

THE MILITANT

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fight for control over safety, health
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 87/NO. 29 AUGUST 7, 2023

Cuba's socialist revolution points way forward for working people

On July 26 we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the 1953 attack led by Fidel Castro on the Moncada army garrison in Santiago de Cuba, which marked the opening of the Cuban Revolution. The attack took place just a little over a year after Fulgencio Batista had seized power. His dictatorship, backed by Wash-

70th anniversary of first battle of Cuba's revolutionary war

ington, deepened the plunder of Cuba's workers, farmers and the country's resources.

Militarily, the attack was a failure. More than 60 of some 160 revolutionary combatants were killed, 56 of them captured alive, tortured and murdered by Batista's henchmen.

Politically, it was the beginning of the end for the dictatorship.

Castro and other survivors were put on trial. His testimony to the court was

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Strikes by actors, writers win widespread support

Rallies, pickets take place from coast to coast



SAG-AFTRA and Writers Guild unionists rally in Philadelphia July 20. Showing the power of united action, actors struck July 13, joining writers who had been on strike since May 2.

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK — Thousands of striking actors joined the “Rock the City for a Fair Contract” rally at Times Square here July 25. Some 160,000 members of

the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists went on strike July 13.

Other unions joined the rally including the United Food and Commercial Workers, Laborers International Union of North America, Teamsters, Communications Workers of America — and members of the Writers Guild on day 85 of their strike. Both unions are on strike against the same boss outfit, the Alli-

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Democrats' push to refurbish FBI part of attack on political rights

BY TERRY EVANS

For over seven years, beginning during the 2016 elections, the Democrats have attempted to use the FBI as a key weapon in their ongoing assault against Republican political opponent Donald Trump. In doing so, they've targeted the working people attracted to his campaign, who Hillary Clinton called “deplorables,” and have gone after crucial constitutional rights workers need to defend and advance our class interests.

Democrats have campaigned to remake the image of the FBI, to turn it into a progressive, woke agency.

This requires trying to smother all memory of decades of FBI spying, harassment and disruption against unionists, Black rights fighters, small farmers battling foreclosure, the Socialist Workers Party, opponents of Washington's wars and anyone else who challenges the capitalist for-profit system. Since 1939 the FBI has been the capitalist rulers' central political police attack force.

The results to date are not helpful for the capitalist rulers. The FBI has won a higher approval rating among liberal Democrats and the left, who are terrified of so-called MAGA Republicans. But among Republicans, fully 63% told an NBC News poll in June that they had a negative view of the FBI.

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Teamsters union says tentative agreement reached with UPS



Militant/Mary Martin

Hundreds of Teamsters Local 638 members, supporters held “practice picket” at UPS distribution center in Eagan, Minnesota, July 22. Real possibility of strike put pressure on UPS bosses.

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Teamsters and UPS announced July 25 they have reached agreement on a five-year contract covering 340,000 union members, less than one week before the current contract expires.

Teamsters General President Sean O'Brien had said repeatedly that if a deal wasn't reached, UPS workers would strike Aug. 1. The union had carried out a series of “practice” pick-

ets across the country.

Talks had broken off July 5 when the Teamsters reported UPS representatives walked out of negotiations. But as the union's “practice” picketing spread, the bosses returned to the table July 25. The agreement was announced that same day.

The UPS Teamsters National Negotiating Committee unanimously endorsed the tentative contract. “This

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Moscow hurls new destruction on Ukraine cities

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Russian President Vladimir Putin has escalated his regime's murderous war against the Ukrainian people with air attacks on civilian targets across the country. These assaults have been met by the defiance of working people determined to defend Ukraine's independence.

DEFEND UKRAINE'S INDEPENDENCE!

Moscow targeted ports and grain facilities, hitting Odesa, Ukraine's largest port, daily, after pulling out of a deal that had allowed international shipping to use the Black Sea to facilitate Ukrainian cereal exports. Drone strikes destroyed Ukrainian grain storage near the mouth of the Danube River July 24, across from Romania, a member of the U.S.-imperialist-led NATO alliance. The river is an alternative shipping route to move the country's grain.

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SWP candidates build solidarity, join in today's union struggles

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Socialist Workers Party candidates and their supporters have been joining strike picket lines and stepping up efforts in their unions and through their campaigns to build solidarity with these working-class battles. Using the *Militant's* pro-labor coverage, they visit with workers on their doorsteps in cities, towns and in the countryside. They're finding growing interest in learning

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Hundreds of nurses rally, demand contract in New Jersey

Is it the ‘hottest week ever’ or is that just political hype?

BY SETH GALINSKY

A barrage of articles in the liberal media, from the *New York Times* to London’s *Financial Times*, assert that this month’s heat waves are the hottest ever. For these forces, every disaster — from hurricanes to forest fires — is presented as proof that “global warming” is dragging humanity toward destruction.

Is this true? Or is it panic mongering to take our eyes off the real threats to the environment and humanity by the capitalist rulers, and to tout Democrats’ “green-energy” schemes to bolster the prospects of President Joseph Biden in the 2024 election?

The first two weeks of July were “likely the Earth’s warmest on human record, for any time of year,” the *New York Times* claimed July 20. Why does the *Times* say “likely”?

To cover up what it can’t prove. Over much of the last century and a half, whether starting in 1850 as the *Times* does, or 1880 — when NASA dates the start of modern weather record keeping — accurate records were limited or non-existent. By the end of 1849 there were just 150 volunteers in the U.S. sending weather information to the Smithsonian Institution. An official weather service wasn’t established until 1870.

And that leaves out the rest of the world, especially Africa, Asia and Latin America where there was little or no record keeping. Today there are 90,000 land-based meteorological stations.

NASA notes there is not enough data between 1850 and 1880 “to estimate average temperatures for the entire planet.” And the space agency says scientists “reconstruct” temperature estimates for

before 1850 “from proxy records like tree rings, pollen counts, and ice cores.” In other words, it’s an “educated” guess.

But even today, with the expansion of weather stations, comparisons are to a large extent guesstimates. “Instruments are not perfectly distributed around the globe, and some measurement sites have been deforested or urbanized since 1880,” NASA admits. Temperature in cities can be 10 degrees hotter than the surrounding countryside.

To get around the problem, NASA explains climate scientists use “algorithms” to come up with their statistics.

One state that liberals point to as proof of their claims about the impact of climate change is Arizona. Officials say heat-related deaths have risen over the last few years. But the *Arizona Republic* notes that the high temperature of 119 degrees so far this month is just the fourth-highest registered at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. In 1990 — 33 years ago! — it hit 122.

A July 17 article by *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman gets at some of the real reasons behind the climate hysteria. Titled “Why We Should Politicize the Weather,” the article targets what Krugman calls “the environmental extremism of the Republican Party.”

“If the G.O.P. wins control of the White House and Congress next year,” he warns, “it will almost surely try to dismantle the array of green energy subsidies enacted by the Biden administration.” In other words, vote for Biden or you will cause the planet’s destruction.

Liberal purveyors of impending doom want to make sure air conditioning stays on for them, while working people in the



Hospital in Uttar Pradesh, India, June 19, where over 100 have died from heat-related illnesses. Deaths weren’t caused by “climate change,” but from lack of electrical power, air conditioning.

semicolonial world are denied fossil fuels and nuclear power that could satisfy their unmet needs for electricity.

There are nearly 775 million people in the world without access to electricity, overwhelmingly in semicolonial countries. Some 2.3 billion cook with the most primitive fuels. And only 8% of the 2.8 billion people living in the hottest parts of the world have access to air conditioning.

Wind and solar power, for the foreseeable future, are incapable of providing energy on the scale needed.

Advancing the interests of workers and farmers, and the worldwide fight for socialism, requires “closing the enormous gap in economic, social, and cultural conditions among working people of different countries, and toilers of city and countryside,” Socialist Workers Party leader Steve Clark says in “Farming, Science, and Working Classes” in *New International* magazine no. 13.

There is a warming trend in the world today. The world temperature average has gone up 2.2 degrees Fahrenheit since the rise of industrialization. Greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide play a role in that. But that doesn’t mean the collapse of civilization. The world has lived through alternating ice ages and warmer periods over millennia.

Climate change is a “challenge to all humanity created by humans themselves,” John Kerry, the Biden administration’s climate czar, claimed July 17. But it’s not true that “we are all in this together.” Rising sea levels, which are

a byproduct of long-term rises in temperature, affect working people disproportionately. Hundreds of millions live in coastal flood zones because they can’t afford to live elsewhere. But these aren’t “climate” problems. These are social problems that can be resolved by building housing for working people away from flood zones. But that’s not profitable for the capitalist rulers.

