Help SWP get on NJ ballot: ‘Give workers their own voice’

BY VIVIAN SAHNER
UNION CITY, N.J. — Over two dozen supporters of the Socialist Workers Party campaigns of Joanne Kuniansky and Candace Wagner, for New Jersey governor and lieutenant governor, began a spirited six-week effort March 6 to place the party’s ticket on the ballot. By the following evening 307 signatures were in hand, a solid start toward the goal of 1,500, nearly double the 800 the state requires.

Campaign teams talked to workers on their doorsteps in nine cities and towns across New Jersey. Kuniansky, a Walmart deli worker, knocked on the door of David Roldan in Carteret, who is on medical leave from his job at an Amazon warehouse. Amazon bosses don’t provide sufficient training to forklift drivers. “So, of course, there’s accidents all the time. They always come up with ways to blame the worker,” Roldan said.

“We’re the only ones who will prioritize our safety and the safety of the workers,” Kuniansky said.

Working people in Texas left on their own as capitalist catastrophe unfolds

BY ALYSON KENNEDY
DALLAS — Thousands of working people throughout Texas and neighboring states hit by a powerful snow and ice storm four weeks ago continue to face serious problems with lack of water, bankrupting-high utility bills, shortages of materials to repair broken water pipes, and food shortages at the grocery store.

The storm froze almost every source of energy in Texas, leading to widespread power and water outages for millions. Eighty people were counted as dead from the effects of the storm, but the full number won’t be known for weeks.

This social catastrophe was a product of the capitalist ruling families.

Unions call general strike against coup in Myanmar

‘We will never be slaves to a military junta’

BY SETH GALINSKY
Working people in Myanmar began a general strike across the country March 8, seeking to topple the military junta that seized power Feb. 1. The strike comes alongside massive protests, in spite of more deadly repression by the regime.

“We are not slaves to the military junta now and we never shall be,” 18 workers in Myanmar began a general strike across the country March 8, seeking to topple the military junta that seized power Feb. 1. The strike comes alongside massive protests, in spite of more deadly repression by the regime.

“Workers need to control production, processing and distribution,” said a Walmart deli worker, knocking on the door of David Roldan in Carteret, who is on medical leave from his job at an Amazon warehouse. Amazon bosses don’t provide sufficient training to forklift drivers. “So, of course, there’s accidents all the time. They always come up with ways to blame the worker,” Roldan said.

“If you’re the only ones who will prioritize our safety and the safety of the worker,” Kuniansky said.

Support fight to win a union at Amazon in Alabama!

BY SUSAN LAMONT
BESSEMER, Ala. — The drive by hundreds of workers at the large Amazon warehouse and distribution center here to bring in the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union to represent them is going strong.

They face a concerted effort by Amazon bosses to use all their resources to keep the union out, from mandatory anti-union meetings in the warehouse to anti-union signs in the bathrooms. The National Labor Relations Board-run election by mail is set to end March 29. Some 5,800 workers at the distribution center are eligible to vote.

There are important stakes for workers all across the country in this fight. Workers need unions to organize themselves to meet the attacks of the employers against our jobs, wages and working conditions. This battle in Bessemer is Continued on page 6

‘Militant’ special appeal goes over $82,000 — a fantastic success!

BY JOHN STUDER
Over the last two months, 191 readers have contributed $82,176 to the Militant’s special “stimulus” appeal — a fantastic response! This second “stimulus” government pay-out is now over.

We explained when we launched the appeal in January that the funds would help the Militant meet expenses until the annual spring Militant Fighting Fund is launched in late March, Continued on page 2

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— On the picket line—
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Report blames Aurora cops in killing of Elijah McClain

BY JANET POST

A 157-page independent investigative report on the 2019 cop killing of Elijah McClain commissioned by the Aurora, Colorado, City Council was released to the public Feb. 22. “This report confirms what we have been saying from the start. The Aurora police and media who murdered my son must be held accountable,” LaWayne Mosley, McClain’s father, said after the report was made public. “Aurora police were in the wrong from the first moment they contacted 23-year-old Elijah McClain until the man’s limp body was loaded onto a gurney and taken to the hospital where he died days later,” the Denver Post editorialized the day after the report. The independent report sharply criticizes the cover-up engineered by city police and prosecutors and their version of events published in October 2019. “It was overwhelming knowing my son was innocent the entire time and just waiting on the facts and proof of it,” McClain’s mother, Sheneen McClain, told CNN. “My son’s name is cleared now. He’s no longer labeled a suspect. He is actually a victim.”

