

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Thousands protest killing of Muslim family in Canada
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 85/NO. 25 JUNE 28, 2021

SWP campaign expands reach, builds solidarity in Ill. coalfields

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Everywhere Socialist Workers Party campaigners are finding interest in discussing what workers and farmers face and how we can stand up together against the bosses' assaults.

Campaigners are in the final weeks of a nine-week drive to sell 1,400 *Militant* subscriptions, 1,400 books by SWP and other revolutionary leaders and to raise \$145,000 for the Militant Fighting Fund.

John Hawkins, a former miner, led a team with other SWP campaigners to introduce the party on workers' doorsteps and at mine portals in the southern Illinois coalfields, June 4-5.

Hawkins and Kaitlin Estill described the strike by coal miners against Warrior Met in Alabama to a person at one door in Sparta. Inside the house Shyana Cole overheard the conversation and came out to ask the SWP campaigners if they "were for or against the union."

"Once we explained we supported the unions and their fights," Hawkins said, "she told us she was raised on

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Volvo Truck workers strike over wages, divisive two-tier

Workers reject bosses' offer, go back on picket line



Militant/Tony Lane

Picket at Volvo truck factory in Dublin, Virginia, June 13. UAW members had ended strike April 30, then rejected boss proposals twice by 90%. They went back out on strike June 7.

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

DUBLIN, Va. — Some 2,900 United Auto Workers Local 2069 members entered their second week back on strike at Volvo Truck, fighting for higher wages and against bosses' demands for divi-

sive concessions.

Since a 13-day strike at Volvo's New River Valley plant here came to an end April 30, union members twice voted down proposed contracts by 90%. Workers went back on strike June 7. Volvo responded by cutting off the strikers' health insurance the next day.

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Workers need cost-of-living protection so our wages go up whenever prices do



Getty/Bettmann Archive

Autoworkers on strike at General Motors in Detroit picket Sept. 14, 1970, as inflation was ravaging paychecks. Strikers demanded improved cost-of-living pay increases to match price rises.

BY TERRY EVANS

Price hikes on basic necessities are wreaking havoc on working people at the same time millions remain out of work. Workers and our unions need to join together to fight for cost-of-living clauses in every contract, and in key government programs like Social Security, so our wages go up every time

prices rise and we can defend our standard of living.

The annual consumer price index surged to 5% in May. Food and other groceries, furniture, clothing and used cars all jumped in price. Getting to and from work is more expensive as gas prices have jumped nearly 50%

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Getting vaccinated is in the interests of all working people worldwide

BY JOHN STUDER

"The union movement needs to organize to assure that all workers get vaccinated, the only road to stop COVID-19 once and for all," Róger Calero, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York, told the *Militant* June 14. "They should run union-organized vaccination programs in every city and explain why it's in the interest of the working class to carry this out. As I campaign, I urge everyone to get vaccinated.

"The starting point of the bosses and their government is to maximize the profits of the pharmaceutical, hospital and insurance companies," Calero said. "They view the vaccines as private property, not a scientific conquest that should be placed at the service of humanity as a whole. This means people in the weaker capitalist countries, and especially in semicolonial Africa, Latin American and Asia, won't see substantial vaccination for

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Victory! Ban on 'Militant' in Indiana prison is overturned!

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Over the last two weeks, bans on the *Militant* imposed by prison authorities in Indiana and Florida were overturned — important victories for defense of prisoners' rights and for freedom of the press.

The latest victory came June 9 when Indiana prison authorities overturned the ban imposed on two issues of the paper sent in May to *Militant* subscriber Kevin "Rashid" Johnson at the Wabash Valley Correctional Facility in Carlisle, because of a photo of officials barred for showing "images of guns."

The historical picture accompanied a feature article in Spanish on "Cuba and the Coming American Revolution." It showed Cuban militia members celebrating after the defeat of the U.S. government-organized mercenary invasion at the Bay of Pigs in 1961. The same article and photo ap-

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Strikers organize expanded picket, rally at ATI steel in Pennsylvania

BY TONY LANE

VANDERGRIFT, Pa. — "Fair contract now!" 120 striking steelworkers, family members and supporters chanted at a rally and expanded picket line at the Allegheny Technologies Inc. plant here June 9. Some 1,300 United Steelworkers union members walked out at nine ATI facilities in five states since March 30.

Workers at ATI have not had a pay raise since 2014, yet the steel giant is offering no wage increase in the first year of their proposed new contract, with measly 3% increases each of the next three years. The company is demanding

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Steelworkers strike Vale mines in Sudbury over safety, health care

After monthlong strike, Quebec iron ore workers win contract

Over 1,000 march in Texas to protest new anti-abortion law

BY JANET POST

Over 1,000 demonstrators marched from the Texas state Capitol in Austin to the Governor’s Mansion May 29 to protest the recently passed “Texas Heart-beat Act” that would ban most abortions in the state after six weeks of pregnancy.

The “heartbeat” bill was signed into law by Gov. Gregory Abbott 10 days earlier. It prohibits abortions after cardiac activity can be detected in the embryo. At that stage many women might not even know they’re pregnant. The only exceptions are for life-threatening medical emergencies.

The Texas law allows any individual to sue doctors, nurses, clinic volunteers or anyone who helps a woman obtain an abortion. This includes getting monetary damages against family members, abortion counselors and anyone who helps the woman raise the funds to cover the procedure. Abortion-rights advocates plan a court challenge.

Over 56,000 abortions were performed in Texas in 2019, most in the first trimester. Amy Hagstrom Miller, head of Whole Women’s Health that runs four clinics in the state, said that about 90% of women who go to the clinics are more than six weeks into their pregnancy.

The Texas legislature has passed measures restricting women’s right to choose abortion in recent years, including mandatory “counseling” to discourage women from getting the procedure, forced waiting periods, parental consent for minors, and requiring patients to have an ultrasound of the fetus and their doctors to show it to them. With few clinics in Texas outside the major cities, many women have to travel hundreds of

miles to see a provider. Nationally, 58% of women and men favor a woman’s right to abortion.

“We are in this together and we’re going to fight this,” pro-choice demonstrator Renee Kreisner said at the rally. We’re here “to help keep women safe, and make sure abortion is an option.”

In Lubbock, a “sanctuary for the unborn” ordinance outlawing abortions in the city took effect June 1. It empowers family members to sue anyone for damages who helps others with an abortion.

Ken Lambrecht, president of Planned Parenthood of Greater Texas, told the Texas Tribune that its Lubbock clinic remains open for reproductive health services and that the ban “violates patients’ constitutional rights.

“We will continue to stand up for [them] with all of our resources,” he said.

On May 17 the U.S. Supreme Court announced it will review this fall whether state laws that ban previability abortions are unconstitutional. The test case is from Mississippi where the Jackson Women’s Health Organization challenged the “Gestational Age Act” passed in 2018, which bans most abortions after 15 weeks.

“The Socialist Workers Party supports a woman’s right to choose whether and when to have a child, free from state interference,” Alyson Kennedy, SWP Texas campaign chair, told the *Militant*. “We call for working people to mobilize to defend clinics that offer women family planning, including the right to safe and secure abortions.

“Defending this right is fundamental to a woman’s control of her own life and to winning full social, economic and



Madelyn Morneault

Rally at state Capitol in Austin, Texas, May 29, to protest law that would ban abortion at around six weeks of pregnancy, one of most restrictive in U.S. Marchers vowed to keep fighting.

political equality,” Kennedy said. “This right is key to uniting the working class as broader class battles are on the horizon. Millions more women are unemployed today, forced to choose between responsibility for child care under government lockdowns or going to work. “We need to build a powerful work-

ing-class movement that breaks from the capitalist rulers’ parties and forms our own party, a labor party, to fight for women’s rights and for all those exploited and oppressed by capital.”

Jeff Pike in Austin, Texas, contributed to this article.

