

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

INSIDE

Fernando González:
'Angola was milestone in my life'

— PAGES 8-9

VOL. 76/NO. 44 DECEMBER 3, 2012

More readers sell 'Militant' to workers door to door

BY LOUIS MARTIN

Some 253 subscriptions to the *Militant* were sold last week, bringing our cumulative total to 1,610, with more readers joining the international campaign to win 3,500 subscribers by Dec. 16.

Clayton Bronson, a retired sugar worker from Drayton, N.D., adopted a

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Fall 'Militant' subscription campaign

Oct. 13 - Dec. 16 (week 5)

Country	quota	sold	%	3,500
UNITED STATES				
Claysville, PA†*	10	10	100%	
Prisoners†*	10	8	80%	
Redding, CA†*	10	8	80%	
Longview, WA†	8	6	75%	
Yakima, WA†*	15	10	67%	
Seattle	210	119	57%	
Washington	110	62	56%	
Miami	120	67	56%	
Twin Cities	175	97	55%	
Des Moines	180	84	47%	
New York	450	209	46%	
Houston	150	69	46%	
Chicago	230	105	46%	
Omaha, NE†	80	35	44%	
Boston	110	46	42%	
Los Angeles	200	83	42%	
Atlanta	185	75	41%	
Greensboro†	5	2	40%	
New Orleans†	5	2	40%	
Rio Grande V Tx†	25	10	40%	
Lincoln, NE	35	13	37%	
San Francisco	225	70	31%	
Philadelphia	150	46	31%	
Tampa†	15	3	20%	
Albuquerque	3	0	0%	
Denver	5	0	0%	
Drayton, ND†	3	0	0%	
Muscooda, WI	5	0	0%	
Total U.S.	2729	1239	45%	
UNITED KINGDOM				
Manchester	80	56	70%	
London	200	122	61%	
UK Total	280	167	60%	
CANADA	140	78	56%	
NEW ZEALAND	130	60	46%	
AUSTRALIA	90	55	61%	
Total	3369	1610	46%	
Should be	3500	1944	56%	

*New to scoreboard *Raised goal

S. African farmworkers' strike for wages 'not over'

Platinum miners win raise after 2-month fight



Rodger Bosch/AFP/Getty Images

Farmworkers in Wolseley, South Africa, Nov. 15, ignore call by government and officials of some unions to suspend strike for two weeks while labor ministry reviews minimum wage.

BY SETH GALINSKY

Thousands of farmworkers in South Africa's Western Cape are continuing their strike despite the Nov. 14 announcement by the South African minister of labor of an agreement with union officials and farmworker aid organizations for a two-week suspension.

Hundreds of farmworkers have been arrested and charged with "public violence."

"The strike is not over," farmworker Mandla Betshe told Agence France-Presse the next day, in a video posted on YouTube. "We are going forward no matter what. We say 150 after deductions."

Betshe was referring to the strikers'

demand to raise the minimum wage of 70 rand a day (\$7.90) to 150 rand. Over the last year the price of sugar, oil and cereals rose more than 10 percent, and the price of mealie meal, the region's basic food staple, has jumped

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Tel Aviv launches assault on Gaza, workers pay for Hamas 'strategy'

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Tel Aviv has launched an assault on Gaza following military provocations from Hamas, Gaza's ruling bourgeois party. The Israeli offensive—designed

OPPOSE ISRAELI ATTACK!

—See editorial, p. 11

to deal blows to Hamas—has left Palestinian working people caught in the crossfire and forced to deal with the consequences.

The Israeli government said it initiated "Operation Pillar of Defense," in response to stepped-up missile attacks by Hamas and other Islamist groups in

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Capitalist pundits election 'analyses' show their class disdain, blindness

BY JOHN STUDER

The big-business media, from the left to the right, has spilled much ink analyzing the recent U.S. elections. What comes through in their various demographic theories is a bourgeois class blindness that prevents these "experts" from understanding attitudes and trends

COMMENTARY

in the working class and how they may or may not be reflected in the elections.

Among these "theories" are conjectures about voting patterns of the majority of so-called whites, whom they often refer to in writing as blue-collar or poor whites, but whom they view with disdain as "white trash."

But the "white America" the pundits write about doesn't exist. And they prefer not to see the reality of an America that is increasingly class divided.

In the mind of self-styled progressive
Continued on page 3

10,000 in Ireland protest woman's death, demand abortion rights



William Murphy

Nov. 17 march in Dublin, Ireland, protests the death of Savita Halappanavar, following a miscarriage after she was denied an abortion. Similar actions took place around the country.

