

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Truckers deliver demands to White House, end DC protest
— PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 84/NO. 22 JUNE 8, 2020

Ga. protests lead to arrests of vigilantes in Arbery killing

BY SAM MANUEL

ATLANTA — Following weeks of protests demanding justice for the killing of a Black youth in Brunswick, Georgia, by a gang of white vigilantes, state cops have arrested a third suspect. The protests have demanded the arrest and prosecution of the vigilantes and the ouster of all those involved in a two-month-long attempt to cover up the killing.

Ahmaud Arbery was gunned down Feb. 23 while jogging in a Brunswick neighborhood by Travis McMichael and his father Gregory. The latter is a retired cop and former investigator in the local prosecutor’s office.

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation
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Protests against killings by cops in Minneapolis, and Louisville, Kentucky
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Demand jobs! Fight for public works program to create jobs

Alyson Kennedy, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, issued the following statement May 26. Malcolm Jarrett is the party’s candidate for vice president.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

The bosses and their governments tell workers “we are all in this together” as they have shuttered factories, farms, retail stores and small businesses of every description, throwing millions of us out of work. They say that we should count on them to protect the livelihoods and future of “all Americans.”

But there are two very different classes in the U.S. — the America of the ruling families, who own the factories, the banks and the land, and that of working people, who have no choice but to sell our labor power to the bosses in order to survive.

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Workers’ battles over wages, conditions show way forward



Militant/Henry Dennison

Striking workers picket at Allan Brothers fruit processing plant in Naches, Washington, May 19. Workers are demanding higher wages, job safety, clean water and 40-hour workweek.

When bosses claim ‘we’re all in this together’ — it’s a lie!

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Fruit packers in Washington’s Yakima Valley who are striking and protesting for higher wages, safer working conditions and respect, along with owner-operator truck drivers fighting against brokers’ rate-gouging and onerous government regulations are setting an example for working people everywhere.

The bosses and their government seek to put the burden of the social crisis — caused by their lockdowns on jobs, production and trade — onto the backs

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Fruit packers strike makes gains, builds workers’ unity

BY HENRY DENNISON

YAKIMA, Wash. — “Good News at Monson,” farmworkers’ union Familias Unidas por la Justicia announced May 22. For the first time since workers began striking at fruit packing plants around Washington’s Yakima County a workers’ committee elected by the strikers reached a preliminary agreement with one of the struck businesses and agreed to return to work, the union reported. The news buoyed workers still on strike at four other plants.

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Thousands defy ban, protest Beijing rule over Hong Kong



Yat Kai Yeung/NurPhoto via AP

Demonstrations rock Hong Kong May 24 against Beijing’s moves to impose unilateral “national security” restrictions to curb protests, free speech, tighten its control over the region.

BY TERRY EVANS

Thousands took to the streets May 24 to protest against the Chinese rulers’ decision to impose a repressive “national security” law over political activity in the territory. Beijing hopes to take advantage of the crackdown on protests by Hong Kong officials under the pretext of stopping coronavirus to tighten its control over the key port and financial hub.

The Chinese rulers aim to deal blows to the mass movement of working peo-

ple and youth demanding greater political rights and autonomy from Beijing. Since last summer over a million people have demonstrated for direct elections of Hong Kong’s chief executive and its assembly, which is currently appointed by a Beijing-dominated committee.

The new law is set to be adopted by China’s National Political Congress, which began meeting in Beijing May 22.

Despite brutal cop assaults on protest-

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‘Our favorite paper just arrived!’ Interest grows in ‘Militant,’ books

BY SETH GALINSKY

“Our favorite paper just arrived, el *Militante*,” Ramón Torres, president of Familias Unidas union, announced when Henry Dennison got to the picket line at Monson Fruit May 13, where striking workers are battling bosses attacks.

The company in Selah, Washington, is one of six across the state where hundreds of fruit packing-house workers have struck. Their demands include a 40-hour workweek, higher wages, safer working conditions and ending the bosses’ abusive treatment. The *Militant* is “covering everything that is going on here,” Torres told strikers, encouraging them to subscribe. Familias Unidas has helped the workers organize to win broad support from working people in the area.

Since the stoppage began, at least 16 strikers have gotten subscriptions to the socialist newsweekly and purchased nine books by leaders of the

Socialist Workers Party and other revolutionaries. Several more workers in the area signed up for subscriptions when campaigners came by their homes.

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FBI’s politically partisan frame-up of Michael Flynn dangerous for workers

BY TERRY EVANS

Long-suppressed evidence showing the FBI framed up President Donald Trump’s former national security adviser Michael Flynn was revealed April 29.

The exposure of this operation is important for the working class, not because we have any stake in defending Flynn. A Republican politician, he is part of the capitalist two-party setup that defends the interests of the rulers against working people. For years he was the director of Washington’s Defense Intelligence Agency — a top government spy. This FBI frame-up was what the boss class’s political police have done to working-class militants for decades and will do again as the class struggle deepens.

Flynn’s entrapment was part of broader efforts by partisan FBI leaders and Democratic politicians to bring down the Trump administration. This use of the rulers’ political police inside the bosses’ two political parties is new.

The recent revelations document how former FBI directors James Comey and Robert Mueller and ex-Deputy Assistant FBI Director Peter Strzok tried to cook up a way to oust Trump and overturn the 2016 election, starting with their operation against Flynn.

Before Trump assumed office, Flynn spoke on the phone with Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak in December 2016, to set the stage for the new administration’s diplomacy. Washington’s spies wiretapped the conversation and shared the tape with a range of Democratic Party leaders.

Desperate for dirt on the incoming

administration, these forces — including Comey, Vice President Joe Biden and some 39 others — tried to assess if they had something to use.

But FBI agents reluctantly concluded they didn’t have real evidence to charge Flynn with anything and decided to close their case. Then anti-Trump fanatic and FBI official Strzok ordered them not to.

The frame-up unravels

The newly revealed documents show that shortly afterward FBI chief Comey ordered agents to entrap Flynn. They lied to Flynn repeatedly, telling him they wanted to talk to him but he wasn’t under investigation. They told him there was no need to bring a lawyer to their “discussion.” Then the agents — including Strzok — pressed him about his talk with Kislyak, without telling him they already had every word of that conversation recorded.

The recently released documents show top bureau officials debated before talking with Flynn whether they should “get him to lie, so we can prosecute him or get him fired.”

The agents who questioned Flynn later stated they didn’t think he deliberately lied to them. But by then former FBI boss Robert Mueller had launched his probe into the Trump campaign’s alleged “Russia collusion,” and he wanted to lean on Flynn. So Mueller charged Flynn with making false statements to the spies. Mueller’s agents threatened him with up to five years in jail, and told him they would also charge his son. They said Flynn and his family would

face financial ruin if he tried to challenge their case in court.

Flynn agreed to a plea bargain, admitting his “guilt” and offering Mueller his cooperation. Mueller’s agents then interrogated Flynn 19 times, but couldn’t come up with any “evidence” to take down Trump or his administration.

So they decided to make Flynn pay, tossed their deal with him aside and pressed for prison time.