Workers give bosses’ ‘blood money’ bribes to build SWP

As bosses everywhere try to boost their competitive edge and profits at the expense of workers, they sometimes feel compelled to hand out some bribes, hoping to buy workers’ acquiescence. Socialist Workers Party members call this “blood money” — production, attendance, safety, holiday and other “bonuses” that bosses offer as they try to get workers to accept speedup, low pay and unsafe conditions. Turning these attempted bribes into contributions to the SWP helps build a working-class movement that can fight these attacks.

“We sent six checks from here, blood money from Walmart in their quarterly attempt to bribe us to accept without protest the worsening conditions being imposed on workers,” Jacquie Henderson wrote June 9 from Louisville, Kentucky. “The wide range of sums received, even among us six, is part of their system of enticement and punishment, as they try to increase competition and undermine solidarity.”

“Enclosed is a check for \$248, the amount, after taxes, of a ‘MyShare’ bonus I recently got from Walmart,” wrote Chuck Guerra from Miami June 4. “It turns out that only some employees, not including me, got the raise the company promised.”

The bosses “think throwing a little money our way will ease the pain of getting a smaller weekly paycheck,” Guerra said. “I would rather see that money go to strengthening a party that encourages workers to organize into a union so we can fight collectively for higher wages and regular work hours across the board.”

Also from Miami, Anthony Dutrow sent a check for \$393.43. Dutrow wrote that in the past six months Walmart bosses have intensified work for cashiers. “No breaks, or breaks so late they tack it onto lunch. And it’s no better for the customers, often standing more than an hour in endless lines stretching back through the store. Walmart bosses make it tough for workers on both sides of the register,” he said.

You too can make the best use of any bribe from the bosses by donating it to the Socialist Workers Party at 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

— ROY LANDERSEN

THE MILITANT

Working-class road to fight crime and cop violence

Millions protested in towns and cities across the country last year against killing of George Floyd, cop brutality. ‘Militant’ explains that the only way to take on anti-social crime is through mobilizing to fight against capitalist oppression and exploitation.

AP photo
Gloria Richardson led 1964 Maryland Black rights protests that built solidarity, cut crime.

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

SWP campaigns in coalfields

Continued from front page the UMWA picket line” and that they needed to meet her father.

So the team visited Earl Cole, a union miner for more than 40 years, in Coulterville. He was pleased to hear reports about the strike at Warrior Met and other union battles taking place today. “I know what these guys are going through, when we were on strike in the ’90s, it was rough. But sometimes it’s the only way to win.”

Hawkins described concessions forced on the miners at Warrior Met when the company declared bankruptcy in 2016. Cole said it was the same at companies he had worked for where retirees faced the loss of health care provisions and then their pensions.

“It’s going to take a mass movement of workers and farmers to take power to run things in our class interests,” Hawkins said. Cole was interested in reading more about how to make that possible and got a *Militant* subscription.

At the shift change at the M-Class #1 Mine, a woman dropping her husband off at work got a subscription, eight miners got single copies of the *Militant* and one got the pamphlet, *The 1985-86 Hormel Meat-Packers Strike in Austin, Minnesota*.



BY DEBORAH LIATOS

SAN YSIDRO, Calif. — “We are for fighting for amnesty for undocumented workers in the U.S. so these workers can be in a better position to fight for their rights,” Dennis Richter, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor, told Liliana Garcia, an unemployed in-home care worker, at her doorstep here June 11. “It would lessen the ability of the bosses to divide workers in their effort to drive all our wages and working conditions down.”

“It should be equal for everyone at work,” Garcia said. “I’m for amnesty but not for letting in delinquents,” a view ex-

SWP to host Int’l Active Workers Conference in Ohio July 22-24

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The Socialist Workers Party is hosting an International Active Workers Conference at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio, July 22-24. As COVID restrictions are being lifted, this is the first time in nearly two years the party has been able to host a gathering of this kind.

There will be talks by leaders of the Socialist Workers Party on key questions facing working people today; classes on lessons from the history of the labor and communist movement, and the example of the Cuban Revolution; a panel presentation featuring SWP and Communist League election candidates; and plenty of time for informal discussion with conference participants

and evening socials.

The conference takes place as the economy has picked up and more workers are getting back to work. Some strikes and union-organizing drives have broken out, an indication that growing numbers are looking for a way to stand up to attacks by bosses as they seek to shift the burden of their crisis onto the backs of workers and farmers. Plans will be made at the conference for participants to join in campaigning teams and to bring solidarity to striking workers.

If you are interested in being part of building a revolutionary working-class party and would like to discuss attending the conference, contact the SWP or the Communist League branch nearest you listed on page 8.



Militant/Deborah Liatos

Dennis Richter, SWP candidate for California governor, talks to unemployed home care worker Liliana Garcia in San Ysidro June 11 about amnesty for undocumented workers living in U.S.

pressed by some of the working people Richter and SWP campaigners spoke to during a three-day team to expand the party’s reach near the Mexico border.

“We’re for working people in the U.S. giving solidarity to the struggles by those in Mexico and other countries who face the same things we do — lower wages and higher prices,” Richter responded. “In Guatemala, where Vice President Kamala Harris just went, workers need jobs too, jobs that pay enough to live on. We are for cost-of-living increases to offset every rise in prices.”

“Prices are increasing in Tijuana, too,” Garcia said. Many workers reside in Tijuana because it is cheaper to live on the Mexican side of the border but work in the U.S. where wages are relatively higher. People from both countries also go back and forth to shop, making it the busiest borderland crossing in the Western Hemisphere.

Several people SWP campaigners spoke to pointed out that U.S. authorities have drastically restricted border crossings. Now “there is only one walk-in entrance to and from Mexico,” which can take up to six hours, Garcia said.

Richter met a transit worker in San Ysidro who told him that having a union meant he and his co-workers had a way to stand up to bosses when they try to increase workloads or press workers to work in unsafe conditions.

“Workers need to fight for control of conditions on the job,” Richter said. The transit worker got a copy of *In Defense of the US Working Class* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters.

The team to the San Diego area sold nine subscriptions and seven books by SWP leaders and other revolutionaries. These publications explain why the rule of the capitalist class is the root of the problem workers face and what we can do to build a movement to bring a workers and farmers government to power.

Cuban Revolution

Rebecca Williamson, SWP candidate for City Council in Seattle, reports that one of her Walmart co-workers, Hadya Ahmade, bought a subscription to the

Militant. Originally from Afghanistan, Ahmade also picked up *The Long View of History* by George Novack, *Women’s Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* by Thomas Sankara, and *Making History: Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces*, all in Farsi. “It’s amazing seeing books here in Persian. I like strong books for women and history,” she said, adding that she also wanted “to learn about the revolution in Cuba.”

Mary Martin from Twin Cities reports that June 11-13 efforts boosted the campaign to get Doug Nelson, SWP candidate for mayor of Minneapolis, on the ballot. Campaigners now have 427 signatures toward their goal of 700 and signed up six new *Militant* subscribers.

To join campaigning with SWP candidates, subscribe to the *Militant* and get books on revolutionary working-class politics, or to contribute to the Militant Fighting Fund, see the directory on page 8. Or visit themilitant.com to purchase a subscription and contribute online.

‘Let migrant workers return to New Zealand!’



Militant/Felicity Coggan

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — “They are us. They belong here. Bring them back!” Unite Union Co-president Tina Barnett told a rally organized by the Federation of Aotearoa Migrants here June 5. Over 800 people marched to demand border restrictions be lifted to allow immigrant workers and their families to return to New Zealand.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the government has closed the border to essentially all but citizens or permanent residents, stranding 19,000 workers with temporary work visas and their families who happened to be overseas at the time. “I haven’t seen my wife for 16 months,” said Nitish Chopra, whose wife is stranded in India.

Marchers, who included participants from Christchurch, Wellington, Tauranga and Rotorua, chanted “Let us stay!” and “When migrants rights are under attack, stand up, fight back!” They demanded the government create genuine pathways to residency, for an amnesty for those who “overstay” their visa, and for an end to visas that tie immigrants to jobs with just one employer.