BY PAUL DAVIES

DUBLIN—In the largest action on women's rights for years, as many as 10,000 people took to the streets here Nov. 17 to protest the death of Savita Halappanavar and onerous restrictions on access to abortion. There have been further actions in towns across Ireland, including in Galway where 1,000 people gathered.

Halappanavar, a 31-year-old dentist of Indian descent, died Oct. 28 in a Galway hospital from septicemia following a miscarriage. Her husband, Praveen Halappanavar, said doctors

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Capitalists do not need workers to be educated

Below is an excerpt from *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning: The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism* by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. The book is one of four offered at reduced prices with a subscription to the *Militant*. (See ad on page 4.) Copyright © 2000 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

as a whole to advance, instead of reinforcing the exploitation of the majority by the few. Until then, the only “liberal education” available to any fighter who wants one is political education within the workers movement.

What is taught in most schools today is largely worthless. There are a handful of skills that provide some preparation for life—learning to read, learning to write, learning to compute, practicing to increase our attention spans, learning the discipline necessary to study and use our minds. Reading and studying are extremely hard. It takes discipline to sit still for three hours, two hours, even one hour—not moving, not jumping up—and to work through ideas. Working through ideas is hard; we all have to learn how to do it. But it is part of taking ourselves seriously. It is part of taking humanity seriously. We have to learn how to read and study by coming to better understand how other people live and work, whether they are older or younger than we are.

But most everything else we are taught in school, especially in the so-called social sciences and related “disciplines,” are things we need to unlearn. Civics courses, social studies courses—these are all obfuscation. There is technical training of certain kinds, and applied sciences, that can be OK, with some luck. But these are forms of apprenticeships, not liberal education in the meaningful, universal sense.

Many young people wonder why they should go to school for twelve years in this society. Most never learn anything of value past the sixth or seventh grade. I went to working-class public schools in



Imaginechina/Zou haibin

Supervisor monitors workers at Foxconn factory in Fengcheng, China, May 2012. Foxconn facilities in China have been sites of strikes, violent clashes and other struggles over last year. “Rulers need workers to be obedient, not to be educated,” Jack Barnes says in booklet.

southern Ohio in the 1940s and 1950s. I never had to write a single essay or do anything like that my entire time in school; I was never given a reason to concentrate on doing so. But I had some teachers who were fine people and who taught me to read, taught me grammar and spelling, showed me by example how to at least sit quietly and work for a while, and encouraged me to do so. They displayed some social solidarity. That is all I can say I ever got from going to school. But that part turned out to be valuable. It was a lucky accident.

But because of this accident, I learned to read, acquired the habit of reading, and acquired it for *life*. At the same time, I hated reading what they crammed down my throat in high school. I hated Shakespeare then; I hated *Macbeth* the way it was taught.

Most young people never get taught they have anything to look forward to after their compulsory schooling is over. They never get taught in such a way as to make them believe the educational system is based on the assumption that their lives are worth a damn. (Many of us can remember teachers and principals who reeked of this attitude, I’m sure.) Instead, young people learn they have nothing to look forward to. They do not need to be told this in so many words; all they have to do is just watch other workers older than themselves. They just watch people like themselves who are above seventeen

or eighteen years of age. Between ages six and seventeen young workers go to school six or seven hours a day; they are supposed to read books, work for good grades, study things, turn in homework. Then, all of a sudden they turn eighteen and they never do it again. First they are supposed to “just say no” to anything that is fun. Then they are supposed to just say yes to anything an employer demands.

Don’t underestimate young people’s moral yearnings, their openness, human solidarity, and sensitivity. Perhaps they cannot put what they see into words. Perhaps they cannot theorize it. But they know a lot about what’s going on. What does this kind of education have to do with the human race? ...

[T]he rulers have no need, and thus no desire, for workers to be educated in this society. It is not true that the capitalist class needs for workers to be educated; it is a lie. They need for us to be obedient, not to be educated. They need for us to have to work hard to make a living, not to be critical. They need for us to consume all we make each week buying their products. Above all, they need for us to lose any desire over time to broaden our scope and become citizens of the world.

But the employing class does not need for us to be disciplined. In fact, indiscipline in life puts us more in their grasp. Obedience on the job, yes; discipline in life, no.

SUBSCRIPTION SPECIALS

BY JACK BARNES

Until society is reorganized so that education is a human activity from the time we are very young until the time we die, there will be no education worthy of working, creating humanity. There will only be the pretensions to education or to technical expertise of a small group of people. That is the historical truth.

Capitalist society promotes the myth that education is a youth question. But any society that sees education as a question just for young people can never have education that is meaningful for human beings, including youth. Social solidarity will never exist in such a society.

