

THE MILITANT

SWP CAMPAIGN STATEMENT
Seize opportunities to
strengthen the unions!
 — PAGE 9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 87/NO. 30 AUGUST 14, 2023

New conspiracy charges against Trump deepen attack on rights

BY TERRY EVANS

Assaults on constitutional freedoms, led overwhelmingly by Democrats, dominate the 2024 presidential election campaign. President Joseph Biden's Justice Department is piling up charges against former President Donald Trump, trying to turn political differences into "crimes" and trying to put him in prison and out of the race.

At the same time, some Republicans are calling for Biden's impeachment, as the scandals surrounding his son point to the president's involvement when he was vice president. Republicans hope the scandal will boost their bid for the presidency. Which of the rulers' two main parties will control the White House, Justice Department and the capitalist rulers' political police — the FBI — dwarfs any debate over policy.

Continued on page 9

Peru protests demand ouster of government

BY JORGE LERTORA

Tens of thousands marched in Peru July 19, four months after a large wave of protests threw the country into turmoil following the removal and arrest of the country's president, Pedro Castillo. The protesters demanded the resignation of Dina Boluarte — who took over as president after Castillo was deposed by Congress — new elections, justice for the over 70 protesters killed by the police and military, and the establishment of a constitutional assembly.

The round of protests, dubbed the "Third takeover of Lima," were largely peaceful and included roadblocks set up in the southern Arequipa and Cusco regions along a key mining corridor.

While most protesters joined in demanding Boluarte's resignation and holding new elections — rejected five times by Congress since December

Continued on page 3

Memphis strike wins broad union, community support

Get out the word, help strengthen the struggle!



Militant/Ned Measel

Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 390G members on strike along with supporters picket, rally at International Flavors and Fragrances plant gate July 26.

BY AMY HUSK

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — "Union strong! All day long!" chanted some 75 striking members and supporters of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 390G as they rallied in front of the International Flavors and Fragrances plant here July 26. Nearly 200 members of the union have been on strike since June 4 after working for almost a year under an expired contract.

The workers make soy protein products that are used by Nestle, Nestle Purina, Kind Bars, Abbott Nutrition and other companies to manufacture baby formula, pet foods, soy-based nutrition-

al powders and other products.

"Why are we striking?" said Local 390G member Cornelius Moore, who chaired the rally. "People think we want more money. We're just trying to maintain what we already have. We're defending our precious benefits. They can call us into the job early on a moment's

Continued on page 6

NY meeting marks anniversary of opening of Cuban Revolution



Militant/Paul Mailhot

Celebration of 70th anniversary of July 26, 1953, Moncada attack opening Cuban Revolution was held in New York July 29. Inset, featured speaker, Cuba's ambassador to U.N., Gerardo Peñalver Portal.

BY JOANNE KUNIANSKY AND SARA LOBMAN

NEW YORK — Cuba's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Gerardo Peñalver Portal, was the featured speaker at a celebration here of the 70th anniversary of the attacks led by Fidel Castro on the U.S.-backed dictatorship's Moncada army garrison in Santiago de Cuba and Carlos Manuel de Céspedes barracks in Bayamo. Those heroic acts marked the opening of the Cuban Revolution.

"Today we are gathered here to honor the feat that would lead the Cuban people on the road of freedom. Today we pay tribute to those Cuban heroes who

sacrificed their youth for the greater good," said Ambassador Peñalver, also Cuba's First Deputy Foreign Minister.

"Precisely because of our history, the present and the future we are building, many in the world admire the Cuban Revolution, the indomitable resistance of our people in the face of external hostility, and the work of justice and humanism we defend."

One hundred and fifty people attended the July 29 event sponsored by the NY/NJ Cuba Sí Coalition.

The July 26, 1953, Moncada assault was a response to a coup carried out by Gen. Fulgencio Batista a year earlier.

Continued on page 7

Putin expands draft as Ukraine forces advance

BY ROY LANDERSEN

For almost a year and a half, Ukrainian working people have pushed back Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion aimed at subjugating their country. Putin is now expanding the

DEFEND UKRAINE'S INDEPENDENCE!

age of conscription to replenish his battered forces, while taking further steps to try to silence growing opposition to the war at home.

Moscow's forces have heavily mined front lines of areas they have seized in Ukraine, slowing today's Ukrainian counteroffensive. Nonetheless, the village of Staromaiorske in the south was recaptured by Ukrainian forces July 27, as part of grinding progress in three directions.

Continued on page 9

Strikes by actors, writers are a 'fight for all the workers'

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

LOS ANGELES — Two weeks after members of the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists went on strike, joining the workers from the Writers Guild of America who walked out May 2, several unions and other workers organized to bolster their weekday picket line July 25 with a rally in front of Netflix.

Key union demands include an immediate 11% pay raise to keep up with

Continued on page 4

Inside

Catherine Burks-Brooks helped launch Freedom Rides in 1961 2

Rail workers fight for control of safety, working conditions 4

International youth meeting in Cuba says 'No!' to US embargo 6

—On the picket line, p. 5—

Canadian dockworkers' fight for contract continues

Chicago hospital workers strike over wages, increased staffing

Catherine Burks-Brooks helped launch Freedom Rides in 1961

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The 1961 Freedom Rides were one of the watershed events in the Black-led working-class fight to overthrow Jim Crow segregation that changed social relations in the U.S. forever. Among those fearless, determined fighters involved in this moment in history was Catherine Burks-Brooks, who died July 3 at age 83.

Despite U.S. Supreme Court rulings in 1946 and 1960 that outlawed segregation in interstate travel, state officials and racist thugs across the South made sure they were ignored. In response to a call by the Congress of Racial Equality, volunteers set out from Washington, D.C., on Greyhound and Trailways buses May 4, 1961, with the goal of reaching New Orleans, desegregating bus station facilities all along the way.

They were met by cop and Klan violence. In Anniston, Alabama, a mob of white supremacists halted the Greyhound bus May 14, pelted it with rocks and bricks, smashed windows, slashed tires and lobbed a firebomb into the bus. The mob unsuccessfully tried to kill the Freedom Riders by blocking them from getting off the burning bus.

A few hours later, Freedom Riders on the Trailways bus were brutally beaten after they entered a whites-only waiting room at the bus terminal in Birmingham, Alabama. Police Chief Eugene "Bull" Connor arranged with local Klan leaders that police would stay away for 15 minutes, making time for the attack. Upon hearing of the assault, Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth led a force of civil rights fighters to free the Freedom Riders. In response to these assaults, CORE called

for a halt to the rides.

But a group of students in Nashville, Tennessee, thought otherwise, including Diane Nash, one of the founders of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and 21-year-old Catherine Burks, then a senior at Tennessee State University.

Burks, Paul Brooks, her husband-to-be, and eight other students left Nashville by bus May 17. At Birmingham city limits the police stopped the bus. Connor came aboard and ordered Brooks, who was Black, to stop sitting next to white student James Zwerg, saying it violated Alabama's segregation laws. Brooks refused and both students were arrested. The other Freedom Riders were all thrown in jail.

That night Connor put some of the arrested students in police cars and said they were taking them back to Nashville. Burks-Brooks, sitting next to Connor in the front seat, got into a lively discussion with him. Connor spoke about his support for South Carolina Gov. Strom Thurmond, who led a walkout at the 1948 Democratic national convention to set up the segregationist States Rights Party. "Now, you know y'all were wrong," she told him. She also invited Connor to continue the discussion over breakfast when they got to Nashville. He accepted, but never intended to do so.

'We'll be back by high noon!'

When they got to the isolated small town of Ardmore, on the Tennessee state line, Connor ordered the students to get out. "I couldn't let old Bull have the last word," she told the *Tennessean* in 2013. "I told the Bull, I hollered it



Inset, Mississippi Department of Archives and History
Above, Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, left, speaks with Freedom Riders, seated from left, Charles Butler, Catherine Burks-Brooks, Lucretia Collins and Salynn McCollum in white waiting room in Birmingham, Alabama, bus station, May 17, 1961. Inset, Burks-Brooks smiles in mug shot after being arrested in Jackson, Mississippi, 11 days later.

out, that we would see him back in Birmingham by high noon!" And they were back there later that day.

