

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuban people, government
respond to hotel disaster in Havana
— PAGE 4

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 86/NO. 20 MAY 23, 2022

'Militant' builds opposition to Moscow's war, wins readers

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The stakes for working people in defeating Moscow's invasion of Ukraine are at the center of discussions Socialist Workers Party members and supporters are having as they head into the final days of the international drive to win new readers to the *Militant*, books by revolutionary working-class leaders and contributions to the Militant Fighting Fund.

Communist League campaigners Ned Dmytryshyn and Katy LeRougetel showed health care worker Melanie Serre a photo in the *Militant* of a crowd in Dnipro, Ukraine, gathered in a subway station at a "Life will win" concert, held to celebrate the defense of the country's independence. The CL campaigners met Serre at her doorstep in East Vancouver, British Columbia, May 7.

LeRougetel pointed out that working people in Ukraine resisting Moscow's war, like workers fighting to defend their wages, conditions and rights in Canada, face the same crisis of capitalist rule.

Serre told the CL campaigners she
Continued on page 3

Moscow out of Ukraine now! Defend Ukraine independence!

For solidarity of workers in Ukraine, Russia against Putin's war



Suspilne Media

Relatives of Ukraine soldiers besieged in Mariupol steel mill by Russian forces protest May 6 in Cherkasy, calling for safe evacuation after months of heroic resistance to Moscow's invasion.

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Russian President Vladimir Putin gave his speech at the annual May 9 display of military force in Moscow on the anniversary of the defeat of Germany in the Second World War. He didn't admit the defeats that Russian forces have suffered from the courageous resistance mounted by

the Ukrainian people, determined to defend their country's independence.

Putin did claim that Moscow's invasion was a just defensive operation, while calling his troops' occupation

US troops, nuclear arms out of Europe! End US sanctions!

of the Donbas-Luhansk region an advance on Russian soil. He repeated the slander that his regime's war is aimed at toppling a "neo-Nazi" government in Kyiv.

Putin's "regime is ruthlessly seeking to claw back, under Moscow's hegemony, those nations incarcerated

Continued on page 6

Capitalist crisis stokes inflation, as bosses rake in record profits

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

In recent weeks U.S. bosses have been posting record profits, 35% above the year before. "The numbers are in" an article in Bloomberg boasts, "2021 was the most profitable year for American corporations since 1950."

While working people struggle to cope with skyrocketing costs for gasoline, diesel and heating oil, Exxon reported doubling quarterly earnings from a year earlier. Chevron — whose refinery workers in Richmond, California, have been forced out on strike — reports first-quarter profits jumped from \$1.37 billion in 2021 to \$6.3 billion this year.

Kellogg's, which forced workers on
Continued on page 9

UAW workers in Iowa, Wisconsin strike for higher pay as prices rise

BY JOHN HAWKINS

STURTEVANT, Wis. — More than 1,000 members of the United Auto Workers walked off the job May 2 at two Case New Holland plants. The 430 members of UAW Local 807 in Burlington, Iowa, and 600 Local 180 members here, voted by over 98% to strike if they didn't have an acceptable agreement when their old contract ran out April 30. The heart of the fight is their demand for higher wages as prices soar.

"I'm ready to stay out for as long as it takes. Everyone I know says we are fighting for what we deserve," said 20-year-old assembler Hayle Brauer, who has worked at the Wisconsin plant for four months.

"The most important issues for me are a pay increase and time off," she continued. "We're working 53 hours a week, five nine-hour days and eight on Saturday with one Saturday off a month. Plus you have to work years to get vacation."

"The company was prepared for
Continued on page 5

15,000 construction workers strike in Ontario, in fight for wage increase

BY JOHN STEELE

Over 15,000 Ontario construction workers went on strike May 1, paralyzing the high- and low-rise home-building industry across the Canadian province. The central issue is the need for adequate wage increases to deal with the impact of skyrocketing inflation on the lives of the workers and their families.

The striking workers are members
Continued on page 9

Supreme Court leak fuels debate on defense of families, women's rights



Colorado Public Radio/Hart Van Denburg

Heather Hernandez with three of her children, April 28, 2021. She was forced to quit her job as schools closed during the pandemic. There were millions of women in the same position.

BY TERRY EVANS

The May 2 leak of a draft Supreme Court ruling signed by Justice Samuel Alito overturning the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision has set off a debate across the country. The leak was met with a hysterical response from the liberal media, full of misinformation aimed at shoring up plummeting support for Democrats in the upcoming midterm elections.

If this or a similar decision is reached, the discussion and debate it will open over how to best advance the interests of working-class women and their families must be joined. This discussion was shut off in 1973 before millions had been convinced that abortion was needed as just one part of family planning and for defending the rights of women. Ever

Continued on page 7

Inside

EDITORIAL: No worker needs to die on the job! 9

Albany forum discusses steps to strengthen SWP political work 2

'When Ukraine is free, then the Tatars will be free!' 6

—On the picket line, p. 5—

Nurses strike wins improved contract at Stanford Health

Toronto truckers end strike, win wage raise, improved conditions

Albany forum discusses steps to strengthen SWP's political work

BY VED DOOKHUN

ALBANY, N.Y. — Twenty-six people attended a special Militant Labor Forum here April 30 titled “A Proletarian Line Confronting Today’s World and the Necessity of Building the Socialist Workers Party.” Speakers included Alex Huinil, organizer of the SWP branch in Albany; Beverly Bernardo, a leader of the Communist League in Canada; and John Studer, a member of the SWP National Committee and editor of the *Militant* newspaper.

The meeting of members, supporters and contacts of the Socialist Workers Party took place in the midst of Vladimir Putin’s war against the Ukrainian people. Studer quoted from a statement issued by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, “Ukrainians are fighting courageously, often arms in hand, to defend Ukraine’s national sovereignty and independence. The Socialist Workers Party hails their resistance and calls for the defeat of Putin’s invading forces.

“Moscow’s war has shaken the imperialist pecking order in the world,” Studer said. “The moves being organized today by Washington in Europe have nothing to do with helping working people in Ukraine fight for independence, but everything to do with advancing the position of the U.S. imperialist rulers as the leading economic and military power in the world against their competitors.

“What’s playing itself out in Ukraine came into focus during the Gulf War,” Studer explained. “That imperialist slaughter held a mirror to

the declining capitalist world order and accelerated its contradictions. It sounded the opening guns of sharpening conflicts and class battles that will decide whether the horrors of World War III are inflicted on humanity or a road is opened by working people to a socialist future of international solidarity.

“The only way to do that is for the working class to break from the bosses’ parties, build our own party, a labor party, and take political power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers. That is why the SWP exists, to build a leadership capable of organizing working people in their millions to do exactly that.

“The Socialist Workers Party is always looking for openings to engage with the working class in struggle,” explained Studer. “That is how we build the party, as more workers gain an understanding of their own class interests and look for ways to fight.”

Steps to strengthen the SWP

“Today we want to strengthen the SWP in areas where we have opportunities to be involved in labor and political battles in defense of the working class, and where we can make gains as more workers are attracted to the party’s newspaper, the *Militant*, and the books we distribute that recount the history and lessons of working-class struggles and revolutionary battles over decades,” he said.

“The party is taking steps now to reinforce branches of the Socialist Workers Party in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Miami and Seattle,”



Militant/Laura Anderson

Forum in Albany April 30 heard John Studer, speaking, SWP National Committee member and editor of *Militant*. From left, other speakers were Beverly Bernardo, Communist League in Canada; chair Jacob Perasso; and Alex Huinil, SWP Albany branch organizer.

Studer said. This is possible because party cadres in Albany have made themselves available to transfer to these cities, get jobs in union workplaces, and help to strengthen the forces the party already has in these cities, all important centers of working-class politics in the United States.

“This will increase the ability of party members in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and Washington, D.C., to work together,” he said, pointing to the upcoming opportunity to put an SWP candidate on the ballot in Philadelphia for the first time in years.

“This wasn’t the first time we have had a branch in Albany and it certainly won’t be the last,” Huinil said, noting that the class struggle determines when and where the party establishes new branches. He said tonight’s meeting was a celebration of the party-building activity members have carried out in the Albany region since 2017, strengthening the party cadre there for the new challenges ahead in the class struggle and party-building opportunities in other parts of the country.