The working class cannot begin with how to change things so that *youth* get a better education. We have to begin with how to transform the values of society, not just the economics; it cannot be reduced simply to an economic problem. To be meaningful, education has to create the possibilities for society

THE MILITANT

Workers of Europe hit by gov't cuts amid world crisis

Workers across Europe are being hit with high unemployment and government-driven cuts to social services in the midst of the worldwide economic crisis.

The ‘Militant’ explains the roots of this crisis and points a revolutionary road forward for working people.



Reuters/Marcelo del Pozo
Union members march Nov. 14 in Seville, Spain, during Europe-wide day of protest.

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

Pundits' election analyses

Continued from front page

liberals, heavily represented by bourgeois-minded meritocrats and professionals, workers who are Caucasian are essentially ignorant, reactionary, and becoming increasingly racist as a natural response to the effects of the economic crisis on their lives. According to this view, these workers can be expected to vote Republican in general, and all the more so in the recent election in order to vote out a Black candidate. This is why a layer of Democratic Party liberals write off any effort to win the so-called white vote and instead focus on the so-called Latino and Black vote, along with those of "smart people" like themselves.

This sentiment was partially captured by Obama himself in 2008 when he spoke about workers in small towns in Ohio and Pennsylvania: "It's not surprising then that they get bitter, and they cling to guns or religion, or antipathy toward people who aren't like them, or anti-immigrant sentiment."

Another notion that flows from this outlook is the idea that growth of reactionary views among working people in the U.S. are part of a similar trend around the world.

A good example of this is an article by *New York Times* guest columnist Thomas Edsall, who interviewed Ruy Teixeira, a senior fellow at the American Center for American Progress and adviser to the Obama campaign.

Edsall writes: "In the United States, Teixeira noted, 'The Republican Party has become the party of the white working class,' while in Europe many working-class voters who had been the core of Social Democratic parties have moved over to far right parties."

Conservative pundits hold a similar version of the same class prejudices about workers who are Caucasian as liberals do, but instead of lamenting about it, many wish it were more true.

Attitudes in the working class are not something that can be directly gleaned from election results or any other method by those who live in a world entirely outside of the working class. Workers' views only find distorted reflection in the bourgeois electoral arena, where, in the absence of sustained class-struggle battles from which workers gain self-confidence and a sense of political independence, most today look for a "lesser

evil" to vote for.

One thing the election results do not support is the view that there is a rising tide of racism among workers today. There are plenty of reasons why one would not vote Barack Obama, from his open disdain for working people to concerns about growing government interference in people's lives.

The most striking thing about the election is that—after four years of the most profound economic crisis in living memory—the lesser evil for most workers, including a substantial section of those who are Caucasian, was not the challenger but the incumbent. And an incumbent who has not even talked about a real jobs program much less shown an inclination to enact one.

But many saw Romney as more out of touch with the crushing effects of the capitalist crisis. Many assumed a second Obama presidency might at least be more open to providing government relief from the crisis.

The exit polls reflect some of these sentiments. While 51 percent of voters said that government was too intrusive in their lives, 55 percent said the U.S. economic system favors the wealthy. And the majority thought that Romney's policies would favor the rich.

"Romney did terribly among the white working class" in Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania, complained Steven Sailer, a conservative with openly racist views, on VDARE.com Nov. 7.

And some 9 million workers who are Caucasian were among the millions of working people who didn't bother to vote for either of the bosses' parties.

This doesn't mean Romney didn't win votes from lots of working people who are Caucasian, particularly in more rural areas and parts of the South. He did, especially from those fed up with the accumulated economic blows suffered over Obama's first four years. But there is no reason to assume that a growing—as opposed to shrinking—minority did so for racist reasons. There is no rise in KKK violence or other evidence to support such a contention.

And workers on the job know that coworkers who voted for Obama or Romney are equally likely to jump into discussion about how to meet the bosses' attacks and fight together, regardless of racial, religious or other differences.

Profound social changes resulting from the massive proletarian Black rights battle of the 1950s and '60s that smashed Jim Crow segregation have wrought irreversible changes in the working class that have opened the door to greater unity in action. And today working people in general are feeling the effects of the crisis and increasingly look to advance their *class* interests above all.

This is true within the Black nationality, where conditions of life for workers—both absolute and relative to others sections of the working class—are getting worse under the impact of the economic crisis. And the crisis is reinforcing forms of national oppression endemic to social relations under capitalism. At the same time, class divisions among African-Americans are widening.

