

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**Social struggles paved way  
for abortion rights fight**  
—PAGE 7

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 73/NO. 36 SEPTEMBER 21, 2009

## Official joblessness climbs to 9.7 percent

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In August the official unemployment rate rose to 9.7 percent as bosses slashed jobs for the 20th straight month. This was up from 9.4 percent a month earlier, the Labor Department reported. According to preliminary government figures, 216,000 jobs were cut.

The broader unemployed and underemployed rate—which includes 9.1 million workers forced to accept only part-time hours and 2.3 million the government doesn't count, claiming they haven't looked for work over the past four weeks—rose to 16.8 percent. That's more than 26 million workers.

Among the 14.9 million officially listed as unemployed last month, 5 million have been out of work for more than half a year, many soon facing a halt to unemployment benefit payments. The official unemployment rate has doubled over the past two years, with employers eliminating some 6.9 million jobs since December 2007. "Most economists expect the rate to top 10 percent in coming months and stay over 9 percent through 2010," reported the *Wall Street Journal*.

Oppressed nationalities and youth again suffer disproportionately from unemployment. The August unemployment rate for teenagers rose to 25.5 percent, the highest since the government began keeping these records in 1948. Unemployment among Blacks is 15.1 percent, and 13 percent for Latinos.

Labor Department figures show that  
**Continued on page 5**

## Immigrants dropped from state health plan

BY DOUG NELSON

The Massachusetts government dropped 31,000 immigrant workers from its state-run health-care program August 31 in order to reduce expenses.

As the one state that requires people to purchase health insurance or face fines, Massachusetts has been held up as the model for various "health-care reform" proposals promoted by the Barack Obama administration.

Those cut from the state's Commonwealth Care plan include permanent residents, political refugees, and other legal immigrants who have been in the country for less than five years. The state program is offered as an alternative to private insurance for "low and moderate-income" residents not eligible for Medicaid.

The state insurance plan is provided free of charge for individuals making less than \$900 per month. Those with incomes between \$900 and \$2,700, can get the insurance for a sliding-scale monthly premium.

While the federal government pays for about half the cost for each resident enrolled in the Commonwealth Care program, it had not covered any costs for the 31,000 immigrants now cut from the rolls.

As part of former president William Clinton's "welfare reform" in 1996, federal funds for health care such as Medicaid were denied for all legally  
**Continued on page 9**

## NATO air strike kills up to 90 in Afghanistan

U.S. rulers debate course as war deepens



AP Photo

Afghan security forces guard burnt out remains of fuel tanker struck by NATO war planes September 4 in Kardu, north of Kabul. The air strike killed many civilians.

BY SETH GALINSKY

An air strike by U.S.-led NATO forces in Afghanistan killed as many as 90 people September 4, according to Afghan officials. The escalation of the war and rising U.S. casualties is also provoking a sharpening debate among liberals and conservatives alike in both the Democratic and Republican parties.

The air attack comes on the heels of a disputed election that further under-

cut the credibility of the U.S.-backed government of President Hamid Karzai in Kabul. Karzai issued what has become a routine statement that he was "deeply saddened" and promised to investigate.

The air strike, which was called in by German troops, struck two fuel tankers that they said had been captured by the Taliban and became stuck in a river. U.S. and NATO mili-

**Continued on page 9**

## 'Militant' launches eight-week drive to win 2,100 new readers

Dear Readers:

The *Militant* is launching an eight-week international campaign to win 2,100 new or long-term subscribers. The drive begins September 12 and runs through November 10.

Working people and youth who are looking for answers in the face of the worst economic crisis since the 1930s will find that the *Militant* is indispensable.

Defenders of a woman's right to choose abortion; opponents of the death penalty and police brutality; participants in union-organizing drives and contract fights; working people and youth opposing cutbacks in social services and education; protesters against the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan; supporters of legalizing undocumented workers—all those who are participating in struggles in the interest of the vast majority today need the *Militant*,

a socialist newsweekly that does not claim to be neutral. The *Militant* takes sides, the side of working people and the oppressed across the globe.

The *Militant* is the only paper that explains the consequences for toilers of the economic crisis and why the imperialist rulers are forced to ex-

**Continued on page 4**

## \$95,000 party-building fund to aid communist response to openings

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Socialist Workers Party has launched a fall party-building fund to raise \$95,000. It will run for eight weeks starting September 12 through November 10.

Funds are needed to enable the party to respond in a timely and effective way to openings in the class struggle that are

emerging as a result of the worst capitalist economic crisis in living memory, said party leader Norton Sandler, one of the co-chairs of the fund. Sandler is joined by Laura Garza, a leader of the party in Boston and the SWP candidate for Boston City Council in District 1.

The fund will pay for travel, phone,  
**Continued on page 3**

## Chicago Labor Day march supports immigrant rights

BY BETSY FARLEY

CHICAGO, September 7—Defense of immigrant rights was the central theme of the Labor Day march here. Hundreds of workers and students joined a demonstration demanding legalization of all immigrants.

They included a group of 50 members of Teamsters Local 743, most of them workers at SK Hand Tools. The workers have been on strike since August 25 in response to the company revoking their medical insurance. (See article on page 6).

Marchers also protested continued

deportations, the expansion under the Obama administration of local and state police acting as immigration cops, and stepped-up use of the E-Verify employment check system to fire undocumented immigrant workers from their jobs.

"More workers are being deported under the Obama administration than under Bush," said Jorge Mújica, a leader of the March 10 Coalition, which was one of the organizers of the

**Continued on page 6**

### Also Inside:

Bosses cheat lower-paid workers out of wages	2
FBI harasses U.S.-Cuba travel groups, activists	2
London's release of Libyan stirs row with U.S. rulers	4
Lebanese women fight law on citizenship rights	5



# Bosses cheat lower-paid workers out of wages

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Employers each week routinely cheat at least 1.1 million of the lowest paid workers out of part of their wages in three of the largest U.S. cities, pocketing tens of millions according to a report released in early September.

The report, “Broken Laws, Unprotected Workers,” is based on interviews with nearly 4,400 workers with median incomes of \$8.02 per hour in Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York. The report said at least two-thirds experienced pay violations the previous week. The average worker lost \$51 out of average weekly earnings of \$339. This included employers not paying the minimum wage, unpaid overtime, and “off-the-clock” work.

The study is “the most comprehensive examination of wage-law violations in a decade,” according to the *New York Times*. It was initiated by members of the Center for Urban Economic Development in Chicago, National Employment Law Project in New York, and the UCLA Institute for Research on Labor and Employment in Los Angeles.

Based on interviews conducted from January through August 2008, the report says that wages of lower paid workers have probably “deteriorated further” over the past year with rising unemployment and the deepening of the economic crisis.

According to the study, 39 percent of those surveyed were undocumented workers, 31 percent immigrants with papers, and 30 percent born in the United States.

More than a quarter of those inter-

viewed received less than the minimum wage the previous week; 60 percent were underpaid by more than \$1 per hour. In addition, 76 percent of those who worked more than 40 hours were not paid legally required overtime rates.

Eighty-nine percent of in-home child care workers earned less than their state’s minimum wage, as did more than 40 percent of all sewing and garment workers surveyed.

For those getting tips, 30 percent were not paid the tipped worker minimum wage, which in Illinois and New York is lower than the state minimum wage. Employers stole tips from 12 percent of these workers.

In nearly half the cases where workers complained to the employers about these wage violations or responded by fighting to form a union, the bosses “fired or suspended these workers, threatened to call immigration authorities, or threatened to cut workers’ hours or pay,” the report said.

Only 6 percent of workers seriously injured on the job were able to get workers compensation insurance to pay their medical expenses. Bosses required 43 percent of these employees to work despite their injury, the report noted.

## Socialists campaign at N.Y. West Indian parade



Militant/Seth Galinsky

Maura Deluca, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York City public advocate, campaigning at the West Indian American Day Carnival in Brooklyn, New York, September 7. Deluca was joined in campaigning at the event by Socialist Workers Party candidates Dan Fein, who is running for mayor of New York, and Tom Baumann for Manhattan borough president. The SWP 2009 candidates were well received by thousands of workers attending the parade. Many, like the group of workers Deluca spoke with pictured above, responded favorably to the need to strengthen the unions and the candidates’ demands for U.S. troops out of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan and for legalization of all undocumented workers.

