

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Protest in London demands
'immediate release' of Cuban 5
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 76/NO. 36 OCTOBER 8, 2012

Call to all readers: Help expand circulation!

BY LOUIS MARTIN

Sept. 25—The *Militant* has started to get a response to last week's call to help make the 2012 fall international subscription campaign the biggest we've had in years.

This perspective is based on recognition—tested and confirmed over the last couple years—of a greater

**READERS ORGANIZE TO SPREAD
'MILITANT' FAR AND WIDE**

interest among working people across the board in a socialist newsweekly that covers working-class struggles around the world, explains the roots and character of the international crisis of capitalism, and presents a revolutionary fighting road forward.

Today two readers ordered small bundles of the paper for the first time. Consider following their example.

Retired seaman Howard Allen in New Orleans ordered a weekly bundle
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'Fight for public works program to create jobs'

SWP vice pres. candidate speaks to Steelworkers



Militant/Osborne Hart

SWP candidate for U.S. vice president Maura DeLuca at Steelworkers union hall in Linwood, Pa., holds up book on fight to free Cuban Five, framed-up revolutionaries jailed in U.S. "Cuban Revolution is example of workers organizing for human needs not profits," she told unionists.

BY OSBORNE HART

LINWOOD, Pa.—"Working people need our own political voice, independent of the bosses and their two parties—Republicans and Democrats. That's why we run in the elections,"

Maura DeLuca, Socialist Workers Party 2012 vice presidential candidate, told some 30 members of United Steelworkers Local 10-1 Sept. 20.

FIGHT FOR JOBS!
—See campaign statement, p. 9

At the close of the local's business meeting, DeLuca was introduced by local President James Savage.

USW 10-1 organizes about 600 oil
Continued on page 3

Fed action kicks up stock prices as bosses kick us

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

More than three years into the so-called recovery, employment levels have in fact remained unchanged since bottoming out at the opening of 2010. The length of this stagnation following a sharp drop is an unprecedented development in U.S. history.

Manufacturing output has barely begun to recover after a drastic decline in 2008. And this is being accomplished on the backs of working people, as increased job speedup and falling real wages are touted as "progress" against "our" competitors in Europe and Asia.

Not to worry: Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke is cranking the valve wide open on the Fed's money hose again. This time for an indefinite period. And all without an impediment from some pretence of a democratic-style decision-making process, like a vote from the legislature.

Saying he hoped to "nudge the economy in the right direction," Bernanke announced Sept. 13 the third round of "quantitative easing," ostensibly aimed at providing incentives for bosses to expand production and hiring.

With QE3 the Fed will purchase
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South San Francisco march protests cop killing of teenager



Militant/Betsey Stone

Sept. 20 march in South San Francisco protests cop killing of 15-year-old Derrick Gaines.

BY JEFF POWERS

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., Sept. 20—Seventy-five people participated in a march and rally here protesting the killing of 15-year-old Black youth Derrick Gaines by South San Francisco police officer Joshua Cabillo. Today would have been Gaines' 16th birthday.

At around 9 p.m. on June 5, Gaines and a friend were stopped by Cabillo as they walked across the lot of a local Arco gas station. At some point

Gaines tried to run away. Cabillo chased him and knocked him to the ground by hitting him on the back of his head with his service revolver. As Gaines fell, an inoperable pistol that he was carrying slid several feet away from his body. While standing on top of Gaines, Cabillo killed him with a single shot to the neck.

On Aug. 29, San Mateo district attorney Stephen Wagstaffe issued a report completely exonerating Cabillo.

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US rulers spar over White House's foreign policy after Islamist attacks

BY JOHN STUDER

Over the past two weeks, anti-U.S. protests and attacks by Islamists on U.S. diplomatic offices have taken place from North Africa to Asia, ostensibly fueled by anger against a video on YouTube that denigrates Islam.

tensively fueled by anger against a video on YouTube that denigrates Islam.

The origins of these actions and the response by the Obama administration have become a major issue in U.S. politics.

From the outset, administration officials claimed the film—which first appeared as a trailer online in July—was the cause of the actions, including

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Romney '47%' talk stirs up bourgeois debate over role of government

BY DOUG NELSON

Remarks by Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney made at a fundraiser in May recently went vi-

COMMENTARY

ral in the press, drawing attention to the challenge he has in concealing his bourgeois contempt for working peo-

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SWP vice pres. candidate

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workers at the Philadelphia Energy Solutions—formerly Sunoco—refinery. In 2011, Sunoco announced it would close the refinery unless a buyer was found.

In July, PES was formed as a joint venture between Sunoco and the Carlyle Group, which has controlling interest.

DeLuca explained how the capitalist system worldwide is being wracked by a deepening crisis in production and trade. Bosses all across the country are pushing against workers, seeking concessions in wages, health care, pensions and working conditions. They are trying to “force us to get used to worsening conditions and compete more with each other,” she said.

She urged those at the meeting to subscribe to the *Militant*, the socialist campaign newspaper, holding up the Sept. 24 issue featuring graphs showing “the employment to population ratio” during three recessions since 1981.

Since the latest contraction beginning in 2008 there has been a significant decline in the percentage of the population with jobs with no recovery.

These high unemployment levels have not fallen, and neither the Obama administration nor the Romney campaign has proposed any program for jobs, DeLuca said.

“The SWP calls for a fight to force the government to carry out a massive federally funded jobs program to provide work at union scale to build schools, hospitals, libraries, child care centers, roads, the things workers need,” she said.

Example of Cuban Revolution

Pointing to the 1959 revolution in Cuba, DeLuca explained how Cuban workers and peasants transformed themselves and their country, largely “eliminating the competition among workers that capitalism breeds and relies on.” The Cuban Revolution is an example of the working class “organizing its power for human needs, not profits.”

“Learning more about and defending the Cuban Revolution is in our own interests,” DeLuca said. Pointing to the recently released new edition of *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free*, she explained how it chronicles the U.S. government’s frame-up, conviction and imprisonment by the U.S. government of five Cuban revolutionaries for defending their revolution.

DeLuca said their fight in prison for their rights and freedom is part of the U.S. class struggle, like hundreds of

thousands of workers run through the “criminal justice” system who fight to maintain their dignity.

“Not one worker should have to die on the job,” DeLuca said, explaining that she had recently campaigned in northern California, where a huge fire at the Chevron refinery in Richmond in August threatened workers’ lives and covered the area with black smoke, making thousands who live there sick.

“If workers organize themselves and fight for the right to shut the plant down over conditions on the job,” she said, “we can be strong enough to stop deaths and environmental disasters.”

Four workers bought subscriptions to the *Militant* as DeLuca and campaign supporters distributed campaign literature and continued political discussions during the social hour after the meeting ended.

“You’re right about the Democrats and Republicans,” John Read, a retired USW member, told DeLuca. But he said he is still considering voting for Obama. He bought a *Militant* subscription and thanked the candidate for coming to the meeting.

Mitchel Rosenberg, a member of United Steelworkers Local 10-1, contributed to this article.

Romney comments spur debate on gov’t role

Continued from front page

ple and fueling the debate between the two bosses’ parties on the role of government.

Like his Democratic rival Barack Obama, Romney is learning the hard way not to say what he thinks about those he is asking to vote for him.

“There are 47 percent of the people who will vote for [Obama] no matter what,” Romney told participants at a private fundraiser in Boca Raton, Fla., May 17 that was first disclosed by *Mother Jones* Sept. 17.