McClain, an African American, was a massage therapist and musician. He often played his violin for the animals at local shelters to help soothe them. On Aug. 24, 2019, McClain was walking home after buying iced tea. Three cops in the area who received a 911 complaint about a young Black man who “looked sketchy,” stopped him. The report then graphically describes how the police threw McClain to the ground. Cops Jason Rosenblatt and Randy Roedema pin him down, and Roedema puts a hammerlock to his arm, causing his shoulder to “pop out about three times.” Rosenblatt and Nathan Woodard both apply carotid control holds, which deprive the brain of oxygen, all the while kneeling or sitting on McClain and handcuffing him.

The report states that the cops’ body camera video shows McClain’s “words were apologetic and confused, not angry or threatening. He became increasingly plaintive and desperate as he struggled to breathe. … He said, ‘It’s just that I can’t breathe correctly because...’ as his voice trailed off.”

Without examining McClain, paramedics from Aurora Fire Rescue gave him a shot of the sedative ketamine, even though McClain hadn’t moved for a minute. And the dose they gave was for a 190-pound person although McClain weighed 140.

Just 18 minutes after being stopped by the cops, McClain had a heart attack. He was brain dead within three days and was taken off life support six days after being brutalized.

In November 2019, Adams County District Attorney Dave Young announced no criminal charges would be filed, claiming prosecutors lacked evidence. His autopsy concluded McClain died of “undetermined” causes.

McClain’s family has continued to fight for charges to be filed against the cops who killed their son, and they also filed a civil lawsuit. In June 2020, Colorado Gov. Jared Polis appointed Attorney General Phil Weiser as a special prosecutor and in January Weiser opened a grand jury investigation. Thousands joined demonstrations around the country after the killing, demanding the cops who killed Elijah McClain be prosecuted. A number of actions included violinists playing music in tribute to him. “Elijah believed in humanity,” his mother, Sheneen McClain, said at release of new report holding cops responsible for the killing the exploiting class. It provides in-depth features on the hard-won lessons of past class-struggle battles. The Militant advances a course to expand our readership. Our only source of income is our readers, and the contributions will also 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.

Our readers meet this goal and more! The paper, published in the interests of the working class, is irreplaceable for its weekly coverage on working-class and social struggles worldwide. For organizing solidarity; for coverage of the Socialist Workers Party campaigns explaining working-class policy on all questions; and to explain all political questions from the point of view of the working class against the capitalists who control government to power.

We now look forward to successful spring drives to continue financing the paper and expand the Militant’s readership! Join the effort! Thanks again for the contributions. As we go to press the government is deciding a third “stimulus” payout. If signed, the Militant will carry an announcement of the best way to use it to advance the working-class movement! In November 2019, Adams County District Attorney Dave Young announced no criminal charges would be filed, claiming prosecutors lacked evidence. His autopsy concluded McClain died of “undetermined” causes.

McClain’s family has continued to fight for charges to be filed against the cops who killed their son, and they also filed a civil lawsuit. In June 2020, Colorado Gov. Jared Polis appointed Attorney General Phil Weiser as a special prosecutor and in January Weiser opened a grand jury investigation. Thousands joined demonstrations around the country after the killing, demanding the cops who killed Elijah McClain be prosecuted. A number of actions included violinists playing music in tribute to him. “Elijah believed in humanity,” his mother, Sheneen McClain, said after the report was released.

The report is a damning indictment of both the cops who killed McClain and the Aurora officials who covered it up.
Give workers their voice in NJ

Continued from front page

communities nearby, over the profits of the bosses.”

Roldán had heard about the efforts of workers at the Amazon distribution center in Bessemer, Alabama, to establish a union. “I used to work at a grocer store with a union,” he said. “So I know how much better that can be, even if the union isn’t perfect.”

When Kuniansky said that it would boost the union drive in Bessemer if they get support from Amazon workers in New Jersey, Roldán said he would talk to some of his co-workers about sending support. He bought a copy of the Militant and signed to get Kuniansky on the ballot.

Schoolteacher Miguel Fernandez told Studer, “I know that safety should be the number one concern for all workers and that schools should not be reopened,” when Evans knocked on his door in Belleville.

“The only way to fight effectively for safer working conditions in schools or any workplace is by organizing together with fellow workers to stand up to the bosses,” Evans re- plied. “To do that workers need to be at work.” Fernandez didn’t agree, but signed the petition.

A highlight of the weekend was a March 6 campaign rally attended by 39 people. John Studer, the party’s national campaign director, introduced Kuniansky, Wagner and the party’s candidates in New York City: Róger Calero for mayor, Willie Cotton for public advocate and Sara Lobman for Manhattan Borough president.