— FELICITY COGGAN

Campaign to expand reach of ‘Militant,’ books, fund
April 24 - June 29 (week seven)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	received
UNITED STATES						
Albany	80	57	80	53	\$8,000	\$4,332
Atlanta	80	65	80	62	\$11,000	\$8,859
Chicago*	115	89	115	84	\$13,600	\$11,238
Dallas*	45	44	40	35	\$3,000	\$2,540
Lincoln	15	10	15	9	\$400	\$206
Los Angeles*	105	88	115	109	\$13,250	\$8,275
Louisville	90	70	90	70	\$5,000	\$4,319
Miami	35	20	35	21	\$4,000	\$4,490
N. New Jersey	80	72	80	75	\$6,250	\$5,020
New York*	100	88	120	112	\$16,000	\$12,545
Oakland	90	64	90	66	\$13,000	\$11,582
Philadelphia	30	26	30	27	\$3,500	\$4,035
Pittsburgh	50	42	50	44	\$3,000	\$2,085
Seattle	95	67	95	69	\$12,500	\$8,170
Twin Cities	50	40	50	46	\$4,500	\$3,514
Washington	65	51	65	61	\$6,000	\$5,134
Other						
Total U.S.	1125	893	1150	943	\$123,000	\$96,344
Prisoners	25	35				
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	45	40	45	58	\$4,000	\$1,485
Manchester	40	33	40	29	\$2,000	\$1,880
Total U.K.	85	73	85	87	\$6,000	\$3,365
Canada*	95	73	115	99	\$12,200	\$9,980
New Zealand	30	30	30	23	\$3,500	\$3,450
Australia	30	25	30	21	\$2,000	\$1,940
Total	1,390	1,129	1,445	1,173	\$146,700	\$115,079
SHOULD BE	1,400	1,092	1,400	1,092	\$145,000	\$113,100
*Raised goal						

Democrat-led state gov’ts cut ballot rights of SWP, others

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Democratic Party politicians and their boosters in the liberal media have been posturing as the foremost defenders of the voting rights of working people, but the fact is their only interest is trying to jerry-rig the system to assure they retain power everywhere possible. One of their key goals is to close down ballot access for the Socialist Workers Party and others who aren’t candidates of the bosses’ two major parties.

Millions of workers and farmers, facing worsening working and living conditions, are looking for a new road forward and are increasingly open to alternatives to the Democrats and Republicans. This has made the Democrats — and the Republicans, when it serves their partisan interests — more determined to put roadblocks in the way of working people taking steps toward independent political action. Socialist Workers Party candidates call for working people to build their own party, a labor party, to fight to take political power into our own hands.

Democratic Party-run state legislatures, backed by cooperative court justices, have been imposing increasingly onerous ballot requirements on “third parties.” These include upping filing fees, raising the number of signatures that must be gathered on petitions, and pushing filing deadlines further and further away from the elections — sometimes into the year before!

New York a key offender

In New York state, Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo last year helped push through some of the most restrictive ballot-access laws nationwide. Among other things, he *tripled* the number of signatures required for statewide independent candidates to 45,000, while lowering the requirements for the two main bosses’ parties. These changes were upheld May 13 by U.S. District Court Judge John Koeltl.

“New York now has the third highest number of signatures for a presidential candidate running outside the two major parties,” wrote Richard Winger in his *Ballot Access News*. “New York has the only prohibition on out-of-state circulators in the nation, for minor party petitioning. New York has the shortest petitioning period for general election presidential procedures” and “the third earliest deadline.”

The law also raised from 50,000 to 130,000 the number of votes a third party had to get to retain party ballot status in the next election. As a result, the Libertarian, Green, Independence and Serve America Movement parties lost their ballot access following the election last November. They’ll now have to petition and meet the new, more onerous, requirements to get a candidate on the ballot.

In Delaware, the long-time home of President Joseph Biden, the legislature made it more difficult for a new party to qualify for the ballot, moving the deadline from August to April 1. The new bill requires these parties to chose their nominees a month before the Democrats and Republicans have to announce theirs.

In Nevada, the legislature passed a bill May 31 pushing back to the end of April the deadline for new parties to file. The

law also requires petitioners to get more signatures from all four U.S. House districts in the state. The bill’s sponsor, Sen. Roberta Lange, said these changes were needed to give election officials more time to check the petitions. (And search for excuses to turn them down!)

In Texas, Republican Gov. Gregory Abbott signed legislation May 26 that would force candidates of “minor” parties to pay new “filing fees.” These fees, which candidates running in primary elections had to pay for over 100 years, were struck down in 1972 by the U.S. Supreme Court, which said they amounted to a poll tax, a legacy of Jim Crow segregation.

The new Texas law also requires that candidates running for nomination in third-party conventions must pay a fee to the state before the convention even meets. The Democratic and Republican parties, needless to say, are exempt from this requirement.

“No state ever imposed a filing fee on someone merely seeking to be nominated at a convention” before, wrote Winger.

In a number of races this year, like in California where SWP candidates did manage to get on the ballot, they discovered that state authorities refused to list their party next to their names, instead putting “no party” down.

All these restrictions are aimed at making it as difficult as possible for the working class to chart its own course in politics. This, above all, is what the monied rulers fear — workers taking

Jewish groups denounce plan for gas chamber execution

BY JANET POST

Arizona prison officials have “refurbished” their lethal gas chamber at the Florence state prison and bought the chemicals needed to resume poison gas executions there, using the same hydrogen cyanide employed by the Nazis in Auschwitz during the Holocaust, the *Guardian* newspaper reported May 28.

Jewish organizations in Arizona and worldwide spoke out in outrage following the report. “We remember what gas chambers did to our own people, and to know it’s going on by our own government, it’s horrific,” Janice Friebaum, vice president of the Phoenix Holocaust Association, told KOLD News 13.

The Nazi German government used the same chemicals — known as Zyklon B — at Auschwitz to murder over a million people, overwhelmingly Jews, in what we know today as the Holocaust. Some 100,000 communists and other anti-fascist resistance fighters, Russian prisoners of war, Roma people, and others were also killed there using the gas. “While there can be no doubt about its effectiveness — the Nazis used it to kill millions of innocent Jews — it is that very effectiveness as an instrument of genocide that makes it utterly inappropriate for use by a civilized state,” the American Jewish Committee said June 7.

For the last few years, as drug companies have stopped making injectable drugs used in executions, the rulers have been scrambling to find new drug cocktails or other methods to put people to death. Last November the U.S. Justice Department changed its execution protocols to allow firing squads, electrocu-

New Zealand rally protests military regime in Myanmar



Militant/Annalucia Vermunt

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Some 50 people gathered at Aotea Square here June 13 to protest the brutal military regime’s war against the people of Myanmar since it seized power in a coup Feb. 1. Similar protests were held around the world that weekend to bring attention to the murders, jailings and repression in Myanmar as the meeting of the main imperialist Group of Seven powers took place in the U.K.

“Since 1962 minority rights have been violated in Myanmar. For decades minorities have been persecuted and tortured, but the majority of Burmese did not speak out,” Pastor Jeffrey Pau told protesters. There are 136 ethnic minorities in Myanmar and the rulers try to keep them — including the Bamar majority — divided.

“After the coup the military has been torturing and killing people of the Burmese majority” he said. “We never thought it would happen to us. It has opened our eyes to understand the suffering of ethnic minorities. Even in 2017 when the Rohingya were persecuted the majority did not speak out. Even Aung San Suu Kyi did not speak up. But now we can see, wherever injustice is found we must speak out.”

— ANNALUCIA VERMUNT

steps to fight for their own class interests and for all those who are oppressed and exploited by capital.

But working people will take this

course, and, along the road, break down all the barriers placed in our path by the tiny minority of capitalist families who run the U.S. today.

tion and poison gas if state governments decide to use them.

Besides Arizona, six states — Alabama, California, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma and Wyoming — have gas chambers, though they use lethal injections as a primary method of execution.

