

THE MILITANT

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 90/NO. 28 AUGUST 10, 2026

C&H strikers back to work as bosses agree to new negotiations

BY JEFF POWERS

CROCKETT, Calif. — In a joint statement, International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 6 and C&H Sugar management announced July 27 that striking members of Local 6 will go back to work under the terms of their old contract while contract negotiations will step up for the next 60 days.

Ninety-one members of the union who work in C&H's warehouse have been on strike since June 15. A significant challenge they have faced from the beginning is that the production workers at the plant, who are members of the Sugar Workers Union, affiliated with the Seafarers International Union, have a different contract expiration date and have continued to work during the strike.

ILWU Local 10 members who unload the sugar from ships docked at the factory have been honoring Local 6's picket lines. Local 6 and Local 10 members have joined together to picket at the plant 24 hours a day seven days a week since the walkout began.

Responding to a move by the com-
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Working people face squeeze as prices stay high, jobs disappear

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Government officials are gushing over the state of the U.S. economy, pointing to June's unemployment rate of just 4.2%, the lowest in a year. But this figure disguises the reality facing the working class today. Millions face huge challenges in getting and keeping a decent job, as well as from rising prices on all kinds of basic necessities, from groceries to rent. Today's capitalist economic and social crisis is deepening.

The number of workers who have been unable to find a job and are no longer counted as part of the workforce jumped by 832,000 in June, bringing the increase since the beginning of the year to 2.5 million. While official unemployment figures drop or remain steady, the number of workers excluded from the count is rising rapidly.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the number of jobs grew by 57,000 in June. But a more accurate survey, which actually counts the number of those working that month, said it dropped by 507,000.

The share of workers in the U.S. who
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US hands off Cuba! End oil blockade, war threats

Stop gov't attacks on right to defend Cuba



Militant/Ernest Mailhot

Protest in defense of Cuba outside Cuban Consulate in Montreal, one of several across world July 26, demands end of U.S. economic blockade. Sign top left says, "Honk to show support."

Gov't launches attack on Cuba supporters in US, political rights

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The government in Washington has launched a new attack against supporters of the Cuban Revolution in the U.S., alongside its oil blockade and escalating financial sanctions aimed at strangling the Cuban economy and suffocating the Cuban people. Their targeting of supporters of the Cuban Revolution strikes blows to the hard-won and sorely needed constitutional

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July 26 meetings celebrate the victory of the Cuban Revolution

BY SARA LOBMAN

NEW YORK — On July 25 some 80 people attended a celebration here of the 73rd anniversary of the opening battle that led to the victory of the Cuban Revolution. The meeting, sponsored by the New York/New Jersey Cuba Sí Coalition, was also a protest against Washington's brutal oil blockade and war threats against Cuba.

On July 26, 1953, Fidel Castro led a
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US rulers press for stability, plunder in the Mideast as repression grows in Iran



U.S. Navy photo

Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush is part of Washington's war buildup in Middle East as U.S. rulers seek to establish profitable control over region's resources, markets.

BY SETH GALINSKY

Following 13 consecutive nights of air strikes on Iran, President Donald Trump ordered a pause July 24, right after sending more U.S. special forces, warships and planes to the region and threatening to launch "a massive attack. Bigger than anything we ever had before." He said the pause is intended to open the door to talks with Tehran.

Washington's imperialist threats are not bluster. With Iranian air defenses largely destroyed, the U.S. military can strike almost anywhere in Iran at will.

Since mid-July the Pentagon has brought the total number of U.S. troops in the region to over 50,000, similar to the size of its forces there

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1960: Black youth decide now is the time to act, sit-in movement begins

BY TERRY EVANS

From the mid-1950s on, the Black-led working-class movement to end Jim Crow segregation was propelled by a series of pitched battles in areas

across the South, like the victorious Montgomery bus boycott, and the nationwide solidarity they inspired. In 1960, sit-ins to desegregate the lunch counters at Woolworth's and other chain stores spread rapidly from town to town. They were led by young fighters who built their own nationwide organization, the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee.

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Locked-out refinery workers win support in hard-fought battle, BP bosses isolated

BY ILONA GERSH

WHITING, Ind. — Members of United Steelworkers Local 7-1 locked out by the bosses at BP here got a rousing greeting as they marched in the huge Whiting Pierogi Fest Parade July 24. On the sidelines thousands applauded, and many shouted slogans and took leaflets and posters for their homes. The float carried union mem-

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They don't respect us, say Ohio Job and Family Service strikers

Pathfinder titles welcomed at Federation of Blind convention

BY JOSEFINA OTERO

AUSTIN, Texas — Some 2,700 people attended this year’s National Federation of the Blind convention here July 3-8. Another 600 listened to the proceedings online. Delegations attended from Hawaii and Puerto Rico, as well as across the U.S.

For the fifth year in a row, Pathfinder Press was among the many exhibitors, publicizing titles it now makes available in eBook, digital Braille and other formats through Bookshare.org for those who are sight-impaired. Presently 32 titles are available in English and four in Spanish on Bookshare. Flyers in Braille and large print were distributed, promoting these accessible Pathfinder books.

Available at the Pathfinder table and on Bookshare is the new book by Cuban leader Victor Dreke, *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde: The Fall of the Last Colonial Empire in Africa*. It was the top seller at the convention.

Many participants said they had never heard of Cape Verde until athletes from there played in their first World Cup matches this year, right before the convention.

The Pathfinder booth featured a wide array of books, along with copies of two *Militant* articles that reported on the work of Cuba’s National Association of the Blind, which participants could take with them. Other best sellers included *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class*; *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning under Capitalism*; and *Women’s Liberation*

and the *African Freedom Struggle* by Thomas Sankara, the leader of the popular 1983-87 revolution in Burkina Faso.

There are over 7 million blind and vision-impaired people in the U.S. An estimated 70% of working people who are blind are unemployed, while many others face low wages and discrimination by employers. The majority who do have jobs are not organized by the trade unions.

Federal law allows bosses to pay blind and other disabled workers less than minimum wage. The National Federation of the Blind has fought and won legislation to phase out subminimum wages in a number of states.

The federation’s constitution says it aims to be “a vehicle for collective action by the blind,” promote their “equality with the sighted,” and improve their “overall condition and standard of living.”

One theme of the convention was the tremendous advances in technology that have opened many doors for the blind and those with low vision. At the same time, Braille literacy remains key for many.

The convention was marked by par-



Militant/Gale Shangold

Janice Grisham, president of Springfield, Missouri, chapter of National Federation of the Blind, with granddaughter Morgan Long, who buys three Pathfinder titles from exhibitor Bob Roberts at NFB’s convention in Austin, Texas, in July. Some 2,700 people took part in the proceedings.

ticipants’ pride and confidence, determined to live the lives they want and fight for accommodations to make that possible.

Amanda Brown from Shamrock, Texas, 28, is the only blind person in the town of less than 1,700. She lost her vision at age 5 and is currently unemployed and trying to find a job. “Blind people don’t have and want more ac-

cessibility, like everyone else,” she said. “We don’t want sympathy.” She said she has written a book which will be published next February, *What the Blind Girl Saw: An Inspiring Journey from Trauma to Triumph*.

A number of participants signed up at the booth to be informed when additional Pathfinder books are available on Bookshare.org.

Minneapolis, Orlando events: independence for Puerto Rico!

BY HELEN MEYERS

MINNEAPOLIS — Some 40 people attended an event here calling for independence for Puerto Rico held at El Colegio High School July 18.

“Our land is under attack and we will never stop fighting for it,” Miguel Fiol, a longtime supporter of independence for

Puerto Rico, said to open the meeting.

Two talks highlighted the history of U.S. oppression of the Puerto Rican people. They also described how conditions there continue to deteriorate today in social services, growing unemployment and that exclusive private resorts are taking over public lands like the island’s beaches. Ten percent of the population has left the island because of the unfolding economic crisis there.

Fiol explained the meeting was sponsored by the Diaspora Puerto Rican Independence Party and other Puerto Rican groups in the area, in conjunction with events in eight other cities, including San Juan, Puerto Rico.

“The other purpose of the meeting was to stand in solidarity with all immigrants,” he said.

Organizers set up an easel displaying

headlines from the *Militant* newspaper supporting the fight for independence. Coverage by the paper on the testimony presented at the recent United Nations decolonization hearing in New York was distributed. The program included music and a poetry reading.



ORLANDO, Fla. — Puerto Rican flags snapped in the hot breeze as 50 protesters chanted and waved signs to passing traffic at a busy intersection in one of Orlando’s heavily Puerto Rican neighborhoods July 18. “Puerto Rico no se vende!” (Puerto Rico is not for sale!) they shouted. They came to demand independence for the U.S.’s biggest colony.

The Orlando march and rally coincided with a demonstration of thousands

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THE MILITANT

Fight to win amnesty for all immigrants in the US!

Hundreds rallied in Houston July 19 protesting the fatal shooting of Lorenzo Salgado Araujo by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents as he drove to work. “The government fears people coming together,” his son Ronaldo said at the rally.

Militant/Brad Downs

Ronaldo Salgado, right, calls for independent investigation of his father’s killing.

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Locked-out BP workers win support

Continued from front page
bers and their families, and big bags of candy that got passed out to kids.
Scores of food and art vendors lined the streets of downtown Whiting for the three-day weekend event. Many of the vendors featured union signs on their booths protesting the illegal lockout. The USW had its own booth, provided free by the Fest, publicizing why the union is fighting the lockout BP imposed more than four months ago, March 19, after the workers overwhelmingly rejected BP's "last, best and final" concession contract offer.
A steady stream of participants stopped by, dropping contributions ranging from a few dollars to \$100 into a large bucket. Some used to work at BP, others were members of other area unions, and many were community members who support the workers. Some had come planning to make a contribution, others were surprised and glad to see the USW booth.

They told locked-out workers and supporters like me who were staffing the booth, "I always honk when I pass the pickets," "The lockout hurts everyone in town," "I've been to the picket line," "Stand strong" and "One day longer!"
The Pierogi Fest brings up to 300,000 people to this small northwestern Indiana town of 5,000 every year. For years, BP has been a major financial backer, but this year the Whiting Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors returned their check. Instead, they announced that they would place cans throughout the event to collect for the USW Local 7-1 Strike and Defense Fund.

This came days after the city of Hammond dropped BP as a sponsor of their Festival of the Lakes and returned BP's \$20,000 check.
On Aug. 8 is a Poker Run for motorcycle and car drivers, sponsored by the Northern Indiana Area Labor Federa-

tion, another fundraiser for USW Local 7-1. It will begin at the USW Local 6787 hall in Chesterton at 10 a.m., and ends at Buddy and Pal's Place in Crown Point, where pizza, wings and refreshments will be available. Everybody who backs the locked-out workers is welcome.
On Aug. 21, there is a punk rock benefit concert for the locked-out oil workers at Avenue 912 at 202 W. Ridge Road in Griffith, starting at 6 p.m. In a statement, the bands said, "The Effigies, The Bollweevils, along with The Rumble are working with USW 7-1 and Avenue 912 to play a morale and welfare concert. These bands are standing with all of our union brothers and sisters!"
In addition, collections of school supplies and children's clothes are being organized, as well as food and home supplies, which can be brought to the USW hall.

