

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Books on Malcolm X presented
at Havana Int'l Book Fair
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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U.S. gov't expands air strikes in Pakistan

BY DOUG NELSON

In recent months Washington has unleashed its deadliest missile attacks from pilotless drones in Pakistan and expanded its strikes into new areas of the country's northwest.

In addition, the White House is now discussing drone strikes into Pakistan's southwest province of Baluchistan for the first time, the *New York Times* reported. In their sights is the area in and around the city of Quetta, the provincial capital, from where Taliban forces led by Mullah Muhammad Omar, former head of the Taliban government in Afghanistan, are reportedly launching attacks into Afghanistan.

On March 15 a Hellfire missile struck a site in the town of Jani Khel in the Bannu District of Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (NWFP) for the second time since December, when U.S. missiles first hit the province. Other U.S. attacks in the country have targeted

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Capitalist crisis sparks protectionist measures

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

With world trade in its biggest decline in 80 years, protectionist measures by Washington and other imperialist powers are on the rise.

President Barack Obama's administration is conducting a review of "free trade" agreements former president George Bush had negotiated with the governments of South Korea, Colombia, and Panama, said Ron Kirk, Obama's U.S. trade representative.

The move reflects the growing protectionist course being taken by Washington as competition sharpens among the imperialist powers for control over raw materials, markets, and cheap labor sources. Protectionist policies can lead to trade wars and are counter to workers' interests.

In mid-February Obama signed into law the \$787 billion "stimulus plan." It contains "Buy American" provisions requiring that these funds go toward

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Factory workers in Israel protest against plant closings

BY SETH GALINSKY

Palestinian, Jewish, and immigrant workers in Israel joined together in two recent fights against factory closings.

In February almost 20,000 workers were laid off in Israel, the highest number in one month in the country's history.

On March 8, 200 workers at the Off Haemek poultry plant near Haifa protested the decision by the owners to shut down the production line. The employer, the Jezreel Valley Agricultural Cooperative Society, refused to pay February wages. About 80 percent of the workers are Palestinian citizens of Israel, while the rest are Jewish.

According to the Israeli daily *Haaretz*, workers demonstrated outside the plant, burning tires and freeing chickens from their cages. The workers barricaded themselves inside the plant and "found an original way to assure themselves of income," *Haaretz* said. The workers "simply helped themselves to slaughtered, frozen fowls," the paper reported, "and sold them in the market."

The Histadrut, Israel's combined trade union federation and social agency with close ties to the Israeli state, issued a press release saying that "the workers who sold the chickens told people in the Haifa market to buy the chickens as a show of solidarity."

On February 23 at least 50 workers occupied the Pri Galil vegetable canning factory to protest plans to close that plant, which employs 150 year-round and 300 seasonal workers in Hatzor Haglilit, in northeast Israel near the Golan Heights.

Workers at the plant work 10-hour shifts and earn the minimum wage, about 21 shekels (US\$5.00) an hour.

The next day workers protested outside the Haifa District Court chanting "Bread and work." They opposed the request by banks that had loaned money to the company to place it in

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Cuban 5 High Court appeal gains international support

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Support is growing worldwide for the campaign to win the freedom of five Cuban revolutionaries unjustly held in U.S. prisons for the past decade.

Twelve friend-of-the-court briefs signed by hundreds of individuals and organizations were filed March 6 supporting the appeal submitted by attorneys for the five in January. It is the largest number of briefs ever placed before the U.S. Supreme Court requesting review of a criminal conviction, reports *Granma International*.

Imperialist troops out of Afghanistan, Iraq!



Militant/Jorge Lertora

More than 800 people march in Chicago March 14 to protest six years of U.S.-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Israeli assault on Gaza, and attacks against immigrants.

Marchers demand end to wars, deportations

BY BEN O'SHAUGHNESSY

CHICAGO—More than 800 people marched through the largely Mexican communities of Little Village and Pilsen on the South Side here March 14 demanding: "Stop the occupations now" in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Palestine, and "Stop the government's war against immigrants!"

The action to protest the sixth anniversary of the U.S.-led war in Iraq was marked by hundreds of youth who participated.

A contingent from the March 10th

Committee, an immigrant rights coalition, kicked off the march holding banners demanding "legalization for all." Hundreds of flyers were distributed to promote this year's May Day demonstration.

They were followed by a lively contingent of Palestinians from Chicago and nearby Bridgeview, Illinois, organized by American Muslims for Palestine. They carried flags and banners in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza and against the assault by the Is-

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'Militant' launches spring sales and fund campaigns

BY BEN JOYCE

Supporters of the *Militant* newspaper are gearing up for a seven-week drive to reach out to workers, farmers, youth, and others in an effort to expand the readership of this socialist newsweekly. Simultaneously, the *Militant* is launching an eight-week campaign to raise \$105,000 from its

readers, asking them to pitch in towards the costs of operating a workers' newspaper.

The worldwide contraction in capitalist production is transforming the lives of millions as the capitalist class is placing the burden of their crisis on the backs of working people. Millions of workers are losing their jobs, the standard of living for most toilers is being driven down, attacks on our democratic rights are increasing, and

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Pathfinder volunteers' effort wins increase in book orders

BY THERESA KENDRICK

MIAMI—Volunteers who visit bookstores, libraries, and professors here to get orders for Pathfinder Press titles have made their goal of 20 and hope to go over it in a national campaign running from January 19 to March 15. The volunteers are using this campaign to get follow-up orders from their fall 2008 campaign in which about 235 visits were completed around the country.

Teams of volunteers in several cities took advantage of the day off work on Martin Luther King Day, and later on Presidents Day, to visit bookstores to get orders of titles for Black History and Women's History months in February and March respectively.

The teams were aided by new promotional flyers on Pathfinder's newest books—*Capitalism and the Transformation of Africa* and *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?*—as well as *New International* no. 14 with the lead article "Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X."

Volunteers in the San Francisco Bay Area got good results from the 41 visits in their campaign last fall. They decided to prioritize 12 of the 22 stores and libraries that had said they would make orders, which several did. As a result, volunteers in the Bay Area went over their goal of five orders. They plan to continue the follow-up visits.

In the Washington, D.C., area, volunteer Tom Headley reported 11 Pathfinder titles had been placed with a bookstore that he had been working

with over some time. His persistence paid off.

In Miami, the bookstore at Florida International University south campus included *Malcolm X Speaks* on its Black History Month table display and *Women and the Cuban Revolution* in its Women's History Month display.

Upon learning about Pathfinder's new title, *Capitalism and the Transformation of Africa*, the University of Florida library in Gainesville immediately placed an order. The school has a large African Studies program.

Defender of travel to Cuba fights gov't probe

BY BEN JOYCE

NEW YORK—Some 50 people came out to support Rev. Lucius Walker, a longtime advocate of the right to travel to Cuba, at a March 12 court hearing. Walker is being harassed by New York City School District officials for his alleged role in a trip by high school students to Cuba.

Walker is the executive director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) and Pastors for Peace, an IFCO ministry. Since 1992 Pastors for Peace has organized "Friendshipment Caravans" to take humanitarian supplies to Cuba and to oppose Washington's ban on travel to the island.

Richard Condon, special commissioner of investigation for the school district, is heading an investigation into trips to Cuba made by students at Manhattan's Beacon High School between



Militant/Peter Seidman

Women and the Cuban Revolution on display at Florida International University's south campus bookstore in Miami as part of Women's History Month display in March.

1999 and 2007. Condon says IFCO helped organize some of the trips. He wants Walker held in contempt of court for not complying with a subpoena issued by the New York State Supreme Court. Walker has refused to provide information about many of the individuals the school district claims were involved in the trips.

A Beacon student who participated in one of the trips was there to support Walker. He said the travel ban hurts everyone. "We're not communists," he told the *Militant*. "We just wanted to see what Cuba is like for ourselves." He declined to give his name on advice of his counsel.

The March 12 hearing took up specific documents that the prosecution claims belong to IFCO and are neces-

sary for the investigation. While Walker has the constitutional right under the Fifth Amendment to refuse to submit personal documents, IFCO is not protected in the same way. The prosecution is trying to prove that the documents in question belong to IFCO, not Walker.

According to a statement by Walker, if Condon were to receive the information he is requesting, he would be required to turn it over to the Office of Foreign Assets Control, part of the U.S. Treasury Department that enforces Washington's travel ban.

Walker's supporters explain that the school district has no jurisdiction in the case because the trip was not organized or sponsored by the school and took place during spring break.

U.S. gov't escalates Afghan war

BY DOUG NELSON

The U.S. government is escalating the war it leads in Afghanistan, which the U.S. rulers say they plan to wage for years to come.

There are about 38,000 U.S. troops and roughly 30,000 troops from Washington's NATO allies in Afghanistan. Last month President Barack Obama approved sending an additional 17,000 by the end of the summer.

More than 2,000 civilians were reported killed in Afghanistan last year, according to the United Nations, a 40 percent increase over the previous year.

A new strategy review, scheduled for release in late March, is said to set Washington's goals for the next three to five years and lay out plans to strengthen the Afghan and Pakistani militaries.

