

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Struggles by toilers in China
 heat up, economy cools
 — PAGE 7

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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World crisis of production inflames EU's inborn conflict

BY JOHN STUDER

On Jan. 1, 2002, fireworks exploded across Germany, France, Italy, Spain and the rest of the 11 countries that issued the first euro coins and notes, marking their agreement to replace their national currencies, ostensibly ushering in an era of “peace and prosperity.”

Today, 10 years later, there are no celebrations. Declining production and trade, resulting financial crises, and increasing nationalist frictions have dispelled the myth of a “united Europe” and portend the disintegration of the currency union.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, presiding over the area's dominant manufacturing and trade economy, said glumly in her New Year's message that Europe faces its “harsh-est test in decades.” The new year is “full of risks,” French President Nicolas Sarkozy chipped in, adding that France's future hangs in the balance.

“In Italy, Giorgio Napolitano used his New Year's speech to warn Italians they will have to make sacrifices
 Continued on page 4

US rulers target Iran's oil trade, central bank

BY LOUIS MARTIN

President Barack Obama signed into law Dec. 31 new, stiffer sanctions targeting financial institutions dealing with Iran's central bank and aimed at hampering Tehran's sale of oil on international markets. The bill, passed by wide majorities in both houses of Congress, is the latest salvo in the imperialists' campaign to force Tehran to abandon its nuclear program.

The sanctions will take effect after a two to six month “warning period,” allowing Washington to organize with its allies to impose the measures in a way that minimizes the impact of a resulting rise in oil prices on the imperialists' economies.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the U.S. and the European Union are seeking assurances from major oil producers like Saudi Arabia that they would increase exports if tighter sanctions are imposed on Tehran.

Iran is the third-largest crude oil exporter in the world. Its oil exports finance as much as half of the government's budget, according to the *New York Times*
 Continued on page 4

Wash. port workers win initial frame-up battles

ILWU calls mobilization to meet scab ship



AP photo/Don Ryan

Longshore workers and supporters march from courthouse in Kelso, Wash., Sept. 16.

BY MARY MARTIN

LONGVIEW, Wash.—Three stalwarts of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union here have been cleared of trumped up charges aimed at derailing the union's battle against

BUILD ILWU SOLIDARITY ACTION IN JANUARY!

— See editorial, p. 9

EGT Development. The three are the first to go to court out of more than 200 ILWU members and supporters charged by union-busting bosses and cops.

On Dec. 30, a jury deliberated just

12 minutes before finding Kelly Palmer, 44, not guilty of charges of disorderly conduct at the union picket line set up outside EGT Development's grain terminal. Palmer was accused of blocking a car July 25 that was being driven by Martin Herman, president of Specialty Response Corp., a private cop outfit hired by EGT.

Eyewitnesses explained that Palmer, who was on picket duty that day, merely crossed EGT's driveway to get better cell phone reception while on a call and did not block any vehicles. Herman did not attend the trial.

“I'm relieved,” Palmer told the press. “I couldn't believe I was being
 Continued on page 9

Miners in Indonesia gain big wage raise in 3-month strike

BY BOB AIKEN

SYDNEY, Australia—After a three-month strike, miners at the giant Freeport-McMoRan copper and gold mine in Papua, a province controlled by the Indonesian government, won a 40 percent wage rise over two years.

“This is not the end, only the beginning” of our struggle, said union

spokesperson Juli Parorrangan in a Dec. 14 press statement. “The energy and unity of our struggle now enters the workplace.” Miners returned to work Dec. 17.

The heart of the strike, the union statement says, was a “fierce blockade” at Mile 28 on the only road between the port of Timika and the
 Continued on page 6



AP photo

Miners celebrate in Papua, Indonesia, after winning strike against Freeport-McMoRan.

Chicago court victories highlight class 'justice' under capitalism

BY JOHN HAWKINS

CHICAGO—Three recent Illinois court decisions shed light on the workings of the capitalist rulers' frame-up system—how cops and prosecutors use false, coerced confessions and suppress evidence to secure convictions of working people.

On Nov. 2 U.S. District Judge Rebecca Pallmeyer rejected an appeal from former Chicago Mayor Richard Daley of her July decision that he must testify in a suit filed by Michael Tillman against Daley, former police lieutenant Jon Burge and 14 others.

Tillman, who is African-American, spent 23 years in jail for rape and murder based on a confession extracted through torture at the hands of the notorious “midnight crew”—a gang of cop torturers operating under the command of Burge, who was convicted of lying about the torture he oversaw and began serving his sentence in

March.

The former mayor could end up in court as a defendant in several ongoing cop torture suits.

The judge agreed with Daley's lawyers that his actions while he was
 Continued on page 2

Also Inside:

- Minn. Somalis protest bank halt on remittances 3
- Locked-out New Zealand meat packers return to work 5
- Greetings from 1 of Cuban 5, Gerardo Hernández 6
- Australian rulers boost military ties with Seoul 7

Public housing tenants in New Zealand fight eviction

BY GEORGE FYSON
AND JANET ROTH

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—A series of protest meetings and demonstrations have occurred here since September, when 156 families in the working-class suburb of Glen Innes received notice that they would have to leave their state-owned houses by mid-2012.

“They want to move us like cattle,” Moana Okotai told the *Militant* at the house she has lived in for 16 years. “They are pushing out Maori, Pacific Islanders and other people who can’t afford to buy houses.”

The properties are owned by Housing New Zealand, a government-owned corporation that provides reduced-rent housing to people who meet the government’s means-testing requirements.

HNZ plans to build at least 260 new houses on the properties. The company will maintain ownership of 78 houses; 39 will go to community housing providers charging higher rents; and the other 140 or so are to be sold at market value. While the corporation says it will rehouse evicted tenants, it will not say where it will put them.

The properties are in areas bordering some of Auckland’s most expensive suburbs and many of them have sea views. It is estimated each house could sell for NZ\$500,000 (US\$393,170) at minimum.

“They’re trying to say that people with no money are not entitled to sit on million dollar properties,” retired garment worker Moepai Temata told the *Militant* at a protest march through central Auckland Dec. 10. She, her husband Michael, and successive generations of

children have been in their house for 47 years. “We were never given limits on how long we could stay,” Temata said.

State housing was a social gain won in the late 1930s as a by-product of struggles by working people in the face of depression conditions. Thousands of houses were built, with the stated aim of providing quality houses for workers, for a lifetime, at rents lower than the market demands.

Since the 1990s successive governments have whittled away at state housing. In July new restrictions were introduced, including regular reviews of new tenants’ “eligibility.”

Raewynne Hita, a 61-year-old welfare beneficiary who attended a Nov. 19 protest at the Glen Innes shopping center, has lived in Glen Innes since 1960.



Militant/Nooroa Tapuni

March in Auckland, New Zealand, Dec. 10 protests evictions from public housing.

The whole area, including the houses and community facilities, were built by working people, she said, many of whom lived in Glen Innes. “We’ve developed this community, not the powers that be.”

“We’re people that will never own our own homes,” said Hita. “But we should be able to have nice houses, a roof over our head, food on the table, and good health—we’re not asking for the moon.”

Chicago court rulings shed light on capitalist ‘justice’

Continued from front page

Cook County State’s Attorney were covered by prosecutorial immunity. Daley’s eight-year tenure in that office coincided with documented systematic torture organized by Burge and his midnight crew in the largely Black neighborhoods on Chicago’s South Side covered by police “Area 2.”

