

THE MILITANT

Interview with Gerardo Hernández
'Resistance by Cuba is the participation of the entire people'
 — PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 85/NO. 2 JANUARY 18, 2021

Join SWP 2021 campaign and the 'Militant' renewal drive

BY SETH GALINSKY

In the midst of 2020's capitalist economic, social and pandemic crisis, and government-ordered lockdowns, the Socialist Workers Party did not skip a beat.

Its members went to work to organize with co-workers to fight to defend their wages and working conditions. They continued introducing the party to working people on their doorsteps in cities and towns, large and small, and in farm areas. Many of those they met were looking for ways to stand up to the bosses' moves to shore up their profits on our backs and were keen to discuss what workers can do together.

They sold thousands of subscriptions to the *Militant* and introduced the SWP 2020 campaign and its fighting action program.

The response to the party's activity and program bodes well for its work in 2021. That begins with a two-month drive to win readers to renew their subscriptions to the *Militant*.

During 2020 SWP candidates and campaigners brought solidarity to picket lines of workers on strike — shipbuilders in Bath, Maine; fruit packinghouse workers in Washing-
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Workers need to build our own party, a labor party



Methodist Hospital nurses in Arcadia, California, demand more workers Jan. 2. "It eats at you morally when you can't give the best care" because of staffing shortages, said Kelly Coulston.

Working people can chart a road to take political power

Cuba's revolutionary government is capable of standing up to the economic war waged against workers and farmers

EDITORIAL

there by U.S. imperialism because it has "the participation of the entire people," Gerardo Hernández, national coordina-
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Change in White House won't end boss attacks on workers

BY TERRY EVANS

As the transfer of the presidency from Donald Trump to Joe Biden draws near, and the fight over which capitalist party will control the Senate closes, the political crises within both the Democratic and Republican parties continue to unfold.

Whatever the outcome, working people will continue to face a govern-
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Historic win in fight for right to abortion in Argentina

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In an important victory for working people, the right of women to choose to have an abortion was won in Argentina Dec. 30, when the Senate passed a bill making abortion free and legal up to the 14th week of pregnancy. As senators debated the bill into the night, tens of thousands of supporters of women's rights rallied outside the Congress in Buenos Aires.

The streets "were full of feminist organizations, political organizations, unions and lots of independent and very young activists," Victoria Tesoriero, a spokesperson for the National Campaign for the Right to Legal, Safe and Free Abortion, told the *Militant* by email Jan. 4. "We waited all night, some of us watching the debate others were just dancing. I had a wonderful 'murga' girls band near us playing. Everything was very exciting."

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'Militant' special 'stimulus' fund drive is off to a strong start!

BY JOHN STUDER

Militant readers have responded with a strong start to our special appeal!

Since Congress, in the midst of a deep social, economic and health crisis facing working people, voted for a second "stimulus" payout of \$600, with additional payouts to those with children, 19 supporters of the *Militant* have already sent in \$12,642 to help the paper expand its reach.

"My co-workers here at Walmart
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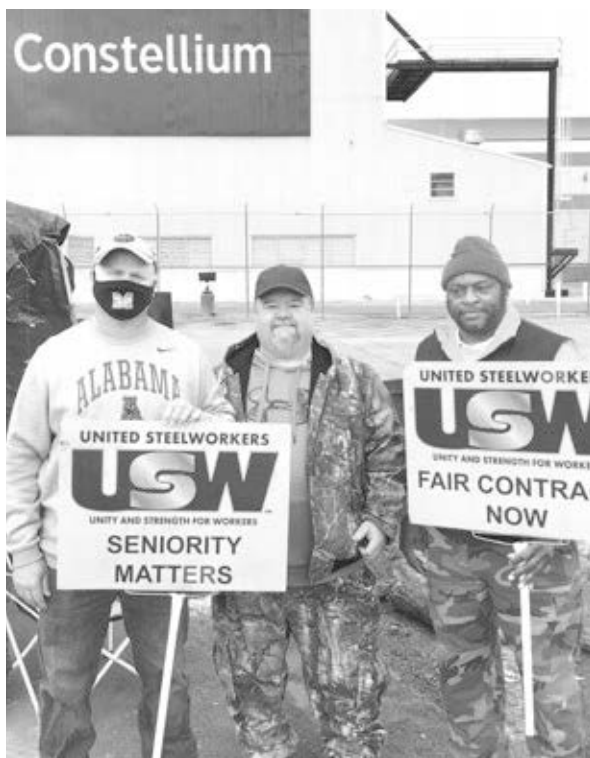
Support Alabama Constellium strike over seniority, conditions

BY SAM MANUEL

MUSCLE SHOALS, Ala. — Over 400 members of United Steelworkers Local 200 here have struck major aluminum beverage can recycle company Constellium since Dec. 15. Workers on the picket line said the company wants to gut seniority, giving bosses complete control over who works when and where.

They said they're determined to defend their union. "I'm the third generation in my family to work here. I come from a strong union family. If I crossed the line my daddy would kick my butt and my granddaddy would come back to haunt me," Kevin Clement said with a chuckle.

Workers said the strike isn't about wages. The company is offering a 15% increase over five years — larger than in past contracts. "They think they can buy what they want on our seniority and working conditions



Jan. 2 Constellium picket line in Muscle Shoals, Alabama.

by offering more money," said Kenney Greenhill. Union members voted down the company's concession contract three times before striking.

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Protests in LA, NY demand: 'End US economic war against Cuba!'

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

LOS ANGELES — A car caravan and protest opposing Washington's decadeslong economic war against Cuba and its revolution took place here Dec. 27 as part of a series of actions around the country.

Some 40 people in 18 cars drove from the Federal Building in West Los Angeles to Echo Park with taped signs and slogans written on their windows. The banner on the lead vehicle read, "U.S. Hands Off Cuba!" "End the Blockade!" and "U.S. Out of Guantánamo!" The caravan was sponsored by the Los Angeles U.S. Hands Off Cuba Committee.

The Dec. 27 actions, which took place here and in New York, were called by the National Network on Cuba as part of a series of protests and other activities over the next few months, including solidarity brigades to Cuba.