—WILLIE COTTON

## FBI harasses U.S.-Cuba travel groups, activists

BY BEN JOYCE

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has made harassing visits to groups that organize trips to Cuba, challenging the U.S. travel ban to the island.

Federal agents showed up at the of-

fices of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) August 4, shortly after the group’s 20th Friendshipment caravan returned from Cuba. The FBI agents said they were doing “community outreach,” according to an IFCO statement. IFCO staffers declined to talk to the agents—a right guaranteed under the Constitution.

Pastors for Peace, an IFCO ministry, organizes annual Friendshipment trips to take supplies such as hurricane reconstruction materials, medical and educational equipment, computers, and school buses to the island, and to protest Washington’s travel ban.

According to IFCO, the FBI also visited the home of Ignacio Meneses, who recently traveled to Cuba with the Venceremos Brigade, another organization in the United States that

travels yearly to Cuba to protest the travel ban. Meneses heads the U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange and is an advocate for the right to travel to Cuba.

In a related development, Lucius Walker, IFCO’s executive director, is being dragged back into court September 10 by the special commissioner of investigation for the New York City School District. The commissioner, Richard Condon, is pressing the New York State Supreme Court to hold Walker in contempt of court for refusing to provide information related to trips to Cuba made by high school students. The investigation is targeting four trips made by students at Beacon School between 1999 and 2007 that Condon says were illegal. He alleges that Walker and IFCO helped organize them.

## THE MILITANT

### Independence for Western Sahara

*The Saharawi people have waged a long struggle against the Moroccan regime, which in 1975 invaded Western Sahara and has occupied parts of the country ever since. The ‘Militant’ covers their fight for independence. Don’t miss a single issue!*



Saharawiak

Saharawi women demonstrate in 2005 against wall built by Moroccan regime dividing Western Saharan territory.

## SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

### NEW READERS

☐ \$5 for 12 issues

#### RENEWAL

☐ \$10 for 12 weeks

☐ \$20 for 6 months

☐ \$35 for 1 year

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT,  
306 W. 37TH ST., 10TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018.

## The Militant

Vol. 73/No. 36

Closing news date: September 9, 2009

Editor: Sam Manuel

Managing Editor: Martín Koppel

Business Manager: Angel Lariscy

Editorial volunteers: Tom Baumann, Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Cindy Jaquith, Ben Joyce, Omari Musa, Doug Nelson, Jacob Perasso

Published weekly except for one week in January and one week in July.

The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018. Telephone: (212) 244-4899

Fax: (212) 244-4947

E-mail: themilitant@mac.com

Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: For one year send \$35 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: For one year send \$85, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above

address.

Africa, Asia, and the Middle East: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Canada: For one year send Canadian \$45 to the Militant, 7107 St. Denis #204, Montreal, Quebec H2S 2S5.

United Kingdom: Send £26 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, First Floor, 120 Bethnal Green (Entrance in Brick Lane), London, E2 6DG, England.

Republic of Ireland and Continental Europe: Send £75 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London at above address.

France: Send 76 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, P.O. Box 175, 23 rue Lecourbe, 75015 Paris.

Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark:

Send 400 Swedish kronor for one year to Bildhuggarvägen 17, 12144 Johanneshov, Stockholm, Sweden.

New Zealand: Send NZ\$50 for one year to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

Australia: Send A\$50 for one year to P.O. Box 164 Campsie, NSW 2194, Australia.

Pacific Islands: Send NZ\$50 for one year to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the Militant’s views. These are expressed in editorials.



# Socialists send solidarity message to North Korea

*Below are greetings from the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists sent to Kim Jong Il, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea on the 61st anniversary of the founding of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.*

September 4, 2009

Kim Jong Il  
General Secretary  
Workers' Party of Korea  
Pyongyang,  
Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Dear Comrade Kim Jong Il,

The Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists send revolutionary greetings on the 61st anniversary of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We reaffirm our commitment to the struggle by working people on both sides of the 38th parallel to end the partition imposed on Korea by the U.S. government at the close of World War II. We salute the DPRK's recent initiatives on cross-border transport, family reunions, and other matters. These steps give the lie to cynical efforts by both Washington and Seoul to deny their responsibility for the fact that—fifty-six years after the cease-fire in the murderous Korean War—no peace treaty has yet been signed ending that imperialist-instigated conflict.

The Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists stand in solidarity with the DPRK and Korean people in demanding a halt to sanctions imposed on your country, including the imperial decrees dictated in June by Washington and unanimously adopted by the United Nations Security Council. With

those draconian sanctions as a pretext, U.S.-backed brigands reigning over the United Arab Emirates seized and confiscated North Korean cargo last month. Earlier in August the Indian government “intercepted” a Korean ship on the high seas. And in June a U.S. warship stalked a DPRK freighter for weeks, as the White House trumpeted claims the vessel was transporting “contraband” to Myanmar.

Meanwhile, the U.S. rulers continue expanding their deceitfully named “ballistic missile defense” programs, today targeting the peoples and governments of Korea and Iran above all. Washington is joining with Tokyo to deploy Aegis missile-equipped warships off Korean waters. And the U.S. military is increasing force levels in Afghanistan to some 70,000 troops, while maintaining some 130,000 soldiers in Iraq.

Despite hype by U.S. officials about “green shoots” at home and abroad, the capitalist rulers still confront a global depression. While they talk about “deleveraging” their massive debt load—in home mortgages (way beyond “subprime”), commercial real estate, credit cards, and more—this is merely a euphemism for what is truly posed by the crisis of their social system. They must destroy enormous amounts of capital—throwing hundreds of millions out of work; gutting the living standards, social wage, and job conditions of working people; junking plant and equipment worldwide on an immense scale; and, in the process, escalating trade clashes and militarization and wars in every corner of the earth.

But working people—from the United States and Canada, across Europe, to New Zealand, South Korea, and else-



U.S. Navy/MC1 Bobbie G. Attaway

**U.S. and South Korean Marines participate in joint Urban Combat Training exercise August 23. Maintaining some 28,000 troops on the peninsula, provocative regular U.S.–South Korean military exercises are part of Washington's threats against the North.**

where—are waging defensive fights to maintain our wages, our jobs, and our unions. In face of the slump in the bosses' demand for labor, foreign-born workers are resisting assaults on their right to live and work. Here in the United States supporters of women's equality have responded to new attacks on a woman's right to choose abortion.

As we join with workers and youth in labor actions and social protests like these, the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists explain the need to put an end to the dictatorship of capital, whose devastating consequences for humanity are becoming clearer to millions. The working class needs to organize and lead a proletarian revolution to take state power out of the hands of the capitalist ruling families. This is part of a *worldwide* struggle, one demanding internationalist solidarity with embattled working people everywhere, including with the Korean people and the decades-long fight

to reunify your homeland.

The Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists congratulate you on this 61st anniversary of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We welcome the DPRK's latest initiatives to advance peace and national unity in Korea. And we stand together with our brothers and sisters in Korea and worldwide in demanding: End the sanctions against the Korean people! Stop the piracy against the DPRK's ships and cargo, under United Nations or any other auspices. U.S. troops, “anti-ballistic missile” ships, and weapons—conventional and nuclear—out of Korea and the Pacific!

Korea is one!

Comradely,

*Steve Clark*  
for the SWP Political Committee

*Ben Joyce*  
for the Young Socialists

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### CALIFORNIA

#### San Francisco

**The Fraud of 'Health-Care Reform.'** Fri., Sept. 18, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

### FLORIDA

#### Miami

**U.S. Military Bases Out of Latin America!** Speaker: Anthony Dutrow, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Sept. 18, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 719 NE 79th St. Tel.: (305) 757-8869.

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Auckland

**Capitalism's Destruction of the Environment and the Rise of Green Politics.** Speaker: Mike Tucker, Communist League. Fri., Sept. 18, 7 p.m. Suite 3, 7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu. Upstairs, above Laundromat. Tel.: (09) 276-8885.