But, she reiterated, “The court concludes that Plaintiff [Tillman] sufficiently alleged that Daley, as Mayor, participated in a conspiracy that included the concealment of exculpatory evidence.” Pallmeyer also wrote that Tillman’s legal team had provided enough evidence to support “an inference that Daley was aware of a racially motivated conspiracy

to torture African American suspects at Area 2.”

In another case, on Nov. 16, Cook County Circuit Judge Paul Biebel ordered a new trial for the Englewood Four—Michael Saunders, Harold Richardson, Terrill Swift and Vincent Thames—convicted for the 1994 rape and murder of Nina Glover on Chicago’s South Side.

The four African-Americans were teenagers when they were interrogated and confessed under police coercion in March 1995. They were tried and convicted in May 1998. In May 2011 DNA

testing excluded each as possible assailants.

On Dec. 9 the Appellate Court of Illinois overturned the 1993 conviction of Juan Rivera for rape and murder. Rivera’s coerced confession was the keystone in the case Lake County prosecutors constructed to secure his conviction three times by three different juries—the latest in 2009. As in the case of the Englewood Four, no physical evidence linked Rivera to the victim. DNA testing in 2005 definitively ruled him out as the rapist. Six years later the appellate court agreed.



Vincent Thames, center, and Terrill Swift, right, leave court Nov. 16 after judge ordered new trial following DNA test results conflicting with their convictions for rape and murder.

THE MILITANT

Fight cop brutality and frame-ups

The capitalist rulers have been stepping up ‘policing’ and incarcerations of working people, especially targeting those who are Black. The ‘Militant’ covers the fights being waged against cop harassment and frame-ups in the U.S. and worldwide. Don’t miss an issue.



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US military steps up campaign in NE Africa

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In a brief visit to the U.S. military base in Djibouti Dec. 13, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said the Pentagon will be expanding its use of hunter-killer aerial drones and special forces assassins in Northeast Africa—in particular in Somalia as well as Yemen in the Arabian Peninsula.

“It’s fair to say that the United States is intent on going after al-Qaeda wherever they locate, and making sure they have no place to hide,” he stated, adding this required “partnerships” with governments in Northeast Africa.

Some 3,500 U.S. military personnel are stationed at the Djibouti base, a launch point for surveillance and armed strikes by U.S. drones in Somalia.

Drones targeting Somalia also operate from an air base in southern Ethiopia and a recently reopened base in the Seychelles Islands.

The drone campaign is the latest supplement to Washington’s clandestine military operations in Somalia over the past decade. Details about this “secret war” are provided in a recent six-part series of articles in the *Army Times* by Sean Naylor, the paper’s senior staff writer.

Based out of the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, CIA operatives sought to “build relationships with the warlords” to convince them to take action against suspected al-Qaeda personnel in Somalia, wrote Naylor. At the same time the Pentagon’s Joint Special Operations Command was ramping up in the region.

In 2004-2005, JSOC “doubled” its forces in Kenya, now reputed to be in the “scores,” an unnamed intelligence source told Naylor. A Special Op unit also began operating out of the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, and by 2006 JSOC was organizing its own operations in Somalia.

The Pentagon’s intervention was aimed at tracking and assassinating alleged leaders of al-Qaeda. Toward

this end, Washington has been monitoring cellphone conversations in Mogadishu, Somalia’s capital, since at least 2003, the *Army Times* said.

Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan, a 23-year-old from Kenya, was among those targeted, beginning in 2002. Seven years later a U.S. airstrike killed him and six others in the Somali coastal town of Barawe. A helicopter then landed in the area, and troops went aground and loaded the bodies of Nabhan and three others into the aircraft, the media reported at the time.

The December 2006 invasion of Somalia by Ethiopian troops, which ousted the ruling Islamic Courts Council, provided new openings for U.S. special forces to increase their operations inside the country. U.S. Special Ops came from “a mix of units,” noted the *Army Times*, including Navy SEAL Team 6 and the Air Force’s 24th Special Tactics Squadron.

Washington’s “preference was for Ethiopians to do the direct action missions against al-Qaeda figures whenever possible,” an anonymous intelligence official told Naylor. “The JSOC operators were to liaise with and provide assistance to them, ‘but also to effect a capture or a kill if necessary.’”

U.S. Air Force gunship attacks

The U.S. military immediately moved to step up its air assaults as well. In early January 2007 Air Force special operations AC-130 gunships, apparently flying out of Ethiopia, noted Naylor, conducted three airstrikes against what the Pentagon claimed were suspected al-Qaeda targets in several towns in southern Somalia.

Not wanting to be seen as a U.S. proxy in the Somali war, Ethiopian government officials began expressing unease about Washington’s role. They requested a halt to further airstrikes and that AC-130 operations leave Ethiopia, which “before long” they did, according to the *Army Times*.

Ethiopian troops, which remained in Somalia until January 2009, be-

Minn. Somalis protest bank halt on remittances



Militant/Natalie Morrison

MINNEAPOLIS—Carrying signs that read “No Bank = Death,” hundreds of Somalis rallied here Dec. 30 to protest the closing of money transfer businesses—known as hawalas—used to send funds to relatives. Since Somalia doesn’t have a banking system, money transfers are the only trusted method for sending money. On top of a growing war, Somalia faces drought and famine conditions.

The decisions by the banks to shut down transfers—the last ones doing them were the Minnesota-based Sunrise Community banks—is the result of U.S. federal laws against organizations that allegedly give “material support” to “foreign terrorist organizations.” The banks sought “waivers” from the U.S. government, but a government attorney responded, “Federal prosecutors don’t give waivers.”

Last fall, following a massive FBI frame-up operation, two Somali women from Rochester, Minn., were convicted of funneling money to al-Shabab, an armed Islamist group in Somalia. The two could face a maximum of 30 years in prison. Government evidence was based on wiretapping and unconstitutional searches of their computers, homes and trash.

—FRANK FORRESTAL

came increasingly resented for the shelling of urban areas and killings of thousands of civilians. During this time U.S. special forces worked closely with Ethiopian army units.

The Pentagon also launched Tomahawk cruise missile attacks from a Navy ship nearby in March and May 2008, targeting al-Shabab, an offshoot of the Islamic Courts Council that has waged war against the U.S.-backed “transitional federal government” since 2006 and controls the southern part of the country. According to the BBC, al-Shabab declared its alliance with al-Qaeda in 2010.

Naylor’s final article, titled “The Secret War: Africa Ops May be Just

Starting,” points to the accelerated pace of U.S. operations in Somalia, particularly during the past six months. These include a June 23 U.S. drone attack near Kismayo; airstrikes July 6 and Sept. 15 in Lower Juba, the southernmost region of Somalia, according to SomaliaReport.com; and a Sept. 23 airstrike targeting al-Shabab at the Kismayo airport.

In October some 4,000 Kenyan troops invaded southern Somalia and have now become part of the U.S.-backed African Union’s occupation force in the country. The AU is also considering sending thousands of Ethiopian troops to operate around the central Somalia city of Baidoa.

