

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Exhibit on African slavery and rebellion in Mexico

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## U.S. denies visa for wife of Cuban 5 prisoner

BY SETH GALINSKY

The U.S. government on July 16 denied for the ninth time a visa for Olga Salanueva to visit her imprisoned husband René González. He is one of the Cuban Five, revolutionaries arrested in 1998 on frame-up charges that they were part of a “Cuban spy network” in Florida. The five were keeping the Cuban government informed about rightist groups that have a long record of carrying out bombings and armed attacks on Cuba from U.S. soil.

González and the other four—Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, and Fernando González—were convicted in 2001 and received harsh sentences.

Officials at the U.S. Interests Section in Havana told Salanueva that her visa request was denied because she had been deported from the United States and that “this ineligibility has a permanent character,” according to an article in *Granma* daily.

The last time Salanueva saw González was August 2000 when she was arrested in Miami and taken to see him on her way to jail. By arresting her the cops hoped to pressure González into signing a confession

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## White House broadens powers of spy director

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—President George Bush approved revisions July 30 to a 1981 executive order that expand the powers of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI). White House officials said the amendment brings the original order issued by President Ronald Regan in line with the 2004 Intelligence Reform and Terrorist Prevention Act that centralized the 16 U.S. spy agencies under a DNI.

The revisions are part of the latest bipartisan drive to strengthen the ability of the spy agencies to snoop on U.S. citizens and others, and to share information among themselves. It is an important component of the U.S. government’s moves to transform its “intelligence” capabilities in the “global war on terrorism.”

According to a “background briefing” posted on the White House Web site the revisions are also based on findings of the 9/11 Commission established to make recommendations strengthening U.S. spy agencies in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks here and in New York City.

One person quoted in the briefing, Continued on page 3

## California workers protest layoffs, cuts

Governor orders wages slashed to \$6.55



Niaree Hopelian

Members of Service International Employees Union Local 1000 protest at the California State Capitol in Sacramento July 24 against plans by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger for massive layoffs of state workers and wage cuts.

BY BETSEY STONE

San Francisco, August 4—“We can’t survive on \$6.55” chanted pickets in Stockton, California, in one of many demonstrations held after Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger cut the pay of 200,000 state workers to the federal minimum wage and laid off 10,300 temporary and part-time workers July 31.

Schwarzenegger claims the cuts are necessary to avoid a “looming cash

crisis” because state legislators did not come up with a budget by the July 1 deadline. “I have a responsibility to make sure that our state has enough money to pay its bills,” he said as he sent pink slips effective immediately to thousands of temporary and part-time workers.

There is no guarantee that the laid-off workers will ever be rehired. They include health workers, state park employees, maintenance workers at the light-rail system, workers hired to reduce lines at the Department of Motor Vehicles, and those processing worker compensation claims.

Schwarzenegger says the workers whose wages are slashed will be repaid when the budget is passed.

At a protest organized by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) in San Francisco, workers explained they need wages now, not later, to pay their bills, mortgages, rent, food, and gas.

“Hey Arnie, was it my mistake? I’m not a pawn!” read a placard at the demonstration, charging Schwarzenegger with using the attack on state workers

Continued on page 7

## Iowa socialist ballot drive goes over top in one week

BY RYAN SCOTT

DES MOINES, Iowa—Amidst a weekend of blistering heat August 2–3 supporters of the Socialist Workers Party campaign gathered 2,150 signatures to get Róger Calero, SWP candidate for U.S. president, and Alyson Kennedy, who is running for vice president, on the Iowa ballot.

“By collecting 2,150 signatures we surpassed the official requirement of

1,500,” said Joe Swanson, a veteran of socialist petitioning efforts in Iowa. “We thought it would take two weekends, but it took only one. It was the best response I have seen.”

Petitioners gathered 580 signatures, almost double the amount needed, to place Frank Forrestal on the ballot for U.S. Congress in Iowa’s 3rd District. The signatures for all three candidates

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Militant/Ryan Scott

Frank Forrestal, Socialist Workers candidate for Congress in Iowa’s 3rd District, left, collects signatures in Des Moines, Iowa, August 5 to get himself and SWP candidate for president Róger Calero on the ballot in Iowa.

## Shipyard workers in Greece strike for job safety

BY NATASHA TERLEXIS AND MARIA PLESSA

ATHENS, Greece—Workers struck for three days at the Perama shipyard following a July 24 explosion on a gas tanker that killed eight people. Perama is near the Greek port of Piraeus.

On July 25 some 1,500 workers demanding safety on the job marched on the merchant marine ministry in Piraeus. Riot cops attacked the demonstration, firing tear gas at the protesters.

The explosion killed seven workers, who were welding on the *Friendship Gas* tanker, as well as one of the ship’s officers. Workers in the area are convinced the toll may be higher. “African immigrant workers had also been seen working on the ship,” said Panagiotis, who was working on the vessel next door and asked that his full name not be used.

Since 1997 a total of 37 workers have Continued on page 6

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# Unemployment at highest level in more than 3 years

BY DOUG NELSON

August 1—More than 2 million workers in the United States joined the official ranks of the unemployed in the last 16 months—1.16 million in the last three months alone.

The U.S. unemployment rate reached its highest level in three-and-a-half years, having climbed from 5 percent in April to 5.7 percent in July. The last time the jobless rate increased by that much in a three-month period was at the end of the 2001 recession.

The continued employment decline did not come as a surprise to economic analysts. “The labor market is likely to remain weak, if not deteriorate a bit further,” Joseph LaVorgna, chief U.S. economist at Deutsche Bank Securities in New York, told Bloomberg before the Labor Department released its July report.

Workers were hit in July with further job cuts across the private sector, including in transportation, manufacturing, construction, and service industries. Overall factory employment declined 35,000 for the second month in a row, about 5,000 less than most economists expected. Construction lost 22,000 jobs, which was actually the smallest loss in that industry since October. And about 16,000 retail jobs were eliminated.

General Motors, which announced a second-quarter loss of \$15.5 billion, will likely lay off another 5,000 workers by the end of the year. Unemployment in Michigan, center of the U.S. auto industry, now stands at 8.5 percent, the highest in the country.

United Airlines and American Airlines each announced they were cutting about 7,000 jobs. Starbucks said it would eliminate a further 1,000 jobs just

weeks after the company announced its plan to cut 12,000 jobs worldwide.

As usual, the last hired have been the first fired. While overall joblessness has risen by 1 percent over the last year, the rate for both Black and Hispanic workers increased by 2 percent to 9.7 percent and 7.4 percent respectively.

Workers in the manufacturing and construction industries have borne the brunt of the mass layoffs. At the same time, work hours have remained stable in these sectors and currently stand at 41 hours and 38.7 hours respectively. In many service jobs, however, bosses have continued to cut back work hours to reduce their cost. This is particularly true in retail, where the current average workweek dropped to 30 hours in July, an all-time low since statistics were first kept in 1972.

According to the Labor Department, another 308,000 workers were unable to secure full-time employment and forced to settle for part-time work in July, bringing the total number of people involuntarily working part-time to 5.7 million. This is the highest number since the Labor Department changed the way it defined that category in 1994.