One 22-year-old participant in the L.A. caravan carried a hand-made sign saying, "Newsom — Call the Henry
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Quebec workers fight Gate Gourmet's union-busting lockout

Liverpool DHL workers strike against low wages, harassment

Argentina abortion rights win

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Simultaneously, pro-choice vigils were organized in many other cities nationwide. “Because of the COVID-19 pandemic many activists couldn’t come to the National Congress,” said Tesoriero, so they organized actions in their local areas. “Our movement is present in every province of Argentina, from Jujuy to Tierra del Fuego. We are very proud of that.” For years, increasingly large and broad protests have taken place across Argentina, where abortion was banned in most cases. Under this pressure, Argentine President Alberto Fernández introduced a bill to legalize the procedure last November.

It was passed by the lower house, the Chamber of Deputies, Dec. 11 in a 131-117 vote. The Senate then voted 38-29 in favor. In 2018 a similar bill had gone down to defeat in the Senate.

‘We built a national campaign’

“We built a national campaign full of activists, with clear goals,” said Tesoriero, “and a complete slogan — ‘Sexual education to decide, contraception to not need an abortion, legal abortion to not die’ — with a clear strategy: to mobilize in the streets for legal abortion.

“I think that in the history of this struggle,” she said, “the Campaign, an alliance of more than 600 organizations, has the credit for expanding the demand of legal abortion, taking it from the feminist groups to other organizations.”

There were also large mobilizations by opponents of the legislation across the country, including actions organized by the Catholic and evangelical churches and other organizations.

The previous law only allowed an

abortion when a pregnancy resulted from rape or endangered the life or health of the woman. In all other circumstances having an abortion was punishable by up to 15 years in jail.

This meant only women in the ruling class and upper middle classes could afford to end an unwanted pregnancy by going to costly doctors in the major cities illegally, or traveling outside the country. Working-class women and those living in rural areas were forced to turn to clandestine and illegal abortions.

Some 40,000 women each year showed up at Argentine hospitals seeking care after botched procedures. This had been the chief cause of maternal death in the country.

“The law that we won to legalize abortion was more than simple ‘decriminalization,’” Nicole Aranovich, a high school teacher who joined the protest Dec. 29 by City Hall in Mar del Plata, told the *Militant* by email. “With simple ‘decriminalization’ of abortion, the state wouldn’t assume any responsibility of guaranteeing a safe and equal practice throughout the country.”

This bill, she said, gives all women “the right to interrupt their pregnancy until week 14, so the state is in charge of guaranteeing that everyone may fulfill that right if they wish to.” Because Ar-



Tens of thousands of supporters of women’s rights rally on the streets in Buenos Aires, Argentina, early in the morning Dec. 30 as senators debated, voted up bill legalizing abortion.

gentina’s health care system is government funded, the procedure will be free.

In the vast majority of countries in Latin America women’s right to choose abortion is severely restricted. In some, including El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua and Suriname, the procedure is banned in nearly all circumstances.

“I am sure this victory will impact other countries in Latin America,” said Tesoriero. “The national cam-

paign for legal abortion, and our symbol, the green bandana, has gone around the world. And it has had an impact in the region with women in many countries launching their own campaigns. We are unstoppable!”

Only in Cuba, where workers and peasants made a revolution, and in Uruguay, Guyana and in Mexico City and the Mexican state of Oaxaca — and now Argentina — can women freely choose to have an abortion today.

‘Militant’ special ‘stimulus’ fund off to a strong start!

Continued from front page

often ask what I’m going to do with my stimulus check,” Samir Hazboun wrote from Louisville, Kentucky, after Congress voted. “I always say I’m going to give it back to the work-

ing class since it’s from our backs that the wealth is created in the first place. Many co-workers know this is true and have great respect for that decision.”

The *Militant’s* weekly coverage of the unfolding working-class struggles today — from farmers protesting in their hundreds of thousands in India to the aluminum workers on strike at Constellium in Alabama — and its coverage of the Socialist Workers Party’s campaigns and fighting action program, to articles and features to educate on the history and hard-earned lessons of the class struggle, are crucial for workers. They advance a road for workers to defend themselves and advance our class interests,

a road toward workers taking power to end the dictatorship of capital and its brutal consequences.

This special fund appeal will help the *Militant* meet our expenses until the annual spring Militant Fighting Fund is launched in late March, along with the spring subscription drive. Our only source of income is our readers. The contributions will strengthen the paper’s capacity to respond in a timely way to unfolding developments in the class struggle today in the U.S. and worldwide.

Please give as generously as you can. Send your contribution to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018, or you can donate online at themilitant.com.

THE MILITANT

Protest US executions, prison conditions!

Since July, 10 federal death row prisoners have been executed, and three more are scheduled shortly. At the same time, 1,700 prisoners have died from COVID-19. The ‘Militant’ gives voice to all who are willing to speak out against these injustices.



AP Photo/Eric Risberg
Rally near San Quentin Prison in California in July protesting prison’s health conditions.

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Managing Editor: Terry Evans

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Emma Johnson, Martin Koppel, Roy Landersen, Jacob Perasso, Brian Williams.

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The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.
Telephone: (212) 244-4899
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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant’s* views. These are expressed in editorials.

Join SWP, 'Militant' campaigns

Continued from front page

ton state; sanitation workers in New Orleans; and more. They marched in protests against police brutality and carried out election campaigns, boldly presenting the party's program.

The SWP's steadfast activity defending working-class interests strengthened the party and won respect from many working people.

The SWP stood up to the threat of the Washington state government disclosing the names and personal information of the SWP's presidential electors, winning broad support and beating back this attack on political rights. More than \$20,000 was raised to help conduct this campaign, including \$1,000 from the American Federation of Teachers in Washington. Its members had successfully waged a fight against an anti-labor group that sought to use the state's disclosure laws to gain personal information about campus workers.

Party members were part of winning support for the *Militant's* fight to overturn attempts by prison authorities in Florida and Indiana to suppress the paper.

