

## 'Militant' drive for new readers, \$165,000 fund go over the top!

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Members of the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the U.K. have taken over the top the international *Militant* drive to win new readers and raise \$165,000 to keep getting the paper out. They won 1,692 readers to the *Militant*, got out 1,981 books by SWP leaders and other revolutionaries, and collected contributions totaling \$169,561 for the Militant Fighting Fund!

Welcome to all new readers and congratulations to everyone who participated.

The response shows the expanding interest among working people in the SWP's program and activity. Every party branch made their goals, which were higher than other recent efforts.

Throughout the drive party members and supporters distributed the SWP's statement "Defend Ukraine's independence! For defeat of Moscow's invasion! U.S. troops, nuclear

Continued on page 3

## Case strike: 'We need schedules that don't tear families apart'

BY NAOMI CRAINE

STURTEVANT, Wis. — "Your job shouldn't be your whole life," Mario Palacios told the *Militant* as he walked the picket line outside the Case New Holland plant in this suburb of Racine May 10. "The last thing you want to do is tear families apart."

Palacios has worked at Case for 25 years, building tractors and industrial equipment. He and the other members of United Auto Workers Local 180 have been on strike since May 2. They're demanding pay raises to keep up with inflation and schedules that allow workers to spend time with their families.

Members of UAW Local 807 at the Case plant in Burlington, Iowa, are also part of the strike, bringing the total to over 1,000 workers at the two locations.

Chris Steward, with four years at the Burlington plant, told the local *Hawk Eye*, "We'd like to be able to plan a family vacation for when

Continued on page 3

## Ukraine fighters push back invasion - Moscow out now!

Unite workers in Ukraine, Russia against Putin's war!



Anna Zaitseva with infant son in Zaporizhzhia after evacuation from Mariupol's Azovstal steel-works April 30. Her husband stayed behind to aid soldiers resisting Moscow's intense assault.

BY ROY LANDERSEN

In a successful counteroffensive, Ukrainian forces pushed the invading Russian army back from Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, reaching the Russian border May 16. Moscow's plans to capture more of the

pull out of Ukraine from around Kyiv, Sumy and other northern centers.

The U.S. imperialist rulers had the same expectations as Putin, shuttering their embassy in Kyiv when the fighting started.

But the courageous resistance of

Continued on page 6

## 43,000 construction workers strike across greater Toronto metro area



Rankandfile.ca

Striking construction workers on picket line in Ontario May 10. Then some 7,000 drywall workers downed their tools, joining 36,000 carpenters and other workers already on strike.

BY JOHN STEELE

Over 7,000 residential and commercial drywall workers downed their tools, joining the ongoing strike of 36,000 Ontario construction workers. This brings the total on strike as of May 14 to 43,000. They are fighting for higher wages in face of galloping inflation.

Other workers are threatening to join the strike movement. On May 11, 8,000 members of the painters' union

voted overwhelmingly to give union negotiators a strike mandate.

The strikes began after workers in several of the bargaining units voted down new contract agreements with the construction bosses. Contractors had agreed to raise pay over a three-year contract by a total of 9.5% in the Toronto area and 9% in the rest of Ontario.

However, in the middle of negotia-

Continued on page 5

**Defend independence of Ukraine!**  
**End US sanctions on Russia!**

Donbas have stalled.

The Vladimir Putin regime had insisted it would achieve a quick and easy victory over Ukraine, seize the capital, Kyiv, oust the government and take other major cities. This entire scheme failed as Russian forces, badly beaten and demoralized, had to

## The road forward to meet US rulers' assault on families, women's rights

BY TERRY EVANS

Numerous demonstrations took place across the country May 14 following the leak of a draft Supreme Court ruling that would overturn the court's 1973 Roe v. Wade decision on abortion.

Justice Samuel Alito's draft holds the Roe decision was not constitutional, and hands decision-making on abortion and related questions to state legislatures and public debate. It would mean that in states where abortion is legal those laws would continue to stand. Some state governments have passed or are considering legislation to impose restrictions on access to the procedure. Nationally the door would be open to a widespread debate.

Continued on page 9

## Cattle rancher describes crisis facing working farmers in Texas

BY JOSEFINA OTERO

FAIRFIELD, Texas — Alyson Kennedy, SWP candidate for governor of Texas, party member Dennis Richter and the author of this article met Nathaniel Turner on a recent campaign trip here. We were eating lunch in a local diner where he is the manager. As we were paying our bill, he asked us why we were in town. "I'm the Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor and we're

Continued on page 2

## Inside

**EDIT: Fight for a sliding scale of wages and hours** 9

Sri Lanka protesters stand firm against gov't attacks 3

Putin's charge Ukraine gov't is 'fascist' is a lie 7

—On the picket line, p. 5—

Striking refinery workers picket Chevron headquarters

UK rail cleaners strike for higher wages, sick pay



# Texas rancher describes crisis

**Continued from front page**  
here to find out about what ranchers and farmers face and write an article about it for the *Militant*,” Kennedy said.

Turner said he’s a small-scale rancher and invited us to come back for more discussion. He subscribed to the paper and bought a copy of *Teamster Rebellion*, where SWP leader Farrell Dobbs describes how party members in Minneapolis in the 1930s helped organize and lead a fighting class-struggle labor movement in the Upper Midwest.

We returned a couple weeks later and he invited us to have lunch in another restaurant where he works as a server. We talked for a couple hours.

Fairfield is in Freestone County, about 100 miles southeast of Dallas-Fort Worth. With a population of 19,500, over 2,000 work on the land, producing live-stock, poultry, other animal products, hay and other crops. The 2017 U.S. Agriculture Census says there were 1,799 Caucasian and 440 Black producers on the land there. Some 97% are family farms, and only 22% hire labor.

“Taking your cow to be processed at a slaughterhouse costs 99 cents a pound, about \$660 to butcher and package. And it must be USDA inspected or the rancher can’t sell the meat,” he said. “The alternative is to sell your cow to a feed lot. The feed lot fattens the cow and sells it to a packing plant.” Naturally, payments to ranchers are kept as low as possible.

“The price of fuel has doubled,” he added. “Diesel went from \$2.20 a gallon to over \$5. Fertilizer is up \$125 a ton. The cost of hay has more than doubled.”

“Black people have a long history in the area, many coming to farm and ranch after the Civil War. I think because of this history there is less racism against Blacks here,” Turner said. In

Texas there are 11,741 Black producers, more than in any other state nationwide, almost a quarter of all Black farmers.

### Fight for workers, farmers alliance

“It’s important for the working class to have alliances with small farmers to change this society,” Kennedy said. “There will have to be a revolution in this country so working people can take power and, in alliance with producers on the land, create a different kind of government, a workers and farmers government. That’s what the SWP fights for.

“This won’t happen overnight,” Kennedy said. “But we will begin to see growing struggles by working people in response to a deepening world crisis of the capitalist system today.”

“How is this going to happen?” Turner asked. Richter pointed to the example of the Teamsters union in Minneapolis in the 1930s. “Conditions facing coal haulers led them to fight for big changes. To stand up and fight starts with people like those workers in Minneapolis.”

“Unions are good because you have a voice,” Turner said. “I’ve been reading *Teamster Rebellion*, and I was impacted when the author said, ‘Do you want to live your whole life as a coward?’”

“To keep your farm here you have to show the federal tax agency you made a profit,” Turner said. A farmer can only report losses for three consecutive years. “Now they’re trying to make into law that a rancher can’t administer antibiotics. Instead, you’ll need to get a vet, so more comes out of a rancher’s pocket.”

“Just a few months after the January 1959 Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro and the new revolutionary government nationalized the land, guaranteeing that those who farm or ranch would never lose their land as



Alyson Kennedy, SWP candidate for governor, and Dennis Richter discuss challenges facing ranchers amid capitalist crisis with Nathaniel Turner, center, at his Fairfield ranch May 9.

long as they worked it,” Richter said. After eating, Turner took us to see his 73 cattle several miles from here.

