

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Socialist Workers conference:
preparing politically to join struggles
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 76/NO. 30 AUGUST 13, 2012

US rulers improvise plan for fall of Syria gov't

BY LOUIS MARTIN

As the battle for control of Aleppo, Syria's largest city, rages, the regime of President Bashar al-Assad is losing ground to bourgeois opposition forces in a civil war that grew out of the government's bloody repression of a popular movement for democratic rights that began nearly 17 months ago.

Meanwhile, Washington and its allies are maneuvering to ensure the outcome favors the establishment of stable capitalist relations and promotion of their economic and political interests in the region against those of the governments of Iran, Russia and other rivals—as well as those of working people who have begun to step into politics amid the chaos.

The last weeks have seen the most intense fighting since the beginning of the rebellion in March 2011.

Following an unclaimed bombing in Damascus July 18 that killed four senior officials, including Syria's defense minister, Free Syrian Army

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Capitalism, not population growth, is cause of world's crises

BY LOUIS MARTIN

As the deepening crisis of capitalism devastates the lives of working people worldwide, there has been a revival in imperialist countries of the reactionary myth that "overpopulation," not capitalist exploitation, is the source of hunger, malnutrition, poverty, underdevelopment, destruction of the environment, oppression of women, infant mortality and other social evils—especially in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

The old nostrum that the solution to these problems lies in stemming population growth has again become fashionable discourse among bourgeois and petty-bourgeois liberals in Europe and North America. Under the rubric of population control as a panacea for reducing poverty, charitable programs are providing needed contraception to toilers in underdeveloped and devastated parts of the world.

On Earth Day 2009, the website Science Daily asserted in its headline, "Worst Environmental Problem?"

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Solidarity event marks year in fight against American Crystal's lockout

'Through fight, we've learned what a union is for'



Becki Jacobson

Participants in "solidarity recognition picnic" in North Dakota's Belmont Park July 29, marking one-year anniversary in battle against lockout of 1,300 workers by American Crystal Sugar.

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

TRAILL COUNTY, N.D.—Nearly 200 locked-out workers took part in a "solidarity recognition picnic" in Belmont Park here July 29, marking the one-year anniversary of their fight against American Crystal Sugar Co.

It was a good day. Spirits were high. Music and excellent food, especially the much talked about barbecue ribs, were enjoyed by workers and their families, who came from areas surrounding American Crystal's

five factories in the Red River Valley of northern Minnesota and North Dakota.

One year ago, American Crystal Sugar, the largest sugar beet producer in the country, locked out 1,300 workers at five plants and two smaller processing facilities in Minnesota, North Dakota and Iowa. In the past year, members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union have rejected

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'Everything we have won comes from mass struggle'

SWP candidate talks with fighting sugar workers



Militant photos, above, Frank Forrestal; inset, Tom Baumann

Above, Paul Dahlman, Clayton Bronson, Wayne Netterlund—workers locked out by American Crystal Sugar—and James Harris, SWP candidate for president, at picket line in Drayton, N.D., July 30. Inset, Maura DeLuca, SWP candidate for vice president, talks with cab driver Pierre Paul Kesler July 25. (See article, page 4.) Kesler was beaten and arrested by cops while working at Miami airport.

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

TRAILL COUNTY, N.D.—James Harris, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president of the U.S., was warmly greeted at the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union picnic in Belmont Park July 29, marking the one-year anniversary of their fight against American Crystal Sugar's lockout.

One of the first people Harris met at the event was Steve Lech, president of United Steelworkers Local 7-669. "I have been reading about your campaign in the *Militant* and have been looking forward to meeting you," said Lech, who was a leader in the Steelworkers' battle against a 14-month lockout by

Honeywell in Metropolis, Ill.

Nathan Rahm, a locked-out sugar worker from Hillsboro, also heard about the campaign from the *Militant*. "I've learned a lot in the past year," Rahm told Harris. "One of the things is how to approach the lockout. Some take a political position of supporting politicians and lobbying, while others are more interested in organizing from the ground up. I'm more of a ground up person, it works better."

"You're right and we can prove it," Harris responded. "Everything we have won, whether in the civil rights or labor movement, has been through organizing working people to fight. The big battles were waged in the streets and on a massive scale."

"Today, what's important," said Harris, "is not just to reach out to other

Continued on page 4

Cab drivers in Miami slam cop assault, arrest of coworker

BY DEAN HAZLEWOOD AND TOM BAUMANN

MIAMI, July 23—"Nobody drives until we find out what happened to the driver they arrested on Saturday," said Joanel Ceremy at the main exit of the airport taxi lot here over a bullhorn. He was referring to fellow driver Pierre Paul Kesler, who two days earlier was beaten up by a Miami International

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'The Revolution Betrayed' published, reviewed in Iran

Below is a June 13 review by the semi-official Iran Book News Agency of the Farsi edition of *The Revolution Betrayed, What Is the Soviet Union and Where Is It Going?* by Leon Trotsky, a central leader of the Russian Revolution. The book, published in Iran by Talaye Porsoo, was translated from the English edition published by Pathfinder Press.

A translation of *The Revolution Betrayed, What Is the Soviet Union and Where Is It Going?* has been published. Leon Trotsky, who wrote this work in 1936, has written his assessment of the Russian Revolution and the challenges facing that revolution.

IBNA reports that one may not find many similarities between the thinkers of today's left, and the Marxist vanguard. To those interested in the experience and analysis of left thought, Trotsky's book helps to some degree in understanding the evolution of that thought.

The capitalist crises at the present time put wind in the sails of left currents, more than before, to beat the drum of capitalism's future demise. Seminars being organized one after the other, as well as the publishing of classic and new books in this field, can be a sign of this renewed enthusiasm. For years Pathfinder Press has been publishing books in the field of left-wing thought. The publisher stood its ground at the height of the domination of capitalism, especially in the U.S., and published books by Trotsky, Lenin, Marx and Engels, as well as thinkers of the contemporary left in the U.S. such as Jack Barnes.

Among the books published by Pathfinder and translated in Iran, one can name, *U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War, Feminism and the Marxist Movement, Their Trotsky and Ours*, and *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*.

The Revolution Betrayed is another work by Pathfinder Press, which has been translated by Masoud Saberi and published by Entesharate Talaye Porsoo.

Talaye Porsoo, so far, has published some 30 books by Pathfinder in Iran. One of the latest books from this publisher is *The Revolution Betrayed*, which is a scientific analysis of an important part of the history of the contemporary



\$20— Available in English, Farsi, French, Greek and Spanish

Leon Trotsky

PathfinderPress.com



"The capitalist crises at the present time put wind in the sails of left currents, more than before, to beat the drum of capitalism's future demise," says Iran Book News Agency's review of Leon Trotsky's *The Revolution Betrayed* shown above on agency's website.

world.

In the preface it says, "The collapse of the Soviet Union, for many who did not know the realities and contradictions of that society, came unexpectedly and caught them by surprise. Some celebrated it and some mourned, and some in Europe and the U.S. hurriedly predicted that the event had signaled the end of history in the world. Each one presented, subjectively, an individual analysis. But these analyses were put together after the event, not before. And for this reason their effective life was very short."

The Revolution Betrayed not only familiarizes the reader with the root causes of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, but the analysis it presents can help shed light on the political horizon of the coming world. Studying this book reminds one of the period when there were many contradictory theories about the Soviet communist revolution.

As Trotsky writes in the introduction to the book: "Facts win out, however, in the end. The bookstalls of all civilized countries are now loaded with books about the Soviet Union. It is no wonder. The literature dictated by blind reactionary hatred is fast dwindling. A noticeable proportion of the newest works on the Soviet Union adopt a favorable, if not even a rapturous, tone. As a sign of the improving international reputation of the parvenu state, this abundance of pro-soviet literature can only be welcomed."

A summary of Trotsky's views about

socialism and the Soviet Union are presented in this work. He first recounts the gains of the Russian Revolution and then illustrates the various stages of the development of the Russian economy.

In subsequent chapters, Trotsky digs into the challenges that confronted the Russian communist society in that period. Then he investigates the Soviet Thermidor; The Growth of Inequality and Social Antagonisms; Family, Youth and Culture; and Foreign Policy and the Army, as challenging issues that confronted the Republic. The concluding chapters of the book are, The Character of the Soviet Union, The Soviet Union in the Mirror of the New Constitution, and Whither the Soviet Union?

Leon Trotsky was one of the central leaders of the October 1917 Russian Revolution, the Bolshevik Party and the Communist International in the first years of the Soviet Republic. Following Lenin's death in 1924, Trotsky was the essential leader of the fight for the continuity of Lenin's communist course, opposed to the political counterrevolution whose leadership was symbolized by [Joseph] Stalin. Trotsky, who was expelled from the Soviet Union in 1929, was murdered in 1940 in Mexico by Stalin's secret police.

The first edition of *The Revolution Betrayed, What Is the Soviet Union and Where Is It Going?* was published with a run of 1,000 copies, 351 pages, 12,000 toman (\$6.50, current exchange rate).

THE MILITANT

Support fights of working farmers

The 'Militant' covers the struggles of working farmers, allies of the working class, who are being battered by the profit drive of the agri-business monopolies and capitalist distributors.

Militant/Hugh Robertson
July 11 rally in London by dairy farmers.