Alongside the drive to win renewals, members of the SWP in the U.S. and the Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom are extending offers on books by party leaders and other revolutionaries throughout the renewal campaign. (See ad on page 7.)

A retired nurse renewed her subscription when SWP members Joel Britton and Eric Simpson visited at her home in East Oakland, California, Dec. 30. She had subscribed earlier and gotten *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa* by Enrique Ubieta. It describes how Cuba's revolutionary government provided what was most needed during that epidemic — 250 volunteer workers offering hands-on medical care, helping to virtually eradicate the disease.

She pointed to the disastrous consequences of the U.S. government's handling of COVID-19, citing "the scandalous transferring of sick patients into nursing homes where no one had tested positive for the virus," Simpson said.

Example of Cuban Revolution

Simpson pointed to what the conquest of power by working people in Cuba made possible. "That is why they set such an outstanding example in the fight against Ebola in Africa and in the fight in Cuba and numerous other countries against the current pandemic."

Readers behind bars are also show-

ing the paper to fellow inmates who then request their own subscriptions. "It means a lot to have news come in to see what is going on in the world," a federal prisoner in California wrote to the *Militant* last week.

Tens of thousands of workers and farmers took copies of the party's action program. It was distributed as part of the election campaign of Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett, the SWP's candidates for president and vice president, and local candidates. Thousands learned about the party from articles in local newspapers.

SWP candidates raised proposals that workers and our unions can fight for. They explained the rule of the capitalist class was the root of the problems workers face and why workers need their own party, a labor party, to take political power.

The SWP's campaign set an example of what such a labor party would do to fight for what workers need, in contrast to the Democrats and Republicans who subordinate workers' interests to those of the bosses. As workers fight together we gain confidence in our own capacities and deepen class consciousness.

In Washington, D.C., Omari Musa, the SWP's candidate for delegate to the House of Representatives, received 6,702 votes, just short of the 7,500 needed to qualify the party for permanent ballot status there. Party branches will soon announce candidates for 2021 elections.

Socialist Workers Party fighting action program

THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY PRESENTS A FIGHTING WORKING-CLASS PROGRAM. WE NEED TO ORGANIZE TO FIGHT GROWING EMPLOYER ATTACKS ON OUR JOBS, WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS. Build solidarity with workers' struggles to organize and defend themselves. On this course, we can build and use union power on our own behalf, and for all those suffering blows by the bosses and their government. One union for all drivers — taxi, Uber, Lyft and other app-based and car service drivers!

MILLIONS NEED JOBS TODAY! Our unions need to fight for a federal government-financed public works program to put millions to work at union-scale wages building hospitals, schools, housing, mass transportation and much more that workers need. Fight for a sliding scale of hours and wages to stop layoffs and the effects of runaway prices. Cut the workweek with no cut in pay! For cost-of-living clauses in every contract that raise pay and retirement benefits to offset every rise in prices!

Demand immediate national government unemployment benefits at union scale for *all* those thrown out of work as long as they need it.

WORKERS NEED THEIR OWN PARTY, A LABOR PARTY. For our unions to lead a class break from the parties of the bosses, the Democrats and Republicans. A labor party can organize workers in our millions to fight in our own interest and in the interests of all those exploited and oppressed by capital. It can chart a course to take political power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers and establish a workers and farmers government.

WORKERS CONTROL OF PRODUCTION. Workers need to fight to wrest



Factory worker Daniela Veloz subscribed to *Militant* after Alyson Kennedy, left, knocked on her door in Ennis, Texas, Jan. 4. Socialist Workers Party is building on success of its work last year to continue campaigning among working people in cities, towns and farm areas.

Higher financial contributions to the party's work is another reflection of its advances over the last year. Working people who met campaigners often kicked in an extra \$5, \$10 or more, saying, "Here's something for the cause."

Many readers will want to kick in to the *Militant's* special fund appeal, contributing their government "stimulus" payments to the paper. As of Jan. 5 the *Militant* had already received over \$12,400 in contributions!

There will be further opportunities to join struggles in the year ahead.

Already SWP and CL members

have joined demonstrations in the U.S., Canada and the U.K. in solidarity with farmers in India fighting to overturn attacks by the Indian government. The *Militant* was welcomed at actions in San Francisco Dec. 31 and nearby Union City, Jan. 3. "Person after person told us that they really liked our paper's coverage of the farmers' struggle and were interested in the articles on fights working people in the U.S. are waging," reported Jeff Powers.

The *Militant* is your paper! Join us in getting it around! See page 8 for the SWP or CL branch nearest you.

CUBA'S REVOLUTION — AN EXAMPLE.

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. End the US rulers' economic war against Cuba; US out of Guantánamo.

FIGHT POLICE BRUTALITY! Demand that cops who kill and brutalize people be prosecuted. Fight racist discrimination and the entire capitalist injustice system, with its frame-ups, "plea bargains," onerous bail and "three strike" prison sentences, all of which disproportionately hit workers who are Black. For the right to vote for ex-prisoners and all workers behind bars.

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

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

DEFEND POLITICAL RIGHTS. Defend the right to vote, to free speech and assembly and to bear arms, under attack from Democrats and Republicans alike. Defend freedom of worship. Stop FBI and other government spying, harassment and disruption. No to reactionary "cancel culture" and efforts to shut up people by public lynching through social media.

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

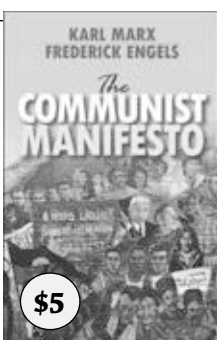
The COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

by 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.

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Change in the White House

Continued from front page
ment driving to make us bear the burden of the economic crisis.

As its presidential ticket did in 2020, the only party acting on the capacities of workers and farmers to fight against the attacks of the employers and their government will be the Socialist Workers Party and its candidates in 2021.

Throughout the last year SWP candidates earned respect for their unwavering opposition to every assault bosses and their governments waged on workers' jobs, wages, safety and our rights, refusing to accept the government's insistence that the pandemic requires workers to make "sacrifices."