'A long lockout, but morale is good'
Last week when this *Militant* worker-correspondent went to the hall to volunteer for picket duty, Local 7-1 President Eric Schultz told me, "It's a long lockout. It's stressful. But morale is good. Every day we stay out, we're more encouraged. Community support is very strong."
"A lot of us are looking for jobs to support our families," he said. "Some can still do their shifts on the picket line, or trade shifts with someone who isn't working. Our negotiating committee and the assistance committee are all volunteers."



United Steelworkers Local 7-1 members, locked out by BP in Whiting, Indiana, marched in the Pierogi Fest Parade there July 24. Thousands applauded workers and took posters home.

After a long fight against BP opposition, the state of Indiana agreed to give the locked-out workers unemployment benefits. But it's under \$400 a week and it will run out in a matter of months.
On the picket line I spoke with Tanya Moore, a locked-out worker in her 40s. She was filling in for another worker who had found a job. I also worked with her at the USW Pierogi Fest booth. "I went through the national strike in 2015," Moore told me, "I'm looking for a full-time job now because BP wants to eliminate my job category. But I want to get back into BP!" She has worked there for 22 years.
Part of BP's proposed contract calls

for eliminating 65 workers in her department and among electrical workers, samplers in the labs and some others and replacing them with contract workers. The union says absolutely not.
"It was harder for women to get a job like mine back then. I liked working with the women who were hired a long time ago, they were fighters and they had thick skins," Moore said. "I feel proud and independent. There's less harassment from the men than there used to be. Now, men stick up for you."
If you want to join the picket line or make a donation, visit the USW Local 7-1 hall at 2045 Schrage Ave. in Whiting. It is open 24/7.

C&H workers back to work as bosses agree to negotiate

Continued from front page
pany to bring in scabs to unload sugar on its dock July 21, hundreds of longshore workers from ILWU Local 10 left their jobs at the Oakland, Stockton and Sacramento ports to protest at the C&H plant, blocking all traffic going in and out. By noon, a dozen trucks headed for C&H had been stopped and traffic was backed up for a half mile.
C&H was using strikebreakers to do ILWU 10 work, operating cranes to unload raw sugar from the Tai Herald, which was docked at the factory.
The bosses were able to get a compliant judge to issue a court order saying the protest was an illegal assembly. At 4 p.m., Contra Costa County sheriffs ordered the unionists to disperse or face arrest. Nine protesters were incarcerated.
In another provocation, C&H began to truck raw sugar it unloaded from the Tai Herald at the Port of Richmond into the plant. That sugar had been dumped on a concrete strip marked for decades as a superfund site by the Environmental Protection Agency due to DDT contamination.
C&H bosses' treatment of the ILWU strikers and disregard of health standards has led to a raft of unfavorable coverage in the local media. In press interviews, strikers have been able to get out the truth about why they had no alternative but to strike, given the company's union-busting demands.
C&H is owned by international conglomerate American Sugar Refining Group, which says it is the world's largest cane sugar refining company. The bosses have demanded cancellation of retiree health benefits, gutting of seniority and forcing

workers to work 10- to 12-hour shifts without overtime pay.
The strike has received widespread support from other unions, including an ILWU Local 42 delegation from Hawaii that came to walk the picket line.
On the day the agreement for high-level negotiations and a return to work was announced, six members of the Maritime Union of Australia joined the picket line after flying to the Bay Area from Victoria. "We have a great relationship with the ILWU," Robert Lumsden, secretary of the union's Victoria branch, told the *Militant*. "It was a considerable expense but it was well worth coming. The workers here are fighting for all of us."

On July 25 a delegation from Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 125 in San Leandro brought a letter signed by dozens of Ghirardelli Chocolate workers in solidarity with the strike.
Local 6 striker Kendra Sparks is one of those who has spoken out in press interviews about the severity of the company's demands. "One thing for sure, we will not agree to a settlement until the company agrees to bring back the four of us who they fired for what they claimed was violence on the picket line," she told the *Militant*, referring to four ILWU Local 6 members arrested on trumped-up charges early in the strike.



Striking members of ILWU Local 6 at C&H Sugar in Crockett, California, receive six pallets of essential aid, including food, in solidarity from Los Angeles Labor Council June 30.

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—ON THE PICKET LINE—

They don't respect us, say Ohio Job and Family Service strikers

ELYRIA, Ohio — United Auto Workers Local 2192 members have been on strike against Lorain County Job and Family Services for over five months, with no resolution in sight. The over 100 UAW case workers walked off the job Feb. 18.

“The county commissioners are all about lining their pockets, they don't care about the services or poorer people, therefore they don't respect us,” striker Kathleen Henderson told these *Militant* correspondents on the picket line July 6. She has been there for 10 years and works with people trying to get Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits and medical cash assistance. “Many of us are single moms and have to manage our kids while working a second job. I have only avoided a second job because I don't have kids and my boyfriend helps support me.”

The county commission has refused to grant a base-rate raise of \$1 per hour and a freeze on healthcare cost increases, saying it doesn't have enough in its budget. Workers' healthcare costs went up by 50% over the course of the last contract.

Strikers said some of them get wages so low they qualify for the very assistance programs they administer.

Angela Atkinson said when she started working at Job and Family Services, she got \$13.59 in wages, and after 20 years she now makes only \$23 an hour. She said she stays working because she wants to help people, but like most of her co-workers she has a second job to survive. She serves as a picket captain, also working as an Uber driver.

Her friend and co-worker, Allison Ives, said she helps people get into nursing homes and to get healthcare. “We do this because we want to help people” she said. She works a second job as a bartender.

Most of their jobs require a college degree, but a number of them start out at about \$18 per hour.

The continuing refusal of the county commissioners to negotiate a fair contract has triggered a public service crisis and crippled the coun-

ty's social safety net.

“Lorain County has been economically depressed since the steel mills and the auto plant shut down years ago,” Ives explained. “For a while, almost every business in downtown Lorain was shuttered.”

“A skeleton crew of supervisors, and some union members who aren't participating in the strike, are left to manage thousands of cases, adding to a massive backlog that directly impacts vulnerable residents,” she said. “Mandatory home daycare inspections and elder abuse investigations have been cut back and you're put on hold when you try to reach the office.”

Strikers said they've gotten a lot of support. Members and retirees from UAW Local 2000 at the nearby Ford assembly plant come out regularly to join the picket line. UAW Local 2192 from AVI catering in Oberlin has joined the picketing, as well as other unions and community groups.

Support their fight! Join the picket line at 42485 North Ridge Road in Elyria.

— Dave Ferguson and Linda Joyce

Atlanta airport Plane Train workers win union contract

ATLANTA — The 90 workers who operate and maintain the Plane Train at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport have ratified their first union contract, the Transportation Communications Union/International Association of Machinists announced July 17. They had voted to join that union last August.

The five-year agreement includes an immediate 18% wage increase, followed by 3% annual increases, five paid sick days and holidays and more. It also establishes seniority rights, a grievance procedure and other union rights.

“We didn't back down,” one of the Plane Train workers told this *Militant* worker-correspondent. He asked that his name not be used. “It was a long-time coming, way overdue. The contract is good. It's a start.”

The Plane Train carries about 250,000 passengers daily between terminals. The company is run by French

Calif. hotel workers fight to win union representation



Militant/Carole Lesnick

BERKELEY, Calif. — More than 50 hotel workers and their supporters picketed outside the Graduate Hotel here July 24 as they prepare to vote for union representation by UNITE HERE Local 2 in a week.

“They want better working conditions,” Local 2 representative Sonya Karel told the media. “They want wages where they can actually afford to live in or near Berkeley, and they want decent healthcare coverage.”

Housekeeper Rosalva Rodriguez said she is expected to clean as many as 20 rooms a day to exacting standards, which is simply impossible.

Union workers from four other hotels, as well as some University of California, Berkeley students and a professor, joined the picket line, as well as the president of the Alameda Labor Council and local politicians.

— CAROLE LESNICK

rail manufacturer Alstom.

“What made this bargaining especially successful was the solidarity the members maintained from start to finish,” TCU/IAM National President Matt Hollis told the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

— Janice Lynn

4,500 Ontario provincial workers strike for wage raise, end to cuts

BROCKVILLE, Ontario — Morale remains high on the picket line of provincial government workers in front of the Brockville and Area Community Living Association here, where members of Ontario Public Service Employees Union Local 441 have been on strike since May 25.

They are some of the 4,500 unionists on strike across Ontario who work

for Children, Community and Social Services. They're seeking a retroactive 6.5% wage increase awarded to other provincial workers after Law 124 passed in 2019.

That law, which capped Ontario government workers' annual wage increases at 1% for three years, was ruled unconstitutional in 2023. The judge said it violated the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms by interfering with collective bargaining.

The court ruling came in the wake of the December 2022 victory of 55,000 Ontario school workers who successfully defied Bill 28, a law that declared their strike was illegal. But the ruling did not include this group of provincial workers.

Stopping massive government cuts to the funding of these services is another big issue in the strike. Children, Community and Social Services funding has been cut by \$200 million since 2018. And in 2019, Legal Aid Ontario funding was cut by \$133 million — or 30%.

“Residences get run-down and vehicles break down and we can't repair them. This deterioration impacts people who live here as well as workers,” Rhea Sloat, a member of the union negotiating committee, told the *Militant* on the picket line July 22.

“Tomorrow we're joining OPSEU members from Belleville for a 'slow walk' in Picton. When you're 4,500 workers spread all across the province, it doesn't look like much. But when we get together, we can see our strength,” said Christine Webb, a resident support worker for 20 years.

“We have to remain optimistic. I think that we're just ramping up the campaign even more every week,” Jodie Rogers, a worker at Community Living London for 32 years, told the *London Free Press* July 14. “We're here for the long run.”

Visit their picket lines to bring solidarity. Use the union picket line finder to join with them. Google “Picket finder — Worth Fighting For.”

— Beverly Bernardo

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

THE MILITANT

August 13, 2001

“Twenty years ago I didn't think this could happen. This is truly a historic day,” said Carlos Zenón, a leader of fishermen and resident of Vieques, Puerto Rico. Zenón was celebrating a victory in the struggle to get the U.S. Navy out of the island, registered when he and others who live there voted by a 68 percent majority for the U.S. Navy to leave immediately.

Washington has used a large portion of the island as a live-fire training ground. U.S. imperialism maintains colonial rule over Puerto Rico, a key component in its ability to impose the objectionable military force on the people of Vieques for so long.

More than two-thirds of those voting supported the immediate closing of the Navy base and departure of military forces. The voter turnout was very high, with 81 percent of the 5,893 registered voters on the island casting ballots.