Washington is reaching out for more commitments from NATO allies and support from new forces in the region, including Iran. It is also looking for openings to cut deals with "reconcilable" Taliban forces.

UN secretary general Ban Ki-Moon has recommended that the UN mandate for the war, which expires March 23, be extended for 12 months.

THE MILITANT

Not one penny, person for Washington's wars!

The imperialist assaults on Iraq and Afghanistan, now being led by a second administration, are an extension of U.S. ruling-class attacks on working people that accelerate as their capitalist crisis deepens.

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Soldier watches bomb explode a target in Afghanistan, August 2006.

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Cuban women’s leader speaks at N.Y. campus

BY MAURA DELUCA

NEW YORK—Some 60 people heard Maritzel González, a leader of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), speak at Hunter College March 11. The Undergraduate Student Government, Hostos Puerto Rican Club, Latino Honor Society, Women’s Rights Coalition, and the Young Socialists sponsored the meeting. González was in New York to attend the 53rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations.

The FMC is a mass organization founded in 1960 to advance the status of women in Cuba. “Before the revolution,” González told the audience, “Cuban women could only work as teachers, nurses, caretakers, or secretaries—if you were pretty. Women were only 12 percent of the workforce, a majority of them illiterate. Today women are 46 percent of the workforce and are involved in all aspects of work.”

While women have made enormous

social gains in Cuba, González explained, the FMC is still working to alleviate the burdens of childcare and household work so that women will feel free to take on more leadership roles. “In the FMC’s 176 *casas* (centers) throughout the island, we offer courses for young women and teach that domestic work is not only for women.”

Cuba’s maternity leave laws were amended in 2001 and 2003, extending paid leave from six months to a year, and enabling couples to opt for the father to stay home with the child. The number of families choosing to have the father stay is growing, González said, “as ways of thinking are changing.” If someone must stop work because a family member needs special care, the Cuban government maintains that person’s previous salary. “No one in Cuba is left to fend for themselves,” González said.

Responding to questions on domestic violence in Cuba, González stressed that the cases are few. She said while verbal abuse is a problem, violence is rarely used to resolve a conflict.

Abortion in Cuba is legal unless performed outside a medical facility. González said they are discussing how to address a declining birth rate,



Federation of Cuban Women leader Maritzel González (center) speaking at Hunter College March 11. At right is translator Nieves Veras from Hostos Puerto Rican Club. At left is meeting chair Tom Baumann of Young Socialists.

since more women are choosing to focus primarily on their career or their studies.

González also spoke on the case of five Cuban revolutionaries imprisoned in U.S. jails since 1998 on frame-up conspiracy charges. The FMC works with their families, who face great difficulties in visiting due to the United States denying them visas. Washington has prevented two of the wives from seeing their husbands since before their trial in 2000. González appealed to the audience to get out the truth of this case.

After the meeting, Kevin Mendez, a 21-year old premed student at Hunter,

said, “I was impressed to hear the difference in conditions of women since the revolution, as well as the medical programs the Cubans carry out in Africa. It’s different than what’s taught in school about Cuba—a dictatorship with no rights, where women are treated worse. It’s ironic that the U.S. is holding Cuban prisoners who can’t even see their wives.”

Jessie Santos, 33, a Romance Language major, said it was her first time hearing from someone from Cuba. “You always only see the poverty and negative sides of Cuba. Communism is always labeled bad. Tonight was an opportunity to get the goods.”



Maritzel González speaks informally to participants after March 11 public meeting at Hunter College.

Washington expands air strikes in Pakistan

Continued from front page
areas adjacent to the NWFP in what is called the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

Some 25 bodies have been retrieved from four sites hit by U.S. drones in the Kurram Agency in the FATA three days earlier. Six people remain missing, likely buried under the rubble, and about 50 others were injured.

The March 12 attack ranks among the deadliest drone attacks since the U.S.-led war in the region began in 2001. Two other strikes, on February 14 and February 16, took a similar toll, killing at least 30 people each.

The March 12 attack was the second time a site in the Kurram Agency was targeted. The first time was the February 16 attack, which reportedly hit a Taliban compound in an Afghan refugee camp, where, according to Pakistan’s *Daily Times*, “only a few poor families” still lived.

Prior to the recent attacks in Bannu and Kurram, U.S. strikes had focused on areas in the Bajur, North Waziristan, and South Waziristan agencies of the FATA.

Conditions in ‘tribal areas’

The FATA of northwest Pakistan remains very economically and culturally undeveloped. The population is 97 percent rural, but only 7 percent of the land is cultivated. The majority of the cultivated land in this mountainous region is not irrigated. More than 80 percent of land in the FATA is not cultivable. The large majority of the population lives in poverty with no access to electricity or basic health care, and more than 80 percent remain illiterate.

This majority-Pashtun area is governed under the executive authority of the president through appointed government agents. Local governance is implemented though government-paid *maliks* (tribal chiefs) and other tribal and clan



heads. Criminal cases and civil disputes are decided under their authority.

The British-imposed Frontier Crimes Regulations of 1901 remains the law of the land. Under the draconian codes, all political activity is illegal and the government can imprison anyone without charges; there is no bail. Collective imprisonment and other punishments are meted out for family members of the accused, including children. Punishments often include confiscation of property and burning down of homes.

The Pakistani government has a long history of using reactionary Islamist movements to further the interests of the country’s ruling class. Increasingly the state imposed religious strictures to

enforce its class rule and keep working people divided. Initially this course was carried out, in part, as a counterweight to Pashtun nationalist movements in the NWFP and FATA, as well as resistance by Baluchis in Baluchistan Province to the southwest.

Later Islamabad established and armed Islamist forces to extend its political influence outside its borders. Islamabad, along with the governments of the United States, Saudi Arabia, and China, backed a loose coalition of rightist Islamist forces, referred to as the Mujahideen, against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Following that war Islamabad armed

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\$105,000 ‘Militant’ Fund Drive March 21–May 19	
Country	Quota
UNITED STATES	
Atlanta	\$8,000
Boston	\$2,800
Chicago	\$9,000
Des Moines, IA	\$1,900
Houston	\$3,000
Los Angeles	\$8,800
Miami	\$3,300
New York	\$15,500
Newark, NJ	\$3,200
Philadelphia	\$3,300
San Francisco	\$13,000
Seattle	\$7,000
Twin Cities, MN	\$6,600
Washington, D.C.	\$4,500
Total U.S.	\$89,900
Canada	\$5,000
New Zealand	\$2,500
Australia	\$1,050
Sweden	\$400
UNITED KINGDOM	
Edinburgh	*
London	*
International Total	\$98,850
* Have not yet adopted a quota	

Conference on Martí, Lincoln, Juárez builds

BY STEVE WARSHHELL
AND SARAH KATZ

EDINBURG, Texas—Professors and students at universities in Texas are preparing to participate in the International Conference on Martí, Juárez, and Lincoln in the Heart of Our America, set for May 18–19 in Monterrey, Mexico. The gathering will bring together academics, students, and others from the United States, Mexico, and Cuba.

José Martí led Cuba's 1895 independence war against Spain. In the 1850s and '60s Mexican leader Benito Juárez instituted revolutionary measures that struck blows at the power of semifeudal landowners and the church hierarchy, and led the fight against French invaders.

Abraham Lincoln led the Union forces in the U.S. Civil War, which overthrew the slavocracy and abolished chattel slavery.

Here at the University of Texas—Pan American (UTPA) “we are quite excited about the conference,” David Anshen, a professor in the English department, told the *Militant*. “This

will give us, academics and students living on the border with Mexico, the opportunity to have real serious discussions on culture, politics, academic, intellectual, and human rights issues between people of the United States, Cuba, and Mexico.”

Several UTPA professors are preparing papers for the Monterrey conference. For example, David Carlson will present a paper on slave revolts in Cuba and Radical Reconstruction in the United States. Theron Francis will speak on Henry David Thoreau, Martí, and the fight against slavery.

UTPA professor José Skinner is preparing a paper on resistance to the border wall, the barrier being constructed along the U.S. border with Mexico. “I want to talk about this issue and its connection to the militarization of the region and the privatization of prisons—especially the growing use of private prisons to hold immigrant detainees,” he said.

Skinner is working with professors Nick Braune, who plans to speak on the historic May Day 2006 demon-



Clockwise from left: José Martí, leader of Cuba's 1895 war of independence against Spain; Abraham Lincoln, led victorious Union forces in U.S. Civil War that overthrew slavocracy; Benito Juárez, Mexican president who instituted revolutionary measures that struck blows against power of semifeudal landlords and church hierarchy, and led fight against French invaders.

strations by nearly 2 million immigrant workers for legalization of undocumented workers, and Erik Toren, who will discuss raids, deportations, and militarization of the border.

Other professors will present papers on pedagogy, education, and free access to information. Stephanie Alvarez will discuss multicultural

education and teaching Latino students in Spanish, and UTPA librarian Deidre McDonald will take up the restrictions on information about Cuba.

Conference organizers have set a date of April 19 for submitting titles and abstracts of papers to present at the conference.