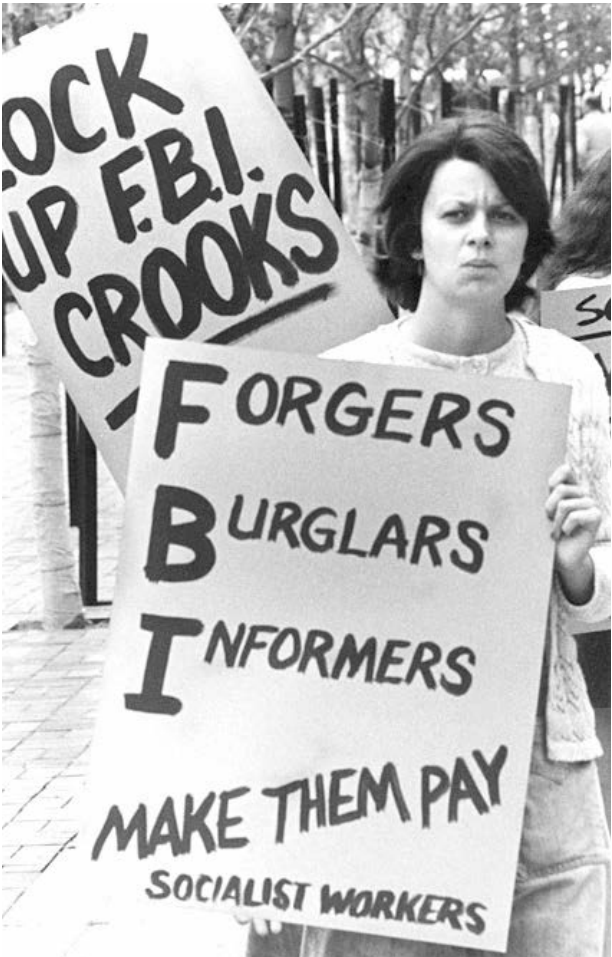
Earlier this year Flynn reversed his guilty plea, changed his lawyers and said the charges against him were based on “vindictiveness.” On May 7 Attorney General William Barr announced that the Justice Department was dropping its prosecution and moved to close the case. The next day former President Barack Obama urged courts to step in and prevent Flynn from “getting off scot-free.”

Prominent members of Obama’s administration as well as the editorial boards of the *New York Times* and other Trump-hating papers screamed bloody murder. They are fearful that more of the truth about what their “Russia collusion probe” was really about will come out and are desperate to keep the Flynn victimization standing. They are being helped by unprecedented action by Judge Emmet Sullivan, who is in charge of Flynn’s case.

Even though the prosecution says they have no case against Flynn, the judge refuses to close it. He has appointed another judge to argue against the Justice Department’s decision to drop the charges and asked him to gather a group of “legal experts” to make a guilty conviction stick.

FBI targets working-class fighters

For decades, the FBI — like local “Red Squads” in cities and states —



Militant/Glenn Campbell

Picket protests FBI spying against labor, political activity in September 1976. SWP exposed, beat back capitalist rulers’ political police with successful political, legal campaign.

have used spying, disruption and frame-ups against working-class militants, opponents of Washington’s wars and Black rights fighters, including members of the Socialist Workers Party. The extent and viciousness of the FBI’s assaults was graphically revealed in the course of the SWP’s political and legal campaign against the agency’s Cointelpro operation, in a victorious lawsuit initiated in 1973.

Whatever the “rules,” the FBI will go after whomever the ruling class deems necessary to defend its interests, especially during a rise in working-class struggle.

But what unfolded in the entrapment of Flynn — and the whole Mueller operation against the White House — is unusual in bourgeois politics. Here one wing of the rulers’ two parties conducted a partisan assault on another.

This is dangerous for the working class. If the two parties of the capitalist rulers feel free to use their political police against each other, they’ll be emboldened to do so against working-class fighters.

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THE MILITANT

Defend rights of immigrant workers

As the capitalist crisis deepens, bosses attempt to divide native-born and immigrant workers to drive down wages of entire working class. Countering these divisions is key to strengthening labor movement. Fight for amnesty for all immigrant workers living and working in the U.S.



Romanian workers on strike in Bornheim, Germany, over low wages, poor conditions.

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Crimean Tatars mark 1944 mass deportation, Moscow occupation

BY EMMA JOHNSON

On May 18 a group of Crimean Tatars put on trial by Moscow on trumped-up terrorism charges staged a daring protest during a military court hearing in Rostov-on-Don in Russia. Placed behind a glass cage for the hearing, the seven men held up signs smuggled in by fellow fighters reading, “Free prisoners of Kremlin,” “Kept our dignity in the past, will keep it now,” and “Don’t forget the exile 5/18/1944.”

That date was when the Stalinist regime in Moscow carried out the mass deportation of the entire Crimean Tatar population, taking them hundreds of miles east from Crimea to Central Asia and Siberia. Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin slandered them all as agents of the Nazis during the World War II German occupation of Crimea.

The anniversary of that deportation is memorialized every year by Crimean Tatars wherever they are.

The Tatar people were allowed less than an hour to collect their belongings. In two days 200,000 people were herded into railroad cattle cars behind locked doors with few provisions and little water. During the expulsion and over the next two years almost half of them died. Over the following five decades those who survived fought for their right to return to Crimea.

One of the leaders of that fight — Mustafa Dzhemilev — became one of the best-known opponents of the Stalinist rulers, speaking out for all those under their boot. He spent 15 years in prison in the Gulag. He was less than a year old when he and his family were rounded up in the 1944 deportation.

“The Crimean Tatar people aren’t even a national minority,” he said in a 2018 interview, “but the indigenous people of Crimea.”

Crimea seized by Russia in 1783

Crimea was conquered by the Russian czarist army in 1783 and occupied until 1991. The only part of this period when there was a flowering of independence was following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The Tatars established an autonomous socialist republic, as did the Ukrainians. Native culture flourished and national pride grew.

But in the late 1920s a growing bureaucratic layer led and epitomized by Stalin carried through a bloody counterrevolution against the policies of the Bolsheviks. National rights were trampled, in both Crimea and Ukraine.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, big waves of Tatars started returning home. They began rebuilding their cultural and political life, set up their own national assembly — the Mejlis — and elected their own leaders. Dzhemilev was elected as leader of the Mejlis.

Tatar-run schools opened up. Newspapers and other media channels in the Tatar language were started and traditional customs and celebrations reappeared.

Today, after decades of first czarist and then Stalinist efforts to repopulate the peninsula with ethnic Russians, the Tatars account for approximately 12% of the Crimean population. They are part of some 200 million people in the world speaking a Turkic language and practicing Islam.

This rebirth of Tatar national life was abruptly brought to an end when the Vladimir Putin regime in Moscow seized Crimea, a part of Ukraine, in February 2014, after popular mass mobilizations overthrew the pro-Moscow Ukrainian government of Viktor Yanukovich. Since then the Russian government has cracked down on all opposition in Crimea, with the Tatars being especially hard hit.

Newspapers and media are prohibited, schools closed down and cultural institutions shut. Events honoring the lives of those who per-



Crimean Solidarity

Following Moscow’s 2014 occupation of Crimea, Crimean Tatars are prohibited from holding events to commemorate 1944 deportation of entire Tatar population from peninsula. On May 18, Tatar prisoners defied ban and staged protest at frame-up military court hearing in Russia.

ished in the 1944 expulsion are forbidden. That makes the May 18 action in the courtroom in Rostov-on-Don even more significant.

The cops of the FSB, the Russian security service, routinely harass and interrogate Crimean Tatars, forcing their way into people’s homes between 4:00 and 6:00 in the morning brandishing automatic weapons to terrorize families.