THE MILITANT

August 6, 1976

NEW ORLEANS — Under a scorching summer sun, 1,000 supporters of Gary Tyler rallied, marched and shouted one message, loud and clear: “We're gonna kick. We're gonna fight. We're gonna save Gary Tyler's life.” Tyler is an eighteen-year-old Black youth falsely charged with the killing of a white youth and convicted by an all-white jury last November.

The march was preceded by a rally across the street from the Louisiana Supreme Court. The court is expected to hear Tyler's appeal for freedom this fall. The loudest, longest applause was reserved for Tyler's mother, Juanita Tyler.

“Mothers,” she warned, “just like it was my son, it could be any of your sons.” Bill Hampton, brother of Black Panther leader Fred Hampton, who was shot to death in his bed by Chicago police in 1969, urged continued mass rallies as the only way to free Tyler.

THE MILITANT

August 13, 1951

When we have a real bomb drill, the lights go off and we line up, the teacher at the head with a flashlight. We climb down the four flights to the boiler room and sit down. We each have a piece of cardboard to sit on.

We are told to put our coats over our own heads until the teacher counts ten; then we begin to sing songs like “God Bless America.” But if a bomb is really falling isn't it a little late for God to bless America?

A few weeks ago we got papers telling us what to do if a bomb falls.

I come to school to learn how to read and write — not to learn how to save my life if a bomb falls. I want to grow up in a happy world — not one full of hatred and wars. If you ask any child I think they will agree with me. I have nothing against the adults, believe me, but I do think the world would be better if the children ran it.

SWP in Los Angeles: ‘Lineage, gov’t must clean up fire mess’

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

LOS ANGELES — A town hall meeting organized by city officials here July 9 turned into an angry protest against their indifference to the horrific conditions that continue to confront workers who live near the Lineage plant in Boyle Heights after a massive fire there June 17.

The blaze at the company’s food storage warehouse occurred in a mostly Latino working-class area of eastern Los Angeles. Some 85 million pounds of once frozen food inside is rotting, with nauseating odors, as well as flies, rats and other vermin.

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass and other officials were met with loud boos and chants from workers who came from the area. They demanded the warehouse be cleaned up after weeks of toxic smoke, putrid odors and health problems. Anger at those responsible grew even louder as Lineage Chief Operating Officer Jeff Rivera took the stage.

Gloria Palacios, a Boyles Heights resident and garment worker at a shop near the warehouse, told the *Militant* she lost wages as it shut for a day. When the boss said it was up to workers if they wanted to go back to work despite the air pollution, Palacios, like many, returned to her job “because no one else is going to pay my rent.”

Laura Garza, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Los Angeles, attended the meeting and spoke with residents. “We demand an immediate response from the government to clean this up now. They have the resources,” she said. “Instead, they are leaving it to the company responsible which is taking its time. Workers in the area are being subjected to conditions no one should be forced to live or work in. In the meantime, workers should be moved to suitable housing with all expenses paid so they aren’t forced to live in a biohazard zone.”

As of July 25 the company says it has cleared out 40 million pounds of the rotting food from the site.

Some work was also delayed because a separate company responsible for the solar panels on the plant’s roof halted the demolition to preserve evidence to defend itself. Lineage claims this company was responsible for sparking the fire.

“This bickering over who will end up being legally responsible for the bills to clean this up shouldn’t be used to delay the clean up needed now,” Garza said. “Workers know all companies cut corners, and the Lineage warehouse had the solar panels catch fire a few years ago. Only when safety is in the hands of the workers in the industries where we work will the necessary measures to protect working people and the community be taken. That’s why my party calls for workers control of production.”

A Community Health and Resource Fair for people in the neighborhood was held near the Lineage facility July 18. Yvette Dominguez, who lives three blocks from the warehouse, said she left the fair with a few items. “They give out a little food one time for each family.”

“There is aid but not enough,” Maria Gonzalez, a preschool teacher, told the *Militant*. “The smell turns your stomach. No one knows what will happen in the future from the effects of the smoke. There were many chemicals in the solar

panels from the roof that burned.”

Patrick Valentine, a former welder now disabled, came to the resource fair with the aid of a walker. “I live half a block away from the warehouse. If they would go door to door it would help. We can’t evacuate. The smell gets into the furniture and doesn’t go away.”

Maria Felix is a laid off mental health care worker who lives 1.3 miles from Lineage. She showed this *Militant* correspondent pictures of plumes of smoke from the fire over her home. “The city of Commerce says we are in East Los Angeles,” she said. “East LA says we’re in Commerce. So neither one will give us aid.” She explained that she tried to get help paying utilities and was told only a one-time payout was available.

At the meeting several participants were interested in discussing why what workers face is a product of today’s capitalist crisis. Socialist Workers Party members set up a table at the entrance and sold two subscriptions to the *Militant*; three books, *Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs and two copies of *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning under Capitalism* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes; along with nine

Ukraine gains against Moscow’s war amid political protests

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Protests broke out all across Ukraine over President Volodymyr Zelensky’s July 15 dismissal of Mykhailo Fedorov, Ukraine’s defense minister. He is associated with the successful use of drones to take the fight to oil refineries and other military targets in Russia and occupied Crimea, as well as behind the front in southeastern Ukraine. Zelensky responded to the protests by overhauling Kyiv’s military command and reshuffling other posts. Street actions continued into a second week in several cities demanding Fedorov’s reinstatement.

The stakes are high as the Ukrainian people’s defensive war to defend their national sovereignty against Moscow’s invasion extends well into its fifth year. In stark contrast to Russia, where anti-war protests are repressed by the Kremlin, the actions in Ukraine, drawing in students and war veterans, took place without government interference.

The political crisis erupted as Moscow’s bombing of Ukrainian cities took a near-record civilian toll in June. At the same time, its human wave efforts at taking more territory in eastern Ukraine have met with little success, while Ukrainian forces have made gains.

Within a week, Kyiv replaced its two top Soviet-trained generals with younger commanders, battle-tested in the current war. Zelensky appointed Mykhailo Drapaty, a respected veteran of the 2014-15 Donbas war, as the new commander-in-chief. Drapaty had supported Fedorov in the public dispute with his predecessor, Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi.

Fedorov has declined all Zelensky’s offers of alternative posts, saying, “No other role carries the actual authority to combat procurement corruption” or to affect the course of the war.

Fedorov wanted more spending on drone innovation; steps to combat deeply entrenched corruption in arms contracts; ending unnecessary losses among Ukrainian troops; and avoid-



Militant/Bernie Senter

Workers picket outside July 9 town hall meeting protesting inaction by Los Angeles officials and Lineage owners after 85 million pounds of food rotted in neighborhood after June 17 fire.

single copies of the *Militant*.

Mayor Bass says her deadline is Aug. 13 to clean up the entire site. But the smells, rats, and flies persist while the time ticks by.

Air regulators have issued several violation notices to the company after receiving more than 900 complaints about the stink from residents in less than a week. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health said it will fine Lineage \$500 a day until the violations are corrected.

Despite the heat, many residents have

resorted to shutting their doors and windows to keep the stench out. Air conditioning units that pull air from the outside have been useless because they pull the stench indoors.

Sabino Soto, 70, lives on the block next to the Lineage warehouse. He grew so nauseated that he had to call off sick from his job as a school crossing guard. He was able to get an air purifier from the city but is now worried his electric bill will shoot up because he has to keep it on all day. “Someone is going to have to pay, and it’s going to be me,” he said.

ing favoritism in reinforcing front-line units. He also introduced popular reforms, like higher pay and more limited terms for soldiers at the front, a step toward relieving social tensions over forced conscription.

One protester in Kyiv, 42-year-old Mila Timchenko, told NPR July 22 that Syrskyi, an experienced officer, was integral to Ukraine’s defense early in the war, “but times have changed, the way wars are being fought has changed.”

Kyrylo, a combat medic, told the July 22 Kyiv Independent he hoped Drapaty’s appointment would mean less sacrifice of front-line troops in pursuit of “media victories.” He added, “We can already see motivation improving.”

Protests over Soviet-style corruption

When Ukraine declared independence in 1991 as the Soviet Union disintegrated, capitalists were emerging from the disintegrating bureaucratic caste to seize chunks of the newly privatized factories and other enterprises, often in collaboration with forces from the U.S. and European powers. The capitalist government in Kyiv inherited crude, pervasive corruption from the Stalinized state, as well as the bureaucratic command system of the Soviet military.

In 2014, the popular Maidan uprising by hundreds of thousands of working people in Ukraine overthrew the brutal pro-Moscow regime of Viktor Yanukovych. They rejected not only direct Russian imperial domination, but also the corruption and profiteering that came with it.

But Ukraine remains a capitalist country, whose industrial and banking owners dominate the economy and seek sway in the country’s politics.

A year ago, despite Ukraine’s war-time martial law, large demonstrations erupted against Zelensky’s move to curtail the power of two government “anti-corruption” agencies. Within days, he was forced to retreat.

At the same time, the dedication of Ukraine’s working people and their unions to defend national sovereignty leads to sacrifice and determination to defeat Moscow’s bloody assault.

Recently, Ukraine has used its own long-range drones to repeatedly strike Russia’s oil and gas sites, causing a fuel crisis. Its mid-range drones have hit supply routes for the Russian army in occupied parts of Ukraine, as well as vessels from Russia’s shadow fleet in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.

With Russia’s parliamentary elections in September, the Kremlin has clamped down harder on anti-war voices, blocking candidates who show signs of opposing Moscow’s increasingly unpopular military operation in Ukraine.

In recent weeks, candidates from the liberal Yabloko Party, with the campaign slogan, “For Peace and Freedom,” have been systematically barred from both federal and regional elections.

Boris Nadezhdin stood on an anti-war platform in the 2024 presidential elections. He attracted thousands of people standing in line to support his candidacy before electoral authorities barred his running. Now he has been stopped from running again.

“People trust Putin and United Russia less and less because the war has come to them,” Nadezhdin told the July 28 *Washington Post*, referring to Ukraine’s successful drone attacks. “Every day, warehouses and oil bases are exploding. People are dying. And in this situation they are trying to get rid of the most visible political actors, like me and Yabloko, who speak against the war.”

Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, one of Moscow’s few allies, hasn’t openly criticized the war until now. He urged Putin July 25 to “freeze” the war in Ukraine, a sign of the Kremlin’s increased isolation.

Tokayev said it was a tragedy since young people from “the brotherly peoples of Russia and Ukraine” are dying.

Opposition to the death penalty spreads among toilers in Iran

BY SETH GALINSKY

Hoping to intimidate working people and head off further challenges to its dictatorial rule, the reactionary Islamist regime in Iran has stepped up the pace of executions of political opponents, especially in the wake of the war with Washington. But, public opposition to the death penalty is growing.

In an unprecedented action, despite a large police presence, crowds gathered in Isfahan after learning that the regime was planning to publicly hang two participants in the massive anti-regime protests that swept the country in January. The regime slaughtered more than 7,000 protesters, mostly on the last two days of the demonstrations.

