

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Intro in Spanish to 'Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution'

— PAGES 7-11

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Locked-out sugar workers strengthen picket lines

BY FRANK FORRESTAL AND NATALIE MORRISON

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn.—As the American Crystal Sugar lockout of 1,300 workers enters its seventh month, members of the Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union are strengthening their picket lines.

On Jan. 16, company officials rejected the union's effort to restart negotiations and declared their intention to "continue hiring employees to staff ... long-term temporary positions."

In response, workers have organized a stronger union presence outside American Crystal's five sugar factories in the Red River Valley of northern Minnesota and North Dakota.

Locked-out workers organized a picket-line rally Jan. 16 of about 70 outside the East Grand Forks plant "with temperature well below zero," Scott Ripplinger told the *Militant* in a phone interview. "We had about 15 on the front gate and rest of us on the back gate where the scabs usually come out."

"When the scabs saw us, they

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For workers, question is not who is taxed, but who taxes

BY JOHN STUDER

All of the bourgeois candidates for U.S. president in the 2012 elections—President Barack Obama and his Republican challengers—tout new tax proposals, which they claim will "stimulate" the economy, help create jobs and aid the "middle class."

Each in their own way seeks support from working people and layers of middle classes. But the working class has no interest in how the capitalist rulers organize to collect revenue for their government. The question is not who is being taxed and how much, but who is taxing.

COMMENTARY

The capitalists' government does face fiscal problems, and the ruling class generally seeks to avoid raising taxes, which ultimately cut into the surplus they extract from the labor of working people. All their various tax schemes today are coupled with plans to cut social programs working peo-

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Capitalist crisis, rulers' austerity spur daily protests in Romania



Reuters/Bogdan Cristel

Demonstrators in Bucharest Jan. 15 protest austerity and demand ouster of government.

BY JOHN STUDER

Daily since Jan. 12, thousands of workers and others have rallied and marched in Bucharest, the capital of Romania, and other cities across the country, protesting the devastating impact of the government's economic assault and demanding political change.

The demonstrations began after the government of President Traian Bas-

escu and Prime Minister Emil Boc launched a new round of cuts against the state health care system, provoking the resignation of Deputy Health Minister Raed Arafat. Rapidly the protests grew and spread, leading to demands for an end to the attacks and the ouster of Basescu's government.

These cuts—and the protests

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Growing support bolsters ILWU fight against EGT

8 more unionists cleared of frame-up charges



Militant/Mary Martin

Workers picket outside EGT Jan. 21 in fight against union busting. From left, Stan DeLapp, ILWU Local 40; Jack Union, ILWU Local 8; Mike Grady; and Gary Poole, ILWU Local 21.

BY MARY MARTIN

LONGVIEW, Wash.—The International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) is gaining support here in its fight to beat back union-busting by the company EGT, which has refused to hire union members on their grain dock despite the union's contract covering the whole port. Increased publicity and growing labor solidarity have strengthened the union's battle against the eight-month lockout.

In a victory for the ILWU, eight more members of Local 21 have been cleared of frame-up charges arising out of the union's ongoing battle against EGT, which has been fighting to keep ILWU labor off its grain docks here. More than 200 members of the union and supporters have been arrested and scores charged with trespass, disorderly conduct and other false allegations for their participation in union protests against EGT

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Georgia police killing of Black youth, cover up spark protest

BY SAM MANUEL

UNION CITY, Georgia—Some 200 people rallied outside the city council meeting here Jan. 17 to demand justice in the fatal shooting of

19-year-old Ariston Waiters by a city cop Dec. 14.

Police released a statement Jan. 14 claiming that the Black youth was shot twice in the back while resisting arrest.

The police say Waiters attempted to grab the cop's weapon while being handcuffed. "During the struggle, our officer discharged his service weapon

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Iran: imperialists tighten economic noose, back off military threats

BY LOUIS MARTIN

The U.S. government and its imperialist allies are imposing further sanctions against Iran, with the aim of forcing Tehran to abandon its nuclear program. This tightening economic noose is having a devastating effect on workers and farmers.

At a Jan. 23 meeting in Brussels, the European Union's 27 foreign ministers adopted an oil embargo on Iran and froze the assets of the coun-

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Roe v. Wade: key gain for women and working class

BY PAUL PEDERSON

On Jan. 22, 1973, the Supreme Court issued the Roe v. Wade decision decriminalizing abortion. This year marks the 39th anniversary of that watershed victory.

The court acted at a time when the disparity was becoming acute between the rapidly changing social position of women in employment, education and throughout society, and the institutionalized forms of sexual discrimination and oppression that still existed. Millions of women had entered the workforce during and after World War II—transforming the working class and themselves in the process. In those years, for the first time, scientific advances brought safe, effective methods of contraception and decreased the dangers of medical procedures, including abortion.

The decision came as a growing women's rights movement was taking to the streets and gaining confidence on the crest of the mass proletarian-based struggle for Black rights. Both battles irreversibly strengthened the working class.

In the decades since, the U.S. ruling class and its two parties—the Democrats and Republicans—have engaged in a steady campaign to chip away at women's right to abortion as part of the wide-ranging offensive against the rights of working people. These measures have aimed their fire first and foremost at working-class and rural women.

President Obama issued an executive order in 2010 extending the ban on

Medicaid funding for abortions to insurance plans offered in the new health insurance exchanges set up as part of the administration's health insurance reform. He endorsed blocking over-the-counter sales of the Plan B contraceptive pill for anyone under 17.

In 2009, during a speech at the University of Notre Dame, Obama called on supporters of women's rights and anti-abortion forces to seek "common ground" to "reduce the number of women seeking abortion." Two weeks later, Dr. George Tiller, an abortion provider in Wichita, Kan., was gunned down by an anti-abortion rightist.

In recent years, the opponents of women's rights have focused on pressing for more legal restrictions at the state level, aimed at making abortions more difficult to get. A study released Jan. 5 by the Guttmacher Institute found that states enacted 92 provisions last year seeking to chip away at access to abortion.

These include bans on abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy; waiting periods and mandatory counseling laws; mandatory ultrasound examinations prior to an abortion; and denying insurance coverage for abortions.

Abortion, a simple medical procedure, is rarely available in hospitals across the country, and has become increasingly restricted to specialized clinics.

Some state governments and local health boards have sought to tie these clinics up in regulatory red tape with baseless and onerous regulations.

In Maryland, prosecutors used a

Supreme Court rally defends right to abortion



Militant/Glova Scott

WASHINGTON—Defenders of a woman's right to choose abortion rallied outside the U.S. Supreme Court building Jan. 23 to mark the 39th anniversary of the court's Roe v. Wade decision, which decriminalized abortion. "I am becoming more of a fighter to defend abortion rights by becoming more visible," said Tirza Cannon, 29, a graduate student at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. Cannon joined about 90 others at the vigil, which was organized by the National Organization for Women. Earlier in the day thousands of opponents of a woman's right to choose took part in a national mobilization here.

—GLOVA SCOTT

2005 fetal homicide law for the first time to charge two doctors with murder for providing late-term abortions.

But anti-abortion forces have been unsuccessful in their efforts to change the broad social attitudes on the fundamental right of women to choose. Unable to turn back the clock, some rightists on the fringes have resorted to acts of individual terrorism abhorred by the vast majority. On New Year's Day a clinic in Pensacola, Fla., was firebombed.

From the outset, it has been public mobilizations—from marches on Washington to clinic defense—that have had the biggest impact.

Last July, Dr. LeRoy Carhart, an abortion provider who worked closely with the late Dr. George Tiller, called a week of demonstrations outside his Germantown, Md., clinic to counter mobilizations against it by the rightist outfit Operation Rescue. For nine days, supporters of women's rights defended the clinic.