Connor said there was a train station in the distance, but it was a shuttered warehouse. In the middle of the night the group got help from a Black family living nearby and phoned the Freedom Ride coordinator in Nashville, who organized a car to come get them and race back to Birmingham, watching out for the Klan all the way. As they neared the city, they stopped at Shuttlesworth's to consult, then went to the bus station.

Burks-Brooks took part in two more Freedom Rides that spring, from Birmingham to Montgomery, Alabama, and from Montgomery to Jackson, Mississippi, where she and other Freedom Riders were arrested, convicted and tossed into the notorious Parchman state penitentiary.

With the Freedom Rides shining an international spotlight on American segregation, the John F. Kennedy administration called for the students to stop and "cool off." CORE and SNCC leaders refused, as hundreds of volunteers joined in ride after ride that summer.

On to Monroe, North Carolina

After being released from Parchman, Freedom Riders responded to an appeal from Robert F. Williams, president of the NAACP chapter in Monroe, North Carolina, to come and join protests

against segregation and Klan violence, including death threats against him. Twenty-two were there in mid-August.

Williams led a fight against the city's segregated public accommodations, for equal employment opportunities and against attacks by racist thugs and cops. A former auto worker in Detroit and army veteran, Williams organized armed self-defense, setting up a rifle club to defend Blacks against all comers. He was framed up a few weeks after the Freedom Riders arrived on trumped-up charges of kidnapping, fleeing overseas for a number of years. The charges were later dropped.

Among Freedom Riders coming to Monroe were James Forman, executive director of recently formed SNCC. Paul Brooks was another, who was joined by Burks-Brooks, and they stayed at Williams' home after getting married in South Carolina.

Joining pickets on the streets in Monroe, Freedom Riders faced threats and attacks by the Klan and city authorities.

Ken Shilman, a Freedom Rider who like Burks-Brooks had been incarcerated in Parchman, was arrested again in Monroe. In response to the brutal beating of Freedom Rider Richard Griswold in a nearby cell, Shilman yelled at the top of his lungs to get it stopped, saving his life. Shilman, then 18, would become a national leader of the Young Socialist

Continued on page 3

THE MILITANT

'Climate' hysteria fanned by liberal doomsayers

The recent heat wave, not overly unusual historically, was the latest extreme weather liberals claim calls for cutting back industrial production. This would deny billions in the semicolonial world access to electrical power, air conditioning essential to health and social progress.



Over 100 died from heat in Uttar Pradesh, India, hospital with no way to keep cool.

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Discussions on unions, politics mark librarians' conference

BY JIM ALTENBERG
AND PATTIE THOMPSON

CHICAGO — Nearly 16,000 librarians from public, school, prison and military-base libraries, along with publishers, authors and vendors, gathered here at the McCormick Place June 22-27 for the American Library Association conference. The gathering took place amid increased attacks on constitutional rights, rewrites of well-known authors whose views clash with today's politically correct inquisition, and bans on books from various political forces.

As part of the conference, volunteers staffed a large Pathfinder Press booth in the exhibit hall, featuring works in several languages by Socialist Workers Party leaders and other working-class revolutionaries worldwide. The booth was a nonstop center of discussion on an array of topics, including the need for unions, women's emancipation, racism, antisemitism and the example of the Cuban Revolution.

Many were interested in Spanish-language titles, saying they wanted to expand their libraries' Spanish collections.

Volunteers introduced participants to Pathfinder's newest title, *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. Many participants pointed to the opening sentence on the stakes for the working class in defending and using constitutional freedoms, and discussed the dangers in the Democrats' unrelenting drive to criminalize political disputes, targeting Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump along with his supporters. Others were drawn to the discussion in the book on the labor movement, saying they were union members or involved in unionization efforts at their libraries.

An important component of the ALA gathering was the organization's campaign against censorship of reading material and of library collections. There were many presentations on this issue, including in the opening session where the featured speaker was well-known children's author Judy Blume. Her popular fiction, which addresses issues faced by adolescent girls, has been the target of censorship efforts for decades.

The ALA campaign focused almost entirely on titles challenged by forces aligned with former President Donald Trump and other Republican candi-

Freedom Rides

Continued from page 2

Alliance and Socialist Workers Party.

For joining the Freedom Rides, Burks-Brooks and 12 others were expelled from Tennessee State University, but they fought back and got their degrees in the fall.

Throughout her life, Burks-Brooks took every opportunity to speak about her experiences as a Freedom Rider. "A glorious time to be alive," she would say.

The actions by this fearless generation of youth — followed by the 1963 Battle of Birmingham and 1965 voting rights battle and march in Selma and Montgomery — transformed their lives, the potential to forge working-class unity and prospects for the U.S. class struggle.

dates. But the fact is, many working-class parents are genuinely concerned about what their children are being taught in the schools, which is increasingly saturated with "woke" political indoctrination and sexually explicit material, all the way down to kindergarten. They demand a say in their children's education, which has less and less to do with learning to read, write, do mathematics and understand history and the physical world.

Little was said at the ALA event about liberal "cancel culture," which seeks to ban books, authors and public speakers and others who do not bow to "political correctness." Conference organizers set up a "banned books" display that included none of the works by William Shakespeare, Mark Twain, Joseph Conrad, J.K. Rowling, and others targeted as "racist," "offensive," or, as a recent bill before the California legislature put it, lacking "inclusive and diverse perspectives." No objection was raised against increasing efforts to strip or rewrite books that some claim use upsetting words.

Along with Blume, the opening session of the conference featured Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias, who campaigned for a law that would pull state funds from libraries that selectively remove books. Illinois Democratic Gov. J.B. Pritzker in signing the bill slandered its opponents as racists, claiming its purpose is to prevent "white nationalism" from "determining whose histories are told."

Books to workers behind bars

As in years past, the ALA conference was an important forum for librarians involved with prisons and jails to discuss their work. Pathfinder

Protests across Peru demand ouster of government

Continued from front page

— they are divided on demanding Castillo be restored to office. Many say Castillo, who had been a schoolteacher, union leader and peasant, was removed because he was considered "a man of the people."

"We demand that our vote be respected, otherwise it has no value," Sonia Quispe, a teacher in Cusco, told the *Militant* by phone. Others had become disillusioned over his performance as president.

The July 19 actions were called by the National Coordinator of Unified Struggle (CNUL), a block of diverse social organizations and political forces, along with the Workers' General Confederation of Peru, the country's main trade union federation.

The capitalist rulers have been unable to form a stable government, with six presidents in the last five years. This political volatility is fueled by longstanding anger among working people over conditions imposed by Peru's government and imperialist interests, as economic growth has expanded in the major copper-producing country.

In Cusco some 3,000 small shopkeepers, teachers, construction workers and others marched around the main plaza, Mary Luz Bastidas said in a phone interview. Unfortunately tourist industry workers, a big sector of the



Militant/Salm Kolis

Discussions of defense of constitutional freedoms, "woke" book bans, need for unions today, politics led to high sales of Pathfinder books at American Library Association conference.

volunteers Mark Severs and Jim Rogers participated in many of these meetings, showing prison librarians Pathfinder books. A Maryland librarian told one of the panels, "I would like to thank our friends from Pathfinder for the work that they do." Some came to the Pathfinder booth, buying books and arranging to be contacted after the conference.

Among the hundreds of panels and other activities, some dealt with current political developments. Two panels addressed Russia's war against Ukraine and Moscow's attacks on libraries and culture. Also addressed were expanding library services to non-English speakers and people with visual impairments.

Pathfinder volunteers introduced Abram Leon's *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation* to participants, including at a reception of the Association of Jewish Librarians. Six people bought copies, and others signed up to be contacted later.

Sales of Pathfinder books at the

booth were significantly higher than at previous ALA conferences. A total of 129 books were sold, along with 19 subscriptions to the *Militant*. Top-sellers included *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us; Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* by Thomas Sankara; *The Jewish Question*; and *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* by Cuban revolutionary leaders Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos and Yolanda Ferrer. One person bought Farrell Dobbs' four-volume series on the Teamsters union movement in the 1930s.