Huinil spoke about the growing resistance by workers to boss assaults in this area that led to the party’s decision to build a branch here, “like the 2016-17 strike by 700 workers at Momentive Performance Materials in Waterford, and the lockout of Honeywell workers in Green Island.”

“The Albany branch also collaborated with the Communist League in Canada to reach out to labor and social struggles that were taking place on both sides of the border,” he said.

“Party members worked at Walmart, on the railroad and more recently at a union-organized bakery where we became part of struggles for better working conditions and safety,” Huinil said. “The party and the *Militant* are known in the region for our uncompromising stance in defense of workers and farmers.”

“Establishing the Militant Labor Forum series and campaign headquarters helped expand the reach of the party,” Huinil said. The party attracted a number of workers and union members from these activities.

Many of those at the meeting had recently met the party and became regular Militant Labor Forum participants. In the discussion period a number took the floor to express what it meant for them to get to know the party. They responded enthusiastically to the party reaching out to new opportunities and wanted to know how to keep in touch and be part of those activities.


“I want to be more involved,” said Julie Hahn, after inquiring about future events that the party will be involved in. Studer extended an invitation to attend Militant Labor Forums

Continued on page 4

THE MILITANT

Cuban workers, farmers march on May Day

Cuban workers and farmers marched together in Havana, and in cities and towns across the country, May 1 in a mass celebration of pride in their socialist revolution. And it showed their determination to defend it from the crushing economic war being waged by Washington.



Granma/Juvenal Balan Neyra
In Havana 600,000 marched May 1 behind banner “Long live international solidarity.”

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

☐ \$5 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

☐ \$10 for 12 weeks

☐ \$20 for 6 months

☐ \$35 for 1 year

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION _____

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT,
306 W. 37TH ST., 13TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018.
OR SUBSCRIBE ONLINE AT:
WWW.THEMILITANT.COM

12 weeks of the *Militant* outside the U.S.: Australia, A\$10 • United Kingdom, £4 • Canada, Can\$7 • Caribbean and Latin America, US\$10 • Continental Europe, £8 • France, 8 euros • New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, NZ\$7 • All other areas, US\$16 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

The Militant

Vol. 86/No. 20
Closing news date: May 11, 2022

Editor: John Studer
Managing Editor: Terry Evans

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

Published weekly except for one week in January, two weeks in August, one week in September.

Business Manager: Valerie Johnson
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.
Telephone: (212) 244-4899
Fax: (212) 244-4947
E-mail: themilitant@mac.com
Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.
Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: For one year send \$35 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Africa, Asia, and the Middle East: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Canada: For one year send Canadian \$45 to the Militant, 7107 St. Denis #204, Montreal, Quebec H2S 2S5.

United Kingdom: Send £30 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, 5 Norman Road (first floor), Seven Sisters, London, N15 4ND, England.

Republic of Ireland and Continental Europe: Send £85 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London at above address.

France: Send 100 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15.

New Zealand and the Pacific Islands: Send NZ\$55 for one year to P.O. Box 13857, Auckland 1643, New Zealand.

Australia: Send A\$70 for one year to P.O. Box 73 Campsie, NSW 2194 Australia.

Submissions to the *Militant* may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.

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

‘Militant’ wins new readers

Continued from front page herself is in a fight with her employer after being let go.

“The health care system leaves a lot to be desired,” she said. “When I saw the deaths in the seniors’ homes in Quebec, I said to my husband, ‘What the heck is going on over there?’ I was flabbergasted.” Over 4,000 people died in the province’s nursing homes in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“That’s why it’s workers like you who should control and organize the workplace,” LeRougetel said.

“Makes sense,” Serre replied. “We’re right there, we know what’s going on, not sitting up in some office.” She signed up for a *Militant* subscription.

Book festival in Berkeley

The May 7-8 Pathfinder booth, staffed by SWP members and supporters at the Bay Area Book Festival in Berkeley, California, was a hub of discussion about what working people are doing to defend themselves.

Tim Kopra, a union theater carpenter and artist, said he appreciated a *Militant* article that described how nuclear workers in Ukraine warned Russian soldiers occupying the destroyed Chernobyl nuclear plant about

the dangers of radiation. “I’ve seen a number of examples of solidarity during the war,” he told Joel Britton, SWP candidate for governor of California. “It’s powerful.”

“We are for the Russians getting out of Ukraine, for the U.S. military out of Europe and against the sanctions on Russia,” Britton said. “Sanctions impact Russian workers and farmers hardest, cutting across them being won to oppose the war.”

Kopra was among the 20 people who subscribed to the *Militant* at the book fair, where 85 Pathfinder books were sold.

The SWP and Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom are campaigning to go over their goals of winning 1,600 readers to the *Militant*, selling the same number of books and to collect \$165,000 for the Militant Fighting Fund. The drive ends May 17.

Rising prices hit workers hard

“Every time bosses give you something, they’re trying to take something else away,” Benito Cohate told this reporter when I called at his apartment in the Bronx, New York, May 8.

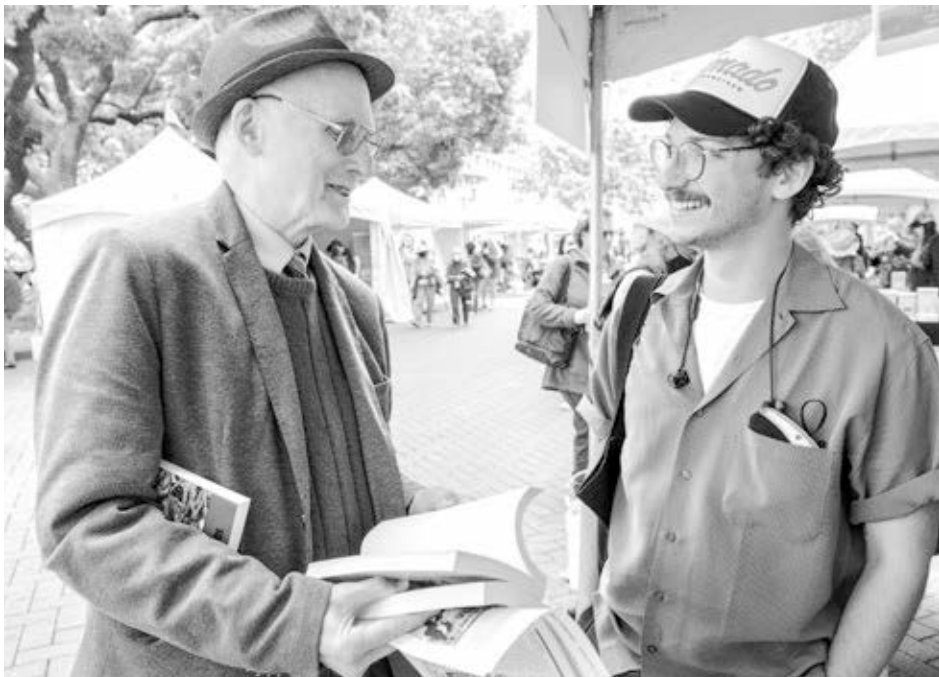
Cohate is a vegetable market worker at the Hunts Point Produce Terminal and member of Teamsters Local 202. He first met SWP members when they joined the picket line during his union’s one-week strike for a wage hike last year. The workers won a 70-cent-an-hour raise the first year and 50 cents the second, more than the bosses initially offered.

One of the things hitting workers and our families is rising prices for food and gas, Cohate said. The government “doesn’t care that we pay more.” “What’s needed is for unions to fight for cost-of-living escalator clauses in all contracts, Social Security and other benefits,” I said. Cohate said such clauses are not currently part of the contract where he works.

“What you’re doing, going door to door and talking to workers is important,” he said. “Republicans and Democrats are all the same. People are looking for an alternative.”

The SWP raises the need for working people to form their own political party, I said, a labor party based on the unions that can advance the fight for workers to take political power away from the capitalist rulers and into our own hands.

Sara Lobman, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from New York, who was campaigning in the neighborhood, stopped by to meet Cohate. He subscribed to the *Militant* and purchased two copies of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, one in English for his daughter and the other in Spanish for himself.