The Crimean Tatar Resource Center reports a ninefold increase in politically motivated arrests from 2017 to 2019. One hundred fighters for Tatar national rights — including those who carried out the Rostov courtroom protest — are currently held in Russian prisons.

Moscow banned the Mejlis in April 2016, calling it an extremist organization. This March the Russian government filed criminal charges against Refat Chubarov, chair of the assembly after Dzhemilev stepped down in 2013, claiming he “organized mass riots.”

In April Dzhemilev was retroactively charged with defying a ban from Moscow when he entered his native country in May 2014. He now faces new criminal charges in exile for attempting to return to his own homeland.

During Moscow’s six-year occupation, the composition of the population in Crimea has continued to undergo changes. According to Moscow’s statistics, some 250,000 people have moved to Crimea from Russia. At the same time some 140,000 Crimeans have left. Most of them are Ukrainians, but more than 25,000 Tatars have been forced to flee.

What goes on now is a repetition “in a somewhat distorted form of what happened in 1944,” Dzhemilev said in a recent interview. Although today Moscow doesn’t put people “in cattle cars as they did in Stalin’s time, they are creating conditions so that the Crimean Tatars will leave Crimea.”

Cheryl Goertz, 55 years as a cadre building the Socialist Workers Party

BY SUSAN LAMONT

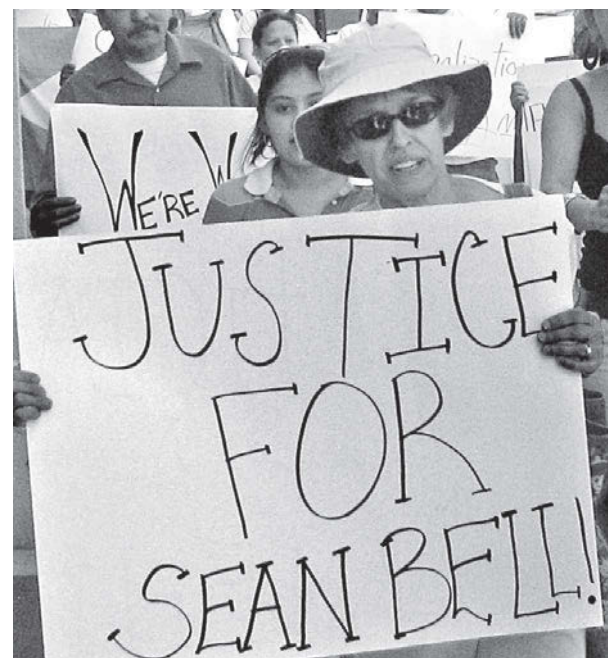
ATLANTA — Cheryl Goertz, a 55-year cadre of the Socialist Workers Party, died May 19 of complications from a lifelong congenital autoimmune disease. Born in Hillsboro, Kansas, in 1944, Goertz joined the SWP in the mid-1960s in Chicago. She spent the rest of her life building the party in cities across the country, including Chicago; Boston; Salt Lake City; Tampa, Florida; Pasadena, California; Birmingham, Alabama; Atlanta; and Carrollton, Georgia.

Goertz shouldered many party responsibilities, from organizing Socialist Workers Party and Militant fund drives to help getting SWP candidates on the ballot, making sure every detail of often complex paperwork was properly carried out. She joined the international campaign to free Troy Davis from death row, an effort centered in Georgia, where she lived with her companion Dave Wulp since 2005.

Goertz covered and sent pictures for the *Mili-*

tant on the Troy Davis fight and a wide variety of union and social struggles.

A May 30 meeting is being organized by the party in Atlanta to celebrate her contributions to building the revolutionary working-class movement. Messages from those who knew and worked with her should be sent to the SWP in Atlanta, with copies to the *Militant*. A future issue will carry a report on the meeting.



Militant/Dave Wulp

Cheryl Goertz marches on May Day 2008 in Carrollton, Georgia, calling for justice for Sean Bell, a young Black man who was murdered by New York cops in November 2006.

Further reading ...

Lenin's Final Fight



\$17

SPEECHES & WRITINGS
1922-23

“I declare war to the death on Great Russian chauvinism.”
V.I. Lenin, 1922

In 1922-23 Lenin waged his last political battle. At stake was whether the revolution would remain on the proletarian course that had brought workers and peasants to power.

pathfinderpress.com

SWP ‘stimulus’ appeal approaches \$100,000

Nine new contributors to this special appeal last week brought the total to \$95,000, from 84 people and increasing!

Harvey McArthur, from the Chicago area, sent his check with a note: “Enclosed is a check from proceeds of the ‘stimulus’ payments. Very glad to be able to make this extra contribution to the work of party.” Pat Travis wrote from North Carolina to say the same, “Glad to contribute.”

The growing number of contributors, all in that same spirit, are making a qualitative reinforcement to the SWP’s long-term financial capital — toward being able to respond to an awakening working class in a period of worldwide capitalist decline and unfolding social and economic crisis.

Those resources mean an expanded ability to build a proletarian party now and in future working-class fights. A party that will organize workers in their millions to end capitalist exploitation and rule, and join hands with toilers worldwide to build a new social order based on solidarity.

The *Militant* will continue its weekly column on the fund.

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

‘Our favorite paper just arrived!’

Continued from front page

Dennison is on the ballot as the SWP’s candidate for governor of Washington. He returned to the picket lines May 19-20 with Alyson Kennedy, the party’s candidate for president.

“The Democratic and Republican parties do not represent working people, they represent the rich,” Kennedy told strikers when she was invited to address the Columbia Reach Pack picket line in Yakima. She told them she joined with truck drivers protesting in Washington, D.C., against attacks on their livelihoods by brokers who dictate the rates they receive for moving freight, and against government regulations.

“What you are doing is the only way to change things for working people. We’ve got to do more of this,” Kennedy said.

Angelina Lara, one of the strikers at Allan Brothers packinghouse in Naches, described conditions to SWP congressional candidate Rebecca Williamson. “When the supervisors tell older workers or a pregnant woman to do the physically harder jobs, I offer to swap with them. The supervisor gets mad and says

that he told *them* to do the job, not me.”

To counter these abuses “working people need to be in control of production,” Williamson said. “Workers control would ensure both safe working conditions and safe products.”

Lara subscribed to the *Militant* and got the book *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions*. A week later she also got *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes.

Working-class road forward

The response to the *Militant* and the SWP campaign by the strikers is not unique. It reflects that growing numbers of workers are looking for ways to stand up and fight for our interests.

The SWP and the Communist Leagues in other countries are poised to go over the goals for winning new readers to the *Militant* and books, and for contributions to the \$115,000 *Militant* Fighting Fund.

Party branches are using the drive to expand the reach of the *Militant* to working people, including farmers and small proprietors, in rural areas as well as cities and towns, large and small.

A two-day team of Socialist Workers Party campaigners in southern West Virginia sold 10 subscriptions to the *Militant* and seven books. “We saw the impact of the decline in coal-mining jobs,” said Tony Lane. “One miner told us that the bosses ‘looked at their piles of coal at the beginning of the crisis and furloughed us, blaming COVID-19. They called us back to work when the coal piles got small and said nothing about the virus.’”

Nursing home worker Neva Spaulding agreed. “There was a job crisis before this started,” she said, including from hospital closings. “The problem is the wealthy few who wor-

ry about how rich they can get, but not what happens two years down the line.” She bought *In Defense of the US Working Class* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters.