## —CALENDAR—

### GEORGIA

#### Atlanta

**The Political Evolution of Malcolm X—Internationalizing the Struggle.** A community panel discussion featuring Dr. Samuel Livingston, assistant professor of History at Morehouse College; Sobukwe Shukura, WRFG; and Steve Clark, editor of several collections of Malcolm's speeches published by Pathfinder Press and managing editor of *New International* magazine. Hosted by Auburn Avenue Research Library in collaboration with Atlanta Pathfinder Books. Free. Thurs., Sept. 24, 7 p.m. Auburn Avenue Research Library, Authors' & Writers' Lounge, 3rd Fl., 101 Auburn Ave. NE. Tel.: (404) 730-4001, ext. 100.

## SWP kicks off \$90,000 party-building fund

**Continued from front page**

and other expenses incurred in extending the reach of the communist movement among workers, farmers, and rebel-minded youth who are responding to the devastation caused by capitalism in decline.

The SWP depends on contributions from workers and farmers to help ensure the communist course—that of taking political power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers and reorganizing economic and social relations from top to bottom in the interests of the working class—is heard.

Many workers and youth are outraged by the incineration of dozens of people in Afghanistan from a NATO bombing raid and reports of U.S. troops raiding a hospital there, allegedly in search of Taliban supporters.

The Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialists have a long history of joining struggles that advances the class consciousness, organization, discipline, internationalism, and self-confidence of working people.

To build a revolutionary working-class party and put forward this perspective, the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists will be taking the *Militant*, *New International* magazine, and books published by Pathfinder Press to college campuses, factory gates and mine portals, and working-class communities.

Socialist workers will talk with

their coworkers in garment shops and meatpacking plants about the work of the party. Many of them who are also facing pending layoffs or speed-ups on the job will want to contribute.

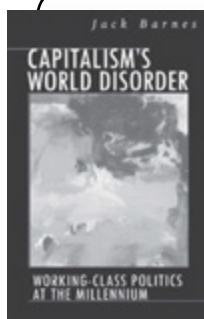
Party-building fund meetings will be taking place in many cities in the United States. Where they are held early in the campaign, public meetings where party leaders will speak on the historic accomplishments of the SWP in the working-class strug-

gles and the place of building a revolutionary party in the fight for political power can help get the fund off to a good start.

This kind of approach can also help to establish a weekly pace to the contributions, which are needed now.

Contributions to the fund can be sent to 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018. Checks and money orders should be written out to the Socialist Workers Party.

### FOR FURTHER READING



#### Capitalism's World Disorder

*by Jack Barnes*

The social devastation and financial panic, coarsening of politics, cop brutality, and 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 increasingly conscious of their capacity to wage revolutionary struggles for state power and to transform the world.

**\$25**



#### The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

*by Jack Barnes*

Building the kind of party working people need to prepare for coming class battles through which they will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and all society. A handbook for those seeking the road toward effective action to overturn the exploitative system of capitalism and join in reconstructing the world on new, socialist foundations.

**\$24**

**Available online or at distributors listed on page 8.**



# London's release of Libyan stirs row with U.S. rulers

BY PAUL DAVIES

LONDON—The release from prison of Abdelbaset Ali al-Megrahi, a former Libyan intelligence officer convicted of the bombing of a commercial airliner over Scotland, has stirred debate among capitalist politicians within the United Kingdom and conflict with the U.S. government.

Al-Megrahi was convicted on circumstantial evidence in 2001 for the explosion of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988, in which 270 people died. The conviction came as part of the U.S. and British governments' decades-long campaign against Libya.

Their hostility began after a 1969 popular coup in Libya led by Muammar Gaddafi that overthrew imperialist backed King Idris. In 1986 Washington bombed the capital, Tripoli, including Gaddafi's residence and imposed economic sanctions.

Al-Megrahi, who is terminally ill, was granted "compassionate release" in August and returned to Libya. However, articles appeared in the British press implying that al-Megrahi's release was connected to deals to facilitate contracts by British oil companies operating in Libya. "Al-Megrahi's release 'would free BP' [British Petroleum] to join the rush for Libya's oil," read a headline in the August 15 London Times.

British prime minister Gordon Brown declined to comment on the decision, claiming it was a matter for the Scottish parliament. When pressed, Brown said there was "no conspiracy, no cover-up, no double dealing, no deal on oil" over the release, reported the BBC. Days later British justice secretary Jack Straw admitted that trade was part of a deal over prisoner releases that he made with the Libyan government in 2007.

"Libya was a rogue state," Straw said. "We wanted to bring it back into the fold. And yes, that included trade because trade is an essential part of it and subsequently there was the BP deal." Straw was referring to a £550 million (£1=US\$1.66) deal that the British oil company signed with Libya just weeks after Straw negotiated a prisoner transfer agreement with Libya, which did not exclude al-Megrahi.

The prisoner release was approved

in principle by former British prime minister Anthony Blair during visits to Libya in 2003 and 2007, said the BBC.

Opposition Conservative leader David Cameron condemned the British government's negotiations with Libya as "a misjudgment." A September 3 editorial in the Times argued that "Britain should not have traded its principles by letting him [al-Megrahi] go."

President Barack Obama said al-Megrahi's release was "a mistake." The Scottish justice secretary's decision "makes a mockery of the rule of law," and "gives comfort to terrorists," said FBI director Robert Mueller. Henry McLeish, the former first minister of the Scottish parliament, responded that al-Megrahi's release was "none of his [Mueller's] business."

In an editorial on al-Megrahi's release, titled "Brown the Betrayer," the New York Daily News wrote, "Today's British are a cowardly, unprincipled, amoral and duplicitous lot." Disagreement over al-Megrahi's release occurs as the "special relationship" between the U.S. and UK rulers has begun to fray.

Libya holds the largest oil reserves in Africa. Robin Pagnamenta, energy editor of the London Times, writes

## 'Militant' launches subscription campaign

Continued from front page

pand their wars around the world. It explains why the only way working people can stop imperialism's march towards fascism and war is to take political power out of the hands of the capitalist class.

The Militant will report on the key issues facing workers and farmers. We will also report on the election campaigns of Socialist Workers Party and Communist League candidates for public office and the activities of the Young Socialists.

As part of the circulation campaign, anyone subscribing to the Militant can purchase several books, pamphlets, and magazines at a substantial discount: Volumes 10 and 14 of New International, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory, for just \$10 each; and 50 percent off Prob-



AP Photo

Residents of Tripoli, Libya, inspect damage to their neighborhood April 15, 1986, after U.S. bombing of Tripoli and Benghazi. Libyan government said attack killed 41 and injured 226.

lems of Women's Liberation, The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning, and Cuba and the Coming American Revolution, published by Pathfinder Press. The Militant will run reviews and excerpts from these titles over the course of the subscription campaign.

Since the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the capitalist government in Libya led by Gaddafi has toned down its anti-imperialist rhetoric, abandoned its nuclear weapons program, paid billions of dollars to victims of terrorist attacks attributed to Libya, and opened up its vast natural resources to imperialist exploitation.

In a letter last year to Alex Sal-

mond, Scotland's first minister, Straw said Libya had become an "important partner in the fight against terrorism" and was helping to police immigration.

To qualify for release on "compassionate grounds" al-Megrahi had to drop an appeal against his conviction. Since his return to Libya he has maintained his innocence. The Libyan government handed him over to Scottish authorities for trial in 1999 as part of a deal with the imperialist powers. UN and UK sanctions against Libya were then ended, although Washington's were maintained until 2004.

lems of Women's Liberation, The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning, and Cuba and the Coming American Revolution, published by Pathfinder Press. The Militant will run reviews and excerpts from these titles over the course of the subscription campaign.

New International no. 10 features the articles "Imperialism's March Toward Fascism and War" by Jack Barnes and "What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold." No. 14 features "Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X."

You can help the Militant expand its readership: sign up your coworkers, classmates, friends, and relatives. Renew your subscription so that you don't miss a single issue. Send sub-

scriptions with a check or money order to the Militant at 307 W. 36th Street, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10018. You can join other supporters of the Militant in this effort by contacting a distributor nearest you listed on page 8.