“Our candidates take our campaign to struggles by working people, building support for them,” Studer said. “We explain the stakes of our Amazon union drive, the lockout at Marathon Petroleum in Minnesota and the fight by Steelworkers for a new contract with Allegheny Technologies.” Work- ers were locked out by ATI for seven months in 2015-16 as they fought boss attacks on wages and working condi- tions. Now organizing for another agreement, in the midst of company moves to shut down some union-organized plants and expand nonunion plants in North Carolina.

“The party has run in every presi- dential race since 1948 and fights to build community no matter who perpetrates them,” they pointed out.

A sampling of workers fighting for a better world across the country is on page 7.

See directory on page 8 to contact party campaign office nearest you.

BY NORTON SANDLER

LOS ANGELES — One of a series of attacks across the country targeting Asians took place in Los Angeles’ Little Tokyo on Feb. 27, where the Highashi Honganji Buddhist Temple was broken into and desecrated.

An unknown attacker climbed the temple’s fence, set fire to two wooden lanterns, ripped metallic lanterns from their concrete bases and shattered a 12-foot foyer glass panel with a rock. Rev. Mas Fuji, who was in the temple at the time, was able to put out the fires. “This feels like an attack on our cul- ture, our history, our community,” Rev. Noriaki Ito, the temple’s head minister, said in a statement.

The Socialist Workers Party campaign extends solidarity with the Hi- ghashi Honganji Buddhist Temple,” wrote Bernie Senter, the party’s candi- date in the just-concluded election for State Senate District 30, and Dennis Richter, the party’s Southern Californ- ia campaign chair. They called on the labor movement to condemn this and other attacks aimed at Asians in the U.S.

“No one can deny that the castro- phe fence seating working people in Texas and nearby states today is man-made,” Wagner told the rally, referring to the refusal of power companies to sacri- fice profits to install protection against subfreezing temperatures.

“While the pressure on different sides of the climate-change debate point fingers at each other, the truth is that wind and solar, coal, gas and nuclear power are produced under capital- ism with one thing in mind — the profits of big business.”

The SWP calls for workers and our unions to “fight for an immedi- ate participative public works program,” she said, to put millions back to work at union-scale wages, repairing dam- aged houses and replacing worn-out power systems and other infrastruc- ture. We also need to fight to national- ize the energy industry under workers control, Wagner said. “Such a course points toward the kind of struggles necessary to lead millions to replace capitalist rule with a workers and farmers government.”

“Nine days ago President Joseph Biden bombed Syria,” New York may- or candidate Roger Calero told the meeting. “Biden’s objective was the same as Donald Trump’s, to define the U.S. capitalist ruling families. The Democrats and Republicans both say they don’t support wars.” Calero said, “but countries don’t have foreign policies, classes do.”

Workers need our own policies on every question, at home and abroad, Calero said, based on support for the struggles of working people.

Some $2,000 was raised in contrib- utions at the rally for the campaign. To join campaign teams in New Jer- sey or other states where the party campaigns, contact the nearest SWP branch listed on page 8.

SWP protests attacks on LA Buddhist temple, Asians

2021 Socialist Workers Party candidates

Fight in the interests of the working class

Workers need our own party, a labor party

Albany, New York Ved Vondkar, mayor

Kathe Fitzgerald, Common Council president

Atlanta

Rachelle Fruit, mayor

Sam Massey, City Council

Dallas

Gerardo Sánchez, City Council Dist. 1

Lincoln, Nebraska Joe Swanson, City Council At-Large

Louisville, Kentucky Maggie Trowe, mayor

Miami

Anthony Doutor, mayor

See directory on page 8 to contact party campaign office nearest you.

New Jersey

Joanne Kuniansky, governor

Candace Wagner, lieutenant governor

New York City

Róger Calero, mayor

Willie Cotton, public advocate

Sara Lobman, Manhattan Borough president

Philadelphia

Osborne Hart, district attorney

Pittsburgh

Malcolm Jarrett, mayor

Seattle

Henry Dennison, mayor

Rebecca Williamson, City Council

On our watch, the bosses have faced a significant rise in attacks, the federation reported that Asian hate crimes have doubled in Los Angeles last year, and increased in cities across the country. In New York a record number of attacks against Asians were reported during the same period.

The Asian American Federation in New York organized a “Rise Up Against Asian Hate” protest of 300 Feb. 27. In addition to the jump in physical at- tacks, the federation reported that Asian workers have faced a significant rise in unemployment.

Working-class protests against racist discrimination and scapegoating have had an impact in the U.S. “The suc- cessful working-class battles waged by Blacks against Jim Crow segregation laid the basis for undermining anti- Asian prejudices as well,” Richter and Senter said in their message.