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The Militant

Vol. 76/No. 30
Closing news date: August 1, 2012
Editor: Steve Clark
Managing editor: Doug Nelson
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Published weekly except for one week in January, two weeks in July, and two weeks in August.
 The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.
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E-mail: themilitant@mac.com
Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.
 Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

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Miami cab drivers protest

Continued from front page

Airport code officer and arrested by Miami-Dade police.

"The bail bondsman could not find him. His family doesn't know where he is. He has disappeared for three days," Ceremy told the *Militant*.

Despite orders by dispatchers to move, some 80 drivers clogged up the lanes, demanding to know Kesler's whereabouts.

Thomas, who declined to give his last name, said the New Vision Taxi Drivers Association, the cab drivers' union, told everyone in the morning to be at the lot at 2:30 p.m. and not leave until they found out where Kesler was. "Everyone agreed," Thomas said.

At about 4 p.m., cops entered the lot with a tow truck and squad cars. Drivers immediately surrounded the truck. The driver stayed inside the truck, which did not move during the standoff. Cops did not attempt to arrest anyone.

"What the police are doing is wrong," Nimal Wettasinghe, who has been driving for a year, told the *Militant*. "But we are not organized. We need a spokesperson and a lawyer."

"We will not move!" yelled Jim Paul, a cab driver for three years. Others repeated what he said.

Drivers, the majority of whom are originally from Haiti, said abuse by airport officials and lot managers is common.

"Sometimes we are forced to wait at the terminal for hours and we are not allowed to use the bathroom there," Dale Saintilhomme said. "Many drivers have hypertension and have to use the bathroom often but they make us come back to the lot. Then, every time we leave the lot we have to pay \$2."

This was the fifth incident of beatings by airport cops in the last five years, according to a press release issued by the taxi drivers' union.

At about 5 p.m. the police reported that Kesler was being held at the county jail and would be released later that day. Having won their demand, drivers got back in their cars and returned to work.

Fellow drivers raised and posted \$2,000 bail to get Kesler out of jail.



Militant/Tom Baumann

Taxi drivers by Miami airport July 23 refusing to return to work until they are told the whereabouts of coworker Pierre Paul Kesler, who was beaten and arrested by cops two days earlier.

One year in fight against American Crystal

Continued from front page

three contract offers, most recently in June when 63 percent of the union membership voted down the bosses' proposal.

The company has not budged from its "final offer" from one year ago, which includes substantial concessions in job security, seniority and health care.

In the July 30 issue of the *Grand Forks Herald*, Brian Ingulsrud, vice president of American Crystal Sugar,

said the company has no reason to negotiate because "at the end of the day, all of the issues that we have in that final offer are important to us."

Near the end of the anniversary event, Scott Ripplinger, a leader of the workers' struggle from the East Grand Forks, Minn., plant, chaired a short program. "This has been a long battle against American Crystal, longer than any of us thought possible. We are here to celebrate our resolve," he said. "But we continue to fight, to stand up for the generations before us who fought for the union, and for future generations."

Ripplinger introduced Steve Lech, president of Steelworkers Local 7-669 in Metropolis, Ill., who was part of a fight there against a lockout by Honeywell at its uranium processing plant in 2010-2011. "I want to tell you—you are not by yourselves, your rejection of the latest contract got lots of attention around the country," said Lech. "My only advice is that when you go back, know your contract because the company will try to use it against you. You will have to continue fighting as we have. Our union is behind you."

"This has been the best and worst year of my life," said Nathan Rahm, 30, a locked-out worker from American Crystal's plant in Hillsboro. All of us have had to endure hardships this past year, but we have also learned what a union is for, he said. "The union is us. After one year we are still standing strong, and we will continue to fight for a fair contract."

"Two percent" shouted one worker from the crowd in response to Rahm's comments, a reference to the fact that only 2 percent of the 1,300 workers have crossed the picket line. This was greeted with applause.

Ripplinger told the rally that the union received phone calls of support from Buddy Howard and Steve Underwood, leaders of BCTGM Local 48G, which fought a 10-month lockout against corn processor Roquette America in 2010-2011 in Keokuk, Iowa.

Becki Jacobson, from American Crystal's factory in Moorhead, Minn., and John Risky, president of BCTGM Local 167G, also spoke at the rally. Jacobson saluted the workers locked out from the factories in Hillsboro and Drayton, who have been denied unemployment benefits by the North Dakota state government. Benefits will soon be running out for locked-

out workers in Minnesota as well.

The majority of the locked-out workers are working or looking for work.

"We're here to celebrate our determination and the huge sacrifices our families have made to affirm our dignity. Let's keep fighting," said Risky.

A few days before the anniversary rally, Richard Trumka, president of the AFL-CIO, announced at a press conference in St. Paul, Minn., that the federation is planning a national campaign against American Crystal Sugar. During the conference he handed John Risky a check for \$25,000. Trumka didn't mention specifics, but indicated the campaign might include a boycott of American Crystal and a lobbying effort against the government's sugar program, which provides subsidies and imposes protectionist measures to prop up the sugar growing and processing industry in the U.S.

"The campaign will escalate until American Crystal negotiates," the AFL-CIO president said. "We will win in the end."

Trumka's announcement was closely watched by locked-out workers across the Red River Valley and received mixed reactions.

"I thought it was good, even though late in the game," said Wayne Netterlund, a locked-out worker from Drayton. "I thought he should have addressed the fact that union workers are crossing our picket lines," referring to four different unions there. "Pressure needs to be put on them to make them stop crossing our line which only helps American Crystal," he said.

Ripplinger said the additional contributions raised by AFL-CIO unions should be put to immediate use, saying funds are needed for "action planning, solidarity work, and corporate campaign work."

"I was disappointed in what Trumka had to say," said Terry Holm, former president of the BCTGM local in Hillsboro. "The media said he was going to make a major announcement, but there was nothing really to sink your teeth into. We'll see what it means."

Messages of support and contributions for the sugar workers can be sent to BCTGM Local 167G, 100 N 3rd, Suite 50, Grand Forks, ND 58203. Make checks payable to BCTGM 167G with "2011 BCTGM lockout" in memo line.

Marchers in Quebec protest university fee hikes, Law 78

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL—Despite mid-summer vacations, at least 10,000 students and their supporters marched through downtown here July 22 to protest university tuition hikes imposed by the Quebec government and emergency Law 78 enacted May 18. Demonstrations were also held in Quebec City and Trois-Rivières.

Law 78 imposed restrictions on demonstrations and suspended the school year until August 17 at 14 junior colleges and universities where the student strike was centered. It aimed to put an end to a months-long student strike across the province. Since February more than 4,000 have been arrested in the student demonstrations.

"Bill 78 restricts us from expressing ourselves in the streets," Kraken, a student at Cegep (junior college) of St. Jerome, north of Montreal, told the *Militant*. "We have to defend our values and our rights against this government."

Truck driver Keith Menezex, a member of the United Steelworkers, came to the action from Toronto with a busload of USW members. "Law 78 attacks democratic rights," he said. "We are here to stand with the students."

A July 19 report from Quebec's Human Rights Commission said Law 78 violates Quebec's Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The law requires organizers of demonstrations of more than 50 people to provide police details of the time, duration and route eight hours in advance; bans actions from taking place near any educational institution; and imposes heavy fines for any violation.

A statement by the construction wing of the CSN, one of Quebec's main union federations, issued just after the law was passed pointed out that "this law could indirectly attack a mobilization we might decide to lead during negotiations."

Soon after the July 22 demonstration began, city cops declared it illegal since the organizers refused to furnish the route to the police. But the police decided not to enforce their declaration.

A coalition of student, labor and other organizations is challenging the law in court. Moves to have sections of the law suspended while the courts debate the challenge were rejected July 23 by the Quebec Court of Appeal.

—CALENDAR—

UNITED KINGDOM

Birmingham

Justice for Kingsley Burrell 2012. Burrell died in March 2011 after being detained by police. Meet at Summerfield Park, Icknield Port Road B16 0BT at 12 noon. March to Centenary Square, Broad Street, B1 2EA.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

California State Cutbacks, City Bankruptcies, Tax Schemes—What They Mean for Working People. Fri., Aug. 10, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St., Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

Socialist Workers Party launches campaign in NY

BY PAUL MAILHOT

NEW YORK—"My boss talks about what he calls 'savings,'" Paola Batista, a 20-year-old retail worker, told Róger Calero, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate here. "But what he means is less workers. The savings is what he puts in his pocket."

Batista, who is also a student at City College of New York, was one of more than 3,000 residents in Harlem, Upper Manhattan and the north Bronx who signed petitions July 28-29 to put Deborah Liatos, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in the 13th District, on the ballot.

Like a number of others who spoke with socialist candidates and their supporters campaigning on the streets, Batista bought a subscription to the *Militant*, the campaign newspaper, and said she would like to keep in touch.

Maura DeLuca, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president, joined Calero and Liatos to help launch the campaign. After seeing in Harlem the "No Stop and Frisk" button she was wearing, Dwayne Elliott, 20, asked her if he could sign the petition.

"The propertied rulers want us to believe we need the police to protect us from ourselves," DeLuca said. "But through struggle against the capitalist rulers—including their cops—we can learn to replace the rulers' dog-eat-dog values with working-class solidarity."

Speaking at a rally at the end of the first day of petitioning, DeLuca said: "Everywhere bosses are trying to establish new conditions, making us work faster while getting lower wages, with less and less concern for our safety—from Caterpillar to Con Edison.

"Bosses are demanding 'sacrifice,' trying to convince us that 'we're in it together' against workers in other countries," she continued. "But we have everything in common with workers around the world and nothing in common with bosses."