The picketers, including this reporter, were greeted with a steady stream of solidarity in the form of honks, waves, pizzas, water, and volunteers for the picket line.

The action helped educate those who joined in or just passed by. Among them were new generations of fighters who weren't alive to see the movement it took to win this fundamental right, but could see firsthand the need to mobilize to defend it today.

Abortion Is a Woman's Right!

by Pat Grogan and Evelyn Reed

Why abortion rights are central not only to the fight for the full emancipation of women, but to forging a united and fighting labor movement. \$6

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White House pushes 'smart' crackdown on immigrants

BY SETH GALINSKY

White House immigration policy is designed to tighten control and further regulate the flow of immigrant labor into the U.S., while attempting to project a meritocratic image of being both tough and humane toward undocumented workers.

The Obama administration has been cranking up enforcement of federal anti-immigrant rules established under his predecessors.

Increasing "by the book" enforcement has made it harder for those without papers to work.

In June 2006, 9,300 employers were using the government's E-verify system to check the work status of potential hires via the Internet. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano says that number has surpassed 292,000, with 1,000 companies joining each week. The status of one out of four new hires was checked in 2010, according to the Migration Policy Institute.

While the Obama administration ordered a halt to most factory raids, which are unpopular among many working people, it is conducting five times more I-9 immigration audits than took place in 2008. The audits are often called "silent raids" because they lead to mass firings of workers without papers.

The U.S. government has also extended the collaboration of local police departments with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, required that fingerprints of prisoners in local and state prisons be checked against federal databases, added 413 miles of barriers at the U.S.-Mexico border, increased the number of border patrol agents, sent Predator drones to monitor the border, and stepped up sweeps of alleged criminal immigrants.

Criminal penalties have been stiffened. The number of immigrants deported through "removals"—which makes returning to the U.S. subject to felony charges and jail time—reached a record high last year. At the same time, due mainly to the decline in arrests along the U.S.-Mexico border, the total number of deportations, when so-called voluntary departures and other categories are included, is the lowest since the early 1970s.

On Jan. 6, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced a proposal to change procedures to allow eligible undocumented spouses and children of U.S. citizens to apply for residency without first leaving the country, although they would still have to leave when it's time to pick up their visa. Under the current rules, applicants must wait outside the U.S. for up to 10 years before being allowed to return. Many decide it isn't

worth the long separation or the risk.

The White House also ordered ICE to review 7,900 deportation cases in federal court in Denver and later all of some 340,000 cases nationwide. Under a policy outlined by ICE Director John Morton, the agency would use "discretion" in deciding which cases to prosecute.

In the Denver cases, ICE plans to continue deportation proceedings in 84 percent of the cases. But even in dropped cases those immigrants would still not be allowed to legally work, receive college aid or, in most states, obtain driver's licenses. One ICE prosecutor told the *New York Times* that immigration authorities could reopen the cases down the road.

Due to the anti-immigrant actions by the government combined with high unemployment in the U.S., fewer undocumented workers are entering the country. In Alabama, where the state government passed a law that would limit the rights of undocumented workers even further, some farmers say they are having difficulty finding farm workers.

Reserve army of labor

High unemployment has helped U.S. capitalists drive down wages and expand their reserve army of labor, but they still depend on millions of immigrant workers to maintain their competitive advantage in the world market.

According to the *Washington Post*, while crossing the border from Mexico without papers is more difficult than ever, Washington approved 516,000

NM immigrant rights rally defends driver's licenses



AP Photo/J.R. Oppenheim

Hundreds of people marched around the state capitol building in Santa Fe, New Mexico, Jan. 24 to protest Gov. Susana Martinez's efforts to repeal a 2003 law that allows immigrants to get a driver's license without proof of legal residence. The Immigrant Day of Action was organized by Somos Un Pueblo Unido. Sponsors included the New Mexico Conference of Catholic Bishops, Communication Workers of America Local 7076 and the NAACP.

New Mexico is one of only three states that does not require proof of legal residence to get a license. Since taking office a year ago, Martinez has pushed three times for the legislature to reverse this, sparking statewide protests.

—LESLIE DORK

temporary work visas for Mexicans in 2010, the highest number since the *bracero* programs of the 1950s. In January, Haiti, Iceland, Spain, Montenegro and Switzerland were added to the nations eligible for temporary U.S. work visas.

"Guest worker" programs give employers similar leverage for pushing down the cost of labor "legally" as they do exploiting the labor of undocumented workers, since modern *braceros* have few rights. If they are fired, laid off, or quit they are subject to deportation.

In an Oct. 5, 2011, speech at American University in Washington, D.C., Homeland Security Secretary Napolitano described Obama's immigration policy as "smart," "effective," "intelligent" and "common sense."

Although the crackdown and economic crisis have made it more difficult for workers without papers to come, work and live, their self-confidence and willingness to struggle remain intact. In October undocumented workers led a one-day strike in parts of Alabama protesting the state's anti-immigrant law.

Protests force Nigerian gov't to reduce fuel hike

BY SETH GALINSKY

A one-week nationwide strike and protest forced the Nigerian government to pull back from doubling fuel prices. After oil workers threatened to join the strike, President Goodluck Jonathan announced Jan. 16 that the government would restore some of the estimated \$8 billion annual fuel subsidy, reducing the price jump to 50 percent. Union officials then agreed to end the strike.

Jonathan claimed that he had planned to redirect the subsidy to funding public transportation and creating jobs for youth and that his administration "is committed to tackling corruption."

"I think the government has not given an argument that is convincing," Nted Anthony Emmanuel, president of the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria, said in a phone interview just prior to the settlement. "Workers are in a difficult situation. The unemployment rate is 60 percent, more than 70 percent among

youth. If fuel goes up, food prices and every other thing will rise."

"Nobody believes the government anymore," he added. "People have lost confidence; 90 percent of the government is corrupt."

Nigeria, with 160 million people, is the most populous country in Africa.

It is a major natural gas and oil producer, pumping 2.4 million barrels of crude oil a day, and the fifth largest oil exporter to the U.S. Despite this, the country imports most of its refined gasoline, diesel and other fuel, to the advantage of foreign oil companies such as Exxon-Mobil, Shell and Chevron. According to the U.S. Commerce Department, 80 percent of Nigeria's imports in the oil and gas sector come from U.S.-based companies.

"If the refineries were working at full capacity, that would be enough to meet Nigeria's needs," Sunday Alhassan,

president of the National Union of Posts and Telecommunication Employees told the *Militant*. But the nations' four refineries, which are government-run, are either not running or so poorly maintained they are nowhere near capacity, he said.

Nigeria has been hard hit by the worldwide economic crisis, Regina Agunlana, president of the National Union of Textile, Garment and Tailoring Workers, told the *Militant*. "We used to have almost 100,000 union members, now we are down to 20,000, due to layoffs and plant closings."

Working people across the country backed the strike, defying the government's declaration that it was illegal. Tens of thousands, including both Christians and Muslims, marched against the price hike in Lagos, a city of 10 million, and in Minna in the center of the country. Protestors and police clashed in Kano in the north.



Jide Odukoya

Mass protest in Lagos, Nigeria, Jan. 11, against government removal of fuel subsidy.

Artwork from the Cuban Five

Antonio Guerrero:
From My Altitude
Seattle Central Community College
1701 Broadway, Seattle
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Gerardo Hernández: Humor
From My Pen
Boneshaker Books
2002 23rd Ave. S
Minneapolis, Minn.
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P.O. Box 5300, Adelanto, CA 92301

Ramón Labañino
Reg. #58734-004, FCI Jesup
2680 301 South, Jesup, GA 31599
> Address envelope to "Luis Medina"

Locked-out Quebec smelter workers win solidarity

MONTREAL—More than 750 union aluminum smelter workers are standing firm in their fight against the company's plans to increase the use of mostly nonunion subcontractors, temporary workers who are paid half the going wage. Members of United Steelworkers Local 9490 were locked out by Rio Tinto Alcan in Alma, Quebec, Jan. 1.