This worker-correspondent was part of a team in Staten Island, New York, that sold five subscriptions and four books May 24.

After buying a subscription, a retired teaching assistant, whose husband is a retired truck driver, saw the picture of independent truckers protesting in Washington, D.C. “That’s going to make my husband’s day,” she told us.

The *Militant* has no paid advertising. It depends on funding from readers who appreciate a paper that tells the truth about working-class struggles and points a road forward to ending capitalist rule. It has become common for workers to hand campaigners \$5, \$10 or \$20, saying, “I like what you are doing.” This has boosted the fund effort.

‘Not all in this together’

“They tell us we are all in this together, but it’s not true,” Samir Hazboun, a Walmart worker who is the SWP congressional candidate in Kentucky’s 3rd District, told Kevin Kennedy in Louisville May 23.

“I had some hope for the governor when he was first elected,” Kennedy, a utility worker, replied. “He said he was for working people. But I think differently about him now, and I sure don’t agree with all these restrictions.”

“We need to break with the bosses’ parties,” Hazboun said. “We need our own party, a labor party.”

“That sounds good,” Kennedy said. “But the unions aren’t like they used to be.”

The top union officials “tell us what’s good for the company is good for the workers,” said campaigner Jacquie Henderson, who accompanied Hazboun. These officials tie workers fate to voting



Militant/Jacquie Henderson
Amy Blair in Louisville, Kentucky, got *Militant* subscription and *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record* after talking with SWP congressional candidate Samir Hazboun.

for the lesser evil of the capitalists’ twin parties, which they say is the Democrats.

“We can rebuild the unions as we stand together against the bosses,” Henderson said. “We need to organize immigrants together with workers born here.”

“I am not an open borders person,” Kennedy said. “But I sure don’t agree with denying millions of people their rights. If they are working here give them amnesty.” He got two issues of the *Militant* and invited Hazboun and Henderson to come back to talk some more.

Fighting speedup on the job

Hazboun told mechanic Scott Blair down the street that the bosses will use the tens of millions of unemployed to divide workers and force down wages and speed up the pace of work.

“I know what you are saying. We get paid a flat rate for repairing cars. So there’s always pressure to go faster,” said Blair. “I’m not against the rich. But if you’ve got \$6 billion, what’s another \$6 billion to you. They just can’t stop. It’s about profits and power.”

“The capitalist class is incapable of organizing society in the interests of humanity,” Hazboun said. “As working people organize together we begin to see what we are capable of and that we can replace the rule of the exploiters with a workers and farmers government.”

Blair and his wife Amy subscribed and picked up two other books by Barnes, *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record: Why Washington Fears Working People* and *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?*

Working people in the United Kingdom are facing lockdowns and restrictions on workers’ rights — just like in the U.S. Members of the Communist League there campaigned in Broughton, North Wales, where bosses at aircraft manufacturer Airbus have just furloughed 3,200 workers.

Scott Hughes, who used to work at the plant, told CL member Hugo Wils that cops “broke up a family birthday event and even tried, but failed, to stop me from laying flowers at a grave.”

“The rulers want us to police each other,” Wils replied. “Meanwhile the bosses are cutting wages, working conditions and the standard of living.” Hughes got a subscription.



Militant/Henry Dennison
SWP presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy, right, talks with striking fruit packing worker in Yakima, Washington, May 24.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



June 12, 1995

SAO PAULO, Brazil — “This strike is about dignity and sovereignty,” said Eduardo Jenner Ozório, an operator at the Petrobras oil refinery in Cubatao, Brazil. Jenner gave an interview to the *Militant* May 30 through the steel gate that keeps the main entrance to the refinery shut. Strikers have been occupying the plant since May 2.

The oil workers oppose the government’s plan to sell off shares of the company to private capitalists, lay off thousands of workers, and speed up production. They also demand a wage increase.

As the walkout enters its second month, 85 percent to 90 percent of the workers remain on strike, according to the union. The big-business media claims only 11,000 are still out. “That’s a bald-faced lie,” Jenner said. “This is a class war. The government will do anything to give the impression we’re being defeated.”



June 12, 1970

Memorial Day anti-[Vietnam] war actions occurred in a number of cities May 30. Veterans were prominent in many. The endorsement by unions and the presence of labor speakers at several were a significant sign of the growing hostility to the war inside the organized labor movement.

In New York, approximately 10,000 participated in a rally in Central Park. Several were from the Veterans Hospital in New York City and were enthusiastically received when they addressed the rally. They have been threatened with expulsion for circulating a petition opposing the war in Cambodia.

Leaning on a cane, Manuel Vitti spoke of this harassment and then addressed himself to President Nixon. His voice was cracking. “You drafted me and sent me to Vietnam to lose my leg and now you tell me I have no rights. You’re wrong!”



June 9, 1945

A grisly sign of the swift advance of twentieth century barbarism is the burning to death of countless human beings in Japan. Fifty-one square miles in Tokyo have been burned out by [U.S.] fire bombs. Other Japanese cities are being similarly obliterated and their inhabitants incinerated. The most populous areas were marked as the target.

“The attacks burned with speed and destructive results and it is possible that 1,000,000 or maybe even twice that number of the Emperors subjects, perished.” MAYBE EVEN TWICE THAT NUMBER — in these five casual words Wall Street’s press sums up the value it places on the lives of 2,000,000 human beings!

These calculating monsters who doom millions to perish in flames are the same ones who boasted that only the Axis bombed civilians, that only fascists would stoop to cold-blooded slaughter.

Gov't tries again to frame up Amtrak engineer in 2015 crash

PHILADELPHIA — For the last five years Amtrak engineer Brandon Bostian, a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, has been hounded by prosecutors and government officials determined to frame him up for a 2015 passenger train derailment here in which eight people died and over 200 were injured.

Pennsylvania Superior Court Judge Victor Stabile reinstated criminal charges against Bostian May 14, overturning a July 2019 ruling by Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas Judge Barbara McDermott, who found Bostian did not commit any crime. Stabile claimed the case must be evaluated not by a judge in a preliminary hearing, but in a trial.

Stabile's decision was hailed by state Attorney General Joshua Shapiro, who had brought the original charges against Bostian May 12, 2017, the last day before the statute of limitations ran out. That same week the Philadelphia district attorney refused to file charges, saying — as did Judge McDermott — there was simply no evidence of criminal intent.

In September 2017 a Philadelphia Municipal Court also dismissed the

charges, only to have the ruling overturned in Common Pleas Court.

For the third time Bostian now faces charges of reckless endangerment, causing a catastrophe and involuntary manslaughter. "This was an accident and not a crime, and we will appeal," Bostian's lawyer, Brian McMonagle, told the press.

On May 12, 2015, Bostian was the engineer on Amtrak Northeast Regional Train 188 when it derailed after accelerating from 70 to 106 mph at the Frankford Junction curve, which has a 50 mph speed limit. With 14 years of experience and respected for his concern for safety by fellow engineers, Bostian had suffered a head injury and does not remember the crash.

Minutes prior to the derailment two engineers running nearby trains reported projectiles hitting their cabs. The engineer's window on a SEPTA commuter train was broken and an Amtrak Acela train window shattered. Cracks in the windshield of Bostian's train indicates it may also have been hit.

In 2016 the National Transportation Safety Board issued a report blaming the accident on the fact the engineer's "attention was diverted to an emergency situation with a nearby SEPTA train that had made an emergency stop after being struck." Bostian tested negative for drugs and alcohol, and was found to have not been using his cellphone.