Two electors for the SWP campaign in New Jersey, where socialist campaigners filed 1,830 signatures July 25 to put Harris and DeLuca on the ballot, sent letters of support.

"Join me in supporting our brother and sister James and Maura to victory," Cesar Sanchez, who is involved in supporting the Cuban Revolution, wrote to the New York rally.

"I am a recent convert from the Democratic Party," Natasha Salerno,

a worker at a chemical warehouse distribution company, wrote. She said she was initially "skeptical" when she heard about the SWP from a coworker, "but as I listened and read about the way politics is headed, where the working class is slowly being squeezed to pay for capitalist gain, I began to get involved and learn more about the SWP and what it means to support them.

"I decided for myself I need to make a change to change the world," she said. "The journey starts with the first step. May it be the first of many more to follow to overthrowing the capitalists! And I am promoting the strength in numbers of regular everyday workers!"

DeLuca campaigns in Florida

Before flying to New York, DeLuca campaigned in Miami. She talked with taxi drivers fighting for better pay, conditions and dignity.

They recently organized a two-hour work stoppage demanding to know where fellow driver Pierre Paul Kesler, who had been beaten and arrested by cops outside the airport two days earlier, was. (See article on front page.)

"The police wrote my name wrong when they booked me, so no one could find me," Kesler told DeLuca. Fellow drivers raised \$2,000 to post his bail.

Days before her visit, a 36-inch water main broke, flooding several residents in northeast Miami. DeLuca went door to door in the area to talk with workers.

"Our campaign is fighting for a government-funded national public works program," she explained, "to put mil-



Militant photos by Candace Wagner (above) and Bernie Senter (inset)

Campaigning in New York. Top, Róger Calero, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Senate, campaigns in Washington Heights neighborhood, July 29. Inset, Maura DeLuca, SWP candidate for vice president, talks with Maggie de León, from Puerto Rico, about gains made by women in Cuba through revolution, July 28.



lions of us back to work repairing the country's crumbling infrastructure and building schools, hospitals, child care centers and other things workers need."

DeLuca's tour ended with a meeting in Miami where she joined Naomi Craine, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida, to speak about the campaign and celebrate the 59th anniversary of the opening battle of the Cuban Revolution on July 26.

Among those attending were Pedro Rodriguez Medina, one of the founders of the Alianza Martiana, a coalition

of Cuban-American supporters of the revolution, and Tony Jeanthenor, president of the Haitian community group Veye Yo. A few days earlier, Craine had spoken before Veye Yo.

Rosario Martinez, organizer of the National Boricua Human Rights Network in Orlando, sent greetings, thanking the SWP for its support and participation in the fight for Puerto Rican independence and to free political prisoner Oscar López Rivera.

Tom Baumann from Miami contributed to this article.

SWP candidate talks with fighting sugar workers

Continued from front page
unions, but to anyone who is fighting, whether it is the unemployed, or those in fights against police brutality. We have to think and act on broader terms, that's how we will build the movement we need."

"This past year has been a year of changes for me," Becki Jacobson, who is locked out from American Crystal's plant in Moorhead, Minn., told Harris. "I never was really active in the union. But this past year I got behind the union and was one of those who traveled on the Journey for Justice campaign with locked-out workers from American Crystal and Cooper Tire in Ohio. I didn't realize how popular we were. I also saw how we need lots of support to win."

"You were popular because you were part of leading a real fight," said Harris. "That's what working people like to see. It shows what we are capable of. This is what we are starting to see across the country."

The following day Harris went to a meeting organized for him in Drayton, at the picket shack near the American Crystal Sugar factory there. He was greeted by locked-out workers Paul Dahlman, Wayne Netterlund and Clayton Bronson. The discussion lasted for three hours.

"This is my first time up here, but I have been closely following your fight in the pages of the *Militant*," Harris told them. "I was struck by how focused and determined you are, even after being locked out for one year.

"One of the points I make as I campaign around the country is that more

fights are taking place than you think," Harris added. "Some are small and some are big, like yours. We talk about the lessons of these fights, bringing your experiences to others. We talk about linking up with other workers, as part of preparing for bigger fights we know are coming."

Bronson said he sees the world today as a place where "more and more workers are unemployed, with goods priced way out of our range, and where they have conditioned us to accept that."

"Exactly," Harris responded. "You are describing the dog-eat-dog world of capitalism. And it's going to get worse. The crisis of capitalism on a world scale

is only going to deepen. The enemy is capitalism."

Bronson signed up as an endorser for the SWP campaign and donated \$20. (See endorser card on this page.)

The evening before, Harris joined Frank Forrestal, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in Minnesota, and Helen Myers, the party's candidate for Iowa's 36th House District, in opening a new campaign headquarters in Minneapolis.

Over the weekend, more than 1,100 people signed up on the streets of Minnesota to put Harris and vice presidential candidate Maura DeLuca on the ballot there, kicking off a two-week drive to get 3,000 signatures.

Literature on SWP presidential campaign



Campaign flyer: \$2.50 for 25
Buttons: \$1 each
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The working class, labor, socialist campaign

- Yes, I urge workers and youth to give a hearing to the working class alternative in 2012, Socialist Workers Party candidates James Harris for president and Maura DeLuca for vice president.
- Enclosed is my contribution of \$_____ (make contribution to Socialist Workers National Campaign Committee)
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Communist League in UK launches election campaign

BY CATHARINA TIRSÉN

MANCHESTER, England—Peter Clifford announced his campaign as the Communist League candidate in the Nov. 15 parliamentary by-election for Manchester Central at a Militant Labour Forum here on July 21. Clifford, 57, is a production worker in a food factory.

Wesley Ahmed joined Clifford on the platform. He explained how Greater Manchester police killed his cousin, Anthony Grainger, on March 3 and how the family had decided to campaign to learn the truth. Grainger was unarmed and sitting in a car cornered by the police when he was killed.

Zulaikha Farooqi also spoke, describing how her father Munir Farooqi had been condemned to four life sentences on frame-up charges of “terrorism,” based on the testimony of two undercover cops. The police and Crown Prosecution Service now want to use a new anti-terrorism law to take away the family home.

“What happened to Anthony Grainger and the Farooqi family, the way the police more and more act as judge, jury and executioner, goes hand in hand with the ruthlessness of the employers and government attacks on all working people,” Clifford said.

“The main challenge for us is to realize that we have nothing in common with the class that confronts us,” he continued. “The Communist League campaign will focus on the working class, the class with no property and nothing to lose, but with the power to end capitalism.”

A lively exchange took place on the deepening assaults on the living standards and rights of working people.

“Why do the police act like this? Aren’t they actually quite low-paid workers?” asked forum participant Mekye Simms.

“Since the day former British Prime Minister Robert Peel, the son of a major Lancashire textile manufacturer, set up the police in the early 19th century, it has been there to maintain the rule of the propertied class and keep us in our place,” explained Clifford. “When you join the police you become part of that.”

He urged participants to join the Justice4Grainger campaign in a march against deaths in police custody in Birmingham on Aug. 18 and back the family’s call for the police responsible for Grainger’s death to be prosecuted.

“Ian Tomlinson was murdered by the Met (the London police) and they’ve just been let loose to do it again,” said Ahmed.

The meeting took place two days after the acquittal of Simon Harwood,

the cop who violently pushed newspaper seller Tomlinson to the ground during G-20 protests in London in 2009. Harwood had been on trial for manslaughter.

“It seems impossible to get a conviction against any copper (policeman) for what they do,” Ahmed commented. “And I have learnt from Peter tonight that the cops are there to protect the system and that is why the system protects them.”

An article on the campaign titled “‘The working classes must fight’: Communist League factory worker to stand in Manchester Central by-election” appeared July 25 in the online newspaper mancunianmatters. It quoted Clifford saying his “main motivation for standing in the by-election was to provide an alternative against



Militant/Dag Tirsén

Peter Clifford, Communist League candidate in parliamentary by-election for Manchester Central, England, campaigning among those attending Durham Miners Gala July 15.

the mainstream political parties—Labour, Liberal Democrats and the Conservative Party—who, he believes, are trying to tackle the economic crisis by ‘taking it out on working people.’”

“Join with us in Birmingham Aug. 18 and join with us to help set up meetings to discuss the campaign in your house or with your workmates,” Clifford urged forum participants.

Syria: Battle rages over control of Aleppo

Continued from front page

forces occupied several largely working-class districts of Damascus, the capital, and Aleppo, Syria’s main industrial and financial center. The Free Syrian Army is a loose umbrella organization comprising most of the various armed groups combating the regime.

After days of intense fighting, the outgunned and outmanned rebel combatants were eventually driven from Damascus. The Syrian army is now waging a full-scale offensive to recapture Aleppo neighborhoods from opposition forces.

The impact on working people has been devastating.

UN officials reported July 29 that some 200,000 people had fled Aleppo in the previous two days of fighting. Those remaining were facing power cuts, shortages of food and fuel, and the ever-present risk of injury or death.

Some 127,300 Syrians had taken refuge in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq, many in poor conditions, the UN reported July 27. The Greek government announced July 30 that it was quadrupling the number of guards along its border with Turkey, aiming at keeping out Syrian refugees.

More than 19,000 people, including 5,000 government troops, have been killed since the beginning of the uprising, according to the London-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights

A weakened regime

The Assad regime has been shaken and the civil war is now generalized across the country. Large areas of the countryside are under control of opposition forces, especially in the north, as well as several border crossings into Turkey and Iraq. Regime and army defections have increased. The Syrian government is increasingly isolated, not only by the imperialist powers of America and Europe, but by most governments in the region.