Working people and our unions need to be at the forefront of struggles against the poisoning of the air, water and land that is inherent under capitalism. We are the only social force capable of confronting the rulers’ profit-driven plunder of the environment and fighting for fellow working people around the world to have access to the electricity they need.

The Stewardship of Nature Also Falls to the Working Class: In Defense of Land and Labor



Socialist Workers Party statement in *New International* no. 14

THE MILITANT

Veterans, retirees step up protests across Iran

Hundreds of retirees and their families protested across Iran in July after the government slashed pensions, other benefits, amid a deepening capitalist economic crisis and sky-high inflation. The ‘Militant’ extends solidarity to workers’ fights worldwide.



Tasnim News Agency
Veterans, retirees rally in Tehran July 8, chant “Yesterday’s soldiers, today’s hungry.”

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The Militant

Vol. 87/No. 29

Closing news date: July 26, 2023

Editor: John Studer

Managing Editor: Terry Evans

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Martín Koppel, Roy Landersen, Jacob Perasso, Vivian Sahner, Brian Williams.

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

Business Manager: Bob Bruce

The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

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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.

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

Support grows as hotel workers carry out rolling strikes in LA

BY NORTON SANDLER

LOS ANGELES — Chanting “On strike. Shut it down. L.A. is a union town,” hundreds of striking hotel workers, members of UNITE HERE Local 11, were joined by striking actors and writers at the W Hotel here near the Hollywood Walk of Fame July 21. They marched from the hotel to the picket line and rally of hundreds more Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists and Writers Guild of America strikers in front of the Netflix offices.

This is the third wave of strikes by UNITE HERE. The hotel workers union isn’t striking at all hotels simultaneously, instead organizing rolling walkouts, Kurt Petersen, co-president of UNITE HERE Local 11, told the media. “Strikes can happen anytime, anyplace.” The latest strikes include three hotels in Hollywood, three in Glendale and Pasadena, and one in San Pedro.

Joe McQueen, a member of SAG-AFTRA since 1996, told the *Militant* he also does food delivery to make a living. “I stand with my brothers and sisters. It’s about greed and power. If we do this they’ll have to back down. This shows there is strength in numbers.”

Luis Garcia, a striker with Local 11, has worked at the W Hotel for two years. “We are asking for better salaries and benefits,” he said.

Tye Justis works more than one job to make ends meet. He’s a front desk assistant at the Viceroy Hotel in Santa Monica and also a home health care worker, and makes time to audition for acting jobs. After participating in the July 4 walkout at the Viceroy, he is now picketing at Fox Studios in Century City. “We can all strike in solidarity because we’re all fighting for the same thing,” he said.

Strikes in this area are increasingly marked by trade unions joining together in protests, marches and pickets. On July 19, 500 participated in a rally organized by the Teamsters union in downtown Los Angeles where national union President Sean O’Brien spoke. Members of the Writers Guild, SAG-AFTRA, and UNITE HERE joined the action, and leaders of their unions spoke.

Members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union joined hotel workers in a lively picket outside the Doubletree Hotel in San Pedro July 21.

UNITE HERE organizer María Meza told the *Militant* that housekeepers are being forced by Doubletree bosses to clean 12 checkout rooms or 18 stay-over rooms a day.

Longshore worker Tony Rosellini said he used to work for the Marriott. “When you are in a hotel,” he said, “you want a clean room and safe, good food. It’s these workers that make it happen. It’s important to stand with them. Conditions are bad. There is no air conditioning in the hallways where they

work or where the dishwashers work.”

Michael Vera from the ILWU’s Inlandboatmen’s union told the *Militant* that he supports all unions in struggle. “This is taking place in my backyard and San Pedro is a union town.”

Local 11 Co-President Petersen said in negotiations earlier in the week the new wage proposal from the hotel bosses moved backwards. He said hotel representatives walked out of the meeting after the union proposed employers offer permanent jobs to replacement workers brought in during the strike.

For years the unions have pressed for the hotels to hire more African American workers. Many of the replacement workers are Black.

SWP candidates build solidarity, join union struggles

Continued from front page

about the party’s activities and political program.

Edwin Fruit, SWP candidate for Minneapolis City Council, and campaign supporters got in a discussion with Michael Pendergast in St. Paul after knocking on his door July 20. To try to make ends meet, Pendergast works two full-time jobs, one at a radio station and another as a music teacher.

Fruit described some of the labor battles today, the strike by thousands of dockworkers in Canada; Bakery union members in Memphis, Tennessee; Teamsters at the UPM Blandin paper mill in Grand Rapids, Minnesota; and the contract fight by 340,000 Teamsters union members at UPS.

“Striking is in the air,” Pendergast said. “It is serendipitous that you all came by right now, I’ve been thinking a lot lately about how can I start a union at the radio station where I work. You know when the radio carries out those regular fund drives, the workers don’t get wage increases out of that. And there is a cap on what percentage of inflation the company will compensate us for.”

“What’s needed,” said Fruit, “is for the unions to lead the fight for cost-of-living escalator clauses in every contract, so whenever prices rise our wages and benefits go up automatically. And we need a sliding scale of hours — 30 hours work for 40 hours pay — to prevent layoffs when production slows.”

“Out of these struggles, we can win the unions to break from the Democrats and Republicans — the bosses’ parties — and form their own political party, a labor party based on the unions.”

Pendergast signed up for an introductory subscription to the *Militant* and purchased *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward* by SWP leaders Jack Barnes, Mary-Alice Waters and Steve Clark.

In New York, Seth Galinsky, SWP candidate for City Council, and party member Willie Cotton knocked on the door of Margie Perea in the Polo Grounds Towers in Harlem July 16. Perea is a health care worker and member of Service Employees International Union Local 1199. She has worked in both nursing homes and hospitals.

Cotton and Galinsky spoke about how the deepening capitalist economic crisis today makes it harder for young people to start and maintain a family, forcing many in their 20s



Striking UNITE HERE Local 11 members march in Los Angeles July 21. “Strikes can happen anytime, anyplace,” Kurt Petersen, co-president of the Local, said of the union’s rolling walkouts. Militant/Bill Arth

and even 30s to keep living at home. “That’s like me!” Perea said. “My daughter is still living with me.”

She said she was concerned about the growing numbers of homeless and immigrant workers. “It’s not fair that all these immigrants get all kinds of government help, food and housing, but we have homeless right here in New York who aren’t getting the help they need.” She was referring to the latest wave of immigration to the U.S., which includes more than 50,000 who’ve been sent to New York over the past year. The city government has put them up free in shelters and provided meals, but few have been given work permits.

“One of the ways the capitalist class divides us is to try to get us to blame other workers for the problems we face,” Galinsky said. “The fact is the

bosses want more immigrants here, to increase competition for jobs. But they prefer that these workers don’t have papers so they can pay them less and use that to push down everyone’s wages.”

“I’m not against immigrants, but something has to be done,” Perea said.

“We’re for amnesty for all immigrants who are in the U.S.,” Galinsky said. “The unions should say, whether you have papers or not, join the union, let’s fight together for better wages and conditions for all workers.”

Perea bought *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us* to learn more, and said she will show it around to her co-workers.

The SWP is running candidates all across the country. Join in campaigning with them! See the list of party campaign offices on page 8.

Teamsters strike Minnesota paper mill

BY EDWIN FRUIT

GRAND RAPIDS, Minn. — Teamsters Local 346 members and supporters rallied and picketed outside the UPM Blandin paper mill here July 21.

The 180 union members went on strike July 15 over a divisive two-tier system for wages and benefits, and forced overtime.

The mill is a leading producer of lightweight coated magazine and catalog printing papers. At one time it employed over 800 workers, now there are around 200.

Zak Radzak, the local’s secretary-treasurer, told the *Militant* there has been a lot of community support for the strike. Union members came to the rally from the Minnesota Teachers Association, county and school workers from the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees union, and other Teamsters locals.

Teamsters from Local 120 in Blaine, near Minneapolis, drove the three-hour trip in their union truck to help supply lunch for the rally.

Several Teamsters UPS drivers went to get hot dogs and burgers for the rally, and the store said it would kick in.