They found interest in discussing the *Militant* and its coverage of the struggles of working people worldwide, and in the SWP's campaign platform, which explains what workers can do today to build a movement to lead millions to replace capitalist rule with a workers and farmers government.

President-elect Joe Biden perpetuates the deception that his new administration will act for all Americans, just as all his predecessors have claimed to do. "We're going to get through this," Biden told the press Dec 29. But there is no "we." The interests of working people and the capitalist rulers are fundamentally counterposed. The capitalist class depends on maximizing their profits by intensifying the exploitation of workers and farmers. This is the cause of the far-reaching layoffs, wage cuts, eviction threats, farm bankruptcies and overflowing hospitals we face.

While liberals are excited about Democrats taking the presidency, barely, they're already worried about someone like President Trump — or Trump himself — getting elected in 2024.

The Biden presidency will reproduce similar conditions to those created under the Barack Obama-Biden administration through its efforts to regulate our lives and by its inherent scorn for those Hillary Clinton called "deplorable." These conditions led millions to vote for Trump.

The *Washington Post* editors urged Biden Jan. 2 to take steps *now* to avoid this happening: to get rid of the Electoral College, to allow Democrats to win the presidency with support from only a few heavily populated areas; to vastly expand mail-in ballots; and to eliminate "third party spoilers throwing elections to candidates most voters dislike." Such a move is aimed at targeting the SWP and other working-class parties.

With Biden in the White House, Democrats will no longer have Trump to blame for the calamitous conditions the capitalist crisis inflicts on working people. The capitalist rulers will rely on the Biden administration to defend their state power and protect U.S. imperialist interests abroad. Biden also faces growing demands from the liberal wing of his own party, who seek either to capture the party or else form their own.

On Jan. 4, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, one of the "squad" of radical Democrats, said she is considering running against fellow party incumbent Sen. Chuck Schumer in 2022.

Behind liberals' feigned empathy for those hardest hit by the crisis is a program of reforms that would reinforce workers' dependency on the capitalist

rulers' state. This is the opposite of what we need and what the SWP raises — that working people need to rely on ourselves, to join together to fight for our class interests.

Some 10 million more people are without a job than a year ago, according to government figures, which are jury-rigged to hide the real depth of the crisis. The Democrats — like the Republicans — have no serious proposals to end joblessness, other than to tell us to rely on the capitalist "market."

Workers face broader social crisis

In addition, workers face a broader social crisis. The rulers' only answer to rising coronavirus infections and overflowing hospitals is stepped-up government lockdowns on production and small shopkeepers. Officials heap blame on working people for being so-called superspreaders. They try to get us to turn on each other, to deflect responsibility from the disastrous consequences of "health care" under the rule of the capitalist class. On New Year's Eve the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department unleashed a "Superspreader Task Force," hundreds of cops and deputies charged with breaking up social events.

Meanwhile, officials in the same state told hospital authorities to prepare for "crisis-care," their code word for leaving medical workers in overflowing hospitals to decide who gets treatment and who is left to die.

"Despite the massive resources at their disposal the class that holds power is incapable of providing jobs, safe working conditions and adequate health care for working people," Rachelle Fruit, the SWP's candidate in a just-concluded Senate race in Georgia, told the *Militant*. "That's why my campaign explained workers and our unions need to wrest control of all aspects of production from the bosses. As we do so, we will discover our own worth and see it is possible for our class and its allies to take command of the entire economy."

"We are inches from one another, knocking into each other through the plastic sheets," poultry production line worker Juana Hernandez at the George's plant in Springdale, Arkansas, told the *Washington Post*, describing the conditions she's forced to work in. The Trump administration has al-

Betsy Ramos case shows real face of capitalist 'justice'

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The case of Betsy Ramos shows the real workings of the capitalist "justice" system. Ramos, 56, is terminally ill with cancer and not expected to live much more than a year. She has been incarcerated for 22 years after being convicted on second-degree manslaughter charges for her then boyfriend Jose Serrano's killing of New York police officer Anthony Mosomillo.

Federal Judge Nicholas Garaufis last month denied Ramos' request for compassionate release. Ramos had won parole on Dec. 9, 2019, but Garaufis threw her back in prison days later. The judge was fully aware of Ramos' grave medical condition, but chose to ignore the fact she might die behind bars when he resented her.

On the morning of May 26, 1998, cops Mosomillo and Miriam Sanchez-Torres went to Ramos' apartment in

Seattle rally backs farmers protests in India



Militant photos: Above, Rebecca Williamson; inset, Edwin Fruit

KENT, Wash. — In the third such rally this month in the Seattle area, hundreds gathered here Dec. 26 to show support for the tens of thousands of working farmers camped out on the main roads outside New Delhi, India's capital. They've been protesting since November in a fight to overturn new laws that threaten their livelihoods.

At the rally, a semi-truck covered with posters backing the farmers and denouncing Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi provided a speakers' stage before a caravan of cars and trucks set off for Seattle. One of the speakers, inset, was Henry Dennison, representing the Socialist Workers Party.

Similar rallies took place in other cities across the country and around the world. On New Year's Eve, over 200 people held a vigil outside the Indian Consulate in San Francisco.

The Modi government claims to be promoting "free market choice," the Sikh Student Association at the University of Washington said in a statement. But in fact the government "privileges the interests of large corporations over farmers who struggle to support their families."

"For many of us, farming is our history," Jasmit Singh, a leader of the Sikh Coalition, a nationwide organization, said in an op-ed in the Dec. 24 *Seattle Times*. "The earliest Sikh immigrants to the United States came to the West Coast specifically to make a living by growing food. Many of us have family and friends still in Punjab, who are now leading on the front lines of this movement."

— EDWIN FRUIT

lowed 15 pilot poultry plants to jack up line speeds, up to 175 birds per minute, despite the pandemic, and plans to extend that in the next few days.

That is the line speed fought for by former Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack during the Obama administration, at the insistence of profit-hungry poultry plant bosses. Vilsack has now been nominated by Biden to head up the Department of Agriculture again.

As conditions like this continue to take their toll, workers will look for ways to defend themselves and to act independently of the bosses' Democratic and Republican parties.