Militant photos: top, Katy LeRougetel; bottom, Eric Simpson Top, Communist League campaigner Ned Dmytryshyn talks with Melanie Serre in East Vancouver, British Columbia, about war against Ukraine. Below, Joel Britton, SWP candidate for California governor, promotes Militant, Pathfinder books at Bay Area Book Festival May 7.

He also got *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?*

“It has been far too long since the working class has had a voice,” Lance Anton, a conductor on the BNSF railroad in Lincoln, Nebraska, told Socialist Workers Party members campaigning for Joe Swanson, the party’s candidate for U.S. Congress there.

Anton hosted a dinner and social for Swanson and SWP members campaigning for him from Chicago and Minneapolis May 3-4 as well as other supporters in the area. Anton had just read *Labor, Nature, and the Evolution of Humanity*, one of the books on special during the SWP’s propaganda drive.

“Reading this was eye-opening,” he

said. “It’s written so anyone can understand the entire sweep of human history. I feel that humanity is at a tipping point, and we need to realize our potential, our worth and organize to go forward.”

Nine people subscribed to the *Militant* at the social and during two days of campaigning in several working-class neighborhoods. At a shift change at one of the largest rail yards in Lincoln, SWP members sold eight copies of the paper.

To help expand the reach of the *Militant*, contact an SWP branch listed on page 8. To contribute to the Militant Fighting Fund, make out a check to the *Militant* and send it to 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018, or donate online at themilitant.com.

Farmer’s art helps dig well, boost Militant Fighting Fund

DINUBA, Calif. — On May 4 Socialist Workers Party members Carole Lesnick and Joel Britton, the party’s candidate for governor, joined Fresno farmer Will Scott for a visit to Sweet Home Ranch, near here, where Paul Buxman raises peaches and other stone fruit. Buxman is also an artist, an impressionist painter. When he learned in 2015 that Scott needed to dig a deeper well or lose his farm, he organized a “Drill for Will” project and sold lithographs of his paintings to raise the necessary money.

Buxman said he stepped forward to help Scott after reading a newspaper article on how the drought was bankrupting Scott and others. “Scott was quoted as saying, ‘We have a lot to lose.’ That pronoun grabbed me,” Buxman said, “He didn’t say, ‘I have a lot to lose.’ Without community we are lost.”

He set up stands “all over this area” with his lithographs and a photo of Scott, president of the African American Farmers of California, asking for “\$50 a foot” toward drilling the 300 foot well. So many farmers and others responded that enough was raised and Scott was able to continue farming.

Following a wide-ranging political discussion and a tour of his farm, Buxman showed us a closet where he stores lithographs of his paintings. He pulled several out. Lesnick asked if he would be willing to donate one for a raffle in Oakland to help raise money for the Militant Fighting Fund that sustains the *Militant*, published in the interests of working people. Buxman said we should take five of them. “That’s what we did the lithographs for. They’ve been used for many good causes.”

— JOEL BRITTON

Discounted books for prisoners

Pathfinder Press offers books at a 50% discount plus \$2.75 shipping per order. Prisoners can mail their prepaid orders to: Pathfinder Press, PO Box 162767 Atlanta GA 30321-2767

Friends and family members can order for them online. For more info: www.pathfinderpress.com

Campaign to expand reach of ‘Militant,’ books, fund

March 12-May 17 (week eight)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	Fund received
UNITED STATES						
Albany	35	34	60	62	\$8,500	\$8,260
Atlanta	90	75	90	79	\$11,500	\$8,899
Chicago	125	114	125	117	\$14,000	\$11,112
Cincinnati*	90	62	90	72	\$5,800	\$4,076
Dallas-Ft. Worth*	70	75	70	97	\$4,700	\$4,374
Lincoln	15	18	15	21	\$400	\$504
Los Angeles*	130	133	155	156	\$14,500	\$9,615
Miami	35	29	35	54	\$5,000	\$4,250
Minneapolis	70	75	70	86	\$5,500	\$4,668
N. New Jersey	90	90	90	88	\$7,250	\$6,098
New York	125	114	125	141	\$17,500	\$16,536
Oakland	100	94	100	101	\$14,000	\$12,577
Philadelphia	40	37	40	41	\$4,250	\$4,385
Pittsburgh	50	48	50	42	\$5,000	\$3,696
Seattle	70	63	70	59	\$13,000	\$10,746
Washington	65	57	65	61	\$5,000	\$4,701
Other		40		229		\$0
Total U.S.	1200	1158	1250	1506	\$135,900	\$114,497
Prisoners	45	69				
UNITED KINGDOM						
London*	55	53	60	60	\$4,000	\$3,100
Manchester*	50	50	50	74	\$2,000	\$1,400
Total U.K.	105	103	110	134	\$6,000	\$4,500
Canada	110	99	110	95	\$13,670	\$11,084
New Zealand	35	33	35	25	\$4,000	\$3,470
Australia	35	29	35	19	\$2,500	\$1,750
Total	1,530	1,491	1,540	1,779	\$162,070	\$135,301
SHOULD BE	1,600	1,408	1,600	1,408	\$165,000	\$145,200
*Raised goal. Other includes 39 subs, 229 titles at book fairs						

Cuban people, gov’t respond to hotel disaster in Havana

BY RÓGER CALERO

HAVANA — As rescue brigades arrived rapidly at the scene of a deadly gas explosion at the Hotel Saratoga, dozens of local residents had already joined in aiding and evacuating others to safety amid the billowing smoke and dust.

Forty-two people were confirmed dead and at least 94 injured as of May 10, as emergency workers continued to comb through the rubble for others believed missing. The May 6 blast rocked Central Havana, destroying parts of the hotel and damaging nearby structures, including an elementary school, apartment buildings, a Baptist church and a theater.

The terrible accident was likely caused by a natural gas leak, as a tank truck was servicing the building. It blew the outer walls into the busy streets, according to the office of Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel. The hotel was closed at the time of the explosion for renovation and was scheduled to reopen after being shuttered for two years during the COVID pandemic. At least 51 workers were inside when the blast occurred.

Next to the hotel, at the Concepción Arenal Primary School, “teachers and workers came out holding groups of three or four students by the hand,” as rescue workers guided them toward the Capitol building across the street, wrote Jorge Sariol in an article posted to the website of Casa Editora Abril, the publishing house of the Union of Young Communists of Cuba. Workers at Abril, whose offices are just two blocks from the Saratoga, also helped evacuate the children, who were rapidly reunited with their families. The publisher’s ground-floor bookstore was opened to assist in the rescue efforts.

‘We always act in solidarity’

“Our people always act in solidarity with others around the world, so it’s only natural that we would do the same toward ourselves,” said Gerardo Hernández, national coordinator of the Com-

mittees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs), pointing to the outpouring of support from working people across the island for victims of the disaster.

Led by the CDRs and other mass organizations, such as the Federation of University Students and Federation of Cuban Women, some 2,000 people made blood donations within 24 hours of the accident. “Once word got out in workplaces, among neighbors, people started to come to the provincial blood bank,” said Hernández. “And they’re bringing other donations without us even asking.”

Cuba’s revolutionary government immediately went into action at all levels, from the Ministry of Public Health to local housing authorities, to help save lives, coordinate emergency services, and provide accurate information on the unfolding rescue operation.

This response by working people and their government is not exceptional. As part of the moral foundations of Cuba’s socialist revolution, millions of workers, farmers and others are trained and mobilized when hurricanes and other natural disasters hit, to organize mass evacu-



Ismael Francisco

Members of well-known Havana baseball team, Industriales, left, gather May 6 along with other Cubans to donate blood shortly after devastating explosion at Hotel Saratoga.

ations, minimize the loss of human life and repair damaged homes. Unlike in the U.S. and other capitalist countries, no one is left to fend for themselves. That preparedness and spirit of solidarity shifted into high gear within minutes of the Saratoga explosion.

Because of Washington’s economic war against the Cuban Revolution and the impact of the worldwide capitalist crisis, the country faces scarcity of medical supplies, fuel and other resources.

Despite those limitations, the basic needs of people affected by the explosion are being given priority.