On Jan. 17, almost 1,000 members of the National Union of Arvida Aluminum Employees, which represents workers at other Rio Tinto Alcan plants and its railway operation, voted almost unanimously to approve a \$1 million interest-free loan to the locked-out Steelworkers.

Students from the nearby junior college Cégep de Jonquière and from the university in Chicoutimi joined nighttime picket lines Jan. 18. Canadian Auto Workers union representatives from Rio Tinto's plant in Kitimat, British Columbia, flew in to walk the picket lines Jan. 20. "The conflict in Alma affects us directly since the issues at the heart of the dispute are the same as in Kitimat," CAW Local 2301 President Ed Abreu told the press.

United Steelworkers Local 1005 representing workers at United States Steel Corp. in Hamilton, Ontario, also plans to send a van load of members to Alma. Locked-out union members who spoke to the *Militant* by telephone said they have been buoyed by the solidarity.

—Katy LeRougetel

Thousands rally to back Ontario Caterpillar workers

LONDON, Ontario—Some 10,000 unionists and supporters from across Ontario rallied at Victoria Park here Jan. 21 in solidarity with 465 Electro-Motive Diesel workers locked out

on New Year's Day by the company, which is owned by Caterpillar Inc. The workers, members of Local 27 of the Canadian Auto Workers, assemble railway locomotives.

The Caterpillar bosses locked the doors after workers refused to accept concession demands that include a 50 percent wage cut and the virtual elimination of their pension plan.

The rally was called by the Canadian Auto Workers in collaboration with the Ontario Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress. Participants from 54 unions came to the rally on 70 buses. Cross-border solidarity was given by workers from the United States, including from the General Electric Co. locomotive plant in Erie, Penn.

Following the rally hundreds joined a picket line and barbecue at the Electro-Motive plant gate. A popular chant was "nothing in and nothing out," showing workers' determination to prevent supplies from entering the plant or machinery being removed by the bosses.

—John Steele and Joe Young
[The Jan. 23 *Militant* incorrectly stated that 650 workers, not 465, were locked out at Electro-Motive Diesel]

Mass. Teamsters strike shingle plant over health insurance cuts

NORWOOD, Mass.—Ninety Teamsters on strike here since Dec. 19 at CertainTeed Corp. are picketing around the clock. During a Jan. 18 visit to the picket line a dump truck dropped off split logs for the strikers' fire barrel, one of many donations including coffee by local supporters.

A subsidiary of the French company Saint-Gobain, CertainTeed makes asphalt shingles at the Norwood plant. Headquartered in Valley Forge, Penn., they have 7,000 employees in the U.S. and Canada. Only workers at this plant are on strike.

Negotiations broke down over the company's insistence on replacing the union-administered insurance with a company-run plan. According to a statement from Teamsters Local 25 the bosses want to "drastically reduce



Militant

Some 10,000 trade unionists rally at Jan. 21 action in London, Ontario, to support Electro-Motive Diesel workers, locked out on New Year's Day by the Caterpillar subsidiary. Participants came from 54 unions, including across the border from the United States.

duce the amount of health insurance they pay and, in return, give employees a one-time \$1,000 bonus."

Local 25 President Sean O'Brien, Massachusetts AFL-CIO President Steven Tolman, and members of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 2222, which represents Verizon workers, joined a Jan. 5 rally at the plant.

The following week the strikers received a letter of solidarity from the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers, headquartered in Switzerland, pledging that they and their affiliates in France would bring pressure to bear on top executives of Saint-Gobain in Paris.

—Sarah Ullman



Militant/Sarah Ullman

Striking Teamsters in Norwood, Mass, use donated firewood at Jan. 18 picket. CertainTeed bosses want to "drastically reduce the amount of health insurance they pay," says union.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA San Francisco

Pres. Obama's 'State of the Union': More attacks on U.S. and world's workers. Speaker: Andrea Morell, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

IOWA Des Moines

The crisis of capitalism and the state of African Americans today: "Diversity" for a few—increased police harassment and incarceration for many. Speaker: Maggie Trowe, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m. 3707 Douglas Ave. Tel.: (515) 255-1707.

MINNESOTA Minneapolis

The fight for immigrant rights: A key front in the battle to defend workers today. Fri., Feb. 3, 8 p.m. 1311 1/2 E Lake St. Tel.: (612) 729-1205.

TEXAS Houston

How we won abortion rights; how we can defend them today. Panel discussion: Lindsay Smith, Houston women's liberation activist; Jacquie Henderson, Socialist Workers Party; others. Fri., Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-50L. Tel.: (713) 688-4919.

Wis. strike against Manitowoc 'absolutely worth it'

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

Following a two-month strike, members of Local 516 of the Machinists union at the Manitowoc Co. crane manufacturing plant in Manitowoc, Wis., voted Jan. 19 to accept a contract proposal with "open-shop" stipulations and return to work. At the same time, the workers' union is clearly stronger having fought and reached out for solidarity than it would have been otherwise.

"We weren't voting on the contract, we were voting to keep our jobs. It is a bitter pill to swallow," Scott Rosinsky told the *Militant*. Rosinsky, a member of the Local 516 shop committee, is a material handler who has worked at the plant for 21 years.

The strike began November 14 when 200 workers walked off the job after rejecting a contract 181 to 2 that contained a "freedom of choice" clause in which each worker would decide whether or not to join the union.

The strike received support

throughout the community. Some 700 supporters, including steelworkers, laborers, construction workers and others, took part in a Dec. 10 solidarity march and rally in Manitowoc.

On Jan. 13, the workers voted down a second contract proposal 140 to 37, which, according to Scott Parr, assistant director for District 10 of the Machinists, would have allowed workers to "opt out" of the union during a 30-day period once a year.

Six days later they approved a contract 112 to 59, which shortens the annual opt-out period to seven days.

"The day before the final vote on the contract the company leaked to the press that they would permanently replace the workers if they rejected the contract again," Parr said. "They never told us this at the table."

"We never told the union that," Tom Musial, Manitowoc Co. senior vice president of human resources and administration, told the *Journal Sentinel*. "But as part of any contingency planning, at some point you do get to

that."

The 800 workers at the plant make gigantic crawler cranes used in construction and other industries. They are members of several different unions.

"Manitowoc may think they have won," Parr said. "But I consider this a victory for 516 because we stepped up to the plate and showed that we're going to fight. It makes other employers think twice before doing this."

"We were between a rock and a hard place," Craig Holschbach, a member of the strike committee who has worked at Manitowoc Co. for seven years, told the *Militant*. "What hurt us was that the other unions in the plant didn't give us the support they should. We needed them to honor our picket line. We couldn't completely stop the work being done in the plant."

"It was absolutely worth it," said Holschbach. "I wouldn't have done anything different. For nine weeks we showed our strength."

Growing support for ILWU

Continued from front page last summer.

Meanwhile, a tentative agreement between EGT and the ILWU was announced Jan. 23 in statements by Gov. Christine Gregoire, EGT CEO Larry Clarke and ILWU International President Robert McEllrath. No details have been released. The fight continues, including plans for a protest against EGT.

EGT has refused to hire ILWU workers. Instead they hired members of Operating Engineers Union Local 701 through a subcontractor under inferior working conditions and wages, without a contract. If EGT prevails, it would be the first grain terminal on the West Coast run without ILWU labor in more than eight decades.

"We send this letter to express our support of your struggles with EGT in Longview," Local 156 of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, covering Oregon and Southwest Washington, wrote to the ILWU Jan. 5. "This must be a line in the sand where all of Labor awakens to the attempt of the Employing class to erode the rights and working conditions around the world by continuously pitting one group against another.