This 47 percent, according to Romney, “are people who pay no income tax” and are therefore deaf to his platform. They are people, he said, “who believe that they are victims, who

Staff changes on ‘Militant’

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

With this issue the *Militant* announces Doug Nelson as editor, John Studer as associate editor and Louis Martin as circulation director.

Nelson, 37, who has been part of the volunteer editorial staff since 2007, was named managing editor in November 2011.

Studer, 65, has been among the paper’s main political writers since he joined the staff last November. He is also director of the Socialist Workers Party election campaign.

The new assignment to circulation director is being established to help lead the effort by *Militant* readers to expand the paper’s subscription base among working people—more open to a communist perspective than at any time in recent decades. Martin, 61, has covered and helped lead the *Militant*’s last few subscription drives. (See article on front page.)

Walmart warehouse workers march for job safety



Militant/Bill Arth

LOS ANGELES—A group of 50 warehouse workers ended their 50-mile march protesting unsafe work conditions, especially in facilities that contract with Walmart, with a rally of 250 supporters on the steps of Los Angeles City Hall Sept. 18. The six-day demonstration followed a one-day strike at a Mira Loma warehouse run by NFI Industries, one of the contractors. The march was organized by Warehouse Workers United to press Walmart to improve conditions. “The struggle is about health and safety,” Javier Rodriguez, one of the marchers, told the *Militant*. “Workers are working together inside Walmart. The union is the people fighting for the same thing.”

—BILL ARTH

believe that government has a responsibility to care for them, who believe that they are entitled to health care, to food, to housing, to you name it. ... And so my job is not to worry about those people—I’ll never convince them that they should take personal responsibility and care for their lives.”

Obama similarly let his guard down more than once before he started working harder on subduing his anti-working-class disdain. Speaking to supporters at a home in San Francisco’s exclusive Pacific Heights neighborhood during his 2008 campaign for president, for example, Obama frankly expressed his view of workers in the small Pennsylvania towns where he had just been campaigning, and in “a lot of small towns in the Midwest.”

Job opportunities for workers in these areas have been falling, said Obama. “And it’s not surprising, then, they get bitter, they cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who aren’t like them or anti-immigrant sentiment or anti-trade sentiment as a way to explain their frustrations.”

While Democrats seized on the opportunity to score points against Romney, his remarks—which he later characterized as “inelegant”—were also received with widespread criticism from conservative commentators.

Many pointed out the fallacy in his contention: A large majority of those who don’t pay federal taxes do pay substantial payroll taxes. Of those who pay neither, most are elderly and retired. The remainder, about 7 percent of the population, have annual incomes below \$20,000. Given that reality, they said, it’s not a good idea to disparage a huge cross-section of society, a substantial portion of whom in fact represent your base of support.

“Surely a man as smart as the former CEO of Bain Capital can give a better speech on taxes and dependency than

he delivered at the fundraiser,” wrote the *Wall Street Journal*. “If he can’t he’ll lose, and he’ll deserve to.” Lesson: Ditch the country club talk when you’re running for office.

In an opinion column in the Sept. 19 *Washington Post* titled “Romney’s Drift from the True Heart of Conservatism,” Henry Olsen of the American Enterprise Institute pointed out that it was conservatives who “created the child tax credit in 1997 and expanded it in 2001 to reduce the tax burdens” for those on low incomes.

Debate on ‘entitlements’

The media frenzy around Romney’s remarks fed into the debate within bourgeois politics on the role of government, so-called entitlements, and how fast to slash government expenses on social programs. Romney sought to re-cast and defend his remarks shortly after they went public by focusing on this debate: “The president’s view is one of larger government; I disagree,” he said in a Sept. 18 interview on Fox News. “I

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Literature on SWP presidential campaign



Campaign flyer: \$2.50 for 25
Buttons: \$1 each
Endorser cards: 20 for \$1

Write to: Socialist Workers 2012 Campaign:
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New York, NY 10018. Tel: (212) 736-2540;
email: socworknatlcamp@sbcglobal.net



\$24

pathfinderpress.com

Help expand circulation!

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of three. A Socialist Workers elector in this year's election in Louisiana, Allen first subscribed to the paper when he met *Militant* worker correspondents outside his home a week after Hurricane Katrina.

Samir Hazboun, a student at Guilford College in Greensboro, N.C., who first subscribed to the paper in January, ordered a bundle of five along with a packet of subscription cards to sell on his campus with other supporters of the *Militant* from Atlanta next week. "The paper covers workers' struggles that you don't hear about elsewhere and is critical of the institutions, which I am also," he said.

The backbone of this campaign will be door-to-door sales in working-class neighborhoods, in cities big and small as well as rural areas. The goal is to talk with a broad spectrum of working people: Black, Latino, Caucasian and others; U.S.-born and immigrant.

This consistent door-to-door effort will be supplemented by other opportunities to get the paper into the hands of workers, farmers and young people—from picket lines and factory gates to social protest actions against police brutality, for women's right to choose abortion and other struggles in the interests of the working class.

'Militant' circulation director

In order to help lead this drive and provide consistent attention to expanding the paper's readership over the long term, the *Militant* has established a circulation director and asked me to take on that responsibility—which I eagerly accepted. I will work with readers and distributors—whether your bundle is two or 200—to extend the *Militant*'s reach far and wide. I will travel to join with others in response to opportunities to carry this out. And I will write about the experiences of readers in winning others to subscribe and keep you informed on your growing ranks through the campaign and beyond.

You may have been reading the *Militant* for years or weeks. You may have been introduced to the paper in your neighborhood, on the job, on a picket line, in your union hall or campus, or at a Militant Labor Forum or other public political event. Consider joining supporters of the *Militant* in your area to help introduce the paper to others by contacting the nearest distributor listed on page 8, or me directly at the paper. Help win new readers among friends, relatives and coworkers.

To fellow workers behind bars: find ways to circulate the paper among inmates and tell them about the *Militant*'s trial offers and special rate for prisoners—\$5 for six months. We've received growing evidence that readers behind bars not only appreciate the *Militant*, but want to help spread its message.

We've started to receive some reports that show the opportunities to involve more and more people in the campaign.

Tom Baumann from Miami described the response of Lucas Azambuja, a student at Miami-Dade College, when he renewed his subscription. "When we told him that the fall subscription campaign will be drawing on the *Militant*'s readers to help get it out," Baumann said, "he said he knew neighborhoods where he thought we could get a good hearing. The next day, despite rain, he and I sold a couple of subscriptions going door to door in the African-American neighborhood of Coconut Grove and South Miami."

After that, Baumann said, they discussed politics at a bagel shop and Azambuja bought *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* by Jack Barnes and *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, How They Will Be Free* by Mary-Alice Waters and Martin Koppel, two of four books offered at reduced prices with a subscription to the paper. (See ad on this page.)

From New York, Sara Lobman wrote about selling three subscriptions in the Morrisania neighborhood in the Bronx



Militant/Dan Fein

Sara Lobman, left, introduces *Militant* and *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free* to Angelica González and Sobeyda Fleti in Bronx, Sept. 22.

Sept. 22 where Reynaldo Cuevas, 20, was shot and killed by cops a couple weeks earlier. He was killed after he ran out of the grocery where he works following a robbery there. (See article on page 2.)

"I guess you need the cops," said Sobeyda Fleti, "but I would never call them. I just don't trust them." Fleti was sitting outside the small beauty shop she owns with her friend Angelica González, a retired garment worker. Both are originally from Puerto Rico.