Pathfinder volunteers across the country have begun to call the over 100 people who signed up to be contacted. Two young women invited Pathfinder to a librarians' conference in Indiana this fall. And as a librarian in the Bay Area told volunteer Jim Altenberg, "I really appreciate you following up. I was very impressed by your collection."

workforce in Cusco, had not joined the action, she said.

Before the protests, the government mobilized 24,000 police and military personnel, including along the country's main highways. They were seeking to obstruct protesters heading to Lima, the capital. The country's prime minister, Alberto Otárola, said a state of emergency, which suspends certain rights, including the freedom of movement, would help keep roads open as Peru celebrated its Independence Day July 28.

Rulers control copper, agriculture

The state of emergency was imposed in Peru's southern regions of Apurímac, Cusco and Arequipa, home to some of the country's largest mines, including Las Bambas, one of the world's most productive copper mines, owned by China's MMG Ltd. and CITIC Metal.

Lucio Castro, leader of the national teachers union SUTEP, told *La Republica* they are demanding 6% of the gross domestic product be used for education. "Education in the country is in total abandonment, and that needs to be reversed."

A big portion of Peru's workforce is hired by contractors or work in the "informal" economy. According to the National Institute of Statistics and Information of Peru, more than 12 million workers are in the informal econo-

my, mostly women.

Peru's capitalist class, ruling over a population of 34 million, depends on control over agricultural production, as well as exports of copper and other minerals.

"The land question has not been resolved in Peru," Edgar Carrasco, a street vendor, told the *Militant* during a wake held in Lima July 7 for Hugo Blanco, a revolutionary organizer of the peasantry in the 1950s and '60s who died June 25. "Food production went from being controlled by the landowners to the agro-exporter conglomerates. This is a central question driving the protests."

Many of the mobilizations by indigenous groups and peasants in the last decade have protested against the impact of large-scale capitalist mining operations, which provide relatively few jobs for the local population. These operations have led to the destruction of agricultural land and water resources, and forced the relocation of thousands.

Felix Suasaca, a representative of the National Platform of People Affected by Toxic Metals, said that some 10 million Peruvians, 31% of the population, are exposed to heavy metals in the water that they drink, mainly from the mining industry.

Róger Calero contributed to this article.

Rail workers fight for control of safety, working conditions

BY JOE SWANSON

LINCOLN, Neb. — There are thousands of rural towns across the U.S. crisscrossed by railroad tracks where trains pass through daily. Since the Feb. 3 Norfolk Southern derailment and burn-off of some 900,000 pounds of toxic vinyl chloride in East Palestine, Ohio, workers and farmers near rail tracks nationwide have become increasingly concerned about their situation.

Their concerns are shared by rail workers, who are looking for ways to take control over safety and work conditions.

A number of working people in and around Camanche, Iowa, located on the banks of the Mississippi River, were interviewed in July by *Grist*, an online magazine. “You feel for those people” of East Palestine, Alice Srp said July 12, “but your heart is thinking, are we going to be next?”

Some displaced East Palestine residents are unable to return to their homes six months after the disaster there, while others still face contaminated soil and streams in the town. Many attend meetings demanding the Environmental Protection Agency and other government agencies do something about the symptoms that are related to the chemical spills, while officials drag their feet.

U.S. railroads move over 2 million cars of hazardous materials annually.

Many homes in Camanche are located between the tracks and the river. “Roughly 1,000 people on the river side of the tracks are without help when trains pass through,” said Kitt Swanson. The only way out for her and others then is by boat.

Swanson, who is diabetic, said, “If I need EMS care, how am I going to get it when all the tracks are blocked?”

The rail line there belongs to Canadian Pacific, which purchased Kansas City Southern in April for \$31 billion. Working people there see around eight trains a day now, but the merger means traffic will swell. People in the city of 4,500 are expected to see upward of 21 trains rolling through every day.

Bosses drive for profits guts safety

Other recent derailments underscore how the rail bosses’ thirst for profits has led to increasingly dangerous conditions facing rail workers and working people along the tracks. Last week the National Transportation Safety Board concluded that an Amtrak derailment that killed

three passengers and injured 49 others in Montana in 2021 was the result of tracks that were not properly maintained and inspected by BNSF Railway.

The situation faced by the track inspector assigned to that area, from cutbacks in personnel and the increased workload forced on those left, the NTSB said, probably “prevented him from performing a timely walking inspection of the track.” When he inspected the curve where the derailment took place two days earlier, he was responsible for inspecting 126.8 miles of track. Two days later the Amtrak train derailed, the report said.

The report says BNSF’s lack of “safety culture” was tied to high workloads and fatigue.

After heavy rain and flooding, a Norfolk Southern train drove over a sinkhole in the Philadelphia suburbs July 17, derailing 15 cars. Some cars on the train carried hazardous chemicals, but luckily none of those hit the ground. While the bosses tried to blame the derailment on “climate change,” in all likelihood the railroad took a chance and didn’t send an inspector out to check the tracks.

“The problem is the railroad bosses are too willing to take a chance to keep the trains moving instead of sending track inspectors ahead of the train to check the track for washouts, sinkholes, and kinking of the trackage following heavy rain storms,” Jakob Forsgren, a Lincoln-based track worker and member of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, told the *Militant*, “all for the reasons of profit over safety.”

“When I was a track-work inspector, it was an absolute practice during a heavy storm that the dispatcher would stop all movement of trains until the inspectors and signal maintainers had checked the



AP/Ted S. Warren

Amtrak 2021 Montana derailment killed three, injured 49. NTSB found BNSF had not maintained the tracks and slashed the workforce, boosting workloads and causing fatigue.

trackage and reported it was safe,” Paul Swanson, a retired Denver area BMW member, told the *Militant*.

One factor rail workers point to in derailments today is the vastly increased length and tonnage of freight trains. The bosses push this relentlessly to reduce crews and boost profits. At the same time, they’re fighting rail unions to be able to cut train crews to just one worker.

Under increasing pressure from the East Palestine derailment, and from public actions by rail workers and their unions as well as residents in that area, some government agencies have called for new measures.

In late July, the Federal Railroad Administration pointed to East Palestine and urged Class I railroads to file monthly reports on the number, length, weight and consist of every train operated on their rail lines.

“When you are running 12,000- to 14,000-foot trains, and my conductor has only five months training, let alone being trained properly,” you raise ques-

tions, Randy Pitts, a SMART-TD union local chair, said at an NTSB hearing on the East Palestine derailment in April, describing experiences he has had.

“When you have a general manager specifically tell a division superintendent, ‘I don’t care whether they’re trained fully or not, mark them up, promote them, we’ve got to get these trains across the road,’” Pitts said.

Reliance on the bosses, government regulators or anyone beside rail workers ourselves, backed by the power of the labor movement, will not get the job done. We need to prepare to use union power, to fight for workers control over safety, and to reach out and win solidarity from other unionists and the working-class public. This is the only road to win safer, larger crew size, shorter trains and control over working conditions.

Joe Swanson is a retired rail conductor and remains active in his SMART-TD union local.

Strikes by actors, writers are a ‘fight for all workers’

Continued from front page

inflation; forcing producers to get actors’ consent and to compensate them whenever a “digital replica” of their image is used; for higher residuals for re-broadcasting shows; and better pensions and health care.

Joining the rally were members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 770, workers from locals of the Service Employees International Union, members of United Teachers Los Angeles, as well as Starbucks and fast food workers, and Lyft and Uber drivers who are fighting for union representation.

“We’re here to show solidarity,” Matt Plotkin, a member of UFCW Local 770 who has worked at Gelson’s Market for 22 years, told the *Militant*.

Ana Najera, 69, has worked for a contractor as a janitor at Paramount for 31 years and is a member of SEIU. “We’re here to support actors and writers. We will also need support when our contract expires next May,” she said.

Amada Mateos is an SEIU member and works as a home care worker. She came to the rally to support the strikers because all workers face the same thing. “We are fighting for a better contract and more money as well. We want everyone to get the same pay. For home care workers some places pay \$25 an hour but we get paid \$17,” she said. “It’s heavy work. You have to lift patients. We are fighting for those who come after us.”