Those evacuated from damaged residential buildings are being housed in the Villa Panamericana hotel complex in East Havana, or are staying with relatives or friends. Students from the damaged school have received new school uniforms, notebooks and pencils to replace lost supplies. The school is expected to reopen by the end of May.

SWP sets drive to campaign, get on Minnesota ballot

BY DAVID ROSENFELD

MINNEAPOLIS — The Socialist Workers Party in Minnesota is organizing a concentrated two-week effort to get the party’s gubernatorial ticket on the ballot while taking its working-class program across the state. “We’re asking supporters from around the country to come and help us overcome the obstacles the state puts in the way of working-class parties getting on the ballot,” said Kevin Dwire, the SWP’s candidate for lieutenant governor.

Minnesota election law requires “minor” parties to collect 2,000 signatures between May 17 and 31. “We will send teams of campaigners all over the state, from the Iron Range to the Red River Valley to the meatpacking towns in the

southern part of the state,” Dwire said. “We will campaign with the Socialist Workers Party program, the *Militant* and books by SWP leaders and other revolutionaries in big cities, small towns and rural areas.”

Campaigners will build solidarity with the striking coal miners at Warrior Met in Alabama and call for Russian troops to get out of Ukraine, as well as an end to U.S. sanctions, which hit the living conditions of fellow workers in Russia, making building working-class unity against Moscow’s invasion more challenging.

Gabrielle Prosser, the party’s candidate for governor, just returned from participating in the Havana International Book Fair and the giant

May Day march in Cuba. “In 1959, Fidel Castro led workers and farmers to take political power,” Prosser told the *Militant*. “We continue to defend this living and fighting revolution. The revolutionary victory was only possible because of the mobilization of people in their millions to work toward changing their conditions and social relations.

“Our campaign says the only way forward for our class is to organize independently from the ruling class and their political parties,” she said. “We point to the example of the socialist revolution that was carried out by workers and farmers in Cuba.”

Volunteers are coming from Chicago and as far away as California and Georgia. Organizers of the effort say more help is needed. Contact a branch of the SWP near you if you would like to help. Funds are also needed to print campaign flyers and petitions, and for travel throughout the state and other expenses. For more information, contact the Minnesota SWP campaign at SWPMinneapolis@gmail.com.

Ricardo Alarcón, leader of Cuba’s socialist revolution

BY JOHN STUDER

Ricardo Alarcón, a decadeslong central leader of Cuba’s socialist revolution, died in Havana April 30. He was 84 years old.

Born in 1937, Alarcón was a leader of the July 26 Movement at the University of Havana during the struggle to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. After the revolution’s victory in 1959, he served as president

of the Federation of University Students. From 1966 to 1978 he was Cuba’s permanent representative to the United Nations. He was named deputy foreign minister in 1978. He also served as a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba.

In the 1980s Alarcón was Cuba’s chief negotiator with the U.S. government, leading Cuba’s efforts to reach an immigration agreement with Washington in 1984 and 1987. He participated in the 1988 talks involving Cuba, Angola, South Africa and the U.S., which led to the withdrawal of South African troops from Angola and the independence of Namibia.

He returned as Cuba’s permanent representative to the U.N. from 1989-91 and then became foreign minister in 1992. In 1993 he was elected to Cuba’s National Assembly, where he served as president until 2013.

Alarcón played a central role in the 16-year-long fight to win the freedom of the Cuban Five, five Cubans framed up and imprisoned in the U.S. for their work to protect the Cuban people against terrorist attacks launched with

impunity from U.S. soil by Cuban enemies of the revolution.

In future issues the *Militant* will reprint a few articles by Alarcón that have appeared in our pages over the years.

Albany forum on strengthening SWP

Continued from page 2

in New York City and encouraged those in Albany to put together campaign events for the SWP candidates.

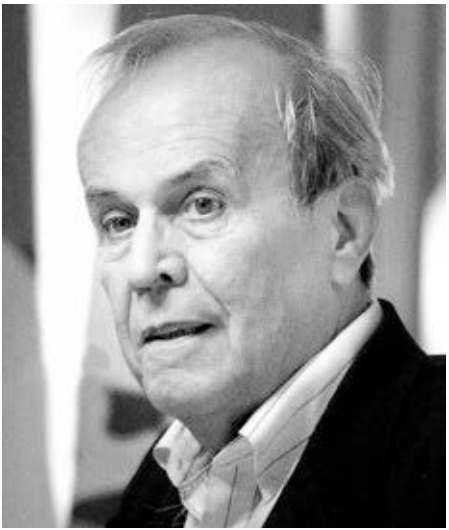
Mike Fitzsimmons, a nurse at Albany Medical Center and one of the leaders of the successful fight to win recognition for the New York State Nurses Association there, thanked the party for joining solidarity activities with their fight. He described the impact on other nurses when Huinil brought a card signed by 20 of his co-workers from Walmart to the picket line. “That and other solidarity helped nurses see we were not alone, that others were standing up, like the nurses in Worcester and workers at Remington Arms,” Fitzsimmons said.

“Collaboration is crucial to main-

taining an international communist movement,” said Bernardo. “Our many teams to workers in struggle and in rural areas helped strengthen the Communist League in Canada.

“We look forward to continuing this kind of work with SWP members in New York, New Jersey and other party branches,” she added.

A delicious Indian-themed dinner preceded the program, cooked in large part by supporters and contacts of the party throughout the Albany and New England region who attended the meeting. Many stayed for refreshments, deserts, and more political discussion following the program. A collection of \$935 was taken to help make the Albany Militant Fighting Fund quota of \$8,500.



Cubaminrex

Ricardo Alarcón, Cuban revolutionary leader.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Nurses strike wins improved contract at Stanford Health

EMERYVILLE, Calif. — Five days after 5,000 nurses, members of the Committee for Recognition of Nursing Achievement, struck the Stanford Health Care system — based at Stanford University in Palo Alto — they voted by an 83% majority to approve a new contract offer. The strike began April 25 and Stanford brought in 2,500 “traveling nurses” to replace strikers at Stanford Hospital, Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital and Stanford Health Care centers in the area, promising them up to \$13,000 a week to cross the picket lines.

The nurses won a 7% raise this year, and 5% each of the next two years, as well as improved retirement benefits. They went back to work May 3.

Burnout caused by job stress, overtime and understaffing were key concerns of the nurses, whose confidence and good humor marked their spirited picket lines across the Bay Area. The new contract adds a week of vacation, improves access to mental health care, student loan assistance and a company promise to make sure patients are covered during nurses’ breaks and lunches. The contract also improves retirees’ health care benefits.

Nurses working in areas with the most severely ill patients will receive incentive pay and improvements in working conditions.

“Amid a nationwide shortage of nurses driven by high levels of burnout, moral injury, exhaustion and trauma, hospitals need to step up their support for the nursing profession,” Kathy Stormberg, Committee for Recognition of Nursing Achievement’s vice president, told reporters. A 2021 report showed hospitals in California are short some 40,000 full-time nurses. “Creating better and safer working conditions for nurses is directly connected to ensuring the best care conditions for the patients who are in our charge.”

In an attempt to force the nurses back to work, the “nonprofit” company had threatened to cut off their health benefits.

The nursing achievement committee was founded in 1966 at a time when it was illegal in California for nurses at a “nonprofit” to unionize. They’ve since won the right to do so.

Due to federal pandemic funding and “strong patient volume,” revenue at the Stanford Health Care complex grew 16%, to a combined \$8.3 billion, according to their financial disclosure for the 2021 fiscal year. In other words, a gift from the U.S. government and the horrors of the COVID-19 pandemic boosted the “nonprofit” system’s profits, while nurses and other hospital staff paid the price.

As nurses returned to work, Stanford’s physicians and interns voted by 81% to unionize in the Committee of Interns and Residents.

— Eric Simpson

Toronto truckers end strike, win wage raise, improved conditions

TORONTO — Over 1,500 dump truck drivers in the Greater Toronto Area ended their six-week strike May 1, when they reached agreement with area bosses to set a standard hourly rate of 120 Canadian dollars (\$93) an hour for bulk excavations for all owner-operators, CA\$105 for sewer and water main work and CA\$90 for road building.