Fleti bought a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *The Cuban Five*, a collection of articles from the *Militant* explaining the case of Cuban revolutionaries framed and jailed by Washington and the international campaign to free them.

Fleti then brought *Militant* supporters down the street to meet Janie Williams, the owner of a hair salon. Williams bought a subscription to the paper to set out in the salon for her customers and took a blank subscription card in case any of them were interested in getting it delivered to their home.

The following day supporters of the paper in New York sold 20 subscriptions and 40 books on revolutionary working-class politics at the Pathfinder Books

booth at the outdoor Brooklyn Book Festival.

New and renewal subscriptions are also coming in by mail.

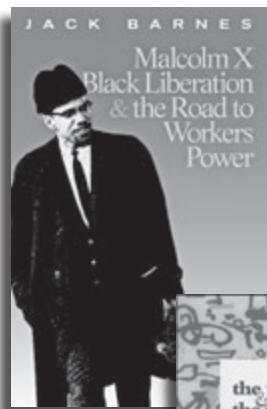
"I like the comparison between the Obama vs. Romney platforms," Adela Cuaron-Dimitrijevic recently wrote along with a one-year renewal to the paper, which she sent with a contribution to help cover the costs of *Militant* reporting trips. Cuaron-Dimitrijevic is a nurse from Canyon Country near Los Angeles, working 12-hour shifts, who first subscribed last spring.

Join us now in broadening the circulation of the *Militant*. Quotas taken by the paper's supporters in local areas, along with the overall international goal will be listed in a chart to be printed in a coming issue.

If your city's not on the chart—start selling subscriptions and earn a spot. State University of New York students Harry D'Agostino and Callie Miaoulis restarted their bundle two days ago to maintain the New Paltz spot they've held since last fall.

Send your comments, experiences, reports and photos related to the subscription campaign for future coverage. The weekly deadline for each issue is Monday at 9:00 a.m. EST.

Special offers

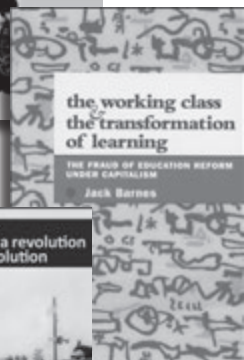


Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power

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* (usually \$20)



The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning

by Jack Barnes

\$2 with a subscription (usually \$3)



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

by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer

\$10 with a subscription (usually \$20)



The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free

articles and interviews from the *Militant*

\$3 with a subscription (usually \$5)

See distributors
on page 8

Cop killing in South San Francisco

Continued from front page

Noor Gheith, a 17-year-old student at City College in San Francisco whose family came from Palestine, told the *Militant*, "Derrick was positive and smart. He made everybody happy."

Gheith and several other marchers said that they had been harassed by cops from the South San Francisco Police Department, in particular Cabillo. "Cabillo arrested me for underage smoking," Gheith said. "He picked me up after he saw me walking down the street smoking a cigarette."

During the rally, Rosa Dubon, a resident here, described her family's run-ins with the cops and Officer Cabillo. At one point, she said, Cabillo forced his way into her 23-year-old daughter's apartment, despite a court order denying police access, and put his "gun to her head" demanding to know the whereabouts of her boyfriend.

The rally was chaired by Dolores Piper, Derrick's great aunt. Other speakers included Rachel Guido Red, Derrick's mother; Sid Patel from the International Socialist Organization;

Lynn Tu, Gaines' eighth-grade social studies teacher; Cephus Johnson, the uncle of Oscar Grant, who was killed by the BART police in January 2009; Willie Cotton from the Socialist Workers Party; Georgean Farrar, a neighbor and friend of the family; and attorney John Burris.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

TEXAS

Houston

Free the Cuban Five! Speaker: Steve Warshell, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress, Texas 18th District. Fri., Oct. 5, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C50-L.Tel.: (713) 688-4919.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free. Speaker: John Naubert, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Washington. Fri., Oct. 5, 7:30 p.m. 5418 Rainier Ave. S. Tel.: (206) 323-1755.

S. African rulers nervous as mining strikes spread

BY SETH GALINSKY

Wildcat strikes at several gold, chrome and platinum mines are making South Africa's capitalist class nervous, especially following the victory of striking rock drillers at the Lonmin platinum mine who won a 22 percent pay increase Sept. 18.

Cops used rubber bullets, stun grenades and tear gas against striking workers at an Anglo-American Platinum (Amplats) mine Sept. 19 in Rustenburg. "We are not tolerating any illegal gatherings," police Capt. Dennis Adriaio told *Business Day Live*. That same day, Anglo-American, the largest platinum producer in the world, claimed its mines were up and running. But three days later Amplats admitted that fewer than 20 percent of 26,000 workers had returned to work.

By Sept. 24 *Business Day Live* reported that Amplats was holding wage talks with the strikers. The workers, members of the National Union of Mineworkers, have elected their own negotiating committee outside of the official union structures to press their demand to increase wages to 17,000 rand (about \$2,000) a month.

Workers have also gone on strike at two of South Africa's biggest gold-mining companies. While a strike at its KDC East mine ended in August, work-

ers at Gold Fields' KDC West mine went on strike in early September. Workers are on strike at Anglo Gold Ashanti and Samancor Chrome.

Union officials have opposed the wildcat strikes, saying that workers need to go through the procedures outlined in collective bargaining agreements, to no avail.

At Lonmin workers ignored pleas from both the NUM and the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union to stop the strike and negotiate later.

In the end delegates selected by the Lonmin workers joined the negotiations brokered by the government's Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration that included representatives of the company and officials from the main unions at the mine.

"We didn't know what we were walking into," mediation commission director Nerine Kahn told the *Mail and Guardian*. "I like to say that it was like people who are invited to a party and some come in black tie and some come in rags. They come to a different party expecting different results."

South African capitalists are worried that the example of the workers "in rags" from Lonmin will keep spreading to other mines and beyond.

According to the Statistics SA depart-



Reuters/Siphiwe Sibeko

Striking miners march outside Anglo-American Platinum mine in South Africa's North West province Sept. 12 as cops watch. Company first claimed miners were not on strike, but by Sept. 23 admitted five mines were shut down and agreed to negotiate wages with workers.

ment, less than 42 percent of households in South Africa have running drinking water; 40 percent do not have flush toilets. Officially some 80 percent of households have electricity, but in many mining communities, like the settlements around the Lonmin mine, most do not.

The price of food has skyrocketed. The price of corn meal, a key staple, has increased from 34 to 56 percent in the last year alone.

On top of these conditions, miners face the companies' disregard for safety. There were 123 mine deaths on the job

in 2011 and as many as half of all gold miners have contracted silicosis from dust in the mines.

An editorial in the Sept. 24 *Daily News* complained that the Lonmin wage agreement set "an unhealthy precedent" and opened the door to "individual settlements and chaos." *Business Day Live* called the deal "a moral hazard" that "cannot be underestimated."

NEW INTERNATIONAL A MAGAZINE OF MARXIST POLITICS AND THEORY



Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun
by Jack Barnes

in issue #12

—\$16

The Coming Revolution in South Africa
by Jack Barnes
in issue #5
—\$14

See list of distributors on page 8

www.pathfinderpress.com

'Life of richness, intensity' in Cuban Revolution

The following review of *Soldier of the Cuban Revolution: From the Cane Fields of Oriente to General of the Revolutionary Armed Forces* by Gen. Luis Alfonso Zayas, published by Pathfinder Press, appeared in the March 2012 issue of *Cuba Sí*, a French-language quarterly published in Belgium by the Friends of Cuba. Translation is by the Militant. See page 8 for an excerpt from the book.