The fight against racist discrimination and to overcome national divisions remains one of the biggest tasks ahead in forging a working-class vanguard in the U.S. But, contrary to the hopes of conservative pundits and the accepted wis-

Socialist debates other school board candidates in LA



LOS ANGELES—Eleanor García, Socialist Workers Party candidate in District 2 for Los Angeles Unified School District, joined six of her opponents in a candidates debate Nov. 15, organized by the District 2 Neighborhood Coalition in the working-class and largely immigrant neighborhood of Westlake.

"Under capitalism, education is class-divided and the only future we can count on is one in which education will worsen, there will be more cuts and more taxes," García said.

"For the big majority of the working class, our lives are a cycle divided into being a child, the time we 'learn' to be obedient to a boss; then a worker, when we produce profits for bosses; and then when we get old, we're looked at as used-up," García said. "Working people are taught that we are not capable of organizing anything, taught to depend on others."

"The biggest battle we face is to cast off the self-image the rulers impose on us. A lifetime of education can prepare us so we recognize our capacities and put an end to capitalism's dog-eat-dog relations."

—ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

dom of liberals, racist bigotry against African-Americans and other forms of prejudice are not on the rise among working people who are Caucasian or of other backgrounds.

This conclusion is consistent with the personal experience of many working people today on and off the job. This is one of the strengths of our class, the only truly progressive class, in the U.S.

Votes on ballot measures

Another more recent shift in attitudes among working people in favor of equal rights and against bigotry was registered in votes on a number of ballot referenda. In Maryland, Maine, Washington and Minnesota, millions of workers voted to push back state laws that discriminate, based on prejudice, against equal rights in marriage based on gender and sexual orientation.

In Florida, a measure to strengthen discriminatory restrictions against young women's ability to get an abortion was rejected. The vote also upheld legal protection for the right to privacy.

Some measures put on the ballot by labor unions did not fare so well. But here it would be wrong to think the vote is a reflection of those who are for and against organized labor. Rather the referenda highlight the failing strategy of the top labor officialdom.

Among the ballot measures, in Michigan leaders of the Service Employees International Union and others organized an effort to write into the state constitution the right of public sector unions to bargain collectively and a prohibition against the legislature enacting "right to work" laws.

The measure, Proposition 2, failed by 58 to 42 percent.

The Socialist Workers Party called for a yes vote. "Not because restrictive laws are the *reason* our unions are getting weaker, a rationalization often heard from union officials," James Harris, SWP presidential candidate said, but as part of "laying the groundwork to transform our unions into effective working-class combat organizations against the bosses' deepening attacks."

At the same time, such substitutes for organizing unions or bringing union power to bear are not something workers will or can rally around. The ballot measure is put forward by the same labor officials who, contrary to leading battles against efforts by politicians and employers to slash our rights or wages, have worked overtime to avoid and limit such fights while supporting some of the same capitalist politicians leading the assault.

Regardless of which "lesser evil" they pulled the lever for, or if they stayed home, or how they voted on any referenda, workers by the millions are feeling the squeeze from the propertied rulers' attacks and are looking to discuss where they come from and a way to fight back.

Through these discussions and coming battles, workers will gain experience and self-confidence, and will begin to transform themselves by the millions into actors on the stage of history. And along the way, they will stop looking for lesser evils and start looking for a way to replace the rule of the propertied class with a government of workers and farmers.



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MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

FLORIDA

Miami

Social Disaster After Hurricane Shows True Face of Capitalism. Panel discussion, Fri., Nov. 30, 7:30 p.m. 7100 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 306A. Tel.: (305) 757-8869.

NEBRASKA

Omaha

Capitalist Crisis and the Road Forward for Working People. Sat., Dec. 1. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. For location call (402) 217-4906.

TEXAS

Houston

Legalize Undocumented Workers Now! Speakers: Christy Mendoza, Revolutionary Socialist Alliance; Mike Fitzsimmons, Socialist Workers Party; others. Sat., Dec. 1. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Donation: dinner \$5, program \$5. 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-50L. Tel.: (713) 688-4919.

Subscription campaign

Continued from front page

goal of selling three subscriptions. He is one of 1,300 workers locked out by American Crystal Sugar since Aug. 1, 2011.

Bronson said he has been reading the weekly articles about expanding the reach of the paper and noticed there were new areas taking part in the campaign. He has already been showing the paper around to other locked-out workers.

Longime reader Horace Kerr asked that Denver be added to the campaign chart with a goal of five subscriptions.

We received our eighth "prisoners" subscription last week—a renewal from a reader behind bars in Pennsylvania that was mailed by his brother. (See box on Prisoners' Fund on page 11.)

Kevin Cole, a 57-year-old postal worker from Anaheim, Calif., has sold two subscriptions to coworkers, one of whom bought all four books on special with a subscription. (See ad on page 4.)