“Among working people today of all national and cultural backgrounds, there is less prejudice than ever before. This bodes well for the unity workers need to fight against the class oppression of the bosses and their government.”

Some $83,000 has been raised by volunteers for the temple’s repair.
Strike against Myanmar coup

Continued from front page “disappeared,” protesters keep pouring into the streets. If anything, the attacks by the police and army have brought workers, farmers and youth; Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Christian religious leaders; and other minorities together.

The demonstrators are not naive about what they face. Kyal Sin, 19, shot dead during a March 3 protest in Mandalay with a bullet behind her ear, had posted on Facebook that if she were killed she wanted her organs donated to save other lives.

The breadth of the protests has surprised even longtime opponents of the military high command. Kyaw Zwa Moe — a veteran of the 1988 uprising that the generals crushed and who was a military officer — wrote in Irrawaddy, a Yangon-based news service that supports the protests, that two days after the killing of Kyal Sin, “we were amazed to see photos of still bigger crowds of protestors taking to the streets in Mandalay.”

After the strike call, police and soldiers began blocking the streets formed by the generals — what was written in Irrawaddy, a Yangon-based news service that supports the protests, that two days after the killing of Kyal Sin, “we were amazed to see photos of still bigger crowds of protestors taking to the streets in Mandalay.”

According to Irrawaddy, they fired guns throughout the night in Yangon in an attempt to intimidate people. The repression has been taking cars and buses and arresting those who have anti-regime literature.

Decades of military rule

Under Myanmar’s 2008 constitution, imposed by the generals as part of allowing a controlled “democratic” opening after decades of military rule, 25% of the seats of parliament are appointed directly by the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, giving him veto power over any changes to the constitution. Key ministries are also appointed by the military.

In 2016, Aung San Suu Kyi, head of the National League for Democracy, won the first elections directly by the commander-in-chief of the seats of parliament are appointed directly by the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, giving him veto power over any changes to the constitution. Key ministries are also appointed by the military.

Despite her earlier reputation as an opponent of the military rulers, she has become the main public defender of the army’s repression of the Rohingya minority in Rakhine province.

Suu Kyi’s reputation has been mistrusted by many from ethnic minorities mistrusted by the military and the government. Di-

Tensions grow between rulers in Australia, Beijing

BY BOB AIKEN

SYDNEY — Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison is refusing to retreat from confrontations with the Chinese government over trade, investment and Beijing’s influence in Australia.

The Australian rulers are caught between their major trading partner, China, and their main military ally, Washington. Since the election of “the Burmese Way to Socialism,” the junta nationalized foreign banks and many businesses.

These nationalizations without a revolution — like similar expropriations carried out by the military casts in Egypt and Syria had nothing to do with eliminating capitalism or advancing the interest of working people. Instead, they served as an incubator for a captive capitalist class, primarily from the Burmese national bourgeoisie, including those with ties to the military.

The depth of the protests has surprised even longtime opponents of the military high command. Kyaw Zwa Moe — a veteran of the 1988 uprising that the generals crushed and who was a military officer — wrote in Irrawaddy, a Yangon-based news service that supports the protests, that two days after the killing of Kyal Sin, “we were amazed to see photos of still bigger crowds of protestors taking to the streets in Mandalay.”

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International Correspondent

Socialist Workers Party

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$5.

The Militant

March 22, 2021

Senior military officers and their families gained control of the most lucrative businesses and industries. This accelerated in 2011 when state-owned businesses were sold off, often to military officials and their cronies. This was coupled with a major expansion of foreign investment in Myanmar companies based in China, Singapore, Japan, the United Kingdom and the U.S. The influx of capital and expanded production meant a growth in the size of the working class along with union organization and struggles. Myanmar has become a major center for world garment production, with some 600,000 workers who earn even less than their counterparts in Vietnam and Cambodia.

Hundreds of thousands of farmers are watching as workers, members of ethnic minorities from the outer provinces

In Myanmar, as well as China. The Chinese rulers claim they are fighting for the working class, who they all seek to exploit and oppress.

Last November the Chinese Embassy in Canberra released a dossier of 14 “complaints’ against the Australian government. “If you make China the enemy, China will be the enemy,” the report warned. To back that up, Beijing imposed tariffs and bans on a number of Australian exports.

The Chinese government accuses Canberra of being in Chinese corporations from efforts to take over Australian companies, organizing police raids on Chinese living in Australia and Australia’s participation in Beijing’s Belt and Road program, designed to facilitate exports by Chinese companies.