Kat Ramos was part of a contingent of Starbucks workers at the rally. The workers where she works voted in a union a year ago. “The company lawyers refused to sit and negotiate in good faith. After one year we still have no contract,” she said. “We are at the rally to show solidarity.”

Stanislav Osipov moved to the U.S. about eight years ago and his friend, Sada Arya, came five years ago. Both worked as actors in Russia.

Osipov is a member of SAG-AFTRA here. “It’s like a circle, like a mouse trap,” he said. “In order to find a good performance job I need an agent. But they stereotype my accent. They portray us as gangsters. They stereotype African Americans too. I was an actor in Russian movies and TV shows, but here I do background work and stunt work.”

Arya lives in San Francisco and is an after-school teacher and Uber driver. “I pay \$900 for one room in a place with five people. We share the kitchen and bathroom. That’s the cheapest I can find,” he said. “I would like to be an actor and in SAG-AFTRA, but am not acting right now.”

“Starbucks workers must have the right to organize free from intimidation and coercion,” well-known actress Jane Fonda told the rally. “Starbucks has engaged in a historic union-busting campaign. Unions coming together in solidarity is historically important. Many

workers at Starbucks here look to break into the movie industry. Like our SAG and WGA members, they’re simply asking for a safe, secure and respectful workplace with a living wage.”

SAG-AFTRA chief negotiator Duncan Crabtree-Ireland thanked the Starbucks union members for coming to the picket. “We want you to know that SAG-AFTRA supports you. And when all of us can join together with a shared vision for a better future, we can overcome anything.”

For strike updates and how to join a picket line visit: www.sagaftrastrike.org and wga.org.

Bill Arth contributed to this article.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Why Washington Dropped the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Why the Militant Headline Afterward Stated, “There Is No Peace!” Speaker: Deborah Liatos, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., Aug. 13, 5 p.m. Donation: \$5. 2826 S. Vermont Ave., Suite 1. Tel.: (323) 643-4968.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Build Solidarity and Join in Today’s Union Struggles. Speaker: Lisa Potash, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., Aug. 13, 3 p.m. Donation: \$5. 777 Cleveland Ave. SW, Suite 103. Tel.: (678) 528-7828.



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First Nations' reserves hardest hit by wildfires across Canada

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

SEPT-ILES, Quebec — As of July 18, the *New York Times* reported that wildfires in Canada have destroyed 25 million acres so far this year — close to double the last few years.

Hardest hit have been the First Nations, whose reserves are located in the heavily forested northern regions. They have been discriminated against and abused by the government for decades.

As of July 28 over 1,000 fires were burning across Canada, 600 out of control. When forest fires on Quebec's North Shore were at their height in early June, Mani-Utenam, an Innu reserve of some 1,500 residents nine miles east of here, was ordered to evacuate.

"We got on buses after being notified about 5 p.m. that we needed to leave in the next two hours," 83-year-old Bernadette Fontaine, whose husband worked for 25 years for the Iron Ore Company of Canada, told this *Militant* reporter July 1. "Most went to the reserve in Pessamit about two hours west, but I went to stay with my daughter in Quebec City. Luckily, we were able to return in about a week and a half."

After a fire destroyed a residence on the Mani-Utenam reserve in 2019, Manuel Fontaine, who was the fire chief before the station was closed in 2011, told Radio Canada it takes firefighters "too long to arrive from Sept-Iles."

Some 56% of First Nation reserves have no serious protection against fires.

Ron Bellerose fled his home in the Metis settlement of East Prairie, Alberta, in May because of an evacuation order. When he returned, fires had destroyed his house and those of 13 others.

Insurance agents told them they couldn't get coverage "because we didn't have a proper fire department, we're too far away from the fire hydrant and the High Prairie Fire Department is too far away," Bellerose told CBC.

In 2022 a Statistics Canada study found Indigenous people living on reserves are 10 times more likely to die in a fire than the general population of Canada, with children most often being the victims. The chief coroner of

Ontario reported in 2021 First Nations children under the age of 10 had a fire-related mortality rate 86 times greater than non-First Nations children.

His report also found poor housing conditions and a lack of fire and building codes to be significant issues. Most of the fires they investigated — 86% — had either no smoke alarms in homes or ones that didn't work.

Deadly cuts to firefighting funding

In over a week in July three firefighters were killed trying to contain the massive blazes. Neil McMillan, director of science and research at the International Association of Firefighters, told the *Toronto Star* that lack of training, resources and proper staffing can cause firefighters' deaths or injuries.

These deaths and the fact the government needed to call in more than 5,000 international volunteers from several countries, reinforce the fact that funding for firefighting isn't a priority for the federal, provincial or territorial governments.

The Ontario government cut its firefighting budget by 67%, leaving the province short 23 fire crews last year and 50 this season.

"The almost unprecedented scope of this year's wildfires, and the devastation faced by tens of thousands of workers and farmers across Canada, is a product of the greed of the ruling capitalist families and their government, not those of working people," Félix Vincent Ardea, a conductor for Canadian National Railroad and Communist League candidate in the recently concluded by-election in Notre-Dame-de-Grace-Westmount in Montreal, told the *Militant*.

"The unions need to join the OP-SEU in opposing government cuts to firefighting and demand that adequate resources be provided to every community, including on the reserves."

"The unions also need to fight for a massive government-funded public works program to put thousands to work at union rates to rebuild housing using fire resistant material at no cost to anyone who lost their homes."

— 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO —



August 10, 1998

GUANICA, Puerto Rico — Tens of thousands of independence supporters marched and rallied here July 25 commemorating the centennial of the U.S. invasion of Puerto Rico.

Held at the very site where U.S. troops landed in 1898, the event was the first time in years that the commemoration was a joint action by all pro-independence forces on the island. The main organizations involved were the Puerto Rican Independence Party and the Hostos National Congress.

Chants included "Viva Puerto Rico Libre!" and demands for freedom for 15 Puerto Rican independistas in U.S. prisons. The same day 1,500 people from across the U.S. marched to the White House, marking 100 years of resistance to Washington's rule over Puerto Rico. Some 2,000 more marched in New York City and 400 in San Francisco.



August 3, 1973

The July strikes in Puerto Rico marked a turning point for the island's labor movement. The workers who played the most active role were sanitation workers; firemen; and the irrigation and electrical workers, who are organized in the Irrigation and Electrical Workers Union (UTIER).

The strikes by the firemen and UTIER ended in mid-July. In both cases the government granted concessions. In 1968 the millionaire Luis Ferre was elected governor. Ferre's four years in office led to a weakening of the government's hold on the union bureaucracy.

This, along with the fact that prices have gone up more than 21 percent since 1967, has led to growing resistance by Puerto Rican workers, shown over the past year and a half by the strikes of the El Mundo workers, teamsters, and telephone workers.

Canadian dockworkers' fight for contract continues



Militant/Ned Dmytryshyn

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — In face of attacks by Ottawa against their right to strike, 7,400 members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada at the 30 terminals run by the BC Maritime Employers Association on Canada's West Coast have used their union power, backed by widespread national and international working-class solidarity, to force the bosses to make a new offer. It will be put to a membership vote Aug. 3-4, following "stop-work" union meetings the day before to discuss it.

The new tentative deal was announced by ILWU Canada President Rob Ashton July 30, two days after the workers voted to reject contract terms from a government mediator.

The workers, who went on a 13-day strike July 1, are demanding a two-year contract, wage increases to cover inflation, and job protection from the bosses' drive to contract out union jobs and step up automation.

Because of the billions of dollars worth of commodities tied up at the Vancouver port, Canada's largest shippers across the country have called on the government to recall Parliament from its summer break, bar any further strike action, impose a contract, and pass anti-strike legislation to end the conflict. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says "all options" are on the table.

Ottawa has called in the Canada Industrial Relations Board, an "independent" body appointed by the government. Federal Labour Minister Seamus O'Regan said he intended to direct the board either to initiate binding arbitration or directly impose a new contract, abrogating the longshore workers' right to strike. The board set an Aug. 4 deadline.