Cole has sold the paper door to door on two recent occasions. "The door-to-door sales of the paper strengthens my resolve. It makes me bolder and hones my skills talking to workers about politics," Cole said.

In September Cole started reading the *Militant* after buying a subscription at a Labor Day action in Wilmington, Calif.

"I'm not that well versed in the science of socialism, but I know that it is the only solution to capitalist dog-eat-dog competition," Cole said. "That's

where the *Militant* fits in for me."

Jesus Landeros, a 17-year-old high school student from Los Angeles has been selling the *Militant* regularly over the past six weeks. He urged other readers to circulate the paper in Lennox, a working-class area near the airport, resulting in 10 subscriptions being sold there. On two occasions friends of Landeros also joined the subscription effort.

"I like the door to door best," said Landeros. "A lot of people are going through many of the problems we are talking about and want to share their experiences."

"Oh, the *Militant*! I really like the *Militant*!" said Ash Khan, 17, a high school student at Murray Hill Academy in Manhattan when she saw the paper at a Nov. 16 protest against the assault on Gaza at the Israeli Consulate in New York. Khan had subscribed five weeks earlier when *Militant* readers knocked on her door in Upper Manhattan.

At the protest she took several subscription blanks to show to friends and introduced *Militant* distributor Brian Williams to a friend of hers who was at the demonstration. It turns out her friend had just subscribed at the action.

"I just sold a subscription to a student at Heritage University, which is on the Yakama Indian Reservation," Robert Beal reported from Yakima, Wash.

This new reader "is politically active locally. He asked for three subscription blanks for friends who he believes will

Socialists from Nebraska and Iowa join weekend door-to-door effort to sell 'Militant' in Des Moines



Militant/Maggie Trowe

DES MOINES, Iowa—Alex Huinil (right) sells the *Militant* outside the Tapatía Mexican supermarket Nov. 18, the second day of a two-day effort by workers from Nebraska and Iowa selling mostly door to door in working-class areas of the city. They added 17 new *Militant* subscribers to the paper's readership.

After selling Nov. 17, *Militant* campaigners attended a dinner and forum on "The Meaning of the U.S. Elections for the Working Class Around the World: Our Struggles Continue." Jacob Perasso and Fredy Huinil from Omaha spoke for the Socialist Workers Party.

Fredy Huinil invited the 20 people at the meeting to come to Omaha Dec. 1 to campaign with the *Militant* and attend the first *Militant* Labor Forum in that city. (For more information, see the *Militant* Labor Forum listing on page 3.)

—MAGGIE TROWE

be interested in the literature.

"He also bought *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning: The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism* and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*" with his subscription, two of the books on special, Beal added.

"As a *Militant* reader going door to door in diverse working-class neigh-

borhoods in Yakima and other cities in eastern Washington, I see revolutionary working-class literature distribution as sharing a basic message, seven generations old, of united political struggle, clarifying the present and being embraced most strongly by young students and by workers," Beal concluded.

Readers: if you haven't yet, join the campaign!

Special offers

The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning by Jack Barnes

"Until society is reorganized so that education is a human activity from the time we are very young until the time we die, there will be no education worthy of working, creating humanity."

\$2 with a subscription to the *Militant* (usually \$3)

Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer

"About the millions of working people—men and women, of all ages—who have made the socialist revolution, and how their actions transformed them as they fought to transform their world."

\$10 with subscription (usually \$20)

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."

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The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free Articles, interviews from the *Militant*

"We know that right is on our side, but to win we need a jury of millions throughout the world to make our truth known."—Gerardo Hernández

\$3 with subscription (usually \$5)

**See distributors
on page 7**

New 'Militant' distributors pitch in on SWP Party-Building Fund

BY SUSAN LAMONT

Nearly \$18,000 has been sent in through the third week of the fall Socialist Workers Party fund drive. The pace of contributions stepped up during the past week, but is not yet at the level needed to reach the national goal by the Dec. 23 deadline.

As part of making local goals, supporters of the party are zeroing in on political opportunities to expand the number of first-time contributors.

In Yakima, Wash., one of two workers who have taken a local goal for the *Militant* subscription campaign—starting with 10 and recently raised to 15—contributed \$20 to the fund. "He told me he was glad to help," said SWP leader Mary Martin from Seattle.

Clay Dennison, director of the fund-raising effort in Seattle, made an announcement at a Nov. 16 Militant Labor Forum that discussed the recent U.S. presidential elections. Ten people responded by making pledges or payments. Seattle has taken a goal of winning five first-time contributors.

Militant sales teams from New York received \$5 in contributions from several workers in Brooklyn and Poughkeepsie while going door to door Nov. 18. Two participants in a demonstration in New York City against Israel's bombing of Gaza that same afternoon gave \$5 each.