"The members of Operating Engineers Local 701 have been the best friends and biggest supporters of Carpenters in Oregon and SW Washington," the letter explains. "That relationship will continue as the members of Local 156 will support Local 701 in all of their struggles with management. With the benefit of this close relationship, we must be the ones to point out when one of us is choosing the wrong path. . . . [I]n this situation Local 701 is doing more long term harm for its members and all the Labor movement. An injury to one is an injury to all."

Prosecutors agreed Jan. 18-19 to drop charges of malicious mischief and obstructing a train against seven ILWU Local 21 members, and to drop charges of trespass and obstructing a train against an eighth. Local 21 organizes the longshoremen on Longview's docks. The charges stem from union protests at the EGT grain terminal on July 11 and Sept. 7.

The eight union members are Ronald R. Beam, Johnny H. Beam, Ryan E. Blaylock, Cary J. Brister, Darin Earl Norton, Philip Dean Schill, Daniel E. Wallace and ILWU Local 21 vice-president Jacob Whiteside.

Prosecutors also agreed not to pursue felony charges of burglary and sabotage against some unionists.

In plea bargain agreements, seven of the eight unionists pled guilty to lesser trespass charges. Most received fines of up to \$250 and were sentenced to perform up to 25 hours of community service. In Norton's case, he pled guilty to resisting arrest and received a suspended sentence and will also be required to perform community service.

Leal Sundet, ILWU Coast Committee spokesperson, issued a statement explaining, "The prosecuting attorney has gotten desperate because she has no real evidence for which to prosecute these demonstrators, and she resorted to threats of additional charges in order to wrestle guilty pleas from innocent workers."

Sundet continued, "[T]he protestors were on public property, exercising their First Amendment rights."

The dropping of charges against the eight comes on top of nine others who were cleared of similar frame-up charges in recent weeks.

The ILWU has been preparing a large, disciplined and peaceful protest against EGT's union busting.

"We want to get out the message that everyone from children to grandparents are welcome to be part of the action to support the ILWU," Kyle Mackey, the Secretary Treasurer of the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Labor Council and a member of ILWU Local 21, told the *Militant*. "We want to squash any fear that may exist in the community or among people coming to Longview. There will be no actions of civil disobedience. No one will be put in harm's way."

After area police mobilized to attack and frame up longshoremen and their supporters last summer, the ILWU filed

Egypt demonstration marks one year of struggle



Hundreds of thousands of people streamed into Cairo's Tahrir Square Jan. 25, the first anniversary of the mobilizations that helped topple then-president Hosni Mubarak, opening political space for workers and farmers to advance their interests.

Egypt's ruling military government declared the day a national holiday. Islamist groups, including the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafist movement, mobilized their supporters. The Brotherhood, which won close to a majority in the new People's Assembly, has refused to join calls for the military regime to immediately step down.

Some organizations, including many that joined the protests a year ago, organized feeder marches, pressing for an immediate or at least quicker end to military rule. Some 12,000 people have been hauled before military tribunals since Mubarak's ouster.

On Jan. 24 the military government announced it was ending Mubarak's infamous emergency law, which allowed unrestricted police detention. However, the military exempted cases of "thuggery," a term they have used to smear opponents.

—JOHN STUDER

a federal suit charging the cops violated their civil rights. The trial has now been set for March 4, 2013, more than a year away. The lawsuit names Cowlitz County Sheriff Mark Nelson and Longview Police Chief Jim Duscha, as well as the county and city.

Send messages of support and donations to ILWU Local 21, 617 14th Ave., Longview, WA 98632. Make checks out to "EGT Fighting Fund."

Edwin Fruit contributed to this article



John Davenport

Members of ILWU Local 21 in front of union hall Jan. 23. They are among some 200 facing charges for defending union in Longview, Wash.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



February 6, 1987

Though shaken by the continuing revelations of the Iran arms-*contra* crisis, the White House has not abandoned its efforts to drum up support for the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries.

Several key administration officials made public appeals on the contras' behalf January 23, at the start of a new propaganda push designed to portray them as "freedom fighters" worthy of U.S. assistance.

Although it is only now being reported, a U.S. mercenary told FBI and Justice Department investigators in March 1986 that he had been recruited by the CIA in October 1984 to form a Green Beret-style special forces unit to fight with the contras.

This operation came at a time when Congress had explicitly barred any U.S. aid to the contras, and was thus illegal.



February 5, 1962

ALBANY, Ga., Jan. 23—Negroes in this South Georgia city were asked tonight at mass meetings that overflowed two churches to boycott the city's buses and downtown stores. The boycott call was made by leaders of the Albany Movement—the group that initiated the anti-segregation demonstrations in December in which 700 persons were arrested. The city commission today rejected a request that city officials live up to the agreement that halted those demonstrations.

[A Jan. 28 *New York Times* report says that a check made after the meetings showed the bus boycott to be effective and that "scores of automobiles packed with Negroes passed the intersection checked. Some of them were driven by volunteers in a car pool, which was organized by the Albany Movement."]



February 6, 1937

The great West Coast Maritime strike, which began Oct. 28, came to an end Thursday, Feb. 4, 99 days later.

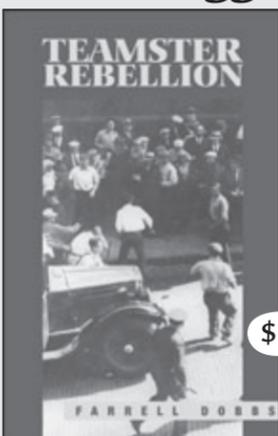
The agreements secured by the settlement represent one of the most clear cut and sweeping victories for unionism since the great revival of the labor movement which began with the organization drives and strike waves of 1933.

The major objectives of the ship-owners—the elimination of union control of hiring and the consequent smashing of the unions—have been completely defeated.

The major demands of the unions—hiring hall, wage increases and strengthened recognition of the unions—have been attained.

The unions can gain what they are strong enough to take from the bosses in a test of strength—This is the outstanding lesson of the maritime strike.

Lessons from earlier struggles



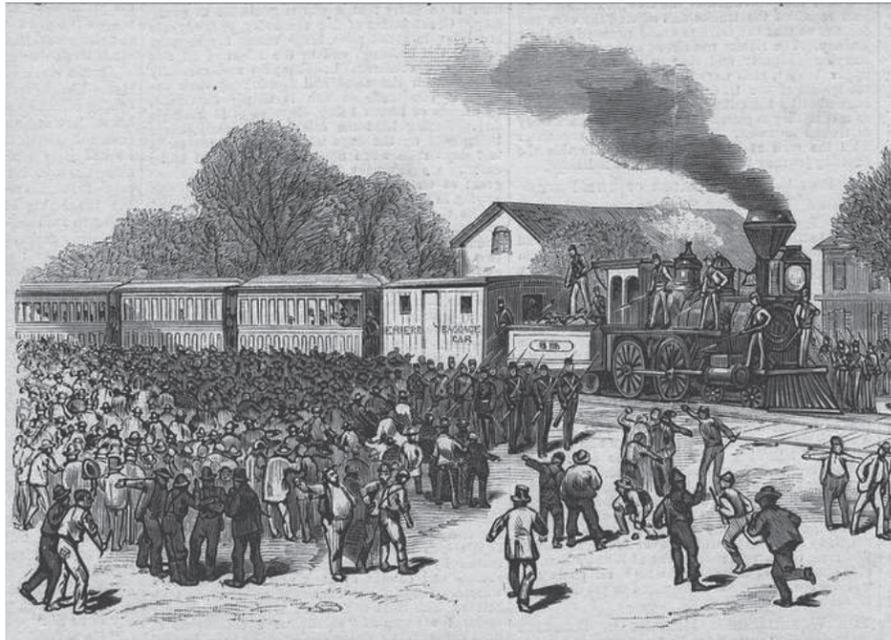
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1877 Erie Railroad strike victory was 'first of its kind'

Below are three excerpted sections from *The Great Labor Uprising of 1877* by Philip S. Foner, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for January. The selection is on the successful strike on the Erie Railroad, one of a series of rail strikes that occurred after four years of economic depression. After a series of financial scandals, the Erie was put into receivership. The new management slashed wages. The workers elected a committee to voice their opposition to the company. The bosses fired them all, sparking a system-wide strike.