Let us know what you think about the paper, questions you have on articles, or suggestions for future coverage. Or if you know of a union struggle, abortion clinic defense, immigrant rights march, campus meeting, or other protest actions where you would like Militant distributors to be involved, let us know that too.

In solidarity,

Sam Manuel  
Editor



Militant/Willie Cotton

Tom Baumann (left), Socialist Workers Party candidate for Manhattan borough president, campaigns with Militant September 7 at West Indian American Day Carnival in Brooklyn.

## NEW INTERNATIONAL

A magazine of Marxist politics and theory

### Issue number 14

- Revolution, Internationalism and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X
- The Clintons' Antilabor Legacy: Roots of the 2008 World Financial Crisis
- The Stewardship of Nature also Falls to the Working Class: In Defense of Land and Labor

### Issue number 12

- Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun
- Their Transformation and Ours
- Crisis, Boom, and Revolution: 1921 Reports by V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky

Available online or at  
distributors listed on page 8.

www.pathfinderpress.com



# Lebanese women fight law on citizenship rights

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Lebanese women are fighting for the right to pass their citizenship down to their children. Under current Lebanese law children can only take the citizenship of their father.

Lebanese citizen Samira Soueidan, for example, married an Egyptian. In an interview with *al-Jazeera*, she said when her husband died she could not get her children recognized as Lebanese citizens, even though they were born in Lebanon. They were denied public education and access to public hospitals. In order to work they had to purchase expensive residency papers every year.

Soueidan went to court and in 2005 a judge granted her children Lebanese citizenship. The country's minister of justice is trying to get the ruling appealed to a higher court.

Another lawsuit was filed in April by women from the northeastern Bekaa region of Lebanon. It calls for women to be able to pass their citizenship on to their children as well as to their husband, should he be of a different national origin.

Women involved in the case held a demonstration outside the Interior Ministry in Beirut April 27, reported the Beirut-based Arab news site *Menasat*. Ilham, a farmer, told *Menasat* that her husband is Iraqi. Her son was denied a visa to Lebanon by the Lebanese embassy in Baghdad. He returned to Lebanon anyway, was arrested, and jailed for six months until Ilham paid the equivalent of \$630 to get him released.

"In our day and age the blame for this situation might easily be cast by some observers on an either outmoded Arab cultural heritage or even so-called 'Islamic intolerance,'" wrote Mida Zantout in the August 7 Beirut *Daily Star*. "However, the real culprit is French civil law (Code Napoleon) which is wrongly regarded as progressive and modern, at least in this case."

## French colonial rule

The territory today called Lebanon was part of the Ottoman Empire for several hundred years up through World War I. Since the empire sided with Germany, which lost that war, the victorious imperialist parties in the conflict stole Lebanon and other parts of the oil-rich Mideast for themselves when they divided up the war spoils. The League of Nations gave the French government the mandate over Syria and Lebanon.

Under the Ottoman Empire a woman's children could inherit her citizenship. The French rulers took this away in 1925 by imposing on Lebanon the law that governed France at the time: children of French men only could become French citizens.

The reactionary law used to be more widespread in the Middle East. But in Algeria, Egypt, and Morocco women have finally won their nationality rights. Women are still fighting the legislation in Lebanon, Syria, and Bahrain.

A factor in the resistance of the Lebanese ruling class to getting rid of the restriction is the country's quota system of government, another legacy of

French colonial rule. When Paris imposed its rule on Lebanon, it depended heavily on Maronite Christians for support in face of the growing Arab revolt against imperialist rule in the region. Fearful of that revolt upsetting its control of Lebanon, Paris established a government structure there that remains to this day: the president is a Maronite, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim, and the speaker of the parliament a Shiite Muslim.

But much has changed since, particularly with the establishment of the state of Israel on Palestinian territory and the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians to other lands. A succession of wars between Tel Aviv and surrounding Arab states and Palestinian armed groups has produced tremendous dislocation of the region's population.

Today, out of Lebanon's population of 4 million, 10 percent are Palestinian. Tens of thousands are Syrian. Allowing those married to Lebanese women to become naturalized citizens or granting citizenship to the women's children threatens to destabilize a government that both the imperialists and the Lebanese capitalist class want to preserve.

## London college lecturers go on strike



Militant/Ögmundur Jónsson

LONDON, September 7—Hundreds of lecturers, members of the University and College Union (UCU) at Tower Hamlets College in London's East End, went on indefinite strike August 27. They are protesting 13 compulsory redundancies (layoffs) that come on top of 30 previous "voluntary" redundancies. Unionists point out that funding cuts mean 1,000 spots for immigrants who want to learn English would be lost in this working-class community.

Roberto Foth, UCU branch secretary at the college's Bethnal Green site, said that no one has crossed the picket line. "We think college authorities were taken aback by how strong this was," he added. Messages of support can be sent to roberto.foth@tower.ac.uk.

—ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

# Official unemployment reaches 9.7 percent

## Continued from front page

in 19 cities, the official unemployment rate is at 15 percent or higher. El Centro, California, and Yuma, Arizona, are among the highest with unemployment rates of 30 percent and 26 percent, respectively.

The number of "discouraged workers" who are not counted in the government's statistics continues to rise. These are workers the government says have looked for work at some point in the past year but not in the last four weeks because they believe that no jobs are available. In August there were roughly 758,000 discouraged workers nationally, compared with 349,000 in November 2007, the month before the recession of-

ficially began.

Another group not counted by the Labor Department, called "marginally attached to the labor force," includes discouraged workers as well as those who have stopped looking because of other reasons, like school, family responsibilities, or health issues. There were roughly 2.3 million people in this group in August, up from 1.4 million in November 2007 the *Times* reported.

Whirlpool is one of several big companies making major job cuts. The world's largest appliance maker, which announced August 28 it will close its Evansville, Indiana, plant, eliminating 1,100 jobs.

American Airlines announced in ear-

ly September it will furlough 228 flight attendants and put 244 more on involuntary leave.

"The number of private-sector jobs is now slightly below the level of August 1999," reported the *Washington Post*, "meaning that a decade has passed without any net creation of non-government jobs."

The average workweek is 33.1 hours, making it increasingly difficult for those with jobs to make ends meet. The number of people turning to food stamps "has surged as their hours and wages erode," stated the *Financial Times*. "Some 40 percent of the families now on food stamps have 'earned income,' up from 25 percent two years ago."

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



### September 21, 1984

"This is their way of trying to clear their names for taking part in war crimes," said Vietnam veteran Oscar Tate, referring to a proposed \$180 million settlement of a class-action suit against the makers of the poisonous defoliant Agent Orange.

Tate was one of nearly 200 Vietnam vets and their families attending a regional public hearing in Atlanta, August 20–21. The suit was filed by 15,000 Vietnam veterans and their families who are victims of Agent Orange.

During the Vietnam War, the U.S. government sprayed 12 million gallons of Agent Orange on Vietnam, causing untold damage and misery to that country and its people. U.S. GIs were also victims, with their exposure to the toxic substance resulting in serious illnesses among them and their families, including birth defects in their children.



### September 21, 1959

The steel corporations remain adamant that the steel workers shall gain no pay increases, shall give up the cost-of-living bonus clause, and shall work under new rules dictated by management. This is the reason why the steel strike continues.

From the beginning, the steel barons were backed in their arrogant stand by all other sections of big business. The steel bosses were urged by the American capitalist class to spearhead a drive to beat down wages. Steel still holds the line for all employers.

The September 14 *Wall Street Journal* reports that though many other industries have granted some wage increases during past weeks, "Both management and labor do agree on one thing: The steel stand is acting as a brake on even larger labor gains."



### September 22, 1934

President Roosevelt has personally intervened in the textile strike with pressure for a settlement—but not until the list of martyrs had mounted to thirteen; not until 11,000 troops shot, bayoneted, and gassed strikers in a half a dozen states; not until concentration camps in Fascist style were set up in Georgia; not until one of the most drastic anti-labor injunctions was handed down in Paterson [New Jersey].

He has let all that go by without batting an eyelash, hopeful that it would smash the strike and save him the trouble of directly having to give the strikers the "raw deal."