Richard Troumbly, 22, has worked at the plant for a year. He works four 12-hour shifts and is supposed to get four days off after that. “Because I am a newer worker, I never get those four days off. They always call me in for overtime. And if someone on your following shift calls in sick, then

you have to work an extra four hours. That’s 16 total for your shift. That isn’t safe when you’re running a machine.

“We also pay 20% of health care costs while longer-term workers pay only 10%,” because of the two-tier setup, he said. “And we get less company contributions for our 401(k) retirement plans.”

“We made a big mistake in 2016 when we agreed to the two-tier system. The company promised to keep lines running and not close the plant if we did this,” Bill Schepers said. “Several months after the contract was ratified, they closed down one of the lines anyway. Now the young guys outnumber the older ones and they get the shaft. We need to fight for everyone.”

Tom Erickson, president of Teamsters Local 120, told the rally it was donating \$10,000 to the Local 346 strike fund. Local 120 is one of three unions working to organize Delta Air Line workers in their union drive at the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport.

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Residents, rail unions fight for control over safety, health

BY CANDACE WAGNER

LISBON, Ohio — Residents of this area around East Palestine, who continue to be affected by the toxic chemicals released by the Norfolk Southern derailment and burn-off Feb. 3, and rail workers across the country are continuing to fight for greater control over safety, cleanup and health care.

Forty protesters gathered here at the Columbiana County Seat July 22 to support residents in the area who still face health problems and other challenges almost six months since the derailment.

When Norfolk Southern bosses and area officials drained and burned some 900,000 pounds of toxic vinyl chloride after the derailment, “I watched the mushroom cloud from my porch,” Jess Conard told the crowd. “I’m active in this fight so that no one else will face another disaster like this.” Conard is a member of the Unity Council for the East Palestine Train Derailment, which helped build the rally. She wrote an article published in *Newsweek* last week that she quoted from.

“Biden, we demand that you sign the disaster declaration. And we demand that you enact 1881A,” she said. “Prioritize human beings. Prevent another East Palestine.”

1881A is a section of the Social Security Act that provides for lifelong medical care to those affected by a public health emergency. For it to be invoked, the president must first declare East Palestine an environmental disaster.

The Lisbon action was initiated by a group that pushes for Medicare for all. This action focused on East Palestine. Other groups participated, including activists from Illinois and Missouri.

After a monthlong campaign by the Unity Council, including a rally at the state Capitol, Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine sent a request to Washington July 3 urging President Joseph Biden to sign the disaster declaration.

“The government is owned by the railroad,” Jami Wallace, president of the Unity Council, told the rally. “Biden, this could happen anywhere that has railroads running through it.”

Jenna Cozza, Wallace’s 17-year-old niece, said she and her younger sister and brother have tested positive for vinyl chloride residue in their urine. Other area residents have similar results. Environmental Protection Agency authorities have dismissed the tests, saying the chemicals are probably caused by smoking, drinking or other personal behavior.

“I’ve lived in East Palestine for 60 years. Today I live in a hotel,” said Daren Gambla, a retired union bricklayer and activist in the Unity Council. “They told us, ‘Trust the science.’ How scientific was it to tell us we could return to our homes two days after the burn, when to this day people still get sick when they go home?”

Amanda Kemmer lives in Darlington Township, Pennsylvania, 4 1/2 miles from the burn site. “The night of the derailment my four kids and I suffered from burning eyes,” she said. “After the chemical release and burn-off, it got a lot worse, especially for my child who already suffered from asthma. I’m a cancer survivor, as are many others in this whole area.”

Act 1881A has only been invoked once, for the people of Libby, Montana.

They had faced the worst asbestos exposure in U.S. history. The owners of a mine there that produced vermiculite — used in construction and insulation — as well as bosses at W.R. Grace who bought the mine in 1963, knew it contained asbestos, but didn’t tell workers, their families or other residents.

Over 690 Libby residents have died of asbestos-related diseases. In 2009 the EPA declared Libby a public health emergency and invoked 1881A. The cleanup there still continues today.

Area residents continue to go to meetings set up in East Palestine to challenge EPA representatives who try to convince them there is no more contamination to worry about. At a July 20 meeting, EPA representative Tricia Edwards admitted they were having problems with removing contaminated soil near the derailment site because of water flowing under the area from nearby wetlands. This means continuing chemical leakage in area streams.

Residents complained it was taking authorities way too long to deal with these issues. “It’s been six months and these are children’s lives,” Wallace said.

Rail union fights ‘one-person’ crews

In what would be a serious threat to the safety of rail workers and all those who live near the tracks, a July 23 Associated Press article reported bosses at Union Pacific plan to start a “pilot project” aimed at replacing conductors



Stephanie Elverd

Protesters in Lisbon, Ohio, July 22, demand lifelong Medicare coverage for residents in area of East Palestine stricken ill from Feb. 3 Norfolk Southern derailment and toxic burn-off.

— half the crew on most freight trains today — with utility workers traveling nearby in trucks. The report was based on testimony given by Union Pacific Railroad officer Jason Pinder at a public hearing in Kansas.

The SMART-Transportation Division, the largest union of rail conductors, responded to Pinder’s comments. In a July 18 letter to Lance Fritz, the head of Union Pacific, Luke Edington, general chairman of the union, said the Crew Consist Agreement between SMART and the company “did not give Union Pacific the right to redeploy Conductors as Mr. Pinder alleges in his testimony.”

“The agreement does expand the utility position so it may assist yard and road crews,” Edington said. “Utility po-

sitions are not Conductor or Foreman assignments, nor do they replace/supplant those positions. The Utility assignment may only assist Conductors and Foreman with their duties.”

The consist agreement expanding the number of utility workers will increase, not decrease, the number of rail operating craft workers, Edington explains.

Edington says, “Immediate action should be taken to clarify and correct the misleading statements made.”

Amanda Snide, a conductor working out of North Platte, Nebraska, told the *Militant*, “The union will not give away any more jobs.”

The ongoing protests in East Palestine and determination of rail workers to defend their jobs and safety deserve widespread support from all working people.

Lac-Mégantic marks 10 years since deadly derailment

BY KATY LEROUGETEL

LAC-MÉGANTIC, Quebec — The 10th anniversary of the July 6, 2013, Lac-Mégantic oil train derailment, which killed 47 people and burned out the city’s downtown, has sparked a broad discussion among working people here on how to fight for safety for rail workers and those who live by the tracks. This discussion includes Ottawa’s drive to build a rail bypass there in the interests of Canadian Pacific Railway shareholders and last February’s toxic chemical train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio.

Militant worker-correspondents Steve Penner and I traveled to Lac-Mégantic to discuss these questions with workers and farmers July 13-16.

“Those promoting the rail bypass are responsible for the tragedy in 2013,” declared the Coalition of Collateral Victims on July 6. The coalition’s statement refers to the widely recognized truth that government and rail company collusion in the drive for rail bosses’ profits laid the basis for the tragedy through cost-cutting, criminally lax safety and dangerous operating procedures.

We joined seven opponents of the bypass at a discussion organized by Yolande Boulanger, 85, a beef cattle farmer and former dairy farmer. Linda Proteau described the July 6 commemoration of the Lac-Mégantic disaster attended by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Quebec Premier Francois Legault. “There was reserved seating for the politicians, including water bottles,” she said.

“For the families, there was nothing, no invitation, nothing,” she said. Proteau and her spouse, Rejean Roy, lost their daughter Melissa in the disaster.

The bypass, to be built at federal and provincial government expense, will give Canadian Pacific Kansas City railway a faster route to the Atlantic.

“This is economic predation,” Robert Bellefleur, spokesperson for the Coalition of Citizens and Organizations Committed to Railway Safety of Lac-Mégantic, told the *Militant*. “We want a bypass but this isn’t the right one.”

Rail union joins debate

“[T]he burden of protecting workers and the public has often fallen on the shoulders of our union,” Teamsters Canada President Francois Laporte said in a statement marking the anniversary.

“Just last month, after years of work by the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference, a federal judge found Canadian Pacific in contempt of court. The railway disobeyed an order to stop overworking train crews,” Laporte said. “Right now, as you read these lines, fatigued railroaders across this country are operating trains when they should be resting.”

Strikes waged by Teamster rail workers at Canadian National and Canadian Pacific over the past years have centered on the need for humane work schedules and for rail safety.

Trudeau’s determination to push ahead with the rail bypass land expropriations despite widespread community objections is of a piece with destruction of homes, businesses and expropriations carried out only weeks after the derailment in Lac-Mégantic itself.