In April, Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich announced the state was seeking to execute two death row inmates, Clarence Dixon and Frank Atwood. The use of hydrogen cyanide for Atwood’s execution would be “particularly horrible because Frank’s mother was an Austrian Jew who escaped the Holocaust at the beginning of World War II,” Natman Schaye, with the Arizona Capital Representation Project, told KOLD News 13.

There are 119 inmates on Arizona death row. The state constitution stipulates lethal injection and the gas chamber as the two accepted methods for administering the death penalty. But gruesome botched executions using both methods ended use of the barbaric penalty since 2014.

Capitalist brutality

In 1999 Walter LaGrand, a German national, took 18 minutes to die in the same gas chamber now set for reuse. He suffered an “agonizing choking and gagging death,” according to an eyewitness account at the time published in the *Tucson Citizen*. “He began coughing violently” and for minutes “his head and arms twitched.” The gas chamber hasn’t been used since.

After that state authorities relied on lethal injection. But in 2014 it took almost two hours for Joseph Wood to die,

even though he was given 15 successive doses of a two-drug cocktail. An eyewitness told the press he counted Wood gasp and gulp 660 times. This led since then to a hiatus in use of the death penalty in Arizona.

“This litany of brutality and torture in Arizona shows why the death penalty needs to be abolished,” Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Philadelphia district attorney, told the *Militant* June 13. “The capitalist rulers use it to terrorize and try to intimidate working people, to keep us from organizing and fighting to overturn their criminal system.”

Atlanta: Meeting the Test of Capitalist Crisis and the Pandemic — in Program and Action

- * Going boldly to the working class — Socialist Workers Party 2021 election campaigns
- * The growing divide between the working-class vanguard and the middle-class left and anarchists
- * The Jewish question, Jew-hatred, and stakes in the fight for recognition of Israel and a Palestinian state

Speaker: Steve Clark, National Committee member of the Socialist Workers Party

Saturday, June 26 at 7:30 p.m.

Hilton Garden Inn, Magnolia Room
3437 Bobby Brown Parkway,
Phone (678) 528-7828

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Steelworkers strike Vale mines in Sudbury over safety, health care

MONTREAL — Over 2,400 United Steelworkers union members went on strike against Vale in Sudbury, Ontario, June 1. Brazil-based Vale is a major producer of nickel, copper, cobalt, platinum, gold and silver. The company bought the former Inco mines in 2006.

USW Local 6500 members work in several mines, a mill and a smelter in one of the largest integrated mining complexes in the world. The workers rejected a concession contract by 70% May 31 that the union bargaining committee had recommended.

A central issue for the strikers is the bosses' attempt to abolish health benefits after retirement for new hires. "We figure that with all the stuff we are dealing with here at the smelter, all of the carcinogen substances, that we deserve to have our benefits after retirement," striker Yan Ouellet told CTV News on the picket line June 10. "That's probably when we are gonna use it most."

A new set of concessionary demands by Vale was voted down by 87% on June 14. The union bargaining committee urged workers to vote against, because the new proposal still eliminates retiree health and medical benefits for new hires. "Vale knows it provoked this strike by demanding concessions, yet it continues to attack health benefits," said Local President Nick Larochelle in a USW news release.

Vale bosses are offering only a 4% pay raise over five years, as well as two bonuses — 2,500 Canadian dollars (\$2,060) for working during the COVID pandemic and a CA\$3,500 signing bonus. Striker Vince Patterson told the *Sudbury Star* the bonuses were "insulting hush money."

Another key issue is safety. "Don't ask me to work unsafe while you look the other way because your infrastructure is outdated and you won't spend the money or shut down the process to correct the hazard," Patterson said.

The last strike against Vale lasted a whole year during 2009-2010. The bosses then tried to run the mine with strikebreakers. There was a solidarity march of 5,000 workers and supporters in Sud-

bury March 22, 2010. During five days in May hundreds blocked two entrances to a mine and mill where strikebreakers were working. While the workers pushed back some concessions, the final contract was similar to the one the workers had voted down at the beginning.

Messages of support and contributions can be sent to USW Local 6500, 66 Brady St., Sudbury, ON, P3E 1C8. Email: info@uswsudbury.ca.

— Joe Young

After monthlong strike, Quebec iron ore workers win contract

MONTREAL — After a monthlong strike against ArcelorMittal, 2,500 iron ore miners and processing, rail and office workers in Port-Cartier and Fermont on Quebec's North Shore, members of five United Steelworkers union locals, overwhelmingly ratified a new contract June 8.

ArcelorMittal is the largest steel conglomerate in the world and biggest private employer on Quebec's North Shore. The key issues were wage increases, improved pensions, better working conditions, a measure of respect from the bosses, and higher premiums paid to workers in remote locations like Fermont, in the frigid far north of Quebec. Workers said the bosses had reneged on promises they made in 2017, particularly on health, cleanliness and issues related to work camps and food services, making the unionists more determined to push on these issues today.

"We made gains on several of the issues where our members were demanding improvements," Johanne Proulx, an operator in production in Port-Cartier, said in an email to this *Militant* worker-correspondent. "A wonderful victory for all of us! Now we return to work with a big smile. Solidarity!"

"Including cost-of-living bonuses, the new collective agreement provides for average salary increases of more than 3% per year, as well as average annual increases in pension benefits of 3.75%," Nicolas Lapierre, United Steelworkers coordinator for the North Shore region, said in a statement.

The company abandoned its demand



United Steelworkers Local 6500

Members of United Steelworkers Local 6500 picket Vale's Coleman Mine June 4 near Sudbury, Ontario. Some 2,400 workers went on strike June 1 at company's mines, mill and smelter.

for a punishing 14 days on, 14 days off schedule for railroad employees in Port-Cartier. The northern premium for Fermont workers will increase by more than 90%, to \$1,200 a month by 2024.

In addition, there are two letters of agreement appended to the contract. One provides a bonus of between CA\$1,000 and CA\$1,200 for all workers living in North Shore communities located between Baie-Trinite and Sept-Iles. The other allows the creation of a task force to deal with issues raised by the workers and their union, including conditions at the concentrator at the Mont-Wright facilities and health and safety questions.

During the strike unionists in Fermont, a town of less than 3,000, organized three marches to win support. Steelworkers visited the picket lines in both Fermont and Port-Cartier and donated funds. Over 150 workers, including Unifor members locked out by Shell Canada since last November, attended a May 21 solidarity rally in Longueuil near Montreal.

— Beverly Bernardo

Poultry, pork workers on strike in Quebec reject bosses' pay offer

SAINT-ANSELME, Quebec — "Groceries have gone up 30% but not my wages, we just want to survive," Noel Rouillard, on strike at the Ex-

celdor poultry packinghouse here, told the *Militant* June 6.

Over 500 United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1991-P members walked out May 23, rejecting the bosses' offer of a CA\$1,500 Canadian dollars to CA\$3,000 signing bonus and a raise from CA\$20.71 an hour to CA\$22.51.

"I don't have that much time left to work," Suzanne Pouliot said, "but we're thinking of the younger ones. And that signing bonus is taxable."

Over 1,000 pork slaughterhouse workers have been on strike 30 miles away in Vallee-Jonction against Quebec meatpacking giant Olymel since April 28. Both strikes focus on demands to make up for past concessions squeezed from the workers.

"Olymel was a precedent in 2007," explained Rouillard, when bosses there cut wages by 38%. At Exceldor, "I was getting \$17.40 an hour. I went down to \$16. They abolished the pension plan and we lost two paid holidays. Now we're looking to catch up on wages, we're aiming for \$25."

Nine busloads of Olymel strikers came to reinforce the Exceldor picket line June 2. "We're planning on going to their picket line soon, too," said striker Donald Chabot. "We had a barbecue last Saturday with music and dancing, morale is good."

Talks between the union and Olymel continue at a snail's pace. At Exceldor, talks are stalled.