"The SWP's 2020 candidates set an example of what is possible, and raised the kind of fighting action program that working people and our unions need to advance. It lays out the road for workers to form our own political party, speak out in the interests of all those exploited and oppressed by capital, and fight to take political power," John Studer, the party's national campaign director, told the *Militant*.

"In the coming days the party will be launching 2021 campaigns for Senate, Congress, mayors and more all across the country to advance this perspective."

Brooklyn looking for Serrano, who was wanted for failing to appear in court. Ramos said he wasn't there, but the cops ignored her and searched the apartment. They found Serrano hiding in a closet and a fight ensued. Serrano, picking up Sanchez-Torres's gun off the floor, shot Mosomillo, who shot back, killing Serrano before dying of wounds.

A jury found Ramos guilty of causing Sanchez-Torres to drop her gun. She received 15 years to life for manslaughter, the harshest possible sentence allowed by law.

When Ramos was paroled in 2019, the cops' Patrolmen's Benevolent Association raised a hue and cry. Federal prosecutors then charged Ramos with violating parole on a previous drug-related conviction decades earlier. When Serrano killed Mosomillo in her apartment, they claimed, she violated her parole. This was why Ramos was thrown

back in prison for another two years.

Ramos had had a rough life. She was abused and abandoned by her mother, then by her father. She began using heroin and was imprisoned on a federal heroin trafficking charge for three years, the charge she was on parole for in 1998.

In court testimony, Ramos said Serrano abused her as well.

"I hid my abuser from the police when they came to serve a warrant," Ramos said in a court statement before being resented to prison. "My actions that day set in motion a situation where a police officer died. But I did not kill the police officer."

"Ramos has done more time than anyone else has ever served for a similar offense," Ron Kuby, her attorney, told the media after the hearing. The system is "piling on torture and punishment because her dead boyfriend's victim was a police officer."

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Quebec workers fight Gate Gourmet's union-busting lockout

MONTREAL — After almost eight weeks on the picket line, locked-out Gate Gourmet workers here organized a march from their picket line in front of the airline-catering plant where they work to the Montreal-Trudeau international airport Dec. 31. Chanting “So, so, so, solidarity!” 30 workers marched with union flags protesting the bosses locking them out and moves to gut their contract.

“After eight weeks on lockout we are solid. We are fighting to keep what we have won over the course of 40 years,” Nathalie Calbral, Gate Gourmet unit president of Unifor amalgamated Local 698, told this *Militant* worker-correspondent on the line earlier that week. Calbral, with 23 years on the job, works preparing airline meals.

There are about 300 workers in the bargaining unit, but at the time of the lockout only about 20 were working. The rest had been laid off, the bosses’ reaction to the impact of coronavirus on the airlines and the company’s loss of contracts.

During their lunch break Nov. 10 the workers were ordered to gather their belongings and leave. Earlier, the bosses demanded 145 contract concessions, including a five-year wage freeze and reducing all positions to part time.

Solidarity messages can be sent to Marie-Andrée L’Heureux, Unifor Quebec communications representative at marie-andree.lheureux@unifor.org. Tel: (514) 916-7373.

—John Steele

Liverpool DHL workers strike against low wages, harassment

LIVERPOOL, England — With four days of effective strike action in December, 120 DHL warehouse distribution workers and drivers here are having an impact. They are determined to win a pay raise and push back company harassment and victimizations.

On Dec. 21, the third day of strike action, workers lined their cars up on the main road leading from the distribution depot, delaying trucks leaving it for hours. Workers have been speaking to

truck drivers, urging them to turn their trucks around. Company complaints have led to police interference. Unite union organizer Kenny Rowe told this *Militant* worker-correspondent he was threatened with arrest, saying they face a “strong arm” reaction from the cops.

DHL here services the Buston Biscuits and AB World Foods warehouses, which supply supermarkets.

“This is an incredibly profitable contract,” Rowe told the media. “DHL have to stop dodging its responsibility to pay a decent rate.”

The strikers are seeking to broaden support for their fight. “We had a delegation to meet DHL workers at the nearby Jaguar car plant, seeking their support. We got a good reception,” striker Gerard Taylor said. The strikers got a “Stay strong” message of solidarity from Mark Porter, the union convener for striking Rolls-Royce jet engine workers fighting job cuts at the Barnoldswick plant in Lancashire.

DHL bosses offered the workers an insulting pay raise, which would take them to just 2 1/2 pence (3 1/2 cents) above the government-set minimum wage. At the same time, several pickets said the bosses are demanding forklift drivers work faster, demanding they meet a target of 20 lifts per hour.

“Workers here can’t take any more,” Rowe said.

—Pete Clifford

Uranium, iron ore miners in Ukraine strike over jobs, back pay

Some 5,000 uranium miners at three mines in the Eastern Mining and Processing Plant in the Kirovograd region of Ukraine went on strike Dec. 16, organizing protests that blocked traffic on the main roads around the mines. The workers, members of the Independent Trade Union of Miners of Ukraine, demanded months of back pay amounting to \$3 million.

They also organized a delegation of miners Dec. 9 to protest outside the Cabinet of Ministers and Office of the President of Ukraine in Kyiv, the capital.

The miners suspended their actions Dec. 24, after funds for paying their November wages were transferred to



Militant/John Steele

Airline catering workers organized by Unifor Local 698 protest eight-week lockout by Gate Gourmet at airport in Montreal Dec. 31. Placard on right says, “If we are on the outside, something is wrong on the inside.” One on left says, “You don’t get rich on our earnings.”

the enterprise’s account by the government, with a promise December wages would be paid by the end of the month. The company, idled since Dec. 7, was to restart production Jan. 4. If work doesn’t resume then “miners will continue their protests,” said Dmytro Bondariiev, head of the independent miners union at the plant.

In September over 400 miners at four mines in the Kryvyi Rih Iron Ore Plant stayed underground, some for up to 43 days. They were fighting to restore minimum hourly pay rates, safety conditions and benefits, all driven down by the mine owners’ attacks in recent years. The complex is the largest iron ore processing facility in Ukraine.