Before the strike “it was the wild west,” Ontario Dump Truck Association representative Bob Punia told the *Militant*. “Contractors were paying rates as low as \$65” and were able to play off one trucker against another to cut rates.

The agreement was reached with the Associated Earth Movers of Ontario and a number of its member companies. Negotiations continue with other contractors, including associations in sewer and water main work and in road building.

The Earth Movers agreed to end the practice of truckers not being paid for all the hours they work. The agreement also stipulates that truckers will be given a 15-minute paid break every four hours. While that’s required under Ontario labor law, contractors weren’t paying for breaks.

Jasvir Dhaliwal, an owner-operator



Militant/Eric Simpson

Nurses picket Stanford Health Care in Emeryville, California, April 28 during five-day strike that won wage raises, improved schedules, working conditions, as well as retirement benefits.

and member of the ODTA committee, told the *Militant* that the agreement will hopefully end the practice of excavators overloading trucks.

Overloaded trucks are unsafe, and drivers can be fined CA\$500 or CA\$1,000, even though it’s the excavators who load the truck, he said. The dump truck association insists that if a truck is overloaded it’s the contractors who should pay the fine, not the truckers.

A number of the contractors agreed to build better truck ramps at excavation sites, Dhaliwal said. Unsafe ramps can result in a truck tipping over, especially if it’s overloaded. “This was putting truckers’ lives at risk,” Punia said.

The strike shut down over 90% of the job sites for six weeks, Dhaliwal said. The contractors “had to reach an agreement with us. They had no choice. Our members were prepared to continue our

fight as long as needed.”

The agreement will help “ensure owner-operators finally get the respect and dignity they deserve,” Punia said, “thanks to the perseverance and determination of our members.” The challenge will be ensuring that individual contractors “abide by the agreement.”

“This fight strengthened” the dump truck drivers association, Inder Singh, an owner-operator and member of the ODTA committee, told the *Militant*. “Now, many more truckers are involved.”

The strikers got a lot of support. “It was very important to know that other truckers stood behind us,” Punia said. “The abuse truckers face is not just here in Toronto. It’s North-American wide. We’ve had calls from three different groups of truckers in the U.S. asking for our help.”

— Steve Penner

UAW strike in Iowa, Wisconsin

Continued from front page

this. No sooner did we walk out than they started walking scabs in.”

Case New Holland Industrial is an Italian international conglomerate headquartered in London. The two plants manufacture Case tractors and industrial and earthmoving equip-

ment. With farm production growing and increased construction projects from federal government infrastructure spending, the company reported a \$1.76 billion profit in 2021.

“June 8 will be one year for me,” said 19-year-old Adrien Richmond. “This is my first factory job. Before that I worked at McDonald’s and Walmart.

“A big issue for me is safety. They’re hiring a lot of young workers and trying to take advantage of our lack of knowledge,” he said. “One shift I got covered with oil. The foreman didn’t tell me that I had the right to leave for an hour to go home and change clothes. Another time I was assigned to run a CNC machine with no training.”

“We’re getting a lot of support from the community. People driving by honk to show their support,” said Heather Mayle, a logistics worker, who has worked at the plant here for seven months.

“You start at a little over \$18 per hour and it takes six years to get up to scale. Compare that to what they’re paying the scabs — \$36 an hour plus room and board.”

—CALENDAR—

NEW YORK

New York

Film Documentary: ‘Sankara’s Orphans.’ Part of New York African Film Festival. Discussion with film’s director, Geraldine Berger, following screening. Sat., May 21, 4:30 p.m. Donation: \$15. *Maysles Documentary Center, 343 Malcolm X Boulevard.*

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 26, 1997

HAVANA, Cuba — “Where did you serve on your first mission as an internationalist?” Cuban journalist Luis Báez asks Ulises Rosales del Toro, division general of Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) and chief of staff of the FAR.

“In October 1963, in Algeria, as chief of staff of the Tactical Combat Group during the war Morocco launched with the goal of forcibly annexing sections of Algerian territory,” the Cuban general says.

The Algerians has recently gained their independence from France, he continues. “They had just begun to govern the country, and their armed forces had not been fully established. Algerian president [Ahmed] Ben Bella asked for Cuba’s help.

“It was my first trip abroad and my initial contact with the revolutionary movement in another country,” says Rosales. He was 21 years old then.



May 26, 1972

As President Nixon’s trip to the Soviet Union on May 22 approaches, the Vietnam war is reaching a critical juncture. The Vietnamese people, struggling for control over their own lives, face grave threats from two sides.

On the one hand there is the United States pounding Vietnam with a considerable part of its naval and air power. There is no way of knowing how far the U.S. war makers are prepared to go. On the other hand, there is the danger that the Soviet Union, in a deal with Nixon, will try to pressure the Vietnamese to give up at the conference table what they have won on the battlefield.

In this situation the antiwar movement can play a historic role through its struggle for immediate U.S. withdrawal and self-determination for the Vietnamese. The masses of the American people have the power to stop Washington’s aggression.



May 24, 1947

OAKLAND, Calif. — Wild enthusiasm broke loose in the Oakland Voters League headquarters when the election returns showed a clear majority for four of the five League candidates. In spite of a tremendous barrage of red-baiting propaganda, the newly formed Voters League, working through the trade unions, was able to defeat the powerful, well entrenched and experienced political machine.

The issue which kept the sides sharply divided was the Kahns and Hastings strike. The strike of the two department stores posed the question “which side are you on” to every trade unionist and large sections of the middle class.

The Socialist Workers Party came out in active support of the Voters League slate. Although critical of the candidates and their mild reform program, the SWP saw the possibility of a labor party movement growing out of the campaign.

Get Moscow out of Ukraine!

Continued from front page
in the czarist prison house of nations, regenerating the Russian empire today with Putin as its czar,” explains Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes, in a statement on behalf of the party’s National Committee. Putin’s goal is to crush Ukraine’s existence and impose Moscow’s rule.

Despite the fierce repression being meted out by Putin’s regime, hoping to crush all evidence of opposition to his war by Russian working people, opponents of the invasion found ways to get their voices heard.

Hackers managed to display “You have blood on your hands!” and other anti-war slogans on every state and cable TV channel, as well as online publications. Overnight before the parade in Volgograd, a large mural appeared showing coffins with the slogan “Our Zinc!” referring to the metal used as box liners for Russian soldiers’ corpses. These returning coffins helped spur deep opposition to Russia’s invasion of Afghanistan years earlier.

In St. Petersburg, a man was arrested for carrying a photograph of an elderly Holocaust survivor killed during the Russian bombardment. In the Siberian city of Novosibirsk, Vladimir Saltevsky was detained for carrying a banner at the parade there saying, “We’re ashamed of you, grandchildren. We fought for peace, but you chose war.”

Ukrainian troops push back

Putin’s invading forces have sustained heavy casualties for two and a half months. After getting bogged down and then retreating from the Kyiv and Sumy regions, the Kremlin is trying to use its greater numbers, missile superiority and greater firepower to consolidate territory it occupies in the east and south.

Ukrainian troops have pushed back Moscow’s forces north of Kharkiv, easing the bombardment of the country’s second-largest city. In the first week of May, Russian units destroyed several bridges as they retreated, indicating they fear further attacks.

In the Kharkiv suburb of Saltivka, 20 miles from the Russian border, most people speak Russian.

“Russians have supposedly liberated

us — from our home, from a happy life, from a job and just being alive, too,” Olha Khorosho, sheltering in a basement there, told the *Washington Post*.

The southern port city of Mariupol has been bombed relentlessly by Moscow’s forces. Some 20,000 civilians were killed and many more fled. “The occupiers celebrate Victory Day on the bones of Mariupol,” the City Council stated May 9. Most remaining civilians were finally evacuated from bunkers in the giant Azovstal steelworks the previous day. Hundreds of Ukrainian fighters are still holding out there, inflicting heavy losses on the invading forces trying to storm the site.

In the first two months of Moscow’s occupation of Kherson, people in the southern city held protests. But as Russian forces detained more and more of them for interrogation, torturing some and deporting others to Russia, demonstrations declined.