The regime had erected scaffolding at Isfahan's Shahid Alikhani Square in preparation for the public hanging of Abolfazl Sepahi and Amir-Hossein Safari July 28. The regime claimed that the two, along with 12 others, had killed four members of the police force and Basij paramilitary thugs during the January protests. Two other defendants in the case were executed July 19.

According to the Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, the defendants were denied their own lawyer and tortured into giving forced confessions.

Family members and others opposed to the execution began arriving early. According to Iran Wire, the mother of one of the condemned youths asked the crowd to remain silent and refrain from protesting, to no avail.

Police special forces dispersed the crowd with tear gas and paintball guns and chased them through the streets. In blurry videos of the clash, protesters can be heard calling the cops "Bis-haraf!" — an insult meaning you are shameless and have no honor.

Just hours after the hangings in Isfahan, a group of trade unionists and others protested outside the Rasht Prison in Gilan province. "Let us rise before it is too late," they said.

Some 1,500 prisoners at Qezel Hesar Prison in Karaj, northwest of Tehran, ended a 16-day hunger strike July 28 after prison and judicial authorities agreed to temporarily suspend executions there of prisoners found guilty of drug offenses.

Videos of the prisoners sitting in the

cellblock hallway chanting and carrying signs against the death penalty were widely circulated. Some prisoners sewed their lips shut.

According to Amnesty International, the regime executed at least 2,159 people in Iran in 2025, double the number of the year before. At least 303 people have been executed this year since March, according to the "No to Execution Tuesdays" campaign — a weekly hunger strike by inmates that began nearly three years ago and has spread to 59 prisons.

While most of those executed are accused of criminal offenses, like drug trafficking, the number of those executed charged explicitly with political offenses is increasing. Kurds, Baluchis, Arabs and other members of oppressed nationalities in Iran are disproportionately victims of the death penalty. Baluchis comprise just 6% of Iran's population, but account for 20% of those executed. Kurds, just 10% of the population, are some 50% of political prisoners.

"The devastating war that has engulfed Iran and whose flames grow ever more intense with each passing day has destroyed the livelihoods of working people," the Council of Retir-



Trade union activists and others protest against death penalty outside prison in Rasht in Iran's Gilan province, just hours after two protesters arrested in January were executed in Isfahan. Regime has stepped up executions, deepening opposition to its dictatorial rule.

ees of Iran said in its call for the July 26 protest in Rasht. "Yet the authoritarian capitalist establishment still shows no willingness to address the people's economic hardships. Instead, it imprisons every dissenting voice. Hardly a day passes without official government media announcing new executions. The gulf between the people and the ruling authorities has become a deep chasm filled with blood and the bodies of those who have been hanged."

Opposition to the death penalty and calls for freeing political and trade union

prisoners was a feature of a number of the weekly retiree protests in more than a dozen cities July 26.

"Out of fear of confronting a protesting population, the government's killing machine has taken advantage of wartime conditions to accelerate the issuance and implementation of death sentences," said a coalition led by the Council for Organizing Protests of Contract Oil Workers in a July 23 statement. They called on fellow workers to join protests and demand the "permanent end of the death penalty."

US rulers press for stability, plunder in the Mideast

Continued from front page
during the peak of Washington's 38-day war before the often-violated ceasefire began April 7.

Washington hopes it can force Tehran to give in to U.S. demands by threatening more powerful military attacks, combined with the reimposition of the U.S. blockade of Iranian ports and its financial sanctions that have worsened the capitalist economic crisis that is battering working people there.

While the U.S. forces' stock of "precision weapons" has been running lower than the Pentagon would like — especially Patriot and THAAD anti-missile weapons — Secretary of War Peter Hegseth boasts that the U.S. military has "a nearly unlimited stockpile" of its less sophisticated, but just as deadly, "laser-guided precision gravity bombs."

During the 13 days of air strikes, Tehran counterattacked, demonstrating its ability to evade U.S. missile defenses and striking nine of its bases in the region. It also hit a water desalination plant and oil facility in Kuwait. Though not insignificant, Tehran's assaults pale in comparison to the 1,000 U.S. airstrikes against military sites and civilian infrastructure over the same period.

Iran's foreign ministry said July 27 that "intermediaries" were conveying "messages ... regarding ongoing developments in the region." In other words, they are negotiating.

U.S. seeks deal with Tehran regime

Washington's goals have not changed. It wants some cooperation with the faction-ridden reactionary regime in Tehran to achieve a measure of stability that will allow the U.S. rulers to shore up their domination of the Middle East, deepen their plunder of the oil, gas and other resources there and push back competition from its rivals, especially Beijing.

This includes an agreement placing

limitations on Tehran's nuclear program and an end to its attacks on ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz.

Israeli officials point out that Tehran has been building a new nuclear facility deep underground in Pickaxe Mountain and is storing thousands of centrifuges that could enrich uranium to nuclear weapons grade levels. It still has more than 1,000 ballistic missiles and has been able to restart new production. Tehran claims that it has increased its drone production threefold as well.

For Israel, these are life-or-death questions. Israel is just 260 miles long and 10 miles wide at its narrowest point, and 70 miles at its widest. The Iranian rulers repeatedly state their determination to wipe it out. With nearly half of all the Jews in the world living there alongside Arab citizens of Israel, one Iranian nuclear bomb could cause a new Holocaust.

U.S. rulers see Israel as obstacle

That is of little concern to the U.S. rulers. They see Israel's war to defend itself as a refuge for Jews as an obstacle to Washington reaching a deal with Tehran and deepening U.S. relations with other governments throughout the region, from Turkey to Syria and beyond.

That's why the Trump administration keeps chastising Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and barred Israel from carrying out new strikes against Iran. On the eve of Netanyahu's July 28 visit to the U.S., Trump scolded the Israeli leader publicly, saying Netanyahu was trying to influence the U.S. by making public announcements about the dangers of Pickaxe Mountain and Tehran's missile programs.

"I don't need Bibi to tell me that," Trump complained. "We know exactly what's going on."

The Washington-Tehran conflict threatens to widen beyond the Arab-

Persian Gulf and spiral out of Washington's control. Ukrainian forces launched drone attacks on a convoy of Russian warships accompanying an Iranian vessel carrying military equipment in the Caspian Sea, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky announced July 25. Tehran threatened to retaliate against Ukraine.

Tehran has provided thousands of drones to Moscow since its invasion of Ukraine began. Moscow also aided Tehran with satellite surveillance data it needed to target U.S. bases. The Caspian Sea is one route Tehran can use to circumvent the U.S. blockade of its Gulf ports.

Asr-e-Iran, an Iranian news site, urged Tehran July 28 to show "restraint" to prevent the opening of "a new front" that would force Tehran to divert military forces to the Caspian Sea.

Stepped-up U.S. arms production

The U.S. military has used up at least 1,500 Patriot interceptors against Iranian missiles and drones since the war began, leaving less than 1,000 on hand, the *Wall Street Journal* reports.

The problem, the *Journal* fears, is that this smaller number "could hamper the U.S.'s ability to deter adversaries around the globe, including China."

While Washington prefers to avoid a direct military conflict with Beijing for now, it's also driving to weaken the Chinese rulers' influence worldwide, especially in Latin America, and shore up its own domination of the world imperialist order. To that end it's rebuilding its military and war-related industries.

The Pentagon has allocated billions of dollars to companies like Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman and Raytheon to replenish and get production of Patriot and THAAD anti-ballistic missile systems and Precision Strike Missiles on a "war footing."

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‘The British rulers defended their own interests, not the Jews’

This is a shortened version of the talk given by Jonathan Silberman at the “Contemporary Antisemitism” conference in Haifa, Israel, July 7-9. Silberman is director of Pathfinder Books in London and a leader of the Communist League in the U.K.

Jew-hatred and violence have been integral to the imperialist order, its crises and wars — from the end of the 19th century and costing the lives of 6 million Jews during the Holocaust. It will cost more.

Grasping this allows us to understand what’s necessary in combating contemporary antisemitism, and the threat today to Israel’s very existence as a refuge for Jews.

Hamas, whose Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom and its war on Israel in collusion with Tehran and its misnamed “axis of resistance,” must be defeated and dismantled. And Israel’s fight to prevent Tehran from acquiring nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles must be championed.

That’s decisive for Jews and for all working people. Victory will lay the ground for oppressed peoples in the Middle East of whatever ethnicity or religion to engage together in mighty revolutionary battles that can open the road to resolving the national aspirations not only of Jews, but of Palestinians, the Kurds and all toilers across the Middle East and North Africa.

My remarks focus on British imperialism — how the interests of Britain’s ruling capitalist families, not defense of the Jews, has always been, and remains, the axis of U.K. government policy in the Middle East.

This goes against the claim that London has long been a friend to the Jews, for which then Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour’s 1917 Declaration is invariably cited as “proof.” But his promise of a “national home” for the Jews in Palestine has never framed U.K. policy. Nor has Britain’s contrary promise made to landholding and emerging capitalist Arab leaders of a greater Arab nation, including Palestine.

Coming out of World War I, the Middle East was carved up between London and Paris in the secret Sykes-Picot deal, only made public by the victorious V.I. Lenin-led Bolshevik government in Russia.

It’s an important lesson. Pay less attention to what capitalist political leaders and governments say or promise, and more to what they *do*.

When the League of Nations handed the Palestine “mandate” to the U.K. in



Above, Militant/Bob Aiken

Jonathan Silberman speaks at panel on “Antisemitism and Polarization,” along with, from right, Nina Heinke, University of Leipzig; Carl Dewald, University of Flensburg; Mark Rusling, U.K. Antisemitism Policy Trust; Stephanie Share, chair of Comper Center. Inset, 1920 article by British political leader Winston Churchill.



1922, London used it to secure a “Pax Britannica” in the region, a “peace” of plunder and exploitation.

- It appointed Amin al-Husseini as Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Palestine’s most important political and religious post. This rich landowner and vile Jew-hater led pogroms in Palestine in 1920, 1921, 1929 and 1936. Then in Baghdad in 1941. From there he decamped to Berlin to join Hitler and the Nazis in World War II.

- Building on the 1905 Aliens Act, which limited entry to the U.K. of Jews fleeing pogroms in czarist Russia — also Balfour’s work — successive governments reduced Jewish immigration to a trickle.

- Thousands of Jews fleeing Nazi terror and Holocaust survivors after the war, were blocked by British armed forces from entering Palestine, detained and returned to miserable barbed-wire-fenced “Displaced Persons Camps” in Germany, Austria and Italy — or internment camps in Cyprus and Mauritius.

- Winston Churchill’s wartime government — well aware of the Nazis’ extermination course by Spring 1942 — rejected repeated calls to bomb the railway lines to the death camps.

At every step, London opposed the establishment of Israel.

Before the war, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain declared it’s better to “offend the Jews rather than the Arabs.” He was loyally acting for the U.K.’s rulers who saw their future tied to the sheiks, the Arab landlords and capitalists and their oil, and their regimes.

The postwar Labour government of Clement Atlee deployed 100,000 troops and police to Palestine and appointed Gen. Bernard Montgomery to lead the assault against the Jews. It backed the 1948 war against the fledgling Jewish state, channeling weaponry and intelligence to the invading Arab armies. It made Transjordan’s Arab Legion the most effective among them, providing troops and their battle commander, British Army Gen. John Bagot Glubb.

