

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuban book fair travels throughout provinces

—PAGE 6-7

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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U.S. Black farmers discuss new settlement

BY SUSAN LAMONT

WASHINGTON—On February 18 the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Justice Department announced a \$1.25 billion settlement to resolve long-standing claims of discrimination in loans by thousands of Black farmers.

This settlement follows more than 10 years of protest activity by farmers to correct injustices coming out of the 1999 settlement of the historic *Pigford v. Glickman* class-action lawsuit.

The announcement came just days after hundreds of Black farmers across the South—from Little Rock, Arkansas, to Richmond, Virginia—joined demonstrations and meetings, demanding equal treatment for all farmers and for Congress to appropriate additional funds for compensation. These were the largest protest actions by working farmers in some time, reflecting their refusal to acquiesce in face of ongoing government discrimination, packaged in ever higher mountains of bureaucratic red tape.

The Barack Obama administration is hoping to put an end to protests by Black farmers. “With the settlement announced today, USDA and African American farmers . . . can move on to

Continued on page 9

March in Scotland answers rightists

BY TONY HUNT

EDINBURGH, Scotland—Some 2,000 spirited and predominantly young opponents of the Scottish Defence League (SDL) took to the streets here February 20 to counter the ultra-right outfit’s attempt to march that day. Students from Edinburgh, Napier, and Heriot-Watt universities were prominent, often carrying hand-made signs such as “Students Against the SDL” and “Heriot-Watt students against racism.” Other placards said, “Fascists off our streets.”

Groups of Asian and Black youth were among the protesters. There were also contingents from the teachers union in Scotland, the UNITE union, the UNISON public workers union, and the Fire Brigades Union. Protesters came from several cities across Scotland.

The SDL is an offshoot of the anti-working-class English Defence League (EDL). The group says it is against “militant Islam.” One Islamist group they targeted, Islam4UK, was recently proscribed by the government, a move the EDL claimed credit for. The EDL has also called for a ban on the building of new mosques in Britain and on wearing burqas, a

Continued on page 5

‘Workers Power’ book focus of spring subscription drive

BY DOUG NELSON AND PAUL MAILHOT

The *Militant* is launching a two-month international campaign March 13–May 12 to expand readership of the paper and introduce hundreds of new subscribers to the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. The international subscription goal will be 2,000. A weekly chart in the *Militant* will record the number of “Workers Power” books sold with subscriptions in each area.

Accompanying the subscription campaign, the *Militant* is launching an international fund to raise \$110,000. An annual effort to win contributions from working people serves as backbone of the *Militant*’s finances. This money is needed to maintain the paper’s production and finance the reporting of class struggle developments around the world.

These spring drives will build on the successful winter campaign in which *Militant* supporters met with readers, getting nearly 400 to renew

their subscriptions, the majority of whom also bought the new book.

Drawing lessons from a century and a half of struggle, *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* explains why it is the revolutionary conquest of state power by the working class that will make possible the final battle for Black freedom—and open the way to a world based, not on exploitation, violence, and racism, but human solidarity.

The experience of the *Militant* subscription campaign last fall showed receptivity to communist politics as workers respond to the cumulative effects of capitalism’s deepening economic and social crises and Washington’s expanding wars.

The new propaganda possibilities were exemplified by the subscriptions sold in a number of cities by *Militant* supporters to their coworkers. This included 30 at the Dakota Premium Foods meatpacking plant in South St. Paul, Minnesota; 18 at the American Apparel garment factory in Los Angeles; and a similar number at the JBS

Continued on page 3

Greek gov’t to deepen austerity measures

Pushes workers to pay for capitalist crisis



Aspasia Kanellou

March in Athens, Greece, during February 24 strike against government austerity measures.

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Greek government says it will deepen austerity measures already begun against working people to narrow a large government budget deficit.

“Brutal steps” are needed “to address the immediate dangers today,” Prime Minister George Papandreou told the Greek parliament February 26. “Tomorrow it will be too late and the consequences will be much more dire.”

In early February Papandreou had announced wage cuts for government workers, who make up one-third of the workforce; raising the retirement

age to 63; and big tax increases that will hit workers and small farmers the hardest.

The government said the measures are needed to obtain loans and sell bonds to pay off \$75 billion in debt to Greek and foreign banks that starts coming due in March. Greece’s government debt is 113 percent of the country’s gross domestic product.

Two days before his speech, some 40,000 people marched in Athens during a one-day strike to protest the austerity plans. It was called by the three main union federations, including two closely tied to Papandreou’s

Continued on page 5

Students in San Diego protest racist attacks at university

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

LOS ANGELES—Hundreds of students at the University of California San Diego (UCSD) have recently organized demonstrations, marches, and other actions to protest racist attacks on their campus. The latest attack was a noose found hanging from a light fixture in the campus library February 26.

“I just took that noose as an attack on all of us,” Mustafa Shahryar, who is from Afghanistan, told reporters.

UCSD enrolled the smallest number of Black freshmen last fall of any of the nine University of California undergraduate campuses—46 students out of a class of 3,749.

The campus administration sponsored a teach-in February 24 on “intolerance.” A majority of students walked out.

“If you truly care about our university, if you want to stand in solidarity, you will join me in walking out of this teach-in and joining us at our teach-in,” said Fnann Keflezighi, vice chair of the Black Student Union (BSU). Chanting, “Whose university? Our

university!” the multinational group marched out to participate in the BSU’s counter-teach-in.

“We do not need to focus on the condemnation of individual racist acts, but to realize that individual acts of racism such as the ‘Compton Cook-out’ and The Koala broadcast are an example of a trickle-down effect,” Jasmine Phillips, a student government

Continued on page 8

Also Inside:

U.S. doctors leave Haiti as Cubans expand care	2
Bolshevik Revolution and Black liberation	4
Chinese-Cuban general to start tour in Montreal	5
An intertwined history: Chinese in Cuba and U.S.	8

U.S. doctors leave Haiti as Cubans expand care

BY CINDY JAQUITH

With thousands in Haiti still in critical need of medical care, the U.S. government is pulling out the doctors it is responsible for. Meanwhile, the Cuban government is expanding its medical mission to Haiti and urging doctors from other countries to join it.

On February 24 the last U.S. field hospital in Haiti closed. The USNS *Comfort*, the much-publicized Navy medical ship docked in Haiti, is also pulling up anchor.

An article in the *Wall Street Journal* noted that an estimated 25 percent to 30 percent of those who had emergency surgery done since the January 12 earthquake will need to have more operations. "New cases of diarrhea, malaria and other diseases are picking up in tent communities crammed with tens of thousands of people who lost their homes," it added. The dangers will mount as the rainy season produces major flooding.

These facts have not persuaded most doctors from the United States and other imperialist countries who went to Haiti after the earthquake to stay there for more than a few weeks. They are now "back in their antiseptic, high-tech offices," the *New York Times* said, "haunted by the experiences." Cuban doctors, on the other hand, are digging in for the long battle that lies ahead.

"The major challenge begins now, when the press headlines abandon Haiti, the moment of emergency is over, and the supposed 'threat' of a wave of emigration is diminishing," said Cuban president Raúl Castro in a February 23

speech to the Summit of Latin American and the Caribbean Unity, held in Playa del Carmen, Mexico. Haiti doesn't need "a fleeting and sudden gesture of 'charity,'" he said. It "requires and deserves a major international effort for its reconstruction."