Only 37 percent of jobless workers received unemployment compensation in 2007, according to the Labor Department. This is down from 55 percent in 1958 and 44 percent in 2001. Part-time workers, people who didn't earn enough money, and workers who were fired are among those who don't qualify for unemployment compensation. Fewer than 15 percent of what the Government Accountability Office defines as “low-wage” workers, who have the highest rates of unemployment, receive compensation when jobless.

## San Francisco protesters oppose Minutemen



Militant/Joel Britton

SAN FRANCISCO—Some 200 supporters of immigrant rights protested a rightist action here at the Civic Center July 30.

Shouting “Racists, go away” and “*Si se puede*” (Yes, we can), supporters of legalization for undocumented immigrants far outnumbered the dozen people who backed the Minuteman Project's call for people to rally at City Hall.

Waving U.S. flags and in one case wearing a U.S. Border Patrol T-shirt, the rightist Minutemen supporters carried signs saying “Cut all funding to sanctuary cities” and “Sanctuary city mayors are U.S. traitors.”

The action was called after a sensationalized series of articles appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle* decrying what has been the city's practice, under its “sanctuary city” policies, of not turning in for deportation undocumented youth who are arrested by city cops. The Democratic administration of Mayor Gavin Newsom recently reversed its policy. Now undocumented youth charged with felonies are handed over to immigration cops.

—JOEL BRITTON

## Verizon workers demand better wages, pensions, and benefits

BY VED DOOKHUN

August 5—Unions representing 65,000 Verizon workers have extended an August 3 strike deadline to continue contract negotiations with the company.

Verizon is pushing for workers and retirees to pay more for health care. It wants to eliminate retirement health-care coverage for new hires. The unions, the Communications Workers of America and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, are calling for a 5 percent yearly wage increase, larger pensions, and expanded medical benefits. The contract will affect workers in 13 states and Washington, D.C., from Maine to Virginia.

Thousands of workers in a sea of red

T-shirts rallied at the Verizon headquarters in New York City July 26. Many carried signs saying “Hands Off Our Benefits.” Similar rallies took place around the country.

Outsourcing and subcontracting by Verizon are also at issue. The company has shifted jobs to nonunion contractors and to its business division, which is mostly nonunion. Few workers at Verizon's wireless division are organized.

Verizon recently obtained a 12-year franchise to make its television service available to New York City's 3.1 million households by 2014. Over the next seven years Verizon plans to invest \$23 billion into expansion of its fiber-optic network.

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People wait in line June 10 to enter the Diversity Job Fair in New York City.

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# Tensions between India and Pakistan heat up

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—U.S. spy agencies have accused their counterparts in Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of involvement in the bombing of the Indian embassy in Afghanistan. Some 60 people were killed in the July 7 explosion.

Tensions have periodically flared between Pakistan and India, including three wars since the British colonial rulers divided India into the Muslim state of Pakistan and the largely Hindu state of India 61 years ago.

Pakistani and Indian troops exchanged fire July 28, threatening to blow up a 2003 ceasefire agreement. At least one Indian and perhaps three or four Pakistani soldiers were killed in the incident along the disputed Kashmir border, according to the Indian military. New Delhi accuses Islamabad of backing Islamist groups opposing Indian rule in Jammu and Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state. Pakistan says it only provides moral support.

Nearly a dozen Islamic rebel groups have been fighting since 1989 for Kashmir's independence from India or merger with Pakistan.

U.S. government officials said that communications intercepted between the ISI and a group allied with al-Qaeda indicate that the ISI also provides militias with details about U.S. military operations in Pakistan's border regions.

Pakistani officials strongly denied the accusation of involvement in the bombing of the Indian embassy. Foreign ministry spokesman Mohammad Sadiq called it "rubbish" and "baseless." Pakistan's military spokesman Maj. Gen. Athar Abbas said it was "malicious propaganda."

The ISI has long maintained ties with the Taliban and other Islamist militia groups—some as far back as al-Qaeda's fight against Soviet troops in the 1980s. These militias continue to be useful to Islamabad as a counterweight to the U.S.-backed government in Afghanistan and to India's growing influence in Afghanistan and the region.

In June the Afghan intelligence services accused the ISI of involvement in an April 27 assassination attempt against Afghanistan's president Hamid Karzai. The Afghan president threatened in June to send troops into Pakistan in pursuit of Taliban and al-Qaeda militia that strike against U.S.-led NATO troops.

Relations between Washington and its unstable ally in Islamabad in the "global war on terror" have been strained as the U.S. military and its

NATO allies in Afghanistan stepped up military operations inside Pakistan. Some U.S. officials are advocating more unilateral U.S. military action, reported the *New York Times*.

While the Islamist militias are useful to the capitalist rulers in Pakistan against their rivals in Afghanistan and India, their operations inside Pakistan are seen as a threat to stability. Pakistan's government has attempted to reach peace deals with militias throughout its border regions.

Renewed fighting against pro-Taliban militias in Swat left a May peace agreement there in shreds. Under the deal the government agreed to gradually withdraw its troops from the area and allow the use of Islamic law. In



Reuters/Omar Sobhani

Indian security guard stands inside what was the Indian embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan, July 7 after a suicide car bomb hit two diplomatic vehicles entering the embassy earlier that day.

exchange the militias would halt attacks and lay down their arms. The Pakistani military said that 136 peo-

ple were killed in the week leading up to August 4 in clashes with militias in the mountainous region.

## Real wages decline amid rising 'productivity'

BY DOUG NELSON

"Labor productivity" in the United States, a measure of the average output produced per worker per hour, has continued to climb amid the deepening capitalist economic crisis. Meanwhile, workers' wages are falling further behind inflation.

A July 15 report to Congress from the Federal Reserve's Board of Governors reported the productivity rise as a silver lining in an otherwise bleak economic outlook. Worker output per hour increased about 3.25 percent from March 2007 to March 2008, compared to 0.5 percent the previous year.

The main source of the rise in productivity is the intensification of labor through faster line speeds and making fewer workers perform the same amount of work through "job combi-

nations," "downsizing," and "job restructuring."

To boost their profit margins, employers have also lowered their costs by pressing down wages, slashing medical benefits and pensions, and lengthening work hours.

Over the last year, average employer payments in wages and salaries increased by 2 percent, not counting for inflation. The previous year this figure rose by 3.5 percent.

According to the Federal Reserve report, employers' greatest labor cost was in payments to retirement plans as a result of money these funds lost in the stock market, not something workers actually received.

As a result of the productivity increase and low wage and benefit cost, according to the report, unit labor costs rose less than 1 percent, the

lowest annual rise in three-and-a-half years. During the previous year, unit labor costs increased by 4.25 percent.

"Broad measures of hourly labor compensation have not kept pace with the rapid increases in both overall consumer prices and labor productivity," said the Fed's report. In other words, workers have seen nothing from working harder other than a decline in their real wages.

Between June 2007 and June 2008, the overall Consumer Price Index, which is always understated, rose 5 percent, 3.4 percent in the last four months alone. The previous year it increased by 2.7 percent. For basic necessities, such as food and energy, it's higher. For example, in the last two years, orange juice rose 34 percent, while gasoline prices rose 33 percent in just the last year.

## White House broadens powers of spy director

Continued from front page

who is identified only as a "senior administration official," said that passage of the new Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act is also an important step. That legislation legitimized a warrantless spy program by the Bush administration and granted immunity to communication companies that provide information to the government about calls and e-mails of its clients.