The union ended its occupation after an agreement appeared to have been reached with mine management. But the bosses reneged, instead filing a lawsuit calling the miners’ protests an “illegal” strike, seeking to victimize them.

The next hearing in the boss frame-up suit is scheduled for Jan. 29.

—Roy Landersen

New Zealand home-care workers strike for a union contract

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Fifty home-care workers and their supporters mounted a picket line here Dec. 18 outside the office of Lifewise

social services. They are fighting for a union contract.

The workers travel to provide care and assistance to elderly people living at home. Of the 100 or so employed by Lifewise, a division of the Methodist Church, 87 are organized, say leaders of the E tu union. Dozens came to the picket lines, as all but a handful of union members carried out the three half-day strikes, of which this was the third.

Pickets told the *Militant* the company reneged on a pledge to sign an agreement last year. A key grievance is the irregular workweek. “Some of the girls are not getting guaranteed hours,” said Katrina Peart, who has worked for Lifewise for 19 years. Others, she said, are forced to “work from seven in the morning to seven at night, five, six, or even seven days a week.”

Kelly Davis, an 11-year veteran, explained that some workers who are supposed to be on 40-hour weeks “are getting maybe 20.”

The union is also demanding “more bereavement leave,” she said. The three days paid leave on the death of a loved one is especially inadequate for workers who have to travel to Pacific nations like Tonga and Samoa — the case for many Lifewise workers — for a family member’s funeral.

The work is demanding, said union delegate Susan Kaio, who led the chants and singing on the line. Time with clients sometimes has to be cut off because of scheduling the next appointment, she said. “Travel time is paid for, but at a lower rate” than home care. And sometimes workers end up sitting in their cars, unpaid, because too much time is scheduled between clients.

The company hired agency workers to keep up work during the strikes, unionists said. They are planning to step up strike actions if the company bosses continue to ignore their demands.

—Patrick Brown

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



January 22, 1996

STOCKHOLM — “We want to fight to increase production, whether at workplaces, the university, or in the army, and win youth to the revolution,” said Jonathan Quirós Santos, a leader of the Union of Young Communists of Cuba, during a five-week tour of Sweden, Iceland, Norway and Denmark.

Quirós spoke of the efforts by the Cuban people to overcome the effects of the deep economic crisis in his country. “We have had to do many things we did not like to do that have increased inequalities in Cuba.”

Quirós described the debate on proposals to tax the workers’ income as one way to deal with the financial crisis.

“The discussion was taken into every workplace,” he said, referring to the “workers parliaments” held in 80,000 factories and offices. “There was a broad consensus among the workers that they [working people] should not be taxed.”



January 22, 1971

LOS ANGELES — On Jan. 9, around 1,500 young Chicanos demonstrated their anger at continued police brutality in East Los Angeles.

The Chicano Moratorium Committee called the demonstration to protest the arrest on false charges of 52 members within a month. A leaflet calling for the demonstration said, “We have been attacked, harassed and beaten day after day by the Los Angeles Police Department, the Metro Squad, and the Hollenbeck division of the LAPD. We have dared to speak out against the police brutality. If they attack one of us, they attack all of us.”

There were thousands of cases of police brutality since Aug. 29, when police attacks brought the deaths of three Chicanos. Threats by police “to arrest anyone seen coming out of Chicano Moratorium offices” forced the closing of the bungalow office in December.



January 19, 1946

The worldwide GI demonstrations coincide with the greatest labor upsurge in American history. These simultaneous struggles have colossal significance.

One common cause binds the workers and soldiers together. They belong to a common class, the working class. They are engaged in a common fight against a common foe. The men in uniform clamoring to come home are the sons, brothers, husbands of the men and women on the picket lines.

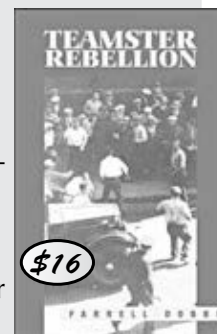
Who denies these just demands of the workers and the soldier ranks? A vicious gang of monopolists, who control the American economy, who dominate the big banks and corporations, who dictate the policies of the government and its armed forces.

United, the workers and the soldiers have the power to defeat Wall Street’s plot to degrade American labor and subjugate the world.

Teamster Rebellion

by Farrell Dobbs

The 1934 strikes that built an industrial union movement in Minneapolis, helping to pave the way for the CIO, told by a central leader of that battle.



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How the Teamsters union organized their 1934 strike to win

Teamster Rebellion by Farrell Dobbs, a Pathfinder Book of the Month in Spanish for January, is the story of the 1934 Teamster organizing drive in Minneapolis. Through hard-fought strikes, rank-and-file workers defeated strike-breaking efforts by the trucking bosses and the employers' "Citizens Alliance," aided by city, state and federal governments. Dobbs, who emerged as part of the class-struggle leadership and became a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, describes how a fighting industrial union movement was built there, helping pave the way for the rise of the CIO. Below is an excerpt from chapter 6, "Organizing the Strike." Copyright © 1972 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Minneapolis Historical Society
Teamsters Local 574 Women's Auxiliary volunteers serve meals during 1934 Minneapolis strike. They also treated wounded picketers in strike hospital, spoke widely in region to win support.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FARRELL DOBBS

Local 574's combat leaders, acting through the organizing committee, had no illusions about the gravity of the impending conflict. They were fully aware that the bosses would try to smash the strike. If the union was to win, a tremendous battle would be necessary. Under the pressures of such a fierce struggle, maneuvers detrimental to the union could be expected from the Labor Board and from Governor Olson. We could also anticipate weakness on the part of the city's AFL officialdom,

which was bound to be squeamish about physical combat and prone to urge the workers to rely completely on Olson. In the last analysis the outcome of the strike would hinge on the fighting capacity of the union ranks.

Seeking to impart this understanding to the membership, the combat leaders prepared to teach the workers the ins and outs of fighting for their rights. This circumstance made the strike quite exceptional. Fighting spirit in the ranks was usually restrained and dampened by the AFL officials, while in this case a militant struggle was being organized by what had become the key section of the top union leadership.