Cops in US increasingly employ aerial spy drones

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Over the past several years Washington has been stepping up its use of aerial assassination drones around the world—in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Libya, Yemen and Somalia. At the same time aerial drones are increasingly being put to use for domestic cop spy operations.

Drone attacks, such as those in Pakistan, are shrouded in secrecy. Some 240 drone strikes there have been reported in the press over the past three years. They have assassinated intended targets—individuals or groups of “suspicious” people—in addition to many noncombatant men, women and children. With the exception of open gloating over some “high value” individuals, victims’ identities and circumstances of the hits are classified by the U.S. government, as is the existence of the drone program itself.

In the United States, spy drones have been deployed along U.S. borders with Mexico and Canada since 2005.

The Customs and Border Protection agency currently operates eight Predator drones—among the models used for international hunter-killer operations—with plans to increase this threefold over the next five years. This will give “the agency the ability to deploy a drone anywhere over the continental United States within three hours,” according to the *Washington Post*.

Some of these same drones are also being used to conduct surveillance operations for local police agencies. In eastern North Dakota in June cops in Grand Forks called in two Predator drones from U.S. Customs and Border Protection to spy upon operations on a family farm in the area.

Police then “rushed in and made the first known arrests of U.S. citizens with help from a Predator,” reported the *Los Angeles Times*. Since then local police have used Predators “based at Grand Forks Air Force Base to fly at least two dozen surveillance flights,”

the paper added.

The Federal Aviation Administration is planning to issue guidelines this month allowing greater use of domestic surveillance drones. And the drive is on by police agencies to gain access to them.

The state of Oklahoma is seeking approval for an 80-mile air corridor exclusively for drone development and testing. In Houston, the police chief told a news conference that the drone Montgomery County is pursuing could be used in issuing traffic tickets. Feeling some heat, the city’s mayor nixed the program, but the county went ahead and purchased a ShadowHawk unmanned helicopter, according to Metro.us. The Miami-Dade Police Department is also purchasing two drones.

If restrictions are loosened on domestic drone use, there could be as many as 15,000 of them by 2018, Ryan Calo, director for Privacy and Robotics at Stanford Law School’s Center for Internet and Society, told Metro.us.

NEW INTERNATIONAL

MAGAZINE OF MARXIST POLITICS AND THEORY

Capitalism’s Long Hot Winter Has Begun by Jack Barnes

in *New International* no. 12



Today’s accelerating global capitalist slump accompanies a continuation of the most far-reaching shift in Washington’s military policy and organization since the U.S. buildup toward World War II.

Class-struggle-minded working people must face this historic turning point for imperialism, and draw satisfaction from being “in their face” as we chart a revolutionary course to confront it. \$16

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World crisis inflames EU

Continued from front page

to avoid financial collapse,” the British *Telegraph* reported January 2. Napolitano, long associated with the Communist Party, is Italy’s president.

The seeds of the European Union were planted by Europe’s capitalist rulers in the aftermath of World War II. U.S. imperialism emerged as the overwhelming economic and military victor. Germany and Japan were crushed. Great Britain, France, Italy, and other European capitalist countries and infrastructure were devastated.

U.S. capital expanded rapidly with little competition, sank its tentacles deeply into Asia, installed its navy as the sea power over the region, replaced European competitors as the dominant colonial power, and reaped billions investing in the rebuilding of capitalist Europe and Japan. U.S. plunder fueled what the rulers over-optimistically dubbed “the American century.”

Faced with this, French and German capitalists, and others in Europe, began discussion of the formation of a common market in order to gain a stronger competitive position. They looked to combine the benefit of a freer market within Europe for goods, capital and labor with protective barriers against imperialist rivals outside the continent.

But it was fraught from the beginning with one major contradiction: the constriction of national sovereignty. The capitalist rulers’ ability to wield borders and a national currency is critical to defend their class rule, profits and prerogatives.

The long road to the establishment, first of the European Union, now a 27-nation single market and protectionist

barrier, and then the eurozone with its common currency, was a stormy process. Shrouded in verbiage about peace and prosperity, the rulers jockeyed for national advantage at every stage along the way. Their competing capitalist classes each have distinct, separate interests along with varying levels of industrial development, productivity and social conditions.

The first step was taken in 1951, when France and Germany, along with Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, established the European Coal and Steel Community, to consolidate control over these basic industries from the U.S.-led postwar occupation regimes and seek markets for profit, especially in Africa.

In 1958, these six countries founded the European Economic Community in an effort to expand their economic collaboration in regional and world economic markets.

These formations merged in 1967 as the European Communities, and, over the next three decades, Denmark, Ireland, the UK, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Austria, Finland and Sweden joined.

In 1991 these capitalist regimes formalized their economic bloc as the European Union. Though rife with internal divisions at each stage, based on fundamentally antagonistic national interests, their rulers felt driven to proceed along these steps by the lash of sharpening competition.

In 2002, 11 of these nations launched a common currency, the euro. Today the eurozone comprises 17 nations. With the additional step of establishing a common currency the ruling classes in these European countries sought to



March through downtown Lisbon, Portugal, Nov. 24, as part of nationwide one-day protest strike. Signs read “dictatorship of the austerity” and “our struggle is international.” The same day Fitch ratings service downgraded Portuguese government debt to junk status.

further bolster their competitiveness with U.S. imperialism, including their common goal of inflicting blows on labor to shore up their declining rates of profit.

Britain, Denmark and Sweden, fearing loss of maneuvering room their own currency provided against their rivals, chose not to participate, while maintaining membership in the common market for goods, capital, and labor.

Temporary gains mask differences

Initially, the deep differences between the capitalist regimes sharing the euro were masked by temporary gains for all. The more developed and productive exporting economies, led by Germany, the region’s manufacturing powerhouse, stepped up their export

of merchandise and capital to the less developed nations, such as Greece and Portugal. The latter in particular gained access to much cheaper loans than they would have otherwise, which—for a time—fueled faster growth. In this way the union accelerated the mounting indebtedness of European governments, particularly the least developed.

Worldwide capitalist rates of profit, and therefore investment, in industrial production continued to slow down, spurring speculative “investment” and ballooning overall debt.

The contradictions bound up within the eurozone deepened, and came to the fore under the pressure of the 2008 depression in world capitalist markets. This downturn flowed from a decades-long slowdown in production, employment and trade, a process endemic to the workings of the capitalist system.

One country after another, from Greece to Ireland to Portugal, now to Italy and Spain, faced soaring interest demands for their national bonds and mounting debts to banks.

Pressure to kowtow to the demands of the creditors, especially Germany, and hand over increasing chunks of national sovereignty in order to pay the debts have mounted. The alternative is to break out of the eurozone and face isolation and economic chaos. Either way, depression conditions deepen.

As the euro unwinds, and the rulers “kick the can” down the road to buy time for a “solution” that never comes, the only course they can agree on is brutal “austerity”—make the working class pay for capitalism’s crisis. Attacks on workers’ jobs, wages, social rights and unions—what the bosses call “reforming labor markets” to “lower their unit-labor costs” are the order of the day. The economic crisis and assaults on the working class have just begun.

Over the last two years, 6 million jobs have been slashed across the eurozone. Youth unemployment averages more than 20 percent, reaching 45 percent in Greece and nearly 50 percent in Spain.