At both plants strikers told the *Militant* some of the workers are from Guatemala, Mexico and Mauritius, working on two-year exclusive contracts. While some strikers have found other work to get by, those restricted to one employer aren't able to do so.

The bosses hope that will put pressure on these workers to push to end the strike. However, striker Francis Goulet said, "We work together, you make a friend, you gain trust. He translates for others. They tried divide and rule, but it didn't work."

I joined fellow Communist League member Joe Young in bringing solidarity cards and messages from our co-workers — from Walmart and Cargill — to Olymel strikers, signed in several languages, including Polish and Filipino.

Strikers welcome all to their picket lines. Send messages and contributions of support to Syndicat des Travailleurs d'Olymel, Vallee-Jonction, 243 Rue Principale, Vallee-Jonction, QC G0S 3J0 and UFCW 1991-P, 3750 boul. Cremazie Est, Bureau 591, Montreal QC H2A 1B6.

— Katy LeRougetel

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



July 1, 1996

FT. MADISON, Iowa — After seven and a half years in prison, Socialist Workers Party member Mark Curtis left the Iowa State Penitentiary here on June 18. Imprisoned since 1988 on frame-up charges of attempted rape and burglary, Curtis recently won parole to Chicago.

Trade unionists, political activists, family and other supporters traveled from eight states to welcome Curtis, celebrate this victory, and recommit themselves to his continued defense, as Curtis faces new challenges on parole.

Within 72 hours after his release Curtis has to report to his parole officer, to the Chicago police department to register as a sex offender, and to the Iowa state police to give a blood sample for DNA fingerprinting.

Supporters in the Chicago area have reaffirmed their commitment to stand ready to defend him from whatever new violations of his rights may occur.



July 2, 1971

The majority of Americans have believed for some time that they were not getting the full truth about Vietnam. Now the Pentagon papers confirm what many suspected or feared was true, but didn't want to believe. As the full extent of the government's deception sinks in, there will be a significant deepening of antiwar sentiment and a broadening of the antiwar movement to new layers of the population as a result.

The fact that the thieves who misrule this country have fallen out and let slip part of the truth is a result of not relying on them but only on the independent power of the mass mobilization of antiwar sentiment in the streets.

The slogan for immediate withdrawal of all troops from Vietnam is once again confirmed by these events. The job now facing the antiwar movement is to seize the new opportunities these events present.



June 29, 1946

All competent observers are agreed that the American people after July 1 face price rises of as much as 50 percent in the next six to eight months. What gives some pause to the inflationary drive of the Big Business government is the fear of another strike wave for more wages to meet the soaring cost of living.

To prevent big strikes, administration officials are projecting the idea of exacting a new "no-strike" pledge from the union leaders. How the promise of "price control" worked out during the war is well known. Cost-of-living rose more than 50 percent; wages were frozen.

Workers must launch an all-out fighting struggle to keep wages abreast with price rises. A sliding scale of wages, under a fixed minimum, which is automatically raised to meet every increase in the cost of living should be included in all union contracts.

Cost-of-living protection

Continued from front page

In the past year. They’ve gone up even more for the last seven weeks.

More price rises are on the horizon, as manufacturers and other bosses report their costs of production hit a record high in May. This includes hikes in raw materials and transportation. Steel, glass, plastic, paper and leather all went up. Sea shipping rates from Asia have quadrupled for many goods.

Food is going up. Hormel Foods announced price hikes on ground turkey, peanut butter and Spam. Retired workers are hit especially hard. Blind to these conditions, President Joseph Biden and the Federal Reserve both claim there is nothing to worry about, saying the rise in inflation is just a blip.

For some capitalists the price increases are a bonanza. Inflation at the high end of the housing market is providing a boon for property speculators. Two condos on New York City’s Billionaires’ Row were bundled and sold together for \$157.5 million this month, one of the most expensive residential transactions of all time in the city.

Like the owners of other food delivery companies, bosses at DoorDash call their workers “independent contractors,” shutting them out of benefits, the minimum wage, overtime pay and paid sick leave, at a time the bosses’ profits are soaring. CEO Tony Xu was compensated \$414 million for the last year.

Workers fight for escalator clauses

Workers need to organize and use our unions to fight against the ravages of inflation, including for a sliding scale of hours and wages. There are valuable lessons from past labor struggles when our class fought for and won automatic cost-of-living-adjustments, also known as escalator clauses, in contracts to protect our wages from being stripped of their buying power.

The first escalator clauses were won by workers in major industries in the 1940s, building on the explosive wave of labor battles that built the CIO before

the second imperialist world war. During the 1945-46 postwar strike wave, workers sought to claw back some of what bosses had taken from them during the war. The Franklin D. Roosevelt government had imposed a wartime wage freeze, which was supported by most labor officials who backed Washington’s war aims. This freeze supposedly included a freeze on prices, but the bosses forced price increases through and workers’ living costs jumped 30%!

Workers at General Motors demanded an escalator clause in their contract in 1948. The bosses gave in just 72 hours before workers were due to strike. Two years earlier some 225,000 United Auto Workers members at GM had struck for 113 days to win substantial pay hikes, paid vacation and other gains. “During the 12-year inflationary period from 1948 to 1960, the GM escalator clause brought regular automatic wage increases,” writes Art Preis in *Labor’s Giant Step, The First Twenty Years of the CIO: 1936-55*, an invaluable book on working-class history.

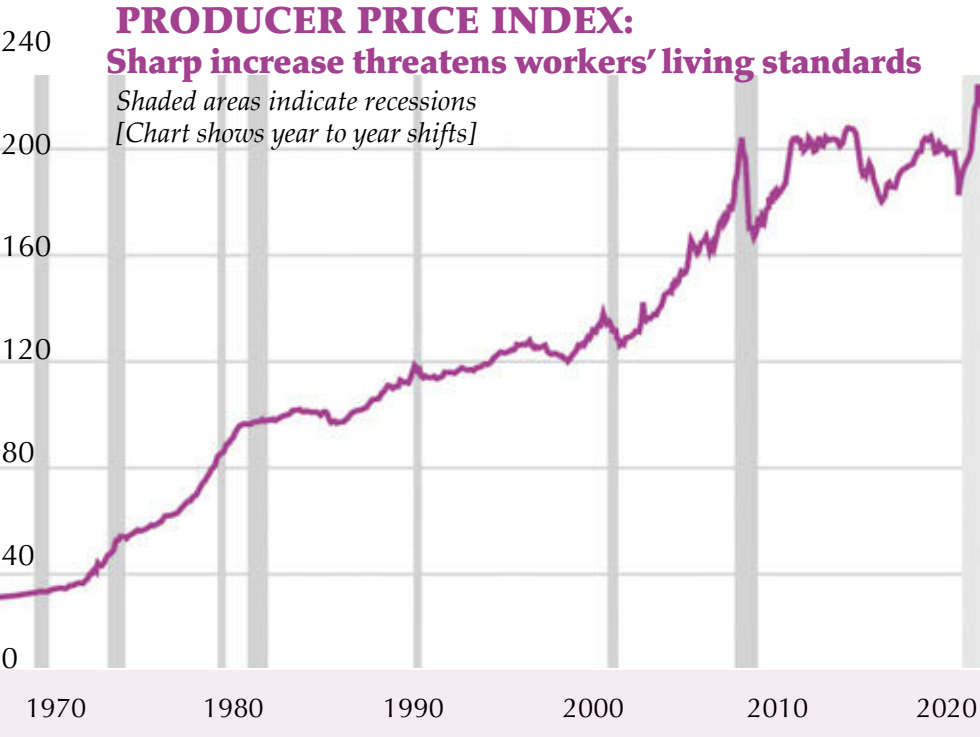
As profit rates began falling in the 1970s, the employers launched an offensive against working people. Escalator clauses were a special target of their assaults.