The U.K. only recognized Israel in April 1950, two years after it was established, and a year after its admission into the U.N.

The victor in the second imperialist world war, Washington, pushed the U.K. aside in the Middle East. But

whether Pax Britannica or Pax Americana holds sway, imperialism has always acted at the expense of the Jews and of Israel.

What of the Balfour Declaration?

Note that the declaration was issued in 1917. The capitalist rulers in the U.K. hoped the declaration would win Jews in Russia away from the Bolsheviks.

London feared a victorious socialist revolution and the example it would set for working people internationally — including in the U.K.

Winston Churchill spelled it out in his article “Zionism vs. Bolshevism.” The majority of Bolshevik leaders are Jews, Churchill wrote. From the days of “Karl Marx, and down to Trotsky (Russia), Bela Kun (Hungary), Rosa Luxemburg (Germany) and Emma Goldman (United States), this worldwide conspiracy for the overthrow of civilization ... has been steadily growing.”

The British rulers acted accordingly, spearheading the 1918 military invasion by 14 capitalist powers against Soviet Russia, backing the royalist “White Armies.” That these counter-revolutionary forces massacred over 100,000 Jews never stood in the way.

But the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin,

acted decisively to draw the millions of workers and peasants to join the fight against Jew-hatred.

As the Bolsheviks led Russia’s workers and peasants, they promoted Jewish self-defense against attacks by the czarist police and reactionary Black Hundreds. They explained why the fight against Jew-hatred was in the interests of all the toilers. No nationality in Russia is so oppressed as the Jews, Lenin said. “It’s not the Jews who are the enemies of the working people — it’s the capitalists.”

Following the revolutionary victory, the Bolshevik-led government drew Jews into social life, encouraged a flowering of Jewish culture in Yiddish and appointed as the first head of the new state, Yakov Sverdlov — a Jew! They put an end to the pogroms.

So strong was Lenin’s leadership in combating Jew-hatred that, during the civil war, the counterrevolutionaries routinely referred to the Bolsheviks as the “Yid Party.” The Whites circulated an infamous poster depicting Red Army Commander Leon Trotsky as a Jewish devil.

After Lenin’s death, this Bolshevik continuity was defended by Trotsky in the face of the Stalin-led counterrevolution that revived antisemitic poison.

This history is recounted in Pathfinder’s *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class*. Over the last couple of years this title has been a top seller as members of the Communist League take it and the *Militant* to discuss the key questions confronting the working class with their workmates, join picket lines, build social protests and go door to door in working-class neighborhoods.

Antisemitism need not be eternal. There is a course to eradicating Jew-hatred. Not by looking to the U.K. or any “democratic” imperialist power for a solution. Rather, by building proletarian parties to lead hundreds of millions to fight for workers power, uproot exploitation by capital, end all national oppression, and build a socialist world.

‘Cockroach’ protesters in India force concessions, inspire others to protest

BY LESLIE DORK

Thousands of youth gathered in a protest zone in central New Delhi let out a cheer July 25 upon hearing that Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan had resigned in face of a growing movement known as the Cockroach Janta Party.

The party emerged in May after Indian Supreme Court Chief Justice Surya Kant referred to unemployed and activist-minded youth as “parasites” and “cockroaches.” Abhijeet Dipke, a 30-year-old graduate student, announced he was forming the party as a satirical response to the insult. Word quickly spread online and protests in the group’s name started to build around jobs and education issues.

India is the world’s most populous nation with 1.47 billion people, over 40% under the age of 25. The official unemployment rate is 5.5%, but some 15% of the 370 million Indians age 15 to 25 are jobless. Among university graduates, as many as 40% are unemployed.

The movement helped mobilize the widespread anger as 2.2 million stu-

dents were ordered to retake highly competitive medical college national entrance exams because test questions had been leaked. The exam system is required for entry into universities and some jobs programs. The exam questions are regularly leaked to those with connections or who can pay. The Cockroach Janta Party became a symbol of defiance and resilience for youth frustrated by government corruption and high unemployment.

The movement attracted protesters well beyond students. Thousands of young workers and others defied government restrictions and marched on parliament in New Delhi July 20. They were met with tear gas and baton-wielding police. Their demands included resignation of the education minister, reform of the exam system and compensation for families of students who committed suicide after exam leaks.

The police attacks intensified anger across India. Thousands continued to gather in Jantar Matar, the designated

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Gov't attacks Cuba supporters, rights

Continued from front page

rights of free speech and association.

Fox News Digital reported the government has compiled a hit list of 145 organizations in what it dubbed the “pro-communist Cuba ecosystem,” political groups, including the Socialist Workers Party, a number of unions and others.

As part of expanding its dragnet against Cuba and anti-communist smear campaign, the State Department released a 100-page report July 20 entitled, “Cuba: The Capital of 21st Century Communism.” It claims Cuba is “uniquely dangerous,” dedicated to “the violent export of communism abroad.”

The document stands reality on its head, alleging, “for nearly seven decades, the Cuban regime has waged a sustained campaign of subversion against the United States.”

In fact, it's the U.S. rulers who have waged an unending political and economic war against the Cuban Revolution, including an invasion of Cuba by counterrevolutionaries at the Bay of Pigs in 1961 and several failed attempts to assassinate Cuban leader Fidel Castro. Today Washington is escalating this campaign, including military threats against the Cuban people.

The State Department's anti-communist diatribe smears Cuba for backing “an unprecedented wave of left-wing terrorism on American soil.” It also accuses a number of leaders of the fight for Black rights of being Cuban agents, including Malcolm X and Robert F. Williams.

The State Department document

takes special aim at five Cuban revolutionaries — Gerardo Hernández, René González, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero and Fernando González — who were framed up by Washington in 1998 and imprisoned for up to 16 years on “conspiracy” charges and allegations of spying against the U.S. They were also accused of being “unregistered foreign agents.”

In reality, they came to the U.S. to gather information for Havana on the plans of counterrevolutionary Cuban American groups, backed by Washington, with a long history of carrying out bombings, assassinations and other violence from the U.S. against Cuba, as well as against supporters of the Cuban Revolution inside the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

Washington reprised its frame-up of the Cuban Five April 23 when it indicted Cuban revolutionary leader Raúl Castro and five Cuban air force pilots for “conspiracy to kill U.S. nationals” in the shoot down of two planes flown by members of the notorious counterrevolutionary Brothers to the Rescue as they were invading Cuban airspace in 1996.

Government subpoenas

The House Ways and Means Committee issued subpoenas July 21 against three left-wing nonprofit organizations who have spoken out in defense of Cuba: the People's Forum, BreakThrough News and Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research.

House Committee Chair Jason



Militant/Joseph Hansen

Fair Play for Cuba picket of over 500 in New York in November 1960 protests moves by U.S. Navy fleet in Caribbean. State Department falsely claims it was “funded by Castro regime,” but it raised donations from people in the U.S. to get out the truth about Cuban Revolution.

Smith claims each received millions of dollars “from Neville Roy Singham and his wife, channeled through shell companies,” which according to Smith, “raises significant concerns regarding foreign influence over a tax-exempt organization.”

The State Department screed also fingers Singham, accusing him of running a “network” of funding trips to “hostile nations,” including Cuba.

The House Committee says it's investigating whether existing laws governing tax-exempt organizations need to be tightened to restrict “foreign influence.” The allegations it makes against the three groups open them up to further probes under the reactionary Foreign Agents Registration Act.

Singham, a former member of the

Maoist League of Revolutionary Black Workers in Detroit and tech entrepreneur who made a fortune, is now based in China. A Manhattan federal grand jury was launched in June to investigate him for alleged financial crimes. All three organizations targeted by the latest House probe protest the government's attacks on their First Amendment rights.

The move follows subpoenas issued in May by the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control to U.S. participants in the March “Nuestra América Convoy,” which had delivered 20 tons of humanitarian aid to Cuba.

State Department targets

The State Department report also targets 43 groups and individuals, including Ben Cohen, from Ben & Jerry's ice cream; Mayors Zohran Mamdani and Karen Bass from New York and Los Angeles respectively; media figures like Amy Goodman and Hasan Piker; and organizations like the Democratic Socialists of America and the Amazon Labor Union.

And under the heading “Exporting Revolution,” the document falsely claims the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, founded in April 1960 to build opposition to Washington's assaults on Cuba, was “funded by the new Castro regime.” Fair Play was actually funded by people in the U.S. dedicated to getting out the truth about the Cuban Revolution.

As far back as 1962 Fidel Castro answered “the accusation that Cuba wants to export its revolution.”

“Revolutions are not exported, they are made by the peoples,” he said. “What Cuba can give to the peoples, and has already given, is its example.” What the Cuban Revolution teaches, he said, is “that revolution is possible.”

Postal workers, supporters protest attacks on jobs, service

BY LEA SHERMAN

NEW YORK — Some 50 members of the American Postal Workers Union and their supporters rallied at the James A. Farley Post Office here July 28.

Joseph Martir, president of the New York Metro Area APWU, told the crowd that the postal bosses are “closing the Bryant Park post office in New York without giving the 60-day notice required,” an example of the kinds of moves the bosses are looking to make across the country. He emphasized the need for solidarity and thanked all those who participated.

“I'm looking to the future, where postal workers who retire will be taken care of like I was, not what is happening now,” Betty, a retiree, told the crowd.

Amid claims that the U.S. Postal Service will run out of money next year, the Postal Service suspended its employer contributions towards the retirement fund in April. It said there will be no “immediate” cut to the pensions, but the funds are being “temporarily withheld.”



CAPITOL HEIGHTS, Md. — American Postal Workers Union members with signs saying, “USPS is a service, not a business” lined both sides of the streets near the postal processing and distribution center here July 28. “One of the things I learned from the 1970 postal workers strike is that we did what we had to do to make a difference,” Grace B. Jenkins, a retired member of Na-

tion's Capital-Southern Maryland Area Local 140 APWU and veteran of the strike, told the *Militant*. “I was new on the job, but I learned a lesson. Believe in the union. It will not work without all of us. In the world we live in this lesson is needed today.”

James Harris, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Washington, D.C., delegate to Congress, joined the protest and spoke at a short rally chaired by Ray Robinson, president of the local.

“I'm proud to be here, and my father would be proud of me, too,” Harris said. “He was a postal worker and part of the historic 1970 strike. This fight deserves the support of the labor movement. While the U.S. government finds money to fund its wars, they say there is nothing there when it comes to workers.”

— Arlene Rubinstein



FORT WORTH, Texas — Drivers in passing cars and trucks honked in solidarity with a spirited 22-person picket line organized by American Postal Workers Union Local 098 at the main post office here July 28. Retirees, postal workers and supporters joined the action, one of many called by the union all across the country to defend public postal services, their jobs and the union.