“I grew up in Fairfield where my father was a minister,” Turner said. “I moved to Indiana where I worked in the restaurant and entertainment industry hosting banquets. I moved back 10 years

ago and was going to buy some land to ranch until I found out it costs \$3,000 an acre. You need to purchase more than 100 acres to get a price break, so it’s inevitable big businesses buy up the land. I rented 90 acres for \$27.77 an acre. Being a rancher made me a better person. It made me think about other people.”

## SWP to host Ohio conference to discuss road forward for working people today

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Socialist Workers Party is hosting its annual International Active Workers Conference at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio, June 9-11.

The conference will bring together members and supporters of the communist movement and others from around the world who are interested in building a revolutionary working-class party capable of leading working people in their millions to take political power. The three days of presentations, classes and other activities will take up key questions facing workers and farmers today.

Last year’s conference was held under the banner “Leading the Working Class to Take Power: Join the Socialist Workers Party! Build the Communist Vanguard!”

The gathering will feature talks and classes by Socialist Workers Party leaders addressing Moscow’s invasion of

Ukraine and the courageous resistance of Ukrainian workers and farmers, as well as opposition to growing imperialist militarization and the threat of new and wider wars; the state of the class struggle in the U.S. and building a fighting alliance of workers and farmers; the importance of the example of Cuba’s socialist revolution amid capitalism’s growing world disorder; the challenges facing working-class families and women as the crisis of capitalism deepens; and the place of Jew-hatred in the imperialist epoch and how to fight it. Plans for bold use of the Socialist Workers Party’s 2022 campaign will be laid out.

If you’re interested in building a working-class party and want to learn more about the communist movement, and would like to discuss attending the conference, contact the SWP or Communist League branch nearest you listed on page 8.

## THE MILITANT

### Fight against racism key to uniting working class

*Since 1928 the ‘Militant’ has reported on and joined in the fight against racism. The ‘Militant’ points to the need to overcome national divisions in the working class, through mutual solidarity and uncompromising struggle, to forge a proletarian vanguard.*



New York rally in 1942 demands end of discrimination in armed forces and on the job.

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# ‘Militant’ drive for new readers over the top!

**Continued from front page**  
arms out of Europe, *all* of Europe!” It was issued March 3 by Jack Barnes, the party’s national secretary, on behalf of the SWP’s National Committee. We explained why Washington’s sanctions on Russia are an obstacle to building unity and solidarity between working people in Ukraine and working people in Russia, including Russian soldiers, against Moscow’s invasion.

We also found widespread interest in discussing how workers here can defend ourselves against attacks by the bosses and their government. In addition to subscribing, many workers that party members met when they knocked on their doors kicked in extra cash to the fund.

As the drive was coming to a close, sizable actions were organized in a number of cities after a leak from the Supreme Court indicated a majority of justices intend to overturn Roe v. Wade.

In Atlanta, some 3,500 people rallied May 14. SWP members set up two literature tables at the action to discuss defending workers and our families, charting a working-class course for women’s emancipation and the stakes for working people in opposing Moscow’s war.

“The corporation where I work has no idea what we workers face,” retail worker Kimberlee Dor said as she signed up for a *Militant* subscription. She said bosses push them to unload trucks with too few workers.

“Workers face this in every industry,” said SWP member Janice Lynn. “It’s part of the capitalists’ drive to increase their profits.” She said workers and our unions need to fight to take control of production from the bosses, so we decide how all aspects

of the job are organized.  
At the rally 23 people signed up for *Militant* subscriptions and 14 books were sold. Several youth brought friends over to the table so they could also subscribe.

**Heightened interest among truckers**  
Around the country party members visited truck stops to discuss the conditions truckers face, including the threat to their livelihoods from rising fuel prices. Drivers were eager to talk about the protests earlier in the year in Ottawa. The Canadian government arrested hundreds of truckers, seized their rigs and bank accounts, and carried out other attacks on their political rights.

SWP members from Dallas-Fort Worth visited 17 Texas truck stops, selling 23 subscriptions, 24 books and collecting \$59 in contributions for the Militant Fighting Fund. *Teamster Rebellion* by SWP leader Farrell Dobbs was one of the most popular titles. Dobbs recounts the story of the battles he helped lead of coal haulers fighting for union recognition in Minneapolis in the 1930s and the over-the-road campaign to organize drivers into the Teamsters union across the Midwest.

Some 20 people rallied at the county courthouse in Fort Worth May 10 to protest abuse and neglect of prisoners being held at the Tarrant County Jail. SWP members joined the action.

Kristina Salinas described the treat-

ment of her sister, Kelly Masten, who had a seizure. Instead of being taken to a hospital Masten was incarcerated at the Tarrant County Jail for 10 days. “There are no neurologists on staff there,” Salinas told the rally. Several former prisoners attended the demonstration. Three protesters subscribed to the *Militant*, and one bought the title *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism*.

Interest in the *Militant* and books by revolutionaries was high at book fairs in Los Angeles and Berkeley, California. A total 91 subscriptions and 319 books were sold.

As they campaigned with the party’s program and literature, members and supporters in New Jersey collected signatures to get SWP candidates for U.S. Congress, Joanne Kuniansky and Lea Sherman, on the ballot. More than 150 people signed up in each district where the SWP is running, more than triple the number required for ballot status.

A similar ballot drive is underway in Minnesota May 17-31. In June the SWP will campaign to get its candidate for Congress on the ballot in Philadelphia.



Militant/Valerie Edward  
**High School student Linda Bolster, left, subscribes to *Militant* after speaking with SWP supporter Holly Harkness at May 14 rally for women’s rights in Atlanta.**

The openings for the SWP to use its campaigns to get the word out about its program and activities was shown by a May 16 feature in the *Sacramento Bee* entitled “Meet the Socialist Workers Party candidate running in California to be a US senator,” describing the campaign of Eleanor Garcia.

To get involved, contact the SWP or Communist League branch nearest you listed in the directory on page 8.

## Sri Lanka protesters stand firm against gov’t attacks

**BY VIVIAN SAHNER**  
Public anger exploded in Sri Lanka May 9 after several hundred supporters of Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, many armed with iron bars, attacked peaceful protesters camped

out in Colombo, the country’s capital. Police did little to stop the attack that left nine hospitalized and up to 150 injured. Two of the main campsites were burned down.

“They started destroying everything,” Kasumi Ranasinghe Arachchige told the media, describing the damage to the tents, including temporary showers and a library. “It seemed as if they knew what and who to look for.”

Within hours of the attack, the prime minister was forced to resign. Three other members of the Rajapaksa family have resigned from the cabinet since April. A central demand of the weekslong upsurge has been for the ouster of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, the prime minister’s brother, and his government.

Soaring inflation, spreading power outages and shortage of food and fuel are devastating the lives of millions in Sri Lanka. The country’s inflation was 30% in April, with food prices up nearly 50% from a year earlier. Weeks of largely peaceful protests by tens of thousands of workers, farmers and youth

have demanded change. On April 28 more than 100 trade unions carried out a one-day nationwide strike.

Hundreds of protesters remain in what is dubbed, “Gota-Go Village,” demanding that President Rajapaksa step down. A coalition of labor unions has set up a tent next to a group representing the deaf. Political groups, disabled veterans and students fill other tents. There are booths of artists and photographers, a tent for discussing constitutional issues, and vans with lawyers and medical volunteers.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which gutted the country’s tourist trade; skyrocketing inflation, including the fuel price hikes exacerbated by Moscow’s war against Ukraine; and billions in high interest loans from China negotiated by the former prime minister have left the country on the brink of bankruptcy. Nearly \$7 billion of its \$25 billion in foreign debt is due for repayment this year.