Asked during the briefing why the revisions were approved now, the official said, "the President is anxious to institutionalize a number of important tools that he and his successors are going to need to fight and win the war on terrorism."

The revised order establishes the DNI as the highest intelligence authority and gives the director oversight in many areas, including relations with foreign intelligence, formerly the turf of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). In carrying out DNI functions, the director will only be required to "take into account" the views of heads of other agencies, including the CIA.

Much of the blame for U.S. "intelligence flaws" regarding the decision to invade Iraq and the failure to prevent the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks were placed at the door of the CIA.

The DNI will determine what intelligence information can be made available to which agencies, regardless of where it came from. This provision makes it easier to distribute information among the spy agencies.

The DNI will also be given a strong say in the appointment and removal of senior intelligence officials throughout the agencies.

White House officials went to great lengths during the briefing to insist that the section of the original order providing protections for the civil lib-

erties and other rights of U.S. citizens have been maintained. It requires the attorney general to approve all procedures regarding the collection of information on U.S. persons, they said.

Critics of the revisions point out that warrantless wiretapping went on under the government's foreign surveillance programs despite supposed civil liberties protections. The American Civil Liberties Union condemned the revisions saying they seem to authorize intelligence agencies to focus more on domestic spying than before.

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

FLORIDA

Miami

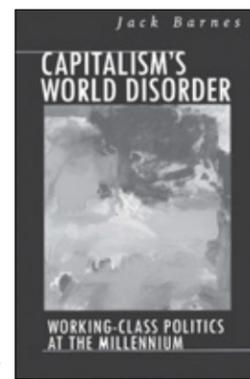
Grand opening of Militant Labor Forum Hall and Socialist Workers Campaign Headquarters. Speaker: Alyson Kennedy, SWP candidate for U.S. vice president. Sun., Aug. 17. Reception, 2 p.m.; program 3 p.m. Dinner to follow. Donation: \$10 dinner, \$5 program. 6777 NW 7th Ave., Suite 5. Tel: (305) 767-8869.

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# Green Party nominates McKinney for president

BY SETH GALINSKY

Former Democratic Party congresswoman Cynthia McKinney won the Green Party nomination for U.S. president at its July 10–13 convention in Chicago. She picked hip-hop artist Rosa Clemente as her running mate.

The first Black congresswoman from Georgia, McKinney served six terms. She lost the Democratic primary in 2002, staged a comeback in 2004, and then lost the Democratic primary again in 2006.

Although a campaign press statement claims McKinney “broke with the Democratic Party,” she gave a speech in June “congratulating Senator Obama for a feat well done” after it was clear he would be the Democratic presidential nominee. “Coming from Barack Obama,” she said, “the word ‘change’ did not appear as just another empty campaign slogan.”

McKinney is running what she calls a “power to the people” campaign. Clemente says they will fight all “-isms and ideologies that divide us.” They are running on the 10-point “Draft Manifesto for a Reconstruction Party,” which includes demands for withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq and Afghanistan, recognizing “affordable housing as a human right,” granting “reparations” to Blacks, “ending prisons for profit,” creating a “single-payer” health-care system, and enacting “real immigration reform.”

McKinney’s claim to be “the only genuinely antiwar candidate” is contradicted by her votes when she was in Congress. She voted for the September 2001 bill authorizing the U.S. war on Afghanistan and for the May 2005 “Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act.” She says she is for cutting “bloated Pentagon spending” and for deploying “our diplomats” to “resolve conflicts through peaceful means” and for “the orderly withdrawal of U.S. troops” from around the world.

McKinney often promotes conspiracy theories about Sept. 11, 2001, alleging that the Bush administration knew in advance about the planned attack on the World Trade Center.

Although McKinney says she is for immigration “reform,” while still in Congress she voted against expanding the number of visas for some categories of immigrant workers. She also voted both for and against lifting the U.S. travel ban to Cuba.

While McKinney uses radical-sounding rhetoric against the Republicans and Democrats, her political framework represents no break from capitalist politics at all. Rather, she puts forward an American nationalist perspective of rescuing “the soul of our country.” She tries to gloss over the class divisions that exist between the ruling billionaires on one side and the working class on the other. And she puts forward the idea that Washington’s wars around the world are the result of mistaken policies and not an integral part of the workings of imperialism.

“Our country has been hijacked,” McKinney told a March 2007 demonstration at the Pentagon against the Iraq war. “Our beloved America is divided again into two Americas. . . . We want an America that is respected in the commonwealth of men. We want our values to shine like a beacon around the world.”

Two parties that call themselves socialist, Workers World and the Workers International League, are backing McKinney. “We are taking the unusual step of endorsing” her candidacy, the Workers World Party said July 17 “because these are unique times and this is a unique candidate.”

“Because of her militancy in the struggle against war, the struggle to impeach Bush, as well as her struggle to expose the government’s role in the displacement of survivors of Hurricane Katrina,” the group said, “she was branded too Black and too radical.”

According to Workers World, socialists should “put aside narrow views, sectarian habits and small differences that have festered during a long and demoralizing period of world reaction” because McKinney’s campaign is “Black-led, anti-imperialist, working-class-centered and has a multinational radical base with the potential of unlimited growth.”



Militant/Ryan Scott

Socialist Workers candidate for president Róger Calero speaks August 2 at campaign event sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum in Des Moines, Iowa. To his right is Frank Forrester, the SWP candidate for Congress in Iowa’s 3rd District.

## Iowa socialist ballot drive

Continued from front page  
will be filed next week.

Many workers signed as soon as they heard about the campaign’s perspective of organizing unions and using them to defend workers from the employers’ speedup, wage cuts, and attacks on health insurance. “We try to resist on the job for safety, or for more money, but until we get organized, we’ll stay divided,” said Abraham Cortez, a slaughterhouse worker in Des Moines.

Upon hearing demands in defense of workers and small farmers, a young man at a Des Moines shopping mall said, “I’ll sign, my dad’s a farmer. Rents are going up. It’s getting harder. I’ll support anyone who supports small farmers.”

In addition to petitioning in Des Moines, teams campaigned in Ames, Iowa City, Postville, and Waterloo.

On Saturday about 30 people attended an evening barbeque and forum to hear Calero speak.

As part of his campaign stops in the Upper Midwest, Calero and four supporters campaigned among first-shift workers leaving the Hormel meat-packing plant in Austin, Minnesota July 30. More than 100 workers took copies of the campaign brochure outlining the working-class alternative in the upcoming elections and 60 workers bought copies of the *Militant*.

Several workers talked with Calero about the speedup they face at Hormel and many thanked him for raising the need for legalization of undocumented workers and the other issues he is putting forward.

Natalie Morrison contributed to this article.

BY TED LEONARD  
BURLINGTON, Vermont—“Socialist! Great! I have never voted for a Democrat or a Republican,” a letter carrier said

when a supporter of the Socialist Workers campaign asked him to sign a petition to put Róger Calero and Alyson Kennedy on the ballot in Vermont. He asked for a campaign brochure to put on the bulletin board where he worked.

Kennedy, who campaigned here August 2–3, said many workers nodded in agreement when she explained that working people are the ones who feel the brunt of the unfolding capitalist economic crisis. A masonry worker told her, “I make good wages but I don’t have any health benefits.”