Beijing has retaliated with tariffs that block 20 billion Australian dollars’ worth of exports to China ($13.5 billion). Beijing’s step up aggression has sent wheat, timber and coal have been hit with taxes or bans. Beijing suspended coal imports worth over AU$14 billion in November. But the two biggest exports for Australian mining and energy firms to China, iron ore and natural gas, have continued unrestricted.

Beijing has long had duties on some Chinese exports. China-based corporations and banks in the South Pacific are now the main rivals of Australian capitalists, who have long dominated and plundered the region. Canberra opposes plans by Chinese companies to build a fisheries factory and a port on Dari Island. This is one of the poorest regions of Papua New Guinea, Canberra’s former colony, just to Australia’s north.

The rift between Canberra and Beijing deepened last April when the Australian government called for an international inquiry into the Wuhan, China, origins of the COVID-19 pandemic. With imperial arrogance, Prime Minister Morrison said the inquiry should wield the powers of “weapons inspectors.”

Beijing complains Canberra is interfering with the Chinese government’s oppressive treatment of the Uighur nationality in Xinjiang as well as its policies in Hong Kong and its relations with Taiwan. Canberra faces a fait accompli from confrontations with the Chinese government over trade, investment and Beijing’s influence in Australia.

The Australian rulers are caught between their major trading partner, China, and their main military ally, Washington. Since the election of...
Locked-out Marathon Petroleum workers win growing support

ST. PAUL, Minn. — The 200 locked-out members of Teamsters Local 120 continue to win support and solidarity in their fight for safety against Marathon Petroleum refinery bosses here. Marathon is the largest oil refining company in the U.S.

Several area unions organized to join the picket line in a show of solidarity March 6, including Iron Workers Local 61, United Steelworkers District 11, Steamfitters Pipefitters Local 455, and Laborers Local 563. They carried banners of support, lining the road that truckers take in and out of the refinery. A union-run bus service to town 21, Marathon has locked out the refinery workers ever since. The company is trying to keep production going, using management and contract workers.

The key issue is the bosses’ insistence on replacing some union workers with contract labor, a move that increases the danger of accidents because of the use of hazardous chemicals — like hydrofluoric acid — in the refining process.

Strikers picketed outside Metro Trans- it’s headquarters and bus garage March 1 to protest their continued use of Mar- athon-produced gas. Metro Transit runs buses and trains throughout the Minne- apolis-St. Paul metropolitan area.

“Apart from being protest- ing Metro Transit’s decision to cross the picket line with their dollars by purchas- ing fuel from Marathon during an on- going strike,” Ryan Timlin, president of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1005, said in a statement. “ATU Local 1005 stands in solidarity with the members of Teamsters 120.”

He said that this strikebreaking act “was part of a pattern of anti-union be- havior in the agency,” noting Local 1005 members have been working without a contract for seven months.

“The Twin Cities has a progressive reputation, but the reality for working- class people is quite the opposite,” Tim- lin added, pointing to how elected offi- cials there appointed the Metro Transit boss. “As a rank-and-file member I stand with workers are responsible for putting these anti-union individuals in positions of power.”

Messages and donations to the strike fund can be sent to Teamsters Local 120, 9422 Ulysses St. NE, Blaine, MN 55434.

— Nick Neesen

Manchester bus drivers strike over longer hours, no raise in pay

MANCHESTER, England Some 400 bus drivers at Go North West are winning support during their first week on strike, after bosses tried to impose a new contract with longer hours but no pay increase.

Unite, their union, says bosses’ de- mands would leave workers out of pocket by 2,500 pounds ($3,450) a year. Workers are especially angry over bosses’ threats to fire drivers who refused to sign the new contract.

Mark Porter, Unite union convener at Rolls-Royce in Barnoldswick, brought a 500 pound strike fund donation and gauze and bater (burn barrels) to the Queen’s Road picket line March 5. The brazier displays two messages, “Stop fire and revenge” and “Solidarity from Rolls-Royce.” Members there fought a nine-week strike recently, stopping the company from cutting hundreds of jobs.

Dozens of drivers had showed up for picket line duty, including Peter Clifford, Communist League candidate for may- or of Greater Manchester, visited that day. Some were deployed to bus stops across the city, talking to passengers and drivers at other companies about their plight. Go North West has attempted to break the strike by outsourcing routes to smaller bus and coach companies.

Some drivers told Clifford they were angry that Labour Party Mayor Andrew Burnham refused to back the strike and instead, pushed a state-organized ar- bitration. “The working-class doesn’t have a party of its own,” Clifford said. “Workers and our unions need to build a party.”