"If a second engineer had been pres-



July 2014 Seattle protest against rail bosses' plans to impose one-man crews. Inset, Brandon Bostian, Amtrak engineer. Government is trying a third time to scapegoat Bostian for 2015 Philadelphia train crash, to take eyes off real source of problem — rail bosses' drive for profits.

ent to assist the engineer of Train 188 in managing the multiple tasks confronting him," Dennis Pierce, national president of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, told the press, "there would have been no accident."

When the government-funded passenger line was created in the 1970s, Amtrak locomotive cabs were required to have at least two crew members. But to cut costs, Amtrak has refused since 1983 to crew Northeast Corridor train cabs with more than an engineer.

Crew cuts are a major issue that endangers all rail workers and people in the cities and rural areas they operate in.

Efforts to frame up Bostian for the crash began immediately following the derailment. "Clearly he was reckless and irresponsible in his actions," said Michael Nutter, Philadelphia's mayor at the time, with no evidence to back it up.

After the crash Amtrak finally installed at Frankford Junction a safety system called "positive train control." It's designed to slow down and stop any train going above the speed limit. Rail unions have been demanding this for years, and Congress ordered the rail bosses to deploy it nationwide. But the railroad owners postponed doing so for years, claiming it was too expensive.

"Our campaign gives full support to the fight by rail worker Brandon Bostian against this frame-up," Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in Pennsylvania's 3rd District, told the Militant. "Time and again, rail workers are blamed by the bosses and the government for accidents when it's the bosses who are the real culprits. They slash work crews, disregard safety and gut working conditions in search of higher profits."

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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.

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 capitalist 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.

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

April 4 - June 2 (week seven)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	Received
UNITED STATES						
Albany*	55	52	55	41	\$6,300	\$4,999
Atlanta*	55	47	55	45	\$10,550	\$10,426
Chicago*	80	100	60	62	\$11,400	\$11,311
Dallas	20	23	20	23	\$2,500	\$2,697
Lincoln	10	7	10	11	\$250	\$270
Los Angeles*	70	63	60	36	\$10,800	\$10,468
Louisville*	55	55	55	52	\$3,900	\$3,502
Miami	20	15	20	17	\$3,500	\$3,429
N. New Jersey*	55	52	40	34	\$5,000	\$4,755
New York*	65	67	60	60	\$14,000	\$13,927
Oakland*	65	65	70	64	\$12,000	\$10,947
Philadelphia	20	21	20	22	\$3,000	\$3,100
Pittsburgh*	30	30	20	19	\$2,250	\$2,515
Seattle*	55	59	40	38	\$10,500	\$7,491
Twin Cities	20	20	20	13	\$3,500	\$3,685
Washington*	30	39	30	23	\$5,500	\$5,030
Other		2				\$600
Total U.S.	705	717	635	560	\$104,950	\$99,152
Prisoners	25	31				
UNITED KINGDOM						
London*	35	30	40	38	\$4,250	\$3,488
Manchester*	27	29	37	41	\$1,722	\$1,705
Total U.K.	62	59	77	79	\$5,972	\$5,193
Canada*	60	61	75	81	\$9,360	\$9,300
New Zealand*	15	16	15	12	\$3,000	\$3,156
Australia	20	18	20	15	\$1,500	\$1,250
Total	887	902	822	747	\$124,782	\$118,051
SHOULD BE	700	613	700	613	\$115,000	\$100,625
*Raised goal						

We're *not* 'all in this together'

Continued from front page

of the working class. We need to be on the job, working and joining together to fight in our defense, and in defense of all those exploited by capital.

On-the-job skirmishes, strike actions and protests, fights against brutality and killings by cops and vigilantes, and other signs of resistance by working people are growing.

As part of their endless efforts to convince us that all we can do today is retreat to our homes and stay there, bourgeois pundits have dubbed this “the age of the virus.” But that’s a lie. The problem workers face today isn’t a disease, but the growing crisis of world capitalism. And a better class of people — working people, whose labor power produces all wealth — are awakening.

From sanitation workers in New Orleans to immigrant waste collectors in Beirut, Lebanon, strikes and protests are breaking out as workers grow more determined to stand up, gaining self-confidence and class consciousness in the process.

Official unemployment figures in the U.S. — which understate the real numbers — reached 38.6 million in just nine weeks of shutdowns. That is nearly 20% overall, with youth unemployment at 32% in April. One in seven coal miner jobs has disappeared in the last three months.

Competition for markets and profits is intensifying, both among the bosses and bankers in the U.S. and between the ruling classes of rival capitalist powers worldwide.

The capitalist system’s long-term decline has been punctuated by economic crises and ever-increasing attacks on the jobs, wages and working conditions of the toilers. Mountains of debt are piling up that will lead to new crises and breakdowns. This process is fracturing the imperialist world order, put together under the bloody hegemony of the U.S. rulers after the second imperialist world war. Military tensions will grow.

They try to tell us “we’re all in this together. We all have to sacrifice.” But

this is a bald-faced lie. The goal of the capitalist rulers is to press us — the working class — to sacrifice for their profits.

To engage in the dog-eat-dog struggle with their competitors, the bosses are now pushing to stoke up production and trade, reopening shuttered plants and transportation. All with one overriding thought — how to do so and maximize profits. They aim to go after our wages and conditions.

Some of the temporary shutdowns are morphing into permanent closures of firms large and small. Goodyear bosses are closing their shuttered tire plant in Alabama, throwing the last 410 workers there on the street. Among the growing numbers of companies filing for bankruptcy are the huge debt-ridden car rental firm Hertz and the former mighty retail chain J.C. Penney.

Many of the tens of millions of small-business owners of restaurants, cafes and corner stores will never reopen. Millions more furloughed workers will be out of a job.

This massive jump in unemployment is one of the central tools the bosses use to go after the working class — to promote divisions between workers with jobs and those without, to pit us against each other.

British Airways boss Willie Walsh confirmed May 25 that they plan to slash 12,000 jobs, and then ask workers to reapply and compete with each other for their jobs at half the former pay.

Many other bosses have the same idea. The *New York Times* reported the day before that some bosses are benevolently looking for ways not to eliminate your job by offering to let you keep working for less pay. Among those jumping on this bandwagon is HCA Healthcare, a large national hospital chain, whose bosses said that in the name of “shared sacrifice” they lowered some executive pay while cutting wages of 15,000 workers.

Governments at all levels, who’ve



Striking immigrant waste workers block company plant in Beirut, Lebanon, May 12 in fight against steep pay cut.

seen taxes plummet with the economy locked down, also like this idea. In Georgia, legislators say they either have to furlough a big clump of teachers and pre-kindergarten staff, but might instead impose a “special deduction” to keep them working the same number of hours for less pay.

For workers the answer to the bosses’ efforts to pit those working against those unemployed is to fight for more jobs, and jobs at union-scale pay. The Socialist Workers Party candidates in 2020 propose our unions fight for 30 hours work at 40 hours pay to spread jobs around without cutting our wages.

Immigrant workers hammered

Global shutdowns and spreading depression conditions have reversed the flow of immigrant workers. The oil-rich, clan-based Middle Eastern regimes are utterly reliant on paying low wages to laborers from the semicolonial world for construction and other sectors of the economy.