In two days supporters of the Socialist Workers ticket collected more than 1,200 signatures here and in Montpelier, Vermont, to place the candidates on the ballot. The law requires 1,000 signatures. Supporters will wrap up the effort next weekend.

### Get the Socialist Workers Campaign on the Ballot!

STATE	STATUS
NEW YORK	PETITIONING COMPLETED!
NEW JERSEY	✓ ON THE BALLOT!
WASHINGTON	✓ ON THE BALLOT!
VERMONT	CURRENTLY PETITIONING
MINNESOTA	CURRENTLY PETITIONING
LOUISIANA	COMING SOON
FLORIDA	COMING SOON
DELAWARE	✓ ON THE BALLOT!
COLORADO	✓ ON THE BALLOT!
IOWA	PETITIONING COMPLETED!

## SWP presidential campaign tour schedule



Calero, center facing camera, speaks with participants in May Day rally demanding legalization of immigrants in Los Angeles.



Kennedy being interviewed by a Georgia TV station April 1 at a truckers’ convoy in Atlanta protesting high fuel costs.

Presidential candidate  
Róger Calero

Aug. 8–11 New York City  
Aug. 12 Albany, NY\*  
Aug. 14–15 Washington, D.C.  
Aug. 16 Newark, DE  
Aug. 17 Wilmington, DE

\* Filing for ballot status in state

Vice presidential candidate  
Alyson Kennedy

Aug. 9–10 New Orleans  
Aug. 11 Baton Rouge, LA\*  
Aug. 12–13 Houston  
Aug. 14 Tallahassee, FL\*  
Aug. 15 Tampa, FL  
Aug. 16–19 Miami

## ON THE PICKET LINE

### Bus drivers in Sweden win gains in strike

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—"We showed them what we can do," a bus driver told this reporter as he passed the entrance of the bus depot here at Hornsberg. "A step forward" was the most common response from drivers when asked about the strike that started July 1 with 6,000 drivers in Stockholm. It expanded the next week to the region of Västerbotten and lasted for a little more than two weeks.

The workers won 11 hours resting time every work day, 13 hours "frame time," the time between the first and the last hour worked in a day, and a 10.4 percent wage raise over three years.

Picket lines were organized at all bus depots. At the Hornsberg depot a trailer was parked outside and a tent erected across the driveway.

Asko Ylitalo, a repairman at the Hornsberg bus depot, thought the strike was stronger and the result better than in 1999, when the union leadership ended the strike before a settlement was reached.

—Dag Tirsén

### Workers picket casino in New Zealand

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Eighty gambling table workers, kitchen workers, cleaners, and other employees of the SkyCity casino and hotel picketed and marched at their central city workplace August 2. The action was part of a series of rolling stoppages by members of the Unite Union and Service and Food Workers Union, which organize 1,300 of the company's 4,000 workers.

The unions are demanding a 5 percent pay rise, increased pay based on seniority, and extra pay for weekend work. Workers have rejected a company proposal that would have increased wages by 4 percent and cut the pay of new hires by NZ\$32 per week. (NZ\$1.00=US\$0.73).

"Everything's going up except the pay," said Zhonghuan, a kitchen worker who recently joined the union. Unite Union national secretary Matt McCarten told workers at the protest that union membership has been growing since the dispute.

—Felicity Coggan



Militant/Catharina Tirsén

Dag Tirsén, far left, talking to pickets July 4 at Nyboda bus depot in Stockholm, Sweden, during two-week strike by 6,000 drivers that began July 1.

## Maryland state police spied on groups against war, death penalty

BY BAXTER SMITH

BALTIMORE—Revelations of infiltration and spying on antiwar and anti-death penalty protesters by the

Maryland State Police have sparked calls for hearings in the state legislature and in Congress. Governor Martin O'Malley has launched what his office calls an independent review.

The moves are the result of documents forced to light through a Maryland Public Information Act lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland.

The documents consist of 43 pages of the infiltrators' summaries and computer logs from 2005–2006 compiled on the Baltimore Pledge of Resistance, an antiwar group; the Coalition to End the Death Penalty; and the Committee to Save Vernon Evans, a Black man on Maryland's death row.

Susan Goering, executive director of the ACLU of Maryland, believes the released documents may be only the tip of the iceberg.

"There's going to be a lot more documents coming out," Max Obuszewski, a member of the Pledge of Resistance who was spied on, said in an interview. "We don't know for sure that they stopped in 2006."

A statement issued by the ACLU says the cops placed Obuszewski's name in the Washington/Baltimore High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area database. They present no evidence

Continued on page 9

## Pentagon document projects 'Long War'

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—Winning the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan will not bring an end to Washington's "Long War," says a National Defense Strategy document released by the Pentagon July 31.

The 23-page paper reaffirms the Pentagon's course of training soldiers, purchasing weapons, and developing battlefield technologies that enhance its ability to conduct irregular warfare, the kind more suited to the enemies it expects to face in the coming decades.

This historic shift in the global deployment, military strategy, and order of battle of U.S. imperialism's armed forces was sharply accelerated under former defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld. It is being continued under current secretary Robert Gates.

In a foreword to the document Gates notes that while there will be a new president and commander-in-chief soon, "This strategy is a blueprint to succeed in the years to come." Gates is the one member of the current administration that both Republican John McCain and Democrat Barack Obama say they would consider asking to serve in their administration.

"For the foreseeable future, winning the Long War against violent extremist movements will be the central objective of the U.S.," the document states. "We face an extended series of campaigns to defeat violent extremist groups, presently led by al-Qaeda and

its associates."

Drawing on lessons learned in Iraq the strategy document says, "The use of force plays a role, yet military efforts to capture or kill terrorists are likely to be subordinate to measures to promote local participation in government and economic programs to spur development, as well as efforts to understand and address the grievances that often lie at the heart of insurgencies."

In a clear reference to the challenges faced in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border regions it says, "Regional and local grievances help fuel the conflict, and it thrives in ungoverned, undergoverned and mis-governed areas." In addition to stepping up its military operations against al-Qaeda and Taliban-backed militias, Washington has pressed the Pakistani government to do more to secure its border areas.

"We also seek to convince our adversaries that they cannot attain their goals" with weapons of mass destruc-

tion, the report states. However, "the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively in exercising its right of self-defense." The Bush administration used the assertion that Saddam Hussein's regime possessed nuclear and/or biological weapons to justify its decision to invade Iraq.

The document singles out the governments in North Korea and Iran as ones to be prevented from having nuclear technology and weapons.

While improving the U.S. military's skill in irregular warfare will be the Pentagon's priority the document warns that the possibilities of conventional conflicts should not be ignored, mentioning China and Russia as possible targets.

The document also says the United States will maintain its nuclear arsenal as a primary deterrent to nuclear attack. "Precision-guided munitions allow us great flexibility not only to react to attacks, but also to strike preemptively when necessary."

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



August 26, 1983

TORONTO—An estimated 5,000 people participated in an angry demonstration here July 6 to protest the police raid on the Morgentaler abortion clinic. It was the largest demonstration in English Canada in support of a woman's right to choose on abortion. The protesters, the vast majority of them women, chanted, sang, and waved placards calling on the government to legalize the clinic and end its harassment of the clinic's doctors.