Nonetheless, residents display Ukrainian yellow and blue colors or daub anti-occupation messages around the city. Some teachers refuse to instruct pupils in the Russian curriculum Moscow has tried to impose. Most people still tune in to Ukrainian radio and TV, despite the Russian government’s attempts at censorship.

Ivan Antypenko, a journalist who fled the city, said that despite repression “people know they live in Ukraine.”

At the same time as the fighting is more contained in the east and south



Mural in Volgograd, Russia, appeared night before “Victory Day” parade there. Sign says “Our Zinc!” over rows of coffins for Russian soldiers’ corpses, referring to boxes’ zinc lining.

of Ukraine, Russian forces continue murderous bombing across the country, hitting targets and civilians as far west as Lviv. Their goal is to slow down new weaponry from reaching Ukrainian fighters.

‘Defend Ukrainian independence’

“The Socialist Workers Party is for the victory of the Ukrainian independence struggle and the defeat and withdrawal of Moscow’s forces from all of the country,” Osborne Hart, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Pennsylvania, said May 9. “The SWP also calls for the withdrawal of all U.S. armed forces, including nuclear weapons, from Europe, all of Europe!”

The U.S. rulers and allied governments are acting to protect the rival interests of their own capitalist classes.

They are organizing rearmament programs and boosting troop numbers in preparation for future conflicts. They see the war and the sanctions they impose as an opportunity to deal blows to their Russian rival, as well as prepare for conflicts with other rivals.

Not all European capitalists see challenging Moscow’s invasion as the best course to defend their interests. This is especially so in Germany, which has been reliant on Russian energy sources for decades.

Herbert Diess, CEO of the German auto giant Volkswagen, urged the European Union May 9 to change course, and press Ukraine officials to reach a humbling settlement with Moscow instead. Their interest in preventing a slump in the world capitalist economy that would weaken them should come first, he said.

‘When Ukraine is free, then the Tatars will be free!’

BY ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

“When Ukraine is free, Tatars will be free. Of course, the struggle for our national rights will continue, but nothing like what we face under Russian occupation,” Melek Maksudoglu recently told the *Militant*. She got to know the paper in London in 2014 at demonstrations supporting the Maidan uprising in Ukraine and opposing Moscow’s subsequent occupation of Crimea. Tatars are the native population of the Crimean Peninsula, with a long history of struggle against national oppression.

Maksudoglu now lives in Istanbul, where — like many in the millions-

strong Tatar community in Turkey — she has joined protests against the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

“Supporters of the invasion try to appeal to Tatars as Muslims, saying Putin defends us,” she said, describing the political debate within Turkey. “How can they say that? He is killing innocent people.” Some even resort to antisemitism, she said, pointing out that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is Jewish.

“But I also worry that the sanctions against Russia will only hurt ordinary people. The rich have ways to protect their money and businesses.” Ever-harsher sanctions by the U.S., U.K. and European governments, aimed at crippling the Russian economy, come down hardest on working people and make it harder to mobilize opposition within Russia against the invasion.

“Some people are starting to repeat old anti-Russian insults,” Maksudoglu said. “But it’s not ordinary people in Russia who are the problem, it’s the government.”

Following the Maidan — the 2014 popular rebellion in Ukraine that overthrew the pro-Russian regime of Viktor Yanukovych — Moscow invaded Crimea and later annexed the peninsula. “On Feb. 28, 2014, people woke up with

tanks in the streets,” she said.

The occupiers launched a campaign of terror against Tatars and other opponents. The Mejlis, the national leadership of the Tatars that leads opposition to the occupation, was outlawed. Its president, Refat Chubarov, and its long-time leader, Mustafa Dzhemilev, were both banned from Russian-occupied Crimea.

Maksudoglu emphasized that the overwhelming majority of Tatars opposed the annexation. “Those who defended it were ‘excommunicated,’” she said.

The repression of Tatars by the Putin regime continues. Three Tatars, including Mejlis leader and journalist Nariman Dzhelyal, are on trial, framed up for allegedly sabotaging a gas pipe. According to the Kharkiv Human Rights Group, the only “evidence” against them comes from secret witnesses. Tatars have been abducted from Crimea and put on trial in Rostov, Russia, where they’ve been given long prison sentences.

Today many Tatars are in Ukraine, fighting shoulder to shoulder with the Ukrainian people to defend their independence. Maksudoglu gave the example of Gulsum Khalilova, a Crimean Tatar journalist now living in Kyiv who reports on Crimea and what Tatars are facing.

In 2019 a Russian court put out an international arrest warrant, accusing her of involvement with an armed group opposed to Moscow’s occupation of Crimea. “She’s very courageous. She says they drove her out of Crimea, but they won’t drive her out of Kyiv,” Maksudoglu said.

BOOKS WORKERS NEED TODAY...

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



\$8 with subscription \$7 with subscription \$5 with subscription \$10 with subscription \$7 with subscription

\$35 for ALL FIVE books above WITH A MILITANT SUBSCRIPTION



\$12 with subscription \$12 with subscription \$5 with subscription \$10 with subscription

PLUS 20% OFF all other Pathfinder books

SEE DISTRIBUTORS ON PAGE 8 OR VISIT PATHFINDERPRESS.COM

Court leak fuels debate on defense of families, women's rights

Continued from front page

since, those seeking to defend women's legal access to abortion have been shackled by the Roe ruling. It was a blow to the fight for women's emancipation. Focusing on trying to defend it will only further muddy the real questions.

It is useful to read Alito's draft. It's far from being a right-wing rant, as liberals suggest. Alito quotes from Ruth Bader Ginsberg's judgment saying Roe v. Wade "halted a political process that was moving in a reform direction and thereby, I believed, prolonged divisiveness and deferred stable settlement of the issue."

The Roe decision was an example of a majority of politically motivated judges concocting a ruling based neither on the Constitution nor on an already accomplished and overwhelming shift in public opinion. This guaranteed ongoing combat rather than settling anything.

Assault on workers' families grows

For working people, access to abortion cannot be addressed separately from the growing pressures tearing at our families. It's bound up with finding ways to resist the broader impact of the capitalist crisis on workers' lives, which is making it harder and harder to start a family, and placing heavier burdens on them.

That crisis is accelerating after years of declining real wages; unaffordable housing and child care; longer hours, forced overtime and draining work schedules that cripple family life; and the intolerable weight of mounting household debts. All of this is exacerbated by the biggest price rises in 40 years.

Some 4 million workers remain in part-time jobs because they can't get full-time work, and 5.9 million want a job but are not counted as unemployed because they've given up looking for



1998 Birmingham, Alabama, protest against clinic bombing, which killed a security guard, injured nurse. Roe v. Wade court decision cut off debate, fueling decades of rightist forces' attacks on women's rights.

work. The labor force participation rate has plunged more sharply for women than men. Millions of women were forced to stop working during the recession because of lack of child care and shuttered schools. Today, 1 million fewer women are in the workforce than in 2019.

Fighting to change these conditions is crucial to advancing women's social and economic equality. They undermine women's choices about when and whether to bear children; warp decisions about how many to have; and intensify pressures on workers with families.

These questions can't be addressed without a fighting program to win broader access to affordable family health care, child care, housing, jobs, contraception, easily accessible adoption and more. This fight is the road to win an unchallengeable majority to include abortion in all public family planning programs.

Under capitalism, the family is where workers go for protection. It's where the elderly and infirm are cared for and our

children are raised and begin learning. It's where young workers all too often have to return when bosses throw us out of work. Children, the elderly and workers who are sick or disabled have no value for the capitalist class. Their drive for profits is carried out with utter disregard for the workers who create their wealth.

'Safe, legal and rare'

In 1992 President Bill Clinton said that his goal was to make abortion "safe, legal and rare." But that was a sham. The capitalist class he defends is driven to profit off the backs of working people, wreaking havoc on our lives. They have no road to providing the kind of conditions in which the decision to have an abortion could become rare. For that goal to be real, different social relations need to exist, something that is possible if the working class — the only class capable of defending human life — takes political power into its own hands.

While no one knows how the Supreme Court will end up ruling on this case, the debate will continue. Today some 13 states have "trigger laws" that would restrict abortion if the court overturns Roe. Kentucky, Louisiana, Oklahoma and South Dakota would ban most abortions immediately, with an exception if the life or health of the woman is endangered.