In 1976 some 6 million workers had cost-of-living adjustment clauses in their contracts, but by 1995 that figure had been driven down to 1.2 million. Not only did real wages decline from the early ’70s onwards, but bosses sought outright hourly wage cuts. All too often, our union officials refused to organize workers to use our union power to fight these assaults and mobilize widespread solidarity. Today COLA clauses are largely limited to workers in some public sector jobs.

We need to put escalator clauses with teeth back on labor’s banner!

Price committees

Bosses and their media peddle the myth that when workers fight and win higher wages, it means higher prices.



Graph shows rising basic costs for capitalist production, including raw materials, transportation. May marked largest year-on-year increase on record, 6.6%. Index also reflects possibility of inflation, which hits working people hardest, as bosses seek to pass on higher costs to consumers.

But that isn’t true. It’s part of the fight of our class to wrench more of the fruit of what our labor produces away from the boss class, which produces nothing. If they try and respond by jacking up prices, this can be fought.

In the 1970s, skyrocketing inflation led to public protests, many led by housewives. These protests won widespread working-class support and helped push back some price increases. “Workers can defend ourselves from the twin scourges of unemployment and inflation by coming together and using our unions to fight against the bosses,” Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New Jersey governor, told the *Militant*.

“We need to fight for a sliding scale of hours — 30 hours work for 40 hours pay — to share the available work around and get millions back to work, with no cut in pay. And fight for a sliding scale of pay, escalator clauses, that guarantee when prices go up our wages automatically match the increase.”

One of the anti-working-class moves by the administration of Democratic President Bill Clinton was to grant a

profit bonanza to the bosses by rejiggering the Consumer Price Index in a way that substantially reduced official price figures. That’s one of the key reasons that when prices go up, our pensions and Social Security don’t go up the same amount!

“Every administration — Democratic and Republican alike — acts to defend the bosses’ interests and tries to divide and weaken the workers’ movement,” Kuniansky said. “Workers need to fight for committees on prices made up of our trade unions, farmers, housewives and other consumers. Price committees would force open the bosses’ books, expose their price gouging, reveal the true extent of inflation and demand control over the fixing of prices. Workers would learn we are capable of running society ourselves in the interests of all those exploited and oppressed by capital.

“Working people are transformed in struggle,” Kuniansky said. “We will organize in our millions to build our own party, a labor party, to fight to unseat the ruling capitalist families and take political power into our own hands.”

Steelworkers organize expanded strike picket, rally at ATI

Continued from front page

workers pay more for health insurance and wants to jack it up even more for new hires, and cut retirement benefits.

ATI President and CEO Robert Wetherbee boasted in April that “our first quarter financial results exceeded expectations.” He said that the company’s progress, despite what it claims are net losses, is due to a recovery in jet engine production and “aggressive 2020 cost cutting actions.” With the opening of new nonunion plants, less than 10% of ATI workers are in the union today. ATI says it wants to close or reduce other unionized plants in the near future.

Steelworkers from ATI plants in nearby Brackenridge, Latrobe, and Washington, Pennsylvania, as well as in Louisville, Ohio, joined the expanded action. There were also delegations from the United Mine Workers, American Postal Workers Union, Greater Westmoreland County Labor Council, Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council and other unions.

Walmart workers from two Pittsburgh-area stores brought cards expressing solidarity signed by more than

20 co-workers.

“We can’t reach agreement,” ATI spokesperson Natalie Gillespie said in reply to questions from the *Militant* June 16, “without addressing the cost of health care.” ATI is demanding a cap on what it pays out for health insurance. The union says this will result in workers having to pay high premiums.

“It’s not just about the health care premiums. It’s about retirees’ health care, it’s about new hires’ health care, and it’s about contributions to pensions,” Keith Beavers, United Steelworkers Local 1138 president, told the rally.

Beavers urged participants to stay on the picket line after the rally and make their presence known as supervisors and replacement workers ATI has hired to try and break the strike came and left during the shift change.

Don Thomas, a Black worker with 25 years in the Brackenridge plant, was trying to get the attention of Black workers among those in the vans carrying strikebreakers. “We saw the same thing in 2015 during the lockout,” he told the *Militant*, referring to their last contract fight. “They brought up African Ameri-

Thousands protest killing of Muslim family in Canada

BY STEVE PENNER

MONTREAL — Less than a week after the killing of four members of Salman and Madiha Afzaal’s family in London, Ontario, June 6, thousands of people in that city of some 400,000 joined actions to show their opposition to violent attacks against Muslims.

Five members of the family, originally from Pakistan, were out for a walk. As they waited to cross an intersection a man drove a pickup truck onto the curb and hit them, killing four — husband and wife Salman and Madiha; their 15-year-old daughter, Yumna Salman; and Mr. Afzaal’s mother, Talat Afzaal. Fayeze, the couple’s 9-year-old son, survived his injuries and is being cared for by family members.

Nathaniel Veltman, 20, is charged with four counts of first-degree murder and one of attempted murder. Cops say Veltman’s attack was premeditated and targeted the Afzaal’s because they were Muslim. Minutes after hitting the family, Veltman stopped nearby and told a taxi driver to call the police because he had killed somebody. The driver did so and told other drivers that Veltman had a swastika on his chest and the back of his shirt, reported CTV News.

“London multifaiith march to end racism and Islamophobia” read a banner at the June 11 march from the spot where the killings took place to the London Muslim Mosque.

“We stand with our Muslim neighbors,” Anne Beattie-Stokes, a member of White Oaks United Church, told the *London Free Press* at the action. People attended the protest “from every single community in London.” Abdullah Al Jarad, a 19-year-old college student, told Yahoo News.

The following day thousands again turned out for the public part of the family’s funeral. Family and friends from abroad, including from Pakistan, were among the mourners.

Canada’s capitalist rulers, including Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Ontario Premier Douglas Ford,



“We stand with our Muslim neighbors,” Anne Beattie-Stokes said at June 11 London, Ontario, protest against the killing of Afzaal family members, originally from Pakistan. Killer wearing swastika drove into them June 6.

called Veltman’s action a terrorist attack. On June 14 Veltman was charged with additional crimes under the Anti-Terrorist Act.

Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland applauded the new charges. “It is important for us to identify the terrible threat that white supremacy poses to Canada,” she said.

“Canada is class-divided between the ruling rich and the vast majority who are working people,” said Beverly Bernardo, Communist League candidate for mayor of Montreal, in a June 9 state-

ment. The government “aims to mask this reality and tar working people as anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant and racist who need to be brought to order by the capitalist state.”

Bosses seek to divide workers

Bernardo condemned the killings and pointed to the solidarity of those who had joined protests, as thousands also did in 2017 following a gunman’s killing of six people at a Quebec mosque.

“In their drive for profits, the rulers seek to deepen divisions among work-

ing people along religious, cultural, language or racial lines, to weaken our capacity to unite and fight back,” Bernardo said.

The CL candidate pointed out that Quebec’s discriminatory Law 21 targets “Muslim women, Jews and all other state employees wearing religious symbols.” Bernardo urged working people to fight for its repeal as well as the government’s anti-terrorism and anti-hate laws, which “will inevitably be used to close political space for working people, our unions, and political organizations.” Under the pretext of fighting terrorism, these laws make it easier for cops to spy on and frame up working people.

At a June 9 action in downtown Montreal, called to protest the killings of the Afzaal family, speakers also condemned recent attacks against Asians and Jews.

In the U.S., Germany and the U.K., Jew-hating attacks rose during the recent 4,000-rockets assault on citizens in Israel by Hamas, the reactionary ruling party in Gaza, and the military response by the Israeli government. Thugs waving Palestinian flags threw fireworks at bystanders in New York’s diamond district where some stores are Jewish-owned.

Volvo workers strike over wages, divisive two-tier

Continued from front page

The union organizes around-the-clock picket duty at five gates, spirited and loud. Many passersby honk and give the thumbs-up.

A key issue in the strike is workers’ desire to get rid of the multiple wage tiers that the company uses to keep workers divided and drive down wages. Under the current contract, new hires make \$16.77 an hour while a “core group” of workers with the most years in the plant make \$27.47.