Students at the University of Texas Law School in Austin are working with the Human Rights Society to fund transportation to the conference for four students. At the University of Houston and the University of North Texas in Denton, students are approaching school departments and campus clubs to help cover their travel and hotel costs.

Others planning to speak at the conference include professors Luis Barrios at John Jay College in New York; Bruce Levine, University of Illinois; August Nimtz, University of Minnesota; Claudia Kaiser-Lenoir, Tufts University; and Dionicio Valdés, Michigan State University.

To register and for more information, write to Alma2008@mail.uh.edu or martijuarezlinconconferencia@gmail.com; or call organizers in Monterrey at (011-52-81) 8300-4169.

A special rate for rooms and meals has been arranged with the Fiesta Inn Hotel in downtown Monterrey, near the conference venue. To make a reservation, e-mail sales representative Rubi Mares Ruiz at ventas2fimt@posadas.com, or call (011-52-81) 8150-2200, ext. 3032, or 8150-2220.

‘Militant’ launches subscription, fund drives

Continued from front page
imperialist wars abroad are spreading. In the face of these disastrous conditions, many workers and youth are looking for answers and a way to fight.

The *Militant* is a unique voice of the working class. It points to the need for workers to make a revolution—a struggle to take political power away from the capitalists and reorganize society for the benefit of the great majority. Many workers and others will be open to discussing this perspective, and there is no better way to advance that discussion than for them to be following the *Militant*

every week.

The subscription campaign will kick off on March 21 when supporters of the paper will participate in demonstrations in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, San Francisco, and other cities against U.S. imperialism's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

A big effort is being organized to reach out to the many young people who will be at the actions to sign them up as new subscribers to the *Militant* and offer them revolutionary books. Socialist candidates from across the country will participate in the marches calling for immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all imperialist troops—not one penny, not one person for Washington's wars.

Militant supporters in San Francisco are getting a good response to the paper as they gear up for the drive. They report selling six subscriptions, 25 copies of the paper, and \$72 in revolutionary literature at a March 16 demonstration in Sacramento, California, to protest cuts in education.

During the seven-week drive, which will run through May 12, Pathfinder titles *Capitalism and the Transformation of Africa* and *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* are available for only \$5 and \$4 respectively with a *Militant* subscription.

Distributors around the world have submitted local quotas, initially totaling over 2,100 subscribers.

As supporters of the paper work to win subscribers, new and long-term readers are encouraged to contribute to the *Militant* Fund Drive. The drive allows the paper to respond to devel-

opments in the class struggle around the world and provide our readers with firsthand accounts that add to the political value of the paper.

Reporting teams sent to Cuba, Venezuela, and Equatorial Guinea are some recent examples of trips that require these substantial resources.

This spring's drive will begin on March 21 and end May 19. The international goal of \$105,000 will make it possible for the paper to continue its unparalleled coverage of working-class struggles and Marxist analysis of world developments.

As a worker's newspaper, the *Militant* appeals to working people to contribute whatever they can to help advance the paper's work. The *Militant*'s financial resources come from those who understand the value of the paper in advancing a revolutionary working-class perspective.

Your help is needed in this effort! To find out how you can be part of the subscription drive and contribute to the fund, contact your local *Militant* distributor on page 6.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco
The Fight against Cuts in Education. A panel discussion. Fri., March 27. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

FLORIDA

Miami
Social and Political Crisis in Mexico. Speaker: Bernie Senter, Socialist Workers campaign; others. Fri., March 27. Dinner, 7 p.m.; program, 8 p.m. 6777 N.W. 7th Ave., #5. Tel.: (305) 757-8869.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis
Legalization for All Now! Build May Day Actions! Speaker: representative, SWP. Fri., March 27. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 1311 1/2 E. Lake St., 2nd fl. Tel.: (612) 729-5861.

NEW JERSEY

Newark
Cuban Revolution: Lessons from a Successful Fight for Workers' Power. Fri., March 27. Dinner, 7 p.m.; program, 8 p.m. 168 Bloomfield Ave, 2nd fl. Tel.: (973) 481-0077.

TEXAS

Houston
Depression, Social Crisis, and Drug Wars: Oppose Troops and Cops on the Border. Speaker: Steve Warshell, SWP. Fri., March 27. 7:30 p.m. 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-51A. Tel.: (713) 688-4919.

CANADA

Montreal
Defending and Strengthening Our Unions. Speaker: Michel Dugré, Communist League. Fri., March 27, 7:30 p.m. 7105 St. Hubert, Suite 106F. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

'Militant' Subscription Drive March 21–May 12	
Country	Quota
UNITED STATES	
Atlanta	160
Boston	60
Chicago	120
Des Moines, IA	130
Houston	95
Los Angeles	125
Miami	150
New York	280
Newark, NJ	75
Philadelphia	75
San Francisco	150
Seattle	101
Twin Cities, MN	140
Washington, D.C.	70
Total U.S.	1,731
Canada	115
UNITED KINGDOM	
Edinburgh	35
London	80
Total U.K.	115
New Zealand	70
Australia	55
Sweden	20
Total	2,106

THE MILITANT

online

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ON THE PICKET LINE

Workers sit in at packaging plant in Scotland to fight layoffs

EDINBURGH, Scotland—Workers at PRISME Packaging, a small cardboard box manufacturer in Dundee, staged a sit-in at the plant March 4. Earlier that day the company announced that all of the 12 workers would be laid off without any severance payments.

The workers have kept the nonunion factory occupied 24 hours a day, sleeping on couches in the office and eating food donated by a constant stream of local people backing them.

“The support we got has been tremendous,” said Christina Falconer. “It comes from all over the world, even from New Zealand.”

Some of the workers have been working in the factory as long as 14 years. They are demanding an explanation for the closure of the plant from the manager, who they haven’t seen since he resigned, as well as the money they

are owed. The factory still contains the machinery, which puts the workers in a stronger position.

“If this could happen to us it could happen to anyone,” said Maureen Duffy, a machine operator, stressing that they were not fighting only for themselves but for everyone in the same position.

—Filip Tedelund

Strikes and factory sit-ins spread across Egypt

Strikes and sit-ins spread across six provinces in Egypt March 5. More than 3,000 workers in Menoufia province sat in at the Andrama Textiles factory when the company failed to pay an annual bonus and the Prophet Mohammad Anniversary bonus.

For the fourth time, more than 300 cotton gin workers in Menya province refused to accept their February pay, which the company had reduced, saying the workers had only met 65 percent



Militant/Filip Tedelund

Left to right: Christina Falconer, Lorraine Skelly, and Maureen Duffy during sit-in at Prisme Packaging plant in Dundee, Scotland, March 7, standing by machine they used to run.

of expected production. The workers noted that the company has not provided enough raw cotton to run all the machines.

Some 150 women workers in the Mansoura-Spain Garments factory in

Dakahlia province went on strike after the company suspended the union’s chairman and delayed payment of allowances. The workers accuse the company’s main investor, United Bank, and the company manager of attempting to force workers to quit so that the plant can be sold without paying them severance.

Strikes and sit-ins also took place in Qena, Alexandria, Port Said, and Qalyubia.

—Sam Manuel

Canada cop cover-up in immigrant death exposed

BY NED DMYTRYSHYN

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—The cross-examination at a public inquiry here of the cops who killed Robert Dziekanski, a Polish immigrant, has exposed their attempt to cover up the killing.

On Oct 14, 2007, shortly after arriving from Poland, Dziekanski was zapped five times with a 50,000-volt Taser gun at the Vancouver International Airport by four cops from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). The cops then pounced on him with their knees on his chest and neck until he stopped breathing.

The cops were called after Dziekanski, unable to speak English, was found wandering the airport baggage area after a lengthy trip from Poland. No attempt was made to find a Polish interpreter. He became increasingly upset. Dziekanski was Tasered by the cops within 30 seconds of their arrival and died minutes later.

Protests against the cop killings were organized in several cities across Canada at the time, including a demonstration of more than 1,000 in Vancouver.

At the inquiry the cops claimed Dziekanski threatened them. They said that he raised a stapler above his head in a threatening manner and that he was “in a combative stance.” A bystander’s video of the entire incident contradicts all of the cops’ claims.

According to *Vancouver Sun* columnist Ian Mulgrew, people attending the hearing were appalled at the cops’ testimony, which drew “laughing in disbelief.” They were incredulous that

four cops each much bigger in size than the Dziekanski, armed with firearms, batons, and pepper spray, could claim they were afraid for their safety from a frightened, exhausted newly arrived immigrant with a stapler in his hand.

According to the *Globe and Mail*, the video showed that the report filed by the lead cop, Kwesi Millington, who also tasered Dziekanski, was false on every count. After jolting Dziekanski once, Millington said he tasered him again because Dziekanski did not go down. The video shows Dziekanski on the floor shaking with both feet in the air. Millington said he tasered the man a third time after the other cops had jumped on him because Dziekanski was still moving. He said he tasered Dziekanski two more times because he thought the taser had malfunctioned.

The police also insisted that they were following proper police procedure as they watched Dziekanski turn blue and stop breathing without attempting to administer CPR or allow emergency crews to remove his handcuffs to administer first aid.