Castro reported that the Cuban medical mission in Haiti has now grown to about 1,430, spread throughout the country. It is called the Henry Reeve International Brigade, named after a U.S. man who joined Cuba's independence war in the late 19th century. The brigade includes nearly 800 Cuban doctors and other health-care workers, as well as Cuban-trained doctors from Haiti and more than two dozen other countries.

Since the earthquake, the Cuban mission has treated more than 95,000 Haitians and performed 4,500 surgeries. It is now focusing the medical mission on advancing the long-term health system in Haiti. According to the Cuban daily *Granma*, the Cubans are building two new hospitals outside Port-au-Prince, the capital, in areas where health care had been practically nonexistent.

Graduates from Cuba's Latin American School of Medicine as well as current students there are at the center of this effort. They number 637

Hotel workers fight for union in Virginia



Militant/Glova Scott

ARLINGTON, Virginia—About 75 people participated in a spirited march and picket line here in support of a union-organizing drive at Sheraton Crystal City Hotel February 27. Sheraton workers, joined by other hotel workers organized by UNITE HERE, college students, and labor activists demanded an end to harassment by the hotel owners, HEI Hotels and Resorts.

Hermán Romero, a former cook at the hotel, said he was fired after management saw him at an earlier picket line. He was later called back to work in housekeeping, but with a \$2.50 an hour cut in pay. "The work is really hard," he said, "they've increased the workload."

—GLOVA SCOTT

and come from 27 countries.

Granma interviewed one of these graduates, Marcela Vera, from Colombia. As soon as the earthquake struck she wanted to go to Haiti to help. She was turned down by many aid organizations. Doctors Without Borders told her

she needed to know French. The Red Cross demanded two years' experience. But when the Latin American School of Medicine called her, "she was only asked to do her best and do it well," *Granma* said. Forty-eight hours later she was on her way to Haiti.

March 21 rally in D.C. to call for immigrant rights

BY SETH GALINSKY

More than a dozen groups are organizing a demonstration in Washington, D.C., March 21 to demand legalization for undocumented immigrants.

A leaflet for the action calls for "Good

Jobs, Full Citizenship for ALL, Stop Separation of Families!"

In 2009 U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) deported 387,000 immigrants—the highest recorded number in U.S. history, even as the pace of immigration has slowed, in part due to the lack of jobs.

Under the administration of Barack Obama, ICE has tripled the number of immigration audits, which leads to the firing of workers who can't prove they are either U.S. citizens or permanent residents, or have work permits.

"Every person who works 12 hours a day mopping floors, picking vegetables, or trimming meat in a factory should be treated with respect and not be the object of deportation or of permanent harassment," said Jaime Contreras, director of Service Employees International Union

(SEIU) Local 32BJ in Washington, D.C., at a February 23 press conference. Casa de Maryland stated they expect tens of thousands of people from 45 states to participate.

According to the Web site set up to build the action, sponsoring groups include several immigration reform coalitions, the AFL-CIO union federation, SEIU, United Food and Commercial Workers union, UNITE HERE, and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The National Council of Churches is also promoting the march.

The Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights is organizing dozens of buses to go to the march. Several student groups at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago are working to fill buses and have posted flyers for the action on campus.

THE MILITANT

Imperialist troops out of Afghanistan!

Washington is intensifying its war in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as maintaining its military force in Iraq. Follow the news on these developments and the stakes for working people in the pages of the *'Militant.'* Don't miss an issue!



USMC photo/Lance Cpl. Tommy Bellegarde
Marines patrol on outskirts of Marjah, Afghanistan, Feb. 14, 2010.

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Three of Cuban Five moved from Miami jail

BY BEN JOYCE

Three of the five Cuban revolutionaries jailed in U.S. prisons have been relocated following their resentencing in October and December of last year. Fernando González, Antonio Guerrero, and Ramón Labañino had been temporarily moved to a prison in Miami for their resentencing hearings.

Together with René González and Gerardo Hernández, they are known to their supporters as the Cuban Five. Convicted on frame-up “conspiracy” charges, the five were railroaded to jail with no material evidence to merit their convictions and harsh sentences. They have been serving draconian prison terms since 1998.

At the time of their arrest the five were living in southern Florida, monitoring rightist Cuban American organizations known for carrying out armed attacks against Cuba with the aim of toppling the revolution. Their task was to inform Havana of plans for future attacks on Cuban targets. The U.S. government claims that they are agents of a foreign government who carried out “acts of vigilantism on U.S. soil.”

The case of the five has gained worldwide attention and support. The many violations of the five’s basic rights—from prolonged time in solitary confinement, to the use of “conspiracy” charges, to the continued denial of visitation rights for the wives of Hernández and René González—have drawn in various individuals and organizations to the fight to win their release, as has their unwavering record as working-class fighters.

In June 2008 a federal appeals court vacated the sentences for Guerrero, Labañino, and Fernando González, ruling that the sentences were inconsistent with the court record. On October 13 last year Guerrero’s life plus 10 years was reduced to 21 years and

10 months. Some two months later Labañino’s sentence of life plus 18 years was reduced to 30 years, and González had his sentence of 19 years reduced to 17 years and 9 months.

During the resentencing of Guerrero, the prosecution told the court that the U.S. government hoped that the reduced sentences would calm the “contentiousness” and “noise” around the case, acknowledging the impact felt by the international campaign to win freedom for the five.

The Cuban Five encourage their supporters to write to them in prison. They can be reached at the addresses in the box on this page.



Militant/Tom Baumann

June 2009 picket at Federal Building, New York City, called for release of Cuban Five.

‘Workers Power’ book at center of campaign

Continued from front page

Swift packing plant in Marshalltown, Iowa.

Many of these workers renewed their subscriptions during the winter. “This is a time when workers need more knowledge, more insight, so we can fully understand what we need to do,” said R. Henderson, a worker at American Apparel. “That’s why I got *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* when I renewed my subscription.”

In line with the new book’s explanation of the “vanguard place and weight of workers who are Black in broad proletarian-led social and political struggles in the United States,” the propaganda effort will focus on selling to Black workers and youth. One aspect of this will be organizing weekly door-to-door sales and setting up literature tables in predominantly Black working-class areas.

Consistent weekly sales of subscriptions and the book at factory gates and workplaces will be a regular activity of the campaign in every area.

In addition, expanding a readership base and building relations with students through weekly sales at campuses will be an important component.

The book will become available in Spanish later this month, and in French in April, in time to be distrib-

uted during the campaign.

The *Militant* is urging all of its supporters to join the drive to expand readership of the revolutionary press and to contribute generously to the \$110,000 fund campaign. If you would like to help, contact a distributor listed on page 8.

‘Militant’ names new editor

BY BEN JOYCE

With this issue Paul Mailhot assumes the editorship of the *Militant* newspaper. Mailhot, an editorial volunteer in 1992–94, has frequently contributed to the paper as a worker correspondent on issues in the labor movement over the past two decades.

During the 2003–2006 fight of the Co-Op coal miners in Utah for a union, Mailhot was one of the *Militant*’s lead writers on this fight. A coal miner himself at the time, Mailhot worked to build solidarity with

the union fight and report on the activities of the miners and the United Mine Workers of America to win this struggle.

When the Co-Op mine owners turned to the courts to defeat the union by suing individual miners involved in the struggle, the union itself, and the *Militant* newspaper for its uncompromising coverage, Mailhot worked with others to organize the Militant Fighting Fund to turn back this boss assault. As a result of this nationwide campaign, and the steadfastness of the miners and the union, a judge dismissed the Co-Op mine owners’ suit in 2006.