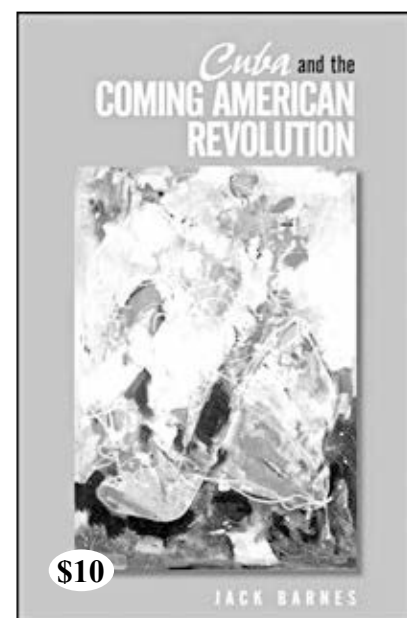
Ben Martinez, president of the local, told the *Militant* that workers there face injuries because of job cuts and insufficient training. “And if postal services are privatized, the rural communities will suffer the most,” he said.

— Josefina Otero



APWU Local 2286/Richard Alicea

Some 50 American Postal Workers Union members and supporters rally at James A. Farley Post Office in New York July 28, part of nationwide protests against cuts in services, jobs.



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July 26 meetings celebrate the victory of the Cuban Revolution

Continued from front page
group of mostly working-class revolutionaries in an assault on the Moncada and Carlos Manuel de Céspedes army barracks of the Fulgencio Batista dictatorship. Though it was defeated, the attack electrified the Cuban people and led to a popular revolutionary struggle that on Jan. 1, 1959, toppled the U.S.-backed tyranny and opened the road to the first socialist revolution in the Americas.

The featured speaker at the New York event was Ernesto Soberón, Cuba's permanent representative to the United Nations. For Cubans today, he said, the celebration of the Moncada attack "is not a simple exercise of historic memory." It signals "a renewed commitment to independence, sovereignty, social justice" and defending achievements won by the Cuban people over more than six decades.

While the U.S. economic assaults "cause huge constraints on daily life," Soberón said, Cubans are working to overcome the crisis through "collective effort, creativity and resilience." He noted that despite the extremely difficult conditions, thousands of Cuban volunteer doctors continue to serve in other parts of the world where they are needed.

The spirit of Moncada lives on, he said, "in those who work every day to maintain service in schools, hospitals, workshops or power plants; in those who produce food, conduct research in scientific centers, teach in classrooms, or serve the homeland performing other duties."

Soberón noted that Washington today is targeting not only Cuba but people and organizations in the U.S. who speak out against the blockade and defend the Cuban Revolution.

Ana López spoke on behalf of the Frente Independentista Boricua, which advocates Puerto Rico's independence from U.S. colonial rule. She had just returned from participating in a thousands-strong pro-independence protest in San Juan. "The histories of Cuba and Puerto Rico are inter-



Militant/Michael Shur
Ernesto Soberón, Cuban U.N. ambassador, told N.Y. meeting that Cuban people are working to overcome U.S. blockade through "collective effort, creativity and resilience."



Escambray
Celebration July 26 in Pinar del Río, Cuba, hailing 73rd anniversary of beginning of the Cuban Revolution.

twined" in common struggles against imperialist domination, López said.

She reported that Fernando González, president of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP), had sent a message to their march championing the anti-colonial struggle. ICAP, an organization that fosters solidarity between Cuba and people around the world, was placed under U.S. sanctions June 4.

Bob Schwartz, executive director of Global Health Partners, spoke about a new "Neonatal and Maternal Healthcare Initiative" to raise funds to gather and deliver medical equipment and medicine to help reverse the current rise in Cuba's infant mortality rate. Global Health Partners has sent some \$280 million in aid and equipment to Cuba over the past three decades, including donations of much-needed syringes, pacemakers and sutures.

In capitalist Cuba, infant mortality was 70 per 1,000 live births. By 1990, through the social conquests of the revolution, that figure had dropped to below 5, Schwartz said. Today, due to the sharp U.S. restrictions on trade with Cuba, it has doubled to almost 10 per 1,000 births.

Washington's blockade means hospitals can't get new equipment or parts to repair old ones for neonatal units. Mothers also face nutritional deficits leading to newborns with low birth weights.

"We've partnered with the two hospitals in Havana that get the most complicated pregnancies and treat the most at-risk babies," he said. "If we're successful, the program will branch out to hospitals in the provinces," Schwartz said, appealing for donations to this campaign.

Among the other speakers were Roger Wareham of the December 12th Movement, Kim Ives from *Haiti Liberté* and Bill Sacks from the Venceremos Brigade.

The audience was treated to music by Grammy-winning Afro-Latin jazz pianist Arturo O'Farrill and members of his band.



MILWAUKEE — Some 250 people attended a meeting here organized by the Wisconsin Coalition to Normalize Relations with Cuba July 21 to hear Cuban Ambassador Lianys Torres Rivera speak. The meeting was endorsed by Peace Action Wisconsin, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, National Lawyers Guild and other groups.

The Cuban ambassador to the U.S. was introduced by Dr. Alexandra Skee-

ter, a graduate of Cuba's Latin American School of Medicine, which provides free medical training for thousands of students from around the world. The only condition is that students agree to serve working-class communities when they return home.

"I left Cuba with much more than medical training," said Skeeter. "I left with a broadened world view. I saw that there is a different way of treating human beings, based on solidarity and the idea that healthcare is a human right."

"These are some of the most difficult times that Cuba has faced," Torres told the meeting. "We have only one or two hours of electricity a day in many homes, which means there is no water, refrigeration or public transportation. It's hard to sleep and food spoils."

Washington's oil blockade on Cuba, imposed by the Donald Trump administration at the beginning of the year, has severely aggravated hardships on working people across the island. Its steady stream of restrictive executive orders is aimed at cutting off foreign trade and support for Cuba.

Torres described the horrific toll the cruel cuts on medical supplies have had on children in Cuba. The survival rate for childhood cancer has dropped from 85% to 65%. Still, she said, the Cuban people are coming together to resist. "We are not just waiting for a savior, we are doing the best we can."

Torres said Cubans have prioritized installing solar panels, especially in the homes of children with special needs, as well as in essential infrastructure.

Millions of dollars worth of solar panels have been installed in hospitals, clinics, homes for the elderly, radio and cellphone stations and other critical services. Solar-powered irrigation pumps are being deployed on tobacco and other farms.

"We have to adapt. But we are still here!" Torres said to enthusiastic applause.

"We thank you for your support," she told the crowd. "Cuba is not alone because we have people like you."

— Amy Husk



MINNEAPOLIS — Some 30 people gathered here July 26 for a meeting to commemorate the 73rd anniversary of the opening battle of the Cuban Revolution. The event was sponsored by the Minnesota Cuba Committee and the Solidarity Committee on the Americas.

Gary Prevost, a leader of the Minnesota Cuba Committee, described the history of the Moncada assault, the dictatorship's brutal torture and murder of

captured combatants and the subsequent trial of Fidel Castro. Prevost pointed to Castro's courtroom defense speech, which laid out the revolutionary program of the July 26 Movement. This speech was smuggled out of prison and distributed widely across Cuba with the title, "History Will Absolve Me." Other speakers read excerpts from the speech.

Prevost condemned the State Department's recently released document "Cuba: The Capital of 21st Century Communism," which slanders the Cuban government and targets Cuban

solidarity activists in the U.S.

Meeting participants viewed excerpts from the film "Cuban Story," made by U.S. actor Errol Flynn. The film includes footage showing how Castro built and led a revolutionary movement of millions that ousted the Batista dictatorship. It also shows how masses of people turned out to greet him and the "Men of Moncada" as they marched across Cuba to Havana after the revolution triumphed in 1959.

Speakers from the audience included Miguel Fiol, a longtime Puerto Rican independence activist, who gave greetings and expressed solidarity with the Cuban Revolution.

Kevin Dwire, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Minnesota, said the best way to defend the Cuban Revolution is to keep building broad public activities. That's also true, he added, for defending Cuba solidarity activists in the U.S. who face government attack after being subpoenaed by the House Ways and Means Committee.

— Mary Martin



MONTREAL — More than 80 people celebrated the 73rd anniversary of the July 26 assault on the Moncada and Carlos Manuel de Céspedes garrisons.

The Quebec-Cuba Solidarity Roundtable called an action in front of the Cuban Consulate where participants loudly chanted, "¡Cuba sí, bloqueo no!" Participants cheered when drivers and passengers in vehicles traveling on the busy street responded to the large sign urging people to "Honk to show your support!"

At the reception in the yard behind the consulate afterward, Yamari Pérez Viera, Cuba's consul general in Montreal, spoke. "The U.S. threat of military intervention is real as they are trying to destroy the revolution," she said. "But we have a generation born during the blockade that is determined to see that Cuba remains sovereign, free and socialist."

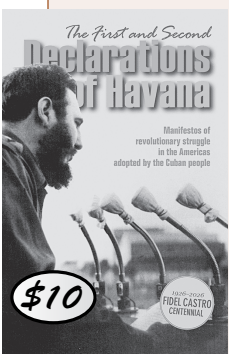
Pérez Viera thanked everyone for "showing their solidarity and being on the side of justice." The crowd responded with shouts of "Venceremos!" and "Down with the blockade."

Representatives from several groups in the roundtable gave greetings, then the program adjourned for refreshments and music. It concluded with Pérez Viera cutting a beautifully decorated cake to celebrate the July 26 anniversary and the living example of the Cuban Revolution.

— Beverly Bernardo

The First and Second Declarations of Havana

By Fidel Castro
"These uncompromising indictments of imperialist plunder and exploitation continue to stand as manifestos of revolutionary struggle by working people the world over."



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1960: Sit-in movement begins

Continued from front page

For decades, Woolworth's, Walgreens and other chain stores had taken money from Black customers, but banned them from eating at the stores' lunch counters.

In February 1960 a group of youths in Greensboro, North Carolina, dressed up smartly and sat down at the Woolworth's lunch counter and refused to move. Two months later, lunch counter sit-ins had mushroomed to 70 cities and towns across the South.

These actions were carefully planned, organized by audacious fighters, and reinforced by pickets at the stores in northern cities and a nationwide boycott called by the NAACP. The *Militant* featured the protests regularly on its front page, and Socialist Workers Party members in New York and elsewhere participated in the actions.

By the end of the year, 70,000 people, overwhelmingly young Blacks, had joined in, with more than 3,000 arrested.

"With what we were doing, trying to abolish segregation, we were coming up against governors, judges, politicians, businessmen," Diane Nash, the central leader of the sit-ins in Nashville, Tennessee, recalled. "The movement had a way of reaching inside you and bringing out things that even you didn't know were there."

The sit-ins, started by four students in Greensboro — Ezell Blair Jr., Franklin McCain, Joseph McNeil and David Richmond — rapidly became mass actions that were met with fierce repression. In Orangeburg, South Carolina, a town of 14,000, some 1,000 students marched downtown to protest segregation March 15. When cops assaulted them with clubs and tear gas, they stood their ground. Some 400 were arrested and held in the town's stockade. A picture of the detainees was featured on the front page of the *Militant*, along with a call for solidarity actions.