One indication of what the crisis has meant for working people can be seen in the changing migration patterns of immigrant labor, with workers fleeing Europe to former colonies in search of work. In the last year tens of thousands have left Portugal, 54,000 to Brazil and 10,000 to Angola, many of them construction workers looking for building jobs. Some 40,000 left Ireland, many going to Australia, and 600,000 left Spain for Germany.

US rulers move to further cripple Iran

Continued from front page

York Times.

Imperialist powers led by Washington charge that Tehran seeks to develop nuclear weapons, which many of the imperialist governments possess in large quantity. The Iranian government maintains that its nuclear program is for energy production and medical research.

Washington’s aggressive move comes on top of major economic and diplomatic measures already implemented by the U.S., the U.N., the European Union and other imperialist powers to force the Iranian government to abandon its nuclear program.

A meeting of EU foreign ministers at the end of January will decide whether to impose an embargo on Iranian oil imports. The EU imports about 18 percent of Iran’s exports of crude oil.

Sanctions hurt Iranian economy

The Associated Press reported Jan. 2 that the rial, Iran’s currency, had lost 10 percent of its value compared to the dollar in four days, “a new record low.” The exchange rate hovered that day around 16,800 rials to the dollar, compared to about 7,000 rials to the dollar in October—a plunge of almost 60 percent in just a few months.

Meanwhile, Iran’s crude oil production has dropped from 4 million barrels a day in 2010 to 3.5 million last year, “due to lack of investment in oil field development,” according to Iran’s deputy oil minister, Ahmad Qalebani. In December, four-year-old talks between Iran and Poland’s biggest natu-

ral gas developer collapsed over a project in the Persian Gulf.

The impact on working people from the imperialist sanctions is stark.

Officially inflation was at 19.8 percent in December. Prices of food and basic items like milk have increased up to 20 percent in recent months. The government recently ended subsidies on fuel and some foods, jacking up oil prices sevenfold and quadrupling bread prices.

Official unemployment was 11.1 percent last summer, but 24.7 percent for those under 24 years old, according to the *Financial Times*. Many factories work at less than half capacity. Interest rates are as high as 35 percent.

Naval maneuvers

From Dec. 24 to Jan. 2, Tehran conducted its largest naval exercises ever, from the Gulf of Oman to the Gulf of Aden, including war games in the Strait of Hormuz where about one-third of world oil tanker shipments transit. It test-fired several new missiles.

Three days into the exercises, Iran’s vice president, Mohammad Reza Rahimi, said that “not even a drop of oil will flow through the Strait of Hormuz” if sanctions are placed against Iran’s oil export, a clear reference to the bill that Obama was going to sign. The next day, Iran’s Navy Cmdr. Rear Adm. Habibollah Sayyari added, “Closing the Strait of Hormuz is very easy for Iranian naval forces.”

“Any attempt to close the Strait of Hormuz will not be tolerated,” responded George Little, Pentagon

spokesperson. The U.S. Navy 5th Fleet has a strong presence in the region. The aircraft carrier USS *John C. Stennis* and guided-missile cruiser USS *Mobile Bay* sailed through the Strait of Hormuz without incident Dec. 27.

Then on Jan. 1, Iranian Rear Adm. Mahmoud Mousavi, said, “We won’t disrupt traffic through the Strait of Hormuz.”

Two days later, Maj. Gen. Ataollah Salehi, commander in chief of the Iranian army, said, “We recommend to the American warship that passed through the Strait of Hormuz and went to the Gulf of Oman not to return to the Persian Gulf,” according to Iran’s official news agency. “The Islamic Republic of Iran will not repeat its warning.”

At the same time, Iranian state television announced that government scientists for the first time had successfully produced and tested fuel rods for use in its nuclear power plants. “This great achievement will perplex the West, because the Western countries had counted on a possible failure of Iran to produce nuclear fuel plates,” said the *Tehran Times*.

The day before, shortly before Obama signed the new sanctions, Iran’s National Security Adviser and top nuclear negotiator, Saeed Jalili, said Iran was ready to resume talks on its nuclear program with the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council—China, France, Russia, U.K. and U.S.—plus Germany. The last round of similar negotiations stalled in January 2011.

ON THE PICKET LINE

Hyundai railcar workers in Philadelphia win first contract

PHILADELPHIA—Fifteen months after union certification, members of Transport Workers Union Local 234 at the Hyundai Rotem railcar plant here voted 77-11 to approve their first contract Dec. 10. Workers voted to join the union in August 2010.

The contract includes wage increases, cuts in health insurance costs, and job security as the company obtains contracts to build more railcars. “The more unity in your shop, the less emboldened management will be to give you less than you deserve,” Ivan McNeil, a Local 234 shop steward, told the *Militant*. “Our contract is a clear example of that.”

In June 2011, about 60 production workers walked off the job to protest the bosses’ refusal to provide break room air conditioning and access to cold drinking water as temperatures rose to nearly 100 degrees. In August, the National Labor Relations Board ordered nine workers reinstated with back pay, saying that union members had been singled out for unfair discipline.

The factory assembles railcars for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, which runs the region’s public transportation lines. Subway, trolley car, and bus operators and mechanics are also organized by TWU Local 234.

The starting wage for Hyundai workers in the union had ranged from \$12.50 to \$15 an hour. The new contract includes 13 to 16 percent wage increases over three years.

The union represents 127 of some 200 workers at the plant. Those not represented by the union include temporary workers, as well as fulltime workers from South Korea who work on a six-month rotation. Hyundai Rotem is a subsidiary of the South Korean automaker, Hyundai Kia Motor Group.

—George Chalmers, member of TWU Local 234 at Hyundai Rotem.

Locked-out New Zealand meat packers return to work

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—“It was the best we were going to get out of them,” TeRangi Wroe, a laborer on the slaughter floor at Canterbury Meat Packers’ Rangitikei plant, told the *Militant* Dec. 22. He was one of some 90 workers who voted that day by a 95 percent margin to accept a new contract. The workers, members of the Meat Workers Union, had been locked out since Oct. 19 after refusing company demands that included pay cuts of up to 20 percent, shift changes and cuts in allowances.

Workers were in good spirits when they marched back in together for a company orientation Dec. 23, said Amanda Chase, a leading hand in the plant’s boning room. “It’s good to go back when we’re still strong. We’re ready to take on what we have to take on. We did as much as we could in making a stand together.” Chase had flown to London during the lockout to speak and garner support at the Unite union’s national meat workers’ committee conference.

The new agreement reduces pay cuts to around 15 percent and improves provisions for long service and seniority, according to union organizer Robbie Magee. Some allowances are reinstated and conditions around bereavement leave, sick pay and staffing levels have been protected. Workers will receive a NZ\$500 (\$390) signing bonus.

The union contract is “an improve-

ment from the beginning,” said worker Maryanne Broadbelt. Workers are being called back a few at a time over the next weeks, Wroe said, and will work alongside more than 200 others who left the union to sign the company’s original concession contract as individuals and worked during the lockout.

Locked-out workers won financial support and other solidarity over the nine-week struggle. They picketed daily at the plant on the country’s main highway and held protests targeting McDonald’s restaurants. ANZCO Foods, Canterbury Meat Packers’ parent company, supplies burger patties to McDonald’s. “This was an attack on unionism,” Chase told the *Militant*. “I believe there are going to be a lot of places that try to introduce these individual contracts as a way to get rid of unions.