The pro-government attack un-

leashed a widespread response of violence and anger overnight, with pro- and anti-government supporters clashing for the first time since protests began in March. At least eight people died, more than 200 people were wounded and over 100 houses damaged, including several government officials’ homes. The government authorized the military and police to arrest people without warrants and approved shoot-on-sight orders against anyone they deem involved in violent protests.

The government had reimposed a state of emergency May 6 after police fired tear gas and arrested students protesting near parliament.

The president appointed Ranil Wickremesinghe as the new prime minister — it would be his sixth term in office. “We have a president who has lost the legitimacy of the people,” a spokesman for the Tamil National Alliance told the press, “and now a prime minister who

**Continued on page 9**

## ‘Schedules that don’t tear families apart’

**Continued from front page**  
it’s convenient for us, when it’s convenient for our family, not around the company’s time.” Workers with less than five years seniority get just one week of vacation per year, which they’re required to take during the plant’s summer shutdown.

Steward’s wife, Ashley Lee, who also works at Case, said they need raises. “We want to be able to support a family, not live week to week,” said Lee, a mother of two.

Workers at both plants also object to forced overtime and irregular schedules.

The company has been bringing in vanloads of scabs to both plants, try-

ing to continue production. Strikers in Wisconsin held a rally at the union hall May 9, one week into the walk-out, followed by mass picketing by over 100 workers at the plant

UAW members at Case struck for nearly three weeks in 2004, and the company responded with a lockout lasting four months.

On the picket line here in Wisconsin, Palacios recalled that fight. “The company built up inventory, and locked us out when they were ready,” he said. “This time we didn’t leave them a lot of finished tractors.”

The strikers welcome visits to their picket line and donations of supplies to the two union halls.

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

March 12-May 17 (final chart)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	Fund received
UNITED STATES						
Albany	35	38	60	62	\$8,500	\$8,553
Atlanta	90	106	90	100	\$11,600	\$11,839
Chicago	125	126	125	130	\$14,000	\$14,291
Cincinnati*	90	91	90	92	\$5,800	\$5,944
Dallas-Ft. Worth*	70	81	70	100	\$4,700	\$4,980
Lincoln	15	18	15	21	\$400	\$504
Los Angeles*	130	145	155	177	\$14,500	\$15,160
Miami	35	36	35	58	\$5,000	\$5,250
Minneapolis	70	81	70	86	\$5,500	\$5,640
N. New Jersey	90	92	90	96	\$7,250	\$7,697
New York	125	126	125	147	\$17,500	\$17,649
Oakland	100	100	100	108	\$14,000	\$14,380
Philadelphia	40	41	40	44	\$4,250	\$4,885
Pittsburgh	50	54	50	56	\$5,000	\$5,016
Seattle	70	82	70	71	\$13,000	\$13,681
Washington	65	68	65	68	\$5,000	\$5,042
Other		40		229		\$1,300
Total U.S.	1200	1324	1250	1645	\$136,000	\$141,811
Prisoners	45	76				
UNITED KINGDOM						
London*	55	57	60	70	\$4,000	\$5,170
Manchester*	50	52	50	76	\$2,000	\$2,050
Total U.K.	105	109	110	146	\$6,000	\$7,220
Canada	110	110	110	120	\$13,670	\$13,830
New Zealand	35	37	35	35	\$4,000	\$4,100
Australia	35	36	35	35	\$2,500	\$2,600
Total	1,530	1,692	1,540	1,981	\$162,170	\$169,561
SHOULD BE	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600	\$165,000	\$165,000
*Raised goal. Other includes 39 subs, 229 titles at book fairs						



# ‘COVID clinics in socialist Cuba show what is possible’

BY CLAUDIA KAISER-LENOIR

HAVANA — I had been here two days in late April as part of an international team of volunteers, helping set up the Pathfinder Books stand at the Havana International Book Fair, when I developed COVID-19 symptoms.

Had I been a Cuban, I would have been seen by my family doctor and nurse, either through a house call or at their office a few blocks from my home. They would know my medical history and that of my household, and be fa-

## REPORTERS NOTEBOOK

miliar with my general living situation. As with other Cubans, my medical care wouldn’t cost me a penny.

But being a visitor from abroad, friends took me to the Cira García International Clinic. After testing positive for COVID, I was taken by ambulance to the much larger Camilo Cienfuegos International Clinic.

This clinic, a renowned ophthalmological treatment center, has been converted into a COVID isolation center for foreign visitors like me. Although it continues to serve its original function on a more limited basis, it has already housed more than 2,500 COVID patients since the start of the pandemic. The day I checked in, 27 COVID-positive adults and three children accompanied by their mothers were staying there.

My check-in was prompt, X-rays were taken and an electrocardiogram performed to assess lungs and heart, and I was assigned a simple, spotless room with a private bathroom. My expenses there were entirely covered by health insurance included in the price of my airline ticket to Cuba with an extra fee of \$3 a day. All I was asked for by clinic workers was my passport, boarding pass and proof of return ticket.

I remained in isolation for 13 days. Unfortunately, I missed the entire book fair. Fortunately, I was well cared for and I learned a lot, including much of the information in this article.

Twice daily a nurse checked my vital signs, and I had two daily visits by the physician on duty. I was served three simple, well-balanced meals daily.

After 10 days of testing, my doctors determined that my antigen levels were not rising enough to fight the infection, and prescribed Nasalferon, a low-dose form of interferon administered as nose drops. Interferon has been used in Cuba as an antiviral drug since it was first developed here in the early 1980s.

During the early stages of the pandemic in Cuba, before vaccines became available, Nasalferon was widely ad-

ministered to COVID patients. Now it is only given to high-risk patients or those whose immune system reacts slowly to overcome the infection.

On day 13, I finally tested negative for COVID and was released. My nurses and doctors gave me an affectionate farewell.

The health workers I got to know at the clinic were proud of their role in helping combat the pandemic. They were proud that Cuba has created effective COVID vaccines, and that brigades of Cuban medical volunteers have helped fight the pandemic in other countries. Today some 90% of Cuba’s population, including children 2 years and older, are fully vaccinated, and over 50% are boosted.

At the same time, the country’s health care system is sharply strained under the impact of the world capitalist crisis, compounded by Washington’s brutally tightened economic sanctions. Many basic medicines have to be imported, from painkillers to blood pressure drugs, and today are nearly impossible to find. In face of this crisis, over the past several months some Cuban medical workers have left for other countries.

### How Cubans fought COVID

For the first year of the pandemic, a well-organized system of contact tracing and quarantine centers, and visits to the homes of people for whom it was harder to get around, together with other public health measures, helped slow down the spread of the virus. The sharp surge in infections in mid-2021 receded once vaccines were rolled out, and the country was able to lift many restrictions by the end of last year. As of May 15, only two COVID deaths had been reported in two weeks.

Because of the enormous costs involved in maintaining the quarantine centers — from food, air conditioning and supplies to workers’ wages — today only young children (with their mothers), the elderly and people with potential medical complications are isolated in medical facilities. Most COVID patients and their contacts quarantine at home.

I called Moraima López MacBean, a leader of the Paulo Freire Community Center in La Lisa, a large working-class district of Havana. She told me the neighborhood-based Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs) have helped organize to bring food to those isolating at home, especially those living alone or with disabilities.

Nonetheless, the forced social isolation over two years of the pandemic has taken a toll, especially among the elderly. With a life expectancy comparable to the most developed imperialist countries, Cuba has the oldest population in the Americas, and more older Cubans are living alone than ever before.