As many of these projects have been shuttered, hundreds of thousands now seek to return home from the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and elsewhere. In the UAE alone, where 80% of its 9 million residents are foreign-born, nearly 300,000 Indian and Pakistani workers want to leave. More than a million Filipinos working in the Gulf states are waiting to return home.

The remittances from wages these workers have relied on to send home — which reached a record \$550 billion worldwide in 2019 — have disappeared. This has deepened the crisis for working people across Asia and elsewhere.

In Beirut 250 immigrant waste collectors have been on strike since April 3 demanding an end to a steep cut in pay by RAMCO, their employer. The workers, mostly from Bangladesh and

India, gained national attention when they blocked garbage trucks moving in and out of RAMCO’s main waste facility May 12.

“There is no economic or social justice at all,” Bou Khater, a striking worker, told Al Jazeera May 19. “This strike shows we are at a point where this is no longer acceptable. It shows how bad the system is.”

He’s right. Workers’ battles over time will lead to growing recognition that the only answer to the devastation caused by capitalism in crisis is the road of working people taking political power into their own hands, taking control over production and over how the wealth our class produces is used, once and for all.

Truckers deliver demands to White House, end DC protest

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

WASHINGTON — Three weeks after truckers parked their rigs by the U.S. Capitol May 1, they ended their national protest calling for an end to brokers slashing their rates and for elimination of government overregulation. An estimated 500 to 1,000 truckers participated in some part of the disciplined and spirited action, which set an example for working people.

“We made a conscious decision to stand up for our rights,” Greg Anderson, a Bardstown, Kentucky, trucker told the *Militant*.

Young truckers participating in their first protest joined with veterans of earlier actions. On May 20, they won one of their central demands — a meeting with officials at the White House to demand federal relief in their fight against low rates. Two representatives for the truckers met with Mark Meadows, President Donald Trump’s chief of staff, and Jim Mullen, deputy ad-

Cuban leaders turn to working people to lead the way forward

BY SETH GALINSKY

Like it has done ever since the fight to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista began, the revolutionary leadership in Cuba has turned to working people to lead the way again. They are doing so to confront the impact of the worldwide capitalist crisis and the U.S. rulers’ economic war against the revolution.

Workers, farmers, youth and their mass organizations are increasing food production, using workers creativity and control of production to find substitutes for critical imports that have been cut off. They are going door to door to make sure everyone gets the medical care they need, and making sure that no one is left on their own.

And despite Cuba’s own difficulties, over 2,000 volunteer health care workers are treating coronavirus patients in 23 countries, part of the revolution’s tradition of international solidarity.

According to *Trabajadores*, news-weekly of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), more than 30,000 workers lost their jobs over the last year — before the pandemic — because of new U.S. sanctions that made it harder to get loans, spare

parts or raw materials.

By May 11 that number had reached more than 138,000 — including in tourism, a key source of hard currency — because of the drop in international travel and trade.

In capitalist countries like the U.S., millions of workers have been thrown out of work and left to fend for themselves. In Cuba — where industry is part of the national patrimony run under workers control — laid-off workers get 60% up to 100% of their salary.

But the goal is “to minimize those who are inactive at home collecting their wage guarantee,” *Trabajadores* explained, by offering workers jobs in other fields. And it isn’t make-work, because workers need to know “they are doing useful work.”

“Work is the best protection” is the headline of a May 24 article in the paper. Hotel grounds are being planted with vegetables and fruit trees to lessen dependence on imports. Other workers are repairing 8,000 rooms that had been out of service to make them available when tourism returns.

Many of the 36,000 workers laid off in tourism now work at urban farms, at senior citizens homes and medical



Juventud Rebelde/Roberto Suárez

Young people in Havana planting cucumbers at La Batalla farm May 23. Union of Young Communists is leading workers, farmers and youth to expand agricultural production to cut into food shortages caused by deepening world capitalist crisis, punishing U.S. trade sanctions.

quarantine centers, or in construction.

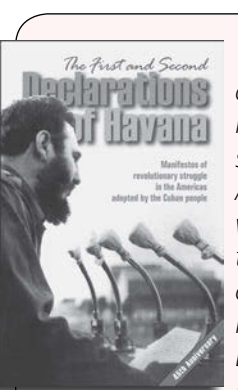
“I will always be where the revolution needs me,” hotel cook Miguel Moreno said. Now he is preparing food for hospital workers and patients. “The best incentive is when they send me messages of congratulations for a tasty dish.”

In Guantánamo, more than 400 laid-off workers have joined 37 CTC agricultural brigades working side by side with vegetable farmers across the province. Others have joined Cuba’s “innovators” movement, which keeps machinery running despite difficulty in getting spare parts.

The Union of Young Communists has initiated more than 305 youth contingents, mostly in agriculture. Diosvany Acosta Abrahante and Aylin Álvarez García, the UJC’s first and second secretaries, joined them at the La Batalla farm in Havana May 22. They cleared fields, spread fertilizer

and planted corn, cucumber and beets.

“This is nothing extraordinary,” Acosta said. “It’s the duty of an organization that has always been at the side of the revolution in good times and difficult ones.”



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Fruit packers strikes make gains

Continued from front page

“Negotiations with Monson continue over the permanent raise the workers want,” Familias Unidas President Ramón Torres told the *Militant*. The union has helped the fruit packers organize and fight for their demands. At each plant the strikers have elected a committee to represent them and lead the walkouts.

“They’re negotiating at Frosty Packing,” where the workers remain on the picket lines, Torres said. “We’re still fighting at the other companies. It’s important that the strikes made Monson sit down and negotiate in good faith with the committee that the workers chose. Both sides committed to work and implement everything necessary to have safety and health at work.”

The strikes began over demands for steps to stop the spread of coronavirus in the crowded packing plants. But the workers quickly raised long-standing issues of wages, working hours, work speedup, broader questions of working conditions in the plants, and to be treated with respect.

One demand is for a guaranteed 40-hour workweek. Workers report they are often offered only 20 hours work, but when the bosses need production they speed up the line to the point where fruit is falling on the floor.

“If we’re going to do the work of three people, we want to be paid for three people,” Rosalinda Gonzales, a striker at Columbia Reach Pack, told the *Militant*. “We want to be treated fairly and with dignity. We need to

be paid a decent wage.”

At Monson workers want more than one women’s bathroom in a department where 50 women work.

The strikes haven’t shut down the plants, but they have slowed production, and got the attention of the bosses across this agricultural region. Washington fruit growers and packing bosses raked in some \$2.7 billion from fruit and berry sales in 2019. Close to \$2 billion of that was from apples alone.

The state’s fruit industry is dominated by integrated fruit-growing and packing combines, increasingly owned by large capital investment funds that have introduced new technologies to speed up production. Allan Brothers, where the strikes started, built a new packing building in 2019 that cost \$35 million. Many of area packing bosses, including Allan Brothers and Matson Fruit, where workers remain on strike, are connected through a common marketing company.

The bosses have introduced new orchard technologies, including lashing fruit trees to horizontal suspension cables. That setup costs more than three times as much as traditional orchards to start up, but the trees can start producing in their second or third year compared to four or five for free-standing trees. It also allows bosses to push workers to speed up production.

These conditions helped spur the walkouts. Workers say they are determined to stay on strike until they get contracts. “And Familias Unidas is staying in Yakima until the last strike is over,” Torres said.

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Anthony Guerrero

Truckers celebrate three-week protest in Washington, D.C., after presenting demands to U.S. officials.