The SWP is a revolutionary working-

class party. It depends on regular contributions from workers and young people who support its work.

Contributions can be sent to the SWP address nearest you (see page 7) or directly to the SWP National Office at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, NY, NY 10018.

Susan LaMont is director of the 2012 SWP Party-Building Fund.

Party-Building Fund Week 3 of 9

Area	Quota	Collected	%
Des Moines	\$2,250	\$1,028	46%
Seattle	\$8,500	\$2,325	27%
Atlanta	\$8,600	\$2,250	26%
Twin Cities	\$6,000	\$1,480	25%
Chicago	\$9,500	\$2,194	23%
San Francisco	\$13,500	\$3,044	23%
Miami	\$3,000	\$630	21%
Lincoln	\$250	\$50	20%
New York	\$20,000	\$3,376	17%
Los Angeles	\$8,500	\$700	8%
Philadelphia	\$4,200	\$300	7%
Washington	\$7,500	\$470	6%
Boston	\$4,000	0	0%
Houston	\$3,500	0	0%
Omaha	\$600	0	0%
Other			
Total	\$99,900	\$17,847	18%
Should Be	\$100,000	\$33,333	33%

* Raised goal

ON THE PICKET LINE

Hostess blames strike for decision to close, sell assets

BIDDEFORD, Maine, Nov. 15—A countdown chant—"five, four, three, two, one"—followed by cheering is how more than 150 strikers and their supporters here greeted the Hostess Brand bosses' 5 p.m. deadline to return to work or face closure of the company's operations nationwide.

About 370 members of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union Local 334 went on strike here Nov. 9 after the company unilaterally imposed a concession contract amid bankruptcy proceedings. The plant was one of 24 BCTGM-organized Hostess bakeries and one transport facility where workers walked out on strike or in honor of picket lines.

"We all survived before we came here, we will survive after we go," Florida Jarry told the *Militant* on the picket line here.

Hostess' previous bankruptcy, which lasted from 2004 to 2009, led to the closure of 21 Hostess plants, voluntary union concessions and the elimination of thousands of jobs.

"In 2004 we gave huge concessions. The company saved \$110 million and the agreement was to invest it in new machinery," Donald Woods, president of BCTGM Local 1, told the *Militant* at a picket line in Shiller Park, Ill. "They won't stop here. It's never enough."

In July 2011, the company stopped making payments to the Hostess workers' pensions, but continued to deduct money from their wages—pocketing nearly \$160 million.

The company filed for bankruptcy in January. In September Hostess presented its "best and final offer" to the workers, some 7,500 represented by the Teamsters Union and 5,700 by the BCTGM. The Teamsters passed the concessions with 54 percent in favor, while BCTGM members rejected them by 92 percent. Hostess' bosses went to the bankruptcy judge and got the cuts imposed on the bakery union's members, leading to the Nov. 9 strikes.

The company-imposed contract immediately cut wages by 8 percent, increased the share of health care costs paid by the workers and eliminated overtime wages after an eight-hour day.

"We deeply regret the necessity of today's decision [to close operations], but we do not have the financial resources to weather an extended nationwide strike," Gregory Rayburn, chief executive officer said in a Nov. 16 company news

release titled, "Hostess Brands to Wind Down Company After BCTGM Union Strike Cripples Operations."

"Hostess Brands will move promptly to lay off most of its 18,500-member workforce and focus on selling its assets to the highest bidders," Rayburn said.

This involves the closure of the company's 36 bakeries, 565 distribution centers, 5,500 delivery routes and 570 outlet stores throughout the United States.

Hostess and the bakery workers union agreed Nov. 19 to a proposal from Bankruptcy Judge Robert Drain to mediate their dispute, putting plans to shutter the company on hold.

—Ted Leonard
Ilona Gersh from Illinois contributed

Calif. grocery strikers push back company attack on medical plan

GILROY, Calif.—After nine days on the picket line, some 7,000 workers at the northern California chains of Nob Hill and Raley's supermarkets returned to work, having pushed back some of the bosses' demands.

The strike by members of the United Food and Commercial Workers began Nov. 4 when, after more than a year of failed negotiations, Raley's announced it would impose its "last and final" offer. The company wanted a wage freeze, an end to premium pay for Sundays and holidays, an end to medical coverage for retirees and a new medical plan.

On Nov. 11, a week into the strike, company officials contacted the UFCW, saying they wanted to go back to the bargaining table. Officials from the company and union then agreed to a tentative contract, the terms of which will not be public until after union members have voted on it.