Bellefleur explained, “There were over 30 noncontaminated buildings standing, half the downtown.” Most were razed anyway. Of the multimillion-dollar fund created to aid victims of the

disaster, major chains, such as pharmacy Jean Coutu and Metro supermarket received \$241,000 and \$494,000 respectively to relocate, while homeowners got as little as \$1,000.

On May 5, the Union of Agricultural Producers in Estrie and the Union of Forestry Producers spoke at a government hearing on the bypass. Opposing the expropriation of 33 farm and forestry producers, they pointed out Ottawa has refused to consider alternate routes.

Patricia Beliveau, resident of a subdivision in nearby Frontenac where all residents use artesian wells, told the *Militant*, “Transport Canada asks us to be cooperative. They’ll send a firm to test the water quality in our wells. But they won’t tell us what firm they’re using. We want to do our own tests.”

Many area residents make the connection with their fight and the ongoing debate on the East Palestine derailment. “We think East Palestine will bring changes,” said Bellefleur. Referring to the tank cars used in both the Mégantic and East Palestine trains that derailed and broke apart, he said, “DOT-111 are not allowed for oil transport anymore, but for other dangerous material, yes. That can be even more dangerous.”

The rail safety coalition calls for an independent committee of inquiry on the disaster and a government-appointed mediator to resolve the community divisions on the bypass, Bellefleur said.

“Capitalist governments defend corporate profits not human needs. Workers and farmers need to fight for the right to make the decisions,” said Penner. “When rail workers and unions speak out on behalf of working people, this shows the way forward.”

Dockworkers vote on contract as gov't threatens intervention

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL — Under threats by the federal government in Ottawa to consider “all options” to force an end to a strike by 7,400 British Columbia dockworkers at West Coast port facilities, the International Longshore and Warehouse Canada union’s Contract Caucus voted July 21 to recommend dockworkers vote to accept contract terms drawn up by a government mediator. The bosses have already said they will sign it.

The longshore workers will discuss the proposed contract at “stop-work meetings” July 25, and then vote July 27-28.

The Contract Caucus, comprised of 100 elected union members, reversed a decision it took July 18 rejecting the mediator’s recommendations, which had led to workers walking out for the second time after a 13-day strike July 1-13.

The workers have been demanding a two-year contract, with wage increases to cover inflation and job protection from the BC Maritime Employers Association’s drive to contract out more union jobs and increase use of automation technology.

The mediator’s report proposed a four-year contract with a compounded wage increase of 19.2%.

Before the Contract Caucus reversed its vote, ILWU Canada President Rob Ashton had said the union “does not believe that the [mediator’s] recommendation had the ability to protect our jobs, now or into the future,” and the “employers have not addressed the cost-of-living issues that our workers have faced over the last couple of years as all workers have.”

Five of the biggest companies represented by the BC Maritime Employers Association reported \$103.3 billion in profits last year.

Bosses’ associations across the country — including the BCMEA, Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Retail Council of Canada and the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters — called on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to

reconvene Parliament from its summer recess to pass “back to work” legislation to force an end to any strike. They were backed by a massive anti-strike campaign in the capitalist media.

“If the federal government does step in to legislate us, or any other worker for that matter, there is no need for any employer to negotiate with workers,” Ashton said. “That can’t be allowed to happen in this country.”

Threat of state intervention

Following the resumption of the strike, the supposedly “independent” Canada Industrial Relations Board, whose members are appointed by the federal government, ruled it was “unlawful,” using the manufactured excuse that the union had not given 72 hours’ strike notice. They ordered the workers back to work.

The board ruling was followed by a behind-closed-doors meeting of Ottawa’s Incident Response Group, a group of cabinet ministers and senior government officials that have dealt with past situations the federal government considered to be a national emergency.

“Introducing the Emergencies Act sets a precedent that could be used against the labour movement when it holds protests in the future,” said a press release by the executive board of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union. “Historically, the labour movement has often been the target of legislation aimed at suppressing anti-government dissent, including times when workers have demanded better living conditions through strike actions.”

“The threats by Prime Minister Trudeau and his ministers to consider ‘all options’ to declare the longshore strike illegal and use the repressive force of the capitalist state against the strikers and their union should be opposed by all working people and the entire labor movement,” Steve Penner, organizer of the Communist League, told the *Militant* July 20.

“Working-class solidarity and union



Militant/Ned Dmytryshyn

International Longshore and Warehouse Canada picket line in Vancouver, British Columbia, July 1. Workers are demanding wage increase to cover inflation, job protection.

power can prevent the rulers from using laws like this against working people and our unions. That’s the lesson of the victorious struggle of the 55,000 Ontario education workers, members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees,” he said. In November 2022, with the backing of the entire labor movement, they defied the Ontario government’s anti-strike Bill 28, forcing its repeal.

“Thousands of workers have seen the

lengths the bosses and their parties will take to assure their profits,” Penner said. “That’s why the B.C. longshore workers won such wide solidarity, including from unions in the U.S., Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere.

“This can help lay the basis for workers seeing the need to break with the bosses’ parties and forge a labor party based on the unions to fight to take political power.”

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Hundreds of nurses rally, demand contract in New Jersey

BELLEVILLE, N.J. — Hundreds of members of the 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East came out for a spirited rally here July 22 demanding a contract for nurses at Clara Maass Hospital. Union-organized buses came from New York City and around New Jersey carrying health care workers to show their solidarity.

The 500 nurses here voted last August to join the union and have been fighting for their first contract since. They waved signs saying, “I’m a fan of safe staffing!” and “We are not second-class nurses!”

Caprice Frazier and Elizabeth Rosa, two members of the union negotiating committee, spoke. Rosa has worked at

Clara Maass for eight years. Born and raised in nearby Newark, “I want to make a difference in this community,” she said. “Negotiations is not a word I could use for the meetings with management. They are not willing to negotiate. All we hear is No! No! No!

“Together we can make management Pay us! Staff us! Respect us!” she said.

“We are thrown into unsafe situations every day, regularly assigned up to eight patients,” Frazier told the crowd. “We are the lowest-paid nurses in the RWJBarnabas system, with no pension. We have a right to be heard and a right to fight!”

Aidan Finch, an oncology nurse who has worked at Clara Maass for two years, came out of work to join the rally. “Staffing is terrible,” he said. “I get so anxious about work. I can’t sleep. We have too many patients and many tasks to carry out. I don’t have time to get to know my patients.”

Kris Wehr, a nurse here for 30 years and a member of the negotiating committee, works in Women’s Health. “Our patients are on Medicaid. We take care of many immigrants, with or without papers,” she said, explaining how important the hospital was to the community. “The hospital wants to keep the power and control. Management doesn’t want us to have any decision-making in staffing.”

The day before, 1,500 nurses at another RWJBarnabas hospital, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick, voted down management’s latest contract offer. Earlier that week they had authorized a strike. Their union, United Steelworkers Local 4-200, says additional staffing is the top issue.

— Joanne Kuniansky

— 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO —



August 10, 1998

PORTADOWN, Northern Ireland — The nationalist population of the Garvaghy Road area of Portadown witnessed the humiliating defeat of forces mobilized by the sectarian Orange Order in the week beginning July 12.

By July 10 some 25,000 rightists were encamped on a hill at Drumcree Church overlooking the nationalist community. But the predicted mass siege and assault failed to materialize. By July 14 the rightist encampment had dwindled to 300.

The catalyst for the collapse was the murder of three Catholic boys in a loyalist firebomb attack. The boys’ mother is a Catholic. The father of the murdered Jason, Mark and Richard Quinn is Protestant and the boys attended a Protestant school.

Meanwhile, a new inquiry began into the 1972 British army Bloody Sunday killing of 14 civil rights protesters after a decades-long campaign by relatives.



August 3, 1973

DELANO, Calif. — Hundreds of trade unionists traveled here July 21 in an impressive show of support for striking farm workers. Their support for the United Farm Workers Union came at an opportune time, as a wave of mass arrests here in the lower San Joaquin Valley has sent thousands of strikers to jail.

Recent court orders make mass picketing impossible and severely restrict the use of bullhorns. In addition to the grape strike in Arvin-Lamont, the union has its hands full with strikes in a dozen other areas of California, three counties in Arizona, and in the San Luis Valley of Colorado.

UFW Director Cesar Chavez said, “The bottom of the market is falling out.” He credited this mainly to the nationwide boycott of table grapes. He also said that “we now have more support than we have had at any stage of the movement since the beginning.”