BY FREDDY TACK

This biography of a Cuban revolutionary, Alfonso Zayas, is presented in the form of an interview by Mary-Alice Waters and Martín Koppel, the book's editors, and is available in Spanish and English. The conversations took place in Cuba in June 2007, March 2009, and early 2011 (with the participation of Róger Calero, editor of the magazine the *Militant*). Harry Villegas (Pombo), vice president of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, also took part in the discussions and often prompted the conversation by encouraging Zayas, a shy man of rare modesty, to tell the story of his life.

After a brief exchange of views on the period before the revolution, the book is divided into three parts: the struggle against Batista, a soldier of the revolution, and defense of Angola's sovereignty. This in itself is enough to summarize Zayas' involvement in revolutionary struggles.

The story begins with the first underground actions in Puerto Padre, his hometown, and his joining the group of "marabuzaleros," the first soldiers sent to the Sierra as reinforcements. This firsthand account enables us to understand better how young people of that time took up the fight against Batista, how much they admired Fidel and the July 26 Movement, and how they be-

came part of the struggle. And how in and through the struggle they developed social and political consciousness.

Zayas joined Che's column, which marched to Santa Clara and dealt the final blow to Batista's army.

He then tells the story of his trajectory, including responsibility for La Cabaña prison and his work in Santa Clara and then the Isle of Pines, where he organized a program for reforestation and agricultural development. He went on to officer training school in the armed forces and held positions of military as well as party leadership responsibility in different parts of the country—a

man always willing to go where circumstances dictate.

In 1975 he took part in his first mission in Angola, where he was to return three times as a senior officer.

Eventually he led the Youth Army of Labor and took on responsibilities as party secretary in Las Tunas.

In short, a life of richness and intensity hard to imagine, told with modesty and simplicity. An account of one of the many combatants who have dedicated their entire lives to their ideals and the development of the Cuban socialist system, both in the military and in everyday politics.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



October 9, 1987

At their September 23 meeting, paperworkers on strike in Jay, Maine, decided to become "labor ambassadors" in a campaign to spread the word about their battle against the takeback demands of International Paper Co.

This decision provides an opening for the union movement throughout North America to throw its weight into building solidarity with the paperworkers' fight.

On strike against the industry giant since June 16, the Jay fighters stand shoulder to shoulder with other members of the United Paperworkers International Union who are resisting IP's concession demands

At International Paper in Jay, workers know acceptance of the company's takebacks would mean the loss of several thousand dollars a year for each worker. It would also signify crippling blows to seniority and safety.



October 8, 1962

If America's youth want a hero really worthy of emulation they don't have to look into outer space or back to the legends of the old West, they need only look to the modern South, to Oxford, Mississippi, to James Howard Meredith. For it was this 29-year-old student who made this racist clique that rules Mississippi back down.

There are many forces in the Mississippi drama, but the racists' main hope of stopping the integration of the University of Mississippi lay in getting Meredith to quit.

The judges in the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals could not have done less than order Meredith admitted to "Ole Miss." If they hadn't they would have destroyed the image of the federal courts. President Kennedy could not have done less than he did—or later than he did it.



October 9, 1937

On Sunday, October 3rd, Ernest R. McKinney, New York organizer of the Socialist Party (Left Wing) announced to the press that the Party had nominated James P. Cannon as its candidate for Mayor of New York. This action was the response of the revolutionary socialists in New York to the sell-out to the LaGuardia machine engineered by every other working class party in the City.

Cannon's nomination will give the militant workers of New York an opportunity to express their determination to break with capitalist politics in all of its forms. The platform on which Cannon will run stresses the fundamental class character of the issue confronting the workers of New York, and the absolute necessity of solving them in the only possible way: by the independent class struggle of the workers for socialism.

Fed action kicks up stocks

Continued from front page

\$40 billion of mortgage-backed securities from banks each month on an indefinite basis. These claims on cash flows from payments on mortgage loans are considered of questionable value and hard for banks to sell as more and more people are unable to maintain payments.

This scheme, which amounts to printing money and injecting it into the banking system, will spur the economy we are told. It's modeled after QE1 and QE2, implemented between November 2008 and June 2011. These measures had no discernable effect on employment, not even a temporary one.

The Fed also seeks to keep short-term interest rates near zero at least until 2015. It aims "to drive down long-term interest rates and push investors into other assets, like stocks," notes the *Wall Street Journal*.

Running concurrently with QE3 is the Fed's "Operation Twist" program, begun a year ago, in which an additional \$45 billion is spent each month to purchase long-term U.S. Treasury bonds. This program is scheduled to run at least through the end of the year.

Bernanke argues all this "should spur more spending, investment and exports," according to the *Journal*.

But "spending," or what economists often refer to as "consumption," can't be spurred without more jobs and a permanent increase in incomes on a large scale. Printing money can't help there.

When speaking of "investment" the question becomes investment in what? As the *Journal* said, Fed policies are primarily driving capitalists to put more money in stocks, driving up stock prices and giving the false appearance to some—workers not among them—that something positive is happening.

Upon the announcement of QE3, the S&P 500 stock index rose 1.6 percent to its highest level since 2007—14 percent since the start of June, reported the *Economist*. Its inflated levels stand in sharp contrast to the lack of any recovery in jobs and expanding production.

Since the late 1960s, the average rate of industrial profit has been gradually going down. The capitalists have more and more been holding back on expenditures for expanding productive capacity or large-scale employment of labor. Instead, they're plowing their money into more speculative investments from stocks to other forms of fictitious capital in hopes that bets on rising or falling paper values will yield a bigger return.

On the other hand, huge chunks of cash are increasingly being held by

banks and corporations in their own coffers. "The economy's not short of money," commented *Investor's Business Daily* about QE3. "Banks today have \$1.5 trillion in reserves. And companies have \$2 trillion in cash stowed away."

The money hose may temporarily spur U.S. exports, as another goal of QE3 is to push down the value of the dollar against other currencies, making U.S. goods cheaper on the world market.

This approach is tantamount to a declaration of war on the value of the dollar. And Washington's rivals are responding. Six days after Bernanke's announcement, the Bank of Japan said it would move to drive down the relative value of the yen. And a similar process is under way in relation to the euro.

The Fed's money printing "could cause a dollar collapse and spur inflation later," noted the *Journal*. While the money hose becomes less and less effective in staving off financial crises, it does pave the way for greater crises down the road.