The longshore workers have received widespread solidarity and inspired others across the country and internationally. Above, rally in Vancouver July 9.

— BEVERLY BERNARDO

— ON THE PICKET LINE —

Chicago hospital workers strike over wages, increased staffing

CHICAGO — Some 200 Loretto Hospital workers went on strike here July 31 at 7 a.m. to demand higher wages and more staffing. The strikers also want Juneteenth as a holiday.

"We are trying to get safe conditions for our patients by hiring more workers," Patricia Key told this *Militant* worker-correspondent. "The low pay leads to high turnover and short staffing."

The workers, members of SEIU Healthcare Illinois, include patient transporters, care technicians, emergency room techs, mental and behavioral health workers, respirator and radiology techs, housekeepers and others.

Greg Kelley, president of SEIU Healthcare, spoke at a news conference an hour into the strike. "We have a crisis of Loretto's making," he said. "There is a 60% turnover rate due to the low pay and short staffing. Workers do overtime to make ends meet."

Carla Haskins, a worker with five years at Loretto, also spoke. "We care about our patients," she said. "The pay is low so many of us work overtime or double shifts to pay bills."

Loretto is a safety-net hospital in the predominantly Black neighborhood of Austin on Chicago's West Side.

Marcos Love, a mental health specialist, said, "Other jobs I've had have been nonunion. I am proud to be part of a union where we can voice our opinion. Then if necessary, we can do something about conditions, like this strike."

The hospital has hired scabs from a temporary agency. Picket lines are up from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. every day and solidarity is welcomed.

— Dan Fein



August 16, 1948

National uprisings continue to spread in the Far East and shake to their foundations the empires of the Western imperialists. To the growing list of Asiatic peoples fighting for their independence is now added Malaya.

For upwards of a century its natives have been ruled and exploited by British imperialism through a system of indirect rule of native sultans. The country is a key sector of the British Empire as it is the world headquarters of the rubber and tin industries. The natives, suffering from food shortages and a raging inflation, have now risen in revolt.

Despite the pouring in huge numbers of troops, the French and Dutch have been unable to suppress the uprisings of neighboring Indo-China and Indonesia, and are losing the wars, it is obvious that the British are in for a long struggle with every chance of defeat.

International youth meeting in Cuba says ‘No!’ to US embargo

BY JACOB PERASSO
AND GABRIELLE PROSSER

HAVANA — “Your presence here encourages us and reinforces that Cuba is not alone despite so many attempts to isolate us,” Aylín Álvarez García, first secretary of the National Committee of the Union of Young Communists of Cuba (UJC), told 80 delegates from 30 countries participating here May 24-25 in a Mission of Solidarity: Global Youth Stand with Cuba. It was organized by the UJC and the World Federation of Democratic Youth.

Delegates represented youth organizations of Communist Parties and other organizations with the declared aim of fighting imperialism. The General Council of the federation met following the solidarity mission.

Álvarez condemned the economic war on Cuba. “They seek a surrender they will never have,” she said. Mirthia Julia Bronssard Oris, head of UJC International Relations, said the aim of the solidarity mission was to bring young people closer to the reality the Cuban people face and to show what they are doing to overcome the obstacles.

Delegates joined a bicycle caravan along the Malecón seafont boulevard in Havana to protest Washington’s brutal embargo on Cuba, which affects all economic and social life here. Hundreds chanted in solidarity with the Cuban people and in defense of their revolution.

The embargo has been maintained by every Democratic and Republican Party administration since Cuban workers and farmers overthrew the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship 64 years ago. Washington fears that workers and farmers elsewhere will be inspired by the socialist revolution here. The U.S. rulers want to crush the example of wresting political power from the capitalist class, and taking over the running of industry, the land and the banks. The revolution gave working people confidence in their own capacities to transform and lead society.

A highlight of the solidarity mission was a visit to the Center of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology. Dr. Manuel Raíces Pérez-Castañeda gave a presentation on medical conquests the center has achieved, including creating several effective vaccines against COVID-19.

He pointed to a rapid decline in hepatitis B cases in Cuba, especially among children from 1992 to 2009. “This kind of massive health achievement is only possible because of the Cuban Revolution,” he said. “We have the political will to treat the entire people and have a medical system not based on profits.”

Delegates toured the Solidarity with Panama School for Children with Disabilities, which serves 225 children with physical and mental disabilities. The school has a staff of 147, including 87 specialists and four doctors.

It opened in 1989 during the rectification process in Cuba, a powerful political reorientation for the Cuban Revolution led by Fidel Castro. Rectification reversed years of adaptation to Stalinist policies copied from the Soviet Union that had resulted in the growth of a privileged petty-bourgeois layer of administrators whose course was leading to what Castro described

as “a system worse than capitalism.”

The school was named as the people of Panama faced Washington’s invasion in 1989 that imposed a government more compliant with U.S. interests.

WFDY General Council meeting

At a seminar organized in conjunction with the WFDY General Council meeting, many delegates expressed solidarity with Cuba. Some spoke about the class struggle in their own countries.

Vicky Mahesari, representing the All India Students’ Federation, described how the victorious 13-month-long fight by farmers to win the repeal of Indian government legislation removing price guarantees they rely on won broad solidarity across the country and around the world. “This fight gave hope not only to farmers but also to the workers and youth as it showed that it is possible to organize a fight that can overcome divisions of religion and caste, and win.”

“Politics isn’t left against right, it’s the working class against the capitalist class,” said Samir Hazboun, representing the Young Socialists in the U.S.

“The Biden administration and the Democratic Party are leading an attack on constitutional political rights,” said Hazboun. “We oppose the U.S. rulers’ use of the FBI, their political police, and any assaults on freedoms, including the violation of former President Donald Trump’s constitutional rights. History shows any such attacks always get



World Federation of Democratic Youth
Some 80 delegates from 30 countries expressed solidarity with the Cuban people and their socialist revolution in Havana May 27. They joined a bicycle caravan along the Malecón seafont boulevard protesting Washington’s trade and financial embargo against Cuba.

turned against the working class.”

“In the U.S. and beyond, a decades-long retreat by the working class and unions has come to an end. More and more workers are saying, ‘Enough is enough!’ They’ve begun to use the collective power of the exploited producers in response. The working class can strengthen itself through the battles our class is waging today,” he said. “We join in building struggles.”

The World Federation of Democratic Youth was formed in the aftermath of World War II to advance Moscow’s foreign policy aims. In the 1990s, led by the UJC and Fidel Castro, the federation’s membership was opened to broader participation. Its most important activity is organizing the World Festival of Youth and Students every few years, which

draw thousands of young people interested in the fight against imperialism.

WFDY President Aritz Rodríguez, from the Communist Youth Union of Spain, said he and other WFDY leaders are pursuing possible host countries for the next festival.

The General Council meeting adopted a resolution of solidarity with Cuba, calling on “the government of the United States to lift immediately, once and for all, the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on Cuba.

“Cuba is an example for the working class and its youth of the world in the struggle against capitalism in its imperialist stage.”

Samir Hazboun contributed to this article.

Memphis strike wins broad union, community support

Continued from front page

notice and now they don’t want to pay overtime.”

Workers at International Flavors and Fragrances work long shifts and are paid time and a half after eight hours. They also work rotating weekly shifts, going from nights to afternoons to days. The schedule is seven days in a row with either one, two or four days off in between. Now the bosses demand workers get overtime pay only after 40 hours.

“What’s a weekend?” Effie Graham, a 31-year employee, told the *Militant*. “We only get one long weekend a month!”

“I gave up my kids’ childhood to this company and look how they treat us!” said Mary Randolph, a boiler operator since 1997.

Other concessions the bosses demand include smaller company contributions to the workers’ retirement plan, ending paid lunches, and offering wage increases less than inflation. “It’s all taking and no giving,” many workers said.

The workers want more affordable health care. The plan now includes high deductibles, high premiums and doesn’t cover a number of essential medications, like for high blood pressure.