At a meeting in Brussels July 23, the European Union strengthened its arms embargo against Syria and extended the list of supporters of al-Assad’s regime targeted by its sanctions.

The governments of Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have been helping rebel groups obtain weapons. Syrian

rebel leaders and fighters operate openly on Turkish soil.

Saudi Arabia’s government has collected more than \$100 million in a national drive to support Syrian opposition forces they favor.

A July 22 emergency meeting of Arab League ministers in Doha, Qatar, called on al-Assad to step down and on the Free Syrian Army to form a transitional government.

According to the *Christian Science Monitor*, the league’s secretary general announced he would travel to Moscow and Beijing to urge these governments to “end their obstruction of UN Security Council action on Syria”—a reference to their repeated vetoing of UN sanctions on Syria promoted by Washington.

Like other regimes in the region, the power of Bashar al-Assad is based on a narrow layer of capitalist families, in this case mostly from the Alawite Muslim minority, a branch of Shiite Islam. Three-quarters of Syria’s population are Sunni, 11 percent Alawite and 12 percent Christians.

Kurds, an oppressed nationality in the region, represent about 9 percent of Syria’s population. Since 1962, 300,000 Kurds have been denied citizenship. The use of the Kurdish language is restricted, and most Kurds are not allowed to own land.

A third of the population survives on \$2 a day or less.

Al-Assad became president in 2000 after the death of his father, Hafez al-Assad, who had ruled the country with an iron fist since 1963.

The Baathist Party regime of al-Assad has draped itself in anti-imperialist and secular-socialist demagogy, as well as lip service of support for the Palestinian struggle. In reality, when not exploiting the cause of the Palestinian people for its own ends, the regime has stabbed them in the back, including outright slaughters of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon in 1976 and 1986-87. And when it has coincided with its national interests, it has allied with imperialism, as it did when it backed the U.S.-led war against Iraq in 1991.

Washington has been at odds for decades with Damascus, in large part because of the latter’s close relations with

Moscow and Tehran, and its support for Iranian-backed groups Hamas and Hezbollah in Palestine and Lebanon.

The bourgeois Syrian opposition is deeply divided—along political, ethnic and sectarian lines, and between the politicians in exile and the fighters on the ground.

An early July meeting in Cairo of the Syrian opposition was marked by squabbling among the some 250 delegates and their incapacity to reach an agreement on forming a unified body to represent the disparate opposition. The Kurdish delegation walked out.

While the White House has been calling for months for al-Assad to step down, the Obama administration has provided limited support to opposition groups, saying it does not want arms falling into the hands of Islamist forces, and has limited its intervention in the country to covert operations.

The July 31 *Time* magazine explained quite bluntly the three-point plan of Washington and its allies.

First, their priority in Syria is to ensure stability after Assad’s fall. The magazine quoted Defense Secretary Leon Panetta as saying, “The best way to preserve that kind of stability is to maintain as much of the military and police as you can, along with security forces, and hope that they will transition to a democratic form of government.”

Second, *Time* said, one way to achieve this goal is to establish “a military junta along the lines of Egypt’s Supreme Council of the Armed Forces—a body that would keep intact the armed forces and avoid a bloody Balkan-style breakup of the Syrian state, while overseeing a political transition to a more inclusive government.”

And third, “one leader apparently being groomed to head up such an entity ... is Gen. Manaf Tlass, until recently one of the most senior Sunni figures in the Assad regime.” Tlass defected at the beginning of July.

Their challenging goal: replacing the current government with another repressive regime that is both allied closely with Washington and capable of clamping down on growing discontent and combativity among working people—and all without Washington getting its hands too dirty or paying too much in blood and treasure.

Correction

The article “Governments of Australia, Indonesia Strengthen Ties” in the July 30 issue incorrectly stated that the nearly 100 refugees who lost their lives in two boat sinkings were Indonesian. They were in fact majority Afghans.

The article “UK Protest: Cop ‘Just Shot My Son, No Questions Asked’” in the July 23 issue incorrectly gave the names of Janet and Christopher Alder as Adler.

More tell their stories of cop brutality in North Chicago

BY JOHN HAWKINS

CHICAGO, Ill.—More than six months after Darrin Hanna's death at the hands of North Chicago cops, Hanna's family and neighbors continue to encourage other victims of cop brutality to come forward as part of their effort to force authorities to prosecute the cops responsible for Hanna's death.

On Nov. 6, six city cops beat and repeatedly used Tasers on Hanna as they arrested him for allegedly attacking his girlfriend. Hanna, an African-American, was hospitalized as a result and died a week later.

At the June 16 North Chicago City Council meeting, Janet Manzella described how she was beaten by one of the cops suspended for 30 days for his role in Hanna's death.

Manzella, who is Caucasian, is confined to a wheelchair. Responding to an October 2010 call she made to report suspected drug dealing, the cop in question arrived. Instead of questioning those she had called about, the cop "started hugging on the people," Manzella said, according to ABC local news. "And he pointed at me and said, 'Go get your ID.'"

Manzella said as she went to get her ID, the officer kicked in her door and slammed her up against the wall. At the time she was recovering from spine surgery.

"I was pinned between him and the wall. My walker ... went flying into the bathroom," said Manzella.

She also described how the same officer physically grabbed and harassed her a few weeks later when she was shopping at a Walmart.

Manzella repeatedly tried to file com-

plaints with local officials, but they were ignored. City Council Alderman Valerie DeVost, who accompanied her on one occasion, corroborated Manzella's story.

"This is the type of thing they try to hide from the public," Ralph Peterson, Hanna's cousin and a leader of the fight to prosecute the cops who killed him, told the *Militant*. "The citizens of North Chicago are terrified because those they think are supposed to serve and protect, carry out terrorist acts against them.

"Janet Manzella came forward after we convinced her that she had nothing to fear. There are others we know of. They're beginning to see they have nothing to fear, and they're just waiting to tell their stories."

Chicago forced to pay victims of cop torture in suit

BY JOHN HAWKINS

CHICAGO—On July 23 the City Council Finance Committee approved payment of more than \$7 million to two men who spent decades in prison based solely on "confessions" exacted through torture at the hands of city cops.

Michael Tillman, who was subjected to waterboarding and severely beaten and spent 23 years behind bars on trumped-up charges of rape and murder, was awarded \$5.37 million. Originally sentenced to life plus 25 years, he was declared innocent and released in 2010.

David Fauntleroy will receive \$1.8 million. He had been sentenced to life in prison in 1986 for a 1983 double murder, but all charges against him were dropped in 2009 after proving that all the "evidence" against him was extracted through torture.



Militant/Betsy Farley

Some 350 people march April 21 in North Chicago, Ill., demanding firing of cops who beat and used Tasers on Darrin Hanna last November. Hanna was hospitalized and died a week later.

Guantánamo: secret hearing seeks to conceal CIA torture

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

A military judge held a secret hearing July 18 in the case of Guantánamo detainee Abd al-Rahm al-Nashiri. The Barack Obama administration is seeking the death penalty. The defendant was not even allowed to attend the session, called to hear defense motions seeking discovery about how al-Nashiri was tortured while held in secret CIA prisons.

Al-Nashiri, 47, is accused by Washington of helping to organize an attack by al-Qaeda on the U.S. destroyer Cole in 2000 that killed 17 sailors.

Al-Nashiri was arrested in 2002 in Dubai. Over the next four years he was tortured in CIA secret prisons in Thailand, Afghanistan and Poland. Since 2006 he has been held at the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

Judge Col. James Pohl has not ruled on the defense motions, the prosecutor, Army Brig. Gen. Mark Martins, told the media. Instead, the private hearing with government and defense lawyers was held "to determine whether any part of it could be discussed in open court," reported Reuters.

"To me, the starting point is what the government doesn't want to be revealed," stated Judge Pohl, according to the *Miami Herald*. "They're the gatekeeper on that as far as I'm concerned."

A censored version of a CIA report made public in 2009 reported that al-

Nashiri was subjected to waterboarding and hooded, shackled and stripped naked during interrogation sessions. U.S. agents interrogated him at gunpoint, revved up a power drill near his head and faked the execution of another prisoner, according to the report.

The *New York Times*, Fox News, *Miami Herald*, Reuters, the Tribune Company and *Washington Post* have requested that the judge allow them to cover al-Nashiri's trial, scheduled to start Nov. 9.

In a related development, on June 11 the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear, without comment, appeals by seven of the 169 men being held at the U.S. Guantánamo Bay military prison.

The rejected appeals include two detainees from Yemen who won their cases at the trial court level, but had the verdict reversed following the government's appeal to a higher federal court.

The Supreme Court also rebuffed Adnan Latif, incarcerated at Guantánamo since 2002. A district judge ordered his release, but an appeals court reversed this.

A lower court order to release Hussain Salem Mohammad Almerfedi, imprisoned since 2003, was also blocked by appellate judges. "Government attorneys argued that Almerfedi stayed at an al Qaida-affiliated guesthouse," reported the Associated Press.

Tillman and Fauntleroy are two of more than 100 men, all of them African-American, who were convicted and incarcerated based on confessions coerced from them through beatings and other torture at the hands of the notorious "midnight crew"—a gang of cop thugs operating under the command of former police lieutenant Jon Burge.