López MacBean noted the many ini-



Escambray/Vicente Brito

Food delivery during peak of pandemic in May 2020. Health care workers and other Cubans are proud of role they played in combating pandemic and at Cuba’s 90% vaccination rate.

tiatives in Cuba to draw older adults into social and productive activity. These include the Casas del Abuelo (Grandparents’ Circles), day care centers for the elderly; the University for Older Adults, for continuing education; and the tai chi exercise sessions held in neighborhoods across Cuba. Under the pandemic protocols, these programs were largely suspended.

“For me, the hardest was the end of the daily tai chi exercises,” said María Eugenia Quintana, 86, a resident of La Lisa and leader of the University for Older Adults.

The prolonged social isolation has had an impact on mental health for many older Cubans. Yudeysi Aguilar, a nurse at the Camilo Cienfuegos Clinic, told me she has seen a greater demand for geriatric and mental services at Havana clinics.

The health care workers who took care of me were particularly interested to hear about the situation in the United States. Jesús, a nurse, was surprised when I described how working people in the U.S., where the medical system is a for-profit capitalist business, with sharp class differences in how they and their bosses are treated,

have been left to fend for themselves in face of the pandemic.

Some I spoke with have had firsthand experience with the conditions working people face under capitalism. Dr. Silvio Saya, an anesthesiologist in his 30s, served for three years on an internationalist medical mission in a village in southern Bolivia. “It was disturbing for me to have to charge patients for surgery or tests,” he said about the clinic where he worked.

“I loved the work I did and learned a lot. But I never got used to it. I grew up instilled with socialist values, not capitalist ones.” Those values are the product of a socialist revolution, through which Cuba’s working people overturned capitalist rule, took state power, and for more than six decades have fought to transform society.

Before my release, I gave Dr. Saya a copy of *Red Zone*, by Cuban journalist Enrique Ubieta, one of the most popular books at the Pathfinder stand during the book fair. It’s an eyewitness account of how Cuban internationalist medical volunteers and their revolutionary government were decisive in ending the 2014–15 Ebola epidemic in West Africa. He was delighted.

### Join May 29 protests against US embargo of Cuba!

For the last two years, car caravans and protests calling for an end to the U.S. economic war on Cuba have taken place on the last Sunday of every month across the United States and around the world. For more than 60 years — under Democratic and Republican presidents alike — Washington has done everything within its power to punish the Cuban people for overthrowing the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship and carrying out the first socialist revolution in the Americas.

The worldwide economic crisis, disruptions caused by measures taken around the COVID-19 pandemic, and the impact of Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine have all made it even more difficult for Cuba to import food, fuel and many other basic necessities, as well as parts and supplies to keep things running.

This month one of the main caravans will be in Miami, home to the largest number of people of Cuban descent in the U.S. Far from being a monolithic bloc of opponents of the Cuban Revolution, large numbers of Cubans in Miami oppose the cruel U.S. embargo. The caravans there against the U.S. embargo are often the largest held each month.

Opponents of the embargo will assemble at 11 a.m. on Ponce de Leon Blvd., between Salamanca and Calabria avenues in Coral Gables May 29. This month opponents of the Cuban Revolution have called for a counterprotest at the same time and place.

The Miami Caravan Against the U.S. Blockade of Cuba and Bridges of Love are organizing to ensure a large, peaceful protest, including encouraging participation from around the country.

For more information on caravans in your area visit the National Network on Cuba at nnoc.info or contact *Militant* distributors listed on page 8.

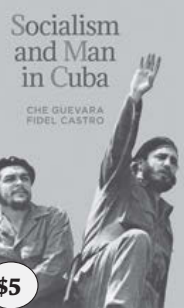
— SETH GALINSKY

### Socialism and Man in Cuba

by Che Guevara  
and Fidel Castro

Guevara explains why the revolutionary transformation of social relations necessarily involves the transformation of the working people organizing and leading that process.

pathfinderpress.com



## — CALENDAR —

### NEW YORK

#### New York

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



# —ON THE PICKET LINE—

## Striking refinery workers picket Chevron headquarters

SAN RAMON, Calif. — Dozens of striking refinery workers and family members picketed the Chevron corporate headquarters here May 10, waving signs saying, “Enough is enough, bargain in good faith,” “Safe refineries save lives,” and “500 strong striking at Chevron.”

With fuel prices skyrocketing, Chevron’s profit-hungry bosses just announced the highest quarterly earnings in almost a decade. Yet management has not budged on the strikers’ demands for sustainable work schedules, better safety procedures and wages that can keep up with inflation.

“For years they’ve taken bite after bite out of us,” refinery operator Jose Chavez told this *Militant* worker-correspondent. “Cuts in safety. Giving us a raise and then taking more money back in out-of-pocket medical expenses. And the overtime. They definitely need to hire more people!”

Refinery operator Elvira Figueroa came to the protest dressed as a rat, displaying her opinion of the company. This is her first time on strike and she is a regular volunteer at strike headquarters. “For me, the big issue is short staffing and being on call even when you have a day off,” she said. Long hours and stress from job combinations lead to a high turnover, making things worse.

The strikers, members of United Steelworkers Local 5, are maintaining picket lines 24/7 at the refinery gates in Richmond. These workers need solidarity in their fight with this oil giant.

— Betsey Stone

## UK rail cleaners strike for higher wages, sick pay

LONDON — “Our living expenses are increasing so we need better pay,” striking train cleaner Rositsa Tomova told the *Militant* outside St. Pancras International railway station here April 30. Tomova led other strikers, members of the Rail Maritime and Transport union, chanting the workers’ demands

as passengers went by.

Hundreds of cleaners, working for contractor Churchill on the Govia Thameslink Railways, HS1, Southeastern Railways and Eurostar went on strike April 27, demanding 15 pounds an hour (\$18.30) and sick pay.

Rose-Mary Afirim-Anturi has worked as a cleaner on Eurostar for 18 years. “When Churchill took over, they lowered my wages,” she said. “I lost 200 pounds a month.” The fact that Churchill only allows two weeks holiday at a time is also an issue for workers who want to visit their families abroad.

“There’s not enough staff so they expect us to do more work,” Tomova said, “which makes more money for Churchill.” On May 7 the cleaners went back to work after bosses said they would negotiate.

— Tony Hunt and Catharina Tirsén

## Quebec bakery workers fight for wage increase, safety

BOUCHERVILLE, Quebec — Over 300 workers have been locked out at the Bridor industrial bakery plant here since April 25 for demanding a wage hike to keep up with the cost of living.

Bridor locked out the members of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN) after they held a two-hour work stoppage. The workers then voted to go on strike.

The company also has plants



Militant/Betsey Stone

Striking refinery workers picket entrance to Chevron corporate headquarters in San Ramon, California, May 10. Workers are fighting for wage raises, safety, sustainable work schedules.

across the river in Montreal and in New Jersey.

Jean-Baptiste LaGuerre, the local’s vice president for health and safety, told this worker-correspondent that workers want an immediate wage increase of 17% and cost-of-living adjustments over the life of the contract. Bridor bosses are offering 2.5% to 3.5%. The inflation rate in Canada is 6.7%. The unionists have been without a contract since Dec. 31, 2020.

Bosses had been running the bakery prior to the lockout with 300 workers, but 400 are needed, said striker Karine Morisseau, the local’s business agent. “They do a lot of overtime as well as

working on the production lines at a very high speed with less workers. This increases the risk of accidents and exhaustion,” she said. Workers have to work on holidays and can be made to take their vacation during the annual plant shutdown.

“We are seeking a better reconciliation between work and family life,” said striker Laila Hajby, the local’s vice president for grievances.

On May 2 the workers protested at an event in Montreal where Bridor bosses were given a prize by the Chamber of Commerce “for excellence in management.”

— Joe Young

# 43,000 construction workers strike in greater Toronto

Continued from front page

tions the federal government agency Statistics Canada released its monthly inflation numbers, reporting a 6.7% increase in March alone, a rise from 5.7% the month before.