August 9, 1948

General Douglas MacArthur, American imperialism’s ruler of Japan, has imposed his own version of the Taft-Hartley Slave Act on the public service workers. His innovation was not only to prohibit strikes but to abolish collective bargaining.

His “suggestions” further abolish mediation and arbitration, ban slowdowns and other “subterfuges” and provide jail terms for one year plus 5,000 yen fines for violators. This applies to 3,500,000 men and women, more than half of Japan’s labor union movement.

The Japanese labor movement is not taking these vicious decrees lying down. The Communications Workers Union, 400,000 strong, is openly defying MacArthur’s slave edicts by calling a strike for August 7. American labor must demand the withdrawal of the American troops from Japan in order to permit the Japanese workers to resolve their own destiny.

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Why do liberals claim that US capitalism is on the upswing?

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

If you go by what the liberal big-business media are saying, the economy is on the verge of a boom, with prices dropping and fears of a wrenching recession fading away. Among a plethora of articles pushing this view include: “Everything’s coming up soft landing,” by *New York Times* economic whiz Paul Krugman, and “US economy shifts into disinflation mode,” by Reuters.

These articles all credit President Joseph Biden and the big bankers who run the Federal Reserve and set interest rates with pulling this miracle off. None too subtly, they’re plugging for you to vote for Biden in 2024.

But the facts show the reality facing working people is a far cry from their headlines. While the Consumer Price Index as a whole — which counts everything from yachts and mansions to used cars and rutabagas — has come down in June to 3% over the last year, almost all of this is because of a steep drop in gas and other energy prices.

But this doesn’t mean that prices of goods essential for working people don’t continue to bite us. Rents rose by 8.3% over the past year. Prices for grocery items workers need kept going up — cereals, up 16%; jelly and jam, up 17.5%; mayonnaise, 23%; applesauce, 22%, for example.

Some of the steepest rises were for the cost of insuring a vehicle, up 17% in June. And the cost of keeping your car running rose 12.7% from a year earlier.

Health care prices are eating us up. A study of 72 insurance companies across the country found rate increases of 10% in the works of being implemented. And this comes on top of 20% over the past five years and a whopping 43% over the past 10. Don’t even ask about nursing homes.

And if you want to celebrate the drop in at least some prices — like gas and eggs — drinks at bars and restaurants are up 7.9% in June over last year.

Krugman claims that inflation is much lower if you only count “super-core” items — which don’t include price rises for rents and mortgages, used cars, food and a number of other necessities.

High interest rates make it increasingly difficult for many working people to cover rising credit-card debts, auto payments and home mortgages — now hovering around 7%. As a result, more young adults in their 20s

and 30s live at home with their parents or other relatives. They can’t afford to get out on their own or form and maintain a family.

Another sign of this crisis is the huge, unpayable debts being racked up by youths in their 30s in the U.S. Their total balances hit more than \$3.8 trillion in the fourth quarter last year, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York reported — a 27% jump over late 2019.

More and more part-time workers

The Biden administration and its boosters pat the Democrats on the back for the low official unemployment figures — 3.6% in June. They say it’s a result of “Bidenomics.” But the fact is real wages have fallen and workers’ purchasing power has dropped since Biden moved into the White House.

And now bosses are indeed keeping more employees on the payrolls, but they’ve been slashing workers’ hours. In June the number of part-time workers increased by 452,000, the biggest monthly jump in nearly four years. A total of 4.2 million workers wanting full-time jobs have had to accept part-time work.

In East Lansing, Michigan, Lawrence Hart-Howlett was forced to take on a second job after his \$14.42-an-hour job at the Michigan State University cafeteria got cut from five days a week to two for the summer. He was able to land a second job as a dishwasher at a fast-food chain, but bosses there cut his hours from 24 to 15 a week.

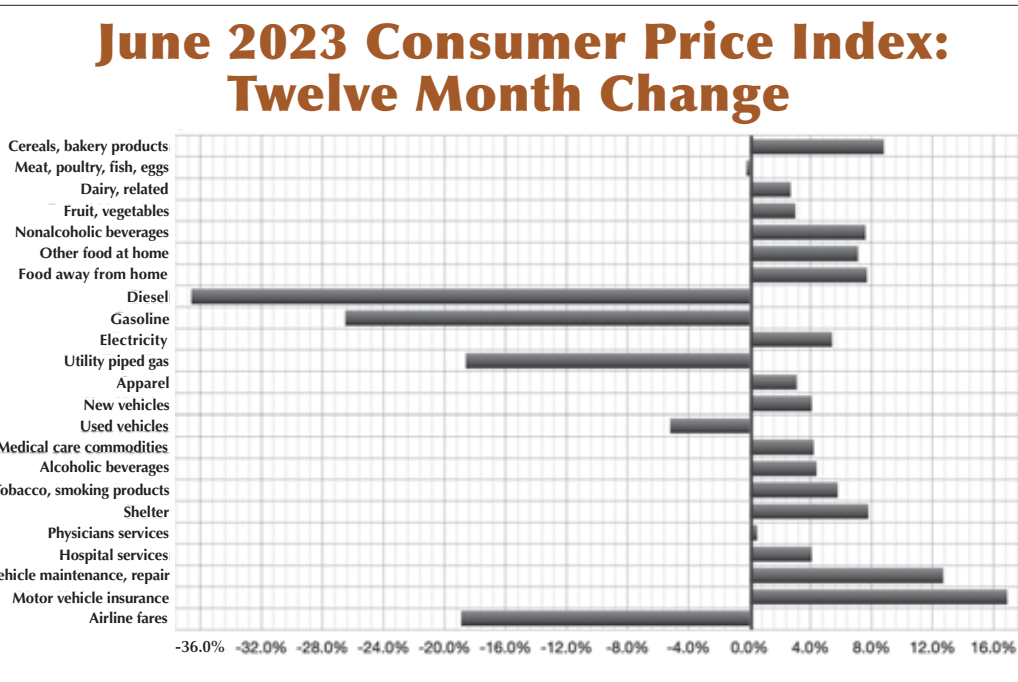
SWP campaigns on program to counter economic crisis

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

What can working people do to defend ourselves from the bosses who continue to push the economic crisis of their system onto our backs?

Strikes and other battles by thousands of union members are underway to win better wages and conditions. Socialist Workers Party candidates and members are building solidarity with these struggles. As they do so they’re presenting a political course to draw workers together, to raise our confidence in our own worth and to strengthen the labor movement.

Central to this is the need for a union-led fight for jobs with the wag-



Bureau of Labor Statistics

While energy prices have gone down, most items working people depend on are still rising today.

“I had to pick up this job to help cover for my first one, and now what am I supposed to do?” he told the *Washington Post*. “I’m not sure I’ll be able to cover next month’s rent.”

Bosses and government spokespeople claim that the biggest problem with inflation is it impels workers to fight for higher wages, leading to what they claim is a “wage-price spiral.” This just isn’t true. When workers organize and use unions to fight and win higher wages, it just means profits go down. Profits are what the bosses steal from the fruits of our labor.

The fact of the matter is workers’ real wages are currently 3.2% lower than in December 2020. This has spurred a number of union-led strikes — by the United Electrical Workers at Wabtec in Pennsylvania; Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union at International Flavors and Fragrances in Tennessee;

and more — for pay raises to make up for past losses and to keep up with inflation, as well as improved work conditions and schedules.

The 340,000 Teamsters union members at UPS faced a July 31 deadline in their fight for a new contract, seeking to close the gap between what full- and part-time workers are paid. And the United Auto Workers contract with the Big Three auto barons runs out in September.

And while the boss media claim the economy is great, “U.S. manufacturing sector is in a ‘sorry state’” headlined a July 18 MarketWatch article. Industrial output dropped 0.5% for the second month in a row in June, it said. Capacity utilization declined to 78.9%, nearly 2% less than it was last September. Motor vehicles and parts fell 3% last month and utilities output dropped 2.6%. Over the past two months mining output declined 1.6%.

es, schedules and conditions necessary for workers and their families to live — rather than be torn apart by the bosses’ drive for profits.

“At stake is protecting the lives of working people — the only productive, creative and progressive class that holds the future of humanity in its hands,” Lea Sherman, the SWP candidate for General Assembly in New Jersey, told the *Militant*.

Unions need to fight for a government-funded public works program — at union-scale wages — to build hospitals, child care centers, housing and needed infrastructure to put millions to work.

Millions are forced to work long hours, and more overtime, or take two or more jobs, while others scramble for any work at all. “The time is ripe to demand a shorter workweek with no cut in pay to spread the work around,” Sherman said.