“There is nothing going on in that plant!” Local 390G President Cedric Wilson told the rally. Some 20 unionists have crossed the picket line to work, Wilson said, “and the company has hired a few more, but they’re not producing much.”

The company says the union refuses to meet. “The company has been lying about this the whole time,” said Wilson. “We have repeatedly offered to go back

to the bargaining table.”

Most strikers are Black in a city where workers are proud of the record of battles against Jim Crow segregation and for workers’ rights that took place here. Many carry signs saying, “I am a man,” the slogan used by sanitation workers in a historic strike in 1968.

“We’re going to fight until we win, and then we’re going to keep fighting!” Kermit Moore from the Memphis branch of the A. Philip Randolph Institute told the crowd. “Tell your friends, your neighbors, your family to stop by the picket line. When we stand together, we will win.”

Local 390G member Glenda Sumner told the rally her husband had passed away since the strike began. When Sumner called the head of Human Resources in the plant, “she said I can’t collect on his life insurance policy because I didn’t cross the line and go to work!”

“But we’re going to fight this!” Wilson said.

Also speaking were BCTGM International Vice President Zach Townsend; Vickie Terry, executive director of the Memphis NAACP; Pastor Walter Womack of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; and Tennessee State Rep. Justin Pearson. Terry and Womack vowed to win support for the fight at upcoming NAACP and SCLC conferences.

Other unionists at the rally were from the United Auto Workers; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees; Teamsters; Kevin Bradshaw, president of the Mem-

phis Central Labor Council and of the BCTGM local at Kellogg’s, where there was a powerful strike in 2021; and Letitia Malone, president of the BCTGM local at Blues City Brewery.

“We began to prepare for this strike in August of last year,” Cometris Morgan, vice president of Local 390G, told the *Militant*. “The company hired a union-busting law firm and began demanding changes in our contract even before negotiations began. Their first offer on wages was a 1% raise, so we knew they wanted to break the union.”

“The number one reason why unions lose these fights is when they don’t communicate and involve the membership,” said Local 390G President Wilson. A union has to sharpen its sword by using the talents of every member. Everyone has something to offer. We’re willing to come speak about the strike to win support anywhere we’re asked to go,” he said.

Many unionists and others have joined the picket line and donated to the strike fund. “Local 36G in Buffalo, New York, sent a donation to support their striking brothers and sisters,” the BCTGM International reported, “and BCTGM Local 22 members from Jerry’s Broadway Bakery in Minneapolis delivered cards with messages of solidarity for Local 390G members.”

Contributions to help win this fight are needed. Make them at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/bctgm-local-390g-iff-memphis-workers-on-strike>.

Books on workers’ struggles
[pathfinderpress.com](https://www.pathfinderpress.com)

Meeting on Cuban Revolution

Continued from front page

The 160 combatants didn't succeed in capturing the garrisons. Five died in battle, 56 were captured and murdered in cold blood, and 32 imprisoned. But these actions reverberated politically across Cuba.

Castro and other survivors were put on trial and given terms up to 15 years. In prison the Cuban leader reconstructed his testimony on scraps of paper. Smuggled out in match boxes and published clandestinely as "History Will Absolve Me," they became the program of the revolutionary movement. Tens of thousands were distributed across the island as part of a defense campaign that won the fighters' freedom in 1955.

That program wasn't just words. Having renewed the revolutionary struggle a year later, the July 26 Movement and Rebel Army began carrying it out in liberated areas even before Batista fled on Jan. 1, 1959.

Ike Nahem, a leader of the Cuba Sí Coalition, welcomed a delegation from Cuba's U.N. Mission and thanked the Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center for hosting the event. The center is located in what had been a section of the old Audubon Ballroom where revolutionary leader Malcolm X was assassinated in 1965.

Nancy Cabrero from Casa de las Américas, and Andreia Vizeu, host of WBAI's Voices of Resistance, co-chaired the event.

Steve Clark, editorial director of Pathfinder Press and a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, introduced Ambassador Peñalver.

Workers and peasants in power

"The Cuban Revolution is a revolution that lives and fights to this day. A revolution that brought the workers and peasants to power," Clark said. "The Cuban people have shown time and again they will defend their sov-

ereignty and independence — their socialist revolution — against the world's most brutal empire, and what will be the world's final empire."

The Cuban Revolution, Clark said, "was a pledge not just to the Cuban people but to those the world over," including right here in the U.S., "of the kind of revolution and the kind of working-class organization and leadership we must build."

"The U.S. rulers' aim under every Democratic and Republican president has been to crush the Cuban people, to overturn their revolution and to snuff out their revolutionary moral and political example. But they have not succeeded — and they will not! That too was the message of Moncada," Clark said, introducing the ambassador.

"Today more than ever," Peñalver said, "the solidarity we are receiving from you takes on special significance, because Cuba is under heavy siege." He pointed to Washington's more than 60 years of hostile economic, trade, and financial measures as "the central element that defines the policy of the United States towards Cuba."

The U.S. government's insistence on keeping Cuba on its State Sponsors of Terrorism list is "extremely harmful," he said. "It reinforces the blockade against Cuba."

On human rights, the ambassador said, "the U.S. government has no moral authority whatsoever to question Cuba and has little or nothing to teach due to its own dismal record."

Cuba offers solidarity

"It should not be forgotten that the U.S. government used the COVID-19 pandemic as an ally in its efforts to increase the siege against Cuba," Peñalver said. It blocked "access to basic medical supplies, such as oxygen."

Despite this, he said, "we were able to offer the world the solidarity that Washington did not give to the Cuban people,

cakes and sandwiches nor for hidden rewards!" he said, alluding to one of the ways the bourgeois-clerical regime in Tehran seeks to build participation in its actions.

"High prices and inflation, skyrocketing rents, high costs of medical treatment and education," Gerami

'Iranian government can never silence the retirees'

BY SETH GALINSKY

On July 23, police in Rasht, Iran, 200 miles northwest of Tehran, attacked a demonstration of some 200 retirees and disabled people. They doused some protesters with pepper spray. Other recent protests of retirees have taken place without government interference.

"The government does not realize that by beating the pensioners, by arresting and imprisoning them in different cities, it can never silence them," Ismail Gerami, an electrician who retired from the Iran Carton Company in 2008, wrote on the internet page of the National Alliance of Iran Retirees. Gerami himself has been in and out of prison, like thousands of other union, teacher and retiree activists.

"The pensioners do not gather in cold and heat, under snow and rain, in order to have fun! They don't go to gatherings for



Iran Pensioners Council

Some 200 retirees and others joined protest in Rasht, Iran, July 23, one of many across country demanding government raise pensions to keep up with inflation.

Union caravan brings solidarity to Wabtec strike



Militant/Peter Oanes

ERIE, Pa. — Solidarity was the word of the day here July 29 as a car caravan brought strike supporters from Western Pennsylvania to join the strike picket line of United Electrical Workers Locals 506 and 618 at the entrance to Wabtec, which manufactures rail locomotives. The strike began June 22.

The convoy of strike supporters included union members and environmental and religious groups. Among those were members of Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ, UNITE HERE Local 57, Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 19, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 56 and UE Local 213 from Staunton, Virginia. UE Local 506 President Scott Slawson thanked them for their solidarity as they joined some 80 strikers on the picket line.

UE Local 610 Vice President Jeff Kohler told the rally that Wabtec is "making a mockery of the grievance process." Local 610 represents workers at Wabtec's plants in Wilmerding and Greensburg, which are not on strike. The union is demanding the restoration of the right to strike over grievances, which they lost in the last contract. Other demands include ending a multi-tiered wage system where new hires start out earning one-third less than long-time workers and maintaining health care benefits.

UNITE HERE organizer Will Arthur told the rally he brought solidarity "from hotel workers in downtown Pittsburgh who are also fighting for a fair contract with good health care."

The UE locals at Wabtec have a proud history of giving solidarity to other unions, from joining strike picket lines to contributing to their strike funds. This includes backing IAM shipbuilders during their strike in Bath, Maine, in 2020 and United Steelworkers on strike in Farrell in 2020-21. Get out the word! Join the picket lines! Fax solidarity messages to (814) 899-0666.