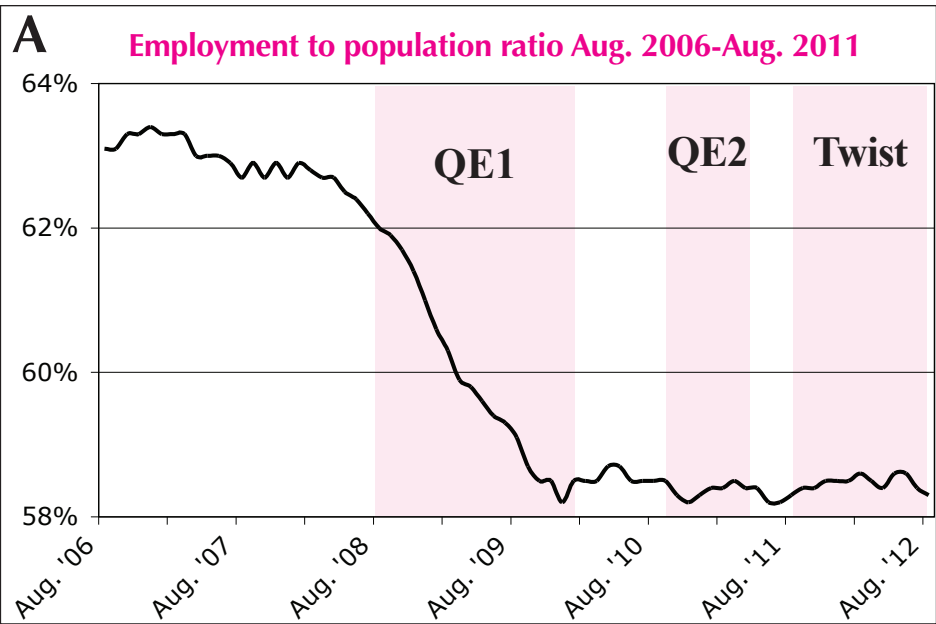
Look at the charts on this page. Graph A shows the negligible effect of the Fed's monetary policies on employment. The employment to population figure is used here, because unlike the official unemployment rate, it can't be falsified by simply lifting "discouraged" workers out of the official workforce.

Graph B indicates that those policies have helped to spur a rebound in stock prices to their pre-recession levels, which means they are even more inflated relative to actual production than before, paving the way for harder falls.

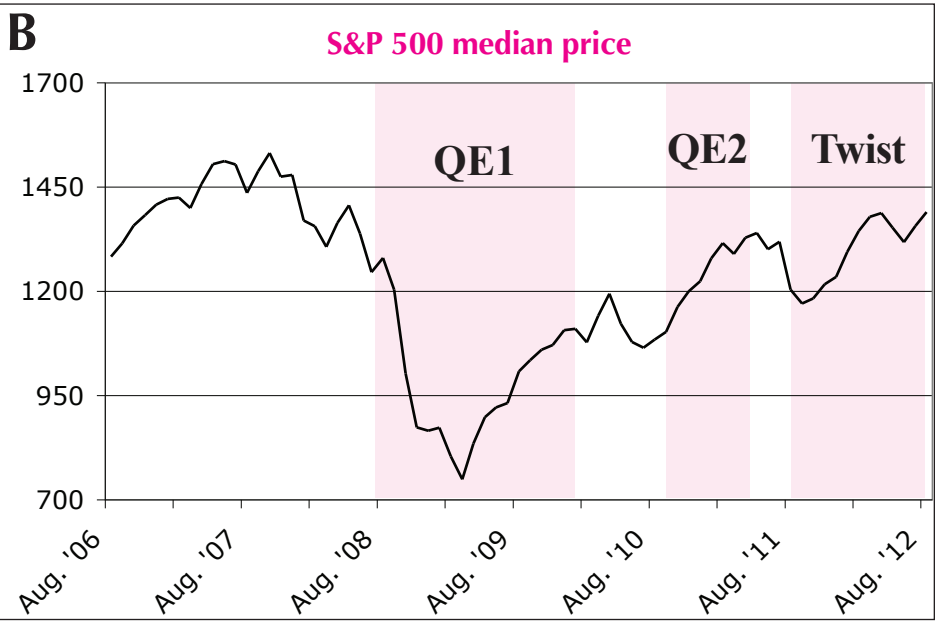
Graph C shows the partial recovery in manufacturing has not led to any substantial hiring. The widening gap between output and employment at the end of the graph is one indication of the bosses' successful "productivity" drive to squeeze more out of each worker, while tens of millions remain jobless. This, along with the assault on wages, like the expanding multi-tier pay rates in auto plants and other factories, is the only substantive development for the capitalists' so-called recovery.

It's through such assaults on the working class that the U.S. rulers seek to become more competitive against their rivals as they drive for markets and trade—a race to the bottom with no end.

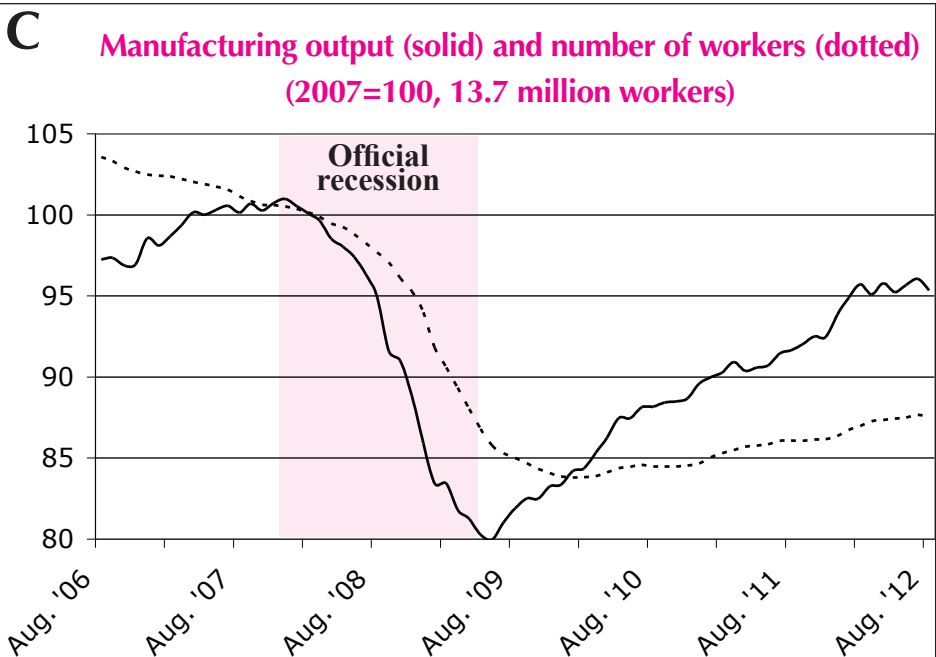
This "boom would be based on the continued decline in US unit labour costs," noted a Sept. 24 *Financial Times* column. "By 2016, according to Boston Consulting Group, the gap with China would have narrowed to just seven cents an hour."



Graph shows percentage of population employed and negligible effect of Federal Reserve's "quantitative easing" and other monetary schemes. Employment to population ratio is used here because unlike official jobless rate it can't easily be "calculated" to obscure reality.



Graph indicates Fed's monetary fiddling has helped reflate stock market even further out of whack with actual production, "kicking the can" of financial paper down the road, building up inflationary pressures and paving way for greater crises down the road.



Graph shows relative changes in manufacturing output and number of workers employed in manufacturing, based on 100 representing average levels in 2007. Output has leveled out around 5 percent below pre-recession levels. Widening gap in last part of graph is indication of bosses' intensification of labor, which has helped capitalists boost short-term profits.

16 years after 'reform': Record numbers without welfare, jobs

BY EMMA JOHNSON

When Bill Clinton spoke at the Democratic Party National Convention he accused the Republicans of pushing "deep cuts on programs that help the middle class and poor children." But it was Clinton who signed legislation in 1996 to "end welfare as we know it."

The legislation targeted one of the most vulnerable sections of the working class—single parents. Sixteen years later the result for millions is neither work, nor welfare.

When Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, the main fed-

erally funded cash relief program, was wiped off the books. It was replaced with Temporary Assistance to Needy Families.

TANF set a lifetime limit of five years for most recipients, tightened eligibility criteria and increased degrading means testing and intrusion into individuals' lives.

The law was enacted with broad bipartisan support. For a number of years, during an uptick in the business cycle, the effects of the anti-working-class assault was partially masked. Now, in the midst of a deep economic contraction, the law's real effects are increasingly being felt.