On December 12, before any of the cops’ testimony had been heard, Stan Lowe, representing the criminal justice branch of the British Columbia government, announced that the four RCMP officers involved in Dziekanski’s death will not be charged. Lowe argued that a conviction would be unlikely and that charges would not be in the public interest.

Meanwhile, the Canadian government is blocking efforts by the Polish government to launch its own investigation into Dziekanski’s death. On the eve of the inquiry Ottawa suspended a criminal investigation cooperation treaty with Poland.

Polish press officer Sylvia Domisie-wicz explained that the treaty suspension means that Polish authorities are unable to access transcripts, tapes, and other evidence being presented at the inquiry. Polish officials have the authority under Polish law to lay charges against the Canadian policemen who tasered Dziekanski.

Steve Penner contributed to this article.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



March 30, 1984

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE, England—For coal miners Britain is in a state of martial law. More than 20,000 police—the largest number since the 1926 general strike—have been mobilized to break the strike called by the National Union of Mineworkers. Organized by Scotland Yard under the code name “Operation Robin Hood,” this police operation is designed to maintain a system that steals from the poor and gives to the rich.

More than 100,000 of the 183,000 miners are on strike, and pickets are persuading others to stop work. The miners are protesting government plans to close many mines, or “pits” as they are called here.

The battle British coal miners are waging for jobs and defense of their union is one we in the United Mine Workers of America are quite familiar with. The motto, “an injury to one is an injury to all,” has no national boundaries.



March 30, 1959

The relationship between art and politics has long been debated in the radical movement. To gain full validity, must a novel or a play with a social theme articulate a “message?” If you are still undecided on that question and are anywhere within traveling distance of the New York theater district then make doubly sure to see Lorraine Hansberry’s play, “Raisin in the Sun.”


It’s the story of a Negro family in Chicago’s black ghetto. There aren’t any speeches in it about the sources of Jim Crow and nobody outlines a political program. The author, director, and cast combine their substantial talents to offer an evening of splendid entertainment. But in presenting an artistic truth they deliver as powerful a condemnation of racism and as eloquent a plea for human brotherhood as any orator ever made.



March 31, 1934

It is quite clear that the American people, to use that term, that is, the exploited and exploiters alike in their overwhelming majority, supported the New Deal program. But as it swings into operation on a large scale, the attitudes toward it begin to divide on class lines. Issues of labor unions versus company unions arise. It increases the money available—for those who own the means of production—by forcing the rate of exploitation of the workers upward due to the lowering of their real wages. The workers come face to face with the realities of a stronger monopoly capitalism functioning under governmental regulation and support.

Preparations for further imperialist expansion as a means of issuing out of the crisis lead directly on the path of war. That, we can rest assured, is taken fully into account in the New Deal program.



Capitalism's World Disorder
by Jack Barnes

The social devastation and financial panic now engulfing the world, the coarsening of politics, the cop brutality, the restrictions on workers' rights, the relentless acts of imperialist aggression—all are products not of something gone wrong with capitalism but of its lawful workings. Yet the future can be changed by the united struggle of workers and farmers. —\$24

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What was ‘National Socialism’ in 1930s Germany?

Below is an excerpt from The Struggle against Fascism in Germany by Leon Trotsky, one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for March. The item quoted is from the chapter titled “What is National Socialism?” written by Trotsky on June 10, 1933, several months after Adolph Hitler was appointed chancellor of the German government. With the Communist Party of Germany calling the Social Democratic Party “social fascists,” these two mass parties of the working class failed to wage a united fight to prevent the Nazis from taking political power. Copyright © 1971 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted with permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

Naive minds think that the office of kingship lodges in the king himself, in his ermine cloak and his crown, in his flesh and bones. As a matter of fact, the office of kingship is an interrelation between people. The king is king only because the interests and prejudices of millions of people are refracted through his person. When the flood of development sweeps away these interrelations, then the king appears to be only a washed-out man with a flabby lower lip.



Nazi storm troopers occupy union offices in Berlin, 1933.

He who was once called Alfonso XIII could discourse upon this from fresh impressions.¹

The leader by will of the people differs from the leader by will of God in that the former is compelled to clear the road for himself or, at any rate, to assist the conjuncture of events in discovering him. Nevertheless, the leader is always a relation between people, the individual supply to meet the collective demand. The controversy over Hitler’s personality becomes the sharper the more the secret of his success is sought in himself. In the meantime, another political figure would be difficult to find that is in the same measure the focus of anonymous historic forces. Not every exasperated petty bourgeois could have become Hitler, but a particle of Hitler is lodged in every exasperated petty bourgeois.

The rapid growth of German capitalism prior to the First World War by no means signified a simple destruction of the middle classes. Although it ruined some layers of the petty bourgeoisie it created others anew: around the factories, artisans and shopkeepers; within the factories, technicians and executives. But while preserving themselves and even growing numerically—the old and the new petty bourgeoisie compose a little less than one-half of the German

nation—the middle classes have lost the last shadow of independence. They live on the periphery of large-scale industry and the banking system, and they live off the crumbs from the table of the monopolies and cartels, and off the spiritual alms of their theorists and professional politicians.

The defeat in 1918 raised a wall in the path of German imperialism. External dynamics changed to internal. The war passed over into revolution. Social Democracy, which aided the Hohenzollerns in bringing the war to its tragic conclusion, did not permit the proletariat to bring the revolution to its conclusion. The Weimar democracy spent fourteen years finding interminable excuses for its own existence. The Communist Party called the workers to a new revolution but proved incapable of leading it. The German proletariat passed through the rise and collapse of war, revolution, parliamentarism, and pseudo-Bolshevism. At the time when the old parties of the bourgeoisie had drained themselves to the dregs, the dynamic power of the working class also found itself sapped.

The postwar chaos hit the artisans, the peddlers, and the civil employees no less cruelly than the workers. The economic crisis in agriculture was ruining the peasantry. The decay of the middle strata did not mean that they were made into proletarians, inasmuch as the proletariat itself was casting out a gigantic army of chronically unemployed. The pauperization of the petty bourgeoisie,

barely covered by ties and socks of artificial silk, eroded all official creeds and first of all the doctrine of democratic parliamentarism.

The multiplicity of parties, the icy fever of elections, the interminable changes of ministries aggravated the social crisis by creating a kaleidoscope of barren political combinations. In the atmosphere brought to white heat by war, defeat, reparations, inflation, occupation of the Ruhr, crisis, need, and despair, the petty bourgeoisie rose up against all the old parties that had bamboozled it. The sharp grievances of small proprietors never out of bankruptcy, of their university sons without posts and clients, of their daughters without dowries and suitors, demanded order and an iron hand.

The banner of National Socialism was raised by upstarts from the lower and middle commanding ranks of the old army. Decorated with medals for distinguished service, commissioned and noncommissioned officers could not believe that their heroism and sufferings for the Fatherland had not only come to naught, but also gave them no special claims to gratitude. Hence their hatred of the revolution and the proletariat. At the same time, they did not want to reconcile themselves to being sent by the bankers, industrialists, and ministers back to the modest posts of bookkeepers, engineers, postal clerks, and schoolteachers. Hence their “socialism.” At the Yser and under Verdun they had learned to risk themselves and others, and to speak the language of command, which powerfully overawed the petty bourgeois behind the lines.² Thus these people became leaders.

At the start of his political career, Hitler stood out only because of his big temperament, a voice much louder than others, and an intellectual mediocrity much more self-assured. He did not bring into the movement any ready-made program, if one disregards the insulted soldier’s thirst for vengeance.

2. The river Yser and the city of Verdun in France were the scene of major battles in World War I. Over a million men were killed at Verdun between February and December 1916.

March

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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1. Alfonso XIII (1886–1941) was the king of Spain who was forced to abdicate at the formation of the Spanish Republic in 1931.

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6 The Militant March 30, 2009

U.S. gov't weighs sending soldiers to Mexico border

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

HOUSTON—President Barack Obama told the press March 11 that he is considering deploying National Guard troops to the U.S.-Mexico border. Using concern over the escalating warfare between the Mexican government and drug cartels as a justification for militarizing the border, Obama said he found it “unacceptable if you’ve got drug gangs crossing our borders and killing our citizens.”

Roger Ruff, the Homeland Security Department’s head of operations, told a congressional panel the following day that the Obama administration is working on a blueprint for dealing with the border. In the first phase he said his department would use its own personnel. The second phase would involve other federal agencies and in the third stage military forces would be deployed to the border.

The president said he didn’t know what would be the “tipping point” that would require troops. “I think if one U.S. citizen is killed because of foreign nationals who are engaging in violent crime, that’s enough of a concern to do something about it,” he said.

Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited Mexico recently to discuss additional support the U.S. government could provide and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will visit the country March 25.

Border-state governors have been pressing for troops. Texas governor Rick Perry announced at a press conference at the border in El Paso February 24 that he had asked Washington for 1,000 more “boots on the ground.” “I don’t care if they are military, National Guard or customs agents,” he said. “We’re very concerned that the federal government is not funding border security adequately. We must be ready for any contingency.”