Clinic supporters are now turning their attention to building the October 1 Day of Action for Choice on Abortion. This cross-country action is receiving widespread endorsement, including from both the Ontario and British Columbia federations of labor.



August 11, 1958

NEW YORK, Aug. 4—The Young Socialist Alliance won its fifth and sixth consecutive victories in its "free speech fight" today when charges of "littering" against two of its members were dismissed. The littering charge arose out of a leaflet distribution.

Lambrecht and Margolies [the defendants] issued the following statement on their trial: "We welcome this victory for the freedom of speech, press and assembly. The unconstitutional attempts by police to abridge these freedoms indicates a concerted attempt to harass socialist groups to death, where they cannot proceed against them legally. We demand that the Police Commissioner end immediately this 'war of attrition' on the Young Socialist Alliance."



August 12, 1933

The political crisis in Cuba appears at last to have reached a climax. The pressure of the working class and the petty bourgeois masses aimed at the overthrow of "Butcher" Machado, has thrown a monkey wrench into Ambassador Welles' attempts to solve the impasse by arbitration.

Strikes initiated by the revolutionary workers in Havana as a protest against the intervention of Wall Street's viceroy as mediator in the island's politics, spread throughout the island affecting all industries and partaking of the nature of a general political strike. Mass demonstrations in Havana and other cities have created a situation that at this writing the police and military have been unable as yet to dominate.

### NEW INTERNATIONAL NO.12

IN THIS ISSUE:

Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun

by Jack Barnes

Their Transformation and Ours: SWP Draft Resolution

\$16



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# Exhibit explores African slavery and rebellion in Mexico

BY NAN BAILEY

LOS ANGELES—Spanish traders took African slaves to colonial Mexico early in the 16th century, long before the first slaves arrived in the British colonies of North America. Mexico has a rich history of anti-slavery rebellions and the country was a destination of the Underground Railroad. Slavery was ended in Mexico in 1829. Jim Crow-style laws were never enacted there.

These are some of the facts presented in an exhibit titled, “The African Presence in Mexico: From Yanga to the Present,” organized by the National Museum of Mexican Art in Chicago. The exhibit, on display here recently at the California

## IN REVIEW

African American Museum, is traveling to other cities on an international tour that continues through 2010.

Through photos, paintings, sculptures, written narrative, and a video presentation, the exhibit describes nearly 500 years of history that Africans and Mexicans share. Most Black slaves came directly from Africa, but a smaller proportion were shipped from the Pacific, particularly the Philippines. They were Aetas, part of an ethnic group known as “chino slaves.” This is the origin of the term *cabello chino* (curly or tightly-coiled hair) in Mexico.

## Canada to send 200 more troops to Afghanistan

BY JOE YOUNG

MONTREAL—Canada will send 200 more troops to Afghanistan, Foreign Minister David Emerson announced during a two-day visit to Kandahar at the end of July. The increase brings Canadian forces in Afghanistan to 2,700.

Ottawa will also send helicopters and unmanned planes to Afghanistan in the coming months.

The Canadian parliament voted March 13 to extend its troop commitment in Afghanistan to 2011, on the condition that other NATO powers reinforce their troops and military equipment in the southern part of the country where combat is the most intense.

On July 27 Canadian soldiers killed two children, aged two and four, who were in a car that approached their convoy in Kandahar. The father, Ruzi Mohammed, was injured.

Defense Minister Peter McKay justified the killings saying, “This is one of those horrible circumstances, a horrible decision has to be taken, when a vehicle is approaching, when it’s behaving erratically, when you have in the back of your mind the fact that this may be a bomb coming your way.”

According to Human Rights Watch at least 300 Afghan civilians were killed by coalition forces last year.

Veracruz, on the Gulf of Mexico, and Acapulco, on the Pacific Ocean, were two of the first Mexican ports authorized to import slaves. Today significant Black communities live in the surrounding regions.

### Largest African population

Mexico’s slave trade peaked in the 17th and 18th centuries, with Portuguese, Dutch, and English traffickers. Slaves worked in sugar fields, refineries, silver mines, and on ranches and haciendas. More and more African slaves were imported as the brutal exploitation of Indian slaves wiped out many in the indigenous population. An estimated 250,000 African slaves were brought to Mexico during the colonial period. From 1580 to 1640 Mexico had the largest African population in the Americas.

Unlike the United States, enslaved Africans in Mexico could marry anyone they chose. Many male slaves sought unions with women who were “free wombs,” meaning they were not enslaved. Such unions ensured freedom for their children. Mixed-race common-law marriages were deemed dishonorable in upper-class Mexican society, but they were not illegal.

Some mixes of the races were considered purer than others and a caste system developed. Children resulting from a union of a Spaniard and a *mestizo* (someone of mixed Spanish and indigenous heritage) were called *castizos* (of good caste). If one parent was Spanish and the other Black, the children were *mulatto*. Access to privileged posts in the Catholic Church and the military was restricted for inferior castes, especially those with Black parentage. The lower castes were banned from bearing arms, learning to read, and riding horses.

### Rebellion of *cimarrones*

The exhibit tells the story of Yanga, a slave who led a group of *cimarrones*

(runaways) out of the sugar fields to set up their own free community. This was the most famous of many slave rebellions. The Spanish military fought hard to crush Yanga’s rebellion but failed. As a result, Yanga was able to negotiate a settlement that led to the establishment in 1630 of San Lorenzo de los Negros, a free African town close to Córdoba, Veracruz. In 1930, the name was changed to Yanga. Today an annual festival is held there to celebrate the victory of the *cimarrones* and to highlight Black African culture. A bronze statue honoring Yanga is in the town’s park.

The Underground Railroad was a network of people and safe houses that helped slaves in the United States escape to freedom. The majority of slaves who used the Underground Railroad fled to northern states and to Canada. After Mexico abolished slavery, it became an added destination. A few thousand slaves went to Mexico.

The exhibit explains that many Mexicans in Texas resisted the white slaveholders’ oppression, which affected them also. Mexicans living in Texas were victims of verbal abuse, pistol-whippings, and lynchings if they displayed what was considered insolence or disrespect toward whites. There were many Mexicans who took risks to assist runaway slaves in their journey to freedom.

“*The African Presence in Mexico* offers an unusually magnificent opportunity for both African-Americans and Mexicans to celebrate a unique bond,” said National Museum of Mexican Art founder and president Carlos Tortolero in the exhibit catalog. “This project also offers Mexico the opportunity not only to revisit its African legacy but also to actively embrace it as an important element in Mexico’s cultural heritage.”

An April 13 article about the exhibit in the *Los Angeles Times* interviewed Mexicans of African descent. “Some people see the exhibition and discover



Anwar Vázquez

Bronze sculpture of Gaspar Yanga, in the township of Yanga, Mexico. Yanga was an African slave who led a revolt of escaped slaves called *cimarrones*. The rebels established the first free African town in the early 17th century. An annual festival takes place in Yanga today.

they are African descendants,” said Sagrario Cruz Carretero, one of the curators from the University of Veracruz. “One man came up to me and told me, ‘Now I know I am part African.’ He showed me a picture of his grandmother and said, ‘Until I was a teenager, I believed she had an accident [and] that is why she was dark.’”