“My son is a new hire, with 2½ years in the plant. Under the tentative agreement, he will never make top pay,” Vicky White, with seven years at Volvo, told the *Militant*. “I’m fighting for my friends in the ‘core group’ and my husband who is a retiree. I’m fighting for everyone.”

Debra Orren, with 17 years, said she lost \$7 an hour under the 2008 contract. “I was laid off for several years and it took until the end of the 2016 contract to get the money back.”

This worker-correspondent met Carolyn Durham and other UAW Local 2069 members in the kitchen at the union hall where they were preparing lunch for the picket shift change.

Several were part of a group of women who fought their way into the plant in 1993. “There was a class-action suit that won. We heard about it and said ‘Great!’ Many of us were single mothers. Well, we liked our independence. We stuck around,” Durham said. She has 28 years at the New River Valley plant and now does final checks before trucks are test driven.

Women workers strengthen union

With the 1,100 new jobs at the plant since the last union contract was adopted in 2016, workers estimate the plant is now 40% female. Women and men working together on the job and in this contract fight strengthens the union.

“My retirement will be \$1,200 a month, but I’ll end up with only \$300, because insurance payments for two people amount to \$900 each month,” Durham said. “The strikes going on today are important,” she added when she saw a *Militant* article about the strike by Alabama coal miners at Warrior Met. “Our fight helps the mineworkers.”

The Volvo strike takes place as bosses are expanding the plant, budgeting \$400 million for technology upgrades and other

preparations for building electric-powered trucks — a hot-selling item in the trucking industry.

According to FTR Intel quarterly outlook, the forecast for demand of trucks and trailers is “record-breaking,” despite current parts shortages. From 20% to 40% of auto components are being delivered late or in insufficient quantities.

Volvo resumed negotiations June 15. Matt Blondino, president of the local, told the *Southwest Times* that the union will remain on strike until an agreement is reached and until it’s ratified by union members. “Going forward we will not be coming off the line until that is done, so whatever that takes, we will be there.”

Glova Scott and this worker-correspondent brought \$41 for the strikers and 15 signatures on a solidarity card from workers at the Walmart where we work. Strikers on the picket line and at the union hall appreciated the support. Send solidarity messages to UAW Local 2069, P.O. Box 306, Dublin, VA 24084 or UAWLocal2069@gmail.com.

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As revolution advanced, Cuban peasants' lives were transformed

The Spanish edition of Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos and Yolanda Ferrer, three leaders of the Federation of Cuban Women, is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for June. Their interviews explain how the revolution as it progressed transformed the lives of workers and peasants and the role of women before and after the Jan. 1, 1959, popular triumph over the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship. De los Santos said that the Second Front — the liberated zone established near Santiago as the Rebel Army advanced in 1958 — set a precedent for the workers and farmers government that followed. The extract is from the chapter "It Gave Us a Sense of Worth." Copyright © 2012 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY ASELA DE LOS SANTOS

It was in the Sierra Maestra that preparations began on a large scale to teach literacy to Rebel Army combatants. It was in the Sierra Maestra that Fidel [Castro] made sure teachers were assigned to all the tiny rural schools that had been closed by the tyranny.

From the moment the Second Front was established, Raúl [Castro] had the

same concern. He issued instructions stating that in all the camps, combatants who were illiterate had to be taught how to read and write. And he ordered the reopening of every small rural school that had been closed because of the war.

Carrying this out was the assignment I was given when I arrived in August.

Within the first months of the establishment of the Second Front, a wide swath of territory was liberated. After the defeat of Batista's "encircle and annihilate offensive" by early August, those areas were largely free of Batista's ground forces, making it possible to open more than four hundred small schools, old and new. This was also due to Raúl's organizational capacities and to his insistence — whatever the demands of war — that there would be no neglect of something so important to the lives of the fighters and children as education. ...

No one in the Rebel Army could confiscate anything from the peasants. Everything was bought and paid for. The peasants were respected. That was part of the ethical standard set by the Rebel Army. So Raúl created a group to manage finances, to manage the small amount of economic resources we had at the beginning. Out of this came a financial plan to support the expanding war.

There were also sugar plantations and mills in the area governed by the Second Front. Fidel, as commander in chief in the Sierra, ordered that for each 250-pound bag of sugar produced, the plantations had to pay 10 centavos to the movement in that territory. ...

We organized hospitals and medical units. Medicine was supplied by the July 26 Movement in the cities. These units even performed surgery.

The Health Department provided health care to the population, peasants and combatants, without distinction, including wounded enemy soldiers.

For the most part, people living in the area of the Second Front had never had the chance to see a doctor before. Many had that opportunity only when the Sec-



Working people and Rebel Army fighters line up at field hospital in Sierra Maestra, Cuba, 1958. Revolutionary forces' policy was to treat peasants, combatants, wounded enemy soldiers without distinction.

ond Front was established. For the first time they were treated like human beings.

That was the Health Department.

Another department was Propaganda. It was important politically, because we had a radio station that could be heard throughout the country. It reached as far as Venezuela. Through its transmitters, the radio station broadcast news and advanced the struggle. It refuted all the lies being spread to demoralize the Rebel Army and the people. It was also a way of communicating with the other fronts.

Then there was the Justice Department. It performed marriages and settled disputes among people in the area. It also regulated legal matters in the camps. There were even trials for misconduct. Some combatants were expelled from the Rebel Army. Discipline and order reigned in the life of the camps.

And finally there was the Education Department.

In *History Will Absolve Me*, Fidel denounced the existence in Cuba of widespread illiteracy. Illiteracy is a tool in the hands of the exploiters. If you are ignorant, if you don't know how to read or write, you're not free. Not knowing even how to sign your name makes people feel inferior.

The rural population in the Second Front was poor, exploited, hungry.

Many young people joined the Rebel Army, so the number of combatants who were illiterate grew. And this was a challenge.

That's how the education effort started. Raúl issued orders that we teach all these young combatants to read and write. ...

So we set about teaching both Rebel Army combatants who were illiterate and school-age children. When peasants heard and saw what we were doing, they became interested. They asked about it. We told them that if they found the facilities, it was possible to organize small schools. So people started to look for sites, to find chairs, and to organize schools. ...

So the campesinos helped open schools in locations they themselves found. After the triumph of the revolution, those new little schools remained.

In wartime you can sometimes achieve things that in normal times can't be done so easily. In the Second Front, change was in the air. There was very little resistance there.

It's true that in the old rural schools peasants often kept their children back. There was a high rate of absenteeism. One reason was that children went to work in the fields with their parents to sustain family income. There were other reasons also: distances that were too long, lack of shoes and clothing, and health problems.

But the new political motivation, the new hope, had a decisive influence not only on the willingness to build little schoolhouses, to make benches and improvise blackboards, but also on school attendance. This despite the danger from bombing runs by the dictatorship, which at times directly targeted civilians in murderous raids. ...

A peasant congress was held in September 1958. Questions of the future were discussed, a future that was imminent — things like the right to land, the guarantee that the land belonged to those who worked it. In fact, following the triumph of the revolution, one of the first acts was the agrarian reform. More than 100,000 peasant families received titles to the land they worked.

June
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Pathfinder Readers Club Specials

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Vaccination in interests of all workers

Continued from front page

years, if ever. It's an anti-working-class outrage and proves once again that the capitalist ruling families are morally unqualified to rule."

Pfizer reported in May that they expect to rake in at least \$26 billion off their vaccine this year. Pfizer bosses predict the profit margin on the drug's sales would be in the high 20% range. Company chairman and CEO Albert Bourla boasted he was "extremely proud" of the way the company has begun 2021.

Pfizer already holds the exclusive patent on the highest-selling drug ever — the cholesterol-lowering drug Lipitor — which has generated some \$125 billion since it was first marketed. Pfizer fought for years to prevent generic, and less expensive, versions of the drug from being produced. When Watson Pharmaceuticals' generic version was finally released, Pfizer got a cut of its profits on every pill.