Clifford and Hugo Wls, the CLP’s candidate for Manchester City Council, talked about the strike with Gulfther Leman, an electrician delivery driver, at his home in Moston.

“Since the pandemic, Amazon is making us do more deliveries for the same amount of money,” Leman said. “We need to fight for a union too.”

Leman subscribed to the Militant after he saw the coverage of the fight for a union at Amazon’s Bessemer, Alabama, warehouse. When Wls met him a week later, Leman said he had stopped by the bus drivers’ picket line to offer solidarity on his way to work.

— Osmundar Jonsson

Medical workers in Oregon strike for first union contract

BEND, Ore. — The first strike in 40 years at St. Charles Medical Center be- gan here March 4 when 150 therapists, technicians and technologists walked out to fight for higher pay. St. Charles is the only hospital in this city.

The workers had voted to join the Or- egon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals union in 2019, which has been negotiating for a union contract for over a year. Bosses have refused to talk since last December.

Up to 100 union members line the street in front of the hospital every day and are getting support from passing motorists at the busy inter- section. Teamsters and members of nurses’ unions are joining the picket line. Small-status workers are drop- ping off food for the strikers.

Contract workers at other St. Charles facilities get higher pay, striker Rachel Maida, a respiratory therapist, told Al- Jazeera. “Why are we not getting paid the same amount when we put our lives in danger every single day?” she asked.

The hospital here takes the majority of COVID-19 patients in the eastern part of the state. Because of this, bosses claim they have no money as they had to can- cel more profitable elective surgeries.

They are hiring replacement workers to try to break the strike. A federal judge rejected a bosses’ request for a court in- junction aimed at blocking the strike.

The union has set up the OFNHP Cares — Member Hardship Relief Fund to support the strikers. To contribute go to https://www.gofundme.com/f/ofnhp-cares-member-hardship-relief-fund.

— Louise Goodman

Brewery workers fight lockout over Molson concession demands

TORONTO — Molson Coors Bever- age Co. Feb. 20 locked out the 300 workers at its brewery here after they rejected the company’s “best and fi- nial” offer by a vote of 208 to 69. The union, members of Canadian Union of Brewery and General Workers Lo- cal 325, had been working without a contract since Dec. 31. The Toronto facility is one of Molson’s biggest in Canada, churning out about 850 million bottles of beer a year.

Local 325 President Gaurav Sharma told the Toronto Star that the union is fighting to end the wage freeze re- struc- ture, in effect since 2010, which caps new-hire wages at 84% of those hired earlier. “We were trying to bring every- one into the same wage scale,” he said.

The bosses also want changes to the pension system and new 12-hour weekend shifts with no overtime pay. They hoped to sell the concessions with raises each year of the contract and a 1,000 Canadian dollar ($795) ratification bonus.

Pickets at one gate this Militant cor- respondent talked to were all opposed to the new shift. Marko Rodman, a 20-year veteran at the plant, said he’s divorced and has his kids every second week. He doesn’t see how he’d be able to handle such shifts. The proposed changes to the pension system also mean he would have to work 10 years longer to qualify.

Three weeks before the lockout the company posted help-wanted ads for temporary workers. A company spokesperson claimed it was a routine posting for summer help, not related to contract negotiations. Workers say they’ll see what happens.

Tony Di Felice

Iron Workers Local 512 members hold banner at union solidarity rally March 6 in support of Teamsters Local 120 oil workers locked out Jan. 22 by Marathon Petroleum in Minnesota.

— Nick Neesen

March 26, 1971

More than a year after the first congressional runnings were heard about the need for legislation that would mushrooming government surveillance, such an inquiry was finally undertaken when the Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights opened public hearings Feb. 23.

The Pentagon keeps files on 25 million Americans. These include persons it considers a “threat to secu- rity and defense.” The Pentagon’s data bank, Assistant Secretary of Defense Robert Frischke testified, keeps files on 760,000 organizations and processes an average of 12,000 “requests” per day. Not only have people been refused jobs, insurance or loans as a result, but some have been blackmailed or defamed.

Neither the Pentagon nor the ex- ecutive branch has any intention of eliminating the practice of spying on the American people. This has gone on for decades.

March 23, 1946

DETROIT — After 113 days on the picket lines, the heroic 175,000 General Motors strikers on March 13 finally forced the multi-billion dollar corporation to terms.

The agreement both with respect to wages and other concessions must be viewed as a significant even though par- tial victory. Especially heartening is the fact that the workers were able to hold out solidly and have emerged with their ranks intact, united and full of fight.