In addition to Mailhot’s activity in the labor movement, he has assumed a number of national leadership responsibilities for the Socialist Workers Party since joining the party in 1974. He is member of the party’s national committee.

Sam Manuel, the *Militant*’s editor since 2008, and the paper’s Washington, D.C., correspondent for five years before that, has been released from the volunteer staff to concentrate on recovering his health after a medical condition sidelined him from day-to-day editorial responsibilities late last year. Manuel is now in Atlanta and working his way back toward full activity in the communist movement.



Militant/Ben Joyce

Paul Mailhot, left, *Militant*’s new editor, reviews page with editorial volunteer Doug Nelson.

Write to the Cuban Five

Rubén Campa (Fernando González)

Reg. #58733-004, FCI Terre Haute
P.O. Box 33, Terre Haute, IN 47808

(NOTE: The envelope must be addressed to “Rubén Campa,” but address the letter inside to Fernando.)

René González

Reg. #58738-004, FCI Marianna
P.O. Box 7007, Marianna, FL 32447-7007

Antonio Guerrero

Reg. #58741-004, U.S.P. Florence
P.O. Box 7000, Florence, CO 81226

Gerardo Hernández

Reg. #58739-004, U.S.P. Victorville
P.O. Box 5300, Adelanto, CA 92301

Luis Medina (Ramón Labañino)

Reg. #58734-004, U.S.P. McCreary
P.O. Box 3000, Pine Knot, KY 42635

(NOTE: The envelope must be addressed to “Luis Medina,” but address the letter inside to Ramón.)

Meeting with delegation from Federation of Cuban Women

In celebration of International Women’s Day

New York City ❖ Friday, March 12

Reception begins at 6:30 p.m., program at 7 p.m.

Hunter College

West Building Room 714 (Take 6 train to 68th Street)

Participate in an evening of discussion with a leadership delegation from the Federation of Cuban Women (FCW). Maritzel González, FCW foreign relations representative for the North American region will be joined by FCW representatives Ana Violeta Castañeda and Yamila González to participate in the United Nations’ annual activities for International Women’s Day.

For more information: (212) 348-5547; July26thCoalition@gmail.com

Bolshevik Revolution and Black liberation

The following is the eighth in a series of excerpts the Militant is running from Pathfinder Press's latest book, Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power, by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. We encourage our readers to study and discuss the book. This excerpt includes the introduction and several paragraphs by James P. Cannon, a founding leader of the communist movement in the United States, from the chapter "Everything New and Progressive Came from the Revolution of 1917." Next week the Militant will run the rest of the chapter. Subheadings are by the Militant.

The Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917 in Russia laid a new foundation the world over for efforts to build revolutionary proletarian parties. Under the example of that revolution, a layer of class-struggle-minded workers began to recognize that, among other things, an uncompromising fight by them against national oppression is essential to the struggle to conquer state power from the capitalist and landlord exploiters. Led by V.I. Lenin, the Bolsheviks not only carried out this internationalist course inside the former tsarist empire's prison house of nations but also insisted, when the Communist International was launched in 1919, that the fight against national oppression be placed at the center of its strategy.

The "entire policy of the Communist International" in the fight against national oppression "must be based primarily upon uniting the proletarians and toiling masses of all nations and countries in common revolutionary struggle to overthrow the landowners and the bourgeoisie," Lenin explained in the "Theses on the National and Colonial Questions" drafted by him for the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920. "Only such a unification will guarantee victory over capitalism, without which it

is impossible to abolish national oppression and inequality."

An intransigent fight "against the most deeply rooted petty-bourgeois, nationalist prejudices (which are expressed in all possible forms, such as racism, national chauvinism, and anti-Semitism)," Lenin said, "must be given all the more priority as the question becomes more pressing of transforming the dictatorship of the proletariat from a national framework (that is, a dictatorship that exists only in one country and is incapable of carrying out an independent international policy) into an international one (that is, a dictatorship of the proletariat in at least several advanced countries, capable of exercising a decisive influence on all of world politics)."

Lenin's position on Black struggle

For that reason, Lenin emphasized, "all Communist parties must directly support the revolutionary movement among the nations that are dependent and do not have equal rights (for example Ireland, the Negroes in America,¹ and so forth), and in the colonies. . . . Recognizing internationalism in word only, while diluting it in deed with petty-bourgeois nationalism and pacifism in all propaganda, agitation, and practical work, is

1. In Lenin's January 1917 article "Statistics and Sociology," he wrote that Blacks in the United States "should be classed as an oppressed nation, for the equality won in the Civil War of 1861-65 and guaranteed by the Constitution of the republic was in many respects increasingly curtailed in the chief Negro areas (the South) in connection with the transition from the progressive, pre-monopoly capitalism of 1860-70 to the reactionary, monopoly capitalism (imperialism) of the new era, which in America was especially sharply etched out by the Spanish-American imperialist war of 1898 (i.e., a war between two robbers over the division of the booty)." V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 23, pp. 275-76.



Top: Otto Huiswoud, left, and fellow Communist Party member Claude McKay at Fourth Congress of Communist International, Moscow, November 1922. Both were also members of African Blood Brotherhood. Bottom: CP-led American Negro Labor Congress, launched in 1925 to fight racist discrimination and for right of Blacks to join unions.

a common practice not only among the centrist parties of the Second International but also among those that have left that International, and often even among parties that now call themselves Communist."

The young Communist movement in the United States, most of whose cadres had broken from the Socialist Party in 1919 to affiliate with the Communist International, did not initially pursue Lenin's course. Demands by Blacks "for economic, political, and social equality were viewed by the communists as just another form of reformism," Farrell Dobbs notes in *Revolutionary Continuity: Birth of the Communist Movement (1918-1922)*. Many cadres "failed to perceive the connection between revolutionary proletarian objectives and the aims and struggles of the oppressed nationalities [and were unable] to shape a course that both solidarized the communists with the democratic aspirations of these superexploited masses and imparted revolutionary political content to their struggles. No special effort was made to recruit militants among the Afro-American and other oppressed nationalities to the communist movement."

James P. Cannon, who was part of the founding leadership of the communist movement in the United States and a direct participant in these early experiences, recounted lessons from them in *The First Ten Years of American Communism: Report of a Participant* (Pathfinder, 1973). Major excerpts from Cannon's account are printed below.

. . . American communists in the early twenties, like all other radical organizations of that and earlier times, had nothing to start with on the Negro question but an inadequate theory, a false or indifferent attitude and the adherence of a few individual Negroes of radical or revolutionary bent.²

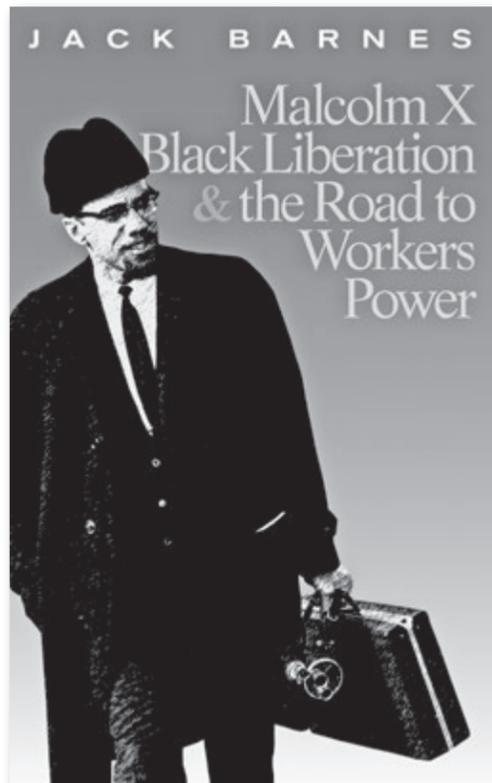
The earlier socialist movement, out of which the Communist Party was formed, never recognized any need for a

Continued on page 9

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power

New from Pathfinder Press

By Jack Barnes



"This is a book about the dictatorship of capital and the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat. A book about the last century and a half of class struggle in the United States, and the unimpeachable evidence it offers that workers who are Black will comprise a disproportionately weighty part of the ranks and leadership of the mass social movement that will make a proletarian revolution. . . ."