Tillman named former Mayor Richard Daley as a defendant in his suit, along with Burge and 14 others. Burge was convicted in 2010 of lying about the tortures and since March 2011 has been serving a four-and-a-half-year sentence in federal prison.

Before becoming mayor, Daley was Cook County State's Attorney for eight years. He has been named in prior cop torture lawsuits, but judges have previously dismissed him as a defendant, citing the immunity given prosecutors. In a decision handed down July 20, 2011, Judge Rebecca Pallmeyer ruled Daley should remain a defendant in Tillman's suit for joining in a conspiracy to cover up torture while he was mayor.

Shortly after final arrangements for Daley's deposition were set Cook County agreed to pay \$600,000 to settle with Tillman. Tillman also received \$200,000 from the state of Illinois for wrongful conviction. The civil settlements means Daley and other remaining defendants didn't have to testify.

"If [Daley] had done what he should have, I would not have been tortured, lived with the fear of the death penalty, or sent to prison," said Tillman in a statement. "To me, this settlement proves that Daley, Jon Burge, and Burge's torture crew did me terribly wrong."

"We're disappointed that we're not going to be able to question Mayor Daley, but we know that he remains a central figure in the torture scandal," said Flint Taylor, Tillman's attorney.

There are still another 25 to 30 cases currently under investigation out of a total 110 complaints, David Thomas, executive director of the Illinois Torture Inquiry and Relief Commission, told PBS' *Frontline*. The rest haven't yet been pursued.

'Blood money turned into its opposite'

"This is a quarterly bonus for \$467.49 from an electrical assembly factory," wrote Dennis Richter from Chicago. "There was a rich discussion on the shop floor around what this blood money represents."

Blood money is a term communist workers use to describe so-called bonus payments and other bribes from the bosses or their government that press workers to accept speedup, wage cuts, concession contracts, dangerous working conditions, or to try to keep a union out of the shop.

"This is a nonunion factory and our hourly wage is determined by the company's yearly review of everyone's performance," Richter continued. "None of the seven workers in my department received higher than a 1 percent increase for this year. Many agreed with my point that we didn't need a company gift every quarter, but instead an hourly raise in wages and to get this we need to have an organization, a union."

Tony Lane in Minneapolis sent in a quarterly safety bonus check for \$40.81 and the following note:

"A worker is still recuperating from a serious accident with an overhead crane. The company doesn't want to talk about it. The safety officer said in the last meeting, 'I can't say anything. There's an ongoing OSHA investigation.' He was on third shift, so day-shift workers still got a bonus."

These donations were among several in the recent period. In May alone contributions totaled \$2,231.42. Class-conscious workers take this money and turn it into its opposite by giving it to the Socialist Workers Party Capital Fund, which finances long-range work of the party.

Pat Fernandez in Houston described how she got her \$188 blood money. "The boss of the machine shop where I work handed out these 'quality production bonuses' along with a speech declaring that anyone caught slowing down would be reprimanded." She added that workers do many long, hard hours without air conditioning and ventilation.

To make a blood money contribution, contact *Militant* distributors on page 10.

—EMMA JOHNSON

ON THE PICKET LINE

Con Edison lockout ends with tentative agreement

NEW YORK—Con Edison ended its nearly four-week lockout of 8,000 workers July 26 with the announcement by Gov. Andrew Cuomo of a tentative agreement. The new contract offer will be brought to a vote by the union membership.

Cuomo summoned Utility Workers officials and Con Ed President Kevin Burke to the governor's offices earlier in the day to press for an agreement.

To maintain power, Con Edison was working 5,000 supervisors, many recently hired college graduates, and 700 contractors 12 hours a day, at least six days a week.

"There is a real possibility of a safety or reliability issue if this situation continues," Cuomo wrote the day before, saying "the lockout has gone on long enough."

According to a summary of the proposed four-year contract posted on the union website, Con Edison agreed there will be no changes to the pension plan for current employees before July 1, 2037, but new hires will be placed on the "cash balance" plan.

The proposal also includes an increase in the weekly payments for medical insurance and deductibles, but less than Con Edison had been demanding, and an 11 percent wage increase over four years.

In a statement, Con Edison thanked Cuomo for his role in brokering the tentative agreement, and Mayor Michael Bloomberg, the New York Police Department "and other city agencies for their extensive assistance in supporting our operations during the labor dispute."

During the lockout, workers held boisterous picket lines and took part in labor rallies, winning support from workers across the city.

"We made some noise, that's for sure," Fred Scott told the *Militant*. "I'm glad that we did. I felt like the whole country was watching us."

If the companies get their way, Scott said, "we're going to end up with just two classes of people: the poor and the wealthy."

—Seth Galinsky

Seattle: Teamsters strike Waste Management over pay

SEATTLE—Some 150 recycle and yard waste workers, members of Teamsters Local 117, went on strike here July 25 for higher wages and better working conditions against Waste Management Inc. In solidarity, 350 garbage haulers, members of Teamsters Local 174 who work for the company under a separate contract, are honoring the picket lines.

"We do the same work, drive the same trucks and face the same hazards on the job" as the garbage haulers, recycler Brent Bliven, told the *Militant* at the picket line. "There is no reason for a \$6 to \$7 or even higher wage gap."

At a July 26 press conference, Brenda Wiest, an organizer for Local 117, said the company has walked away from the bargaining table three times since the contract expired May 31.

Waste Management, whose registered trademark is "Think Green," said in a July 29 news release that the company has brought in substitute drivers from other Waste Management locations, and more "are on the way and we are beginning to hire replacement driv-

ers identified during our job fair last month."

About 9,000 of Waste Management's 45,000 employees nationwide are organized into the union, Wiest said.

Having inexperienced drivers who don't know the routes could be dangerous, said recycling driver Brent Barrett. "There are narrow streets, alleys and overhead wires that you have to be aware of."

All those who support the union are encouraged to join the picket lines, Wiest said in an interview.

Waste Management did not return calls requesting comment.

—Edwin Fruit

Peugeot workers win delay on plant closing, layoffs

PARIS—Fifteen hundred workers demonstrated outside Peugeot headquarters here July 25 to protest the planned elimination of 8,000 jobs in France, including the closing of the Aulnay assembly plant. Workers came from all over France, including more than 200 from the Rennes assembly plant, 200 miles west of Paris.

A special meeting of the Central Works Council, a consultative body with elected workers representatives convened by management, was taking place at the headquarters. The council decided to impose an audit of Peugeot's books before the "restructuring" plan can proceed. This blocks its implementation until the fall, giving the unions more time to mobilize.

Among the speakers at the protest rally were union officials from Renault, the pharmaceutical group Sanofi, and Air France. The airline recently announced plans to lay off more than 5,000 workers.

—Derek Jeffers

Quebec Hyatt Regency workers turn lockout into a strike

MONTREAL—The Hyatt Regency hotel here locked out some 300 workers organized by the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN) July 25, after the unionists came to work wearing orange sashes to protest the slow pace of contract negotiations. In response, 94 percent of the Hyatt workers



Militant/John Naubert

Teamsters Local 117 members, on strike against Waste Management in Seattle for higher wages and better working conditions, picket scab truck in front of company facility July 26.

voted to strike that afternoon.

The union federation is in negotiations with 35 hotels involving some 5,500 workers in Quebec.

Workers on the picket line July 28 told the *Militant* that Hyatt wants to make it easier to move full-time workers to part-time status to avoid paying benefits and to allow management to cancel some shifts with 24 hours notice.

The hotel is also demanding to reduce the guaranteed work shift from eight hours pay to four, said Rose Vaillant.

"I worked at McDonald's where we didn't have a union so I see the difference having a union makes," said Anthony Gentile, 19.

On July 29, 50 people joined a solidarity barbecue on the picket line, including workers from other hotels.

"We are continuing to bring everyone together to fight for our rights," said Jorge Cunha, a dishwasher. "We are going to fight hard like we did in the 2008 strike that we won."

The Hyatt Regency did not return calls asking for comment.

—Beverly Bernardo and John Steele

Strikers at steel plant in Greece return to work after cop attack

ATHENS, Greece—Workers at the Elliniki Halivourgia steel mill, on strike since October last year, voted July 28 to return to work. Some 400 members of

the steelworkers union, which is affiliated to the PAME federation, were fighting cuts in their wages and hours and the firing of more than 100 coworkers.

Plainclothes cops arrested six workers on picket duty during the early morning of July 20, the day after an Athens public prosecutor ruled that the strikers were depriving other employees of their "right to work." An Athens court ruled in June that the strike was illegal. The plant has been closed since the walkout began.

"After the six were arrested, six platoons of MAT [riot police] invaded the plant and there they remain," Sofia Roditi, an activist in the union's Women's Support Committee, told the *Militant*. Thousands of strike supporters who had gathered at the plant that evening were attacked and tear-gassed by the riot cops.

"This decision was necessary given the situation," Roditi said. "The union judged that we should not let our forces gradually dwindle and lose the ability to act in a united way."

"The strike was rescinded on the condition that we go in Monday morning, without the MAT and are escorted by people who solidarize with us," she said. "Then a new fight will begin."

—Maria Plessa and Natasha Terlexis

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



August 14, 1987

PLAINVIEW, Texas—Workers at the Excel meat-packing plant here voted July 30 to retain the United Food and Commercial Workers union as their bargaining representative.

The North American Meat Packers Union challenged the UFCW in the election. The vote was 496 to 347.

UFCW Local 540, which represents the Plainview workers, is an amalgamated local based in Dallas, which is 400 miles from Plainview. NAMPU was formed by former members of UFCW Local P-9 who participated in the strike at the Hormel plant in Austin, Minnesota, in 1985-1986.