The center of the strike was Hornellsville, N.Y., where three of the railroad's



Railroad workers on strike against Erie Railroad slow soldiers from 23rd Regiment from reaching Hornellsville, N.Y., July 23, 1877. Even after troops came, bosses couldn't move trains.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

lines came together. The workers shut Hornellsville down tight. Federal troops were sent in, but the strikers fraternized with them, forestalling attacks. No trains ran. Erie management was forced to make concessions, and the workers voted to return to work, with valuable experience on evaluating the relationship of class forces and acting accordingly to advance the struggle, advancing their own class consciousness in the process. The Erie victory inspired other workers across the country to launch what became the Great Labor Uprising of 1877. Copyright © 1977 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



BY PHILIP S. FONER

Governor Lucius Robinson of New York had been advised by the Erie receiver of the strike in Hornellsville, and although not a single act of violence had been reported, he immediately ordered the militia units from Rochester and Elmira to the town. However, the same drama unfolded at Hornellsville as had occurred in a number of other struck communities. As soon as the militiamen descended from the train, the strikers "commenced shaking hands and greeting their many acquaintances among the soldiers." The soldiers stationed a guard around the yards and expelled all people from the railroad property except employees on duty, but they turned their eyes away when the strikers crossed the line and prevented engines from leaving the roundhouse. . . .

[T]he company was determined to run all trains, and on the morning of July 22, a section composed of an engine, mail car, baggage car, and two passenger coaches started out of the yards for Tiptop Mountain, the only way for westbound trains to get out of Hornellsville. Thirty soldiers were detailed to guard the train; five were stationed on the engine, two on the bumper, and the rest scattered throughout the cars. On the long flat stretch before the ascent of Tiptop Mountain—one of the steepest grades on the road—engineer Dave Cary threw open his throttle to build up speed. . . . Then suddenly, its wheels be-

gan to slip. The strikers' wives had prepared buckets of soft soap, and the men had liberally slathered it all over the rails for a quarter of a mile up the hill.

As the train slipped backward, the strikers on the hillside cheered wildly and threw on more soap for good measure. The engineer, by making liberal use of the sand pipe, was able to conquer the grade, but the train could move only in spurts. As it slowed down from twenty to fifteen, to ten, to eight miles an hour, worried passengers began shouting. When it had almost come to a stop and was about to slide down again, the strikers rushed on board, shoved their way past the half-hearted militiamen, disabled the brakes, and forced all the passengers to get out. . . .

[T]he Erie gave up its attempt to run a train out of Hornellsville that day.



Responding to the demand for sterner measures, Governor Robinson declared martial law in Hornellsville and called upon "all authorities, civil and military," to keep the strikers from preventing those who wished to do so from working. "It is no longer a question of wages," the governor's declaration concluded, "but the supremacy of the law. . . . To the maintenance of that supremacy the whole power of the State will be evoked if necessary."

As soon as the governor's proclamation was issued, the Twenty-third Regi-

ment was ordered to leave Brooklyn, New York, for Hornellsville. These soldiers, having no personal ties with the strikers, could be relied upon to enforce the proclamation. At the same time, General Brinker issued an order prohibiting anyone not working for the Erie from going onto the road's property without military permission. In fact, anyone who even stated his intention of entering the yards without this permission could be arrested. . . .

The train met little resistance until it reached Corning, about forty miles east of Hornellsville. From that point on, it had to fight its way. The strikers had torn up the tracks in front of the advancing train, and the soldiers spent much of their time repairing the damage. Five miles before Hornellsville, the spikes had been pulled and the plates joining the rails spread and the train settled to the ground. This caused a delay of about two hours. Finally, at six in the evening, the regiment arrived in Hornellsville.



The strikers' committee visited the company's office, and was told that the Erie was willing to sign an agreement immediately on the terms set forth that afternoon, but would not go beyond those concessions. The committee returned to report to the strikers; the workers accepted the proposals, and at a quarter after twelve in the morning of July 26 the strike was declared over. The "Great Strike on the Erie" was at an end. . . .

The compromise agreement ending the strike at Hornellsville was extended to other Erie workers. It was the first of its kind on any of the nation's major roads during the Great Strike. . . .

Editorial comment on the Erie settlement stressed that it was a poor precedent for management to have compromised at all in such a confrontation. The reaction of the *Elmira Daily Advertiser* was typical.

The terms may be all right, and they may be wise. But it looks to us like a surrender. True, the trains are again put in motion, but not through the supremacy of the law asserting itself against the will of a mob. It is because the mob, for a consideration, has given its consent that business may be resumed.

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Sugar workers' pickets

Continued from front page

turned around their vans and went out the front gate to avoid us," said Tamara Johnson. "You should have seen their faces when they saw the expanded pickets." In the coming weeks, the union will be organizing similar rallies outside other plants.

The lockout by the largest processor of sugar beets in the U.S. began Aug. 1 after workers rejected the company's concession contract by a margin of 96 percent. Workers rejected a similar contract a few months later by 90 percent.

The company hired Strom Engineering to supply hundreds of replacement workers at its seven facilities, which include two smaller operations in southern Minnesota and Iowa. Since November, the company has been hiring local replacement workers.

Union and company representatives met Jan. 11 in the presence of a federal "mediator." Union officials presented alternative concession proposals based on a recent survey of the membership, according to a statement on the union website.

In its statement, the union said, "We are willing and ready to negotiate, any time, any place and to stay at the negotiations table until negotiations are completed."

Five days later American Crystal rejected the union's proposals, and sent a letter to locked-out workers claiming the union failed to negotiate in good faith and calling the union statement a "publicity stunt."

When asked what was meant by "publicity stunt," company spokesman Brian Ingulsrud told the *Militant* that it was "strange" and "disingenuous" for the

union to release a statement while both sides were meeting. When asked about the content of the statement, he said he couldn't remember what it said.

Meanwhile, American Crystal's Jan. 13 Securities and Exchange Commission filing shows that company profits fell 28 percent in the last quarter, ending Nov. 30. The company blames lower profits on a smaller beet crop and "anticipated higher operating costs." The union points to costs associated with hiring private cops and replacement workers from around the country.

American Crystal workers got more national attention when the Jan. 22 *New York Times* ran an article, "More lockouts as companies battle unions." Under a picture of picketing sugar workers, the article begins, "America's unionized workers, buffeted by layoffs and stagnating wages, face another phenomenon that is increasingly throwing them on the defensive: lockouts."

In another development, Brad Knapper, a locked-out worker from the Moorhead plant, faces felony charges stemming from an incident at the picket line Dec. 20 in which he allegedly scratched a replacement worker's car. "Brad is one



Vicki Ripplinger

Locked-out workers picket Jan. 23 outside American Crystal plant in Crookston, Minn.

of our front-line soldiers. He's on the negotiating team, a leader of the picket lines," said Tamara Johnson.

Knapper is scheduled to appear before the Clay County District Court on Feb. 2 at 8:30 a.m.

Union members have set up a defense fund with a goal of raising \$2,500 to defend the framed-up worker. So far more than \$1,000 has been raised. Donations to the defense fund can be made online at <http://www.gofundme.com/d6aas>.

The embattled workers continue to receive contributions and solidarity from around the country. Recently a semi-truck of food was donated from BCTGM Local 50G in Omaha, Nebraska.