Soledad Silver, a junior at John Muir High School in Pasadena, said, “I have African American friends who say, ‘You’re not Mexicans. I saw you with your dad and he’s a black man.’ I say, ‘Yeah, he’s a black man, but he’s also Mexican.’”

The museum’s Web site, [www.nationalmuseumofmexicanart.org](http://www.nationalmuseumofmexicanart.org), offers a mini-video showing and other materials, including a fact-filled catalog on the exhibit in English and Spanish. Currently on display in Philadelphia (June 25–Oct. 25, 2008), the upcoming stops include Oakland, California, (April–Aug. 2009) and Washington, D.C. (November 7, 2009–July 4, 2010). Additional locations and more details are on the Web site.

## Shipyard workers in Greece strike three days

Continued from front page

been killed at the Perama docks.

Maintenance work at these docks is done by small contractors with notoriously low safety standards. “Ship owners bring their vessels here because they want the job done cheaply and fast,” a contractor who did not give his name told the *Militant*.

“This dock area is a crematorium,” the mayor of Perama, Yiannis Glykas, said in a radio interview. “Safety standards are negligible with workers often lacking even fireproof suits and masks.”

As authorities investigate the causes of the explosion, the unions at the docks stress several common safety violations. According to a statement by Yiannis Stefanopoulos, president of the Metalworkers Federation, the merchant marine ministry routinely issues permits allowing work to begin before the tankers have been adequately inspected to assure they are free of gas.

No safety exits had been cut into the hull, creating a death trap.

The highly flammable polyurethane insulation of the tank had not been removed before workers started on repairs using acetylene torches. In addition, the Friendship Gas tanker had been permitted to dock alongside other vessels.

The unions are demanding upgrading of the role of mixed (union-management-ministry) safety committees, proper fire-fighting and medical facilities at the docks, and severe penalties for those responsible for safety violations.

On July 31 another 24-hour strike took place with the participation of the Pireaus Labor Center. There was also a march to the min-

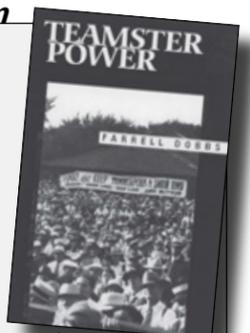
istry of labor in Athens. While workers demonstrated outside, union representatives met with the vice minister.

“We have not come here to beg, but to demand that immediate measures be taken so that we never have to mourn for our coworkers again,” said Sotiris Poulikogiannis, president of the Metalworkers Union at Perama.

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### Teamster Power

The story of how the men and women of Minneapolis Teamsters Local 574 and their class-struggle leadership used the power they had won through three hard-fought strikes in 1934 to extend union power to cities throughout the Upper Midwest.



\$19

## Medical students graduate in Equatorial Guinea



Militant/Martín Koppel

BATA, Equatorial Guinea, August 5—One hundred and twelve students at the National University of Equatorial Guinea proudly received their diplomas today. The graduates will be starting work here as doctors, teachers, agronomists, engineers, journalists, lawyers, sociologists, nurses, and in other fields.

Among them are 21 students—16 men and 5 women—who graduated from the school of medicine here in Bata. One of the few medical schools in sub-Saharan Africa, it is staffed by Cuban doctors under an agreement with the government of Equatorial Guinea. Altogether 122 Guinean medical students have graduated from the school since 2006, when the first class finished the six-year course of study. The new doctors are eagerly awaiting their jobs at hospitals and clinics throughout the country, where they will work alongside and progressively replace more than 150 Cuban doctors, nurses, and technicians who are helping Guineans build the medical system in this Central African nation.

The graduation ceremony heard the president of Equatorial Guinea, Teodoro Obiang Nguema; education minister Anselmo Ondó Esono; university rector Carlos Nse Nsuga; and others, including Luisa María Díaz, who headed a delegation from Cuba's health ministry. Also in attendance was Cuba's ambassador to Equatorial Guinea, Víctor Dreke.

—MARTÍN KOPPEL

# U.S. military napalmed civilians in Korean War

BY SETH GALINSKY

More information continues to come to light on the deliberate and indiscriminate massacres by the U.S. military during the Korean War. On August 4 South Korea's Truth and Reconciliation Commission called on Seoul to seek U.S. compensation for the killings.

The latest revelations, based on interviews conducted by the commission with survivors, and confirmed by once classified U.S. documents, detail how U.S. forces bombed, strafed, and napalmed hundreds of civilians and war refugees in three towns in South Korea in 1950 and 1951.

“Of course the U.S. government should pay compensation. It's the U.S. military's fault,” survivor Cho Kook-won, 78, told the Associated Press. He lost four family members when the U.S. air force napalmed a cave shelter south of Seoul in 1951.

The massacres in the three towns took place when Washington sought to retake territory it had lost twice—first in June and July 1950, after revolutionary Korean forces crossed the 38th parallel and pushed back the U.S.-led occupation army—and then lost again in early 1951.

On Sept. 10, 1950, according to U.S. military documents, five days before the landing at Inchon that opened the U.S. counteroffensive, 43

U.S. warplanes dropped 93 napalm canisters to “burn out” the eastern slope of Wolmi Island and clear the way for U.S. troops. Wolmi Island overlooks the channel that approaches Inchon harbor.

“When the napalm hit our village, many people were still sleeping in their homes,” Lee Boem-ki, 76, told reporters. “Those who survived the flames ran to the tidal flats. We were trying to show the American pilots that we were civilians. But they strafed us, women and children.”

Despite fierce resistance by anti-imperialist fighters, U.S. and United Nations troops made rapid progress after Inchon. By September 1950 they reconquered Seoul and kept driving north toward the Chinese border. U.S. general Douglas MacArthur thought he had won the war. Instead the Korean revolutionaries together with Chinese troops fought back and by Jan. 4, 1951, retook Seoul.

The U.S. occupiers saw all Korean workers and peasants as potential enemies. The U.S. ambassador to Korea, John Muccio, sent a letter dated July 26, 1950, informing Washington that the U.S. Army had adopted a policy of shooting South Korean refugees who approached U.S. lines.

Anyone dressed in white, a common clothing color in Korea, was viewed as suspect. Investigators with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission found an after-mission report where a U.S. Air Force observer wrote in the “enemy” box, “Many people in white in area.”

On Jan. 19, 1951, three waves of U.S. Navy and Air Force planes attacked the village of Sansong-doing, 100 miles southeast of Seoul. The U.S. 10th Corps had issued an

Continued on page 9

## U.S. denies visa to wife of Cuban 5 prisoner

Continued from front page and testifying against the other defendants. He refused and received a 15-year sentence.

Salanueva, who was jailed for three months, was deported six days before the trial of the Cuban Five began.

Adriana Pérez accompanied Salanueva to the July 16 appointment at the U.S. Interest Section. She is the wife of Gerardo Hernández, who is serving a double life sentence. Pérez is requesting a visa to visit Hernández but has not received a reply. Her eight previous visa requests were turned down.

Relatives in Cuba of the rest of the five have been able to visit only once a year on average because of the long delays in obtaining visas. Guerrero's son and sister recently visited him, but the visit was cut short when the

U.S. prison in Florence, Colorado, was placed in lockdown. “Every visit with my father is a victory,” his son Tony told *Prensa Latina*.