Workers said the proposed wage increase agreed to by the bosses and union officials would be more than wiped out after the first year of the contract.

The strike is the largest in the residential construction industry in over 20 years. On May 1, 15,000 residen-

tial skilled workers walked off the job paralyzing high-rise and low-rise housing construction. About 6,000 operating engineers, who operate cranes and other heavy machinery, struck at the same time. The following week 15,000 members of the carpenters’ union joined the strike.

The contracts of the many unions involved expired April 30.

There are about 570,000 construction workers in Ontario, many of them workers who have emigrated to Canada relatively recently. Almost half live

and work in the Greater Toronto Area.

The strikes are taking place amid a construction boom. There are more than 200 high crane sites in the Toronto area alone and thousands more housing units are under construction throughout the province.

As of May 12, negotiations between the bosses and carpenters’ union officials had “stalled,” Mike Yorke, president and director of public affairs and innovation for the Carpenters’ District Council of Ontario, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, told the press.

“The livelihoods of our members are being impacted and we demand that the employers get back to the bargaining table as soon as possible,” Yorke said.

Under the anti-worker Ontario Labor Relations Act, strikes in the housing sector must end within six weeks — in this case by June 15 — or the disputed issues are turned over to a government-appointed arbitrator.

The six-week limit, however, does not apply to workers in the commercial sector. A longer strike by these workers could cause significant delays in the construction of hospitals, office towers, light rail transit, as well as holding up the multibillion-dollar renovations to government buildings in Ottawa.

The strikers need and deserve the solidarity of all working people. Send messages to LiUNA Local 183, 1263 Wilson Ave., Suite 205, East Wing, Toronto ON, M3M 3G2, Canada; IUOE Local 793 Business Manager Mike Gallagher at (905) 469-9299, ext. 2202; Carpenters’ District Council of Ontario and Drywall Acoustic Lathing & Installation Local 675, 222 Rowntree Dairy Road, Woodbridge ON L4L 9T2. Tel.: (905) 652-4140.

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



June 2, 1997

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — Anzac Day celebrations here were seized on by capitalist politicians and media to glorify past military adventures of New Zealand imperialism, and to gain support for the government’s push to refurbish the country’s armed forces in preparation for future conflicts. Anzac Day commemorates the Gallipoli campaign, a bloody eight-month conflict in Turkey during World War I.

New Zealand’s armed forces are designed to operate in partnership with those of Australian imperialism and have been “involved internationally” in many imperialist interventions under the banner of the United Nations since the Gulf War, just as they were involved in the aggression against Korea and Vietnam in previous decades.

For the ruling class, joining with Washington in major conflicts remains the lodestar of its foreign and military policy.



June 2, 1972

MONTREAL — The massive strike wave continues across Quebec in the wake of the jailing of the three presidents of major labor bodies. More than 100,000 workers in private and public sectors have walked off the job. Their demands are: free the jailed union leadership; repeal Bill 19, which broke the strike of the 210,000 public service workers; and amnesty for all unionists fined or jailed for ignoring injunctions that violated their right to strike.

The strike began May 9. By May 12, a dozen cities and towns were totally strikebound. Roving squads of strikers patrolled the streets.

The capitalist press expresses deep unease. Typical is the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, “We are witnessing a new surge of a third political force, one outside the normal political structure of government and opposition; one in fact dedicated to their destruction.”



May 31, 1947

The Taft-Hartley slave labor legislation hangs over the American trade union movement like a razor-sharp sword. The trade union bureaucrats have sent appeals to [President] Truman to please reject this legislation. The AFL officials have ear-marked \$1,500,000 for an advertising and radio campaign to inform the public.

But this is utterly inadequate. The great mass of workers want to exert real pressure on Truman and Congress. This can come only from demonstrations and mass actions involving millions of participants. Resolutions passed by union bodies throughout the country show that the union ranks want a 24-hour nationwide protest strike.

They want a definitive answer to the Taft-Hartley legislation. The way to do that is to organize an independent Labor Party! Mobilize on the political field and put labor’s own representatives in office!



# Ukraine pushes back invasion

Continued from front page

working people in Ukraine has turned these expectations on their head.

Moscow's war has accelerated the breakdown of the imperialist "world order" that came out of Washington's victory as top dog in the second imperialist world war. Today there is growing world disorder, as each major capitalist power seeks a road to defend its own national interests first and foremost. Rulers from Sweden to Germany to Australia have announced plans to beef up their military. The threat of new wars grows.

Under a deal between Kyiv and Moscow, close to 1,000 Ukrainian troops and volunteers, some wounded, surrendered to Russian forces and were evacuated by May 18 from the Azovstal steel works in Mariupol. They've been sent to Russian-held towns in Donetsk and are supposed to be exchanged for Russian prisoners of war.

They're being held and interrogated as part of a probe by Moscow into alleged "Ukrainian regime crimes." The Azovstal fighters have often been smeared by the Russian government as Russian-hating "neo-Nazis."

Civilians, including many relatives of workers at the steel mill who escaped from the plant to Ukrainian-controlled Zaporizhzhia, said these soldiers were responsible for saving their lives.

The Ukraine government told the fighters holding out in Azovstal's tunnels to lay down their arms. Their resistance tied down Russian forces for almost three months.

Moscow's most significant gains have

come in Ukraine's south, where they now occupy territory from Kherson to Enerhodar to Mariupol, connecting the "People's Republics" of the Donbas with Russian-occupied Crimea.

Putin denies Ukraine is a separate country and claims the right to subjugate the Ukrainian people. Like other oppressed nations incarcerated in the czarist prison house of nations, Ukraine established independence in the 1920s after the Bolshevik Revolution, when its native culture and language flourished. But it was once again reduced to servitude as part of the counterrevolution led by Joseph Stalin. It won independence again following the disintegration of Stalinist regimes in the former Soviet Union in 1991.

Working people in Ukraine joined the popular 2014 Maidan uprising that overturned the brutal pro-Moscow regime of Viktor Yanukovich. That rebellion deepened the confidence of millions that they could defend their country's sovereignty against Moscow.

"The desire to defend one's motherland ... really does exist and they intend to fight to the last," Mikhail Khodaryonok, a retired Russian colonel said on the widely viewed "60 Minutes" Russian talk show May 16. The situation "will get worse" for Moscow, he warned, "practically the whole world is against us."

State media has mostly repeated the Putin regime's rationalizations for its murderous onslaught. The fact that views like Khodaryonok's are



Remains of Russian pontoons, tanks, weapons at river in Donbas May 11 after being destroyed by Ukrainian artillery. In several attempts to cross pontoon bridges, hundreds of Moscow's troops were killed and over 70 Russian armored vehicles, foreground and inset, were destroyed.

now openly expressed reflects deepening opposition toward the regime over its conduct of the war.

This was underlined by failed river crossings by Russian forces in the Donbas, timed around Putin's May 9 Victory Day celebration in Moscow. They planned to cut off Severodonetsk, the easternmost town held by Ukrainian forces.

But Ukrainian artillery fire destroyed them. Hundreds of Russian troops were killed and more than 70 tanks and other armored vehicles destroyed.

In response to the series of Russian setbacks, Putin purged top commanders of the army and navy. He yanked Moscow's FSB intelligence service out of Ukraine, replacing it with military intelligence.

## Impact of war in Ukraine, Russia

Moscow's brutal war has almost halved the size of Ukraine's economy. Its naval blockade of Black Sea ports has prevented Ukrainian imports of fuel and exports of grain. Its bombardment across the country has targeted rail connections, fuel storages, grain silos and other vital infrastructure.

A wing of the U.S. rulers is now urging Washington to pressure Kyiv to shelve plans for further advances and reach a peace deal with Putin on terms that allow him to "save face." Their view of what's best for U.S. imperialism — including future collaboration with Moscow against Beijing — comes before Ukraine sovereignty. Due to sanctions by Washington

and other imperialist powers, the Russian economy has already contracted sharply, with working people getting hit hardest.