Send solidarity messages and donations 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.

Give blood money 'bonuses' to party's Capital Fund 'where it does most good'

Some 28,000 members of the International Association of Machinists who work for Boeing aerospace in Washington State received bonus checks in December for approving a new four-year contract.

"Merchants, are you planning any special sales to entice that windfall out of Boeing workers' wallets and into your cash registers?" asked the Tacoma, Wash., *News Tribune*.

"I'm going to spend my windfall on where it will do the most good for the working class," said Boeing worker Dean Peoples. He sent in a \$5,000 contribution to the Socialist Workers Party Capital Fund, which helps to finance long-range work of the party. Peoples said the bonus is "blood money" given out "to help buy a 'yes' vote on the contract."

Blood money is a term communist workers use to describe so-called bonuses and other bribes from bosses or their government, usually given as part of pressing workers to accept speed-up, wage cuts, concession contracts or dangerous working conditions.

"I am sending a check for \$106.71 to the Capital Fund. This came in the mail in the form of unclaimed property from the state of Iowa," writes Amanda Ulman from Houston, Texas. "It's from a job I had more than 15 years ago. I assume it's some company bribe or a production or

'safety' bonus of some kind."

Ulman made the contribution to aid the SWP "build a revolutionary movement of working people to take political power and bring the whole system of exploitation crashing down," she said.

"I know it will be put to good use in the Capital Fund," wrote Rita Lee from Pittsburgh with a \$1,000 check from workers compensation money paid from an injury at U.S. Steel Corp.

Ned Measel and Glova Scott, two workers at an ice cream plant in Washington, D.C., sent in \$140 for the fund from a monthly bonus for production and reducing waste. "The bonus is based on how production lines meet the company's criteria," Measel said. "On some lines, they try to get workers to pressure each other to work faster" to receive this blood money.

Dennis Richter, a worker at an electronic assembly plant in Chicago, sent \$30 from a "Christmas gas card blood money gift from the bosses turned into cash for the party."

If you want to contribute blood money to the party's Capital Fund, write or call *Militant* distributors listed on page 6.

—EMMA JOHNSON

Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?

A necessary debate

by Mary-Alice Waters

"To think that a socialist revolution in the U.S. is not possible, you have to close your eyes to the spreading imperialist wars, civil wars, and economic, financial, and social crises we are in the midst of." \$7



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SPANISH/ESPAÑOL

Las mujeres en Cuba: Haciendo una revolución en la revolución

Viene de la página 10

borradores, corrigiendo errores y explicando aspectos de la historia de la Revolución Cubana que, de otra manera, habrían quedado sin esclarecer.

Carolina Aguilar, cuadro fundadora y dirigente por mucho tiempo de la FMC, e Isabel Moya, directora de la Editorial de la Mujer, la casa editorial de la FMC, ofrecieron su tiempo, sugerencias, colaboración y aliento a cada paso, peinando los archivos en busca de fotos, documentos y publicaciones agotadas desde hace años.

Iraida Aguirrechu, encargada de política actual en la Editora Política, la casa editorial del Comité Central del Partido Comunista de Cuba, brindó su irrestricto apoyo, ayuda y pericia editorial, como siempre.

La Oficina de Asuntos Históricos del Consejo de Estado, a través de su director, Eugenio Suárez, y Elsa Montero,

organizadora de su archivo de fotos (y además mensajera del Ejército Rebelde a los 14 años y combatiente del Tercer Frente bajo el mando de Juan Almeida) ofreció una ayuda valiosísima al brindar numerosas imágenes históricas reproducidas en este libro y al identificar a individuos, sitios, fechas y circunstancias de muchas otras fotos.

Los directores de los archivos fotográficos de *Bohemia* y *Granma*, Magaly Miranda Martínez y Alejandro Debén, fueron generosos con su tiempo al ayudar a buscar muchas otras fotos que captan momentos y sucesos específicos en la historia de la revolución.

Por último, pero no menos importante, expresamos nuestro reconocimiento a la familia del fotógrafo Raúl Corrales por permitir la reproducción —gratuita para esta edición— no solo de tres fotos que aparecen en este libro, sino de la foto evocativa de una unidad de milicias

obreras que figura en la portada.

Las empleadas de una tienda por departamentos con sus armas y sus vestidos blancos de trabajo —marchando hombro con hombro con sus compañeros de una cervecería el Primero de Mayo de 1959: cada cual dispuesto o dispuesta a dar la vida para defender su revolución— capta una imagen indeleble de la vanguardia de la clase trabajadora cubana en ese momento decisivo de la lucha de clases. Lo hace con una perspicacia que pocos fotógrafos pudieron lograr como lo logró Raúl Corrales.

El oficio de vendedora en tiendas por departamentos era uno de los pocos que se consideraba apropiado para una mujer cubana en la década de 1950. Y tenían muy buenas razones para estar armadas. Dos de las acciones más destructivas de la contrarrevolución fueron las bombas incendiarias que se colocaron en dos famosas tiendas por departamentos en el

centro de La Habana: El Encanto y La Época. Una miliciana —como las que se ven en la portada de este libro— que estaba de guardia en El Encanto murió cuando volvió a entrar a la tienda, en medio de las llamas, para tratar de recuperar los fondos que los trabajadores habían recaudado a fin de construir un círculo infantil allí. Solamente en los años 1960 y 1961, nueve tiendas por departamentos en La Habana fueron objeto de estos ataques.

Se dedica *Haciendo una revolución dentro de la revolución* a las nuevas generaciones de mujeres y hombres, tanto en Cuba como a nivel mundial, para quienes una historia exacta de la Revolución Cubana —y de cómo se hizo— es y será un arma indispensable en las tumultuosas batallas de clases cuyas escaramuzas iniciales ya estamos viviendo.

Enero de 2012

Protest of Ga. cop shooting

Continued from front page

on mortally wounding Waiters,” the statement read.

That version differs sharply from the account given to the Waiters family attorney and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation by two eyewitnesses. “I saw Ariston look back then run and pow, the officer shot him. He continued to run then pow, the officer shot him again,” said one of them, Amber Dorsey, according to CBS Atlanta News.

“How can somebody being handcuffed reach for your gun and you shoot them in the back twice?” John Tillman, an electrician at the rally, told the *Militant*. Tillman said he hoped the Fulton County District Attorney would investigate the case. “What we got the other day was the cops investigating themselves.”

Several participants in the rally told the *Militant* they had decided to join in because of their own experiences with the cops. “I brought my 12-year-old son with me tonight so he could see we are doing something about how we are treated,” said Tabitha Boyce, a postal worker. “My friends are hesitant to come to Union City because of the police,” she said.

Michael Harris, an unemployed mechanic in nearby College Park, said he had been threatened with arrest after being stopped by cops for a missing tail light. After questioning him and searching his car, the cops let him go. “I checked my tail lights and they were all working. When I asked the cops about it they just said it wasn’t working a minute ago.”

Speaking at the rally, Marcus Coleman of the National Action Network denounced the police statement as another attempt to cover up the shooting. “We want to know what will be done about police intimidation of witnesses, the shooter being allowed to sit in on interviews with witnesses, and another officer visiting a witness on her job.”

CBS reported a Union City Police captain confirmed that the cop who shot Waiters was allowed into the interrogation room with potential witnesses. Attorney Mawuli Davis said that the statement of one witness was torn up by the cops.

“We must keep the pressure on and keep rallying and demanding answers,” said Derrick Boazman, a former city councilman in nearby Atlanta and radio personality, speaking at the rally. Several speakers also called for getting out the vote to replace local government officials.

David Ferguson, a factory assembly worker, spoke on behalf of the Atlanta branch of the Socialist Workers Party during the open mike portion of the rally. “This shooting is part of the broader assaults on working people as the system of the wealthy rulers goes deeper into crisis,” Ferguson said. “It goes hand in hand with high unemployment, and temporary jobs with low pay and no benefits,” he said to applause.