Louisville rally: Arrest cops in killing of Breonna Taylor

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — More than a hundred people gathered here May 25 to protest the March 13 police killing of Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old emergency room technician.

“My daughter’s life mattered,” Tamika Palmer told fellow protesters. “Those cops shot her. They should be held accountable.”

Taylor was killed in a police raid on her apartment after midnight. The plain-clothes cops in unmarked cars were assumed by her boyfriend, Kenneth Walker, to be intruders. He called 911 to say Taylor and he were “in significant, imminent danger.”

After busting down the door with a battering ram, the cops fired a hail of bullets. Eight shots hit Taylor. Walker picked up his gun to try to defend himself and his girlfriend. He fired a warning shot, hitting an officer in the leg. Walker was arrested and charged with attempted murder, but later released and the charges dropped.

For two months, Taylor’s family pressed for authorities to explain what happened. The killing received no attention in the media. Then the family filed a lawsuit charging Metro Police Department Sgt. Jonathan Mattingly and Officers Brett Hankinson and Myles Cosgrove with killing their daughter as they “sprayed gunfire into the residence with total disregard for the value of human life.”

The officers justified their actions, saying they had a “no-knock” warrant to search for narcotics and a warrant for a suspect. But they admit they found no drugs in the apartment, and the person they claimed to be looking for was already in police custody. The officers have been “placed on administrative leave,” but none have been charged.

The cop killing of Breonna Taylor finally began getting some coverage

after the months-old vigilante killing of Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia broke through the media.

The Memorial Day action began with the families of both Taylor and Walker leading a procession of cars circling the parking lot outside their apartment while supporters cheered. Then they joined their neighbors and other supporters in holding a rally and wreath laying in front of the apartment where she was killed.

Juniyah Palmer, Breonna’s sister and roommate, pointed to a bullet hole in the wall, explaining her bed is on the other side, and she would likely have been hit if she had been home.

Further protests are planned.



Militant/Samir Hazboun

Some 200 people rally May 26 at mayor’s office in Louisville, demand cops who shot Breonna Taylor as she lay in her bed be arrested. With mic is Velicia Walker, mother of Kenneth Walker, Taylor’s boyfriend. Maggie Trowe, left, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate, also spoke.

Protests lead to arrest of vigilantes in Arbery killing

Continued from front page

announced the arrest May 21 of William Bryan Jr. on charges of felony murder and criminal attempt to commit false imprisonment. The GBI said Bryan was a participant in the attack, using his vehicle several times in attempts to stop Arbery.

The McMichaels were arrested on murder charges May 7, two days after protests erupted in Brunswick and other cities following the release on the internet of a cellphone video showing them chasing and shooting Arbery. The video had been made by Bryan.

Bryan’s attorney said his client played no role in the shooting and is only a witness. But Gregory McMichael told cops that “Roddie,” a nickname Bryan uses, had attempted to “block” Arbery’s escape.

The McMichaels have said they chased Arbery because they suspected he had committed burglaries in the neighborhood. But there are no police

records of any burglaries. That accusation centers on security tapes that show several people entering a home construction site over several months.

Larry English, the owner of the house under construction, told the *Wall Street Journal* that Arbery is among those shown on the security tapes, but that nothing was ever taken and no damage was done to the property. He criticized the McMichaels for their “vigilante response” in killing the 25-year-old youth.

Over several months the McMichaels and local cops were involved in organizing area residents in a surveillance operation of the house, with neighbors, sometimes armed, going on the property to “check things out.”

An attorney for English also confirmed that a Glynn County cop had texted her client in December to say that Gregory McMichael was willing to help “deal” with any trespassers. He also said it was likely Arbery interrupted his jog to get a drink of water at the site.

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation director told the press that the agency expected to wrap up its investigation in a relatively short time, expressing confidence that all those who needed to be charged in connection with the shooting have been charged.

But thousands have taken to the streets to demand that all those in-

volved in trying to cover up the killing be fired or charged. The actions have included church and Black rights organizations and local unions. Leaders of International Longshoremen’s Association Local 1423, which organizes dockworkers at Brunswick’s large port, have joined the protests. The slain youth’s mother and attorneys for the family say there are others who need to be arrested.

“The Georgia NAACP remains focused on its advocacy efforts to ensure that Jackie Johnson and George Barnhill [two prosecutors] are both held responsible,” the group told the press May 18.

For two months after the fatal shooting local cops and prosecutors did everything possible to avoid arresting the McMichaels. First one and then another prosecutor removed themselves from the case, saying Gregory McMichael had been working in their offices. One of them, George Barnhill, did so after he had told cops not to arrest the McMichaels, claiming they had acted legally in shooting Arbery under Georgia’s “citizen’s arrest” and armed self-defense laws.

Last year a grand jury investigation found a “culture of cover-up and abuse of power” in the Glynn County police department. The police chief and three other current and former cops were indicted.

1,000s hit killing by Minneapolis cops

BY DAVID ROSENFELD

MINNEAPOLIS — Thousands of protesters gathered at the intersection of East 38th Street and Chicago Avenue at 5 p.m. May 26, where Minneapolis cops had cuffed and then strangled to death George Floyd the day before. Hundreds of people poured into the intersection and nearby streets, carrying signs, mostly handmade, saying “I can’t breathe,” “Stop killing us!” “Prosecute the cops” and “Justice for George Floyd.”

The cops were called to the Cup Foods market there after the owner called 911 and reported someone had tried to pass what appeared to be a counterfeit \$20 bill. Cops Derek Chauvin, Tou Thao and a few others responded. They grabbed Floyd, a 46-year-old African American, took him to the ground and cuffed him, later claiming he resisted arrest.

Then Chauvin — who is Caucasian — put his knee on Floyd’s neck and pressed it there for five minutes or more, as other cops held him down. Floyd said over and over, “Please, I can’t breathe.”

People gathered around, and some began shooting cellphone videos. “I started as soon as I heard him trying to fight for his life,” Darnella Frazier, who posted the killing on Facebook, told the *Star Tribune*. Bystanders pleaded with the cops to get off Floyd, to let him breathe.

“Bro, you’ve got him down, let him breathe at least, man,” someone says. Thao approaches the crowd telling them to get back, adding, “Don’t do drugs, guys.”

Continued on page 9

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SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

Fight for jobs program!



Continued from front page

Working people have nothing in common with those whose wealth comes from exploiting us. Everything they do has only one purpose — to maximize their profits on our backs. That’s why where we are still working, they’re cutting our hours and wages, and attacking our working conditions. As they move to restart their capitalist economy to compete against rivals at home and abroad, they will squeeze the working class even harder.

As we fight to defend ourselves, workers increasingly see through their rhetoric that “we are all Americans,” and stand with all those who face exploitation, oppression, and attacks from cops and vigilantes.

Striking workers at fruit packing plants in Washington state are showing that workers can take action against the bosses’ attacks. Their resolute struggle provides an example to emulate.

My party, the Socialist Workers Party, is campaigning on an action program against the anti-working-class offensive of the bosses and their government.

- First and foremost, workers need jobs, to be working in order to join with our co-workers and others to fight to defend our wages, working conditions and social rights.
- My party urges workers and our unions to fight for a massive government-funded public works program to put millions to work now, at union-scale pay, to build the things working people need — hospitals, affordable

housing, schools, day care centers, and to rebuild crumbling infrastructure.