“We definitely compromised on the contract but one thing we didn’t compromise on was giving up that site for the union. We actually got introduced to what unionism is all about. If anything, we should thank the company for that opportunity to get educated—that is priceless.”

—Felicity Coggan

Quebec auto parts workers win reduced wage gap

BOUCHERVILLE, Quebec—By an 88 percent margin, members of Canadian Auto Workers Local 698 at TW Distribution voted Dec. 20 in favor of a three-year contract that included annual wage increases of 3.5 percent for the first two years and 3 percent for the third.

The increases reduce the wage gap between TW Distribution workers and those at the UAP/NAPA auto parts warehouse in nearby Montreal. Workers on the picket line say reducing this gap is a question of “respect.”

Faced with the threat of a lockout because of their Nov. 27 rejection of a contract by 92 percent, 45 members of Canadian Auto Workers Local 698 organized to put pressure on the company, including setting up picket lines. TW bosses locked them out Dec. 1. On Dec. 4 the unionists voted unanimously to strike. Workers picketed around the clock seven days a week.



Militant/George Fyson

Workers locked out by Canterbury Meat Packers protest Dec. 17 in Palmerston North, New Zealand. Experience gained facing union busting was “priceless,” said one, Amanda Chase.

The unionists also reached out for support. “On Friday Dec. 16, about 40 people—TW Distribution workers and CAW members from other locals—picketed at the UAP/NAPA warehouse in Montreal to let workers there know about our lockout,” André Nadon told the *Militant*. “We received a good reception.”

—Beverly Bernardo

New York City office cleaners push back concession demands

NEW YORK—Some 22,000 office cleaning workers, members of Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ, pushed back much of the Realty Advisory Board’s concession demands with the threat of strike action and solidarity. The two sides reached a tentative agreement for a four-year contract Dec. 30.

Tentative agreements with SEIU 32BJ have also been reached for 7,000 workers in New Jersey; 2,000 in Hartford and New Haven, Conn.; 3,300 office cleaners in Hudson Valley, N.Y., and Fairfield County, Conn.; and 450 in Delaware.

All the contracts were set to expire January 1.

The tentative contract for workers in New York City includes a 5.6 percent wage increase over four years. The em-

ployers had demanded no increases for the first three years.

The contract maintains employer-paid family health-care coverage for all workers and their families. The bosses had demanded that new hires’ families not be covered. Under the old contract new hires were paid 80 percent of the wages of more senior workers for the first 30 months. The real estate barons wanted new hires to get just 70 percent permanently. Union negotiators agreed to a new hire wage of 75 percent, reaching 100 percent after 42 months. The agreement maintains sick time, holidays and vacation pay.

In recent weeks SEIU 32BJ in New York organized sizeable rallies, joining with other unions including Transport Workers Union Local 100 whose contract covering 38,000 bus drivers, train operators, signal maintainers, cleaners, mechanics and other workers expires Jan. 15.

A Dec. 29 press release by SEIU 32BJ said that janitors in more than 12 cities across the country had “pledged to honor picket lines should a strike spread outside New York City.” Contracts that cover some 155,000 cleaners around the country will be negotiated in 2012.

—Deborah Liatos

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



January 16, 1987

Even before the smoke had cleared from the New Year’s Eve hotel fire in San Juan, Puerto Rico, opponents of the labor movement jumped to pin the blame on the hotel workers’ union.

FBI officials, the governor of Puerto Rico, hotel management personnel, and the big-business news media have all tried to implicate Local 901 of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in the fire, which killed nearly 100 people.

Without citing any evidence—simply “suspicions”—Gov. Rafael Hernández Colón declared that “one tends to think this matter rises from the labor situation.”

This is a blatant frame-up. And it is directed against a group of workers who are resisting a union-busting drive by the hotel’s U.S. owners. Management has been pushing to “reclassify” job categories in order to hire nonunion workers and get rid of at least 90 union jobs.



January 15, 1962

A second tent city, to house Negro tenant farmers evicted in the course of a drive to become registered voters, was established this month in western Tennessee. The tents—three large ones, with three more in preparation—have been set up in a cornfield on one of the few Negro-owned farms in Haywood county.

The first such settlement, known as “Freedom Village,” is still in operation in adjacent Fayette county. It was established in 1960 when white landlords began mass evictions of Negro tenant farmers who had been involved in a voters-registration drive there. White-owned banks also refused credit to Negro farmers who had registered to vote, and white-owned businesses refused to sell gasoline or tractor parts to them.

Thus far there has been no federal move to block the new victimizations.



January 16, 1937

The struggle between the United Automobile Workers’ Union and the General Motors Company is rapidly approaching a showdown with thousands of workers on strike in many plants and with the vital “feeder” industries being tied up by strikes.

Violence has already broken out in Flint, and labor spies, thugs, and Pinkertons are being imported into the affected areas in wholesale numbers.

The United Auto Workers, a CIO affiliate, have presented the following demands to General Motors as the alternative for a general strike affecting all GM plants: Abolition of all piece work systems of pay and the adoption of a straight hourly rate; thirty hour week and six hour day with time and one-half for overtime over the basic work day and work week; seniority based on length of service; union recognition.

US-Pakistan ties crumble after attack kills Pakistani soldiers

BY JOHN STUDER

As the U.S. administration of Barack Obama begins to draw down troop levels in Afghanistan leading up to the 2012 elections, on the heels of the U.S. withdrawal from Iraq, relations with Pakistan are deteriorating markedly.

At the end of 2011, the U.S. military announced they had withdrawn 10,000 troops, leaving 91,000 remaining in Afghanistan. Another 23,000 are slated to leave by summer.

Pakistan has been a key, albeit conflicted and unstable, ally of U.S. imperialism in its war in Afghanistan. But tensions between Washington and Islamabad have been growing, fueled by mutual mistrust, deep anti-U.S. sentiment among Pakistani workers and peasants, and the arrogance and imperiousness of Washington.

These tensions deepened in 2011, reaching a breaking point on Nov. 26, when U.S.-led NATO forces killed 24 Pakistani soldiers near the country's

border.

Obama refused to apologize for the U.S. assault. Instead, the U.S. military issued a report placing blame for the deaths on both Pakistan and U.S. "mistakes," offering "condolences."

Islamabad blocked all further NATO logistical supplies from crossing to Afghanistan and ordered the CIA to vacate the Shamsi airbase it used to launch drone attacks. Nearly 40 percent of NATO military supplies have gone through Pakistan.

"Pakistan has told us very clearly that they are reevaluating the entire relationship," a senior U.S. official, who requested anonymity, told the *New York Times*. U.S. officials are seeking to reestablish a more restricted relationship with Pakistan, the *Times* reported.

As a bargaining chip, they have sharply cut back on financial aid, including suspending more than \$1 billion in military assistance and equipment.



Rajput Yasir/Demotix

Protest in Hyderabad Dec. 9 against Nov. 26 NATO attack killing 24 Pakistani troops.

"The United States will be forced to restrict drone strikes, limit the number of its spies and soldiers on the ground and spend more to transport supplies through Pakistan to allied troops, American and Pakistani officials said," the *Times* reported.

"Whatever emerges," the *Times* added, "will be a shadow of the

sweeping strategic relationship" that Washington had hoped for.