Unfortunately for Mr. Roosevelt . . . not all the thugs in the country, not all the troops in the garrisons have been able to dam up the river of militancy that has been overflowing this Labor Day.



# New clashes arise between Hans, Uighurs in China

BY CINDY JAQUITH

A fresh outbreak of clashes between Han Chinese and Uighurs, who are an oppressed nationality, has exposed as false Beijing's claim that racial harmony prevails in China's western Xinjiang Province.

The latest round of fighting was sparked by rumors that Uighurs were stabbing Hans with syringes filled with poison or HIV virus. On September 3, 10,000 Hans demonstrated in the city of Urumqi, the provincial capital, saying they were not getting police protection and demanding the firing of the provincial Communist Party chief. Five people were killed.

Beijing subsequently fired the police chief and Urumqi party head. All demonstrations without permits were banned and Internet service cut off.

Hans are the dominant nationality in China. But they are relative newcomers in Xinjiang Province, a traditional homeland of the Uighurs, a Turkic-speaking people who practice Islam.

Most Hans have migrated to Xinjiang in the last 50 years for jobs in the oil, natural gas, and coal industries and on state-run farms, where they are favored over Uighurs for employment. A similar migration of Hans to Lhasa, Tibet,

has been encouraged by the Stalinist bureaucracy in Beijing with the aim of ensuring its control there.

In Urumqi, Hans now outnumber Uighurs by three to one. As Beijing has developed the western region, increasingly by capitalist methods over the last two decades, the inequality between Hans and Uighurs has become more glaring. Most Uighurs are farmers in the countryside. Their average "disposable income" is about one-third that of residents of Urumqi, who earn about \$1,800 a year, according to Reuters.

The government has announced that 25 people are charged with syringe attacks. Police have threatened to impose the death penalty for those convicted, reported the Chinese news agency Xinhua. The report added that those who "deliberately concoct and spread false information" about needle stabbings risk five years in jail.

But many questions remain about what actually happened and to what degree the alleged needle incidents were political in nature. According to Xinhua, one of those arrested was a Uighur drug addict who allegedly fought off arrest with a syringe. Two others are accused of attempting to rob a taxi driver, threatening him with a needle.



Chinese troops patrol Uighur neighborhood in Urumqi in July. A Turkic-speaking, Muslim nationality, Uighurs face pervasive discrimination.

"Days after reports of the attacks in the state media, credible evidence seems in short supply," wrote the September 8 *Toronto Star*. "The government said more than 500 people claimed to have been attacked, but only 170 show any signs of injury."

"Some of those who said they had been stabbed actually suffered from mosquito stings," reported Xinhua.

## 'Uighur separatists'

The country's highest-ranking security official, Meng Jianzhu, charged that Uighur separatists were behind the attacks. Beijing routinely accuses Uighurs who protest their oppression of having connections to a small Uighur organization called the East Turkistan Islamic Movement, which Beijing says

has ties to al-Qaeda.

In June a rumor that Uighur factory workers in Guangdong Province had raped a Han woman led to an attack by Han workers. Two Uighurs were killed. The rape story turned out to be false.

When Uighur students organized a march in Urumqi to condemn the factory killings it turned into several days of fighting between Hans and Uighurs, leaving at least 186 dead. More than two hundred people, mostly Uighurs, are awaiting trial on charges stemming from that incident.

## Labor conscripts

More has surfaced on the programs begun in 2002 that send Uighurs from Xinjiang to factory jobs in Guangdong Province and other industrial areas. Beijing presents these programs as a kind of affirmative action, promising Uighurs they will earn much more than they can farming in Xinjiang. The July 15 *Washington Post* reported that the program is not voluntary, however. In the villages around the city of Kashgar in Xinjiang, "residents said each family was forced to send at least one child to the program—or pay a hefty fine," wrote reporter Ariana Eunjung Cha.

Cha interviewed Liu Guolin, the Han owner of a textile plant in Hebei Province that has been hiring Uighurs. The 143 women workers sent to his plant were accompanied by a cop from Xinjiang Province, who kept the women from praying in the factory or wearing headscarves. "Without the policeman, I assume they would have run away from the very beginning," Liu said.

Meanwhile, Beijing has stepped up joint military exercises with Moscow supposedly aimed at "terrorists" in Central Asia.

## Illinois Teamsters strike over health benefit cuts

BY BEN O'SHAUGHNESSY

CHICAGO—Members of Teamsters Local 743 have been walking the picket lines at SK Hand Tools factories here and in nearby McCook, Illinois, since August 25. A day earlier workers voted unanimously to strike after the company cancelled workers' health insurance without notification in May.

The Teamsters local has been in contract negotiations for nine months. Workers on the picket line say the company is refusing to restore lost health benefits and is demanding other concessions, including a 20 percent across-the-board pay cut and an additional \$4 cut for the first six months of the new contract. On average, workers make about \$14 per hour. SK Hand Tools employs some 70 workers between the two Illinois plants.

"They want 80 percent of the people here to work at near minimum wage," said Emilio Lunar, a machine operator and shop steward at the Chicago plant. "This is a great example of what is happening right now, it is happening elsewhere every day. We know it is hard to be on strike but we have to do this."

The union reported that the company has not made regular payments to the pension fund since February. Workers also said they have not been given holiday pay since December and that the company is seeking to cut vacation time.

This is not the first time workers have held protest actions against the company's withdrawal of their health coverage. In May, workers held a 30-minute rally during lunch and also struck for four hours on July 31.

Union members say they have maintained 24-hour picket lines at both SK Hand Tools plants, covering multiple entrances. Workers said they have pre-



Striking Teamsters march in Chicago's Labor Day parade. Company cancelled their health coverage without notification last May.

vented several trucks from making deliveries and have had the picket lines honored by drivers who are members of Teamsters Local 705.

Strikers have received solidarity from unionists in the Service Employees In-

ternational Union, United Auto Workers, and United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1546. Members of UNITE Local 1, who are on strike at the Congress Hotel here, joined the Teamsters picket line last week.

## Hundreds in Chicago demand legalization

Continued from front page

march and rally.

From Oct. 1, 2008, through June 30, 2009, Immigration and Customs Enforcement deported or returned more than 271,200 undocumented immigrants, the agency said in a July 14 press release. That compared to 229,800 undocumented immigrants removed during the same time period in fiscal year 2008, an increase of 18 percent.

Two restaurant workers from Addison, Illinois, said this was the first time they have marched for legalization. "We're here for the right to drivers licenses," said Jacobo Merlín. He and Roberto Baños described how local police stop drivers who look Mexican, slapping them with traffic tickets and fines

of \$600 or more.

Armando Torres works as a welder and is a student at night. His friend Ricardo Cortez is currently laid off. "They try to put the blame on immigrants for the economic crisis, but we are not the ones at fault," Torres said.

Bonnie Murphy, 21, a senior at Loyola University, said this is the first march for immigrant rights she has ever been to. "I'm here for equality for all. We should legalize the people that do the work in this country. People are people. The government continues to ignore immigrants. This is a democracy, but it is really not a democracy at all."

"I'm here because we need an amnesty for everyone," said Lupe Owautuce, a meat packer and member of United

Food and Commercial Workers Local 1546. "It's the only way we can make Obama listen to us." A large banner in front of the march read, "Without legalization there can be no re-election," a reference to a possible second term for President Barack Obama.

Marchers also included contingents from Our Lady of Guadalupe Justice Mission, Workers United Union, Service Employees International Union, Street Vendors Association, Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, March 10th Coalition, and Ya Basta Coalition, the latter two prominent immigrant rights groups here.

Alyson Kennedy contributed to this article.



# Black rights, antiwar fights paved way for women's movement and abortion rights

BY BEN JOYCE

On May 31 Dr. George Tiller, an abortion provider in Wichita, Kansas, was shot dead by an antiabortion rightist. Emboldened by the lack of response by capitalist politicians, opponents of legal abortion have redoubled efforts to chip away at this right won and defended through decades of struggle.

The polarization around the right of a woman to choose an abortion, that is, her right to control her own body, is sharpening with the deepening capitalist economic crisis.

Abortion rights, like any advance for working people and the oppressed and exploited sections of society, were won through hard-fought struggle. Yet to many of those active in the fight to defend and extend legal abortion, the history of struggle that brought about this and other victories for women is often not well known, especially among younger generations.