Workers in Russia are finding ways to resist the impact of the crisis deepened by Putin's war and U.S. sanctions. At the Hemont construction complex in Nizhnekamsk, in Russia's Tatarstan region, owned by Turkish capitalists, workers walked out March 5. Hundreds of workers, who are flown in from Turkey, marched off the job after their wages were reduced following the sharp collapse of the ruble under the impact of Washington's sanctions.

The strikers demanded the cuts to their salaries be reversed. The strike ended after bosses agreed to pay them at a higher rate.

Some Russians are offering solidarity to Ukrainians living in Russia or in Moscow-occupied territories in Ukraine. Risking interrogation or arrest, Russian volunteers have formed networks to help thousands of Ukrainians get out of Russia. They help with money, transport, putting Ukrainians up in their homes and providing visa advice.

"It's a miracle we got out," Bogdan Goncharov, a former builder in Mariupol, told Reuters. He, his wife and 7-year-old daughter managed to escape "thanks to the volunteers."

In the long run, this is the key to defeating Moscow's intervention — the solidarity of working people in Ukraine and Russia.

# Ukraine workers fight Moscow invasion, boss attacks at home

BY SETH GALINSKY

Workers and their unions in Ukraine are joining in the fight to defeat Moscow's invasion of their country, while standing up to assaults on jobs, wages and working conditions by bosses who are backed by the government of President Volodymyr Zelensky.

Working people have been at the forefront of resistance to the Russian invasion, from protests in occupied cities like Kherson to signing up as combatants in the Ukrainian army and territorial defense forces.

"At least 15% of miners volunteered for the military," Mikhailo Volynets, president of the Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Ukraine, told the *Militant* by phone from Kyiv May 2. At the Pavlograd coal mine in the Donbas area owned by billionaire Rinat Akhmetov, 800 out of 4,000 workers are now in the army fighting the invasion.

"The war has destroyed a large part of the economic and social infrastructure of Ukraine," Volynets said. "Rail lines, communications and bridges were destroyed by Russian forces. There is increasing inflation." Gross national product has fallen by 50%, he says, and millions lost their jobs.

While fierce resistance by working people has pushed Moscow's troops out of large parts of the country, Putin's forces have doubled the area they control since the invasion, especially in parts of southern Ukraine.

## Workers fight on two fronts

Oleksandr Skyba, a rail worker from Kyiv and a member of the Free Trade Union of Railway Workers and Transport Builders, described the work his union is doing at a solidarity conference held in Lviv May 5-6.

Rail lines and depots are being bombed as Moscow tries to disrupt the movement of Ukrainian weapons and troops, and many rail workers have been killed by the invaders. Nonetheless, workers continue to move supplies to front line troops, the hardest hit cities and contested areas, Skyba said, as well as transporting those displaced by the war.

Yurii Samoilov, a mineworker union leader who addressed the conference via Zoom from Kryvyi Rih, described efforts there. He noted that unions have been crushed in the Moscow-controlled "People's Republics" of Donetsk and Luhansk in eastern Ukraine. Health care workers there have been forced to join Moscow's state-controlled unions and take serious pay cuts.

Pavel Oleshchuk, spokesperson of the Atomic Workers Union, told the gathering that the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant — the largest in Europe — and the adjoining town of Enerhodar, are still under Russian occupation.

Ukraine has three uranium mines and a processing facility. Now the mines are closed. But to prevent them from flooding, water has to be continuously pumped out. As of early May, Oleshchuk reported, workers at the mines had still only been paid part of what they were owed for March.

Martial law and curfews imposed by Zelensky — including the banning of some meetings and protests — have increased the challenges.

The youth organization of one of the nuclear workers unions in Cher-



Rail workers load up rail car May 3 in Lviv with food, medicine and other supplies for union members, fellow workers and Ukraine combatants, in areas hardest hit by Moscow's invasion.

nobl issued a statement on May Day, noting that the martial law measures suspending union contracts has "greatly and negatively affected the financial situation and quality of life" of workers. Working conditions have deteriorated along with cuts in wages. "We are against any violations and restrictions of workers' rights!" the youth organization said.

On May 12 parliament passed a new labor relations bill that makes it easier for bosses to reassign workers, as well as to fire those unable to get to work because of Moscow's invasion.

In a statement released that day,

Volynets noted the authors of the law seek "to please employers by significantly reducing the rights of workers."

According to the law, laid off workers and those who have been displaced by the war "have a right to get social benefits," Volynets told the *Militant*. "But because of the heavy burdens on the budget due to the war, there is a delay in getting payments. And some employers act like real capitalists. Even in wartime they want to get not only profits, but extra profits. That's why a strong trade union is needed."

Unions are finding ways to push back. Some 2,700 workers at the Cher-

nobl Nuclear Power Plant continue to make sure the radioactive disaster site is carefully monitored to prevent further leaks and other related tasks and to repair extensive damage caused by Moscow's troops who occupied it for over a month.

After Moscow's forces were driven out of the site and the nearby town of Slavutych, where most of the workers live, bosses at the plant announced that under martial law they were terminating 314 workers who had not come in to work.

The union proposed some 160 of the workers who live in nearby Chernihiv, and could not commute because of the effects of the war, be kept on the payroll. The union proposed they join in the cleaning up and rebuilding of Chernihiv, which has been hard hit by bombings by Moscow's forces. The bosses agreed.

## Solidarity by Belarus unions

Unions in Ukraine have been getting solidarity from unions in Belarus, which is ruled by a dictatorial regime closely allied to Moscow. Rail unionists there organized to disrupt the movement of Russian troops and materiel into Ukraine. At least 14 leaders of the independent union movement in Belarus have been arrested for opposing the invasion.

"We are grateful to our courageous and principled Belarusian brothers and sisters," Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Ukraine said in statement, demanding their immediate release.

## Putting Russian soldier on trial for 'war crimes' weakens fight against Putin's war

Ukrainian prosecutors rushed to put 21-year-old Russian Sgt. Vadim Shysimarin on trial May 13, charging him with having committed "war crimes." This is the first of what authorities there say will be hundreds of such prosecutions. If convicted Shysimarin faces 10 to 15 years in prison. He's accused of shooting an unarmed civilian Feb. 28, four days into Moscow's invasion. Both he and the prosecution agree that he acted under orders from above.

This is a blow to forging solidarity between working people in both Ukraine and Russia in the fight against Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

The youthful troops, often conscripts from rural areas, are the cannon fodder in the Russian capitalist rulers' war. Many have refused to fire on civilians or rendered their equipment nonfunctional. The responsibility for any inhuman conduct by Moscow's forces lies squarely with the Kremlin, President Vladimir Putin and his military high command.

By launching these trials, Kyiv also stymies any fraternal appeals to rank-and-file Russian soldiers, and ignores reports of deadly misconduct among its own forces.

The imperialist rulers of the U.S., U.K. and others use the highly publicized horrors of Moscow's war to help mobilize bourgeois public opinion at home behind their own drives to expand their military forces and deepen economic sanctions that fall hardest on working people in Russia.

The Nuremberg trials of Nazi leaders at the end of World War II were imposed by Washington, Moscow and their allies, the victors in that bloody conflict. Comparable or worse war crimes by the "Allies," such as firebombing working-class areas of Hamburg and Dresden in Germany and dropping atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan, were not put on trial.

"While using the Nuremberg trial to cover up the real roots of German fascism, the main aim of the Allied imperialists was to establish, through a pretended impartial juridical procedure, the exclusive 'war guilt' of Germany," the Oct. 12, 1946, *Militant* reported. "Thus, Allied imperialism hoped to conceal its equal complicity with German imperialism in unleashing the Second World War."