The lawyer representing the Orangeburg young protesters was arrested, students were threatened with expulsion if they continued to protest, and the state passed a law making it a crime to refuse a storeowner's request to leave the premises. Not a single store there was desegregated.

In Nashville students also faced assaults and jail, but they led a series of mobilizations that drew national press attention, forcing city authorities to announce they would begin desegregating public facilities.

Several hundred Nashville students had joined together to discuss how they would respond to provocations before beginning the sit-ins Feb. 13. When a gang of pro-segregation hoodlums start-

ed beating the students at a store sit-in Feb. 27, 81 of the Black students were arrested, but not a single thug. Student leaders rejected a "compromise" proposed by city officials to divide lunch counters into segregated sections for Blacks and Caucasians.

The sit-ins were backed up with a boycott of downtown stores and carried out by a big majority of the city's Blacks.

When segregationist goons firebombed the house of the students' attorney, Z. Alexander Looby, April 19, some 2,500 students began a protest march. By the time it reached City Hall, it was 4,000 strong. Nash and other student leaders confronted Mayor Ben West who caved in and announced the city would become the first in the South to desegregate its public facilities.

Students win solidarity across U.S.

The refusal of students in Nashville and elsewhere to give in stirred solidarity from workers around the country. Picket lines at three midtown New York Woolworth's were organized by the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union, the March 14, 1960, *Militant* reported.

Just prior to the victory in Nashville, students from there helped organize a meeting in Raleigh, North Carolina, that brought together 200 people active in sit-ins across the South. They discussed how to extend the fight against Jim Crow and put pressure on other Black groups to join the struggle. They founded the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

The following February nine students at Rock Hill, South Carolina, after holding a sit-in were arrested and each sentenced to a \$100 fine, or 30 days' hard labor on a chain gang. They chose jail time.

SNCC responded by sending Nash and three other young veterans to the town to step up the fight. Soon they too were jailed. SNCC sent in more youths, and organized mass picketing and sent a motorcade of 600 protesters to York County Prison Farm in support the imprisoned activists. Several of the jailed students were thrown into solitary confinement for "refusing to stop singing."

Mass meetings were held to honor the imprisoned students on their release, March 7, 1961. Days later, James Farmer, national director of the Congress of Racial Equality, announced plans for a movement of Freedom Riders to take on the segregated seating on Greyhound and other buses.

In December 1960 the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled that buses and trains involved in interstate transportation be desegregated. But the ruling was ignored by state officials across the South.

Freedom Riders face deadly attacks

CORE's first Freedom Rides were abandoned after riders were brutally assaulted. Just outside Anniston, Alabama, a mob firebombed a bus and attacked passengers as they fled the burning vehicle. A few onlookers from the Caucasian neighborhood of Bynum stepped forward to offer the passengers assistance.

When a second bus carrying Freedom Riders arrived at Anniston an hour later, a mob boarded the bus and beat protesters. Many were sent to a hospital. Another segregationist mob gathered outside it, ready to lynch the riders when



Eldred Reaney/The Tennessean USA TODAY NETWORK

Protest after firebombing of house of Z. Alexander Looby, lawyer for students organizing lunch counter sit-ins in Nashville, Tennessee, April 19, 1960. Marchers confronted Mayor Ben West, who agreed to desegregate public facilities. Inset, *Young Socialist* magazine calls for solidarity.

they were released. State troopers and local cops refused to provide an escort through the mob, so Freedom Rider Joe Perkins called Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, a leader of the fight for Black rights in Birmingham, for help.

Shuttlesworth told his bodyguard, Buck Johnson, and other deacons at his church to get cars ready and to mount a rescue. When the deacons arrived at the hospital, they stepped out openly displaying their weapons and escorted the Freedom Riders to safety.

"We walked right between those Ku Klux," Johnson later recalled.

President John F. Kennedy was nervous about breaking apart the Democratic Party coalition that included both northern labor officials and Dixiecrats — pro-segregationist Democrats in the South. His administration urged the Freedom Riders to abandon the strug-

gle. CORE agreed to suspend the next Freedom Rides, but Nash and other SNCC leaders urged students in Nashville and elsewhere to step in. Hundreds volunteered to join and the Freedom Rides went ahead.

A previous article in the *Militant* describes how those fights unfolded. It's available at: <https://themilitant.com/2023/08/05/catherine-burks-brooks-helped-launch-freedom-rides-in-1961>.

The courage shown by the Freedom Riders helped recruit thousands of young people to the fight, in the face of the murderous brutality of Jim Crow authorities and their Ku Klux Klan vigilantes. The cadres who came out of this struggle went on to lead the 1964 Freedom Summer in Mississippi and other parts of the South to fight for voting rights and other freedoms.

Independence for Puerto Rico

Continued from page 2

in Puerto Rico the same day. The action here drew people from Tampa, Miami and other cities across the state. Hosted by FloriBoris, whose name stands for Puerto Ricans in Florida, at least half a dozen organizations participated, Rafael Olivera-Cintrón, a principal organizer of the event, told the *Militant*.

Protesters also chanted, "La Junta pal carajo!" (To hell with the Junta!) The Junta is a popular phrase referring to the hated Financial Oversight and Management Board established by Barack Obama in 2016 to take dictatorial control over all the Puerto Rican government's financial decisions. It has "gutted public services and privatized essential services," Olivera-Cintrón said. "It decides what lives and what dies in public policy."

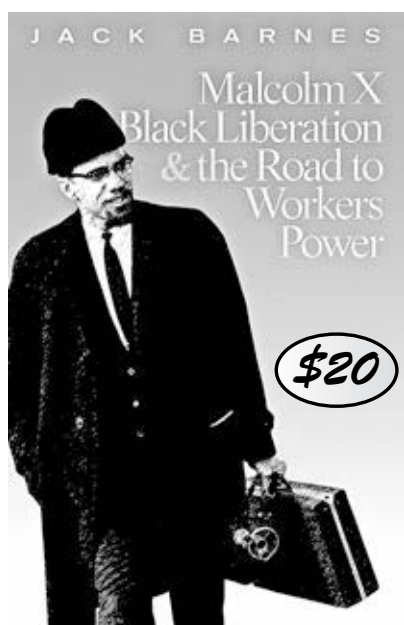
Orlando's Puerto Rican population increased in size after Hurricane Maria devastated the island in 2017. Olivera-Cintrón told protesters through a megaphone, "We have such a large Puerto Rican community here in Orlando because they left us to die after Hurricane Maria! Those who could, came here."

Olivera-Cintrón said FloriBoris exists to celebrate and connect Puerto Ricans in Florida in order to work to-

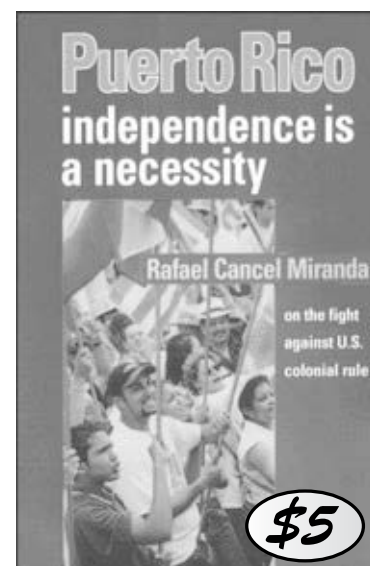
gether to demand change in Puerto Rico. "Without independence, it is impossible to imagine a prosperous future for Puerto Rico."

Among the groups that joined the Florida action were Diaspora P'alanta, Young Lords, La Mesa Boricua, Victory in Puerto Rico and the Puerto Rican Independence Party in the Diaspora. Rachele Fruit, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida, joined the rally, along with campaign supporters.

— David Rosenfeld



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‘We will protest for every right that belongs to a freeborn American’

W.E.B. Du Bois *Speaks: Speeches and Addresses 1890-1919*, edited by Philip S. Foner is one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month*. The selection, “We claim our rights,” is one of the historic statements on the rights of Blacks in the United States. It was read by Du Bois to the second annual meeting of the Niagara Movement Aug. 16, 1906, in Harper’s Ferry, West Virginia, paying homage to John Brown. Copyright © 1970 by Philip S. Foner and Shirley Graham Du Bois. Reprinted by permission of Pathfinder Press.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY W.E.B. DU BOIS

The men of the Niagara Movement coming from the toil of the year’s hard work and pausing a moment from the earning of their daily bread turn toward the nation and again ask in the name of ten million the privilege of a hearing. In the past year the work of the Negro-hater has flourished in the land. Step by step the defenders of the rights of American citizens have retreated. The work of stealing the black man’s ballot has progressed and the fifty and more representatives of stolen votes still sit in the nation’s capital. Discrimination in travel and public accommodation has so spread that some of our weaker brethren are ac-



Underwood and Underwood

“Silent Parade” of 10,000 African Americans marched in New York City July 28, 1917, organized by the NAACP to protest anti-Black violence and lynching in East St. Louis.

tually afraid to thunder against color discrimination as such and are simply whispering for ordinary decencies.

Against this the Niagara Movement eternally protests. We will not be satisfied to take one jot or tittle less than our full manhood rights. We claim for ourselves every single right that belongs to a freeborn American, political, civil and social; and until we get these rights we will never cease to protest and assail the ears of America. The battle we wage is not for ourselves alone but for all true Americans. It is a fight for ideals, lest this, our common fatherland, false to its founding, become in truth the land of the thief and the home of the slave — a byword and a hissing among the nations for its sounding pretensions and pitiful accomplishment.

Never before in the modern age has a great and civilized folk threatened to adopt so cowardly a creed in the treatment of its fellow citizens born and bred on its soil. ...

In detail, our demands are clear and unequivocal. First, we would vote; with the right to vote goes everything: freedom, manhood, the honor of your wives, the chastity of your daughters, the right to work, and the chance to rise, and let no man listen to those who deny this.

We want full manhood suffrage, and we want it now, henceforth and forever.

Second. We want discrimination in public accommodation to cease. Sepa-

ration in railway and street cars, based simply on race and color, is un-American, undemocratic, and silly. We protest against all such discrimination.

Third. We claim the right of free-men to walk, talk, and be with them that wish to be with us. No man has a right to choose another man’s friends, and to attempt to do so is an impudent interference with the most fundamental human privilege.

Fourth. We want the laws enforced against rich as well as poor; against capitalist as well as laborer; against white as well as black. We are not more lawless than the white race: we are more often arrested, convicted and mobbed. We want justice even for criminals and outlaws. We want the Constitution of the country enforced. We want Congress to take charge of Congressional elections. We want the Fourteenth Amendment carried out to the letter and every state disfranchised in Congress which attempts to disfranchise its rightful voters. We want the Fifteenth Amendment enforced and no state allowed to base its franchise simply on color. ...

Fifth. We want our children educated. The school system in the country districts of the South is a disgrace, and in few towns and cities are the Negro schools what they ought to be. We want the national government to step in and wipe out illiteracy in the South. Either the United States will destroy ignorance or ignorance will

destroy the United States.