So how did the legalization of abortion come about?

Prior to the dominance of capitalist social relations and class structure, abortion was seldom a criminal act. Beginning with the development of modern capitalism, however, access to abortion began to be restricted by the ruling class as a way to maintain women's position in society and the family as a domestic servant responsible for the care of the young and the elderly. By 1910 abortion was illegal, except to protect the life of the mother, in all but one U.S. state.

The criminalization of abortion had devastating results on the health of women for the next several decades, with consequences falling disproportionately hard on working-class women. Without resources to hire a

Women of oppressed nationalities felt the heaviest impact. Eighty percent of the hundreds of women who died from botched abortions in the years preceding decriminalization were Black or Latina.

In an August 31 *Newsweek* article, Dr. LeRoy Carhart, an abortion provider in Nebraska who is being targeted by antiabortion forces, describes an experience at a clinic that convinced him to become a provider. A nurse had urged him to spend a day at the clinic where she worked.

"Talking to the women reminded him of the patients he had seen as a medical student, in the days before Roe: women whose botched abortions, anywhere from the first to the third trimester, left them with perforated uteruses, intestines protruding from the vagina, or untreatable pelvic infections," *Newsweek* said. "The way Carhart remembers it, it was a good week for the emergency room if only five women died."

## Rise of women's movement

The tremendous impact of the proletarian movement for Black rights and against government-sanctioned racial segregation in the South that emerged in the 1950s set the stage for the development of other forms of social struggle, including against the U.S. imperialist war in Vietnam.

The uncompromising struggle by the workers and peasants of Vietnam against Washington's brutal assault, along with the successful movement built in the United States and among GIs overseas, helped bring about an end to the war and provided additional inspiration for movements of social struggle.

By the late 1960s, a general radicalization had developed, especially among youth, that provided momentum for the rise of a movement for women's liberation.

The rise of the women's movement was also a consequence of the sharpened contradictions between women's "traditional" role under class society and the rapid expansion of industrialization and technology that took place after the Second World War, leading to the incorporation of many more women into the workforce.

As the massive expansion of capitalist development took place in the postwar boom, modern appliances, frozen and packaged foods, ready-made clothing, and other developments transferred many domestic chores from the individual family unit to social, industrial production. At the same time, more women than ever began working outside the home—from 34 percent in 1950 to more than 43 percent in 1971.

Meanwhile, developments in technology and medicine opened up more



Photos by Howard Petrick

Some 30,000 people marched in New York City, Aug. 26, 1970, backing women's rights.

options for women to control whether or not a pregnancy was carried to term. Abortion had become a well-known, modern medical procedure that was safe under appropriate conditions. The contradictions between what was possible and what was legal had become sharper. (Today, there are fewer deaths due to abortion complications—0.6 per 100,000—than there are deaths related to childbirth—7.1 per 100,000.)

The fight for abortion rights and freedom from enforced motherhood emerged as a precondition for women's broader liberation. In order to become fully integrated into society, including holding jobs, being active in unions, and participating in political activity, women first must have full control over their own bodies.

## Victory for women's rights

The rapid growth of the women's liberation movement quickly posed the question of abortion rights, making it an unavoidable issue for the ruling class. Partial victories were scored when individual states began decriminalizing abortion, including New York in 1970.

A landmark victory in the struggle for women's rights came on Jan. 22, 1973, when the U.S. Supreme Court decriminalized abortion in the case known as *Roe v. Wade*.

Under the alias Jane Roe, a single, pregnant woman in Texas filed a class-action lawsuit on behalf of herself and all pregnant women, challenging the criminal abortion laws in that state,

which proscribed obtaining or attempting an abortion except for the purpose of saving the life of the mother. Henry Wade was the district attorney for Dallas, Texas, at the time.

The court ruled in favor of Roe, declaring that the Texas abortion laws were unconstitutional. The decision said that the laws were in violation of the 14th Amendment, which says that no state shall "deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." The court ruled that the "right of privacy . . . is broad enough to encompass a woman's decision whether or not to terminate her pregnancy."

In striking down the Texas antiabortion laws, the court established that states cannot restrict women's right to abortion in any way during the first three months of pregnancy. In the next trimester, a state may "regulate the abortion procedure in ways that are reasonably related to maternal health," the court said. After the third trimester begins, a state may proscribe abortion except in the case of protecting the mother's life or health.

The restriction on access to abortion in the third trimester, along with the broad discretion allowed states in applying the law, have been fault lines along which opponents of a woman's right to choose have encroached on abortion rights. Rightists and capitalist politicians have been trying to overturn legal abortion ever since, attacking it at the federal, state, and local levels. That will be the subject of a second article.

(To be continued)

## For further reading

### Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women's Liberation

Documents of Socialist Workers Party 1971–86

How did the oppression of women begin? What class benefits? What social forces have the power to end the second-class status of women? Why is defense of a woman's right to choose abortion a pressing issue for the labor movement? A three-part series that helps politically equip the generation of women and men joining battles in defense of women's rights today.

Special offer through end of September: purchase entire three-part series for \$15, or \$7 for each single booklet. Regular price is \$30.

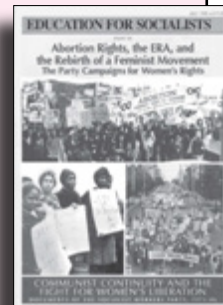
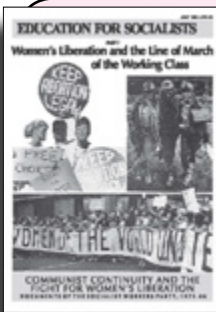
[www.pathfinderpress.com](http://www.pathfinderpress.com)



Militant/Flax Hermes

March against Vietnam War in San Francisco, April 15, 1967. Radicalization of late 1960s strengthened women's rights fight.

high-priced doctor, women who decided not to carry a pregnancy to term were forced to seek dangerous back-alley medical procedures that often resulted in mutilation or death. In 1930, nearly 2,700 women died due to botched abortions—around one-fifth of all maternal deaths that year. In 1969, the year before New York State relaxed the laws against abortion, approximately 210,000 women entered New York City hospitals due to abortion complications.





# Why bureaucracy in Russia is not a ruling class

The Spanish edition of *The Revolution Betrayed* is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September. A section of the book by the Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky is excerpted below. In 1917 the working class and peasantry of Russia carried out one of the deepest revolutions in history. Yet within 10 years a political counter-revolution by a privileged bureaucratic social layer, led by Joseph Stalin, drove the working class from political power. This study of the Soviet workers state and its degeneration shows the roots of the social and political crisis shaking the countries of the former Soviet Union today. Copyright © 1937 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

Classes are characterized by their position in the social system of economy, and primarily by their relation to the means of production. In civilized societies, property relations are validated by laws. The nationalization of the land, the means of industrial production, transport and exchange, together with the monopoly of foreign trade, constitute the basis of the Soviet social structure. Through these relations, established by the proletarian revolution, the nature of



Women receiving instructions about work on Russian railroads, December 1923. Workers and peasants won social and political gains through October 1917 socialist revolution in Russia, but rise of Soviet bureaucracy “expropriated the proletariat politically,” wrote Trotsky.

the Soviet Union as a proletarian state is for us basically defined.

In its intermediary and regulating function, its concern to maintain social ranks, and its exploitation of the state apparatus for personal goals, the Soviet bureaucracy is similar to every other bureaucracy, especially the fascist. But it is also in a vast way different. In no other regime has a bureaucracy ever achieved such a degree of independence from the dominating class. In bourgeois society, the bureaucracy represents the interests of a possessing and educated class, which has at its disposal innumerable means of everyday control over its administration of affairs. The Soviet bureaucracy has risen above a class which is hardly emerging from destitution and darkness, and has no tradition of domination or command. Whereas the fascists, when they find themselves in power, are united with the big bourgeoisie by bonds of common interest, friendship, marriage, etc., the Soviet bureaucracy takes on bourgeois customs without having beside it a national bourgeoisie. In this sense we cannot deny that it is something more than a bureaucracy. It is in the full sense of the word the sole privileged and commanding stratum in the Soviet society.