Membership meetings of the 80 GM locals will vote on ratification of the contract. No locals are authorized to re- turn to work until a majority of the lo- cals have voted acceptance of the terms.

The lessons of this strike have been imbedded deeply in the consciousness of the GM and other auto workers. We must be sure that they will not rest on their gains, but will stand in the forefront of the new struggles that loom ahead.

— The Militant
Continued from front page and their drive for profit above all else. They make that choice because it’s the only way they know how to make money. Their work is, by its nature, anti-social. It destroys people’s health and the environment.

The Militant

Workers in Texas left on their own amid capitalist catastrophe

by ROY LAMBERD

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The protests were in response to a bill that would allow the authorities to arrest people through a process of “national security investigation” without a warrant. The bill has been fiercely criticized by human rights groups and international organizations.

The pro-democracy protesters demanded that the Hong Kong government withdraw the bill and allow for genuine elections. They also called for an end to the police brutality that has marred recent protests.

“I am very proud to be a part of this movement,” said a demonstrator. “We are fighting for our rights and freedoms, and we will not give up.”

The police responded with force, using tear gas, pepper spray, and water cannon. There were reports of injuries among both protesters and police.

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The Lessons of Cuba’s revolution can help us emulate its example

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Aldabonazo — which in Spanish means a sharp, warning knock on the door — became a rallying cry of that generation of youth who risked their lives in defiance of the military regime. What distinguished them from the various bourgeois political parties and associations that opposed the Batista dictatorship was not primarily words, but deeds. Without fear of consequences for themselves, or political hesitation over where the struggle might lead, they fought for what they believed was right and refused to settle for less.

Fewer than seven years later, under the leadership of Fidel Castro, the July 26 Revolutionary Movement and its Rebel Army led the workers, peasants, and revolution-minded youth of Cuba to victory. Some 20,000 had paid with their lives by the time Batista and his henchmen fled the country on January 1, 1959. A new revolutionary government was installed with the revolutionary cadres coming from the urban underground. …

Along this course the July 26 Movement fought to forge the revolutionary ca-
dids… and as they clarify questions about the traditional bourgeois opposition parties; and as they take advantage of every opening to intervene in the political struggle, through action and debate, to win the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard; as they take advantage of every opening in the broad political ferment, exposing the empty posturing and pretensions of the traditional bourgeois opposition parties; and as they clarify questions of strategy and tactics debated not only among the revolutionary cadres … but throughout the anti-Batista opposition.

And why imperialism has failed. … The Cuban Revolution in all its richness offers us the present and future struggles of Our America, and the world. The better we understand how that revolution was led, and the better we prepare we will be to emulate its example and meet the challenges posed by the social and political expulsions that will shape the twenty-first century.

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The fight for women’s emancipation is in the inter-est of all working people and is key to unifying the working class in the face of capitalist exploitation and for building a working-class party and a movement of millions to advance the liberation of all humanity. Defending a woman’s right to unrestricted family planning, including the right to safe and secure abort-ion, is fundamental to women controlling their own lives and to winning full social, economic and politi-cal equality. Hundreds of thousands have taken to the streets in Poland, India, Hong Kong and elsewhere to demand the right for women to choose to have an abort-ion. In Ireland and Argentina gains have been made that set an example for working people everywhere.

Indian farmers’ fight to defend livelihood grows

BY ROY LANDERSEN
“Now the farmers in India are doing ‘maha-parvatar’ — really big gatherings in different villages for discussions on what they’re going to do now,” Gurcharan Singh, a construction worker in Montreal, told the Militant Feb. 28. His father, Kuldip Singh, farms 18 acres in India. He swerved, with unqualified support for the right of women to make this crucial decision about their own lives and with protests in the streets led by unions and women’s rights groups.

The integration of women into the workforce strengthens the working class and increases the centrality of the fight for women’s equality. Hundreds of thousands of women have joined protests by farmers in India on International Women’s Day, demanding the overturn of new laws that threaten to sacrifice farmers’ livelihoods to the profits of agri-cultural conglomerates. Women garment workers in Yangon, Myanmar, were among the first to organize strikes against the military coup there.

Blows are being dealt to the fight for women’s rights today by middle-class liberals, who claim that human beings are not born male or female, but can choose to be whatever sex they like. They deny the fact that in class society women are an oppressed class, that the history of human beings is one of hard-fought battles for women’s emancipation. And they harass and try to silence anyone who speaks out against their anti-scientific views. The fact is anti-women prejudices are declining among working people. This increases prospects that efforts by the bosses to pit women and men against each other, the better to exploit both, can be defeated in unified struggle. The historic fight to end the oppression of women — rooted in class society and all forms of discrimination can only be carried through to the end by the working class taking political power.