Today only one in five poor children receive cash aid, the lowest level in 50 years. One in four low-income single mothers is jobless and without cash aid—roughly 4 million women and children, twice the rate in 1996.

TANF is paid out by the federal government as a block grant to the states, which then use the funds to operate their own programs. It puts conditions on the states to receive the money, including the requirement to encourage "two-parent families" and reduce "out-of-wedlock pregnancies." State programs are mandated to have "work requirements" for workers to get welfare.

The historic trend is a decline of

two-parent families. Fifteen percent of all children lived in single-parent families in 1970; in 2010 it was 34 percent. Two-thirds of Black children live in single-parent families. In several states it's more than 70 percent, and in Washington D.C., 80 percent.

Each state has to ensure that at least 50 percent of its TANF recipients are engaged in "work-related activities." For two-parent families the requirement is 90 percent. Welfare was to be replaced with "workfare."

Since the economic crisis exploded in 2007, unemployment has jumped, the competition for jobs intensified, and

Continued on page 7

200 protest in London, demand ‘immediate release’ of Cuban 5

BY ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

LONDON—“We want immediate, unconditional release now,” said Frances O’Grady, general secretary designate of the Trades Union Congress, the largest trade union federation in Britain. She was speaking Sept. 18 at a protest of some 200 people outside the U.S. Embassy demanding freedom for five Cuban revolutionaries held in the U.S. This was the sixth annual such vigil organized by the Cuba Solidarity Campaign.

Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, Antonio Guerrero and René González were arrested 14 years ago and convicted in 2001 on frame-up charges, including conspiracy to commit espionage and, in the case of Hernández, conspiracy to commit murder.

Like O’Grady, many speakers came from the labor movement, including Carolyn Simpson, representing the Southern and Eastern TUC; and Len McCluskey, general secretary of UNITE, the United Kingdom’s largest union. They were joined by Cuban doctor Aleida Guevara, daughter of Argentine-born Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara.

Simpson outlined the long history of violent and often deadly attacks by Cuban-American counterrevolutionaries against the Cuban Revolution and its supporters.

“How can we put an end to these activities?” Guevara asked, at a meeting at the House of Commons the day before where 150 people heard her speak as part of a tour of the U.K. “The only option we have is through information.” That’s why the five took assign-

ments to infiltrate these paramilitary groups in the U.S., she explained.

McCluskey stressed the importance of spreading the truth about the case, saying the U.S. rulers needed to learn they “are not just dealing with 11 million Cubans, but the whole working-class movement around the world.”

Cathy Jamieson, a member of the House of Commons, spoke of a parliamentary motion she is supporting that criticizes U.S. authorities for refusing to grant visas to Adriana Pérez and Olga Salanueva to visit their husbands, Gerardo Hernández and René González. A number of other speakers denounced this measure.

Rob Miller, director of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign, read a message from René González to the meeting that pointed to the U.S. rulers’ “calculated treatment to break our spirits and



Militant/Anne Howie

Sept. 18 protest at U.S. Embassy in London demands freedom for five Cuban revolutionaries jailed in U.S. in 1998 on frame-up charges that included conspiracy to commit espionage.

shatter ties with our loved ones. But they didn’t imagine that people like you would stand up.” González has been on supervised release in Miami since October 2011. He is fighting to be allowed to return to Cuba.

Musicians Omar Puente and Rebecca Thorn played a couple of songs. Actors Andy de la Tour and Adjoa Andoh read from letters between Fernando González and his wife Rosa Aurora Freijanes.

Pentagon reknits ties with NZ military to counter China

BY ANNALUCIA VERMUNT

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—The Sept. 20-22 visit here by Leon Panetta was the first trip to New Zealand by a U.S. defense secretary since 1982. As part of Panetta’s weeklong, three-country tour, which also included Japan and China, the stop was designed to counter China’s growing influence and military capacities in the region.

During the tour Panetta announced new steps to strengthen Washington’s military ties and presence, including building a new anti-ballistic missiles radar station in Japan.

The tour came just three weeks after U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

led the biggest U.S. delegation to ever attend a meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum, which took place in the Cook Islands. The forum is an annual gathering of South Pacific government leaders. Both the U.S. and China attend as “dialogue partners.”

During his stopover here, Panetta announced the relaxation of restrictions on New Zealand naval ship visits to the United States. Currently New Zealand warships are banned from U.S. military facilities, but Panetta said they will now be allowed at bases in the U.S. and around the world, subject to a waiver.

Washington downgraded its mili-

tary relationship with New Zealand in 1984 after Wellington banned port stops of nuclear-armed or nuclear-powered naval vessels from the U.S., United Kingdom and other nations. The following year New Zealand was formally suspended from the 1951 Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty.

For the first time in 28 years, New Zealand Defence Forces in July were invited to participate in Rimpac. Hosted by Washington off the coast of Hawaii, Rimpac is the world’s largest military maritime exercise. In a snub, New Zealand navy ships were told to tie up at a civilian port downtown, after being refused permission to dock alongside other military vessels.

Panetta also announced the lifting of existing restrictions on talks between senior military personnel of both governments. He also raised the prospect of stationing U.S. troops in New Zealand for the first time since World War II.

“The U.S. and New Zealand militaries have fought and bled side by side in defense of our way of life—whether in Europe or North Africa, in two world wars, in the jungles of Vietnam or the mountains of Afghanistan,” Panetta said during a tribute to New Zealand soldiers who died in Afghanistan.

At the Pacific Islands Forum Clinton made it clear that Washington would not allow its role as the dominant power in the Pacific to be usurped. “We have consistently protected the Pacific sea lanes through which a great deal of the world’s commerce passes,” she said, addressing government leaders from 16 nations. Washington intended to remain for the long haul, she added.

New Zealand Prime Minister John Key announced Sept. 20 that special forces were being sent to Afghanistan to track down those responsible for killing five New Zealand soldiers there in August. During his stop in Auckland, Panetta said U.S. forces “will do whatever we have to do in cooperation with the forces in New Zealand to make sure that they understand nobody attacks our forces and gets away with it.”

Record numbers without welfare or jobs

Continued from page 6

more and more working people have given up trying to find work. But the welfare rolls are still close to 70 percent lower than in the mid-1990s.

Those who’ve been lucky enough to find work are forced into low-paying, nonunion jobs, often without health, pension or other benefits. What many workers receive for their “work-related activities” is below a living income.

The TANF federal grant to the states remains the same as it was in 1996, while inflation has cut its real value by about 30 percent. In 1997 three out of four federal and state TANF dollars were spent in cash assistance to families. Today it’s one in four.

Levels vary widely between states—but nowhere do they reach even 50 percent of the arbitrarily set official poverty line. A majority of states pay between \$200 and \$500 a month. Compared to 1996 the real value of payments has gone down by more than 20 percent in 34 states.

As cash assistance has plunged many people have found some relief in food stamps. In May this year a historic high 40.8 million received them, one in seven U.S. residents. But the government is going after them, too. The Senate voted Aug. 2 to cut \$12 billion from the program.

Throughout the economic crisis that

has marked his presidency, Barack Obama has said that Clinton’s welfare “reform” will remain “a centerpiece of any social policy.”

One piece of Clinton’s 1996 legislation limited the time adults without children could get food stamps without fulfilling the work requirement. Obama suspended this rule in 2008, as part of his “economic stimulus” package. The number of individuals collecting food stamps then rose by 2 million.