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2. Some early African American cadres of the Communist Party had been among the very few Black members of the Socialist Party. Others had been members of the African Blood Brotherhood (ABB), founded in 1919 in Harlem by Cyril Briggs, an immigrant from the Caribbean island of Nevis. The Brotherhood called for full equality and voting rights for Blacks in the South, the right of self-defense against Ku Klux Klan violence, and organization of Blacks into the trade unions. The ABB solidarized with Soviet Russia; condemned outrages by European colonial powers in Africa; championed the Irish struggle against British rule; and spoke out against anti-Semitism and Washington's racist exclusion of Chinese and Japanese immigrants. The ABB built branches in New York, by far its largest, as well as in Chicago, Omaha, Nebraska; Tulsa, Oklahoma; West Virginia coal mining areas; and elsewhere. Two CP members who were Black, both also members of the African Blood Brotherhood, attended the Fourth Congress of the Communist International in Moscow in 1922. Otto Huiswoud was a delegate from the CP and ABB, and poet Claude McKay an invited guest. Huiswoud was asked by Comintern leaders to chair the Negro Commission and reported to delegates on its "Theses on the Negro Question," which were adopted November 30. McKay stayed on in Moscow for six months following the congress. Leon Trotsky's reply to questions by McKay about the place of the fight against Black oppression in the world proletarian struggle was published in the Soviet press and is available in *The First Five Years of the Communist International*, vol. 2 (Pathfinder, 1953, 1972).

Chinese-Cuban general to start tour in Montreal

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

MONTREAL—Armando Choy, one of the authors of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*, will be on a speaking tour here March 15–20. Choy's visit has sparked considerable interest in hearing about his decades of experience as a leader of the Cuban Revolution as described in the book.

The Observatoire des Amériques (Americas Observatory) and Pathfinder Books, the book's distributor in Canada, are organizing a public meeting for him March 19 at the University of Quebec at Montreal (UQAM). Victor Armony, director of the Observatoire will cochair the meeting with law student Patrick Véronneau. Also speaking at the meeting will be Cuban ambassador Teresita Vicente; Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and the book's editor; and Timothy Chan, president of the Chinese-Canadian Historical and Cultural Society.

Political Science Department head Jean-Guy Prévost will welcome Choy to the university. Several UQAM student organizations, institutes, and departments have endorsed the meeting.

Following a 1952 military coup in Cuba by Fulgencio Batista, Choy joined the anti-Batista organization Joven Patria (Young Homeland). He was a founding member of the July 26 Movement, which led the armed struggle against Batista, and in 1958 was promoted to captain, the third-

highest rank in the Rebel Army.

During the April 1961 U.S.-backed mercenary invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs, Choy was head of one of the units engaged in combat. The mercenaries were defeated in 72 hours. Promoted to brigadier general in 1976, Choy later participated in Cuba's internationalist mission in Angola to repel the invading South African army.

Choy is a founding member of the Communist Party of Cuba and belongs to the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution. He is currently president of the State Working Group for the Cleanup, Preservation and Development of Havana Bay.

The Third World Studies Certificate at Marianopolis College has invited Choy to speak at a meeting March 16. The following day he will address the political



Inset: Militant/Martin Koppel
Demonstration in Havana against Batista dictatorship, May 1957. Armando Choy is at far left. Inset, during interview for *Our History Is Still Being Written* in 2002.

science class of Prof. Dominique Caouette at the University of Montreal.

Later that day, the Chinese-Canadian Historical and Cultural Society of Montreal will host a banquet in Choy's honor at the Ruby Rouge restaurant in Chinatown. In addition to a short pre-

sentation by Choy, the program features a musical performance by Montreal artists. For more information on Choy's visit, contact the Student Association for the Faculty of Law and Political Science at afesped@uqam.ca. Telephone: (514) 987-3000 poste 2632.

Greek gov't to deepen austerity measures

Continued from front page

Panhellenic Socialist Movement. Many marchers carried banners that said, "Working people should not be made to pay for the crisis that we did not create."

The strike, which closed down air and rail transport, public services, the shipyards, oil refineries, and ports, was centered among government workers. It involved a much smaller percentage of private-sector workers. Although air traffic controllers joined the strike, many ground workers did not.

The march included small contingents from workplaces, many with their own demands. Workers in the newspaper industry called for the reinstatement of fired colleagues and laid off Olympic Airlines workers, whose unemployment benefits are running out.

Union officials, however, did not challenge the government's claim that the budget deficit needs to be narrowed nor did they put forward a program to unite working people in the face of the capitalist economic crisis.

Instead, Yiannis Panagopoulos, president of the General Confederation of Greek Workers, stated, "Our problem is that the sacrifices being proposed are not fair, they fall on working people, they should be shared evenly."

Leaders of the European Union, especially the German government, have been pushing Athens to carry out deeper austerity measures. The crisis has sharpened tensions between the competing capitalist classes in Germany and Greece.

In an editorial, the German daily *Bild* said that "the proud, cheating, profligate Greeks" ought to be "thrown out of the euro on their ear."

The paper was referring to reports that previous Greek governments had underreported their real debt to be accepted into the European Union and the euro zone, countries that replaced their national currencies with the euro.

Greek deputy prime minister Theodoros Pangalos charged that the German government shared the blame because it had wrecked the Greek economy and slaughtered thousands during the Nazi occupation of World War II. "They took away the gold that was in the Bank of Greece, they took away Greek money, and they never gave it back," he said.

German banks have some \$43.2 billion in loans outstanding in Greece; French banks hold \$75.5 billion. But Greek bankers reportedly hold more than \$100 billion in Greek government bonds and loans.

More measures are expected, such as raising the value-added tax, which now stands at 19 percent, and steeper cuts in the wages of government workers.

Natasha Terlexis and Georges Mehribian in Athens contributed to this article.

Scotland march against rightists

Continued from front page

form of dress worn by some Muslim women.

The SDL Web site features calls for pride in "being British" or "Scottish" and support for the British rulers' war in Afghanistan. The right-wingers deny being racist. The EDL invited both a Black and a Sikh speaker to address their recent rally in Stoke-on-Trent in England.

The main counterprotest was organized by Scotland United, an umbrella group including the Scottish Trades Union Congress and supported by Unite Against Fascism, a United Kingdom-wide organization. The Edinburgh Anti-Fascist Alliance led a breakaway march to a pub where some SDL supporters gathered, protected by the police. According to the SDL, many of their supporters were prevented from entering the city by the police.

The Scotland United rally held here included speeches by representatives of all the main capitalist parties. Their talks were marked by calls for a "multicultural" Scotland, placing trust in the police, and for laws that undermine the right to freedom of the press and association in order to deal with the threat of "fascism." March organizer Aamer Anwar, of Scotland United, hailed the police use of Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act against the SDL. This law gives police a range of arbitrary powers.