The company has imposed concession contracts, cutting starting wages to \$6 an hour. Excel subjects its workers to a murderous line speed resulting in a high injury rate. Many workers are routinely fired or disciplined.



August 13, 1962

While white racists in the area of Albany, Ga., meet the attempt of Negroes there to exercise their constitutional rights with legal subterfuges, mass arrests and violence, the Kennedy administration is avoiding any effective action to defend the civil rights fighters.

The Albany movement began in October 1961 when SNCC workers set up voters' registration classes and non-violent training groups in Albany. In December over 700 persons were arrested in marches protesting the arrest of several youth who had attempted to sit integrated in the inter-state rail and bus terminals in Albany. The demonstrations were called off on the understanding that the arrested persons' bail would be returned and the cases dropped. Racist city officials prosecuted. The sentencing of demonstrators touched off the recent mass actions.



August 14, 1937

In 1936 the great bulk of the workers in this country were hitched up to the Roosevelt bandwagon. Democratic machine politicians had to get help from the labor bureaucrats, both A. F. of L. and C. I. O., and from the gang of liberals and Popular Frontists. In a number of States they had to change the Democratic label, to keep workers' votes in the Roosevelt column: Farmer-Labor Party in Minnesota; Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation in Wisconsin; American Labor Party in New York.

In 1937 the international crisis of capitalism is breaking out openly into revolution and war. In this country, the working class is surging forward in a new class militancy. At all costs the bourgeoisie and its henchmen have got to keep the workers from moving toward the revolutionary position of independent Marxist politics.

Preparing politically to join workers struggles in US

Communist workers bring hard-won political lessons from century and a half

BY JOHN STUDER

As members of the Socialist Workers Party join in the spreading resistance by fellow workers against relentless attacks from the bosses and their government, our involvement is grounded in understanding what the communist movement is, said Jack Barnes, the party's national secretary, to participants in the June 21-23 Socialist Workers Membership Conference in Oberlin, Ohio.

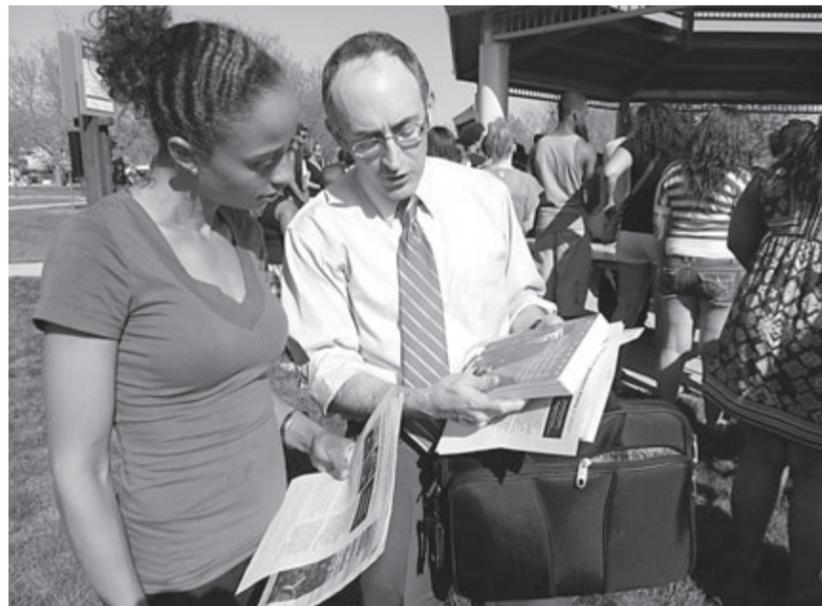
Communism is not an idea, he said; it's a movement of the working class, an international movement, one that proceeds on the basis of the existing class struggle, on the basis of facts, not preconceived doctrines or principles.

Recognizing who we are, and acting accordingly, is the foundation of all our activity, Barnes said, whether we're fighting alongside and organizing solidarity for locked-out sugar beet workers in the Upper Midwest; or longshore workers on the West Coast; or those fighting cop brutality, supporting a woman's right to abortion, and demanding legalization of immigrant workers; or workers and farmers combating exploitation and oppression anywhere in the world. We're *part* of a vanguard of the working class that's gaining experience in the course of struggles.

We're meeting groups of workers and getting to know them, Barnes said. Through use of the *Militant* and in other ways, we're helping bring them together with embattled workers elsewhere. We're just like them, and they're like us. We want to strengthen the working-class movement, so we can fight better.

Communist workers bring to those we're fighting alongside political lessons from working-class battles for more than a century and a half—lessons that are hard-fought, often earned in blood, and written down for use by succeeding generations. Above all, these are generalized lessons from struggles on the road to the revolutionary conquest of political power by the working class. This isn't a course that's "discovered", but one that's *built* and renewed by vanguard workers over many decades.

These extend from the conclusions



Militant photos by Eric Simpson (left) and Lisa Rottach (above)
Left, closing session of Socialist Workers conference presented party's 2012 campaign June 23. Gerardo Sánchez, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in California, speaks at the meeting. Above, David Rosenfeld, SWP candidate for 3rd Congressional District in Iowa, campaigns with *Militant* and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* at April 1 protest against vigilante killing of Trayvon Martin.

reached by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels as leaders of the communist workers movement in the revolutions of 1848-49 in Europe and during the Paris Commune of 1871, where for the first time the working class, for nearly three months, held political power; to lessons from forging the Bolshevik leadership of the 1917 Russian Revolution, led by V.I. Lenin, and efforts to build proletarian parties in other countries able to extend workers power worldwide; to today's living, fighting revolution in Cuba, brought to victory in 1959 by workers and farmers under the leadership of the Rebel Army led by Fidel Castro.

One of the five classes at the conference focused on the place of the Cuban Revolution in this continuity—a discussion of the new book *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos and Yolanda Ferrer. The class was led by Martín Koppel and Lynn Hudson. Each class was aimed at supplementing political themes of the main talks, presented by Barnes and by Mary-Alice Waters, a member of the SWP National Committee.

Through firsthand accounts by Espín and de los Santos—combatants in the revolutionary struggle and founders of the Federation of Cuban Women—the new title explains how Rebel Army combatants and exploited farmers and agricultural workers fought alongside each other to become a stronger, more politically conscious revolutionary force; how they transformed themselves in the process; and how growing numbers of women were drawn into revolutionary activity and productive work.

Revolutionary centralism

In order to build a workers vanguard in face of the capitalist crisis and growing resistance, Barnes said, communist workers need to remain loyal to disciplined habits and organizational norms conquered over decades through the struggle for a proletarian party.

That means rejecting the bourgeois illusion of "individual freedom" promoted by the capitalist rulers to pit us against each other, Barnes said. Class-conscious workers take responsibility for each other in struggle and learn to organize in a disciplined way. That's what makes it possible for workers to pay attention to planning, timing and detail, which are essential to fight and win against the bosses and their government.

These questions were at the center of another conference class, "Proletarian Revolutionary Centralism: From the Communist League (1847-48) to Today," led by Louis Martin and Sam Manuel.

The revolutionary centralism of a proletarian party isn't a set of rules, Barnes said. It's how revolutionary-minded workers function *together*—voluntarily in harness, as part of a common organization—in order to defend ourselves against the employing class and their cops, thugs and armed forces. It begins on the picket line or wherever workers engage in class combat. It's the bedrock of a revolutionary party fighting to win workers power from the ruling capitalist families who own the land, factories, and other means of production and who use the state to maintain their property and their political rule.

A proletarian party cannot be built in the U.S. without involvement in the fight for Black liberation and recruitment of

growing numbers of workers who are Black. This extends from participating in actions against cop brutality and "stop and frisk" harassment of youth, to labor battles alongside fellow workers who are Black, to social and political struggles of all kinds. It involves regular sales of the *Militant* in neighborhoods with large numbers of workers who are Black.

Socialist workers act on a recognition of the disproportionate weight, both in numbers and combat record, of workers who are African-American in the vanguard of working-class-led social and political battles since the Civil War and Radical Reconstruction—the second American Revolution.

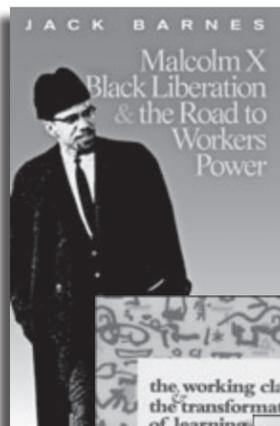
Barnes pointed to the place of outstanding proletarian leaders who are Black in battles that overthrew Jim Crow segregation in the 1950s and '60s, opening the road to broader fights for Black freedom—from E.D. Nixon in the 1955-56 bus boycott in Montgomery, Ala.; to Fred Shuttlesworth in the 1963 "Battle of Birmingham"; to Malcolm X. The SWP joined these struggles and reached out to working people involved in them.

These themes were addressed in a third conference class, "The Struggle for a Proletarian Party and the Fight for Black Liberation in the United States," led by Steve Clark and Gerald Symington. It was based on the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the*



July 2010, contract workers at day care centers, w same conditions as permanent employees. Socialist Palestine is through common revolutionary struggle

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Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power by Jack Barnes

Why the "revolutionary conquest of state power by a politically class-conscious and organized vanguard of the working class—millions strong—is necessary." \$10 with subscription to the *Militant* or \$15 without (usually: \$20)

The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning by Jack Barnes

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Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution

by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer - \$15 (usually \$20)

Available from distributors, page 10

S and abroad focus of Socialist Workers conference

f of working-class battles to those they fight alongside in today's struggles

Road to Workers Power by Jack Barnes.