"If we'd lost the war, we'd all have been prosecuted as war criminals," said Gen. Curtis LeMay, wartime head of the U.S. Air Force.

Taking the moral high ground, with a fraternal class appeal by Ukrainian working people to the sons of Russian workers and farmers in uniform and their families in Russia would speed the disintegration of the invading army's discipline, hastening the end of the war — and Putin's regime.

— R. L.

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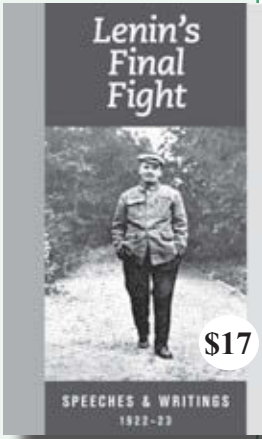
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## Lenin's Final Fight Speeches and Writings, 1922-23

"Internationalism must consist not only in the observance of the formal equality of nations but even in an inequality, through which the oppressor nation, the great nation, would compensate for the inequality which obtains in real life. Anyone who does not understand this has not grasped the real proletarian attitude to the national question."

— V.I. Lenin, 1922

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# Fidel Castro: ‘Maurice Bishop was a true revolutionary’

Maurice Bishop Speaks: The Grenada Revolution and Its Overthrow 1979-83 is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for May. Inspired by the Cuban Revolution, Bishop mobilized working people on this small Caribbean island, in their majority Black and English-speaking, to take political power in a popular revolution in 1979. Less than five years later, a Stalinist-inspired coup led by Bernard Coard murdered Bishop and others, overthrowing the revolutionary government and paving the way for a U.S. invasion a week later.

This was a heavy blow to Cuba's socialist revolution, as the Grenadian workers and farmers government under Bishop's leadership was a powerful reinforcement. This excerpt is from Fidel Castro's speech to a million people in Havana, Nov. 14, 1983, honoring 24 Cuban volunteers killed during the U.S. attack. Copyright © 1983 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

### BY FIDEL CASTRO

In Grenada, we followed the same principle we apply to all revolutionary nations and movements, full respect for their policies, criteria, and decisions, expressing our views on any matter only when asked to do so. Imperialism is incapable of understanding that the secret of our excellent relations with revolu-



Maurice Bishop, left, and Cuban President Fidel Castro at May Day rally in Havana, 1980. Coup against Bishop, overthrow of workers and farmers government was a blow to Cuba.

tionary countries and movements in the world lies precisely in this respect.

The U.S. government looked down on Grenada and hated Bishop. It wanted to destroy Grenada's process and obliterate its example. It had even prepared military plans for invading the island — as Bishop had charged nearly two years ago — but it lacked a pretext.

Socioeconomically, Grenada was actually advancing satisfactorily. The people had received many benefits, in spite of the hostile policy of the United States, and Grenada's Gross National Product was growing at a good rate in the midst of the world crisis.

Bishop was not an extremist; rather, he was a true revolutionary — conscientious and honest. Far from disagreeing with his intelligent and realistic policy, we fully sympathized with it, since it was rigorously adapted to his country's specific conditions and possibilities.

Grenada had become a true symbol of independence and progress in the Caribbean. No one could have foreseen the tragedy that was drawing near. Attention was focused on other parts of the world. ...

It was impossible to imagine anyone more noble, modest, and unselfish. He could never have been guilty of being authoritarian. If he had any defect, it was his excessive tolerance and trust.

Were those who conspired against him within the Grenadian party, army, and security forces by any chance a group of extremists drunk

on political theory? ...

In our view, Coard's group objectively destroyed the revolution and opened the door to imperialist aggression. Whatever their intentions, the brutal assassination of Bishop and his most loyal, closest comrades is a fact that can never be justified in that or any other revolution. As the October 20 statement by the Cuban party and government put it, "no crime must be committed in the name of the revolution and freedom."

In spite of his very close and affectionate links with our party's leadership, Bishop never said anything about the internal dissensions that were developing. ...

Coard's group never had such relations nor such intimacy and trust with us. Actually, we did not even know that this group existed.

It is to our revolution's credit that, in spite of our profound indignation over Bishop's removal from office and arrest, we fully refrained from interfering in Grenada's internal affairs. We refrained even though our construction workers and all our other cooperation personnel in Grenada — who did not hesitate to confront the Yankee soldiers with the weapons Bishop himself had given them for their defense in case of an attack from abroad — could have been a decisive factor in those internal events. Those weapons were never meant to be used in an internal conflict in Grenada and we would never have allowed them to

be so used. We would never have been willing to use them to shed a single drop of Grenadian blood.

On October 12, Bishop was removed from office by the Central Committee, on which the conspirators had attained a majority. On the thirteenth, he was placed under house arrest. On the nineteenth, the people took to the streets and freed Bishop. On the same day, Coard's group ordered the army to fire on the people and Bishop, [Unison] Whiteman, Jacqueline Creft, and other excellent revolutionary leaders were murdered.

As soon as the internal dissensions ... became known, the Yankee imperialists decided to invade. ...

We could not accept the idea of leaving the Grenadians without doctors or leaving the airport, which was vital to the nation's economy, unfinished. Most certainly, our construction workers were to leave Grenada when that project was completed, and the weapons that Bishop had given them were to be returned to the government. It was even possible that our very bad relations with the new government would make it necessary for us to leave much earlier.

The thing that placed Cuba in a morally complex, difficult situation was the announcement that Yankee naval forces were en route to Grenada. Under those circumstances, we couldn't possibly leave the country. If the imperialists really intended to attack Grenada, it was our duty to stay there. To withdraw at that time would have been dishonorable and could even have triggered aggression in that country then and in Cuba later on. In addition, events unfolded with such incredible speed that if the evacuation had been planned for, there would not have been time to carry it out.

In Grenada, however, the government was morally indefensible. And, since the party, the government, and the army had divorced themselves from the people, it was also impossible to defend the nation militarily, because a revolutionary war is only feasible and justifiable when united with the people. We could only fight, therefore, if we were directly attacked. There was no alternative.

It should nevertheless be noted that, despite these adverse circumstances, a number of Grenadian soldiers died in heroic combat against the invaders. [Applause]

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# Fight for a sliding scale of wages and hours

Soaring prices on basic necessities are wreaking havoc with the lives of working people and our families, at the same time millions remain out of work and bosses are pushing pay cuts, “suicide schedules” and speedups that damage our bodies.

Construction workers in Ontario, Canada, are striking for a large enough pay raise in each year of their three-year contract to defend their wages from being eroded.

“We want to be able to support a family, not live week to week,” Ashley Lee, a striking United Auto Workers member at Case New Holland in Sturtevant, Wisconsin, told *Militant* reporters last week. “Your job shouldn’t be your whole life,” striker Mario Palacio said. Refinery workers at Chevron in Richmond, California, are striking for higher wages, safer conditions and sustainable work schedules. “They definitely need to hire more people!” striker Jose Chavez said.

Each of these strikes needs solidarity from workers and our unions to bring home a victory.

The labor movement needs to organize workers to fight for a sliding scale of wages and hours. There is no way to prevent inflation under capitalism, but workers can fight to protect ourselves and others from having our lives ripped apart.

Every time consumer prices go up we need wage increases to match. In past decades the United Auto Workers and other unions won automatic cost-of-living adjustments in contracts covering millions of workers. They can be fought for again. These protec-

tions should be extended to all workers, unionized or not, and in federal programs like Social Security.

The capitalist rulers have countless tricks to mask the real rate of inflation. Workers need to form consumer committees on prices to monitor the real effects of inflation on the goods we need. Our unions must demand the bosses open their books to workers inspection to find out the truth about company profits.