Paul Davies, Communist League candidate for Bethnal Green in London, traveled north for the protest. "It was great to see so many come out onto

the streets to oppose these ultraright forces," Davies, who is a meat worker, said. "That bodes well for building a movement that can resist employer-backed assaults on workers organizations and fight fascist street gangs in the future."

At the same time, Davies added, "It is very dangerous to place any reliance on the capitalist state and its police. These are the very forces that are undermining workers rights today and will nurture and protect fascist forces in the years ahead."

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



March 15, 1985

AMES, Iowa—"The National Crisis Action Rally," a broadly sponsored farm protest rally, attracted 16,000 farmers and their supporters here February 27. They heard four hours of speeches describing the depth of the farm crisis and urging the federal government to intervene on behalf of family farmers immediately.

People packed the Hilton Coliseum, which was filled with a variety of banners and posters including: "Reagan policy: let them eat cake; No profit, don't plant; Save the farmer, save your job."

A number of posters addressed the priorities of the federal budget: "Farms not arms; Grain silos, not missile silos; No more weapons."



March 14, 1960

After six weeks, the Southern students' campaign of direct action against Jim Crow is still spreading. At the same time, the conflict with Southern white-supremacist officials and the mobs they have incited has become more bitter.

Sit-down demonstrations at discriminatory lunch counters have erupted in Texas and Kentucky, bringing to nine the total of affected states below the Mason-Dixon line. And on March 9, students from six Negro colleges in Atlanta announced in a full-page newspaper advertisement their intention of making Georgia the tenth.

In a few instances Negroes have won victories and are now being served at formerly lily-white lunch counters and soda fountains.



March 16, 1935

Wall Street's most important semicolon, Cuba, is now in the throes of a nation-wide general strike. Martial law has been declared. The death penalty has been decreed for all those offering open opposition to the government. The trade unions have been declared dissolved. A great struggle is under way between the workers, professionals and students on the one hand and the agents of American imperialism on the other.

The very narrow social base that Mendieta once had, as with Machado in 1934, has been washed away from under him until his sole supports today are the army under Batista and American imperialism, represented by Jefferson Caffery.

Cuban book fair travels throughout

Panel discussions present literature on Cuban Revolution and

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN
AND OMARI MUSA

MATANZAS, Cuba—A scramble to purchase books and get them signed by the authors followed the presentation here February 27 of a new printing of the Spanish-language translation of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*.

Released by Editora Política, the publishing house of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, the Cuban edition includes all the material first published in English and Spanish by Pathfinder Press in 2005. A Chinese-language translation of the book was published in China in 2008. The Cuban edition was launched at a February 17 presentation during the Havana International Book Fair.

Following the conclusion of the 10-day cultural festival in Havana, the book fair becomes nationwide, traveling to each of Cuba's provincial capitals. The fair in Matanzas, a city 60 miles east of Havana, ran from February 24 to 28.

Guests participating in the Saturday activities were welcomed by a number of Matanzas provincial officials: Dulce María López, director of culture; Fidel Alpízar, head of the Cuban Book Institute there; Yanel Poyato, responsible for the cultural program at the book fair; and Nelson González and Róger Almeida, president and vice-president of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution (ACRC). The Combatants Association is a voluntary organization of some 300,000 Cubans who have participated in the revolutionary struggle, in internationalist missions, in medical cooperation brigades in other countries, or with many years of service in the armed forces.

Cuba's Special Book Plan

The Editora Política edition of *Our History Is Still Being Written* was published under the Special Plan of the national Cuban Book Institute (ICL).



Part of audience at presentation of Cuban edition of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution* in Matanzas, Cuba, February 27. Speaking is Justino Baró, member of Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution.

The plan was launched in the 1990s during what's known here as the Special Period—the profound economic and social crisis when production contracted sharply following the sudden collapse of trade and aid agreements with the former Soviet Union.

Funded by the Ministry of Culture, the plan makes possible larger-than-normal print runs. Publishing houses submit proposals to a council of representatives of each publisher affiliated to the ICL, and the council decides which titles to include in the program that year. Prices are heavily subsidized to make the books broadly available to the Cuban people, and are sold at each of the 15 book fair locations.

Iraida Aguirrechu, editor of the Cuban edition, chaired the presentations in both Havana and Matanzas. Addressing the audience of 80 packed into the ACRC center in Matanzas, Aguirrechu spoke with pride about the book's quality, its

photographs, glossary, and notes—as well as its name and subject index, something rare in books published in Cuba. “And it has a print run of 5,000 copies, selling at just 15 Cuban pesos,” she announced.

On the platform at both presentations were Generals Armando Choy and Gustavo Chui, two of the authors, and Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the Pathfinder edition. The third author, Gen. Moisés Sío Wong, died February 11, shortly before the Havana launch of the book, in which he had planned to take part. Aguirrechu pointed out

that Sío Wong, having been born and raised in what is now Matanzas province, had been particularly eager to speak at the presentation here, as well.

“Today we are all mindful that Sío Wong is not here to join us,” said Mary-Alice Waters in her opening remarks. “This is truly a day to celebrate, because this book is a great tribute to him. Through it, his legacy as an exemplary revolutionary combatant is being passed on to new and future generations of proletarian internationalists in Cuba and around the world.”

“It's rather difficult to present this book without him,” noted Gustavo Chui, “since for a long while we've shared a common struggle. All three of us were involved in the underground struggle against the Batista dictatorship. All three of us joined the Rebel Army. And all three have been internationalists,” including serving as combatants in Angola in the war to repel the South African apartheid army's invasion.

This theme was picked up by Armando Choy. In the final months of the 1956–58 revolutionary war, he said, “I had the good fortune to be in a platoon that joined with the vanguard detachment Moisés was part of.” Both platoons were part of Column 8, led by Ernesto Che Guevara.

Choy said that he and Sío Wong participated together in the battles that led to the taking of Fomento, the town in central Cuba where Choy was born, in what was then Las Villas province. “We took 142 prisoners and almost 200 arms,” Choy still recalled.

During the battle, Sío Wong climbed the church bell tower so he could take better aim at the dictatorship's army, which had occupied Fomento's tallest building, the Varona Theater. “I joked with him afterward, saying this was sacrilegious, and he laughed. That's how he was, a great comrade.”

Choy spoke of Sío Wong's work in the underground in Havana and of the esteem in which he was held by Che Guevara. Sío Wong “was not an of-

ficer, just a soldier in a vanguard detachment throughout the entire course of the war,” Choy said. Following the 1959 triumph Che promoted him to lead a company, with the rank of first lieutenant.

Choy reviewed the many assignments Sío Wong had shouldered—from anti-aircraft defense, of which he was the first head; to a founder of the military police; to specialist in logistics, including in Angola where he organized the enormous effort to supply tens of thousands of Cuban troops; to serving as president of the National Institute of State Reserves, which is effectively a ministerial post.

“In every responsibility he had, he served with distinction,” Choy said. “He's a dignified example for our youth.”

The presentations on *Our History Is Still Being Written* were followed by a lively discussion. Moisés Velásquez González spoke about his work in the same column as Choy and Sío Wong and later as a teacher alongside local Combatants leader Nelson González in the school of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, where Choy had been a student.

Two other book programs

The presentation was the third in a morning of Matanzas book fair programs here. The first was the presentation of *Estrellas en la frente: Comunicaciones, electrónica e informática 1959–2008* (Guiding lights: Communications, electronics, and information technology 1959–2008) by Omar Pérez Salomón.

The title is taken from a metaphor by Cuba's national hero, José Martí. What's important “is not the number of arms at hand but rather the lights that guide,” Martí had written. The book's author, also from Matanzas, is a telecommunications engineer who has worked for Cuba's armed forces and Communications Ministry and participated in the Angola mission.