Workers picketing at the Nob Hill store on the last day of the strike here told the *Militant* they thought the company was influenced by strikers' success in convincing many customers to shop elsewhere.

"The company was hurting because the customers supported us," said Angie Guzman. "The success was also from us being strong, walking out together."

"Many customers understand when you say we're fighting for our medical



Militant/Eric Simpson

Members of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union Local 125 on strike outside Colombo Bakery, a part of Hostess Brands, in Oakland, Calif., Nov. 17.

Workers strike Bombardier over subcontracting, pension freeze

LA POCATIÈRE, Quebec—Rail car construction workers went on strike Nov. 1 against Bombardier here around subcontracting and pension demands.

The 330 members of the Confederation of National Trade Unions have been without a contract since September 2011. They voted Oct. 27 by 95 percent to walk out if negotiations didn't move forward.

"The workers are very determined," Mario Lévesque, local president, told the *Militant*. Workers maintain 24/7 picket lines outside the plant.

Based in Quebec, Bombardier is a major international corporation in rail and airplane manufacture. In 2009 it was granted a \$1.2 billion contract to build new cars for Montreal's subway system on promises to keep jobs in Quebec. "But the company refuses to respect this agreement," Lévesque said. "In 2006 we had 1,000 at this plant, today there are 330. Our pensions have been frozen since 2003."

"We are out against subcontracting. We want to keep our jobs," Carole Dubé told the *Militant* on the picket line Nov. 10.

Bombardier declares all its contracts will be fulfilled in full and on time.

—Annette Kouri

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

December 11, 1987

JAY, Maine—Unfazed by sub-freezing weather, 3,000 striking paperworkers and their supporters staged a militant march past International Paper Co.'s Androscoggin mill here November 21 to show the unity of their strike against IP, now in its sixth month.

Hundreds of strikers—members of United Paperworkers International Union Local 14 and Firemen and Oilers Local 246—were joined by family members, community supporters, and unionists from around New England.

UPIU Local 14 President Bill Meserve described the paperworkers' decision to strike when IP refused to back off from the concessions it demanded, including an end to Sunday premium pay, elimination of Christmas as a shutdown holiday, and a plan to boost productivity. IP's current stance is that the 1,000 scabs who now work in the mill are permanent employees.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

December 3, 1962

Puerto Rican pro-independence pickets demonstrated Nov. 12 at Fort Brooke in San Juan, under heavy intimidation by police and U.S. military personnel. The demonstrators, carrying Puerto Rican flags, a banner of the Federation of University Students for Independence, and placards, marched to the Antilles Command Headquarters Building. Among the slogans carried during the two-hour demonstration were, "We Are Peaceful People; Go Home Warlords," "Latin American Goodwill Is Not Possible Without Independence of Puerto Rico," and "We Protest Atomic Weapons in Puerto Rico."

The civilian cops were joined by over 100 combat-ready military police in an effort to intimidate the pickets. An army helicopter hovered over their heads, reportedly taking motion pictures.

SOCIALIST APPEAL

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AS THE ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW YORK. LEFT-WING BRANCH

December 4, 1937

MINNEAPOLIS—The atrocious murder of Pat Corcoran, Secretary-Treasurer of the powerful Teamster's Joint Council, has once again brought the turbulent labor movement of Minneapolis into the center of national attention. Once again the keenest interest and concern of progressive labor circles from coast to coast have been aroused in this stormy outpost of labor in the Northwest, the pace-setter for the country. The forces of organized labor cried out with one voice for the apprehension of Corcoran's assassins.

The dark forces of reaction and their dubious agents and stooges couldn't wait for the body of the martyr to be lowered into the grave before they began to sing in chorus—with a suspicious unanimity and enthusiasm, as though the song had been rehearsed—for a police investigation of the trade union movement of Minneapolis.

JACK BARNES
THE CHANGING FACE OF U.S. POLITICS
Working-class politics and the unions



\$24

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Tel Aviv assault on Gaza

Continued from front page

recent weeks targeting civilian areas in southern Israel.

The Israeli assault began with an air-strike that assassinated Hamas military commander Ahmed al-Jabari.

As usual, the Israeli response was vastly disproportionate. Through Nov. 18, Israeli forces from air and sea had carried out more than 1,000 strikes throughout Gaza, one of the most densely populated areas of the world. Targets initially were Hamas' weapons storage facilities and rocket launching sites, but have been expanded to include government buildings, a mosque in central Gaza, residences of Hamas leaders and infrastructure.

The Israeli military knocked out five electrical transformers, plunging more than 400,000 people into darkness, a spokesperson for the Gaza electric company told al-Jazeera. Phone service disruptions have prevented the *Militant* from contacting anyone in the area.