— MALCOLM JARRETT

with our medical brigades, in the worst moments of the pandemic.

"Even in the midst of the inhuman limitations imposed by the blockade, Cuba will never renounce its socialist system of social justice," said Am-

notes, "and worst of all, low wages and salaries" have made it hard for young people to get married and start families.

"Which family member does not know that the cause of this bitterness and misery of life is the government," he says. Sooner or later it won't be just the retirees at these protests, "they will come with all their family members."

These weekly protests, demanding higher pensions and better health care, began in January and have been gathering steam. Now they take place around the country every Sunday, Monday and Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the government's Fars News Agency announced the regime plans to increase the price of bread — "gradually." In some regions it had already increased 40% by the end of July.

bassador Peñalver. "We remain committed to those young people of the Centennial Generation to not disappoint their legacy and to defend the dignity of our homeland. Cuba will not give up, and we will continue to resist and overcome."

Speaking for the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party in New York, Alegna Cruz said their "support and solidarity with Cuba is a living principle that unites us through history" and is part of the fight for independence of the U.S. colony. "Our sister nation Cuba is still setting an example" of courage and sacrifice.

Other speakers were Zayid Muhammad of the People's Organization for Progress in Newark, New Jersey; Juanita Millal from the Mapuche people in Chile; and Calla Walsh, a co-chair of the National Network on Cuba.

Erin Feely reported on the Cuba Sí Coalition's work in winning passage by the New York City Council of a resolution calling for the U.S. government to end its economic measures and travel restrictions against Cuba, and to remove Cuba from the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism. Vincent Verdrée, December 12th Movement; Molly Moser, Democratic Socialists of America; and Jacob Buckner, Young Communist League, also spoke about this effort.

Dinner and dessert, along with specially prepared Cuban drinks, added to the celebratory nature of the event. A raffle of two paintings of Puerto Rican independence leader Pedro Albizu Campos helped offset costs.

1930s labor upsurge posed need for class-struggle leadership

As 340,000 Teamster-organized workers at UPS discuss a tentative contract, it is timely that one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for August is Teamster Politics by Farrell Dobbs. It is the third in a four-volume series by Dobbs, who emerged from the ranks to be the central organizer of the Teamsters' 11-state campaign to unionize over-the-road truckers and a leader of the Socialist Workers Party. The Teamsters in Minneapolis, with class-struggle leadership, used union power to beat back boss attacks, extend the union in the Midwest, and help organize other unions as well as the unemployed. They mobilized a union defense guard against boss goons and fascist gangs and led labor resistance to the U.S. rulers' entry into World War II. The excerpt is from chapter 4, "Dynamics of the labor upsurge." Copyright © 2015 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



"Battle of Deputies Run" as Minneapolis Teamsters beat off cop, goon attacks during 1934 strike. Teamsters and other class-struggle fighters pointed road forward for labor movement.

blows in a more or less passive manner. They had been stunned by the economic debacle and it took time to recover from the shock effect. Then, when they did begin a quest for ways to defend themselves, only scant means were at hand. Less than three million were organized into the AFL, mainly workers in skilled trades. The great bulk of the working class, especially in basic industry, was not unionized at all. On top of that, the AFL bureaucrats showed no real concern about the plight of the unorganized, whether employed or unemployed. In short, labor was caught in a crisis of organization and leadership.

But limited patterns of struggle gradually began to emerge, characterized by ups and downs in scope and tempo. In the initial stage the actions centered mainly on protest demonstrations by the unemployed. Then, during 1933, strikes broke out here and there in industry, the biggest one being conducted by textile workers. ...

Combative moods among the workers continued to grow in intensity, and within the unions radicals were able to increase their leadership authority. As a result, miniature civil wars were fought in 1934 by Minneapolis truck drivers, San Francisco longshoremen, and Toledo auto workers. In each case, labor emerged victorious. Inspired by proof that strikes conducted militantly could be won, the main detachments of the working class in basic industry began

to move toward action against the monopoly corporations.

Before the end of 1934 struggles erupted in auto, rubber, and steel. ...

This created a new problem for the labor bureaucrats. If these workers were not allowed to organize on an industrial basis, and if they were not given more effective leadership, radicals would soon gain considerable influence among them. Everything would then be up for grabs, including the future of the bureaucrats themselves. ...

[A] bloc of unions ... split from the AFL in 1936 to form what became the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

With the appearance of the CIO as an independent force, workers throughout basic industry flocked into its ranks and, during 1936 and 1937, a series of bitter struggles followed. These included massive sit-down strikes involving the occupation of plants in total disregard of the alleged "sanctity" of capitalist private property. Action at the scene of battle was guided by broad strike committees. Following the initial contract settlements, committees were elected in the plants to enforce the terms; during the first period of the CIO's existence these committees were quick to call work stoppages whenever needed to obtain adjustments of grievances. ...

Frightened by the breadth and intensity of the developing conflict, the top CIO officials looked from the outset for a way to bring the situation back with-

in class-collaborationist bounds. As a means toward that end they seized upon the 1936 presidential campaign. Steps were taken to center union attention on support of Roosevelt's candidacy for reelection. That backing, it was hoped, would induce him to use governmental influence to get the CIO a few concessions from the giant monopolies in basic industry, thereby helping to restore more peaceful class relations. ...

On the strike front the main CIO battles were yet to be fought, especially in auto and steel. In those clashes — which came in 1937 — the workers would be directly up against major components of the ruling class. This would occur at a time when the capitalists were beginning to prepare for World War II and could, therefore, be expected to put up unusually stiff resistance to the CIO drive.

A potential class showdown was thus in the making, during which the government would become more fully exposed as an agency of the bosses. As a result, more and more workers might be able to see through Roosevelt, clear to his patrician bones.

Developments might also be affected by the labor radicalization then unfolding in Western Europe. Intense class struggles had erupted there, ranging from massive strikes in France to civil war in Spain. If a big advance toward a social overturn were to occur in any of the countries involved, profound repercussions could be expected in the United States. To an increasing degree, workers here would become ready for revolutionary action. A sweeping social conflict might then ensue, leading toward a confrontation over the issue of state power. In that case the way would be open to abolish outlived capitalism, put an end to the injustices it inflicts upon humanity, and proceed to the construction of an enlightened socialist society.

As of 1936, such possibilities definitely existed under the objective conditions then prevailing. Only the further passage of time and events, however, would show whether the implied opportunities could be converted into political reality.

Meanwhile, there was vital need to concentrate on assembling revolutionary cadres, since it takes a party comprised of conscious revolutionists to lead the workers to complete victory.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FARRELL DOBBS

[T]he 1929 stock market crash ... heralded the onset of severe economic depression. As the slump deepened, millions lost their jobs. Earnings were slashed for those who still had employment. Working conditions went from bad to worse, as did living standards in general.

At first the workers accepted these

August
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Pathfinder Readers Club Specials

Teamster Politics
FARRELL DOBBS
How Minneapolis Teamsters organized the unemployed, truck owner-operators and a union defense guard against strikebreaking goons, while campaigning for a labor party based on the unions and opposing the U.S. rulers' entry into World War II.
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Seize opportunities to strengthen unions!

Statement by Chris Hoepfner, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Philadelphia, Aug. 2.

Recent rallies by Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers unionists on strike against International Flavors and Fragrances in Memphis, Tennessee, and by Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists in Los Angeles show how wide-ranging solidarity can be won to maximize the fighting power of the labor movement. Both actions show the openings to rally broad social forces behind the labor movement.

Alongside members of other BCTGM locals in Memphis, unionists from the United Auto Workers; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees; and Teamsters joined the action, pledging support for the largely African American striking workers, side-by-side with representatives from the NAACP and the A. Philip Randolph Institute.

In Los Angeles striking actors and writers were joined by members of the United Food and Commercial Workers, Service Employees International Union, and United Teachers. Lyft and Uber drivers fighting for union representation, as well as fast-food workers, brought support. Like at other recent labor mobilizations, both actions were opportunities to get to know fellow fighters, learn from each other and forge stron-

ger bonds based on our common class interests.