Texas Homeland Security director Steve McCraw named Mexican gangs as “the most significant threat Texas faces,” and asked the state legislature for \$135 million to boost his department. Last year Governor Perry gave Texas border sheriffs \$2 million to set up a “virtual surveillance” program with web cameras placed along the border to catch immigrants and “other suspicious activity.”

Arizona governor Jan Brewer sent a letter to Defense Secretary Robert Gates



National Guard Bureau/Sgt. Jim Greenhill

U.S. Army National Guard soldier at U.S.-Mexico border near Nogales, Arizona, Jan. 17, 2007, during Operation Jump Start. Washington is considering sending troops to the border again under pretext of fighting drug crimes.

requesting 250 more National Guard soldiers be sent to that state’s border with Mexico.

The last major National Guard mobilization along the U.S.-Mexico border, called Operation Jump Start, took place from 2006 to 2008. By the end of July 2008 more than 30,000 National Guard troops had participated in the operations.

Previous use of troops along the border has met with opposition. U.S. Marines deployed there in 1997, also sup-

posedly to end drug trafficking, shot and killed an 18-year-old shepherd in Texas, sparking widespread protests that set back government efforts to militarize the border.

In another development, 1,500 people packed a local church March 13 chanting “Legalization now!” in Spanish and waved banners declaring, “Deportation is not the answer! Legalization is the solution!” reported the *El Paso Times*. The meeting had been organized to hear Democratic party politicians speak on immigration reform.

Steve Warshell contributed to this article.

Obama defends jailing ‘terrorists’ indefinitely

BY CINDY JAQUITH

The Obama administration has dropped the designation “enemy combatant” but is fighting to maintain the U.S. government’s right to indefinitely jail individuals it claims are connected to al-Qaeda or the Taliban.

In a federal court filing March 13 in response to challenges by some 200 men to their indefinite detention at the U.S. prison camp in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, Justice Department attorneys proposed a sweeping definition of who may be lawfully detained. It includes anyone who “substantially supported Taliban or al-Qaeda forces or associated forces that are engaged in hostilities against the United States or its coalition partners.”

The George Bush administration justified detention of “enemy combatants,” defining them as those who “directly supported” al-Qaeda or the Taliban. The majority of detainees at Guantánamo were never charged with

any specific crime, however.

Unlike Bush, the Obama administration is not claiming a presidential authority to indefinitely incarcerate individuals accused of terrorism, but rather says its authority to do so is based on congressional authorization of military force in response to September 11, 2001.

A statement by the Center for Constitutional Rights said, “They have adopted almost the same standard the Bush administration used to detain people without charge—with one change, the addition of the word ‘substantially’ before the word ‘supported.’ This is really a case of old wine in new bottles.”

Following a one-day visit to Guantánamo, Attorney General Eric Holder told a February 25 news conference, “I did not witness any mistreatment of prisoners.” A U.S. military review of the prison begun in January concluded that the conditions there meet Geneva

Convention standards.

The Obama administration has suspended the legal challenges by Guantánamo detainees to indefinite imprisonment while a task force reviews the files on all 242 prisoners in the camp. That is expected to take almost a year. Closing down the prison within the year, as Obama has ordered, “will not be an easy process,” Holder said when he returned from Guantánamo. “It does not in any way decrease our determination to close the facility.”

On February 27 Ali Saleh Kahlah al-Marri, held in a South Carolina navy brig since 2003 as an “enemy combatant,” was formally charged with conspiracy and providing “material support” to al-Qaeda. He was transferred to civilian custody and will be tried in a civilian court in Illinois. Al-Marri is a dual Saudi and Qatari citizen.

Obama simultaneously asked the U.S. Supreme Court to dismiss Marri’s legal case, which challenges the authority of the president to indefinitely imprison people charged with “terrorism” who are arrested on U.S. soil. The Supreme Court did so March 6, meaning there will be no court review of presidential power to order an indefinite detention.

In a March 8 interview with the *New York Times*, Obama did not rule out continuing to authorize the seizure of “terrorism” suspects abroad regardless of the agreement of the country involved. He said anyone so detained would have “an opportunity through *habeas corpus* to answer the charges.”

The *Times* reported that “aides later said Mr. Obama did not mean to suggest that everybody held by American forces would be granted *habeas corpus* or the right to challenge their detention. In a court filing last month, the Obama administration agreed with the Bush administration that 600 prisoners in a cavernous prison on the American air base at Bagram in Afghanistan have no right to seek their release in court.”

Mexican gov’t boosts army troops to 8,500 in Juárez city

BY SETH GALINSKY

March 17—In the last two weeks the Mexican government has sent more than 5,000 additional soldiers to Ciudad Juárez, a city of 1.6 million just across the border from El Paso, Texas.

There are now some 8,500 troops in addition to about 4,000 cops patrolling the city. More than 300 cops accused of ties to drug traffickers have been fired.

The municipal police have been placed under control of the army. Julián David Rivera Bretón, a retired army general, replaced the previous chief, who quit February 20 after drug cartels reportedly threatened to kill a police officer every 48 hours until he resigned. Bretón was commander of a military unit in Chiapas during the conflict with the Zapatista movement guerrillas. He immediately asked residents of Ciudad Juárez to make “anonymous reports to guarantee public security.”

The intensifying warfare between competing capitalist drug cartels has undermined government functioning in Mexico, which has the second-largest population and economy in Latin America. About 1,600 people were killed in Ciudad Juárez in 2008 and 250 in February alone this year.

The militarization of the border area takes place in the midst of growing unemployment, increased trade tensions with Washington, and the loss of more than 30 percent in the value of the Mexican peso since August. Ciudad Juárez has been especially hard hit as 80 percent of its industry is auto assembly, which has sharply declined worldwide.

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Malcolm X is focus of Havana Int'l Book Fair

Book launch discusses 'one of the most important revolutionary po

BY RÓGER CALERO
AND BEN JOYCE

HAVANA—Malcolm X, his political legacy, and the importance of his example in Cuba today were the focus of one of the major presentations at the Havana International Book Fair this year.

The first Cuban edition of *Habla Malcolm X* (Malcolm X Speaks), issued by Ciencias Sociales, one of this country's major publishing houses, and "Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X," by Jack Barnes, the lead article in the latest issue of *New International* magazine, were presented at a February 20 event to a standing-room-only crowd.

Sonia Almaguer, director of Ciencias Sociales, who chaired the event, told the audience of 60 that *Habla Malcolm X*, with a run size of about 5,000 copies, was part of the publisher's expanding "A Look at the United States" collection. She noted that the speeches, interviews, and statements in the book, first published in Spanish in the United States by Pathfinder Press, represented the largest collection of Malcolm X's works yet published in Cuba.

Almaguer introduced the four panelists: Esteban Morales, director emeritus of the University of Havana's Center for the Study of the United States, who wrote the preface to the Cuban edition of *Habla Malcolm X*; Martín Koppel, editor of the original Pathfinder edition; Adalberto Hernández, national president of Cuba's Federation of University Students (FEU); and Fernando Martínez Heredia, recipient of the 2006 national prize for social sciences.

As the audience listened intently to what the speakers said about Malcolm X, the political electricity in the hall was almost palpable. Many were for the first time learning about the political views of a revolutionary leader whose name they were familiar with but who they had never really known.

Malcolm's political evolution

"Malcolm X became a revolutionary leader on a world scale," said Esteban Morales. "He is one of the most stirring and important revolutionary political figures of the 20th century." The publication of *Habla Malcolm X* in Cuba is especially important, Morales noted, because Malcolm X "is



Militant/Ben Joyce

Sonia Almaguer, director of Ciencias Sociales publishing house, welcomes audience to February 20 presentation of Malcolm X titles at Havana book fair. From left: Adalberto Hernández, national president of Federation of University Students; Martín Koppel, Pathfinder Press; Esteban Morales, director emeritus of Center for the Study of the United States; Fernando Martínez Heredia, recipient of 2006 national prize for social sciences; and Almaguer.

not sufficiently known."

In Cuba, excerpts of Malcolm X speeches were published in various collections in 1967, 1968, and 1974, along with the posthumously published *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, by Alex Haley. A few years ago Ciencias Sociales reprinted the autobiography, and in 2003 Casa Editora Abril published a Cuban edition of *Malcolm X habla a la juventud* (Malcolm X Talks to Young People), originally published by Pathfinder Press.

Morales cited Malcolm's statement that "I'm not an American—I'm one of the 22 million Black people who are the victims of Americanism." His revolutionary outlook "distinguished Malcolm, in terms of strategy and tactics, from Martin Luther King's practical course of struggle."

He pointed to Malcolm's example as an unflinching leader who broke with the Nation of Islam, as he saw its leadership's "corruption and lack of real political activity on behalf of Blacks," and continued to evolve politically. In his last year Malcolm X "was no longer speaking in terms of black and white revolutionaries, but simply of revolutionaries. He was an opponent of imperialism, which led him toward internationalism and socialism. He embraced the Cuban Revolution. He supported the Algerian revolution. He promoted the *Militant* newspaper. And he was deepening his collaboration with the Socialist Work-

ers Party," said Morales.