In July, as the 2012 presidential campaign was heating up, the Health and Human Services Department announced plans to modify state requirements to abide by quotas for welfare recipients to get jobs or be dropped from the program.

The Obama administration repeatedly says its goal is to make it easier in hard times for the states to get more people working, not fewer. HHS says its new standards will require 20 percent more people to move to work from welfare before a state can qualify for a waiver from the quotas.

The move has come under harsh criticism from Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney and other Republicans. Obama “wants to strip the established work requirements from welfare,” Romney said.

“The Obama administration has en-

gaged in a systematic effort to undermine work and increase dependence across government benefit programs,” Rep. Dave Camp, chair of the House Ways and Means Committee, and Rep. John Kline, chair of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, said in a statement released Sept. 19.

Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney said he would place work restrictions on “all these federal programs.” Running mate Paul Ryan calls Clinton’s elimination of “welfare as we know it” an “unprecedented success.”

In New International no. 14

The Clintons’ Antilabor Legacy: Roots of 2008 World Financial Crisis

by Jack Barnes



“The Clinton administration consolidated an anti-working-class shift in Democratic Party domestic policy that increased the political convergence of the two leading parties of the employing class.”

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How Cuban Revolution tested combatants' capacities

Below is an excerpt from Soldier of the Cuban Revolution: From the Cane Fields of Oriente to General of the Revolutionary Armed Forces by Luis Alfonso Zayas, a general in the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba. Here Zayas recounts an episode from the 1956-58 revolutionary war led by Fidel Castro. The victory of Castro's forces against the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista on Jan. 1, 1959, ushered in a mass insurrection in which the toilers of city and countryside wrested political power from the capitalist exploiters and opened the socialist revolution in the Americas.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

The book, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September, is based on interviews conducted by Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press; Martín Koppel and Róger Calero. Copyright © 2011 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY LUIS ALFONSO ZAYAS

KOPPEL: You were part of Che's

1. Ernesto Che Guevara (1928-1967) and Camilo Cienfuegos (1932-1959) were commanders in the Rebel Army led by Fidel Castro. The Sierra Maestra is a mountainous region in eastern Cuba.



Granma

Ernesto Che Guevara's Rebel Army Column 8, in which Luis Alfonso Zayas was a commander, heading to Santa Clara, December 1958, a couple of months after events recounted here. Liberation of Cuba's fourth-largest city dealt major blow to U.S.-backed dictatorship.

Column 8, weren't you—the invasion, as it is known, that crossed Cuba from the Sierras?¹

ZAYAS: Yes, we left the Sierra Maestra from a place called Jíbaro on August 31. The march to Las Villas took forty-seven days. Che's column had one hundred forty men and Camilo's had around ninety. We marched on foot a little more than six hundred kilometers, in terrible conditions. It was in September and October, hurricane season, and we got hit by two of them—some say three. We marched along the coast the entire time, which meant we had to put up with water, mud, mosquitoes, and little or no food.

We went four days without eating once. We had no fresh food with us at all. We did have rice, beans, and other things.

All this had to be cooked, however, and we couldn't cook since the army was dug in by the railroad tracks. They would have spotted our fires. So we marched three days without eating.

On the fourth day we got to a wooded area, where there was a peasant who raised pigs. Che bought two of those big pigs. As we were getting ready to cook them at dawn, an enemy aircraft appeared. An informer had reported us, so we had to abandon it all. The last plane circling and strafing us left at around 9:00 p.m. We went back looking

for the pigs we'd been preparing, but we couldn't find them in the dark. We had to go into the lagoon, with water up to our waists, walking more or less like that through the night. The whole next day was really tough. That made four days without food.

Around midnight we came to a small settlement, with a cattle shed. We were given a little guava paste with cheese.

With the fifth day dawning, we finally ate a meal. We slaughtered a cow and ate it with rice and beans, as well as boiled plantains. That was about 2:30 a.m.

While we were at the dairy farm, we got hit by a second hurricane. It was like an ocean. The water was knee-high everywhere, since Camagüey is flat and we were along the coast. While the hurricane was still passing over, however, we ended up having to get out of there. The reason was that although our presence was supposed to be a secret, a compañero on guard duty had given twenty-five centavos to a young boy to buy honey for him at a grocery store. Meanwhile, Che had sent a contact to buy us food at the same store. While our contact was there, the boy came in.

"Give me twenty-five centavos worth of honey for the rebels over at the dairy farm," he said.

We had to take immediate measures, since army troops were nearby. The

compañero who sent for the honey was put under arrest, and we went on alert. With rain from the hurricane still coming down, we had to move to a wooded area nearby, into knee-deep water—all due to the indiscipline of the person on guard duty. If the army came, Che said, we'd have to shoot the guard. He's lucky they didn't come. ...

WATERS: When you left Jíbaro, did you think it would take you a month and a half to reach the Escambray?

ZAYAS: The plan was to cover the distance in two days in trucks, to surprise Batista's army by reaching Las Villas in forty-eight hours. That was the idea.

What happened?

The first hurricane hit before we even got to the trucks, and they got stuck in the rain and mud. So we decided to go on foot. At Camagüey we tried to get a boat but weren't able to do that either. At one point we did commandeer two trucks, but after only a few kilometers we ran into an ambush at Cuatro Compañeros. We again had to continue on foot. None of the steps we'd taken to get to the Escambray faster worked. It took us forty-seven days.

It was an exhausting march. Men were really completely drained, without food. We lacked supplies of all kinds, including extra clothing and shoes. Our feet were in terrible shape from being constantly wet, and we didn't even have a change of socks. Some men simply stopped marching. They no longer wanted to continue. They preferred to be killed by the army rather than to continue marching under those conditions—and that's what happened, the army did kill them.

"If even one person can fulfill the mission," Che said, "it shows that someone who really wants to do it *can*." I knew Che would be one of those. He was determined to carry out the mission Fidel had given him. If we'd advanced by truck, maybe we would have fallen into an ambush and none of us would have made it. If we'd done it in forty-eight hours, perhaps we wouldn't have weeded out the quitters, those who didn't have the willpower to continue. Perhaps we would never have been able to measure the capacities of those who did.

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Fight for massive jobs program!

Among the most striking features of bourgeois politics in the 2012 election race between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney—in which the pundits all say the economy and jobs are the number one issue—is that neither of the bosses’ parties has any plan that could actually alleviate the high unemployment that plagues the working class.

Since the historic crisis of production and trade deepened with the economic contraction in 2008, joblessness has soared and remained high—higher than official government statistics claim and devastatingly high for youth and workers who are Black.

The capitalist rulers have no solution to their crisis. Their only “plan” is that being carried out by Federal Reserve Chairman “Helicopter” Ben Bernanke: print \$40 billion a month and throw it to the banks. But this won’t create a single job.

The one thing the bosses all agree on is to make our class pay for their crisis with attacks on our wages, working conditions and social and political rights.

Meanwhile, joblessness promotes competition among workers for jobs, used as a lever by the bosses to tear up union contracts and squeeze higher returns from our labor.

The working class, labor, socialist campaign of James Harris for president and Maura DeLuca for vice president puts forward an action program of immediate demands for workers to fight around that can put us in a stronger position to forge solidarity and more effectively stand up to the bosses’ assaults.

Among these demands, the SWP campaign calls for a massive government-funded jobs program to put millions to work at union-scale wages to build homes, schools, hospitals, child care centers, roads, bridges and public transportation—things that workers need.