“To protect workers’ living standards from the ravages of inflation, full and automatic cost-of-living escalators are needed in all contracts, in every workplace and in pensions, unemployment benefits and Social Security,” she said. Unions can fight for a basic income to make it possible to keep a job *and* have a family life and time to be active in our unions, as the labor movement fights for higher pay, universal child care and medical care.

“After the Feb. 3 train derailment devastated the town of East Palestine,

Ohio, rail workers and town residents have spoken out about the rail bosses’ drive for profits, which is the cause of such disasters,” Sherman added. “The Socialist Workers Party says workers need to take control of production, including decisions that affect the health and safety of millions of people, and to ensure the safeguarding of the land, air and water.” We need to force open the bosses’ business secrets, she said, and expose how their exploitation squanders the labor of working people and endangers lives.

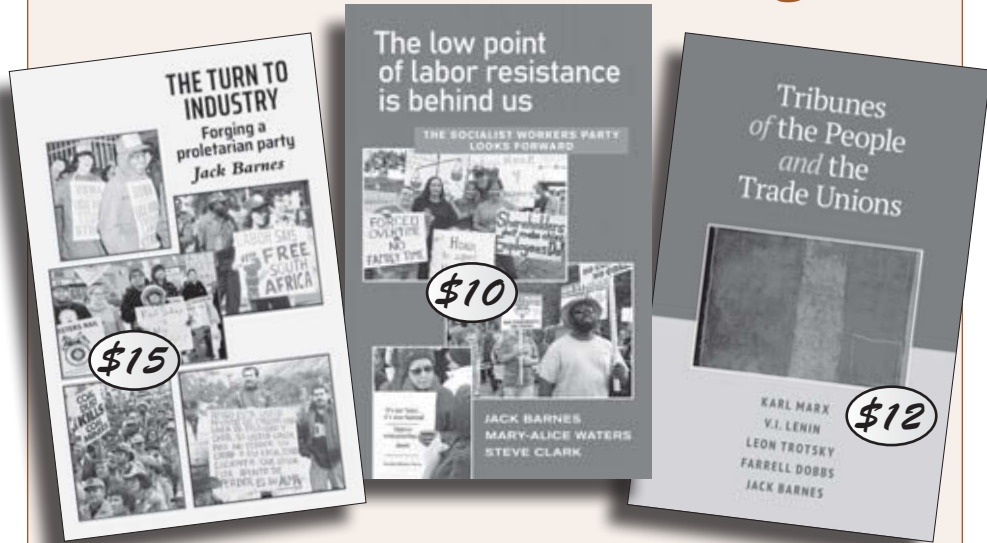
The labor movement has a tremendous stake in forging an alliance with exploited farmers, who are robbed from every side by the banks and other capitalists, and to join in their struggles. The SWP explains that nationalization of the land is the only way to block extortionate land grabs by the banks and large real estate firms and ensure land can be used by those who want to work it.

“Securing these aims requires ending labor’s reliance on the bosses’ Democratic and Republican parties,” Sherman said. “We need to break from the capitalist parties and build a labor party based on the unions.”

“Along that road we can draw together the class forces capable of leading tens of millions of workers and farmers to take political power from the capitalists and into our hands.

“This opens the door for a workers and farmers government, to reach out in solidarity with toilers worldwide.”

Recommended reading



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Cuba's socialist revolution

Continued from front page
carefully reconstructed, smuggled out of prison and published clandestinely under the title "History Will Absolve Me." It became the program of the July 26 Movement and tens of thousands of copies were distributed across the island.

Castro and the others were found guilty, but because of the growing outcry by working people, Batista was forced to grant them amnesty and they were released from prison May 15, 1955.

The revolutionary struggle deepened, and on Jan. 1, 1959, Batista fled the country ahead of the advances of the Rebel Army. A week later Castro entered Havana, leading working people determined to implement that program.

Within two years, they had carried out the first socialist revolution in the Americas and inspired a new generation of communist fighters worldwide.

Below, an excerpt from "History Will Absolve Me." The translation is by Pathfinder Press. Copyright © 2023 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Why were we sure we could count on the support of the people?

When we speak of the people we aren't referring to the wealthy and conservative sectors of the nation. We aren't speaking of those who welcome oppressive regimes, dictatorships, and despotism. We aren't speaking of those who prostrate themselves before the master of the moment, to the point of pressing their foreheads into the ground.

When we use the term people, we're referring to the struggle of the great unredeemed masses, those to whom everyone makes promises and everyone deceives and betrays. We're referring to those who yearn for a better homeland, one with dignity and justice. To those who are moved by age-old aspirations for justice, because they have suffered injustice and been treated with contempt for generation after generation. We're referring to those who want extensive and sound changes on all levels. To those who are ready — ... above all, when they believe in themselves — to give their last

drop of blood to attain those changes.

The first condition of sincerity and good faith in any effort is this: to do precisely what no one else does — to speak with absolute clarity and without fear. ... Revolutionaries must proclaim their ideas courageously, define their principles, and express their intentions so that no one is deceived — neither friend nor enemy.

When we talk about the people, in terms of struggle, we mean the 600,000 Cubans without work, who want to earn their daily bread honestly without having to emigrate from their homeland in search of a job.

The 500,000 farmworkers who live in miserable huts, who work four months of the year and starve the rest, sharing their poverty with their children; who don't have an inch of land to till and whose lives would move any heart not made of stone.

The 400,000 industrial workers and laborers whose retirement funds have been embezzled; whose gains won in the past are being taken away; whose homes are hellish shacks that resemble the worst barracks; whose wages pass from the hands of the boss to those of the moneylender; whose future is a cut in pay and loss of a job; whose life is endless toil; whose only rest is the grave.

The 100,000 small farmers who live and die working land that's not theirs, looking at it with the sadness of Moses gazing at the promised land; who will die without ever owning it; who,



Fidel Castro, center, with Raúl Castro, left, lead prisoners freed from jail May 15, 1955, after popular demand for amnesty of survivors of July 26, 1953, Moncada attack. They continued revolutionary struggle, leading to overthrow of U.S.-backed dictatorship on Jan. 1, 1959.

like feudal serfs, have to pay for the use of their parcel of land by giving up a portion of what it produces; who cannot love it, improve it, beautify it, nor plant a cedar or an orange tree on it because they never know when an officer of the court will come with the Rural Guard to evict them.

The 30,000 teachers and professors who are so selfless, dedicated, and necessary for a better future for the generations to come — yet are so badly treated and paid.

The 20,000 small merchants, crushed by debt, ruined by the crisis, and dealt the final blow by a plague of thieving, venal officials.

The 10,000 young professionals:

doctors, engineers, lawyers, veterinarians, school teachers, dentists, pharmacists, journalists, painters, sculptors, and others who leave school with a degree, looking for a way to fight, full of hope, only to find themselves at a dead end with all doors closed and deaf to their pleas and outrage.

This is the people — those who know misfortune and are therefore capable of fighting with limitless courage! To these people, whose desperate roads through life have been paved with the bricks of betrayal and false promises, we weren't going to say: "We'll give you ..." but rather: "Now's the time: Fight with all your strength so that liberty and happiness may be yours!"

Teamsters say tentative agreement reached with UPS

Continued from front page
is going to improve workers' lives tremendously," O'Brien told Fox News. The Teamsters will use the gains they made to step up attempts to organize Amazon and FedEx workers, he said.

The agreement will be reviewed on July 31 by representatives of the 176 UPS Teamsters locals in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. The union's members at UPS will get a summary and vote online from Aug. 3 to 22.

According to the Teamsters' press release, all current full- and part-time UPS workers will get a \$7.50 per hour wage increase over the life of the contract, starting with \$2.75 more this year. That comes to about an average of 6.5% a year.

Existing part-timers will be raised immediately to \$21 per hour minimum, although most will continue to get only 20 hours a week. Those who have been there five years or more, O'Brien said, will get a larger increase.

The union press release says that the two-tier wages system for drivers — where 25% or more of them earned up to \$6 an hour less than more senior drivers — will be eliminated immediately. The two tiers were imposed in the 2018 contract.

Starting next year, all new UPS vehicles will be equipped with air conditioning. O'Brien told Fox News that existing trucks will get two fans and improved ventilation, what he called a "short-term fix."

UPS bosses issued a statement saying that the tentative contract is a "win-win-win agreement." It rewards UPS workers while allowing the company to retain "the flexibility

we need to stay competitive, serve our customers and keep our business strong," the statement said.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported July 25, "The company isn't boasting about it, but we're told the agreement will allow more warehouse and delivery shifts on Saturdays and Sundays, which are currently understaffed."