This second edition of the book, first published in 2003 by Editora Política, tells the story of the revolutionary ex-



Participants line up to have books signed by authors and editor after February 27 presentation of *Our History Is Still Being Written*.

out provinces communist strategy

appropriation of the telecommunications sector, carried out over many months between 1959 and 1960, as well as the development and use of mass media and the struggle against Washington's 50-year economic war against Cuba. Pérez explains the battle by Cuba that continues today to gain access to the Internet at affordable rates.

Lenin's final fight

The second presentation was of the 2010 edition in Spanish of *Lenin's Final Fight: Speeches and Writings, 1922–23*, published by Pathfinder Press. The book chronicles Lenin's struggle, in the last 12 months of his active political life, to maintain the Bolshevik revolution's proletarian course in face of the growing influence of an expanding bureaucratic layer.

On the platform were Edith González, dean of the Department of Social Sciences and Humanities at the University of Matanzas, and Pathfinder president Mary-Alice Waters.

Introducing González, Waters explained that the book had been published because it is needed today "by those around the world who are determined to put an end to capitalism's exploitative, oppressive, and more and more destructive social relations." As capitalism enters its deepest economic crisis "since the decades leading from the first to the second imperialist world wars," she noted, "the questions in dispute in the communist workers movement in the early 1920s weigh heavily in the prospects for the working class in every country to advance along its historic line of march toward the conquest of power."

González was one of four faculty members at the University of Matanzas who, working together, helped prepare the first edition of *Lenin's Final Fight* in the mid-1990s, checking the existing Spanish translations against Lenin's Russian originals. Diosmedes Otero, who organized the translation team, participated in the panel at the Havana book fair 10 days earlier. Idalmis Izquierdo, who also worked on the Spanish translation, was present at both meetings. (See the *Militant* no. 8 in 2010 for reports of the Havana event.)

Waters first met a number of faculty members at the University of Matanzas—which earlier had been the Agro-Industrial Institute—in 1993. The previous year she had participated in a librarians' conference in the eastern city of Holguín, where a librarian from Matanzas encouraged Pathfinder representatives to visit. Waters and two others were then invited to a student conference on social sciences at the University of Matanzas. It was there that they met Otero and other faculty members and collaboration on the Spanish translation of *Lenin's Final Fight* was born.

With a laugh, González opened her remarks by noting that most people in the hall knew her not as a dean at the university but as the daughter of one of their ranks, a worker combatant who had taken part in the revolutionary underground in Matanzas. She expressed her pleasure in again being

with those from Pathfinder with whom she had worked some 15 years earlier in producing the Spanish text for *Lenin's Final Fight*.

"We were qualified for the work, being familiar with the subject matter and, having all studied in the Soviet Union, we knew Russian," said González, who studied in Kazakhstan from 1980 to 1985. She proudly explained how the translators worked, individually and cooperatively, to ensure an accurate product.

"The standard Spanish translations we started from were generally of high quality," she said, "but they contained important misrepresentations.

"It's not just that the translations were not always accurate," González noted. "They sometimes distorted what Lenin said." She gave several examples.

One was the translation of a March 1923 article by Lenin, "Better fewer but better." "We have been bustling for five years trying to improve our state apparatus," Lenin wrote. "But it has been mere bustle . . ." He proposed instead organizing the most advanced workers, and others who could be depended upon, along a course to advance toward "a republic that is really worthy of the name of Soviet, socialist."

This included cutting the staff of a Soviet government body called the Workers and Peasants Inspectorate from 1,200 to 300–400. "We must follow the rule: Better fewer but better," Lenin wrote. "We must follow the rule: Better to get good human material in two or even three years than work in haste without hope of getting any at all."

This class-struggle trajectory was totally distorted in the standard Spanish translation, González explained—which had quoted Lenin as saying *not* "better fewer but better" (in Spanish, "*es preferible menos pero mejor*"), but instead, "better few and good" (*más vale poco y bueno*)!

"When we embarked on the project," González said, "we had no idea how much work would be involved. No matter. We can see today, 15 years later, how important it was."

Speaking from the floor, Idalmis Izquierdo recalled the conditions of the mid-1990s when they were engaged in the work—a time of blackouts and extreme shortages. She spoke of the late nights and early mornings when the work was done—they were all working jobs—"and we all had small children too!"

But what emerged, Izquierdo said, was "a weapon of struggle—a book that addresses key questions in the building of socialism." She gave the example of the national question, the decisive importance of raising the cultural level of workers and peasants, developing the forces of production,



Panel at February 27 presentation of *Our History Is Still Being Written*. From left: Iraida Aguirrechu, Editora Política; Gustavo Chui, general interviewed in book; Mary-Alice Waters, Pathfinder Press; and Armando Choy, general interviewed in book.

broadening the Central Committee to strengthen its proletarian character, and Lenin's efforts to avoid a split in the Communist Party.

Following the presentation of the book in the Havana book fair Izquierdo explained how essential the material in *Lenin's Final Fight* is to the students to whom she teaches history at the prison in Matanzas.

Also taking the floor was Justino Baró, a member of the Combatants Association who, as a student activist, had participated in the revolutionary underground in Matanzas. "What's particularly striking," Baró said, "is how relevant these questions are for today. At stake is whether the revolution continues to move forward toward socialism or whether it's reversed and defeated."

Fourth in two weeks

The Matanzas presentation was the fourth in two weeks in Cuba, following one at the Havana book fair and another at Havana's technological university, CUJAE (see last week's

Militant for a report on the CUJAE presentation).

The third was a February 22 presentation at the University of Havana, organized by the Department of Philosophy and History. Forty students and faculty members attended the meeting despite torrential rain and flooding that led to most classes being canceled that day. Paraphrasing a poem by Bertolt Brecht, written as a tribute to Lenin, philosophy professor Carlos Delgado said there are good books and there are very good books, but that some books—like *Lenin's Final Fight*—are indispensable. He urged everyone in the room to read it.

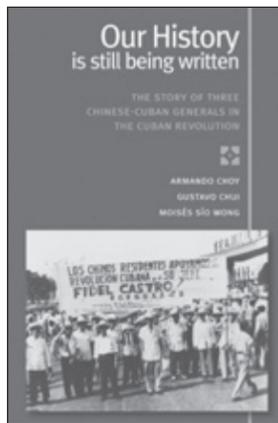
Students and faculty members bought 59 copies, along with many other Pathfinder titles. So far more than 400 copies of *Lenin's Final Fight* have been purchased or donated to libraries and other institutions in Cuba since the opening of the book fair February 11.

Róger Calero and Mary-Alice Waters contributed to this article.

For further reading

Our History Is Still Being Written

The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution



Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong talk about the historic place of Chinese immigration to Cuba, as well as more than five decades of revolutionary action and internationalism, from Cuba to Angola, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. Through their stories the social and political forces that gave birth to the Cuban nation and still shape our epoch unfold.

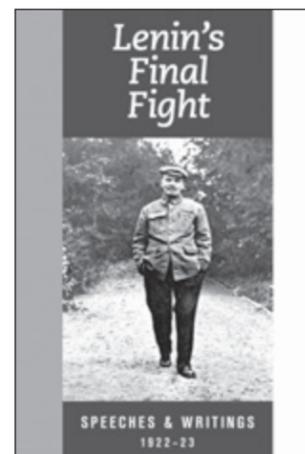
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Lenin's Final Fight

Speeches and Writings, 1922–23

In 1922 and 1923, V.I. Lenin waged what was to be his last political battle. At stake was whether the Russian Revolution would remain on the proletarian course that had brought workers and peasants in the former tsarist empire to power in October 1917—and laid the foundations for a truly worldwide revolutionary movement of toilers organizing to emulate the Bolsheviks' example.