A decadeslong retreat by the working class and the unions is over. New opportunities exist to fight for what workers need, not what the bosses and governments say we must accept. These openings are evident in the confidence and combativity workers demonstrate resisting speedup, schedules that wreak havoc on our families, attacks on job safety, falling real wages and the lack of steady employment. While millions cannot get enough work, millions more are forced to hold down two or more jobs just to pay the bills.

The bosses' relentless drive to profit at workers' expense has produced a deep-going social and moral crisis. Organizing union solidarity is the foundation for building a stronger labor movement that can begin addressing the needs of *all* workers, those with or without a job, immigrants and native-born alike. A labor movement that can fight for 30 hours work for 40 hours pay to spread the work available around and prevent layoffs and for cost-of-living adjustments in every contract to combat price hikes.

To undermine union solidarity, the bosses claim that workers demand for higher pay means prices will go up. In fact higher wages mean workers have clawed back more of the fruits of our labor out of their profits.

Join Socialist Workers Party candidates in spreading the word about today's union battles. Mobilize the solidarity that can help workers win!

New charges against Trump deepen attack on rights

Continued from front page

The Biden administration filed a third set of charges against Trump Aug. 1. Justice Department special counsel Jack Smith indicted the former president on "conspiracy" charges, saying he aimed "to defraud the U.S." These are thought-control charges, based on what Trump *said*, claiming the First Amendment doesn't apply. His exercise of free speech, the indictment claims, was a criminal act.

The indictment adds on three other charges, of (1) conspiring to obstruct the certification of the 2020 election, (2) obstructing and attempting to obstruct that certification, and (3) conspiring to threaten people who were exercising "the right to vote."

In fact, the "criminal" conduct listed in the indictment rests on what the then-president said to state officials about hunting for voter fraud, and said about establishing an alternative set of electors in some states, in case his claims of fraud in these states were proven. The so-called fake-electors were only doing something that political parties have done before when a state's vote is in dispute.

None of this has anything to do with Trump's claims about the election being stolen. It targets his right to say it was stolen and speak about what he thought.

Smith makes a passing acknowledgment that there is a constitutional protection for free speech at the outset of the charges. He says Trump "had a right, like every American, to speak publicly about the election and even to claim, falsely, that there had been outcome-determinative fraud during the election and that he won" and to challenge the results.

When Trump's efforts to get state officials to challenge the vote were exhausted, he joined a rally on Jan. 6, 2021, to urge Vice-President Michael Pence to not certify the election. Smith details statements Trump made in a speech there, none of which even approaches a call for an "insurrection" that liberals have insisted he organized that day.

What Smith doesn't quote is Trump's concluding remarks, urging participants to "peacefully and patriotically make your voices heard." He told them to give members of Congress "the kind of pride and boldness that they need to take back our country."

To try to make his charges stick, Smith claims Trump engaged after the riot in "exploitation of the violence and chaos at the Capitol." Again charging him for things he said.

Smith says there are six as yet unindicted co-conspirators. Media accounts say they are all lawyers or political consultants for Trump. They include Rudy Giuliani, John Eastman, Sidney Powell,

Jeffrey Clark and Ken Chesebro. This continues a trend by Democrats to put pressure on any lawyer who works for the former president.

The administration's charges will be heard before Judge Tanya Chutkan, a Barack Obama appointee. She has sentenced a large number of Jan. 6 protesters charged by the Justice Department even more harshly than prosecutors called for.

The real assault on the "right to vote" is the Democrats' drive to crush Trump's candidacy.

"Everything's breaking President Biden's way," Nate Cohn crowed in the July 21 *New York Times*, pointing to highly exaggerated claims about the end of inflation and full employment, which liberals attribute to "Bidenomics." But then he laments that Biden's low approval ratings haven't budged.

In fact real wages have continued to fall under Biden's administration and there's been no reversal of the long-term crisis of capitalist production and trade, with workers facing difficulties finding full-time jobs with wages and schedules that make starting or sustaining families feasible. Growing uncertainty about the future has led to a decline in birth rates.

The more charges prosecutors file against Trump, the more he solidifies his position as the Republicans' front-runner. Head-to-head polls either put Trump ahead of Biden or say the race is a toss-up.

Organize opposition to attack on rights

Defending freedoms protected by the Constitution is at the center of the class struggle. Organizing opposition to these attacks, no matter who is targeted, is crucial. Whenever attacks on these rights arise, they always end up being used against workers, farmers and the oppressed.

The Justice Department is using its "foreign agent registration" law to try to frame up members of the African People's Socialist Party and Uhuru Movement, who were hit by a pre-dawn armed FBI raid last year. The foreign agents law dates back to the capitalist rulers' drive to criminalize union opposition to the U.S. entering the second imperialist world war over markets and colonies. It was used during the 1950s witch hunt and since, including the 1998 arrest and frame-up of the Cuban Five.

The government charges APSP members with failing to register as "Russian agents" and trying to influence elections in Florida. In fact they were exercising their constitutionally protected right to collaborate with forces abroad who share their support for Moscow's war against Ukraine's independence.

Putin expands draft

Continued from front page

Putin hopes Russia's much larger population and military resources will allow it to hold onto areas Moscow occupies and that backing for Kyiv by the capitalist rulers in Washington and their allies will weaken over time.

The Kremlin is gearing up for a long war. Putin's proposal to raise the top conscription age from 27 to 30 will swell by another 2 million the pool of men the Russian rulers can conscript for use as cannon fodder. A ban on draftees leaving the country has also been adopted to try to prevent them fleeing the war. Military supply factories are running around the clock.

Putin remains fearful that rising casualties may ignite broader opposition and continues to shut down organizations that have protested his war. The Council of Mothers and Wives, organized by relatives of conscripts, announced it had been forced to cease functioning July 28. In May the Kremlin designated the group as "foreign agents."

"We do not want to continue with this stigma, because in this form it is simply humiliating for women," said Olga Tsukanova, head of the group.

The organization was formed after the regime's call-up last September and had chapters in 89 cities. It demanded proper training and medical care for soldiers, the right to inspect military units and that the government begin peace talks. In a March video it said, "Our mobilized men are being sent like lambs to the slaughter."

Prior to smearing the group as "foreign agents," authorities had detained Tsukanova and fined her for "discrediting" the country's armed forces. Despite shutting the organization down, Tsukanova said the group's members would continue their activities. "We will still each stand up for justice where we are."

Just before the invasion, Putin used the same law to ban political rights group Memorial as "foreign agents."

Sanctions hit working people

Washington has responded to the war by imposing sanctions on Russia. They're aimed at Russian workers and farmers, to make them pay for Putin's war. Working people bear the brunt of job cuts and inflation. The sanctions come on top of the broader capitalist economic crisis they face. Sanctions undercut the fight for fraternization between working people in Ukraine and Russia and make building a powerful working-class struggle to end the war more difficult.

Russian emigres continue to protest Putin's war. Dozens demonstrated in Belgrade, Serbia, July 30, demanding that two leading anti-war critics be allowed to stay in the country after the Serbian government refused them residency. Since the start of the war, some 200,000 Russians have fled to Serbia.

In New York the same day, over 30 people, mostly Russian immigrants, protested the war. "The only way out — withdraw troops from Ukraine," read a placard.

Tatiana Vorozheeva, one of the organizers, told the *Militant* the war has caused deep rifts within many Russian families. Some people strongly defend Ukraine's independence, she said, while others echo the great-Russian chauvinist arguments used by the Kremlin for its attempts to crush Ukraine.

In the discussion with Vorozheeva, Sara Lobman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York City Council, pointed to the Bolshevik-led 1917 Russian Revolution. Under Lenin's leadership, the workers and farmers government granted self-determination to Ukraine and all the nations oppressed under the Russian czars, opening the door to a flowering of national culture. But after Lenin's death, that course was sharply reversed in a counterrevolution headed by Joseph Stalin. It took until 1991 for Ukraine to become independent, after the collapse of the Stalinist regimes in the former Soviet Union.

Today, "Putin says Lenin and the Bolsheviks were the worst thing that ever happened to Russia," Lobman said. "Putin seeks to reestablish the Russian empire with its prison house of nations."

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