Pfizer, Moderna and the other capitalist pharmaceutical companies have patented their vaccines, preventing manufacture and distribution of them worldwide. While this helps assure monopoly profits, it sentences millions to disease and death.

In the development of vaccines for past pandemic scourges, some medical researchers have refused to patent their discoveries, making them available for all. Jonas Salk developed the first vaccine for polio. When he was asked who owned the patent, he replied, "Well, the people, I would say. There is no patent. Could you patent the sun?"

The U.S. government helps bosses reap maximum profits, even if it puts people at risk. The vaccine roll-out by Johnson & Johnson has been marked by neglect for care and safety in production, forcing the company to destroy millions of doses. At the beginning of June when millions of doses were set to expire and would have to be destroyed, the U.S. government stepped in with a helping hand, and simply extended the vaccines' expiration date by six weeks.

"Our unions need to fight for workers control of production. This is the only way we can gain the power to prevent the bosses' disregard for our safety and to expose their business secrets and take charge ourselves of how things are made," Calero said. "Nothing could be more important in today's pandemic."

Imperialist powers seize vaccines

Pfizer's Bourla claims they're doing everything possible to make their vaccine available worldwide. "We share the mission of COVAX and are proud to work together so that developing countries have the same access as the rest of the world," he said in January.

But this flies in the face of what they've actually

done. They've put the bulk of their efforts into driving highly profitable sales agreements with the rulers in the U.S., U.K., other imperialist governments and with EU officials. Their claim of world humanitarianism is "one of the great public relations triumphs of recent corporate history," Richard Kozul-Wright, a director of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, told the *New York Times*.

COVAX is a project of the World Health Organization, backed by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and funds from a number of imperialist governments. It promises to get vaccines out to 190 countries, including 92 it says are "lower income." However, they have had difficulty finding enough available doses to make a serious dent. Most approved vaccines have already been bought up, including big hunks of future production. By March, the rulers in Washington, for instance, had bought up doses for 750 million people — three times the country's adult population. COVAX says it hopes to distribute 1.3 billion doses to the 92 developing countries by the end of 2021, but this will leave the vast majority of people unprotected.

Washington has made it a condition that in donating vaccines to COVAX, the U.S. rulers must have final say over what countries could receive them, concerned more about its political and economic sway than arresting the pandemic.

By mid-February, 75% of all vaccinations had been administered in just 10 countries, a substantial proportion in the U.S., while 2.5 billion people in 130 countries worldwide had not received a single dose.

Two different class approaches

"There are two different class approaches to the vaccination effort today," Calero said. "One is based on ensuring the profits of the ruling capitalist families in the imperialist countries. The other is advanced by the Cuban people and their socialist revolution, which concentrates the country's social resources to develop and administer vaccines to every single person in the country and to the peoples of any country who ask.

"Despite the U.S. rulers' punishing economic war against the Cuban people, they've developed their own vaccine," he said. "As of June 13, over 2 million Cubans have gotten at least their first shot.

"Cuba's medical and scientific accomplishments are only possible because working people there made a revolution, taking power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers and their imperialist backers in Washington," Calero said. "They provide an example of the road forward for working people everywhere."

30,000 health care workers strike in New Zealand

BY FELICITY COGGAN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Some 30,000 nurses, midwives and other health workers walked off the job in a nationwide eight-hour strike June 9, after overwhelmingly rejecting the government's latest contract offer. The nurses work in public hospitals and outpatient services, the main provider of such care in New Zealand. Government-employed nurses in COVID vaccination centers also joined the strike.

"Just get more staff and stop asking people to do overtime when they're already tired," Tania, a dialysis nurse who requested to use only her first name, told the *Militant* at a march of 2,500 here. The need for more staff was a central demand at marches and rallies across New Zealand.

During her 40 years as a nurse, "it's never been harder, it's never been so unsafe, it's never been so poorly paid," emergency department nurse Anne Daniels told a rally in Dunedin. Her department has 26 beds, but regularly had 40 to 50 patients. "They look at me every time I run past, wanting to

be helped and we can't do it. We can't give people the care they deserve."

Their union, the New Zealand Nurses Organisation, is demanding a 17% pay increase, five extra days of sick leave and implementation of safe staffing protocols that the government had agreed to after their last strike in 2018.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has said the pay claim is unaffordable. The government offered nurses only a 1.38% raise, the union said, and a proposed one-time lump sum bonus of 4,000 New Zealand dollars (\$2,840) that was actually just part of back pay nurses are set to receive on a previous claim.

Many nurses have left New Zealand, moving to higher paid jobs in Australia, to other occupations, or just retiring. The union's wage demand would almost close the gap in pay rates between nurses in New Zealand and Australia.

Marchers here, many wearing purple, the union's color, carried signs saying, "Stand with us," "Safe staffing saves lives" and "Applause does not pay the bills," referring to government rhetoric about essential workers. Marchers chanted, "What's disgusting? Unsafe staffing!"

Recently the government announced it was imposing a pay freeze on public sector workers. This doesn't effect the nurses, because their negotiations began last July, but strikers say the government is using it to press to limit the pay raise. "What's outrageous? Freezing wages!" chanted those demonstrating.

Victory over prison ban

Continued from front page

peared the previous week in English.

After *Militant* attorney David Goldstein filed an appeal and working people in the region began sending in letters protesting this violation of the Bill of Rights, Anna Levitt, senior attorney of operations at the Indiana Department of Correction, overturned the ban.

"I agree with you that censoring the 'images of guns' is too broad in the context of safety and security of our IDOC facilities," Levitt wrote to Goldstein. "I believe there is historical significance to the images your newspaper contains, and I will be instructing Wabash Valley Correctional Facility to release the censored newspaper to Offender Johnson."

Levitt also said that some prison regulations will be rewritten. "A forthcoming Executive Directive will modify the Offender Correspondence Policy to adjust the language to better reflect our intentions," she wrote. "We intend to restrict censorship only to images that depict violence against persons and animals."

Johnson is a leader of the New Afrikan Black Panther Party. The *Militant* has now fought successfully to reverse the impoundment of his subscription three times over the past three years.

"Amnesty International welcomes the reversal of this decision," Justin Mazzola, a researcher for the organization, told the *Militant* June 10. "Exclusions such as these without a sufficient demonstration of security risk violates incarcerated individuals' right to freedom of expression and the U.N. standards on the treatment of prisoners. Having connection to and knowledge of current events and the outside world is crucial for those who will one day be released."

"I've seen this stuff going on for years and years," George Blue said by phone from Michigan City, Indiana, June 14. "There should be an end to it." Blue began reading the *Militant* in prison in the late 1950s. While in prison in the 1970s, Blue waged a successful fight to be able to continue getting it. While some institutions aren't banning papers, "many more go ahead and take the paper away from prisoners, thinking maybe the guy won't say anything about it. That's ridiculous."

"The victory in Indiana is an important part of the fight to defend the right of workers behind bars to read whatever they want," said *Militant* editor John Studer, "and to form their own opinions about what road forward to deal with the deepening capitalist economic and social crisis working people face today."

The decision follows the overturn of another ban on five issues of the paper by the Florida Department of Corrections last month.

Both sets of impoundments attacked the right of the *Militant* to present its political point of view.

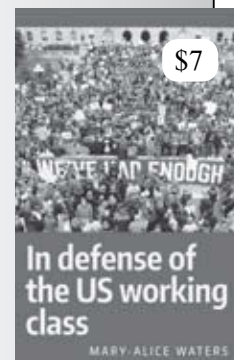
"We'll fight to reverse any attempts to ban the *Militant* for our subscribers behind bars and join with all other defenders of prisoners' rights in doing so," Studer said.

Along with Amnesty International, the National Lawyers Guild, PEN America, Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, Florida Press Association, American Civil Liberties Union of Florida, union officials and many others have spoken out against prison officials' bans of the *Militant* over the years.

In Defense of the US Working Class

by Mary-Alice Waters

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