Practice pickets took place in 12 states over the two days before the deal was announced.

Teamsters General President O'Brien was the main speaker at a rally by some 800 UPS workers and other union supporters at the Local 728 Teamsters hall July 22 in Atlanta, UPS's corporate headquarters.

He said one of the key unresolved issues was part-time workers' pay. "They hire in at around \$16 an hour, they have to work two to three jobs, some of them live in homeless shelters. We know our worth, our value," he said to applause. "The concession stand is closed."

Picket signs saying, "Just practice picketing for a just contract!" and T-shirts reading, "Pay up" dominated the hall, backed by spirited cheers and whistles throughout the rally.

"We're fighting against corporate greed," George Berry, a UPS feeder driver who delivers packages to the company's distribution centers, told the *Militant*. "We do the work, we want to benefit from it."

Part-time UPS warehouse worker Mike Smith said, "The big issues for me are heat, safety and wages. You spend 45 minutes to an hour-and-a-half in the back of a trailer where the heat gets up to 130 to 140 degrees, and the little fan they provide does little good. I need to work a

second job just to afford an apartment."

Jay Watson, a 30-year UPS veteran, traveled to the rally with several carloads of Teamster members from North Carolina. When asked what he wanted to see changed, he said, "Cameras! They watch you every day and then try to write you up."

Watson noted the importance of the "practice pickets," which helped shine a spotlight on the workers' determination to stand up to the company.

Several Teamster truckers in negotiations with Yellow Corporation attended the rally. Marvin Maple said Yellow had stopped paying health and pension contributions and wanted to reopen their contract to ask for concessions. "Solidarity with all our fights is needed."

The next day, the Teamsters got Yellow bosses to reverse its decision, so health care benefits will be paid as negotiations continue.

A lively contingent of some 20 actors from the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists had a literature table outside the hall explaining the issues in their nationwide strike. "It's essential to support other unions. The strength of unions is numbers and showing up for one another," Michael Mau, an actor and writer in the Writers Guild of America, told the *Militant*. "Solidarity makes us all stronger. Our country is built on exploitation."

Some 180 members of Teamsters Local 728, waste workers at Republic Services, who face a July 31 contract deadline, held a rally in Atlanta July 21.

Lisa Potash and Janice Lynn in Atlanta contributed to this article

pathfinderpress.com

Atomic bomb slaughter in Hiroshima points to more wars to come

Below is an extract from a speech by James P. Cannon, "The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki," given shortly after the U.S. rulers' cold-blooded massacre in the two Japanese cities, Aug. 6 and 9, 1945. To mark the anniversary of these atrocities against humanity, we print this excerpt from *The Struggle for Socialism in the "American Century": Writings and Speeches, 1945-47* by Cannon, then national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. It is one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* for July. Copyright © 1977 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JAMES P. CANNON

Capitalism in its death agony is dragging humanity down into the abyss. Capitalism is demonstrating itself every day more and more, in so-called peace as in war, as the enemy of the people. Bomb the people to death! Burn them to death with incendiary bombs! Break up their industries and starve them to death! And if that is not horrible enough, then blast them off the face of the earth with atomic bombs! That is the program of liberating capitalism.

What a commentary on the real nature of capitalism in its decadent phase is this, that the scientific conquest of the marvelous secret of atomic energy, which might rationally be used to lighten



Militant/Laura Gray

Laura Gray cartoon, "The Only Victor," after Japanese surrender, accompanied Aug. 18, 1945, *Militant* headline, "There Is No Peace!" U.S. rulers celebrated A-bomb, prepared for new wars.

the burdens of all mankind, is employed first for the wholesale destruction of half a million people.

Hiroshima, the first target, had a population of 340,000 people. Nagasaki, the second target, had a population of 253,000 people. A total in the two cities of approximately 600,000 people, in cities of flimsy construction where, as the reporters explained, the houses were built roof against roof. How many were killed? How many Japanese people were destroyed to celebrate the discovery of the secret of atomic energy? From all the indications, from all the reports we have received so far, they were nearly all killed or injured. Nearly all.

In the *Times* today there is a report from the Tokyo radio about Nagasaki which states that "the center of the once thriving city has been turned into a vast devastation, with nothing left except rubble as far as the eye could see." Photographs showing the bomb damage appeared on the front page of the Japanese newspaper *Mainichi*. ... The broadcast quoted a photographer of the Yamaha Photographic Institute, who had rushed to the city immediately after the bomb hit, as having said: "Nagasaki is now a dead city, all the areas being literally razed to the ground. Only a few buildings are left, standing conspicuously from the ashes." The photographer said that "the toll of the population was great and even the few survivors have not escaped some kind of injury." So far the

Japanese press has quoted only one survivor of Hiroshima.

In two calculated blows, with two atomic bombs, American imperialism killed or injured half a million human beings. The young and the old, the child in the cradle and the aged and infirm, the newly married, the well and the sick, men, women, and children — they all had to die in two blows because of a quarrel between the imperialists of Wall Street and a similar gang in Japan.

This is how American imperialism is bringing civilization to the Orient. What an unspeakable atrocity! What a shame has come to America, the America that once placed in New York harbor a Statue of Liberty enlightening the world. Now the world recoils in horror from her name. Even some of the preachers who blessed the war have been moved to protest. One said in an interview in the press: "America has lost her moral position." Her moral position? Yes. She lost that all right. That is true. And the imperialist monsters who threw the bombs know it. But look what they gained. They gained control of the boundless riches of the Orient. They gained the power to exploit and enslave hundreds of millions of people in the Far East. And that is what they went to war for — not for moral position, but for profit. ...

One can imagine an interesting discussion taking place in the inner circles of the House of Rockefeller and the

House of Morgan, who are at one and the same time — quite by accident of course — pillars of finance and pillars of the church and supporters of missionary enterprises of various kinds. "What shall we do with the heathens in the Orient? Shall we send missionaries to lead them to the Christian heaven or shall we send atomic bombs to blow them to hell?" ... [W]here American imperialism is involved, hell will get by far the greater number of the customers.

American imperialism has brought upon itself the fear and hatred of the whole world. American imperialism is regarded throughout the world today as the enemy of mankind. The First World War cost twelve million dead. Twelve million. The Second World War, within a quarter of a century, has already cost not less than thirty million dead; and there are not less than thirty million more to be starved to death before the results of the war are totaled up. ...

Who won the war that cost over thirty million lives? Our cartoonist in *The Militant*, with great artistic merit and insight, explained it in a few strokes of the pen when she drew that picture of the capitalist with the moneybags in his hands, standing on top of the world with one foot on the graveyard and the other on destroyed cities, with the caption: "The Only Victor." The only winner is American imperialism and its satellites in other countries. ...

Before the Second World War, with all its horror and destruction of human life and human culture, is formally ended, they are already thinking and planning for the third.

Don't we have to stop these madmen and take power out of their hands? Can we doubt that the peoples of all the world are thinking it cannot go much further, that there must be some way to change it? Long ago the revolutionary Marxists said that the alternative facing humanity was either socialism or a new barbarism, that capitalism threatens to go down in ruins and drag civilization with it. But in the light of what has been developed in this war and is projected for the future, I think we can say now that the alternative can be made even more precise: The alternative facing mankind is socialism or annihilation! It is a problem of whether capitalism is allowed to remain or whether the human race is to continue to survive on this planet.

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Democrats push to refurbish the FBI

Continued from front page

Only 37% of voters overall told NBC they had a favorable opinion of the FBI, down from 52% under Trump in 2018. Not surprisingly, the FBI is “more popular among Americans making more than \$200,000 a year,” the *New York Times* reported.

Millions of working people today see the FBI as a partisan weapon in the drive by Democrats to criminalize political opposition. Many recall Attorney General Merrick Garland ordering the FBI to snoop on parents protesting at school board meetings in 2021. Last year the FBI’s Richmond office planned a secret operation to spy on Catholics who prefer a Latin Mass, tossing aside the constitutional protection of the right to worship.

Two rulings by District Judge Terry Doughty highlight the FBI’s and CIA’s brazen political manipulation with the 2020 elections. He is presiding over a case brought by the attorney generals of Missouri and Louisiana against the Biden administration. On July 4

Actors, writers

Continued from front page

ance of Motion Picture and Television Producers.