Malcolm X helps us understand the importance "of being communist without forgetting that one is black," Morales said. That understanding "is relevant in the fight for socialism, including in Cuban society today, because, despite all the progress we have made, we still have a long way to go to eliminate racial discrimination and racism in our country."

Malcolm's ideas, he concluded, are important "not only for the American people but for Cubans today."

Morales is well-known and respected in Cuba not only for his writings on U.S. politics but for his work to make known important chapters of Cuban history that are part of the struggles against the legacy of slavery and racist discrimination, as well as the ongoing fight today to eradicate that legacy.

A proletarian internationalist

"The Malcolm many Cubans know is the Malcolm of the *Autobiography* or of the Spike Lee film," Koppel noted, both of which end before the final, most decisive year of Malcolm's life. "In *Habla Malcolm X*, you can follow his development as a proletarian internationalist leader."

Koppel highlighted the importance for revolutionists in the United States of some key points made by Barnes in "Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X," which is featured in *New International* no. 14 and in *Nueva Internacional* no. 8. The first, Koppel said, is that the vanguard role in the U.S. class struggle of workers who are Black is not an open question. It has been demonstrated over and over, from the Civil War to the forging of the industrial unions in the 1930s to the mass civil rights battles that overthrew Jim Crow segregation to today.

The second, he said, is that only a socialist revolution can open the door to the possibility of ending racist oppression. "The legacy of racism cannot be abolished overnight, but, with conscious leadership, state power is the most powerful weapon that can be used to combat that legacy," Koppel said, pointing to the example of the Cuban Revolution. "Whatever the challenges that remain, Cuba is the one place we

can point to today and say: this is what a socialist revolution opens up."

In the *New International* article, Koppel said, Barnes also explains how in his last year Malcolm, deeply affected by world events and his international travels, evolved away from considering himself a Black nationalist and toward proletarian internationalism.

The turning point for Malcolm was not his pilgrimage to Mecca and discovery "that some whites might live beside him as brothers in Islam . . . in a distant future, in a far-off land," as Barack Obama asserts in his book *Dreams from My Father*. It was Malcolm's discussions with revolutionaries, especially in Africa, that led him to stop using the term Black nationalism to define his outlook, Koppel noted, and to "seek out fellow revolutionists around the world, no matter what their skin color or views on religion."

Malcolm "was on a trajectory that was taking him toward socialism and communism," Koppel said.

Relevant for Cuban youth today

Adalberto Hernández said that "Malcolm X offers an important message for today's generations" of Cubans. He noted that Malcolm X and "other revolutionary leaders from the 1950s and '60s worldwide" are not studied much by young people in Cuba today.

"In his last year Malcolm X underwent a radicalization," Hernández noted. More and more he "embraced the cause not only of American Blacks but of the oppressed of the world."

Malcolm X "also has another message for us," Hernández said, "not to forget our identity—to be defenders of our historic cultural patrimony." Malcolm's instilling of pride and rejection of degrading self-images among blacks is an answer to antiblack prejudices and stereotypes that persist in Cuba today, he noted, offering several examples that had many in the audience nodding in agreement.

"Sometimes, when a man sees an attractive young mulatta or black woman, he will say, '*Qué blanca se perdió ahí*,'" (She must have quite some white woman in her background), Hernández remarked.



Book fair visitor eyes new Cuban edition of *Habla Malcolm X* at the Havana book fair. Titles by and about Ma

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by Jack Barnes

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Book Fair discussion

political figures of the 20th century'



Militant/Ben Joyce

Esteban Morales speaks at book presentation

To much laughter Hernández, from his own experience as a dark-skinned black person, gave a second example—the stereotype that blacks are natural-born dancers. “I’m not very good at dancing,” he said. “But sometimes people say to me, ‘How can it be that you don’t know how to dance?’”

Hernández concluded by quoting from a speech by Fernando Martínez Heredia at a meeting last year at which the Communist Party of Cuba established a commission, headed by Martínez, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Independent Party of Color, a political party in Cuba that fought for the rights of blacks and was brutally repressed by the capitalist government in a 1912 massacre that cost the lives of thousands.

The speech underscored the need to “encourage an understanding of the pluralistic character of our nation’s culture” and “recover the forgotten contributions and sacrifices of the poor of all colors,” Hernández noted.

‘One of our own’

The final speaker was Martínez Heredia, who began by welcoming the new Ciencias Sociales edition of *Habla Malcolm X* as well as the “profound essay” by Jack Barnes published in *New International*. He saluted Pathfinder

Press and the Socialist Workers Party in the United States for its 45-year record of “compiling, publishing, and making known” Malcolm X in his own words.

Martínez highlighted Malcolm’s political contributions, from his opposition to supporting Democratic Party politician Lyndon Johnson as a “lesser evil” to the Republican candidate Barry Goldwater in the 1964 presidential elections, to his discussions with young civil rights fighters on rejecting “nonviolence” as a strategy. He quoted Malcolm’s words on the need to awaken the oppressed, not to their exploitation but “to their humanity, to their own self-worth, and to their heritage.”

Malcolm, he noted, “evolved from Black nationalism to advocating the unity of all those who want to take action” against the “miserable condition that exists on this earth.” He condemned U.S. imperialist aggression, from Africa to Vietnam, and increasingly took an internationalist course. “He began to pose the need to oppose capitalism as a system and to overthrow it.”

Cuban government replaces 10 high officials

BY DOUG NELSON

The Cuban government announced March 2 a reorganization of government ministries and changes in the responsibilities of 10 high-level officials.

The action of the Council of State also merged the Ministry of Foreign Trade and the Ministry of Foreign Investment and Economic Cooperation into a single Ministry of Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment. The new department’s responsibilities include overseeing the country’s foreign trade as well as joint ventures with foreign enterprises in Cuba.

The Ministry of the Fishing Industry was combined with the Ministry of the Food Industry. Both ministries are centrally involved in food production, a national priority.

According to the statement by the Council of State the March 2 measures were in line with proposals made by the president at the Seventh Legislature of the National Assembly of People’s Power, the Cuban legislature, held on Feb. 24, 2008.

“A more compact and operational structure is required, with a smaller number of institutions under the central state administration and a better distribution of their functions,” President Raúl Castro said in a report to that body.

Among the changes announced March 2 were the removal of Foreign Minister Felipe Pérez Roque and the secretary of the Council of Ministers, Carlos Lage Dávila. They were replaced, respectively, by Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, former first deputy minister, and Brig. Gen. José Amado Ricardo Guerra, head of the Secretariat of the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba.

Commentary in the world capitalist press “speculated” that the changes were evidence of a factional struggle between supporters of former president



Militant/Ben Joyce

Audience listens to panelists at joint presentation of new Ciencias Sociales edition of Malcolm X speeches and of article by Jack Barnes, “Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X,” in latest issue of *New International* magazine.

The revolutionary leader’s ideas “constitute an extraordinary legacy on the road toward the liberation of the people of the United States and the cause of liberation of other people.”

For all the oppressed who are engaged in struggle, “Malcolm was what you can call ‘one of our own,’” Martínez concluded. Many in the audience clearly understood that more deeply than ever before, and several commented that the remarks by the Cuban speakers on the continuing fight to eradicate the vestiges of racism in Cuba were encouragingly frank.

The hunger for learning more about Malcolm X was seen in the fact that every book by the revolutionary leader at the Pathfinder booth was sold out by the end of the fair. More than 340 copies of *Nueva Internacional* no. 8 and *New International* no. 14 were sold and distributed at the book fair and related events.

The book presentation was covered by Cuban TV, as well as in articles in *Cuba Ahora* and *La Jiribilla*, two Cuban online publications. The remarks by Martínez Heredia were reprinted by the Cuban news agency Prensa Latina.

Fidel Castro and President Raúl Castro.

In his “Reflections” column in the March 3 *Granma* Fidel Castro refuted those rumors.

Castro said he was consulted and agreed with the replacement of Pérez Roque and Lage. Their release had nothing to do with “a lack of personal courage,” he wrote. “The sweet nectar of power, for which they had made no sacrifice, awoke in them ambitions that led them to play a disgraceful role. The external enemy was filled with illusions about them.”

Castro also noted that he had not proposed the original assignments of most of those who were replaced. “I never

devoted myself to that task,” he wrote.

Both Pérez Roque and Lage subsequently submitted letters addressed to Raúl Castro, president of the Council of State and Council of Ministers, expressing their agreement with the action taken to replace them and resigning from all of the government and party responsibilities they had held.

The Council of State’s March 2 statement on the reorganization concluded by noting that further changes should be expected. “It is necessary,” it said, “to continue studying the government’s current structure with the objective of gradually reducing its magnitude and increasing its effectiveness.”

Cuban 5 appeal gains support

Continued from front page

was also falsely accused of “conspiracy to commit murder.”

In August 2005 a three-judge panel of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals threw out the convictions on the basis that the five men could not get a fair trial in Miami. A year later the full court of 12 judges overturned that ruling. In September 2008 the court again upheld their convictions.