- Workers need to fight for a sliding scale of wages and hours, to cut the workweek to prevent layoffs without any cut in pay.
- And workers need to fight for amnesty for the millions of undocumented workers in this country to lift the fear of deportation. This is the road to strengthen the unity and fighting power of the working class.
- The SWP explains workers need to wage a struggle to take control of production out of the hands of the bosses. Taking steps to gain control of all aspects of production will allow workers to control line speed, shut down production whenever conditions are unsafe, open up the bosses’ books for all to see, and to take control over what we produce to assure it’s useful and doesn’t fall apart after a few months. We can reorganize production to meet the needs of the vast majority.

This is a necessary step in learning how to run all of society — something that becomes possible as workers deepen our struggles, develop more self-confidence and break politically with the capitalist rulers.

- In our millions we will construct our own party, a labor party, that the working class and our allies can use to put an end to capitalist exploitation and abuse once and for all and establish a workers and farmers government.

Join us!

EDITORIAL

Join fight against cop, vigilante killings

Protests demanding prosecution of the vigilantes who killed Ahmaud Arbery in Brunswick, Georgia, and the cops who killed Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky, and George Floyd in Minneapolis deserve the support of all working people.

Cop and vigilante violence are a threat to the entire working class, and disproportionately target African Americans.

Protests demanding the prosecution of those who carry out these assaults are an essential part of working people’s struggles against attacks by the capitalist rulers on our wages, conditions and rights. They are key to unifying the working class.

And when they grow large, inclusive and disciplined, they can force the capitalist authorities to prosecute and jail the assailants. Authorities in Georgia have brought charges against the three vigilantes who carried out a modern-day lynching of Arbery after weeks of protests. In less than a day, outrage over the cops strangling Floyd led to them being fired.

Vigilante thuggery has long been used by the rulers to terrorize and attack both the labor movement and fighters for Black rights. Murderous Ku Klux Klan vigilante gangs were key to overturning Radical Reconstruction governments in the 1870s that sought to uproot the legacy of slavery and chart a road forward

for freed slaves and all working people. Jim Crow segregation was imposed and defended arms in hand by vigilante lynchings and increasingly by cop-backed violence for decades afterward. Vigilantes also targeted Catholics, Jews, and immigrants, and was especially used to target class-conscious workers who sought to join struggles across the color line.

The vigilantes who killed Arbery worked hand in glove with cops and prosecutors, who helped and then tried to cover up for them. One of them, Gregory McMichael, was schooled in brutality working as a cop.

Outrage and protests against the killings of Arbery, Floyd and Taylor reflect the transformation and strengthening of working people resulting from the mighty victory of the Black-led civil rights movement in the 1950s and ’60s that tore down Jim Crow segregation and transformed social relations in the U.S.

As today’s labor battles grow, working people will learn from experience that cops and company goons will be used by the bosses against striking workers.

The rulers claim cops are “front-line essential workers.” They *are* essential to the bosses to keep workers in check to serve their interests.

Build, join protests against vigilante and cop killings! Help strengthen the unity, self-confidence and fighting capacities of the working class!

1,000s march against killing by Minneapolis cops

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Then Floyd stops moving. He’s pronounced dead after being taken to the hospital.

At first cops tried to cover up the killing, telling the media Floyd had a “medical incident.” Over the next 24 hours the Facebook video was watched over 1 million times. The outrage was so widespread that within hours Chauvin, Thao and two other cops were fired.

Protesters marched from the corner where Floyd was killed to the cops’ Third Precinct headquarters. The crowd included people of many generations and backgrounds.

Briana Lazarchic, a 25-year-old laid-off bartender, came with a friend. Neither had ever been to a demonstration before. “It feels good to be part of something with all these people,” she told the *Militant*, holding a

homemade sign saying “Black Lives Matter.”

“I wanted to be part of a sea of people calling attention to this murder,” Joni Youngblood, a young retail worker, said. He credits the response for the rapid firing of the cops. “But we have to hold cops accountable. If they end up with a mild slap on the wrist and some diversity training, we have to be ready.”

Police were noticeably and completely absent from the area of the protest. Volunteer marshals closed the surrounding streets and directed traffic.

Later that evening some confrontations took place with the police, and a small group vandalized squad cars and the station house. They were hit with tear gas and flashbang devices fired by the cops. This was the opposite of the disciplined, spirited and largely working-class protest earlier.

Hong Kong protest

Continued from front page

ers and the arrest of thousands, the government’s efforts to subdue the movement have been futile. Earlier this month hundreds began to gather again in shopping malls to voice their opposition to Beijing’s restrictions.

The Chinese rulers’ new edict outlaws “treason, secession, sedition and subversion,” catch-all terms that allow them to go after political opponents. They falsely accuse those demanding greater freedom of being the tools of “foreign powers.” What they actually fear is that mass actions for political rights in Hong Kong will mean the loss of control over the territory and provide an example to working people on the Chinese mainland chafing under their dictatorial regime — something they are determined to prevent.

“We must stand up and fight, and let Beijing know that we will never surrender,” longstanding protest leader Joshua Wong told the press after he and thousands of others protested the new laws May 24. Cops used tear gas and water cannon to try to disperse the crowd. A popular slogan at the action was “Hong Kong independence, the only way out.”

Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam vowed her administration would loyally implement Beijing’s new law. The territory’s legislature also plans to make disrespect for the Chinese national anthem a crime punishable with jail time. Recent protests have featured participants booing Beijing’s anthem and singing one they have written — “Glory to Hong Kong” — which includes the line, “Arise! Ye who would not be slaves again: for Hong Kong, may freedom reign!”

Lam’s cops stormed into a meeting of the legislature May 22 and arrested members who were protesting the new attack on free speech.

Under the 1997 agreement ending British colonial rule in Hong Kong, its assembly was required to enact explicit “security” measures. But legislators shied away from doing so after a demonstration of half a million in 2003 forced them to withdraw proposals similar to those Beijing is imposing today.

China’s foreign commissioner in Hong Kong, Xie Feng, claimed the measure would “alleviate the grave concerns among local and foreign business communities about the violent and terrorist forces” in the demonstrations.

More protests took place May 27 when the Hong Kong legislature debated the new law criminalizing disrespect of the Chinese anthem.

City authorities decreed that gatherings of more than eight people would continue to be banned until at least June 4, the anniversary of Beijing’s bloody repression of Tiananmen Square protests.

Washington threatens reprisals

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo seized on Beijing’s imposition of the new law to press forward the U.S. rulers’ interests in their conflicts with Beijing. He threatened Washington would withdraw Hong Kong’s preferential trading status, which would raise tariffs on goods exported from Hong Kong to the U.S.

With the steep drop in capitalist production and trade worldwide, conflicts between Washington and Beijing have sharpened. President Donald Trump has heaped condemnation on the Chinese government, saying its cover-up of the extent of coronavirus in China last fall hastened the spread of the disease.

The accelerating economic crisis is also provoking new conflicts between Beijing and governments across Asia that are indebted to the Chinese government for substantial loans. These credit lines were aimed at facilitating Beijing getting contracts for infrastructure projects that will advance the Chinese rulers expanding their markets and domination in the region.

In recent weeks Beijing received requests from governments of Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, Sri Lanka and elsewhere to delay upcoming loan repayment deadlines. It presses governments desperate for loans to put up their country’s patrimony as collateral. Beijing seized a port in Sri Lanka when the government there struggled to make loan repayments in 2017.

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

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