Supporters have continued to win backing for both the visa fight and the fight to free the five.

The July 18–20 National Latino Congreso in Los Angeles approved a resolution calling for freedom for the five and “the immediate granting of humanitarian visas to Adriana Pérez and Olga Salanueva in order that they

Continued on page 9

## California governor slashes jobs and wages

Continued from front page to try to force legislators to come up with a budget.

A lawsuit arguing that layoffs without notice violate the state constitution was filed in Sacramento Superior Court August 1 by the SEIU, which represents 94,000 state employees. The lawsuit challenges the governor's right to act “by executive fiat” on employment issues. The SEIU filed a second lawsuit charging unfair labor practices with the Public Employment Relations Board.

State Controller John Chaing, who is responsible for cutting the checks, says he will not follow Schwarzenegger's “improper and illegal” order.

California officials claim the budget shortfall has risen to \$17.2 billion in the wake of the deepening economic recession and housing crisis.

Democratic and Republican party legislators have already cut back Medi-Cal, which funds health care for 6.6 million people who cannot otherwise afford it. Fees for the large network of doctors, pharmacists, dentists, and other health-care providers who serve Medi-Cal patients were reduced by 10 percent last week.

Next week, Medi-Cal payments will

cease for about 4,700 hospitals, clinics, adult day-care centers, convalescent homes, and other institutions until the deadlock ends.

Campaigning in San Francisco, Lea Sherman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in the 8th District, said, “The attacks on state workers, on their union contracts, and on Medi-Cal patients should be opposed by all working people.”

“Schwarzenegger and the Democratic and Republican legislators who represent the rich will continue to use their budget shortfall to attack us. They will prioritize paying bills to the wealthy bondholders when they come due, while delaying and denying payments for workers comp and other benefits workers need.

“To combat rising prices, workers need cost-of-living raises, not wage cuts! With rising unemployment, we need a massive public works program at union-scale wages to build hospitals, public transportation, housing, schools, and infrastruc-

ture, not layoffs!” the socialist said.

“We need to build a labor party, based on a strengthened and fighting union movement, so we can fight for what is in the interests of working people.”



Militant/Eric Simpson

Lea Sherman, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in California's 8th District, called for cost-of-living raises and a massive public works program.

### Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes

A book about prospects for revolution in the United States, where the political capacities of workers and farmers are today as utterly discounted by the ruling powers as were those of Cuba's working people—of which the Cuban Five are outstanding examples, now serving on the front ranks of the class struggle in the U.S. \$10

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# Democracy and the fight to end capitalist exploitation

Below is an excerpt from *Democracy and Revolution*, one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* in August. George Novack, a longtime leader of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States, traces the evolution of democracy from its roots in ancient Greece to its decline under modern capitalism. This excerpt recounts how the Bolsheviks expanded democracy following the October 1917 Russian Revolution. Copyright © 1971 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY GEORGE NOVACK

In *The State and Revolution*, his classical though unfinished work on the subject, Lenin explained, in refutation of the anarchists, that the working class needs its own state when it takes power.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Society cannot function without a state so long as classes and social conflicts exist and the economy cannot cover everyone's needs, although the ultimate aim of socialism is to do away with the state as an agency of coercion. The proletarian regime has to defend itself and the gains of the revolution against the resistance of the exploiters at home or abroad, as well



Meeting of a soviet, or workers' council, in Russia in 1917. Workers and peasants used this instrument to vastly expand democracy in their fight to end capitalist rule.

as guiding the masses of the population in the tasks of economic, social and cultural construction. If the first obligations require military and police agencies and forcible measures which have a dictatorial edge, the second set of tasks has a democratic character. Whether coercive or constructive, the administration and execution of both functions should rely upon the mobilization and enthusiastic support of the popular masses.

Lenin discussed the measures that could keep the new regime genuinely democratic, under the control of the workers, responsible to them and responsive to their demands. He was keenly aware of the dangers of reversion to a militarized, bureaucratized and authoritarian state apparatus like those which had arisen during the recoil against previous revolutionary upheavals. The principal bodies which arrogated exorbitant authority to themselves in oppressing the people were the standing army and its officer corps, the professional bureaucracy, the police, the judiciary and the clergy.

Lenin proposed to curb the repressive and reactionary role of these parasitic organs of the old state by handing over their functions to the people themselves or at least, for the interim period, placing them under the unremitting surveillance

of the masses. The professional army was to be replaced by a popular militia, the people in arms. The police were to be stripped of all political functions and made responsible for their conduct to the workers' councils. All state support to the clergy would be withdrawn, though believers of any denomination would have full right to voluntarily support their churches and pastors. Judges appointed for long terms or life would be replaced by elected judges. Juries and courts would be staffed and surveyed by neighbors of individuals accused of criminal offenses. Full-time officials at all levels were to be the real servants of the people and not act like imperious big shots heedless of popular feelings and problems.

The objective was to give the workers constant control over all elements of the state apparatus until such time as the development of socialism enabled the functions performed by full-time professionals to be assumed by rotation among the citizen body, as had been done on a much smaller scale and in a more restricted and primitive way under Athenian democracy.

Lenin proposed numerous safeguards against the estrangement of the officialdom from the people and their elevation above them. All public officials

were to be elected and subject to recall periodically or in emergency for any ill-performance of their duties, just as shop stewards stand liable to revocation today where rank-and-file workers have a democratic shop union. To cut down careerism and corruption, no officeholder was to receive more than the highest paid worker. More and more of the functionaries were to be selected from the working masses and, when their special assignments in the state apparatus were completed, would return to their previous occupations and statuses.

Lenin urged as thoroughgoing a reformation of political representations of everyday administration of the government. The proletarian power would have to make a conscious break with the evils of parliamentarism, "the congressional racket," as it is called in the United States, by narrowing as far as possible the gap between the legislative and executive powers. All representative institutions were to be transformed from debating societies, designed to dupe the people while carrying out the dictates of the rich, into working bodies. The deputies of the toilers would not simply pass laws and proclaim edicts but personally check to see that their purposes were implemented in practice. They should not be sequestered in a national or state capital, or city hall, fussing over legislation which does not take account of the actual conditions or most pressing demands of their constituents. They should hold themselves responsible for the results of the application of their enactments.

The type of organization needed for instituting and executing such measures was foreshadowed by the Paris Commune of 1871. It was first created during the Russian Revolution of 1905 and revived in more extensive form in 1917. These were the Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Councils, known under their Russian name of soviets. These directly elected organs did not originate through the prevision or prescription of any political party. They were spontaneously improvised by the insurgent masses as instruments to register their will, organize their forces and carry forward their struggles against the czarist, landlord and bourgeois authorities.

*August* **BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

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## For sliding scale of hours, wages

According to U.S. government figures, which deliberately understate inflation, prices in the United States rose 5 percent since last June, the biggest rise since 1991. Meanwhile, unemployment continues to climb, reaching an official rate of 5.7 percent in July, the highest level in three and a half years.

Inflation and unemployment are permanent features of the capitalist system. With that system in its worst financial crisis since the 1930s, the bosses are shifting more and more of the burden of their crisis onto the backs of working people. They will intensify their attacks on our class as they seek ways to divide workers and break down solidarity, pitting the employed against the unemployed, native-born against immigrant, white against Black, and men against women. The working class needs to respond with a course of action that can unite the toilers in the face of the employers' assault.