The book includes discussions from the 1930s by members of the SWP and its predecessors with Leon Trotsky, a leader of the Bolshevik Revolution and world communist movement. Trotsky urged the party leadership to turn toward broader involvement in the fight for Black freedom along the road to power in the U.S. "It is a question of whether the party is to be transformed into a sect or if it is capable of finding its way to the most oppressed part of the working class," Trotsky said.

Israel not exempt from class struggle

Since the state of Israel was established some 65 years ago on the dispossession of the Palestinian people, Barnes said, the reactionary and failed "solution" put forward by all Arab regimes and misleaderships of Palestinian organizations has been military conquest to "drive the Israelis into the sea."

But the road forward in Israel and Palestine, as elsewhere, is through the class struggle. It is through common revolutionary struggle by Jewish, Arab and other working people that state power can be won and national oppression and capitalist exploitation can be ended, Barnes said.

A class on "Israel Is Not Exempt from the Class Struggle and Social Contradictions, at Home or Abroad," led by Norton Sandler and Lea Sherman, explained how bosses there aim to make Jewish, Arab and other workers pay for capitalism's crisis. There are growing numbers of immigrant workers, including Africans. The working class is more and more a part of the region and the world.

Lifetime of learning, working

The revolutionary workers movement, Barnes said, fights for the transformation of learning, so it becomes a universal human activity—a lifetime of working, producing and creating together.

That's the opposite of the class-divided character of education under capitalism, where schools for the ruling families and better-off middle layers prepare them to maintain their privileges. But for the big working-class majority, Barnes said, our lives are a cycle divided into being a child, the time we "learn" (above all to be obedient to a boss); then



SWP acts on fact of disproportionate weight, in numbers and combativity, of workers who are African-American in vanguard of social and political battles. Fred Shuttlesworth (pointing), leader in movement for Black rights that smashed Jim Crow, talks with Freedom Riders released from jail in Alabama in "whites only" section of Birmingham bus station, May 17, 1961.

a worker, when we produce profits for the employing class; then a used-up "pensioner."

Presenting a course toward a lifetime of learning and a lifetime of working is part of preparing the working class to cast off the self-image the rulers impose on us, so we recognize our revolutionary capacity to conquer workers power, end capitalism's dog-eat-dog relations, and reorganize on new social foundations of working, studying and producing together. In that world, Barnes said, nobody will even know what the word "retiree" used to mean.

The final class, led by Dave Prince and Laura Garza, focused on Barnes' pamphlet *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning: The Fraud of Education Reform under Capitalism*. Socialist workers at the conference decided to step up campaigning to get that pamphlet—along with the *Militant*, *Malcolm X*, *Black Liberation*, and *Road to Workers Power*, and *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution*—into the hands of workers and others battling employer and government attacks.

New openings in the world

The conference talk by Mary-Alice Waters, "Starting with the World: The Practical Work of the Party," focused on expanding political opportunities for the communist movement the world over.

Waters pointed to the response by the Socialist Workers Party and its sister Communist Leagues in Australia and New Zealand to the publication in the Indonesian language last year of two Marxist works: *Woman's Evolution* by Evelyn Reed, an SWP leader until her death in 1979; and *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* by Frederick Engels. The books, published in English by Pathfinder, were issued in Indonesia by Kalyanamitra, a women's rights organization.

Earlier this year Waters completed a successful speaking tour in Australia and New Zealand with two Kalyanamitra leaders, Rena Herdiyani and Hegel Terome. The tour was aimed at learning more about the fight for women's rights and other struggles in Indonesia, and promoting the two new books.

In a talk as part of the closing conference panel June 23, Jane Ridge from New Zealand said the tour was a way

for leaders of communist organizations there and in Australia and the U.S. "to work with two Kalyanamitra leaders, and for us to learn more about each other."

What's more, Ridge said, most of those involved in the tour "were people we hadn't worked with politically before." That helped us "learn what is open to us politically, when we reach out confidently, without fear or favor," as members of proletarian parties joining together with fellow workers and others.

Waters reported on opportunities to deepen the communist movement's international work, including a *Militant* reporting trip to Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous country. Worker correspondents will report on the class struggle there, from protests by working people against fuel price hikes to the fight for women's right to abortion.

In October delegations from the Socialist Workers Party and Communist Leagues in Australia and New Zealand will participate in the Asia-Pacific Regional Conference of Solidarity with Cuba in Colombo, Sri Lanka, co-sponsored by organizations and individuals in Sri Lanka and by the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP).

The gathering will set plans for defense of the Cuban Revolution and Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, René González, Fernando González, and Antonio Guerrero, Cuban revolutionaries known the world over as the Cuban Five. Arrested in 1998,

they were framed up on various conspiracy charges and imprisoned by Washington. All but René González remain in prison.

The SWP's defense of the five Cuban revolutionaries is part of all political work by party members and young socialists, Waters said—first and foremost in the U.S., as well as abroad. So far more than 3,000 copies of *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free*, edited by Waters and Martín Koppel, have been sold around the world as a contribution to this fight.

Producing Pathfinder books

"Pathfinder books are used as part of the daily practice of building proletarian parties," Pat Nixon, a member of the Organization Committee of the Print Project, said at the panel that closed the conference. The project organizes supporters of the SWP and communist organizations in other countries to help with proofreading, formatting, design, indexing and other aspects of producing these books and pamphlets.

"The Print Project's work is tied to the perspectives presented and discussed at the conference, and to the place and importance of Pathfinder books" in the work of communist parties, Nixon said. The next day, Print Project volunteers met to discuss how to continue expanding the numbers of them taking on regular tasks and leadership responsibilities in this work.

They also registered progress in the Supporters Monthly Appeal, which by July 1 was collecting more than \$755,000 a year to help support the SWP's activity in the class struggle. Supporters are organizing to break through a goal of \$790,000 by year's end.

Participating in the resistance

The closing conference session presented the 2012 SWP ticket of James Harris for U.S. president and Maura DeLuca for vice president—the working class, labor, socialist campaign.

Politically strengthened by the gathering, party members are deepening participation in growing resistance by working people, using the SWP campaign, the *Militant* and Pathfinder books, expanding collaboration with groups of workers across the U.S., and reaching to growing opportunities around the world.



with signs in Hebrew, Arabic and Russian, demand an end to the road forward in Israel and the oppression of Jewish, Palestinian and other workers.



March 12 demonstration in Jakarta, Indonesia, against government plan to raise fuel prices.

'Cuba represents road to rebellion, freedom, independence'

Below is an excerpt from *In Defense of Socialism*, a collection of four speeches by Fidel Castro given around the 30th anniversary of the revolutionary overthrow of the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista on Jan. 1, 1959. The speech printed here was given to a rally of half a million in Havana's Plaza of the Revolution Dec. 5, 1988. Three days earlier in 1956 the yacht *Granma* landed on Cuban soil, bearing the freedom fighters led by Castro who initiated the revolutionary war. Copyright © 1989 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted with permission.



Courtesy José Ramón Fernández

Fidel Castro, center, leads Cuban troops in April 1961 to meet US-backed mercenaries who invaded country at Bay of Pigs. To his right is José Ramón Fernández, a central leader of the revolution. Cuban people quashed invasion in less than 72 hours. "Even if the day were to come when relations between socialist Cuba and the empire improve formally, that would not stop the empire from trying to crush the Cuban Revolution," said Castro in December 1988 speech. "As long as the empire exists we will never be able to lower our guard, to neglect our defense."

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FIDEL CASTRO

We are a small country—an island, what's more—located many thousands of kilometers away from any potential or real allies; ninety miles away from not just the most powerful imperialist power on earth but also the most high-handed and arrogant one. ... That empire still is and will continue to be, perhaps for a long time to come, just that: an empire, and a powerful one at that.

We are the first socialist country in the Western Hemisphere, the first socialist country in Latin America, the last one to free itself from Spain, the first one to free itself from U.S. imperialism, [Applause] the first one to establish full control over its own wealth, the first one

to disobey their orders, the first one to challenge them, the first one to carry out the deepest of revolutions on the basis of new concepts, new ideas, new values.

We have been the first country to raise aloft the banner of the workers, the peasants, the poor, and to implement their demands and rights. We have been the first country to set the example corresponding to this stage of historical development of the peoples of Latin America. We have upheld those banners and that attitude for nearly thirty years, and the empire will never forgive us for that.

But it's not just a question of wounding the empire's pride but also of causing a great injury to its imperial interests. We are a symbol, we are the road to rebellion, freedom, and independence. And the empire will never stop trying to crush that symbol, that example, that road one way or another. As long as the imperial domination of our hemisphere exists, that is and will continue to be their goal.

Even if the day were to come when relations between socialist Cuba and the empire improve formally, that would not stop the empire from trying to crush the Cuban revolution. And they don't hide

it; their theoreticians explain it, the defenders of the imperial philosophy explain it.

There are some people who say it's better to make certain changes in their policy toward Cuba in order to penetrate it, weaken it, destroy it—peacefully, if possible. Others think that the more belligerence shown toward Cuba the more active and effective Cuba will be in its struggles on the Latin American and world scene.