After the U.S.-led attack on Nov. 26, tens of thousands demonstrated against U.S. aggression across Pakistan.

One new expression of opposition to the U.S. has been the increasing popularity of Imran Khan, a politician and former cricket star. Khan is building a new political party, Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (Movement for Justice), mobilizing massive crowds across the country, built on opposition to Islamabad's ties to the U.S. and drone attacks, as well as anti-corruption demagoguery. On Jan. 1, more than 100,000 Pakistanis rallied in Karachi, the country's largest city, to support Khan.

West Papua miners win three-month strike

Continued from front page

company's open-cut and underground mining complex in the central highlands of Papua. As well as blocking supplies from getting to the mines the union action prevented the company from repairing the 70-mile slurry line that carries ore concentrate to the port.

Production, worth \$5 billion to Freeport in 2010, was slashed to 5 percent during the strike, and the company was forced to suspend its contracts.

As part of the settlement Freeport agreed to pay three months back pay as a "signing bonus" and allowances for health care, housing, education, shift premiums and other bonuses that will be calculated by a method proposed by the union.

Almost all of the 9,000 field operators employed by Freeport at the mine took part in the strike. There are also 3,000 salaried staff and another 10,000 contract workers there.

During the strike two miners were shot dead by the police in Timika at a protest against busing in of scabs. Twelve strike leaders were later charged with "disturbing the public

order."

Over the years Freeport has paid tens of millions of dollars to the Indonesian troops and police deployed to protect the mine bosses' interests.

There is a long history of struggle for self-determination in the province and of protests against the mine itself. In mid-December the Indonesian army launched an offensive against pro-independence fighters in the Lake Paniai region, some 80 miles northwest of Timika. There are reports that 20 people have been killed and 26 villages razed with 10,000 people fleeing the area.

In October, Indonesian cops broke up the Papuan People's Congress being held in the provincial capital Jayapura. The trials of five Papuan leaders held in prison on treason charges since then are expected to start in January.

The miners' struggle is having an impact across Indonesia as workers fight for higher wages in the context of an economic expansion over the last couple of years.

In Jakarta the minimum wage was raised by 20 percent Nov. 20 in face of a strike threatened by one of the

main union federations. Four days later, some 10,000 workers marched in the Indonesian island of Batam, near Singapore, clashing with the cops over two days. The governor there increased the minimum wage by 25 percent Dec. 13.

Revolutionary greetings from one of the Cuban Five



Gerardo Hernández

Panel 1. Happy 53rd anniversary of the revolution, brothers and sisters! Every year, every month. [Placards: Long live Raúl [Castro]! Long live Fidel [Castro]! Long live free Cuba! Down with the blockade! Long live the revolution!]

Panel 2. Every day that we resist and continue to advance is a new victory. [Placards: 100% Cuban socialism! Long live peace! Cubans don't surrender or sell out! With all and for the good of all! Breaking with schemas! Down with the mental blockade of the bureaucrats!]

Panel 3. In the face of those who for more than a half century have tried to make us give in. Greetings! [Placards: Down with terrorism! Freedom for the five! Proud to be Cuban!]



The cartoon above by Gerardo Hernández was drawn for the occasion of the 53rd anniversary of the Cuban Revolution, which on Jan. 1, 1959, overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and opened the door to socialist revolution in the Americas.

Hernández is one of the Cuban Five—working-class revolutionaries arrested in 1998 and convicted in 2001 on trumped-up charges that included "conspiracy to commit espionage" and, in the case of Hernández, "conspiracy to commit murder." The other four are Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, Antonio Guerrero and René González.

They were given sentences ranging from 17 years plus nine months for René González to double life plus 15 years for Hernández. On October 7, 2011, René was released on probation but is barred from returning to Cuba under a three-year "supervised release." The other four are still in prison.

Considered as heroes in their homeland of Cuba, the five were living and working in Florida in order to keep the Cuban government informed on the activities of Cuban exile counterrevolutionary groups that have a long history of organizing bombings and other deadly attacks on Cuba from U.S. soil—with Washington's tacit backing.

An international campaign has been publicizing their fight for freedom.

—LOUIS MARTIN

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China: fights by toilers heat up, economy cools

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Protests by working people in China have increased over the recent period. In addition to a number of strikes by factory workers in November and December, residents in a fishing community on the south coast put the land question into world focus.

This is happening at the same time as a slowdown in manufacture, trade, and other economic activity highlights the fact that the anti-working-class course of the Chinese ruling bureaucracy has left the country quite vulnerable to the worldwide crisis of capitalism.

The strikes have involved thousands of workers. Their demands are over unpaid wages, relocation of factories, loss of overtime, abuse by bosses, rising production quotas, and lack of compensation after factory closures.

A strike wave hit Guangdong province in southern China in the summer of 2010. Workers in plants operated by Honda, Toyota and Foxconn fought for and won substantial wage increases, in some cases as high as 50 percent. As a result, the provincial government raised the local minimum wage.

Since then the central government has encouraged and offered incentives for domestic and foreign companies to move inland in search of cheaper labor as wages have risen in Guangdong and Shanghai, the two industrial export centers in China.

“Nowadays the cost of labor has risen to such a level that it’s no longer cost-effective to be on the eastern

coast, so you’d have to be moving west as much as you can,” Francois de Yrigoyen from ManpowerGroup China told Reuters.

The 2010 strikes were led by the second generation of so-called migrant workers, many in their early 20s. Migrant workers in China are registered with the government as being from rural areas, but actually live and work in urban centers. Lacking official residency in the city, they are denied government services and other benefits, such as education, housing, medical care, food subsidies and many jobs.

Nearly two-thirds of those considered migrant workers today belong to the second generation that either grew up or were born in the cities. Only about 11 percent have any experience in agricultural work.

There were 30 million migrant workers in 1989. Today there are roughly 250 million.

In Beijing 40 percent of the population are migrant workers. In Shenzhen in Guangdong province nearly 12 million of the population of 14 million are migrants.

Increased protests over land rights

A majority of the estimated 180,000 social protests in China last year were over land rights in rural areas. Peasants accuse local officials of taking their land without offering proper compensation.

In September, residents in the fishing community of Wukan on China’s south coast took to the streets protesting seizure of agricultural land by lo-



Rally in December in fishing community of Wukan in south China. Protesting grab of agricultural land by local government, residents ran the village for three months, fighting cops and 10-day siege. They eventually forced provincial authorities to intervene and won truce.

cal government and party officials. Some 1,100 acres of village land was sold to a property developer and their common fishing grounds to a large seafood company, sharply reducing basic subsistence for many families.

Residents of Wukan chased local officials out of town and for three months ran the village. An elected committee organized food distribution, defense and logistics.

The struggle intensified and residents fought off an attack by 1,000 police with water cannons and tear gas. Five of their leaders were kidnapped by the police, and one died in custody. After being under siege by the cops for more than 10 days they threatened to march through the police chains to the county capital to press their demands. Concerned with the local authorities’ inability to quell the growing unrest, a provincial Communist Party leader moved in and took control. He

said residents’ claims were just and he would look into their demands. A truce was negotiated.

Land grabs—“legal” and “illegal”—have been a central part of China’s economic “miracle.” Local governments have taken over land for real estate, industries, roads, dams and power plants. Land grabs are also an important source for growing social inequality. They are a constant threat to the livelihood of the rural population, still a majority in China.