Fourteen other states would decriminalize abortion, but restrict it to the first 22 weeks of pregnancy. These "progressive" states incorporate Roe's medical criteria for legalization, not women's right to equal protection of law under the Constitution's 14th Amendment. This means making "viability" of growing embryos the criteria to set time limits on legal abortion.

But *no* fetus is "viable" outside the womb without care and support from a mother and her family.

By basing its judgment on these shifting medical grounds, the 1973 decision made it easier for opponents of women's rights to claim the mantle of being defenders of the "right to life." Their claims are a fraud. The capitalist rulers' dog-eat-dog system rests on an endless series of wars, deaths and maimings of workers on the job, racism and perpetuating the oppression of women. It is the working class, and its struggle to liberate humanity from these ills, that is the defender of life.

By 2017 there were no facilities where women could get abortion in

89% of all U.S. counties, the result of the unsettled debate and the debilitating framework of the Roe v. Wade decision.

Democrats and the middle-class left insist Alito's decision will trigger a flood of assaults on gay rights and other conquests working people have a stake in defending. Overruling Roe threatens "the right to same-sex intimacy and marriage, to interracial marriage and to use contraception," Joe Biden's Justice Department claimed in a court brief.

But Alito's leaked draft plainly states the opposite: "To ensure our decision is not misunderstood or mischaracterized, we emphasize that ... nothing in this opinion should be understood to cast doubt on precedents that do not concern abortion."

The "cancel culture" left has already made it clear they oppose a debate on these issues, and intend to shut down discussion and do damage to any who disagree with them by any means necessary. The Madison office of anti-abortion group Wisconsin Family Action was hit with an arson attack May 8. "If abortions aren't safe then you aren't either," was spray painted on their wall.

Protesters also showed up outside the houses where the families of Alito, and Justices Brett Kavanaugh and John Roberts, who didn't sign on to Alito's draft, live. More such attacks are to be expected.

Democrats complement these attacks with calls for opponents of Alito's draft to get them elected. They pledge to change the character of the Supreme Court to make it a more "progressive" institution, adopting rulings that should be the province of Congress and the states.

A class-struggle road forward

But real progress for working people and our rights never comes from the courts. It is always the product of gigantic class struggles, which transform people, public opinion and open the door to human progress.

Working people should view the debate over the draft ruling as a crucial opportunity to join discussion about the working-class road forward that is needed for women and for our families.

"Workers should look to our own capacities to act together to defend ourselves. That requires organizing independently of the bosses and their Democratic and Republican parties," Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress in New Jersey, told the *Militant*. "Workers need to form our own political party, a labor party, to lead the fight for women's emancipation and to replace capitalist rule with a workers and farmers government."

After win, then loss, at NY warehouses, Amazon workers press fight for union

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK — "We're still at the beginning of the fight for the union," Chris Smalls, president of the Amazon Labor Union, told the *Militant* May 9. The union won the vote for recognition at the JFK8 warehouse in Staten Island by 2,654 to 2,131 in early April, a vote challenged by Amazon bosses, but lost the vote at the nearby, smaller LDJ5 sort center by 618 to 380 a month later.

Amazon spent millions of dollars trying to defeat the union at both facilities. After losing the vote at JFK8, bosses stepped up their "captive audience" meetings across the street, where they presented anti-union propaganda and pressured workers to vote no, without any opportunity for union supporters to respond. They also brought in more anti-union "consultants" at \$400 an hour.

When asked via email why the company does not allow the union viewpoint to be presented at the mandatory meetings, Amazon spokesperson Barbara Agrait told the *Militant*, "If the union vote passes, it will impact everyone at the site."

Smalls says the union is going to "make sure that we keep our stronghold at JFK8," after the vote at LDJ5.

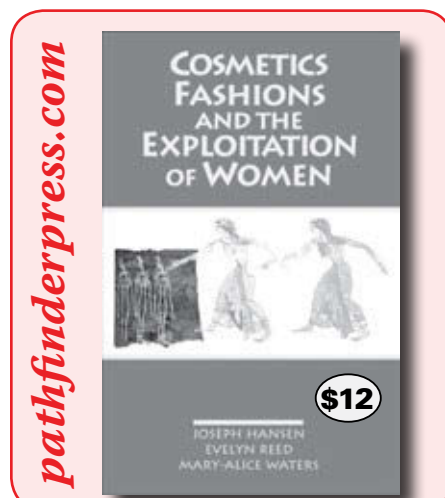
That is going to be a fight.

Amazon bosses have filed a petition with the National Labor Relations Board raising 25 objections to the union win at JFK8, urging the NLRB to overturn the vote. Amazon got the government agency to move the hearing for its challenge from New York to Arizona, claiming NLRB Region 29 officials "gave the appearance of support" to the union. The hearing is set for June 13.

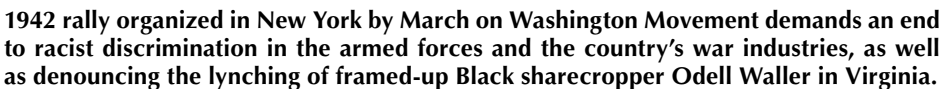
At the beginning of May Amazon fired two workers active in fighting for the union, Tristan Dutchin and Mat Cusick. Dutchin told the press Amazon said he failed to make productivity goals, which require workers pick hundreds of packages per hour.

Many workers have told *Militant* reporters the work pace at the Staten Island warehouses is grueling and they lack adequate breaks. These conditions help ensure turnover is 150% a year.

"Individual performance metrics are a key business tool," Amazon spokesperson Agrait said.



Below is an excerpt from Fighting Racism in World War II: From the Pages of the 'Militant,' one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for May. It provides a week-by-week account of struggles against discrimination and lynch-mob terror from 1939 to 1945. This includes inside the military, weapons plants and the unions, despite appeals by the Franklin Roosevelt administration to end resistance until after the U.S. "victory" in World War II. These battles stood on the shoulders of the struggles of the 1930s that built the industrial unions and paved the way for the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s. This article, "CIO Committee Fights Jim Crow," is from the Nov. 4, 1944, Militant. Copyright © 1980 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



According to Director George Weaver's most recent report, the number of state, county, and municipal committees has increased from fifty as of March 15, 1944, to eighty-five as of August 15, 1944. Most significant is the fact that committees have been organized for the first time in Georgia, North Carolina, West Virginia, Kentucky, Texas, Kansas, and Alabama. Any movement capable of organizing effective branches committed to abolish racial discrimination in those states really means business. Furthermore, it bids fair to become the medium through which will come the final victorious assault on all the

The Michigan state committee initiated the prosecution of the Cody Hotel in Grand Rapids, involving discrimination on July 11 during the Michigan CIO convention. The delegation from Local 208, UAW-CIO, had arranged to house their delegates at this hotel. The local had received written confirmation from the manager agreeing to house the entire delegation. The white delegates arrived first and were housed. Later, when the Negro members of the delegation arrived, they were refused accommodations. The following resolution was submitted to the convention and unanimously endorsed: "That the hotel

These are only a few examples of what the CIO is doing. It deserves and has the allegiance of the Negro people. With the more crushing oppressions that are planned by the ruling class, the labor movement will have to adopt more militant means to defend the brown workers against race discrimination. In defense of the trade union movement itself, it is of utmost importance that every militant worker, black or white, rally support within his union to fight discrimination and Jim Crowism wherever it rears its ugly head.

— *IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP* —

ENGLAND: London: 5 Norman Road (first floor). Seven Sisters. Post code: N15 4ND. Tel: 020-3538 8900. Email: cllondon@fastmail.fm **Manchester:** 329, Royal Exchange Buildings, 3 Old Bank St. Post code: M2 7PE. Tel: (0161) 312-8119. Email: clmanchr@gmail.com

No worker needs to die on the job!

Two bakery workers were killed on the job in North Carolina in recent weeks, among the thousands killed at work every year. The AFL-CIO reported last month that in 2020, 340 workers were killed because of hazardous conditions on the job and another 120,000 died from diseases caused by their work. Neither the bosses nor their government does anything serious to halt this, nor can they.