Therefore, there is something that must be the essence of Cuban revolutionary thought; there is something that must be absolutely clear in the consciousness of our people, who have had the privilege of being the first to travel this road: and it is the awareness that as long as the empire exists we will never be able to lower our guard, to neglect our defense. [Applause]

I say this because some people may wonder if it perhaps wouldn't be better to use all that energy, all that effort, and all those resources in building socialism. And I would answer—anybody could answer—that it would indeed be better to be able to use that money, that energy, and those resources to develop the country.

But to do so would be an illusion, a grave illusion, a criminal illusion, because that's the price our people must pay for their revolution, their freedom, their independence, their most sacred rights. That's the price that throughout history many peoples have had to pay for their right to exist and, in our case, not just to exist but to exist for something and by something. ...

And our people also learned to defend themselves; they learned a long time ago and defended themselves without vacillation. They defended themselves against imperialism's dirty war. They defended themselves against the mercenary invasion at Playa Girón, and even then there were hundreds of thousands of men and women ready to defend their country.¹ They defended themselves heroically during the October crisis;² and when the intermediate-range missiles were withdrawn, our people continued to defend themselves. They continued to apply the principle that the defense of our country is in the hands of our own people. [Shouts and applause] ...

War of the entire people means that to conquer our territory and occupy our soil, the imperial forces would have to fight against millions of people and would have to pay with hundreds of thousands, even millions of lives for trying to conquer our land, for trying to crush our freedom, our independence, our revolution, without ever succeeding in doing so.

1. In April 1961, 1,500 Cuban-born mercenaries organized by the U.S. government invaded Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. After 72 hours, the last of the mercenaries surrendered at Playa Girón (Girón Beach), which is the name Cubans use to refer to the battle.
2. In October 1962, in what is commonly referred to in the U.S. as the Cuban Missile Crisis, Washington brought the world to the edge of nuclear conflict after Havana accepted a proposal from Moscow to deploy Soviet nuclear missiles in a mutual defense agreement. The determination and readiness of the Cuban people and revolutionary government blocked U.S. plans for a massive bombardment and military invasion, and opened a way to resolve the crisis.

August **BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

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'Overpopulation' myth

Continued from front page

Overpopulation, Experts Say." It quoted ecologist Charles Hall saying, "Overpopulation is the only problem. If we had 100 million people on Earth—or better, 10 million—no others would be a problem."

On the occasion of this year's World Population Day, July 11, the Italian-based nongovernmental organization Inter Press Service featured an article titled, "Women's Inequality Linked to Soaring Population."

"Though the World Bank has reported progress [in reducing poverty] since the 1980s, it still may not be enough to counter the surge in population and the resulting problems that will stem from it," the article said. "Family planning is one of the most successful development interventions and one of the strongest and most cost-effective investments available. It reduces poverty, and it allows governments to invest in infrastructure, schooling, and healthcare."

The same assumptions were at the heart of the highly publicized London Family Planning Summit held that same day under the auspices of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the UK Department for International Development, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the United Nations Population Fund.

Gates herself committed \$560 million for such a program launched at the summit "alongside pledges totaling \$4.3 billion from the British government and leaders from African nations wrestling with the health and social problems brought on by high rates of unplanned pregnancy."

The case of Nigeria

The *New York Times* published an article in April titled "Nigeria Tested by Rapid Rise in Population" that is typical of this trend.

"In a quarter-century," it said, "at the rate Nigeria is growing, 300 million people—a population about as big as that of the present-day United States—will live in a country roughly the size of Arizona, New Mexico and Nevada. In this commercial hub ... living standards for many are falling." With a population of 167 million, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and the sixth most populous in the world.

The article described working-class

families in Lagos living in 7-by-11-foot rooms in apartment blocks where up to 50 people share a kitchen, toilet and sink. It mentioned a primary school where students sat two to a desk. And it added, "Nigeria's unemployment rate is nearly 50 percent for people in urban areas ages 15 to 24—driving crime and discontent."

Then the *Times* made the connections. "Last October, the United Nations announced the global population has breached seven billion and would expand rapidly for decades, taxing natural resources if countries cannot better manage the growth.

"Nearly all of the increase is in sub-Saharan Africa, where the population rise far outstrips economic expansion. Of the roughly 20 countries where women average more than five children, almost all are in the region." According to the *Times*, women of childbearing age had 5.5 children on average last year.

The article reported approvingly that "Nigeria made contraceptives free last year, and officials are promoting smaller families as a key to economic salvation." It quoted demographer Peter Ogunjuyigbe as saying, "If you don't take care of population, schools can't cope, hospitals can't cope, there's not enough housing—there's nothing you can do to have economic development."

The mantra that population growth is "outstripping economic expansion" serves as a convenient way to sidestep the worldwide contraction of capitalist production and trade—which has nothing to do with population growth and which is bearing down with double force on the semicolonial world.

It ignores the fact that "economic expansion" is a product of human labor. And it avoids confronting capitalism, which puts profits before human needs, as well as unequal trade relations and outright plunder by the imperialist nations. All this, with the blessing of self-enriching "African leaders" who are "wrestling" with growing social crises and discontent.

Class-conscious workers support increased access to contraceptive devices as a prerequisite for women to be able to decide when and if to bear children, thus gaining more control over their lives. For the same reason, they completely reject any "population policy"—either aimed at increasing or decreasing it—with governments telling women what they should do with their bodies for "the well-being of the nation."

Overpopulation myth

The idea that overpopulation is the source of scarcity and poverty was initially promoted by British economist Thomas Malthus (1766-1834) as a reaction against the ideals of "liberty, equality, fraternity" put forward by the bourgeois 1789 French Revolution against outlived feudal social relations in Europe.

The problems working people face, said Malthus, are not the result of an exploitive society that needs to be changed. They come from the fact that there are too many human beings. The world's population at the time had just reached



Jide Odukoya

Lagos, Nigeria, Jan. 11 protest against fuel price hike. Country is ninth largest oil exporter in world. Capitalist exploitation and imperialist domination, not so-called overpopulation, is source of country's underdevelopment and onerous conditions of life for toiling majority.

the 1 billion mark.

Malthus' "theories" proved to be wrong as the production of food exploded worldwide with the mechanization of agriculture and the application of science to it under capitalism—a system which in its early stages provided impetus to expanding production, but which today is increasingly incapable of providing the majority of toiling humanity with the most basic needs.

The truth is that some of the most densely populated regions of the globe are located in the wealthiest, most advanced imperialist countries in Europe as well as Japan. There is no cause and effect relation between population density and production of wealth.

But that doesn't prevent a regurgitation of Malthus' ideas as the propertied rulers look for one more way to pin the blame on workers, not capitalist social relations of exploitation and oppression, for the abysmal working and living conditions created by capitalism.

The *Times* article is no exception. It didn't mention that what is Nigeria today had been for centuries one of the main sources of bonded labor in Africa for the bloody slave trade that helped jump-start capitalism in Europe. It failed to mention that the country was directly pillaged by British capital until it won independence in 1960. And that this legacy of underdevelopment continues today as a result of unequal trade and financial relations with the imperialist world.

The *Times* article said in passing that today's Nigeria is "rich with oil." In fact, Nigeria is the 10th largest oil-producing and the ninth oil-exporting country in the world. But most of this wealth fills the coffers of foreign-owned oil giants—with Shell, Chevron Texaco,

Exxon Mobil, Total and Agip accounting for more than 95 percent of Nigeria's oil and gas production. Nigeria had a gross domestic product of \$1,670 per capita in 2006.

Revolutionary legacy of Sankara

"I assert that Africa remains an underpopulated continent," said Thomas Sankara in 1986. This remains true today, with Africa having a population density less than half of Europe's and a third of Asia's.

Sankara was the central leader of the 1983-87 revolution in the West African nation of Burkina Faso, one of the poorest countries in the world. Instead of seeing working people as objects to be controlled, the revolutionary government Sankara led mobilized the toilers of city and countryside to begin confronting and solving their most pressing needs, transforming themselves and laying the foundation for social relations based on human needs and solidarity, not profit for a tiny minority.

Through their mass organizations, peasants, workers, craftsmen, women and youth carried out literacy and immunization drives. They sank wells, planted trees, built dams and erected housing. They fought the oppression of women and began transforming exploitative relations on the land. As they were freeing themselves from the imperialist yoke, they extended the hand of solidarity to others engaged in that fight internationally.

Sankara was killed and the Burkinabè revolution overthrown in a murderous coup in 1987. But the revolutionary course he led remains to this day an example that points the only way forward for working people in Africa—and the rest of the world.

Recommended

Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle and We Are Heirs of the World's Revolutions both by Thomas Sankara

Sankara led the revolution of 1983 to 1987 in Burkina Faso. He explains how the peasants and workers established a popular revolutionary government and began to fight the hunger, illiteracy and economic backwardness imposed by imperialist domination and the oppression of women inherited from millennia of class society. In doing so they provided an example not only to the workers and small farmers of Africa, but to the entire world. \$8 and \$10 respectively.

Our Politics Start with the World by Jack Barnes In New International No. 13

The huge economic and cultural inequalities between imperialist and semicolonial countries, and among classes within almost every country, are produced and accentuated by the workings of capitalism. \$14



UN Photo/John Isaac

Women from town of Kaona terracing soil to control erosion April 1, 1986, during revolution in Burkina Faso. "Africa remains an underpopulated continent," said Thomas Sankara, central leader of the revolutionary government that mobilized toilers to begin solving most pressing needs, laying foundation for social relations based on solidarity, not profit.

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