This strike is not just for actors, actor Steven Lang told the crowd. “I’m also thinking of the craftspeople, the designers, the drivers and the stunt people,” he said to cheers. “All of them caught up in this maelstrom of inequality brought about by organized corporate greed. The only effective answer to organized greed is organized labor,” he said.

Other well-known union members took part, including Bryan Cranston, Jessica Chastain, Brenden Fraser, Ellen Burstyn, Jane Curtin, Christian Slater and Chloe Grace Moretz.

Among the central union demands is an immediate 11% wage increase to keep up with inflation; requiring actors give informed consent and be compensated when a “digital replica” of their performance is used; compensation when a production they’re in are streamed; and better pensions and health insurance.

The problem with artificial intelligence, actor Chuckii Graves, 72, told the *Militant*, is “they take our image and use it for a lifetime without our consent and we don’t get paid for it.” Graves showed this reporter a picture of one of his checks for “residuals — payment for repeat broadcasts — for a movie he was in. The check was for 81 cents.

But often residuals can be a significant part of an actor’s income. “The residuals are important,” said actor Peter Previte, 31. “As it is, you can’t make it on acting alone, you have to take other jobs.”

But it’s more than that, he said. “With AI they want to put your image out there, even alter it, without your permission. It’s about your reputation and your dignity.”

Background actor John Castagliola said that because of the minimum yearly income requirement to qualify for the union’s plan, he lost his health insurance twice. “The first time was during a bad winter where I had to miss some work,” he said. “The second time was when the pandemic struck and things shut down.”

For strike updates or to join a picket line, visit: www.sagaftastrike.org

Joanne Kuniandy contributed to this article.

Doughty ordered the FBI, State Department and other officials to refrain from “threatening, pressuring, or coercing social media companies in any manner to remove, delete, suppress, or reduce posted content of postings containing protected free speech.”

In a July 10 ruling, Doughty described how FBI officials regularly met with social media bosses to discuss censoring so-called fake news leading up to the 2020 election. In October that year Facebook asked if a *New York Post* story about Hunter Biden’s laptop was “Russian disinformation.” Laura Dehmow, head of the FBI Foreign Influence Task Force, refused to comment, despite the fact the agency had the laptop. Facebook suppressed the story.

Then Antony Blinken, a senior adviser to Biden’s campaign who is now secretary of state, had a chat with Deputy CIA Director Michael Morell. Following the meeting, Morell recruited 51 ex-CIA officers to issue a letter saying the *Post*’s story had “all the classic earmarks of a Russian information operation.” In testimony this April, Morell admitted he wrote the letter to help Biden win the election.

Despite Democrats’ and Republicans’ sharp differences over how the FBI should be used today, both parties — and the capitalist ruling families they represent — have a vital stake in refurbishing its reputation. They must be able to wield a political police agency with little restraint on it, especially when the class struggle heats up.

Moves to refurbish FBI attacks

The current hearings of the Republican-led House Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government are aimed at tapping the deep distrust of the FBI under Biden, to demand the FBI act more apolitical, like in the “good old days.”

The liberal press is keen to cover up the FBI’s history. In the *New York Times*, Beverly Gage writes that her liberal friends were secretly “cheering for the FBI” when it was used against Trump, “after a lifetime of viewing it as a bastion of political repression.” Don’t feel guilty, she tells them, claiming the FBI’s true history was as “an objective, nonpartisan investigative force.”

In contrast, conservative commentator Jonathan Turley says the FBI has become Biden’s “Praetorian Guard.” He proposes a “new Church Committee” to investigate the FBI, like the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence set up in 1975, headed by Sen. Frank Church.

Church was given the job of cleaning up the rulers’ spy agency. His committee held public hearings in late 1975. Knowing they had to “expose” some excesses to have any credibility, they trotted out a handful of carefully selected FBI abuses.

The hearings took place two years after the Socialist Workers Party launched a federal lawsuit and political campaign to expose decades of government spying, eavesdropping, infiltration and Cointelpro disruption programs against the party. This 13-year-long effort produced a powerful exposé of secret police interference with political freedom.

When Church submitted his committee’s findings in April 1976, the *New York Times* editors wrote, “The Socialist Workers Party lawsuit is prying out of the FBI files information that was in existence but was withheld from both

of the committees expressly charged with investigating intelligence abuses.” In truth, the Church Committee didn’t want to dig too deep.

Church’s findings led to some new restrictions and calls for transparency on the FBI. But they largely left the FBI free to continue its role as the rulers’ political police. One example of the limits imposed on the snoops was Congress establishing the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act court system in 1978. This created a secret court where the FBI could seek warrants for illegal wiretapping and spying.

This hasn’t proved to be much of a deterrent. A FISA court granted the FBI a warrant to spy on Trump campaigner Carter Page based on “evidence” of Russian collusion the FBI knew to be a pack of lies cooked up by Hillary Clinton’s 2016 campaign.

The SWP won its lawsuit in 1986, and, for the first time ever, a federal court ruled that the FBI could not infiltrate a political organization and spy on its members because of their constitutionally guaranteed political activity; that its burglaries and wiretapping vio-



lated Fourth Amendment protections; and that its Cointelpro attempts to disrupt SWP activity were illegal. This was a victory for all working people.

We have a substantial stake in standing up to the assault on constitutional freedoms led today by Democrats and the middle-class left. Both the Democratic and Republican parties will try to refurbish the rulers’ political police for greater use in future class battles.

Moscow hurls new destruction

Continued from front page

The air attacks killed or wounded a number of civilians and ruined the historic Ukrainian Orthodox cathedral in central Odesa. In the northwest Black Sea the Russian navy conducted a live-fire exercise July 21, threatening to target ships from any country sailing to Ukrainian ports.

In one strike, over 60,000 tons of grain was destroyed in an Odesa warehouse. Some 36 million tons of Ukrainian corn, wheat and other foods were shipped in the past year, more than half to drought-affected countries, like Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

With cereal shortages causing prices to rise, Russian grain exporters stand to benefit. More Ukrainian grain will now have to be shipped overland through Europe. To cover the increased costs, Arif Husain, chief economist at the World Food Program, demanded a cut to the price paid to Ukrainian farmers.

Pro-war ultranationalist arrested

Since the war began Putin has stepped up assaults on his political opponents, including the jailing of anti-war protesters. Now he is also clamping down on rightist opponents.

One of those, Igor Girkin, was arrested in Moscow July 21 for “inciting extremism,” based on comments he made about Putin. He faces five years in jail. Members of Girkin’s group, the Angry Patriots Club, protested outside his court hearing. Three of them were detained.

Like Putin, Girkin is an ex-FSB secret police officer. Under the nom de guerre of Igor Strelkov he was a leader of Moscow’s forces that seized Crimea in 2014 and led the takeover of Donetsk, in eastern Ukraine, by pro-Moscow separatists the same year. He was later convicted by a court in the Netherlands of the shooting down of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 over eastern Ukraine in 2014, killing all 298 aboard.

Girkin calls Putin a “cowardly medi-

ocrity” and blames him for Moscow’s failure to defeat Kyiv. He also calls for the incorporation of Armenia, Belarus, Georgia and Ukraine into the Russian Federation. He warns that forces inside Russia “are preparing a pro-Western coup” to “dismember the Russian Federation.” All force necessary must be used to defeat them, he says, urging an even more draconian course at home than that carried out by Putin.

On top of Girkin’s threats and Putin’s repression, working people in Russia bear the brunt of the capitalist economic and social crisis, exacerbated by U.S.-led sanctions.

The ruble has fallen by 18% against the dollar this year, pushing up import costs and prices for working people. While its military spending soars, the Kremlin plans to cut its overall budget by 10%.

As many as a quarter million Russian workers and farmers in uniform have been killed, wounded, defected or gone missing since the invasion began, according to the U.K. defense ministry. Russia’s military courts are convicting deserters at the rate of over 100 per week. But many deserters receive suspended sentences so that officials can send them back to the front. In the Zaporizhzhia region, some complete platoons have voluntarily surrendered to Ukrainian forces.

Their morale contrasts sharply with that of workers and youth in Ukraine.

“Everyone understands that now we have to defend our land from the Russian invasion,” Anastasiya Vaganova, who runs the music venue Caribbean Club in Kyiv, told the *Financial Times*. Members of the well-known Ukrainian rock band Antytila no longer perform because they enlisted as medics at the front. Music promoter Yougin Kibets says, “I can’t do heavy rock music now, because all of the audience for live rock music have joined the army, it’s like their credo.”