win these battles workers need to build our own party, a labor party, that will mobilize millions to defend the interests of all the exploited and oppressed.

It will chart a road toward overturning the rule of the capitalist class and replacing it with a workers and farmers government. Working people in Cuba have set the example, showing how our class has the capacities to do this and build a new, truly human society.

Join us campaigning for this program!

New Orleans sanitation workers strike for safety, pay

BY TERRY EVANS

Sanitation workers in New Orleans who work for PeopleReady temp agency have been on strike since May 5, demanding a pay hike, safer working conditions and more respect. They work as hoppers, loading the trash into the garbage trucks. Unlike most New Orleans sanitation workers, they aren’t employees of Metro Service Group, which contracts with the city.

“This has been going on long before the corona even came. We get paid late, everything is bad,” striker Gregory Woods told WDSU-TV. “We need better pay, better equipment. The trucks need to be fixed, they have hydraulic fuel leaking on us.”

The workers demand a raise from \$10.25 to \$15 an hour, extra pay for the duration of the coronavirus outbreak and adequate safety equipment.

Metro Service Group tried to break the strike — and boost its profits — by firing the hoppers and replacing them with inmates from prisons throughout Louisiana.

“They are really trying to use those dudes to do our

job, and they pay them way less than they were paying us,” Woods told the press. Democratic Mayor LaToya Cantrell said the administration had no objection.

“We are pleased to be able to provide work-release-approved inmates with meaningful work at a good wage so that they can easily transition back into society,” read a statement from Metro Service Group bosses.

Lock5, the company that hires out the prisoners’ labor, took a 64% cut of the \$9.25 an hour Metro Service Group paid for each inmate. The prisoner’s share was \$3.23 apiece, and the prisons take another cut.

Boss Hootie Lockhart said Lock5 eventually pulled the prisoners off the job, claiming they hadn’t known they were being used as strikebreakers.

The striking workers continue to picket and press their fight. They have protested outside Metro Service Group, carrying signs that read “I Am A Man” — the slogan used in the 1968 sanitation workers strike in Memphis, Tennessee, where Martin Luther King was assassinated while supporting them.

Cops ‘serve and protect’ capitalist exploitation

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arrests for charges of possessing or purchasing marijuana or other illegal drugs.”

“They’ll get a person for marijuana before they’ll get a person for murder,” Angela McCray told *The Trace*. Two of her sons were killed by gunfire, in 2015 and 2017. She said both times the cops wouldn’t even come to take a statement from them as they lay injured in the hospital.

No “reform” under capitalism will change this situation. Cop brutality is an intrinsic part of capitalist rule. Its role — as part of the rulers’ criminal “justice” system — is to intimidate and punish workers. Their victims are disproportionately Black and Latino.

What we must do today is build a fighting labor movement with a revolutionary program — helping lead fights for jobs, for amnesty for undocumented immigrants, and against police brutality. This can open the road to unite working people in our millions to

fight to take political power from the capitalist class.

As was the experience in both the rise of industrial unions in the 1930s and in the fight to overthrow Jim Crow segregation in the 1950s and ’60s, real working-class struggles draw in broader layers, including those who today carry out anti-social activity, and involve them in forging solidarity with other workers.

It is only through growing struggles against the brutalities of capitalism that working people can begin to overcome the distortions of human potential and character that exist today.

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

The fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. Send a check or money order payable to the ‘Militant’ and earmarked “Prisoners’ Fund” to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Or donate online at www.themilitant.com

Judge backs Gibsons in fight over privacy rights

BY EMMA JOHNSON

For more than three years Oberlin College has pursued a vicious race-baiting smear campaign against the Gibson family in the Ohio college town. The family, which owns Gibson’s bakery shop, have won wide working-class support in the area and all court rounds so far in a legal fight to halt the slanders. The latest victory was an April 29 ruling by Lorain County Judge John Miraldi barring some media outlets from making public the sealed and private Facebook records of a member of the Gibson family.

In 2016, Allyn Gibson, a store clerk, stopped an Oberlin College student who is Black from using a fake ID to buy wine and then prevented him from shoplifting. The man and two friends ran out of the store and then assaulted Gibson, who had followed them outside. The students were arrested and later testified that no racism or racial profiling was involved by the Gibsons, who agreed the charges against the students should be dropped.

In the days after the shoplifting attempt, Oberlin College Dean of Students Meredith Raimondo and other college officials helped organize student protests outside Gibson’s and initiated a boycott against it. They accused the family — with no evidence — of a long history of racism and “racial profiling.” The bakery had supplied the college cafeteria with baked goods for more than a century and no such charge was ever leveled against the owners.

After college officials refused to back off their slanders, the Gibsons took them to court. In June 2019 a Lorain County jury unanimously found the college and Raimondo guilty of libel and interference in business relations. The jury awarded the bakery damages and legal fees totaling more than \$30 million.

Oberlin’s board of trustees has appealed, hoping to overturn the jury’s verdict and pressure the bakery owners to give up defending themselves. College officials claim the protests and slanders of “racism” are simply actions and opinions of the students, constitutionally protected free speech. But the Gibsons never sued the students. They sued the *college* and the dean and proved to the jury they were slandered and their business was damaged.

College officials began looking for dirt to smear the family further, filing a court motion in August 2019 seeking to make public private Facebook postings by Allyn Gibson. He was not a party to the legal battle against the college.

The Facebook records were part of the pretrial proceedings, but were sealed by the court with agreement of the college. Allyn Gibson was not called to testify and the college did not seek to use his private records as evidence in the trial.

In September Judge Miraldi ruled against the college’s motion to unseal.

In November, an almost identical motion seeking public release of the Facebook records was filed by the owners of the *Plain Dealer*, WEWS-TV and the Ohio Coalition for Open Government. None of them had paid much attention to the earlier legal fight, but suddenly jumped in to claim the “public interest” in these private records “outweighs” all confidentiality considerations.

Lawyers for the family asserted these outlets are collaborating with Oberlin College. The college’s lead trial lawyer, Ronald Holman, was a legal analyst for more than 10 years for WEWS-TV.

In his two-page April 29 decision, Judge Miraldi ruled against the media outfits’ motion, saying he “finds that the continued restriction of public access is warranted.” It’s an important victory for the right to privacy and setback for the college’s effort to continue their attacks against the bakery.

The money and resources the college administration continues to pour into their vendetta against a small business and its family members is meant to send a message, “We run this town and those who try to stand up to us are going to pay.”

But the Gibson family’s stand has shown it is possible to fight back and win. Their cause deserves the continued support of working people everywhere.