Seldom anywhere, in fact, had there been such a well-prepared strike. When the sun rose on May 16, 1934, the headquarters at 1900 Chicago Avenue was a beehive of activity. Union carpenters and plumbers were installing gas stoves, sinks, and serving counters in the commissary. The Cooks and Waiters Union sent experts on mass cooking and serving to help organize things and train the volunteer help. Working in two twelve-hour shifts, over 100 volunteers served 4,000 to 5,000 people daily. Sandwiches and coffee were always available and a hot meal was served whenever the commissary's resources and the circumstances of the strike permitted. In addition, arrangements were made so that key personnel could sleep in or near the headquarters for the duration.

Committees were set up to promote material aid. They solicited friendly grocers for staples to be used in the commissary and to help out the needy families of strikers. Similar donations were also received from sympathetic farmers. The committees fought city hall to get public relief for union members and the facts of life were explained to landlords who pressed the workers for rent payments. Money donations from other unions helped to stock the commissary, as well as to buy gasoline for the cruising picket squads and medical supplies for the union's emergency hospital. ...

Three trained nurses headed up a larger volunteer staff that provided such efficient care that, despite the many open wounds treated, not one bad infection developed. The hospital was supervised by Mrs. Vera McCormack, a skilled technician whom everyone fondly called "Mac." To avoid air pollution in the hospital and commissary, picket cars were pushed into and out of the headquarters.

About a score of skilled auto mechanics had turned to, bringing their tools with them, to keep the strikers' cars in working order. The former tool crib and supply room in the big garage was turned into a general office where volunteers did the typing and mimeographing and signed up new members pouring into the union. An organized guard was maintained in and around the headquarters to watch for police intru-

sions, prevent drinking, cool down temper flareups, and keep order. Except at critical times, when everyone worked to the point of exhaustion, the various assignments were rotated.

Special attention was given to keeping the workers informed about the strike's progress and helping them to answer lies peddled by the bosses. Each evening a general assembly was held at the headquarters for this purpose. Reports were made by the strike leaders, guest speakers were invited from other unions to help morale through expressions of solidarity, and some form of entertainment usually followed. A loudspeaker system was installed so that packed meetings could hear what was said, as could the overflow crowds outside, which often numbered two to three thousand.

There were also regular meetings of the strike committee of seventy-five, which had been elected by the union membership. This body ... made the general decisions about strike policy. ...

Assembling the mass forces for such extensive picketing proved to be no problem at all. As soon as the strike was called, new members poured into Local 574 from all sections of the trucking industry. In no time at all the union almost doubled its mid-April strength, reaching a figure of nearly 6,000. The union's approach to the unemployed workers brought spectacular results. Hundreds upon hundreds of jobless poured into the strike headquarters, volunteering their services; and they fought like tigers in the battles that followed. Unorganized workers from other industries came forward. Together with women and men from other unions, they came to the strike headquarters at the end of their day's work, ready to help in whatever way they could. Deep in the night they would finally stretch out wherever they found a place to get a little sleep before returning to their jobs. A significant number of college students pitched in to help the union. All in all, pickets were on hand by the thousands. ...

As matters now stood, the union had its strategy worked out, the necessary forces had been mobilized and picketing operations were planned with military precision. The next step was to begin the big push against the employers. Trucking operations had to remain tied up, despite all attempts to use scabs working under police protection, until the employers agreed to deal with the union.

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January BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Workers need our own party, a labor party

Continued from front page

tor of the country's Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, explains in an interview in this issue of the *Militant*.

That is possible because Cuba is the only country in the world where the working class exercises political power. Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement led workers and peasants to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista 62 years ago this month in 1959. They established their own government, leading millions to take over the land, factories and banks, and reorganize production in the interests of the vast majority. As they did so they were transformed, becoming "new men and women," as Che Guevara put it, more self-confident and class conscious. They learned to rely on themselves and recognized their fight is part of winning a new future for working people worldwide.

The same capacities for uncompromising and disciplined struggle, and carving out a mass working-class movement capable of taking political power, exist among working people here. This has been shown in the mighty battles to build industrial unions and successfully tear down Jim Crow segregation that have been waged by working people in the U.S.

Today the rulers' capitalist system is in crisis. Millions have been thrown out of work in the midst of a pandemic. Those still working face wage cuts, speedup and worsening conditions. Production of vaccines for coronavirus is *restricted* by the owners of the pharmaceutical monopolies to keep prices high. Their central

concern — like all capitalist bosses — is to maximize profits, regardless of the deadly consequences.

The Socialist Workers Party is fielding candidates in 2021 across the country, fighting to build a mass movement that can bring an end these attacks. The *Militant* is stepping up efforts to spread the word. Join us!

SWP campaign supporters join and build solidarity with union fights, like that by Steelworkers at Constellium in Alabama, with the struggle by farmers in India against government assaults on their livelihoods, with the just-won battle for the right of women to choose abortion in Argentina — a gain for women's emancipation that advances the unity of all working people.

The SWP is advancing a fighting action program. When bosses threaten more layoffs, SWP campaigners urge a fight to cut the workweek with no cut in pay to spread the work available around. The party starts from what working people *need* and explains how a successful struggle to meet that will require taking control over all aspects of production ourselves, and fighting for workers and farmers to take political power.

We need a party of our own — a labor party, built out of our struggles over jobs, wages, working conditions and social rights, a party that speaks out for all those exploited and oppressed by capital.

On this course, workers and farmers here will have the opportunity to emulate the powerful example provided by working people in Cuba. Join SWP candidates around the country campaigning to make that possible!

Support Alabama strike over seniority, conditions

Continued from front page

Paris-based Constellium bought the plant from Wise Alloys and Reynolds Aluminum in 2015. Bosses say they can process 20 billion used cans a year and the aluminum can sheet they make out of them is in heavy demand.

"This company claims to be 'pro-family,'" Greenhill said. "We get seven holidays every year. You know where I was on those holidays? Working in there!" The company would rather lay out holiday pay than shut down for a day, he said.