Since 1980, an estimated 50 million farmers have lost their land, according to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing.

Meanwhile, the world economic crisis is beginning to bite in China. “China is nearing the end of the period of high economic growth,” according to Yu Bin, senior economist with China’s State Council. He expects 8.5 percent growth for 2012 and between 7 and 8 percent through 2017. Annual growth rates have been more than 10 percent for three decades.

Manufacturing continued to contract in December, following an even bigger slowdown in November. Export growth slowed because of a drop in demand from Europe and the U.S., and export orders fell in December for the first time in three months. Foreign investment was 10 percent lower in November than a year earlier.

Australia rulers boost military ties with Seoul

BY LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY, Australia—The Australian and South Korean governments signed an agreement in Canberra Dec. 14 to expand military ties.

In a joint statement Stephen Smith and Gen. Kim Kwan-Jin, the defense ministers of Australia and South Korea, declared that the two countries “shared strategic interests” and would “continue to look for new opportunities to deepen our defense cooperation.” The agreement includes staging regular naval exercises starting in 2012.

The meeting and agreement follow

the April announcement by Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard and South Korean President Lee Myung-bak that their respective military representatives would hold annual talks to discuss information sharing, defense industry cooperation and “regional security.”

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two capitalist governments. “Australia’s collaboration with the Republic of Korea on defense and security extends back to the Korean War and has taken on renewed

strength in recent years,” Smith stated in Singapore last June.

From 1950 to 1953 Australia’s imperialist rulers sent 17,000 troops to back the U.S.-led invasion of Korea, which ended in the forced division of the peninsula into north and south. Washington still has 28,500 troops in South Korea and officially would command the South Korean army in time of war.

The Australian rulers’ agreement with Seoul complements their deepening military ties with Washington and the U.S. rulers’ efforts to extend the naval dominance of the Pacific they conquered with U.S. imperialism’s bloody triumph in World War II.

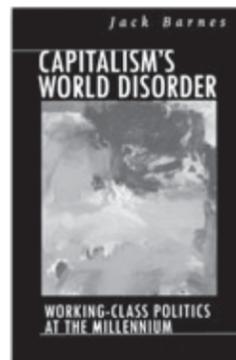
For the first time since then, significant U.S. Armed Forces will be stationed at Australian military bases in the north and west of the country. This is part of a recent agreement between the two imperialist powers aimed at countering the growing economic and military power of China and mounting pressure on the North Korean government.

In response to the Dec. 19 announcement of the death of North Korean president Kim Jong-il, Australian Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd arrogantly suggested that the North Korean government “engage with the international community on how to feed its people, open its economy and deal with its nuclear weapons program.”



South Korean president Lee Myung-bak reviewing Australian troops in Canberra, Australia, during three day visit in March 2009. Deepening ties between the two governments complement Washington’s efforts to extend U.S. naval dominance in the Pacific.

CAPITALISM’S WORLD DISORDER Working-Class Politics at the Millennium



by Jack Barnes

The crisis of the world capitalist order “is no plot,” says Barnes. “There is no mystery to it.” It is the product of “rivalry among the ruling

families of finance capital to intensify their exploitation of the toilers the world over, collect on their debts, and enhance their profit rates.” \$25

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'Nothing moved on wheels without union's say'

Below is an excerpt from *Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs, one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* for January. In the 1930s Dobbs was a central leader of labor battles in the Midwest. He later served as national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. The excerpt describes how the second of three strikes by Teamsters in Minneapolis in 1934 was organized. Ray Dunne and Carl Skoglund were leaders of the Communist League of America, a predecessor of the SWP. The Citizens Alliance was the main bosses' outfit. Copyright © 1972 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Minneapolis, May 1934. Hundreds of truck drivers and their supporters rout cops and bosses' deputies in one of key battles of successful organizing drive led by communist workers.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FARRELL DOBBS

Picket dispatching was assigned to Ray Dunne and me. This was Ray's first official function in Local 574, although he had headed the Communist League fraction in the union from the start of the organizing drive in coal. Previously he had been handicapped by loss of his coal job which stripped him of a formal basis for union membership. Now, however, he was able to step forward as a volunteer supporter of the strike, along with hundreds of other individual workers. Many in the strike committee were aware of his impressive trade-union credentials, and he was given an important assignment accordingly.

Working beside Ray, as had been the case earlier with Carl Skoglund, im-

pressed upon me the experience and education one gains through membership in a revolutionary socialist party. He knew a lot about conducting a strike, and like Carl, he taught me a lot about the team concept in leadership.

Ray was a superb combat leader with a clear sense of purpose, backed up by strong willpower and the ability to keep a cool head in critical situations. He not only taught by the example he set, never shirking either hazardous or minor tasks; he also gave others leeway for initiative, seeking only to safeguard against serious blunders. His criticisms were presented constructively with the aim of helping others to learn. Never a dabbler at anything he did, Ray tried to find some role for everyone who wanted to help. . . .

As dispatchers, Ray and I were in charge of all picketing assignments and it was our responsibility to direct tactical operations. We had a special staff at our disposal to handle the telephones and operate a shortwave radio used to monitor police calls. Teenage volunteers with motorcycles were organized into an efficient courier service. Scooting around the city under strict orders to stay out of the fighting, they served as the eyes and ears of the picket dispatchers and as a swift means of contact with picket captains.

So many cars and individually owned trucks were volunteered that we had more than enough to achieve the high degree of mobility required in the strike. Trucks were used to transport station-

ary picket details and their relief shifts to truck terminals, the market area, wholesale houses, and other places where trucks normally operated. Picket crews also kept a vigil at points where the main highways crossed the city limits.

Cruising squads in autos were assigned, district by district, to sweep through the streets on the lookout for scab trucking operations. A captain was designated for each of these squads and for each detachment of stationary pickets. At all times a reserve force with the necessary transportation was kept on hand at the strike headquarters. In situations where large forces were involved, a field commander was appointed and a command post set up to coordinate activities and keep in touch with the headquarters.

Special cruising squads with hand-picked crews were constantly at the disposal of the picket dispatchers. They were captained by qualified leaders who supersede all other authority in the field. These squads were used for special assignments on their own, and they were sent into tense situations to marshal the union forces and lead the fight.

Assembling the mass forces for such extensive picketing proved to be no problem at all. As soon as the strike was called, new members poured into Local 574 from all sections of the trucking industry. In no time at all the union almost doubled its mid-April strength, reaching a figure of nearly 6,000. The union's

approach to the unemployed workers brought spectacular results. Hundreds upon hundreds of jobless poured into the strike headquarters, volunteering their services; and they fought like tigers in the battles that followed.

Unorganized workers from other industries came forward. Together with women and men from other unions, they came to the strike headquarters at the end of their day's work, ready to help in whatever way they could. Deep in the night they would finally stretch out wherever they found a place to get a little sleep before returning to their jobs. A significant number of college students pitched in to help the union. All in all, pickets were on hand by the thousands.

A majority of the city's population proved sympathetic to the strike and soon a spontaneous intelligence service was in operation. People telephoned reports of scab activities, and other information was mailed in anonymously, often with the postage having been paid by some unknowing employer. Typists, even personal secretaries, slipped in an extra carbon to make a copy for the union when a boss dictated something they felt the strikers should know about. Material arrived that had obviously been salvaged from wastebaskets, some of it coming from the offices of the Citizens Alliance itself. . . .