Among those signing the briefs backing the appeal are the Mexican Senate, the Panama National Assembly, 75 members of the European Parliament, 87 members from the House of Commons in the United Kingdom, 9 senators and 33 deputies of the Irish parliament, 17 senators and 138 deputies from the Brazilian National Congress, and Mary Robinson, former president of Ireland. Organizations include the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, National Conference of Black Lawyers, U.S. Mexican-American Political Association, Berlin Lawyers Association, and Asian Human Rights Foundation.

UN General Assembly president Miguel d’Escoto issued a public plea for freedom for the five Cubans in a statement before the UN Human Rights Council in early March. Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez has condemned their unjust imprisonment while demanding that President Barack Obama extradite CIA-trained counterrevolutionary Luis Posada Carriles to Venezuela to stand trial for violent attacks against Cuba, including the 1976 bombing of a Cubana Airlines plane that killed 73 people.

The Cuban Five’s appeal focuses on three main issues: the refusal of the presiding judge to grant a change in venue for the trial, the disproportionate exclusion of Blacks from the jury, and the absence of any evidence for the murder charge against Hernández.

The U.S. government has until April 6 to present its brief opposing the appeal. The Supreme Court may decide whether to review the case before it recesses in June.



Militant/Ben Joyce

Malcolm X (Malcolm X Speaks) at the main sales center. *Malcolm X* drew high interest at the 10-day festival.

Factory workers in Israel

Continued from front page
receivership. Residents of Hatzor Haglilit held a one-day general strike to support workers fighting the closure.

Moti Hazizi, head of the Histadrut workers committee in the canning factory, told the court, “We do not want unemployment benefits, and no pity, just to be allowed to work.”

According to Webhe Badarne, a former Pri Galil worker, about half the workers at the plant are Palestinian. The rest are Jewish workers from the area, including Russian and Ethiopian immigrants.

“It is normal for Jews, Arabs, Ethiopians, and Russians to work together,” Badarne said in a phone interview from Haifa. “The capitalists violate everyone’s rights. In political views we are different, but when we talk about issues like in Hagali, we are the same.” Badarne is now director of Laborer’s Voice, an organization that is trying to organize a Palestinian trade union.

Role of temporary agencies

On top of the deepening economic crisis, Palestinian workers face additional discrimination and are often hired through employment agencies.

At Pri Galil, Bardane said, the company hires many workers through the agencies, fires them after nine months, then rehires them, to avoid making them permanent employees entitled to full benefits.

Jamal Zahalka, a member of the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, said in a phone interview, “The rule is that the harder the work and the lower the salary, the more you have Arabs. The more sophisticated the work and the higher the salary, the fewer the Arabs.”

Zahalka is a member of Balad, one of several parties based among Israeli Arabs that have won election to the Knesset.

While very few higher paid electrical or railroad workers in Israel are Palestinian, more than 22 percent of farm workers and 43 percent of construction workers are Palestinian.

On March 4 it was announced that the Hatzi Hinam store chain had bought Pri Galil and agreed to give the workers a 5 percent pay raise and to hire 100 more permanent workers.

Palestinian women demand work

Palestinian women have also joined recent protests. On March 8 dozens marched through Tel Aviv demanding to be hired as farm workers.

“The government used to say that Arab women won’t work because it was not a part of their culture, but with the

way things are today, that’s simply not true,” Rada Wahida, an unemployed mother of four, told the daily *Yedioth Ahronoth*. “We want to provide for our families—we want to work, but there are simply no jobs.”

The demonstration also had an anti-immigrant bent. “We have nothing against foreign workers, but their import must be stopped,” Wahida said, because immigrants are often paid less than the minimum wage.

There are almost 100,000 “legal” immigrant workers in Israel and as many as 150,000 undocumented workers. Immigrants come from the Philippines, Thailand, India, Turkey, Nepal, China, the former Soviet Union, and Africa.

Law of return

On March 15 the Israeli Supreme Court heard arguments from Adalah, the Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, challenging a law that bans family unification between Palestinian citizens of Israel and Palestinians from the Gaza Strip, West Bank, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Iran.

The law, first passed in 2003 as a “temporary” measure and extended eight times, is aimed at Palestinians who are married to Israeli Palestinians, in an attempt to slow the growing



Activestills.org/Oren Ziv

Workers burn tires and lock gate to Pri Galil food processing plant in northern Israeli town of Hatzor Haglilit during February 23 strike. Jewish, Palestinian, Russian, and Ethiopian workers at plant participated in strike.

number of Arab citizens of Israel, currently about 20 percent of the population.

The law is especially discriminatory against Israeli Palestinians because Israel’s law of return grants Jews from around the world the right to emigrate and become citizens, while Palestinians originally from inside what is now Israel who fled or were expelled are denied the right to return.

“Most Palestinians in Israel have friends and families outside the country,” said Orna Kohn, a senior attorney

at Adalah, in a phone interview. “And this law directly affects some 20,000 families inside Israel.”

Even getting a temporary permit is difficult, Kohn noted. Men who are married to Israeli Arabs can only apply, with no guarantee of approval, if they are 35 or older and women if they are 25 and older. “And even if you get a temporary permit,” Kohn said. “It can be for six months or less. And with a temporary permit you are not allowed to work or even to drive a car, nor are you eligible for any government benefits.”

Economic crisis sparks protectionist measures

Continued from front page

purchasing U.S.-made products.

Soon after, Congress passed a \$410 billion spending bill that among other things eliminates a pilot program allowing Mexican truck drivers to cross the border to deliver goods. Responding to defend its markets, the Mexican government announced March 16 that it would place tariffs on \$2.4 billion worth of U.S. exports, covering 90 U.S. industrial and agricultural products.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), signed by the U.S., Mexican, and Canadian governments in 1993, gave Mexican truckers access to border states in 1995 and nationwide in 2000. Washington has refused to implement this provision.

The trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia, and Panama, which Congress has not yet approved, eliminate tariffs, allowing U.S. companies greater ability to sell their goods at prices local industries and farmers in these semicolonial countries cannot match. But with the deepening economic crisis, some of these pacts no longer seem advantageous to the U.S.

capitalist rulers.

One example is the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement, which could be the biggest such trade agreement Washington has undertaken since NAFTA, reports *Business Week*. Under this pact South Korea’s 8 percent tariff on all U.S. vehicles would be removed. Washington would phase out over 10 years a 25 percent U.S. tariff on pickup trucks and end its 2.5 percent import tax for smaller Korean cars.

Last year Korean auto companies, including Hyundai and Kia, sold 700,000 cars in the United States while GM, Ford, and Chrysler sold only about 7,000 vehicles in Korea. About 90 percent of car imports into South Korea are from European and Japanese competitors.

This “just simply isn’t fair,” said Kirk at his Senate confirmation hearing March 9, adding that Washington was “prepared to step away” from the U.S.-Korea trade deal.

Since 2004 Washington has banned the import of Chinese poultry products

despite an agreement that year for both countries to resume trade after it was briefly suspended following an outbreak of bird flu. Over the same time the U.S. rulers greatly expanded their poultry exports to China, up to nearly 4 million tons. This accounts for more than 75 percent of China’s total poultry imports, according to *China Daily*.

A provision in the recently passed \$410 billion federal spending bill extends this U.S. trade ban by blocking any of these funds from being used to import poultry products from China.

Trade conflicts between Washington and governments within the European Union are also heating up. In response to the EU’s ban on importing U.S. beef containing hormones, the U.S. government in January imposed 100 percent tariffs to take effect in April on 45 food products made in Europe. The tariff for Roquefort cheese is raised to 300 percent. The EU announced March 12 that it is imposing steep duties on biodiesel fuel imported from the United States.

Marchers demand end to war

Continued from front page

raeli military earlier this year and also against the U.S.-led imperialist wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Other contingents came from area high school and college campuses.

“We came to show that there are still wars,” said Abdul-Aziz Hassan, who works at Lawndale High School in Little Village and came with a group of students. “Troops are leaving Iraq, but they are still in Afghanistan and Palestine. We are going to be in the streets until we get what we want, rights for immigrants and to get the troops out.”

“It’s important to have a march that brings together the antiwar and immigrant rights movement,” said Chris Poulos, a member of Students Against

the War at Northeastern Illinois University. “That’s what builds a mass movement, bringing all the issues together.”

Some participants came from other parts of the Midwest, including Iowa and Minnesota.

“It has been a long six years of a terrible and unjust war in Iraq,” said Melissa Goodemote, who came with a friend from the Urbana-Champaign area, where she is a student at the University of Illinois. Both Goodemote and her friend demonstrated in Washington, D.C., January 10 against Israel’s assault on Gaza.

Alyson Kennedy contributed to this article.

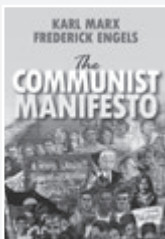
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Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?

by Mary-Alice Waters

“Revolutionary struggles by working people are inevitable. They will be initiated not by the toilers, but will be forced upon us by the crisis-driven assaults by the propertied classes. As solidarity grows among working people, the outlines of these coming class battles can be seen.”