And when we call for education we mean real education. We believe in work. We ourselves are workers, but work is not necessarily education. Education is the development of power and ideal. We want our children trained as intelligent human beings should be, and we will fight for all time against any proposal to educate black boys and girls simply as servants and underlings, or simply for the use of other people. They have a right to know, to think, to aspire.

These are some of the chief things which we want. How shall we get them? By voting where we may vote, by persistent, unceasing agitation, by hammering at the truth, by sacrifice and work.

We do not believe in violence, neither in the despised violence of the raid nor the lauded violence of the soldier, nor the barbarous violence of the mob, but we do believe in John Brown, in that incarnate spirit of justice, that hatred of a lie, that willingness to sacrifice money, reputation, and life itself on the altar of right. And here on the scene of John Brown’s martyrdom we reconsecrate ourselves, our honor, our property to the final emancipation of the race which John Brown died to make free. ...

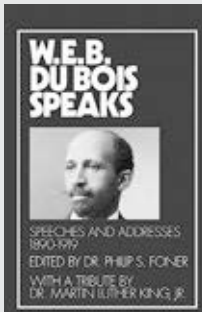
And we shall win. The past promised it, the present foretells it. ...

We appeal to the young men and women of this nation, to those whose nostrils are not yet befouled by greed and snobbery and racial narrowness: stand up for the right, prove yourselves worthy of your heritage and whether born North or South dare to treat men as men. Cannot the nation that has absorbed ten million foreigners into its political life without catastrophe absorb ten million Negro Americans into that same political life at less cost than their unjust and illegal exclusion will involve?

Courage, brothers! The battle for humanity is not lost or losing. All across the skies sit signs of promise. The Slav is rising in his might, the yellow millions are tasting liberty, the black Africans are writhing toward the light, and everywhere the laborer, with ballot in his hand, is voting open the gates of opportunity and peace. The morning breaks over blood-stained hills. We must not falter, we may not shrink. Above are the everlasting stars.

July
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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The Militant August 10, 2026

11

Protest gov’t attacks on supporters of Cuba!

Steps by the imperialist rulers in Washington toward new wars have always been accompanied by attacks on the unions and on essential constitutional rights of free speech, political activity free from government interference and other protections in the Bill of Rights.

That’s true today as the rulers escalate their decadeslong economic and political war against the Cuban people and their socialist revolution. With bipartisan backing, Washington has imposed a total oil blockade aimed at strangling the population, ramped up threats of an invasion and has tightened sanctions in an effort to deny Cuba any assistance.

The U.S. capitalist rulers seek to wipe out the example Cuba sets — that working people can forge a leadership capable of meeting the fundamental challenges posed by the deepening crisis of capitalism. Fidel Castro led millions of workers and peasants to take political power into their own hands. On that foundation they mobilized to uproot exploitation and oppression, transforming themselves in the process. The Cuban people have steadfastly defended their revolution against Washington’s ceaseless assaults and have extended their hand to struggles for freedom around the world.

In May the Department of Justice filed baseless charges of murder against Cuban revolutionary leader Raúl Castro. Last week the State Department issued a 100-page anti-communist screed fingering the National Network on Cuba and other groups that oppose Washington’s attacks on Cuba. The document, prepared behind the scene for months, is a tool for slander and frame-ups. It tries to turn Cuba’s selfless aid to other people battling for independence into a “violent export of communism.” It claims the groups it smears are tools of Cuba’s “subversive activities.”

This exact same charge was leveled by the

Franklin D. Roosevelt administration in 1939 against political opponents like the Socialist Workers Party that spoke out against the U.S. rulers war drive.

“Subversive activities,” the 2022 political resolution of the SWP points out, was used by Roosevelt as “an undefined and elastic term calculated to include militant trade unionism, independent working-class political action, and above all, any determined opposition to the US rulers’ entry into the second imperialist world war.” Leaders of the SWP and Teamsters were framed up and thrown into prison for what they *said* about the need for the working class to oppose that slaughter.

Today it’s vital the labor movement and all defenders of constitutional freedoms take an unequivocal stand against attacks on any organization, whatever its political outlook, for speaking out in opposition to Washington’s offensive against Cuba. Or that faces government probes because it organizes defense of Cuba’s revolution.

“Defending and extending the freedoms protected by the US Constitution is at the center of the class struggle,” the SWP 2022 resolution explains. These protections include “universal rights limiting the reach of the bourgeois state, protections that are deeply in the interests of workers and our allies.”

The SWP’s resolution is available in *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward*. It’s an invaluable guide for fighters in today’s union struggles for discussing and getting out the truth about Cuba’s revolution and for organizing the widest possible public opposition to Washington’s assaults on Cuban sovereignty.

Hands off Cuba! Hands off those who use their constitutional rights to defend Cuba!

Workers squeezed as prices stay high, jobs disappear

Continued from front page

are part of the workforce — that is, who hold down a job or are looking for work — dropped to 61.5% in June, the lowest since March 2021, during the COVID pandemic. If you exclude the decline in jobs during COVID, the drop in the percentage who hold jobs is the lowest in 50 years.

The biggest plunge in employment was for workers between the ages of 25 and 54, the heart of the working class in the U.S. Meanwhile, some 2 million workers — 27.3% of all those on government unemployment roles in June — haven’t been able to find work for 27 weeks or more, and their benefits have run out.

‘Groceries are unaffordable’

High prices on just about everything are hitting the working class hard. “Two-thirds of Americans find groceries unaffordable,” the *Washington Post* reported July 16. For working-class households with incomes below \$50,000, it’s 82%.

Food prices have risen more than 18% since the beginning of 2022, and for many items, including beef, coffee, tomatoes, and fresh fruits and vegetables, it’s much higher.

Today’s price hikes encompass a broad variety of basic necessities, including transportation, housing, medical care, childcare and much more.

Just in the last 18 months electric utilities have raised their rates by 18%, and even higher in some areas where big tech companies are building data-center hotspots that siphon off billions of kilobytes.

Home prices and apartment rents are soaring. The median price for a house hovers above \$400,000, and mortgage rates, currently over 6.7%, put them out of reach of many young people. Plans to move out on their own and raise a family have to be put aside.

Rents are at record highs. The median rent in May for a one-bedroom apartment in New York City hit \$4,000. Just five years ago it was under \$2,500.

Many young people find themselves having to move back in with their parents, other relatives or friends. Last year, 49% of adults under age 30 lived

with a parent, up 12% from 2019. Nearly one-third of those adults were 25 or older.

Millions who took out student loans to further their education are saddled with unpayable debts, boosted by huge interest bills, a boon for the big banks. Nationwide, borrowers who have defaulted on their student loans jumped by more than 4.2 million in the last year.

‘I’m not going to pay anymore’

Barbara Howaniec, a 63-year-old psychiatric nurse practitioner from Auburn, Maine, is one of those who defaulted. She had borrowed some \$62,000 to get a master’s degree from New York University, graduating in 2001. Twenty-five years later, she owes \$67,000 with interest, a higher debt than she began with!

Even though she was making regular payments under an income-based plan, government authorities have informed her that she now needs to make 355 more payments, which means she won’t have her debt paid off until she’s 91 years old. “I had already paid what I borrowed. I’m like, no, I’m not going to pay anymore,” she told The Associated Press.

Another reflection of the social crisis is the ongoing decline in birthrates. The U.S. birth rate fell to 1.57 births per woman last year. Anything below 2.1 means the population will decline.

With this declining number of children, more and more public schools have shut down. More than 1,000 were shuttered in 2025-26. Nationwide, school closures have spiked 35% over the past four years.

The federal government now reports that Social Security will run out of funds six years from now. It has no plan to remedy this disaster, which means by 2032 some 70 million people will see their benefits slashed by 22%. This deadline is a year earlier than the Congressional Budget Office projected last year.

Forty percent of us on Social Security rely on it for half or more of our income, while about 14% depend on it for 90%, the AARP reports.

It will take an organized fight by the labor movement to take on this looming disaster.

‘Cockroach’ protesters

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protest site, many setting up camp. Soon, over 10,000 protesters were there. Authorities shut 17 metro stations and blocked mobile internet to try and keep others away.

People across the country responded by ordering food and water on food apps to be delivered to protesters. The response was so great, organizers asked people to hold off sending more.

Motorbike courier Neg Singh reported he had made 19 trips delivering food there. When one order turned out to be for 70 pizzas, he had to recruit two other couriers to deliver them all.

Singh said he could no longer see himself the same way. “We also feel deeply connected to this protest,” he told the press. “We support it wholeheartedly.”

The protests spread to 30 cities across India. A video of protests in Mumbai captured 27-year-old Rhiya Ahir standing alone in the rain in front of a police van with her hand pushing on its hood. She refused to let the van pass until officers released the protesters detained inside. They let them go.

Farmers’ unions that had led yearlong protests over crop price minimums in 2021 also supported the protests. Rakesh Tikait brought the Bhartiya Kisan farmers’ union solidarity to Jantar Matar, while union national spokesman Dharmendra Malik told ETV Bharat, “Farmers’ full support is with the agitating students.”

After protesters called for nationwide actions July 24, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi posted a video pledging to set up fast-track courts to ensure swift justice and harsher punishment for those who leak exams. It was his first public acknowledgement of the protests.

“An exam paper leak is not a small issue,” Modi said. “Those guilty have been arrested and are in jail.”

“Nothing is more important than the welfare and future of our youth!” he claimed. But protesters vowed to continue their demonstrations until the education minister resigned.

The news of Pradhad’s resignation didn’t end the protests. Cockroach spokespeople announced they would stay until all their demands were met. A few hours later government negotiators conceded to all demands, including dropping prosecution against demonstrators.

Inspired by victory, other groups, including farmers, announced a new round of protests against government policies.

LETTERS

Lee Oleson

Lee Oleson, a member and supporter of the Socialist Workers Party for five decades, died July 12 in East Orange, New Jersey, after battling long-term health challenges. He was 81 years old.

Lee was one of hundreds of young people active in the Free Speech Movement at the University of California, Berkeley. He was arrested in December 1964, when the campus administration attempted to crack down on those organizing solidarity with the fight against Jim Crow segregation.

Oleson met members of the SWP and Young Socialist Alliance and later joined the party. In Washington, D.C., in the mid-1970s, he built solidarity with striking printers at the *Washington Post*.

Oleson could speak Spanish and helped other party members learn it as the party reached more deeply into Spanish-speaking layers of the working class.

In the 1980s, he worked as a steelworker in Dallas. He was active in the fight against cop brutality and in winning support for the fight against apartheid in South Africa. Oleson was the SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in 1982.

In Omaha, Nebraska, he built the SWP as a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers. He was the party’s candidate for governor of Nebraska in 1990. After leaving the party, Oleson supported its work, helping to produce and distribute books on revolutionary working-class politics. Despite the challenges he faced, he followed the party’s work closely, optimistic about the opportunities in front of the SWP.

Don Mackle

New York, New York