Through various struggles, like the fight for jobs, we can gain experience, combativity and self-confidence and discuss how we can best organize to fight against the root cause of the assaults on our class and its allies—the capitalist system itself.

US foreign policy and Islamist attacks

Continued from front page

the death of U.S. ambassador to Libya, Christopher Stevens.

“This is not an expression of hostility in the broadest sense towards the United States or to U.S. policy,” Susan Rice, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, told *Fox News* Sept. 16. “It’s proximately a reaction to this video and it’s a hateful video—that had nothing to do with the United States—which we find disgusting and reprehensible.”

Comments by officials in the Obama administration give the impression that the fact that the initial attacks took place on Sept. 11, the anniversary of the al-Qaeda attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001, is mere coincidence.

“For nine days, the Obama administration made a case that virtually everyone understood was untrue: that the killing of our ambassador with three other Americans in Benghazi, Libya, was a random, spontaneous act of individuals upset about an online video,” Stephen Hayes wrote in the *Weekly Standard*, “that had nothing to do with the eleventh anniversary of 9/11.”

Among the consequences of the attack on the Benghazi embassy was that the U.S. lost the spy center it was building up there. Dozens of CIA operatives had to be evacuated from the city. “We got our eyes poked out,” one U.S. official said, speaking to the *New York Times* on condition of anonymity.

The protests, including the attack on the embassy building in Benghazi, were organized and led by reactionary bourgeois Islamist forces. The ruling Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt was among the initial forces calling for protests at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo before pulling back under Washington’s pressures.

Taking advantage of not having any governmental responsibilities, opponent Salafist parties used the protests to present themselves as more anti-U.S. than the Brotherhood-led governments in Tunisia and Egypt and the pro-Brotherhood one in Libya.

While all these forces appeal for support by posing as radical opponents of imperialism, they act to close down political space for workers and farmers, restrict labor rights and deal blows to freedom of speech and the rights of women.

In June, Salafist forces firebombed three regional offices of the General Union of Tunisian Workers.

Debate over restrictions to free speech

These events have sparked a sharp debate over whether restrictions on free speech are required to protect “religious sensibilities.”

As part of opening this fall’s session of the United Nation’s General Assembly, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged nations to consider limiting freedom of speech when it is “used to provoke or humiliate”—that is, to outlaw speech that incites to violence, like the denigration of Islam.

In addition to many majority-Muslim countries, a number of countries in Europe have so-called blasphemy laws, including Greece, the Netherlands and Ireland.

Last month the courts under President Vladimir Putin in Russia convicted Pussy Riot of “hooliganism motivated by religious hatred” for carrying out an anti-Putin protest in a church—one among many steps the regime has taken recently to silence its opponents.

Some officials in the U.S. administration held open the option to adopt restrictions on anti-Muslim speech. Appearing before the House Constitution Subcommittee, Assistant Attorney General Thomas Perez repeatedly refused to answer when asked by Chair Trent Franks whether “this administration’s Department of Justice will never entertain or advance a proposal that criminalizes speech against any religion.”

Under pressure, President Barack Obama backed off from such a step. “The strongest weapon against hateful speech is not repression,” he said, speaking to the U.N. General Assembly Sept. 25. “It is more speech—the voices of tolerance that rally against bigotry and blasphemy.”

Democratic administration’s foreign policy

As part of the bourgeois debate in the 2012 presidential elections, the Obama administration has come under criticism for its conduct of foreign policy.

“There have been indications over the last four years,” William Kristol wrote in the *Weekly Standard*, “that, in its heart of hearts, the Obama administration blames America first for many of the ills of the world.”

“Obama used to pretend that the end of the wars [in Iraq and Afghanistan] would be accompanied by all kinds of positive developments in the Muslim world,” Kristol adds. “No longer. Now we’re just heading for the exits, lobbing drones as we go.”

While the president boasts about his personal role in the assassination of Osama bin Laden, “he goes many months without speaking substantially about the war in Afghanistan,” Robert Kaplan wrote this week in Stratfor, a newsletter published by a U.S.-based intelligence and news service, “even as tens of thousands of uniformed Americans are fighting there.”

Obama sees his role in the world, the *Times* said Sept. 24, based on “his sense of himself as a historic bridge-builder who could redeem America’s image abroad.”

As developments in Libya, Iraq and Afghanistan show, neither the current Democratic Party policies of “leading from behind” nor Republican candidate Mitt Romney’s call for pushier international relations will end hostilities in today’s world capitalist crisis.

Both lead to growing conflicts and instability, including for working people.

Romney’s 47% talk

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think a society based on a government-centered nation where government plays a larger and larger role, redistributes money, that’s the wrong course for America.”

U.S. government expenses have been rising for many decades, under both Republican and Democratic administrations. A deficit in the capitalists’ government budget has mushroomed as a result of their wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, growing interest payments on the national debt, and the impact of the worldwide capitalist crisis. Today, both candidates are pledging to rein in this deficit and present this as a problem that all citizens must accept—one that requires “shared sacrifices.”

In seeking support for his pledge to do more than his Democratic rival to cut government expenses and simultaneously reduce taxes Romney demagogically appeals to workers who rightly oppose the increasing intrusion of government in their lives and are adverse to feeling dependent on it. And conservative politicians hope to gain a hearing from workers who are becoming more distrustful of a government that is continually chipping away at constitutional protections—a bipartisan course that neither candidate speaks a word about.

Dependency on gov’t bureaucracies

On the other hand, there’s the left liberal view characteristic of the self-styled “enlightened meritocracy” of which Obama is a leading spokesperson. Lurking behind their feigned empathy for the impact of the capitalist crisis on our lives is a combination of disdain and fear. They seek to breed and reinforce attitudes of dependency on government bureaucracies and their patronage peddlers. And under current economic conditions and the absence of mass social struggles, many workers find themselves susceptible to this trap as well.

In this view the government is not the state power to manage the affairs of the capitalist rulers, but your “community.” This notion was succinctly presented at the Democratic Party Convention by Rep. Barney Frank. He said, “There are things that a civilized society needs that we can only do when we do them together, and when we do them together that’s called government.”

Social wages such as unemployment compensation and welfare were won through working-class struggles and represented the recapturing of a small portion of the social wealth the working class alone creates. The promotion of “entitlements” as a gift from the government for which we are supposed to be grateful, on the other hand, represent an attempt to turn these gains into their opposite.

The premise behind the traditional conservative view, however, is that social problems can and should be solved by individual initiative and at the family and community level, with minimal government interference.

The latter part of this—with minimal government interference—is an outlook shared by communists, consistent with the views but forward by Karl Mark, Fredrick Engels and Vladimir Lenin. This stands in stark contrast to benevolent big government visions of liberals, petty-bourgeois left radicals and Stalinists.

Our greatest social problems are created and reproduced by social relations under capitalism. Only with the working class in political power can the creative initiatives and energies of working people at the most basic level—local, neighborhood and community—be unleashed and social problems confronted and solved by the toilers themselves. This is what the experiences of socialist revolutions in Russia and Cuba show.

The function of a revolutionary government of the toilers is to maintain the political power of the working class and to whither away as the threat of capitalist restoration recedes. The socialist society will have no need for cops and prison guards, lawyers and bureaucrats. Teachers and doctors will perform their social services in the neighborhoods where they live with other workers of all kinds.

Many commentators, liberal and conservative, predicted Romney’s comments would result in plummeting support at the polls. But so far there is little evidence of any major impact and the race remains close. Perhaps workers were not so shocked or surprised. Maybe instead of changing their vote, more will simply stay home.