Socialist Workers candidates on the federal, state, and local level are advancing such a course. A key demand of the campaign is for a sliding scale

of wages and a sliding scale of hours that includes:

A cost-of-living clause. When prices go up, wages should automatically go up to match. Cost-of-living clauses are also needed for pensions, Social Security payments, unemployment, and other benefits.

A shorter workweek, with no cut in take-home pay. When unemployment rises, work hours must be reduced to guarantee jobs for all.

In addition to a shorter workweek, the socialist candidates call for an increase in the federal minimum wage and a massive public works program to build and repair much-needed hospitals, schools, public housing, roads and bridges, and other infrastructure. Millions could be put to work at union-scale wages on such projects, which would advance the living conditions of all working people.

These are demands around which a labor party, based on a fighting union movement, can mobilize the power of the working class, contesting the Democrats and Republicans in the political arena and organizing us to act in our own defense.

## Maryland state police spying

Continued from page 5

linking Obuszewski to drugs. The entry indicates that the "Primary Crime" linked to him in the database is "Terrorism-Anti Govern[ment]," and a "Secondary Crime" of "Terrorism-Anti War Protestors."

The spying occurred under Republican governor Robert Ehrlich, Jr. Democratic governor O'Malley has tried to paint his administration as being above such behavior. Nonetheless, it has been put on the defensive by angry letter writers, newspaper opinion pieces, and TV coverage.

David Rocah, the lead ACLU attorney on the case, said in an interview that "Laws were broken and there needs to be some accountability for that."

"Why was it allowed to go on?" he asked. "The people spied upon need the opportunity to have their names purged."

The documents are censored in places with whole sections blanked out, reminiscent of the 1970s FBI Cointelpro documents. Still, they show that cops spent at least 288 hours spying. One agent joined a group's electronic listserv under an alias with a spoof e-mail address. The spies infiltrated private planning meetings and forums at churches.

They also recorded anti death penalty rallies outside Baltimore's SuperMax prison.

The documents reflect the institutional racism of the cops. Because death-row prisoner Evans is Black and the people he is accused of killing are white, that "will likely raise tensions and could make any gatherings about the execution contentious and possibly violent," one of the documents states.

To see the documents, go to [http://www.aclu-md.org/aPress/Attachments/MSP\\_Documents.pdf](http://www.aclu-md.org/aPress/Attachments/MSP_Documents.pdf)

## LETTERS

### Midwest floods

I thought the article on the Midwest floods ("Poorly built levees in Midwest magnified damage by floods" in the July 7, 2008, *Militant*) politically disorienting by attributing the floods to the "landscape radically reengineered by humans."

This catastrophe is another example of how capitalism unalterably advances the forces of production (transportation and agricultural in this case) without regard for the consequences to workers and farmers or the environment. It's not the canalification of the Mississippi or raising the productivity of agricultural land that's the problem, it's capitalism's disregard for these consequences to land and labor.

Karl Butts

Plant City, Florida

### Racism in WWII

On July 26 a commemoration was held at the site of the former Fort Lawton, an army base in Seattle. At the ceremony the court martial and convictions of 28 Black soldiers, which occurred in November of 1944, were overturned. The soldiers had been charged with rioting and complicity in the lynching of an Italian prisoner of

war on the base.

The army was forced to review the case after Jack Hamann, a journalist, investigated the case and wrote a book on it called *On American Soil*. Only two of the Fort Lawton 28 were still alive at the time of the ceremony and the one, Samuel Snow, who had been flown in for the occasion was hospitalized in Seattle and died the next day.

Edwin Fruit

Seattle, Washington

### FARC in Colombia

Many thanks for the good work, such as the article "Fidel Castro speaks out on Colombia hostages, lessons of the Cuban Revolution" (July 28, 2008, *Militant*). Fidel's articles contain many lessons about the bloody role of imperialism and of the murderous state-sponsored

paramilitary hordes that terrorise the Colombian countryside, the revolutionary methods of the Cuban leadership, and the different calibre of the Cuban leadership and the leaderships of groups such as FARC [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia].

For accuracy's sake could you please check the following sentence: "In 1993 the FARC split from the Communist Party and Marulanda took over the leadership of the guerrilla group." In fact, Marulanda was always the main leader of the guerrilla group. The 1993 split marked the moment when the FARC decided to organize its own political party. However, it is true that the Communist Party did take over *politically* the course of what was a legitimate peasants movement. The split didn't change the political character of FARC.

Yonatan Mosquera

London, United Kingdom

### '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.

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.

## Korean civilians

Continued from page 7

order to destroy South Korean villages within five miles of a mountain held by North Korean troops. Sixty-nine of 115 houses were destroyed and at least 51 killed in the bombing raid.

An unusual joint army-air force review admitted there were no "enemy" casualties during the U.S. attack, even though U.S. pilots reported "excellent results." Two colonels wrote in the report, "Civilians in villages cannot normally be identified as either North Koreans, South Koreans, or guerrillas."

The massacre was too much for one U.S. officer, Brig. Gen. David G. Barr, who wrote that "methodical burning out poor farmers when no enemy is present is against the grain of U.S. soldiers."

The day after the bombing of Sanseong-dong, a cave shelter at Yeongchun, 120 miles southeast of Seoul, came under repeated napalm and strafing attacks from U.S. warplanes. The planes dropped firebombs at the cave's entrance, where hundreds of South Korean civilians had taken refuge, fearing their village could be next. Villagers say that 360 people were killed at the cave. The truth commission estimates the dead at "well over 200."

Some 7,000 South Koreans have brought more than 200 similar cases to the attention of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Although the Pentagon has refused to comment on the most recent findings, many Koreans continue to press for the truth to come out. At the entrance to a Wolmi Island park that hosts a bronze statue honoring General McArthur, elderly South Koreans gather daily to draw attention to the massacres.

## U.S. denies visa

Continued from page 7

may visit their husbands."

The organizations that convened the Congreso include the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, League of United Latin American Citizens, Mexican American Political Association, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, and National Day Labor Organizing Network.

The vice president of the Mexican Senate, Yeidcol Polevnsky Gurwitz, recently added her name to those protesting the visa denials.

The Namibian parliament approved a motion July 9 demanding the immediate and unconditional release of the five and the end of the U.S. embargo of Cuba.

On July 24 lawyers for the five filed a petition with the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta, for a rehearing on the June decision of the court, which upheld the convictions while ordering new sentencing for three of the men.

In a phone interview lead defense attorney Leonard Weinglass told the *Militant* that the petition requests a review of the charges and sentencing of Gerardo Hernández, who was convicted of "conspiracy to commit murder" because he had been gathering information on Brothers to the Rescue. In 1996 Cuban pilots shot down two planes flown by the right-wing outfit, which had repeatedly violated Cuban airspace despite many warnings.

The appeals court decision upholding Hernández's conviction and sentence is "based on the fiction that there was a plan to shoot down the planes in international airspace," Weinglass said. "But the plan was to defend Cuban airspace." The lawyer pointed out that Cuba insists the planes were in Cuban airspace when the shoot down occurred. Further appeals of the convictions of the five are planned.

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