Workers need a shorter workweek with no cut in take-home pay to spread the available work and prevent layoffs. End the “suicide shifts,” forced overtime and extended working days that lead to injuries, deaths and broken families. This would ease the competition workers face to get hired and help unify the working class.

The bosses won’t take any of these steps voluntarily, they fly in the face of capitalism’s dog-eat-dog drive for profits above all else. They’ll use wars like Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine, and trade wars with Beijing and other rivals, to try to convince working people “we” must sacrifice for “American interests.” But workers in the U.S. share common interests with fellow working people worldwide and have no common interests with the rulers who exploit us.

A labor movement fighting for this perspective can be the basis for a break with the bosses’ parties, the Democrats and Republicans. We need our own party, a labor party, that can lead millions in struggle to take political power, build a workers and farmers government and join hands with workers around the world.

# US rulers’ assault on families, women’s rights

**Continued from front page**

But the heart of the discussion has to be put on a broader basis. The key question isn’t abortion. It’s how to organize working people to defend ourselves and make gains amid a broader capitalist crisis that is making it harder to start a family and to hold one together. This includes the fight for jobs, adequate wages, protection against soaring inflation, accessible and affordable health care, child care, access to family planning, including adoption, as well as access to contraception and safe and secure abortion when needed.

Liberals and middle-class radicals, however, oppose this course. They think working people are “deplorables” and fear a fight to win public opinion. They want to shut down discussion and show disdain for the rights and opinions of others.

“To put the right to have an abortion up for debate,” *New York Times* columnist Jamelle Bouie says, “degrades” women. But it’s the liberals’ refusal to discuss this and all the related questions that have aided opponents of women’s rights in systematically restricting access to the procedure ever since Roe was pushed through in 1973.

## Harder today to set up a family

Millions are out of work today, or unable to get sufficient hours to provide for their families. The bosses are imposing longer workdays, forced overtime and speedup, leaving less and less time for family life. This is a central issue in most strikes today, alongside relief from the crushing impact of rampant inflation.

Living paycheck to paycheck, millions were struggling to pay bills even before recent price hikes. Inflation is running officially at 8.3%, but prices are actually far higher on the essentials that make up a greater part of workers’ expenses.

Average mortgage payments are now \$1,800 a month, 70% higher than before the pandemic and the highest since 2007. If the bubble in house prices bursts, millions of home “owners” will owe more in outstanding loans than the value of “their” house. Defaults on mortgage payments and foreclosures loom.

At the same time, workers who rent face large increases as landlords seek to boost profits. Evictions are on the rise. More young workers and students are moving back in with their parents. And so too are the elderly, especially after the horrors they faced in the capitalist death traps called nursing homes during the pandemic. The possibility of young people putting a family together is harder and harder.

In the past weeks parents in large parts of the U.S. have been forced on a desperate hunt for baby formula as an acute shortage unfolds. Abbott Laboratories is a key supplier, having crushed its competition. It recalled several products, and the government had no provision for reserves to make up the shortfall.

Under capitalism, the family is one of the key institutions workers have to defend ourselves and our loved ones, in the face of all the assaults of bosses, landlords and government regulators. In the face of the long-term capitalist crisis, many workers are putting off forming families. Women face harder and harder decisions about when and whether to bear a child and how many to have.

Today, growing numbers of workers are stricken with drug addiction, alcoholism and mental problems. Then they run into the cops, courts and capitalist “justice” system. These burdens fall on all workers, but especially on workers who are Black.

The wealthy capitalist rulers face none of these pressures. As long as they have sufficient labor to exploit, they have no interest in making it easier for workers to maintain a family. Their concern is to find ways to undermine solidarity among working people and pit us against each other, as they drive to profit off our backs.

The consequences of the crumbling of working-class families was described by New York Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan in the early 1990s. He spoke out against then-President Bill Clinton’s decision to “end welfare as we know it,” which included slashing government programs for single mothers and their children. Families in Black communities headed by single mothers, without jobs and with less and less federal assistance, Moynihan said, would be unable to provide stable support for children, with disastrous consequences.

What Moynihan described for African American families then is what increasingly faces the working class as a whole today. It is the inevitable consequence of a social system based on capitalist exploitation.

“All of these questions are *class* questions,” said Sara Lobman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from New York. “The road forward is to organize a working-class battle to defend our livelihoods, our families and control over the conditions we live in. This is the framework to advance the fight for access to child care and family planning, including when a woman finds herself with the need to have an abortion.”

# Rolls-Royce workers strike to raise wages

**BY FÉLIX-VINCENT ARDEA**

MONTREAL — Some 530 strikers at the Rolls-Royce aircraft engine maintenance plant here rejected another company “final offer” by a vote of 94% at a well-attended union meeting May 11. The workers, members of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN), walked out March 15 over needed wage raises as prices soar and bosses demand to cut retiree benefits and double costs for health benefits for current employees.

“We’re prepared to stay out until the end to win what we need,” Claude Lemay, an inspector for 25 years, told the *Militant* on the picket line May 12. “That includes a decent pension, not only for my generation but for the next one. Workers are entitled to them.”

Trying to intimidate the strikers, the bosses had locked them out while the union was meeting in March. The unionists responded with an overwhelming vote to strike. The contract expired in March 2020.

“We’re all motivated to stay mobilized as long as needed to get a respectful contract,” Steve Mayer, an inspector for 22 years in the plant, said.

The Rolls-Royce bosses are trying to get rid of the defined-benefits pension plan workers won in the past, replacing it with a less secure defined-contribution scheme, with no guarantee on what the company payment would be.

The workers are demanding a 23.5% wage increase over the life of a seven-year contract. The Rolls-Royce bosses have offered only 17%, with no raise at all in the first two years.

Strikers marched through the aerospace district here May 12 to make their demands known. “In a context of a labor shortage in aeronautics, we deserve respect, and respect comes with a good work contract,” Mayer told the crowd to applause.

The strikers are winning much-needed support. “The rulers want to see us divided,” Alexandre Jacob, a train conductor at Canadian National Railways and member of the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference union, told the *Militant* after visiting the picket line last month. “That is why it is so important that we unite beyond union lines and job types. We have to instill this habit among workers that when one of us gets attacked, we all come to their defense.”

Join the strike picket line. Send solidarity messages to Rolls-Royce strikers at CSN, 1601 avenue De Lorimier, Montreal, Quebec H2K 4M5. Tel (866) 646-7760.

# Sri Lanka protesters

**Continued from page 3**

never had the legitimacy of the people.”

Attempting to shift the blame for the crisis onto the protesters, President Rajapaksa said on Twitter, “I urge all Sri Lankans to reject the subversive attempts to push you toward racial and religious disharmony.” But the fact is, he was the defense secretary, and his brother, Mahinda, was president, during the final phase of Sri Lanka’s three-decade-long civil war that ended in 2009 with the crushing of the Tamil Tigers. According to a United Nations report, 40,000 Tamil civilians were killed in the final months of that war.

Some 70% of Sri Lanka’s 22 million people are Buddhists; 12.6% are Hindus, mostly ethnic Tamils; 9.7% are Muslims; and 6.1% Christians.

In 2019 Islamist terrorists carried out a series of bombings, killing nearly 270 people, an action denounced by Muslims across the country. The Gotabaya Rajapaksa-led government shut down more than 1,000 Islamic schools and banned the wearing of the burqa.

The recent protests have been marked by rejection of religious and ethnic divisions. “Nobody brought us here. We organized ourselves,” tea farmer Charith Weliwatta told the press at the tent camp. “Tamils, Muslims, Burghers, Sinhalese, we are all here. They can’t divide us any more.”

The government continues efforts to seek a financial bailout with the International Monetary Fund and elsewhere. Wickremesinghe met with Indian officials May 13. New Delhi is battling China for influence in the strategically important country, which lies on key shipping lanes between Asia and Europe.