Inside the city council chambers Freda Waiters, mother of the slain youth, gave an impassioned plea for action. Councilwoman Angelette Mealing said that there needed to be an investigation of the entire police department and that the city should have offered condolences to the Wait-

ers family.

According to Channel 2 News Mealing in a follow-up interview described the killing of Waiters as murder.

On Jan. 5 the Waiters family and their supporters met with the Fulton County District Attorney, whose office is investigating the shooting. The family’s attorney said he expects a response in about a month.

The Fulton DA is also investigating the killing of another Black youth in October by a MARTA transit cop. Joetavius Stafford, 19 years old, was shot in the back twice and chest once.

In the last fiscal year state investigators have conducted 100 reviews of cases of police force reported the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. Of those, 24 involved police shootings.

Capitalist crisis spurs daily protests in Romania

Continued from front page

against them—are part of the deepening economic and social crisis in Europe, a result of the decline in capitalist production, trade and employment internationally.

Thousands marched in Bucharest Jan. 24, including unionized workers, teachers, nurses and retired officers, reported the *Guardian*.

Active duty military personnel are prohibited from protesting government policy. But Lt. Alexandru Gheorghe, an active-duty officer, gained prominence when he traveled 300 miles from the base where he is stationed to take part. “I can no longer bear the way we are insulted,” he told the media. “I saw old people beaten and said to myself that we . . . must have the courage to fight and tell the truth here in our country.”

Some 5,000 people rallied in Iasi, the country’s second largest city. Demonstrations have also taken place in Cluj, Timisoara, Deva and Galati. Like in many other Eastern European countries, the Stalinist regime of Nicolae Ceausescu in Romania fell in 1989. These regimes, claiming to be communist but in fact ruling over a system worse than capitalism, systematically drove the working class out of politics.

The fall of the Stalinist governments brought the development of capitalist social relations and greater integration into capitalist trade and finance. At the same time, it opened up the class struggle and the political space for working people to organize and defend their interests.

The worldwide capitalist economic crisis had a major impact in Romania, precipitating a government fiscal crisis at the end 2008. The government turned to the International Monetary Fund, European Union, and World Bank, obtaining \$26 billion in loans and implementing harsh economic austerity.

The effects have been devastating. Romania now ranks second to last in Europe in workers’ standard of living, according to Eurostat figures. In 2010, the government reduced the wages of state workers by 25 percent. In 2011, average purchasing power diminished by 30 percent due to wage cuts and price hikes, including a 5 percent jump in sales tax. Between



Militant/Fredy Huinil

Some 200 demonstrate Jan. 17 outside City Hall in Union City, Ga., against killing of Ariston Waiters, who was shot twice in back by police. Freda Waiters, mother of Ariston, is at center in white jacket. At bullhorn is Marcus Coleman, National Action Network.

2007 and 2011, new car sales dropped 74 percent to 3.8 per 1,000, the lowest in Europe.

Fifteen percent of workers lost their jobs in 2009-2010. Some 200,000 small businesses shuttered their doors. Government benefits were slashed 15 percent.

“We are here to protest, we cannot face it any more, we have no money to survive, our pensions are so small, the expenses are more than we can afford,” a demonstrator who identified himself as Sorin told the Associated Press at the Jan. 24 rally in Bucharest.

Health care has been hard hit. Following a series of cuts, Bucharest now spends less on health care than any other government in the European Union.

Constantin Grigore told the BBC that his son died in 2010 after he was taken to the hospital with a simple broken arm. He caught an infection there, and received no medical care. The family had to buy painkillers with their own money. They gave the hospital the equivalent of \$6, all they had. It wasn’t enough.

Seventy hospitals have been closed. Doctors’ salaries, which start around \$400 a month, are being cut 25 percent. Heavily indebted hospitals have few drugs or medical supplies.

New proposed cuts prompted protest from Deputy Minister Arafat. He was publicly rebuked by the government, and resigned in protest, sparking the current round of demonstrations.

The mobilizations have forced a series of concessions from the Basescu regime, including the reversal of the latest round of cuts in health care and the restoration of Arafat to his position.

The government was forced to sack Foreign Minister Teodor Baconschi after it became public he called the protestors “inept and violent slum-dwellers.”

While the workers face crushing austerity, the thin strata of those who have enriched themselves are looking for more. The country’s “elite,” Perer Janku from the Romanian editorial team at *Deutsche Welle* said, “already have plenty of money and are looking for new opportunities to do more business.”

The drive to foist the burden of the unfolding economic crisis of capitalism on the backs of Romania’s working class is viewed as a model of sorts by capitalist pundits from Europe to the U.S.—an example of what needs to be done to restore profitability.

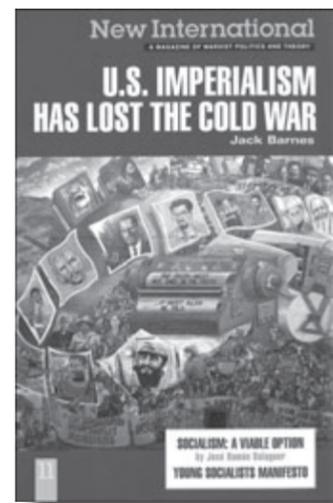
“The austerity policies have helped Romania to put its troubled finances on a steadier footing,” Radu Marinus wrote for Reuters Jan. 19.

More protests are projected. “Romanians protest not only because they are unhappy with the austerity measures,” Prime Minister Boc said in a speech Jan. 23, “but because they are unhappy with the entire political class in Romania, not only the government.”

for further reading

“The advances registered by the toilers of Eastern and Central Europe in 1989-90 against oppressive regimes have already begun to bring fighting humanity closer together. . . . In the most immediate sense, the walls between struggles by working people in the Eastern European workers states and capitalist Western Europe have begun to crumble.”

— Jack Barnes
U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War in *New International* no. 11



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Working class has no use for nuclear bombs

Working people should strongly oppose and condemn the relentless campaign of sanctions by Washington and its imperialist allies against Iran—a campaign of economic deprivation, unemployment and hunger designed to impose hardship on Iran’s working people in order to force Tehran to submit to imperialist dictates.

Iran, a country oppressed for centuries by imperialist domination, has every right to acquire the energy sources it needs, including nuclear power, used by most advanced nations, for economic and social advances.

While imperialism is tightening the economic noose, the situation is moving away, not toward, military conflict. Both sides are actively seeking to avoid any confrontation that could lead to negative consequences for all, including working people of the region.

But Iran is a sovereign country that has been the target of Washington’s wrath since workers and farmers there overthrew the U.S.-backed monarchy in 1979 in a massive popular insurrection. It has every right to defend itself should that be necessary, and the working people in the U.S. have a fundamental class interest in supporting Iran in a confrontation with imperialism.

At the same time, our eyes are on our fellow workers and farmers of Iran. While a counterrevolutionary

bourgeois regime was eventually consolidated in Iran in the early 1980s, working people there were never broken. Imperialist pressure and threats serve to close the space our class needs to organize and fight, along with toilers in the broader region—from North Africa to the Middle East.

The working class has no interest in possessing nuclear weapons, as Cuban leader Fidel Castro recently pointed out. Communists reject them outright as detrimental for the defense of national sovereignty and working people.

Nuclear weapons can only be used to slaughter the innocent. Washington maintains the distinction as the only government to have used them, killing hundreds of thousands in the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

“We have never considered producing nuclear weapons, because we don’t need them,” Castro said in a 2005 speech. For more than five decades, the Cuban Revolution has defended itself from the unremitting hostility of U.S. imperialism with the mobilization, political consciousness and military preparedness of millions of workers and farmers—a virtually invincible “war of the entire people.”