The clearest example of what is possible is Cuba’s socialist revolution. By overthrowing capitalist rule, Cuban working people ended domination by the exploiting class that profits from the second-class status of women.

Led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement, they built a workers and farmers government and used it to take over the factories, nationalize the land and place it in the hands of those who wanted to farm it; to mobilize 250,000 young volunteers to eradicate illiteracy; to outlaw racial segregation; and to draw millions of women into social and political life for the first time. Their conquest of power established the indispensable foundations for advancing the fight to eradicate the subjugation of women and much more.

The SWP is building a working-class party in the U.S. to emulate that example. Join us!

Correction

In the article “Books by Revolutionary Leaders Sell Well at Tehran Fair” in the Militant dated March 15, the wrong name of the main sponsor of the book fair was given. The correct sponsor is the Cultural Center of the Militant. The sponsor was the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance.

Hong Kong protest

Continued from page 7

Congress began March 5. Vice Chairman Wang Chen announced it would adopt a new electoral system for Hong Kong that would further limit direct elections, ensuring only true Chinese “patriots” would serve.

Pro-Beijing Hong Kong legislator Martin Liao un-wittingly spoke the truth March 6 — that Beijing’s “re-forms” are to prevent a “dictatorship of the majority.” The last time so many protesters were charged with subversion in China was in the wake of Beijing’s brut-ral crushing of the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests.

In the past two years, over 10,000 people have been detained, while others have fled overseas. Many public sector workers have been dismissed or forced to work longer hours for less. They don’t care.”

The regime in Beijing also fears the effects of the Hong Kong protests on the massive working class and peasantry on the mainland.

Steelworkers at ATI vote to authorize strike

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

Steelworkers at ATI in nine Allegheny Tech-nologies Inc. steel mills held a strike authorization vote March 5 with 95% backing a walkout. “It’s time to take a stand, and stop the bleeding,” Todd Barbazio, a crane operator and president of United Steelworkers Local 1956 in Brackenridge, Pennsyl- vania, told the Militant by phone after the local’s over 400 members voted.

If a strike comes, he told the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, “we’re prepared. We have the signs, the bar- rels, the sheds that can all be up within two hours.”

The overwhelming strike vote reflected workers’ rising anger and frustration with the steel bosses’ demands to strip workers of rights and benefits that the workforce and weaken the union: a contract without a pay raise, deeper two-tier divisions, elimination of overtime after eight hours, cuts in health care and retirement, and increased contracting out. The Steelworkers have been working through a one-year contract ex-tension, which expired Feb. 28.

“We haven’t had a raise in six years,” Ben McCain, a railroad engineer who moves molten slag and other steel waste byproducts in the Brackenridge mill, told the Militant. “We need higher wages because food and other costs are going up. The company wants us to work longer and harder.”

The last time their union contract ran out in 2015, the company locked out the workers for seven months. The day after the lockout began, the bosses released hundreds of strikebreakers brought in by the notorious scab-herding firm Strom Engineer-ing. After the National Labor Relations Board ruled the lockout was illegal, a settlement was reached.

Workers went back into the plants with their heads held high, having won some of their de-mands, but they were also forced to accept a series of concessions, including the wage freeze.

At that time the union organized 2,200 workers at 12 plants. Today they represent 1,300. The bosses are shuttering union mills and shifting products and re-sources to nonunion plants in North Carolina. “We are taking decisive action to become a more profitable company,” Robert Wetherbee, ATI presi-dent and CEO, told Berkshire Hathaway’s Business Wire last December, “by shedding a low-margin product line,” production of stainless steel, and “re-deploying resources to an aerospace and defense-centered portfolio” to “generate significant value for our shareholders.” More union-organized plants are slated for layoffs. “Here we are again, with a contract that forgets ac-tual workers with real families,” Angie McCaAl, the Militant, referring to the 2015-16 lockout. “The lockout made people stick together in the plant. If you were spouse, you started an anti-lockout and other spouses now,” she said. “If there’s a strike, we are here to fight.”

A former contract worker at ATI, McCaAl was active in Wives of Steel, which organized to get solidarity, food, funds and Christmas presents during the lockout.

Dave Varsho, a garage worker and unit chair of USW Local 1700 in Allegheny County, Pennsyl-vania, was a probationary worker during the lockout who stuck with the union. “There are negotiations back and forth, but the items on the company side that separate unions from each other, and create a two-tier situation, that’s the problem,” he said. “Solidarity is our strength.”

Messages of solidarity can be sent to: unionhall1109@gmail.com.