Available in English and Spanish. \$20



An intertwined history: Chinese in Cuba and U.S.

The following is the summary of a paper, titled "The Intertwined History of Chinese in Cuba and the United States," that will be presented by Mary-Alice Waters at the seventh conference of the International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas (ISSCO), to be held May 7-9 in Singapore.

Waters, who is president of Pathfinder Press, is the author or editor of numerous books including *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*. She has spoken at dozens of panel presentations discussing the themes of that book across the United States and in other countries.

At a regional ISSCO conference held last July in Auckland, New Zealand, Waters presented a paper on "The Unique History of Chinese in Cuba" (see Aug. 10, 2009, *Militant*).

ISSCO's previous full conference, held in Beijing in September 2007, drew participants from 20 countries, mostly researchers who focus on the history and development of Chinese communities around the world. The majority came from Asia, including China, Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, and South Korea. Three-quarters of the 20 million ethnic Chinese outside China live in Southeast Asia.

ISSCO, founded in 1992 in San Francisco, previously held full conferences in

Hong Kong; Manila, Philippines; Taipei, Taiwan; and Copenhagen, Denmark, in addition to regional gatherings.

The host of the upcoming conference is the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. The local organizers are the Chinese Heritage Centre and the university's School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Singapore, an island city-state off the southern tip of Malaysia, has a population of 5 million, three-quarters of whom are of Chinese heritage. A former British colony, Singapore has four official languages: English, Malay, Chinese, and Tamil.



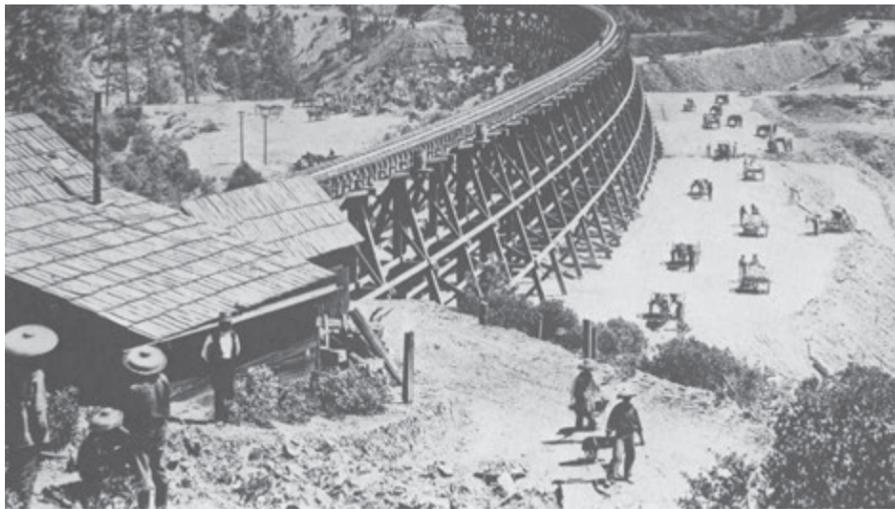
BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

The paper will address the intertwined dynamics of Chinese immigration to Cuba and to the United States from the mid-1800s to today, and look at how that history helped lay the foundations for the socialist revolution made by Cuban working people half a century ago.

Chinese arrived in both Cuba and the United States in large and substantially equal numbers between the late 1840s and 1875. Their weight and place in the bourgeois democratic revolutions that swept both countries in the second half of the 19th century was, however, markedly different.

The emergence of the United States as an imperialist power in the final decades of the 19th century was accompanied by an expanding wave of racist terror at home. Jim Crow segregation was consolidated across the U.S. South, accompanied by anti-Asian exclusion laws and pogroms, especially, but not only, in the West. This rising power of finance capital in the United States had been concretized in, and was accelerated by, the crushing of the post-Civil War Radical Reconstruction regimes in the South by 1877.

Throughout the same period, tens of thousands of Chinese indentured laborers in Cuba were conquering their freedom as they joined in the revolutionary war against Spanish colonial domination and helped to forge the Cuban na-



Chinese laborers build U.S. railroads in 19th century. During rise of U.S. imperialism, Chinese immigrants faced exclusion laws and pogroms. In Cuba, throughout same period, thousands of Chinese indentured laborers joined revolutionary war against Spanish colonial domination.

tion. That 30-year war, which won independence from Spain in 1898, only to fall under the boot of the rising empire to the North, was inseparable from the struggle to abolish both slavery and indentured servitude of all kinds.

As these revolutionary battles unfolded in Cuba and were paralleled by mounting anti-Chinese racism in the United States, thousands of Chinese left the United States in the 1870s to resettle in Cuba, where they became known as the "Californianos." At the same time, Spanish and Cuban property owners, eager to reduce the numbers of rebellious and potentially insurgent Chinese laborers in Cuba, shipped significant numbers to the sugar plantations of Louisiana and Mississippi, where capitalist landowners faced a severe shortage of labor in the wake of the Second American Revolution and abolition of slavery.

Contracted to work the plantations of the Mississippi Delta, the newly arrived Chinese laborers joined with Black freedmen to become protagonists in the postwar labor struggles and pitched battles against the counterrevolutionary forces that by the 1880s had drowned in blood the revolutionary regimes of Radical Reconstruction in those states.

The paper will look at the consequences for Chinese Cubans and Chinese Americans of the interrelated yet divergent courses of the class struggle in Cuba and the United States over the last 150 years. It will address the question: how has discrimination against men and women of Chinese descent been virtually eliminated in Cuba today, while anti-Chinese racism, both blatant and subtle, flourishes elsewhere throughout the world, the United States included?

Students protest racist attacks

Continued from front page
officer, explained to NBC News.

The "Compton Cookout" was an off-campus party organized by fraternity members February 15 to deride Black History Month. Among other anti-Black comments, the Facebook invitation said participants should wear chains and female participants should dress like "ghetto chicks."

On February 18 a program on the campus television station by a student organization called The Koala described students who protested the racist party as "ungrateful niggers."

The BSU is demanding that the UCSD

administration take steps to increase the number of African American students, faculty, staff, and administration, and fund programs to retain Black students.

Stephanie Roberts, a senior and activist in the African Student Union at the University of California Los Angeles, participated in the February 24 protest at UCSD along with 10 other students from her campus. "The language of post-racialism denies that race is a problem in the United States," said Roberts in a phone interview. "But when there's a noose hanging on campus, it's impossible to deny racism. If our protest translates into action, that will be good."

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Fighting the dictatorship of capital

Steep attacks against the standard of living of workers and farmers in Greece, Ireland, Portugal, and Spain have been launched in the name of lowering budget deficits and avoiding loan defaults. The ruling classes in these countries are making working people pay for the capitalist economic crisis.

The governments in Greece, Spain, and Portugal are headed by parties that belong to the Socialist International, sometimes known as social democrats. These parties are demonstrating once again that they are *bourgeois* socialists; whatever their rhetoric or ties to trade unions, they defend capitalism.

When Greece's prime minister George Papandreou, who is also president of the Socialist International, says he will "draw blood" with the austerity measures, he means workers' blood, not the capitalists'.