Another difference is no less important. The Soviet bureaucracy has expropriated the proletariat politically in order by methods of *its own* to defend the social conquests. But the very fact of its appropriation of political power in a country

where the principal means of production are in the hands of the state, creates a new and hitherto unknown relation between the bureaucracy and the riches of the nation. The means of production belong to the state. But the state, so to speak, “belongs” to the bureaucracy. If these as yet wholly new relations should solidify, become the norm and be legalized, whether with or without resistance from the workers, they would, in the long run, lead to a complete liquidation of the social conquests of the proletarian revolution. But to speak of that now is at least premature. The proletariat has not yet said its last word. The bureaucracy has not yet created social supports for its dominion in the form of special types of property. It is compelled to defend state property as the source of its power and its income. In this aspect of its activity it still remains a weapon of proletarian dictatorship.

The attempt to represent the Soviet bureaucracy as a class of “state capitalists” will obviously not withstand criticism. The bureaucracy has neither stocks nor bonds. It is recruited, supplemented and renewed in the manner of an administrative hierarchy, independently of any special property relations of its own. The individual bureaucrat cannot transmit to his heirs his rights in the exploitation of the state apparatus. The bureaucracy enjoys its privileges under the form of an abuse of power. It conceals its income; it pretends that as a special social group it does not even

exist. Its appropriation of a vast share of the national income has the character of social parasitism. All this makes the position of the commanding Soviet stratum in the highest degree contradictory, equivocal and undignified, notwithstanding the completeness of its power and the smoke screen of flattery that conceals it. . . .

If a socialist government is still absolutely necessary for the preservation and development of the planned economy, the question is all the more important, upon whom the present Soviet government relies, and in what measure the socialist character of its policy is guaranteed. At the 11th Party Congress in March 1922, Lenin, in practically bidding farewell to the party, addressed these words to the commanding group: “History knows transformations of all sorts. To rely upon conviction, devotion and other excellent spiritual qualities—that is not to be taken seriously in politics.” Being determines consciousness. During the last fifteen years, the government has changed its social composition even more deeply than its ideas. Since of all the strata of Soviet society the bureaucracy has best solved its own social problem, and is fully content with the existing situation, it has ceased to offer any subjective guarantee whatever of the socialist direction of its policy. It continues to preserve state property only to the extent that it fears the proletariat. This saving fear is nourished and supported by the illegal party of Bolshevik-Leninists, which is the most conscious expression of the socialist tendencies opposing that bourgeois reaction with which the Thermidorian bureaucracy is completely saturated. As a conscious political force the bureaucracy has betrayed the revolution. But a victorious revolution is fortunately not only a program and a banner, not only political institutions, but also a system of social relations. To betray it is not enough. You have to overthrow it. The October revolution has been betrayed by the ruling stratum, but not yet overthrown. It has a great power of resistance, coinciding with the established property relations, with the living force of the proletariat, the consciousness of its best elements, the impasse of world capitalism, and the inevitability of world revolution.

September

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS

25% DISCOUNT

**La revolución traicionada**  
(*The Revolution Betrayed*)  
by Leon Trotsky  
This study of the Soviet workers state and the degeneration of the revolution that won power in Russia in October 1917 illuminates the roots of the disintegration of the Soviet bureaucracy and sharpening conflicts in and among the former republics of the USSR.  
\$20. **Special price: \$15**

**Socialists and the Fight against Anti-Semitism**  
by Peter Seidman  
\$5. **Special price: \$3.75**

**Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War, 1956–58**  
by Ernesto Che Guevara  
\$30. **Special price: \$22.50**

**Eugene V. Debs Speaks**  
\$25. **Special price: \$18.75**

**Pragmatism versus Marxism**  
by George Novack  
A defense of Marxism against the pragmatism of John Dewey, chief theoretical spokesman in the 1930s of the middle-class democratic movement in the United States.  
\$22. **Special price: \$16.50**

**Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle**  
by Thomas Sankara  
\$8. **Special price: \$6**

**Join Pathfinder Readers Club for \$10 and receive discounts all year long**

ORDER ONLINE AT

WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM

OFFER GOOD UNTIL SEPTEMBER 30, 2009

## IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

Where to find distributors of the *Militant*, *New International*, and a full display of Pathfinder books.

### UNITED STATES

**CALIFORNIA:** Los Angeles: 2826 S. Vermont Ave. #9 Zip: 90007. Tel: (323) 737-2191. E-mail: laswp@sbcglobal.net **San Francisco:** 5482 Mission St. Zip: 94112-1015. Tel: (415) 584-2135. E-mail: swpsf@sbcglobal.net

**FLORIDA:** Miami: 6777 NW 7th Ave., Suite 5. Zip: 33150. Tel: (305) 757-8869. E-mail: swpmiami@att.net

**GEORGIA:** Atlanta: 465 Boulevard SE Suite 201A. Zip: 30312. Tel: (404) 627-3704. E-mail: swpatlanta@bellsouth.net

**ILLINOIS:** Chicago: 3557 S. Archer Ave. Zip: 60609. Tel: (773) 890-1190. E-mail: Chicagoswp@sbcglobal.net

**IOWA:** Des Moines: 3707 Douglas Ave. Zip: 50310. Tel: (515) 255-1707. E-mail: swpdesmoines@qwestoffice.net

**MASSACHUSETTS:** Boston: 13 Bennington St., 2nd Floor, East Boston. Zip: 02128. Tel: (617) 569-9169. E-mail: swpboston@verizon.net

**MINNESOTA:** Minneapolis: 1311 1/2 E. Lake St. Zip: 55407. Tel: (612) 729-1205.

E-mail: tcswp@qwestoffice.net

**NEW JERSEY:** Newark: 45 Academy St., Suite 309. Zip: 07102. Tel: (973) 273-0075. E-mail: swpnewark@optonline.net

**NEW YORK:** Manhattan: 306 W. 37th St., 10th Floor. Zip: 10018. Tel: (212) 629-6649. E-mail: newyorkswp@mac.com

**PENNSYLVANIA:** Philadelphia: 188 W. Wyoming Ave. Zip: 19140. Tel: (215) 455-2682. E-mail: philaswp@verizon.net

**TEXAS:** Houston: 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-51A. Zip: 77092. Tel: (713) 688-4919. E-mail: swp.houston1@sbcglobal.net

**WASHINGTON, D.C.:** 143 Kennedy St. NW Suite 15. Zip: 20011. Tel: (202) 536-5080. E-mail: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

**WASHINGTON:** Seattle: 5418 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118-2439. Tel: (206) 323-1755. E-mail: seattleswp@speakeasy.net

### AUSTRALIA

**Sydney:** 1st Flr, 3/281-287 Beamish St., Campsie, NSW 2194. Mailing address: P.O. Box 164, Campsie, NSW 2194. Tel: (02) 9718 9698. E-mail: cl\_australia@optusnet.com.au

### CANADA

**QUEBEC:** Montreal: 7107 St. Denis #204 H2S 2S5. Tel: (514) 272-5840. E-mail: clc\_can@bellnet.ca

### FRANCE

**Paris:** P.O. 175, 23 rue Lecourbe. Postal code: 75015. Tel: (01) 40-10-28-37. E-mail: milpath.paris@laposte.net

### NEW ZEALAND

**Auckland:** Suite 3, 7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 276-8885. E-mail: clauack@xtra.co.nz

### SWEDEN

**Stockholm:** Bildhuggarvägen 17, 12144 Johanneshov. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. E-mail: kfstockholm@tele2.se

### UNITED KINGDOM

**ENGLAND:** London: First Floor, 120 Bethnal Green (Entrance in Brick Lane). Postal code: E2 6DG. Tel: 020-7613-2466. E-mail: clondon@onetel.com

**SCOTLAND:** Edinburgh: Second Floor, 105 Hanover St. Postal code: EH2 1DJ. Tel: 0131-226-2756. E-mail: cledinburgh@talktalk.net



# U.S. troops out of Afghanistan!

A debate is growing among U.S. capitalist politicians, top officials at the Pentagon, and in the opinion columns of major big-business dailies over how to advance U.S. imperialist interests in Afghanistan and more broadly in Central Asia.