While all this was going on, talk about joining Local 574 spread rapidly among fleet drivers at the Yellow Cab Company. When the employer got wind of it he tried to set up a company union and the drivers reacted angrily. On the second day of Local 574's walkout they sent a delegation to the strike committee asking that they be allowed to take a hand in the fight being waged by the truck drivers and other workers.

Despite the existence of a miniscule local union of individual cab owners and their relief drivers, the strike committee agreed to sign up the Yellow Cab drivers. Cruising squads were sent out to notify all taxi drivers of a meeting at strike headquarters that night. Upon coming together they voted to go on strike, and within hours not a cab was to be found in operation.

As this episode graphically demonstrated, Local 574 had become a power to be reckoned with. . . . Nothing moved on wheels without the union's permission.

January BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Help build ILWU action in Wash.

The *Militant* encourages workers, farmers, and youth—anyone repelled by the myriad social ills of capitalism being multiplied and magnified by the deepening crisis of the profit-driven system—to actively back International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 21 in Longview, Wash., in its fight against EGT Development.

EGT bosses have refused to hire ILWU labor at their grain terminal at the Port of Longview in blatant disregard for a long-standing agreement between the union and the port. The union-busting maneuver is essentially a lockout, part of a growing trend in the capitalists' war on workers worldwide as the bosses and their governments drive to foist the burden of their crisis on the backs of working people and change the relationship of class forces.

If EGT succeeds in icing out Local 21, it would set a dangerous precedent as the first West Coast terminal run without ILWU labor in 80 years.

EGT says it's bringing in its first ship to load grain stored at the terminal later this month.

The union is preparing to mount a large protest on the day of the ship loading. They expect only four day's notice.

Discuss the importance of this fight and upcom-

ing action with fellow workers, including those involved in strikes and other struggles, students, friends, and others. Doing so now will be decisive in bringing as many as possible to stand in solidarity with the ILWU when the ship comes in. Find other groups and individuals planning to go, and travel with them to Longview.

The San Francisco Labor Council passed a resolution backing a solidarity caravan to join the protest, and "will spread the word about the caravan to its membership and constituency groups, and encourage their participation, when requested to do so by ILWU Local 21."

It is important that those who come to support the longshore workers act in a disciplined manner and follow the lead of ILWU Local 21, which will make whatever tactical decisions it deems most effective. Longview workers have been threatened with revocation of their work papers by the Coast Guard and other consequences if the bosses can successfully smear them as "interfering" with EGT operations.

Go to Longview and stand with Local 21 to meet the scab shipment. But don't go alone! Help make the protest there as large as possible and send the bosses—both EGT and more broadly—a message.

LETTERS

Sugar beet lockout

I find it alarming that the *InForum* [newspaper in Fargo-Moorhead, N.D.] editors would select David Berg, CEO of American Crystal Sugar, as Area Person of the year for 2011. But since *Time* magazine also selected Adolf Hitler in 1938, one year before he invaded Poland, I am also not surprised.

Yes, he has impacted the Red River Valley. He has created a divide among ACS and its workers, and also among many people in the communities local to the factories that will take years to repair, if it's repairable at all.

He has taken 1,300 families out of the working middle class and dropped them into poverty. He's done more damage over a wider area than most tornadoes on record.

Could we simply have signed the

contract and stayed at work? Sure. Would we be taking a step backward? Sure. We did the right thing not only for ourselves, but for future workers at Crystal Sugar and for workers around the U.S.

Many of the jobs at ACS are dangerous ones, working with or around industrial strength and deadly chemicals, super steam, moving, old, dated machinery. That we take a deep interest in our health care is normal.

Our insurance is the union.

Chris Halligan
Former bulk sugar loader
ASC factory, East Grand Forks,
Minn.

Editor's note: After they rejected a concession contract offer, American Crystal Sugar locked out 1,300 workers, members of the

Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union, Aug. 1 at five sugar beet factories across the Red River Valley of the Upper Midwest and two smaller plants in the region nearby. ACS then brought in more than 1,000 scabs. The locked-out workers have since maintained picket lines and mounted a sustained fight. Solidarity messages and donations can be sent to BCTGM Local 167G, 100 N 3rd, Suite 50, Grand Forks, ND 58203. Write checks to BCTGM 167G with "2011 BCTGM lockout" in the memo line.

Greetings

To the compañeros and compañeras of the *Militant*. Greetings and embraces for all of you. Thanks for everything you do.

A prisoner
Rhode Island

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

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Longshore fight

Continued from front page

arrested when I didn't do anything wrong."

A week earlier, ILWU member Shelly Ann Porter was acquitted of charges of assaulting an EGT officer who tried to take her photo at a July 22 union protest outside the company's terminal at the Port of Longview. Porter pushed away the boss's hand as he put his cell phone camera in her face.

Also on Dec. 30, prior to jury selection for a trial, prosecutors dropped their charges against ILWU member William Roberts, 42, who had been charged with disorderly conduct at the port.

EGT Development has refused to hire ILWU members at its terminal in violation of an agreement between the union and the Port of Longview. Instead, the bosses have hired members of Operating Engineers Union Local 701 through a subcontractor under inferior conditions and without a contract. If EGT prevails, it would be the first West Coast terminal run without ILWU labor in eight decades.

"I'm happy the jury saw the truth in these set-up charges," Dan Coffman, ILWU Local 21 president, told the *Militant*. Local 21 organizes longshore workers here in Longview.

"These acquittals show the support for the union," Coffman said. "There is a change of perception in what the union is up against with this Pinkerton type Specialty Response security agency and the public relations firm EGT has hired to spin their story."

Meanwhile, the union is preparing for a large protest when EGT brings in its first ship to load grain later this month. Several unions and other organizations have pledged to come to Longview for the protest, according to Coffman.

The Committee to Defend the ILWU, a rank-and-file committee within ILWU Local 10 in San Francisco, has announced it will organize a vehicles caravan to join the protest here when the ship arrives.

The San Francisco Labor Council issued a resolution endorsing the caravan and calling on other labor organizations to do the same.

Occupy Longview has put out a national call for other Occupy groups to join the protest in solidarity. On Dec. 12 Occupy Longview organized a protest at the port of Longview in support of the union's struggle.

At the same time, anarchists, many of whom are motivated by interests counter to those of the union battle and the working class in general, are planning to be at the port protest. An anonymous post to Anarchistnews.org, for example, called on anarchists to "bring black flags and storm the gates," adding that they did not need to be "weighed down by Occupy's moral stances on tactics."

"We need to fight EGT. If they break the ILWU, who's next?" Occupy Longview Spokesperson Paul Nipper told the *Militant*. "An injury to one is an injury to all. As the host Occupy group we are asking people to come here and participate in a peaceful protest exactly as our Dec. 12 protest was held. We want no arrests, no injuries, no confrontation other than the presence of our bodies and our voices."

Financial contributions to help pay for ILWU Local 21's fight can be made out to "EGT Fighting Fund" and mailed to ILWU Local 21, 617 14th Ave. Longview, WA 98632.



In front, framed-up ILWU member Shelly Porter standing outside Kelso, Wash., Hall of Justice, Sept. 17, 2011.