This is a class question. Workers need to use our unions to take control of production away from the bosses and into our own hands. This is the only way to protect our lives and limbs, and of those who use the goods we produce and live near the mines, mills and plants where we work.

For the bosses their relentless drive for profits and market share is all that counts. Workers who are killed are easily replaced. Under capitalism, workers that are ground down through overwork or maimed on the job are simply cast aside. Some 5,000 nurses in Palo Alto, California, showed what is possible when they struck April 25 and made gains in their fight for better conditions for themselves and the patients they care for.

Workers need to set line speeds, ensure new hires get proper training, and control how the job is organized. Our unions need to be able to shut down production if conditions are unsafe. This goes hand-in-hand with fighting bosses' efforts to extend our workday,

compel us to work endless overtime, and to impose arduous and ever-changing work schedules that wreak havoc with our lives and families. Our unions need to fight to force the bosses to open their books — *all* their financial records — to inspection by workers and consumers committees, so the steps they take to exploit us and steal the wealth our labor produces are laid bare. Where necessary we can take over their companies.

Fighting for workers control is inseparable from the fight to halt the capitalist rulers' poisoning of the earth, air and oceans and to strengthen the working class, the only class that can safeguard the planet and its resources for future generations.

Workers' confidence in our own capacities and worth grows through our class struggles, including the fight to exercise control over production. And this prepares workers to take over management of the entire economy. It puts us in a position to harness scientific advances and utilize the vast potential of the labor of workers and farmers to ensure food, electricity and other essentials are available to all worldwide.

We will need to build our own political party, a labor party, to organize workers in uncompromising struggle against the exploiting classes and chart a course to take political power from them and establish a workers and farmers government. That's what Cuba's socialist revolution shows is both necessary and possible.

Capitalist crisis stokes inflation, as bosses profit

Continued from front page

strike last year, posted a 15% increase in earnings. Four of the biggest meat-processing companies tripled their net profit margins, while underpaying farmers and attempting to drive down workers' wages and conditions on the job.

The bosses try all kinds of tricks to get more for less, like nibbling away at the contents of their products while leaving prices the same. But the key to their rising profits is that they come at the expense of the workers. It's a class question.

Working people have seen their real wages drop. The government, which finagles its figures to hide the real impact of inflation, admits that consumer prices rose at an annual rate of 8.5% in March, the steepest increase since 1982. As all workers know from experience, the things we need most, like food, fuel and housing, leapt up higher than that.

In New York City, where renters make up two-thirds

of all households, rents rose 33% last year. Roughly 2,000 eviction cases have been filed by landlords every week since March. Nationally rents are up 18%.

The surge in profits so far eclipses any increase in workers' pay that even some of the media shills for the capitalist class have given up on the oft-repeated lie that higher wages push up prices. "It's completely inconsistent with a wage-price spiral," George Pearkes of the Bespoke Investment Group told Bloomberg, "there is no other way to put it."

The so-called wage-price spiral has *never* been true. Bosses always strive to pay workers as close to what we need to barely survive, and always less than the value of what we produce. The "surplus" — after taking out what is necessary to replace machinery, etc. — they take as profits. Rising wages simply mean workers have been able to wrest more of the wealth they produce by their labor power, and the bosses get less. This is what we try to use our unions to accomplish.

Inflation has soared worldwide because governments have been printing vast amounts of money to try to buy their way out of today's crisis of the capitalist system, and to help their own country's bosses compete ever more fiercely with rivals abroad. This spurs demand, shortages and rising prices.

Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, explains in *New International* no. 10, "Under such conditions, competing capitalist commercial interests bid prices up and up and up and up in an ultimately self-defeating effort to reap surplus profits."

Working people have begun to use their unions to fight back. Members of United Steelworkers Local 5 in Richmond are on strike against Chevron to demand higher wages and relief from dangerously long work schedules. Over 5,000 nurses in Palo Alto, California, just won wage gains and other advances with a five-day strike at the Stanford Health Care system.

A key demand in strikes last year by the United Auto Workers against John Deere and by the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers unionists at Kellogg's was for cost-of-living adjustment clauses. At Kellogg's the bosses were forced to agree to regular cost-of-living pay adjustments of up to \$3 an hour through 2026.

This is a concrete step working people can use to protect ourselves, making bosses raise our wages whenever prices go up. "These struggles set an example for workers everywhere and deserve our support," Lea Sherman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress from New Jersey, told the *Militant*. "We need cost-of-living adjustments in our union contracts, in retirement benefits and Social Security."

Another bakery worker's death

Another woman died on the job in North Carolina May 3 after getting stuck inside an industrial bread machine for an hour, the second such death in the state in three weeks.

Virginia López Severiano, 44, was cleaning an industrial food mixer used to make bread at Azteca Market in Selma when half of her body got trapped inside the machine. Crews spent nearly 90 minutes taking the machine apart to free her. She was taken by helicopter to Duke University Hospital for emergency surgery to save her arm, but died from injuries.

Her death, like that of 22-year-old Bibiana Arellano Delabra, who was crushed to death April 16 while operating a large industrial mixing machine at an Automatic Rolls plant in Clayton, is a product of the bosses' drive for profit at the expense of safety and workers' lives. The bread machine was on when López Severiano tried to clean it.

"No worker has to die on the job," Samir Hazboun, a bakery worker and Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Ohio, told the *Militant*. "All work can be done safely. But for this to happen workers need to organize and use our unions to take control over all phases of production, including mandatory lockout of all machinery being serviced, the pace of work, number of workers assigned to each job, work schedules and more."

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

Construction workers

Continued from front page

of Laborers' International Union of North America Local 183. They work as house framers; tile, carpet and hardwood installers; and in other trades. Local 183 is the largest construction local in North America, with more than 58,000 members in the Greater Toronto Area. Like in other areas, many in the union are immigrant workers.

Members of International Union of Operating Engineers Local 793, who operate cranes and other heavy construction equipment, walked out at the same time.

Some 15,000 carpenters in the industrial, commercial and institutional sector also went on strike across the province May 9 after voting to reject the bosses' last offer four days earlier. The strikers are members of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America.

In a video update to strikers May 7, Local 793 Business Manager Mike Gallagher said employer claims that the union was refusing to talk was a lie. They're ready to sit down right now and discuss an offer that meets workers' needs — wages that deal with inflation, especially in fuel costs, and for the bosses to cover workers' parking fees in downtown areas. Gallagher thanked the strikers for their solidarity, saying the strike had shut down all sites.

The two unions set up picket lines the same day that 1,500 striking truck drivers who move earth out of construction sites, members of the Ontario Dump Truck Association, ended their successful strike, which had begun March 21. The truckers inspired working people in the region by forcing their bosses to agree to significant improvements in wages and work conditions. (See article on page 5).

Laborers' union officials are currently negotiating 15 contracts that expired April 30. Some of them have provisions that have been in place for over 30 years.

"Our members work hard and are critical to building housing across" the Greater Toronto Area, said Laborers' Local 183 Business Manager Jack Oliveira in a May 1 media release. "We're ready to get back to work, but the Contractors' Associations needs to offer a fair proposal that respects our members and the work they do."

Helping to fuel the determination of the strikers is that during the pandemic the government considered construction "essential," while it ordered the shut down of other industries. Construction workers were told to stay on the job. They feel that since they put their health at risk, the bosses should reflect that in the terms of a new contract.

The strikers could face government strikebreaking action. In past construction strikes the provincial government, using the anti-labor Ontario Labour Relations Act, has ordered construction workers back to work after six weeks on strike, forcing them to accept the binding decision of a government-appointed arbitrator.

This is another reason why solidarity from the labor movement and working people everywhere is needed now. Send messages to LiUNA Local 183, 1263 Wilson Ave., Suite 205, East Wing, Toronto ON, M3M 3G2, Canada, as well as IUOE Local 793 Business Manager Mike Gallagher at (905) 469-9299, ext. 2202.

Special Offer Teamster Series

*Lessons from U.S. labor
battles of the 1930s*

by Farrell Dobbs

*"The principal lesson of
the Teamster experience
is not that under an
adverse relationship of
forces, the workers can
be overcome, but that
with proper leadership,
they can overcome."*

**\$16 each, all four for \$50
pathfinderpress.com**