The debate is rooted in their inability to find a self-confident course to surmount the uncontrollable forces carrying them toward a future of sharpening crises, with its intertwined faces of depression, war, and increasingly violent class battles with higher stakes and risks.

An air strike in Afghanistan that killed up to 90 people, incinerating many of them, shows the consequences of Washington's "new" war strategy for working people in that country.

The U.S. rulers have waged war in Afghanistan since 2001, going on eight years this October, under the pretext of fighting terrorism. This front in the multitheater war continues to accelerate as the Obama administration gives carte blanche to the Pentagon military brass. Since taking office, Obama has ordered an additional 21,000 troops to Afghanistan. The Pentagon says its goal is to have 68,000 there by the end of the year—nearly double

the level when former president George Bush left office.

The debate on a shift in war strategy is in the framework of how U.S. imperialist forces can more effectively wage the war and win. Gen. Stanley McChrystal, top commander of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, issued a report August 31, outlining a strategy that emphasizes holding and securing areas captured from Taliban control and paves the way for increasing troop levels.

There is no course for the war put forward by the ruling class and their representatives that's in the interests of working people and their allies, in Afghanistan, the United States, or anywhere in the world. It's only by removing the boot of U.S. imperialism off the necks of the toilers in Central Asia that they will be able to chart their own course along the line of march toward taking political power and effecting their own emancipation.

It's for this reason that working people in the United States, Afghanistan, and the world over should demand the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of U.S. troops from Central Asia. Not one penny, not one person for Washington's wars!

## Air strike kills civilians in Afghanistan

**Continued from front page**

tary officials speculated that civilians had been forced by the Taliban to unload the fuel, reported the *New York Times*. Villagers who survived said they went to the site to get free fuel.

Gen. Stanley McChrystal, Washington's top commander of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, also issued a statement expressing concern for the "safety and protection" of the Afghan people and promised an investigation. As part of the U.S. military's new strategy, McChrystal recently issued a directive restricting the use of air strikes.

The emerging differences over the war among capitalist politicians, and in the media, is not a difference over whether Washington should have invaded in the first place or whether or not to pull out entirely; instead the disagreements are over what course will best defend the interests of U.S. imperialism. How many troops? What military strategy? Can they transform the Afghan army into a cohesive force that will defend U.S. interests? Can they put together a stable capitalist regime in Afghanistan? What about Pakistan?

The debate has heated up as President Barack Obama is deciding how many more troops to send to Afghanistan on top of the 21,000 additional troops he ordered there soon after taking office. According to news reports, McChrystal is expected to present Obama three options: send 10,000 to 15,000 U.S. troops, send about 25,000, or send nine to 10 combat brigades of up to 45,000 troops.

McChrystal is also implementing a shift in U.S. strategy away from focusing on ground combat with Taliban forces in the countryside, toward holding more populated areas and combining this with economic development projects. It has been called "clear, hold, and build."

In a September 1 column that is controversial among his fellow conservatives, George Will came out against sending more troops and the new strategy.

"Counterinsurgency theory concerning the time and the ratio of forces required to protect the population indicates that, nationwide, Afghanistan would need hundreds of thousands of coalition troops, perhaps for a decade or more," Will wrote. "That is inconceivable."

### 'No choice but to try'

Other conservatives answered Will. In a column titled "In Afghanistan, No Choice but to Try," Michael Gerson, a former speechwriter for George W. Bush, decried what he called "the stirrings of a cross-ideological revolt against American military involvement in Afghanistan."

Gerson said that although there are no guarantees that Washington will win, "It is not a serious strategy to exaggerate American obstacles in Afghanistan."

The *Wall Street Journal*, in a September 3 editorial,

said, "If the U.S. were to depart, the Taliban would soon control at least the southern and eastern parts of the country. Kandahar would probably fall, too."

"Now is the time for Mr. Obama to give his generals everything they need to defeat the Taliban," the editorial said, "or leave and explain why he's concluded that Afghanistan is no longer worth the fight."

"We are about to see," the *Journal's* editors continued, "if our current Commander in Chief has the nerve of his predecessor to withstand a Washington panic."

The same day Will's column appeared, the Republican National Committee's Web site posted a statement headlined "Stand Strong, Mr. President" and called on Obama to speak out against critics of the war.

Disenchantment among Democrats, *New York Times* reporter Helene Cooper wrote September 3, was leaving Obama "in the awkward position of relying on the Republican Party, and not his own, for support."

One of the more prominent liberal Democrats who opposes sending more troops is Sen. Russell Feingold. He said that Obama should start discussing a "flexible timetable" for reducing U.S. troops in Afghanistan. The senator argued that Washington's Afghan policy was driving more "extremists" into Pakistan.

According to the *Times*, Vice President Joseph Biden is one of several high-ranking officials in the Obama administration who has reservations on sending more troops. He argues that Pakistan is more important than Afghanistan, the paper said.

Richard Holbrooke, special representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the *Times* said, are expected to back a troop increase.

### Lack of confident course

The debate among capitalist politicians in both parties reflects a lack of confidence among U.S. rulers about being able to forge a stable regime in Afghanistan, which is strategically located between Pakistan and Iran and not far from India and Russia.

David Ignatius, a columnist for the *Washington Post* who is considered a Washington "insider," captured the ruling class quandary.

He said there is "little evidence" that Washington's counterinsurgency doctrine will work in a country as large and impoverished as Afghanistan.

"Even in Iraq, the successes attributed to counterinsurgency came as much from bribing tribal leaders and assassinating insurgents as from fostering development projects and building trust," Ignatius wrote.

Afghanistan "may be one of those messy situations where the best course is to both shoot and talk," he said, "a strategy based on the idea that we can bolster our friends and bloody our enemies enough that, somewhere down the road, we can cut a deal."

## Immigrant health

**Continued from front page**

admitted immigrants for five years after their arrival.

After revoking its insurance for immigrants, Massachusetts struck a deal with a private company, CultiCare, to provide an inferior coverage for less than a third of the cost.

The new plan is "somewhat less comprehensive," JudyAnn Bigby, the state's health and human services secretary, told reporters. It does not cover dental, vision, hospice, nursing home care, or skilled-nursing services such as rehabilitation or tube feedings. In many cases, patients will also have higher co-payments.

"A two-tier system with second-class health care for residents who arrived [in the United States] later than others, sets a bad precedent for the rest of the country," Frank Soultis, communications director for the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, told the *Militant*. "Our goal is to get these immigrants re-included [in Commonwealth Care] next year."

At the same time, Soultis said, his organization was grateful to Gov. Deval Patrick for pressing the state to provide some coverage, which was uncertain up to the last minute.

The number of facilities and physicians that accept the new insurance is more limited. For example, in the state's broader MetroWest area, encompassing nine towns and more than 180,000 people, only one hospital accepts the insurance. Boston's main public hospital, the Boston Medical Center, Soultis said, is among those that does not accept CultiCare.

"It's an extraordinary accomplishment," Governor Patrick said in announcing the new plan the same day the state benefits expired.

Many will not be covered by the plan for a couple months. A letter from the state health department told those being switched that the state would "make every effort to get all members enrolled in the new plan by December 2009."

The CultiCare plan is being offered only to the 31,000 immigrants who had been under Commonwealth Care; other immigrants will not be eligible.

Recent immigrants not covered by CultiCare or a company plan have limited options: purchase insurance or, if they meet income guidelines, apply for the state's "Health Safety Net." That program is very limited and available for no more than one year. It covers only "facility charges" and prescriptions at community health centers and hospitals. At most hospitals "services" such as "bills for the doctor," lab tests, and X-rays must be paid by the patient.

Massachusetts, California, New York, and Pennsylvania are among a small number of states that provide any subsidized health insurance for legal immigrants.



Workers line up for free blood pressure screenings at El Sereno community festival in East Los Angeles.

### Correction

The article "Amid crisis, Japan vote ends 1-party dominance," in the September 14 issue, said Japan's "gross domestic product rank in the world fell from fifth in 2001 to 19th in 2007." It should have read: "*per-capita* gross domestic product rank among member nations in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development fell from fifth in 2001 to 19th in 2007."