The trade union leaderships in Greece, Spain, and Portugal are tied to these bourgeois socialist parties or to Stalinist Communist parties that act no differently. They organize mostly symbolic protests and short strikes. They are not interested in a real fight against the austerity measures: they want to act "responsibly," convince the capitalist class they should "share the pain."

As the worldwide capitalist crisis unfolds, whatever the ups and downs, there will be more austerity measures, more wages cuts, more attempts to

raise retirement ages, and more layoffs. There will be more trade disputes; some will become trade wars and even shooting wars. This takes place as the myth of the European Union's "unity" continues to unravel and the EU's competing capitalist classes maneuver against one another.

It won't be long before the scapegoating of immigrants for the crisis will be joined by blaming Jews, in an attempt to get workers to take their eyes off the real enemy: capitalism.

Workers around the world, including in the United States, face many of the same challenges as our brothers and sisters in Europe. Across the globe we need to build a fighting labor movement that calls for massive public works programs, that demands legalizing immigrant workers, that rejects capitalist austerity measures, that opposes imperialist wars in Afghanistan and elsewhere, and demands canceling the foreign debt of semicolonial nations.

In the course of this struggle workers can force some concessions from the capitalist rulers. But these concessions cannot reverse the workings of the capitalist system itself. To accomplish that—to end the dictatorship of capital—the working class needs to take state power and expropriate finance capital. That will lay the basis to rebuild society based on working-class solidarity, not exploitation and discrimination.

Bolshevik Revolution and Black struggle

Continued from page 4

special program on the Negro question. It was considered purely and simply an economic problem, part of the struggle between the workers and the capitalists; nothing could be done about the special problems of discrimination and inequality this side of socialism. . . .

The inadequacy of traditional socialist policy on the Negro question is amply documented by the historians of the movement, Ira Kipnis and David Shannon. The general and prevailing attitude of the Socialist Party toward Negroes is summed up by Shannon as follows:

"They were not important in the party, the party made no special effort to attract Negro members, and the party was generally disinterested in, if not actually hostile to, the effort of Negroes to improve their position in American capitalist society." And further: "The party held that the sole salvation of the Negro was the same as the sole salvation of the white: 'Socialism.'" . . .

Such was the traditional position inherited by the early Communist Party from the preceding socialist

movement out of which it had come. The policy and practice of the trade union movement was even worse. The IWW barred nobody from membership because of "race, color or creed." But the predominant AFL unions, with only a few exceptions, were lily-white job trusts. They also had nothing special to offer the Negroes; nothing at all, in fact.

*

The difference—and it was a *profound* difference—between the Communist Party of the twenties and its socialist and radical ancestors, was signified by its break with this tradition. . . .

The true importance of this profound change, in all its dimensions, cannot be adequately measured by the results in the twenties. The first ten years have to be considered chiefly as the preliminary period of reconsideration and discussion, and change of attitude and policy on the Negro question—in preparation for future activity in this field.

The effects of this change and preparation in the twenties, brought about by the Russian intervention, were to manifest themselves explosively in the next decade.

and the Road to Workers Power and a subscription renewal.

Bernie Senter
Miami, Florida

Working class's true position

I really enjoyed the subscription that was sent to me through the *Militant* Prisoners' Fund. It is my only source of news that reflects the reality of the working class's true position under capitalism. However, I am an indigent prisoner. Would you please send me another subscription?

A prisoner
California

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi, who play a prominent role in a heterogeneous opposition movement that includes young people and others who seek to advance the fight for democratic rights more broadly.]

Donation to Prisoners' Fund

A Haitian coworker who has been a subscriber gave me \$20 yesterday for the *Militant* Prisoners' Fund. Last week he got the new book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation,*

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

The Prisoners' Fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced-rate subscriptions. To donate, send a check or money order payable to the 'Militant' and earmarked "Prisoners' Fund" to 306 W. 37th St., 10th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

LETTERS

Iran 'pro-democracy forces'

The otherwise informative article "Washington pushes for more international sanctions against Iran" by Cindy Jaquith in the March 1 issue uses the phrase "pro-democracy forces" in citing demonstrations against the Iranian regime in various cities. I think it would be better to say "forces fighting for democratic rights" or something similar.

Ike Nahem
New York, New York

[Editor's reply—We agree the term "pro-democracy forces" is open to misinterpretation. Elsewhere in the March 1 article it referred to "domestic opponents who are competing to run the capitalist government and who call for lifting restrictions on democratic rights." This is a more accurate description of bourgeois politicians such as Mir Hossein

Black farmers

Continued from front page

focus on their future," said U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder.

'Pigford v. Glickman'

In 1999 Black farmers' claims of decades of discrimination by the USDA were upheld in federal court. The *Pigford* settlement ordered the government to give claimants a \$50,000 payment, debt forgiveness, and preferential treatment in future loan applications. Farmers who could provide stringent proof of greater losses could apply for a larger settlement. Farmers were told that the \$50,000 payment and debt relief would be awarded to claimants that provided a "reasonable basis" for finding that they had been subject to racial discrimination.

But to file a claim, farmers had to have been farming between the years 1981 and 1996 and be able to demonstrate that they had been denied a USDA loan and that a similarly situated white farmer in their area had a loan granted.

The outcome of the settlement was far from what farmers were told would happen. Of the 22,547 claims that were considered, 41 percent were denied. Many farmers didn't even learn of the settlement until after the initial deadline, resulting in some 75,000 claims being filed "late." Only 2,200 of these were considered for compensation as part of the 1999 settlement.

Payments and debt relief in the first *Pigford* case totaled about \$1 billion, \$200 million of which returned to the government in the form of taxes.

'A bittersweet victory'

The second, most recent settlement, was agreed to by attorneys for the major organizations representing Black farmers and the USDA and Justice Department. It must now be approved in federal court, and funds appropriated by Congress. Only farmers with pending claims from the original settlement can apply, which includes as many as 75,000 farmers. No new claims will be accepted.

A ceiling on payments has been set at \$1.25 billion, including \$100 million already appropriated in the 2008 farm bill. The payout to individual farmers—not to exceed \$50,000—will depend on how many people refile claims, according to Associate Attorney General Thomas Perrelli of the Justice Department.

"This is a bittersweet victory," said John Zippert, program director for the Federation of Southern Cooperatives (FSC) in Epes, Alabama. The FSC, founded in 1967, helps Black farmers fighting to hold onto their land and has aided many farmers in navigating the rough waters of the case.

"This is a positive step, but it's an ongoing fight," he said. "We have to help as many farmers as possible get \$50,000, and if \$1.25 billion is not enough, we have to demand more money from Congress. There are battles ahead to get loans and programs for Black farmers who are still farming. The younger farmers are not included in this case."

"If farmers in the earlier settlement got \$50,000, how can you give people less than that now? Farmers need to discuss this settlement and learn what it really is," said peach farmer Robert Binion, 56, from Clanton, Alabama, who attended recent rallies in Montgomery, Alabama, and Washington, D.C. "This is 'hush money.' What they need to do is make the system fair."

"This settlement is a day late and a dollar short," said Gary Grant, president of the Black Farmers and Agriculturists Association, of Tillery, North Carolina. "I hope it will bring some relief. But how many farmers [who originally filed claims] are still alive, still on the farm, still operating?"

"We are holding the president, the USDA, the Justice Department accountable for getting this done," said National Black Farmers Association President John Boyd. "The farmers in this case are old. They deserve some relief now, and if we have to go back in the future for more funds, we will."

Correction

The "On the Picket Line" item on the Borax strike in the March 8 issue misidentified Willie Adams. He is secretary-treasurer of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union.