"Without our seniority we don't have a union," said Greenhill. The company's demands include moving workers from eight-hour to 12-hour shifts. Several workers said bosses want to be able to have workers start on one machine and in the middle of the shift send them to another area.

"It's the way they treat us," added Willie Coffey. "They have got people in there telling us what to do who have never done the work." Several workers said the company has been using overtime to produce a surplus in preparation for the strike.

Bosses have been chipping away at the union over years, the workers said. Much of the maintenance is now done by contractors. Some contractors have honored the pickets; others have crossed.

The bosses' handling of the coronavirus pandemic is also an issue among workers. Nearly 250 people in the plant have been infected with the virus. Bosses ran

the plant at 50% capacity claiming they were trying to lessen the spread of the infections. But then "they had us working overtime to make up the difference," Clement explained.

The strike is getting support from other workers in this town of 14,000. Many honked as they drove by.

"The media has really been attacking us, saying we make too much and telling us go back to work," said Greenhill. In contrast, workers say their picket line is kept stocked with snacks, coffee, sodas, wood for the burn barrels and other supplies from strike supporters.

"We've had people from the post office and UPS come by," said Greenhill. "The train crews that pick up shipments refused to cross the picket," added Coffey.

The union has also received support from the Metalworkers' Federation of France. In a Dec. 22 letter to the USW members the French unionists said, "You can count on the full support of the FTM-CGT and the CGT Constellium in your struggle."

The union has begun to hold rallies outside the plant every Monday at 6 a.m. "We hold them just across the street from the main office so they can see us. Everyone is welcome to join," said Clement.

Donations and messages of support can be sent to the union at: United Steelworkers Local 200, 2601 Avalon Ave., Muscle Shoals, AL 35661.

Lisa Potash in Atlanta contributed to this article.

Workers give bosses 'blood money' bribes to SWP

BY JOHN STUDER

"Enclosed is a check for \$132, the amount after taxes of a COVID-19 lump sum bonus I recently received from the store where I work. This is supposed to be for working a 'hazardous' job, working in a place where we come into contact with large numbers of people," Walmart worker Chuck Guerra wrote to the Socialist Workers Party from Miami in December.

"Meanwhile, many workers were exposed to unsanitary conditions, having to handle garbage for extended periods of time, and massive piles of garbage accumulating when the garbage compactor at the store broke down and the company failed to provide an alternative way to dispose of garbage.

"I refuse to accept this bribe," he said, "and instead contribute it to building a party that encourages work-

ers to fight."

During the Christmas holiday season many bosses dispense bribes to their workers, hoping to buy their loyalty. Communists call this "blood money" — production, attendance, safety, holiday and other "bonuses" that bosses offer, seeking to get workers to keep quiet about speedup, rotten pay and unsafe conditions. Turning these attempted bribes into contributions to the Socialist Workers Party transforms them into helping to build a fighting working-class movement.

In addition to Guerra, over 50 workers at Walmart and other companies contributed over \$6,000 in "blood money" to the SWP. You too can make the best use of your holiday bonus from the boss by donating it to the Socialist Workers Party. Send your contribution to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

Protests hit cop killings of 2 men in Columbus

BY MAGGIE TROWE

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Working people have organized a series of protests here since the police killed two unarmed African American men in December.

Casey Goodson Jr., 23, a laid-off truck driver who was working at the Gap, was gunned down on his family's steps Dec. 4 as he returned from a dentist appointment. He was holding sandwiches he bought for his grandmother and younger brother.

He was shot by Franklin County sheriff's deputy Jason Meade, who claims he saw Goodson wave a gun while he was driving. There is no evidence that Meade, who is on paid leave, has yet to be interrogated by the authorities. Goodson was licensed to carry a firearm, but family members who were in the house say he had no weapon on him.

"This is by far the hardest day of my life," Goodson's mother, Tamala Payne, said at his funeral service Dec. 23. "But I will stand strong in your name, and in your honor, and we will receive justice."

The day before Goodson's funeral, 47-year-old Andre Hill, a chef and construction worker, was shot and killed by Columbus cop Adam Coy. Hill was visiting a friend on the city's east side when Coy and another cop, who were investigating a non-emergency call from a neighbor, saw Hill in the garage. Coy shot him dead within seconds as Hill walked out holding up his illuminated cellphone to show the cop. He had no weapon.

Footage from body cameras document the shooting, and show Hill lying still alive on the floor of the garage. The cops provide no medical assistance at all for more than 10 minutes, instead cuffing the dying Hill. A woman inside the house can be heard shouting to the police, "He was bringing me Christmas money. He didn't do anything."

Coy was fired from the police force Dec. 28, and is under criminal investigation. Since 2001, some 90 "citizen complaints" have been filed against him, and 16 of those were sustained.

"I think it's a small step," Sierra Mason told WSYX-TV at a protest against the killing of Hill the day Coy was fired. "My next hope is, you know, to at least have the charges of murder, homicide."

"It is just disgusting how they did my dad," Hill's daughter, Karissa, said at a Dec. 31 press conference, where she was joined by other relatives and well-known attorney Ben Crump. "These pictures that I got to look at, I got to memorize my dad on the floor for the rest of my life and how nobody helped him.

"How there's 22 officers on the scene with body footage and not one of them helped my dad. It's unbearable," she said.

Hill's sister, Michelle Hairston, also spoke. "The way that my brother was treated, to me, it's like an animal. He was preyed upon. He wasn't given any kind of chances," she said.

Call for justice

"I heard about the killings," Mexican American construction worker Efrain Bustamante, shaking his head, told this *Militant* worker-correspondent Dec. 26 outside his trailer in Columbus. "They do it to us, too."

"It was bad," Trammel Price, an auto dealership worker, told me in the living room of his house down the street. "People are angry, and they're going to keep pushing. But I'm worried nothing will happen to the police who did it. The prosecutors always find ways to let the cops get off, or they get little or no time in jail."

More than 100 people, mostly from the Cranbrook neighborhood where Hill was killed, held a vigil there Christmas Eve. The event outside the house where Hill was shot was organized by Shawn Finley, a neighbor. "I had to do something because we can't look away anymore," she said.

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

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