“We possess a weapon as powerful as nuclear power,” Castro added, “and it is the magnitude of the justice for which we are struggling.”

Taxes: real question is who is taxing

Continued from front page

ple have come to depend on, including Medicaid, Medicare and Social Security.

Republican candidates call for simplifying the tax codes, as well as slashing corporate taxes and taxes on the wealthy, who they call the “job creators,” as a means of boosting investment in production.

Newt Gingrich proposes to offer two tax regimes people can choose between—the current tax system and a “flat tax” of 15 percent on your income, buffered by a \$12,000 personal exemption. This is coupled with cutting the corporate tax rate from the current 35 percent to 12.5, and eliminating taxes on capital gains, dividends and interest.

Mitt Romney says he will keep the tax rates the way they are now when elected, and then devise a big reform plan, as he says, to “flatten” federal taxes. He would cut the corporate tax rate to 25 percent.

They argue these proposals, heading toward “flatter,” simpler tax schemes, will reduce federal bureaucracy and red tape, demagogically appealing to growing distrust in big government and its increasing interference in peoples’ lives. The decrease in corporate taxes, they claim, would provide bosses with the means to provide jobs.

The working class has much experience with regressive “flat” taxes. They weigh us down daily in the form of sales taxes, homeowners taxes, taxes on gasoline, alcohol, tobacco, tuition fees, school lunches, road tolls, utility bills, driver’s licenses, birth certificates, marriage licenses and so on.

Populist demagoguery of ‘tax the rich’

President Obama has ratcheted up populist demagoguery calling for increasing taxes on the rich, the “1 percent,” with a nod toward the Occupy forces he hopes to harness into his campaign. His aim is to raise the revenue needed to fund an expansive government bureaucracy to do “good works” and regulate workers’ behavior, such as with new taxes on soda pop to keep us from getting too fat.

Obama invokes what he calls the “Buffet rule,” urging that those with annual incomes over \$1 million—less than 450,000 out of the 144 million who filed tax returns in 2010—should pay at least the same percentage in taxes as those with median income.

Warren E. Buffett, Obama’s inspiration, is the third richest man in the world as of November 2011 according to the “World’s Billionaires” list in *Forbes* magazine, worth about \$39 billion.

(This, of course, is pure demagoguery. Buffett and others like him know all the loopholes to evade taxes and can pay all the lawyers and accountants they need.

They can afford not to pay taxes. It’s their system.)

Workers are barraged with all these tax schemes and urged to choose their poison in order to save “our” economy. But there is no “our” economy, or “our” government. We live under *their* government, a dictatorship of capital.

Workers have no interest in how the capitalist class organizes to get the money to fund their government. This is the reason the capitalist class levies taxes: to beef up *their* cops and prisons; to pay for *their* ever-expanding government; to pay for the profit-producing interest *they* rake in on their government bonds; to balance *their* budget. Whatever they need to advance their class interests, which are irreconcilable with those of the working class.

For this reason, communists have no “tax program,” urging some taxes be raised and others cut. Communists oppose all taxation on working people. Up until 1943, workers in the U.S. paid no income tax. The first was imposed by Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt, because the U.S. rulers needed to pay for their drive to dominate the world capitalist order through the slaughter of World War II.

Can’t tax our way to political power

The working class needs to chart its own political course. There is no way for workers to tax our way to taking political power out of the hands of the capitalist exploiters. No way to change the government and its class priorities by advocating more taxes on the rich.

This can only be done out of the battles fought by working people to defend themselves and others, deepening class consciousness, leading to a victorious revolutionary struggle for political power.

To do this requires a break with both capitalist political parties, the Democrats and Republicans. We have to do away with all illusions that their system can be reformed to serve us.

Workers know that the rich get away with murder. They also know the capitalists’ government bureaucracy is a nightmare for us. But no reform or tax scheme can alter the class nature of the power we face.

It is the labor of working people that creates the massive surplus value that capitalists appropriate and from which they derive their profits and power. Nothing workers get in terms of schooling, medical care, or pensions is charity—it’s all produced by *us*.

A workers and farmers government will not levy taxes on working people. A government of toilers will provide universal lifetime education, health care, and disability and pension benefits by drawing on society’s enormous surplus wealth—wealth produced in one and only one way, by the working class.

Iran sanctions

Continued from front page

try’s central bank. The same day, the Obama administration announced sanctions against Iran’s third-largest bank, Bank Tejarat, described in a statement as “one of Iran’s few remaining access points to the international financial system.”

Washington and its allies contend Tehran’s nuclear program is geared toward the acquisition of nuclear weapons and are bringing massive pressure to bear in an effort to prevent Iranian technological advances that would bring it closer to that alleged goal. Tehran maintains its program is solely for energy production and medical research.

Alongside the economic squeeze runs an imperialist campaign of sabotage, in which the Israeli government is deeply involved, that includes bombings, crippling computer viruses, and assassinations of scientists.

At the same time, both Washington and Tehran have taken steps to de-escalate military tensions to avoid the possibility of any armed confrontations.

The new EU sanctions include an immediate embargo on new contracts for crude oil and petroleum products. Existing contracts with Iran will be allowed to run till July. The delay is aimed at giving countries like Greece, whose crisis-stricken economy relies heavily on Iranian oil, time to find alternative sources. The EU imports some 18 percent of Iran’s crude oil.

The imperialist sanctions have had a significant impact on Iran’s economy, bearing down particularly hard on working people already hit by high unemployment, subsidy cuts and other assaults on living standards by Iran’s capitalist rulers and their government.

Official unemployment stood at 12.5 percent at the end of the year, and at 29.1 percent among those under 25. The government counts those working one hour a week as employed. In an early December demonstration, textile workers held up a banner saying they had not been paid for 17 months.

In September, more than 6,500 petrochemical workers were involved in several strikes across the country against subcontracting, low wages and bonuses, and for the very right to strike.

The Jan. 19 *New York Times* reported that the rial, Iran’s currency, has dropped “to its lowest level ever against the dollar,” increasing the prices of imported goods. According to Reuters, the cost of basic necessities like bread, meat and transportation has shot up in recent months, sometimes by over 50 percent. “Many factories,” it added, “are facing closure ... hundreds of thousands of workers have taken wage cuts, inflation is surging, and shortages are spreading.”

On Jan. 16, Washington and Tel Aviv postponed major joint military exercises “to avoid further escalating tensions with Iran.” The maneuvers would most likely have coincided with naval exercises to be held by Iran in February in the waters surrounding the Strait of Hormuz.

Tel Aviv has backed away from previous threats to bomb Iran’s nuclear facilities. Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak said on Israel’s Army Radio Jan. 18 that any decision by Tel Aviv to launch a military strike on Iranian sites was “very far off.”

Hossein Salami, a deputy commander in Iran’s Revolutionary Guard, told the official IRNA news agency Jan. 21 that the likely return of U.S. warships to the Persian Gulf would be considered as routine activity, backing away from warnings to Washington by Iranian officials not to re-enter the area.

At the end of a two-day visit in Turkey by Iran’s Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi Jan. 19, Ankara called for the resumption of negotiations between Tehran and what’s known as the “S+1”—U.S. Security Council permanent members China, France, Russia, the U.K. and the U.S., plus Germany.

A week earlier, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad made a one-day stop in Cuba Jan. 11-12 as part of a four-country trip in Latin America. A joint statement with Cuban President Raúl Castro stressed the “right of all nations to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.” He also met with former President Fidel Castro, who has defended Iran’s right to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

The following day, Fidel Castro published a column in *Granma* reiterating revolutionary Cuba’s stance that no country, large or small, should “posses nuclear weapons.” Cuba has long rejected nuclear weapons as not only of no value but detrimental to defense of its sovereignty against imperialist aggression.