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Cuba’s revolutionary leadership

On March 2 the Cuban government announced the reorganization of several of its ministries and changes in the responsibilities of 10 top government officials. The changes most commented on in the press internationally were the replacements of Foreign Minister Felipe Pérez Roque and of the secretary of the Council of Ministers, Carlos Lage Dávila.

The capitalist media has taken the announcement as another opportunity to “speculate” about the transition in leadership in Cuba—and to search for fissures and conflicts to be exploited. The replacement of Pérez and Lage was variously presented as “evidence” of a factional struggle between supporters of Fidel Castro and those of Raúl Castro, or proof that Raúl Castro was removing potential “rivals” for power.

Such fishing expeditions reflect Washington’s hope that they can find elements in the leadership willing to make concessions that it has vainly sought for decades, concessions that would turn Cuba’s working people away from the 50-year revolutionary course they have fought for and defended—and the imperialists’ frustration at being unable to do so.

Some among those active in solidarity with revolutionary Cuba have also expressed concern about the government changes, as if something exceptional had occurred that required further explanation.

There is nothing in the announced changes, however, that needs “comment” or “analysis” beyond what has been and will be provided by the appropriate bodies and leaders in Cuba when it serves the interests of defending the Cuban Revolution.

In addition to the initial long-discussed steps to consolidate and streamline government ministries, and the administrative apparatus, two Cuban leaders who were well-known internationally were removed for apparent cause, as unambiguously stated by former Cuban president Fidel Castro.

Referring to Pérez Roque and Lage, he noted that those replaced did not lack personal courage, but the “sweet nectar of power, for which they had made no sacrifice, awoke in them ambitions that led them to play a disgraceful role. The external enemy was filled with illusions about them.”

Since the attack on the Moncada barracks in 1953, which opened the revolutionary struggle to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, the course of the leadership of the Cuban Revolution has started with and been guided by defending the interests of working people internationally and in Cuba. This course remains the test of leadership for all generations in Cuba and is at the heart of the steady, measured transition in leadership that has been under way for some years now.

Expanding U.S. strikes in Pakistan

Continued from page 3

the Taliban (students) movement, drawn largely from government-backed Islamic schools in the majority-Pashtun areas of Afghanistan and northwest Pakistan, in order to establish “stability” and secure its influence in Afghanistan.

Under pressure following Washington’s invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, Islamabad launched a war against sections of the Taliban in Pakistan, which has claimed the lives of hundreds of civilians.

Islamabad launched two major offensives last year: in the Swat District of the NWFP and in the Bajur Agency in the FATA. Pakistani paramilitaries burned thousands of homes to the ground. More than 400,000 people have fled Swat and Bajur, swelling the ranks of the homeless in other parts of the country.

In February, Taliban forces in Swat agreed to stop fighting in exchange for the implementation of *sharia* (Islamic) law there and in several other districts comprising some one-third of the NWFP. On March 10 pro-Taliban tribal heads in Bajur signed a peace agreement with the government and agreed to rein in Taliban fighters there.

Ireland: Sinn Fein meets with rightists in wake of killings of cop, soldiers

BY PAUL DAVIES

LONDON—Two British soldiers were killed by the Real Irish Republican Army (IRA) in Antrim, Northern Ireland, on March 7. Days later a cop was killed by the Continuity IRA in Craigavon. This is the first time a member of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), formed in 2001, has been killed by republican forces.

Both groups claiming responsibility for the killings are small splits from the Provisional IRA, which carried out armed attacks for decades in a fight to end British rule of Ireland. The Provisional IRA ordered an end to its attacks in 2005. In 2007 the main Irish nationalist party, Sinn Fein, joined a coalition government with pro-British parties in the Northern Ireland Assembly. Sinn Fein’s support for the PSNI helped pave the way for the coalition government.

The killings were condemned at a joint press conference by Hugh Orde, chief constable of the PSNI; Peter Robinson of the pro-British Democratic Unionist Party; and Martin McGuinness of Sinn Fein.

Orde said, “I have no intention to ask the Army for routine military support, it’s not necessary.” Brit-

Meanwhile, Pakistan’s economy is showing signs of increasing volatility and a deep factional struggle between two major bourgeois parties—the Pakistan People’s Party of President Asif Ali Zardari and the Pakistan Muslim League (N) of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif—has threatened to further destabilize an already shaky government.

In mid-March the country’s top general, Ashfaq Kayani, stepped in to convince Zardari to accede to demands of the opposition. Faced with plans for a “long march” in the country led by lawyers, the federal government restored judges deposed under former military dictator Pervez Musharraf and announced it would request the Supreme Court lift its ban on Sharif and his brother Shahbaz from holding public office.

The government also said it would end federal rule of Punjab Province, where Shahbaz Sharif will be reinstalled as chief minister. It restored broadcasts of Geo TV news station, and lifted the imposition of section 144 of the criminal code. Section 144, established by the British Raj in 1860, bans political activity, including the gathering of more than four people in a public place.

ish prime minister Gordon Brown commented that there would be “no return to the old days.” This theme was echoed by the *Financial Times*, which said these events “should not lead to even a tiny build-up of British troops.”

McGuinness said those who carried out the killings were “traitors to the island of Ireland,” a remark that drew praise from a *Financial Times* editorial. The *London Times* noted that McGuinness had “called on republicans to help police to find those who have murdered two soldiers and a policeman.”

For the first time, Sinn Fein leaders attended a funeral for a British cop killed by a republican group. In the wake of the killings party leaders also participated in their first-ever meeting with the Ulster Political Research Group, an organization linked to loyalist paramilitaries.

Taking further advantage of the cop killing, the chairman of the inquiry into the sectarian killing of Robert Hamill announced that cops testifying at the inquiry would be granted temporary anonymity. Hamill, a young Catholic, was beaten to death in 1997 by a loyalist mob in Portadown while cops looked on.

U.S. Treasury Dep’t fines company over business with Cuba

BY MAGGIE TROWE

MIAMI—The Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), a division of the U.S. Treasury Department, has levied a \$20,950 fine against Lactalis USA, a U.S. branch of the French food and dairy giant Lactalis. The company makes Sorrento, President, and other milk and cheese products.

OFAC, which enforces the U.S. embargo against Cuba, also issued a new license March 11 that eased restrictions on Cuban Americans traveling to Cuba to visit family members.

Lactalis was fined for “making electronic financial transactions in which Cuba or a Cuban citizen had an interest” between February 2004 and March 2007.

The Cuban daily *Granma* reported that the fine is the first imposed by the Treasury Department on a company for ties to Cuba since President Barack Obama took power. “It reaffirms the policy of blockading the island,” the paper said.

In 2004 President George Bush’s administration tightened restrictions on Cuban Americans traveling to Cuba, limiting them to once every three years. The new OFAC license officially overturned that restriction and permits Cuban Americans to travel to the island once a year. If they want to travel again that year, they must apply for “specific licenses,” which will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The new guidelines also broaden the definition of who qualifies as family and can be visited. The per diem spending cap has been raised to \$179, in comparison to the \$50 allowed before.

According to the White House, the new OFAC guidelines are pursuant to the 2009 budget bill passed by Congress March 10. This legislation left the status of restrictions on travel to Cuba unclear by removing funding to enforce them without lifting the restrictions or the criminal penalties for breaking them. The new guidelines dispelled any illusions that unlimited travel would be permitted.

The budget bill also provides for the creation of a license for representatives of medical and agricultural companies to travel to the island.

The limited measures of the bill and the OFAC license fell short even of what Obama had promised during his campaign for president. In August 2007 Obama wrote an op-ed column published in the *Miami Herald* saying that if elected president he would grant Cuban Americans “unrestricted rights to visit family and send remittances to the island.” Asserting that Cuba is a repressive country, Obama wrote that this course would also be “our best tool for helping to foster the beginnings of grass-roots democracy on the island.”

A March 15 editorial in the *Miami Herald*, a paper which for many years has been known as a powerful voice in favor of the embargo, took Obama to task, saying he “failed to follow through on the commitments he made.” Recent polls have shown that a majority of Cuban Americans now support an end to the embargo and normalization of U.S. relations with Cuba.

“This is incomplete,” Armando García, owner of Marazul charters, told the *Herald*. Marazul operates flights to Cuba. Silvia Wilhelm, executive director of the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights, called the bill and OFAC guidelines a step in the right direction but added, “This is not the presidential executive order removing all restrictions.”

Andrés Gómez, a leader of Alianza Martiana, a coalition of groups against the embargo, said, “Every person in the United States should be able to travel to Cuba when they want and for whatever reason, as is their constitutional right.” Alianza Martiana is planning an event against the embargo later this month.

Ellen Brickley, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Miami, condemned the attack on Lactalis and called for an immediate, unconditional end to the embargo and all travel restrictions. Brickley told the *Militant*, “As capitalism in its deepening crisis throws millions here and around the world out of jobs and hurries toward war, Cuba’s example of a revolutionary society based on human solidarity and internationalism is more important than ever. My campaign demands an end to all restrictions on travel and trade to Cuba.”