"We are fully supportive of Israel's right to defend itself," President Barack Obama said Nov. 18 during his visit to Thailand, adding it is "preferable" that Tel Aviv not launch a ground invasion.

Missile strikes Nov. 18 on two buildings in Gaza City with offices of Palestinian and international media injured at least six journalists. That same day an attack aimed at killing Hamas military commander Yihia Abayah flattened the al-Dalu family house, killing at least 11 Palestinian civilians, reported the *Financial Times*. This includes five

women and four children, Gaza health officials told the Associated Press.

Tel Aviv has bombed many of the tunnels built between Egypt and Gaza through which arms for Hamas come into the country as well as food, fuel and other goods. The Israeli government halted supplies from entering Gaza from Israel days before its military operation began.

According to the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, 87 Palestinians had been killed by the Israeli military assault as of Nov. 19. Of these 58 are civilians, including 18 children and 12 women. Hundreds have been injured, mostly civilians, the center reports.

Thousands of Israeli troops are now stationed at the border with Gaza. The Israeli cabinet Nov. 16 approved a call-up of 75,000 reservists, poised for a possible ground invasion.

In response to the Israeli offensive, Hamas fired more than 500 rockets and mortars into Israel Nov. 14-19, according to the Israeli military, killing three civilians and wounding dozens. The three deaths occurred when a projectile slammed into an apartment building in the working-class neighborhood of Kiryat Malakhi, 15 miles north of Gaza.

On Nov. 15, Hamas began launching longer-range M-75 rockets, capable of traveling 45 miles, that have reached the outskirts of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem for the first time.

"Tel Aviv, which we hit, will be hit over and over until you stop your crimes against our civilians," said Mosheer Al Masri, a leader of the Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military wing, Nov. 19 outside the burial of the al-Dalu family killed in an Israeli airstrike, reported the *New York Times*. He threatened to capture and hold hostage Israeli soldiers if there's a ground invasion, as Hamas did in 2006.

While Hamas leaders have issued defiant statements, most of its top leaders have gone into hiding.

Much of Hamas' missile launchings are conducted from working-class residential areas, with little if any warning or preparation for residents, who then

Protests of Israeli bombing of Gaza held in NY



Militant/Dan Fein

NEW YORK—Some 300 people demonstrated outside the Israeli Consulate here Nov. 16 to protest Tel Aviv's air assault on Gaza. The action was one of many over the last week around the world. Above, a similar protest in New York's Times Square Nov. 18.

Participants, many of them young, expressed a range of views.

"I don't support the rockets fired by Hamas," rally participant Sarah Aly, 18, a student at Brooklyn College, told the *Militant*. "Killing civilians does not win support for your cause. I am not against Israelis. I am against the occupation."

"I see the similarities in the struggle of the Palestinian people, the Tibetans and in Chechnya," said Tensin Choeying, 23, who is from Tibet and a student at LaGuardia Community College. "What Hamas is doing can be expected. It's normal to fight back in war."

"Religion has nothing to do with it. All people need to fight for freedom," said Ash Khan, 17.

—BRIAN WILLIAMS

bear the brunt of the Israeli response.

Upon launching its offensive, the Israeli Defense Forces sent text messages to about 12,000 Gaza residents "warning them to stay away from Hamas operatives," reported the *Times*.

"My family and I left al-Karama two days ago" where several military compounds are located, Mohammed Abu Qassem told *USA Today* in Gaza City Nov. 16. "Although we were expecting a better situation in my brother's area, we experienced the shattering sound of at least seven or eight massive explosions last night."

According to a Haaretz-Dialog poll Nov. 18, some 84 percent of Israeli citizens support Tel Aviv's current military operation, but only 30 percent support a

ground invasion.

Several hundred people demonstrated in Tel Aviv Nov. 17 against "Operation Pillar of Defense," reported the *Jerusalem Post*. A rally in Nazareth that evening drew 1,500 people, both Jewish and Arab, organizers told the *Post*.

Israel occupied the Gaza Strip for 38 years, after capturing the territory from Egypt in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. It withdrew its forces in September 2005, but continues to control the airspace, borders and the coast. In 2008-2009 Tel Aviv carried out a three-week invasion of Gaza, killing 1,400 Palestinians.

Representatives of Tel Aviv and Hamas are in Cairo where the Egyptian government is trying to broker a ceasefire, *Haaretz* reported Nov. 19.

UN condemns US embargo on Cuba for 21st time

BY SETH GALINSKY

UNITED NATIONS—For the 21st year in a row the United Nations General Assembly voted Nov. 13 to condemn the U.S. embargo of Cuba.

The U.N. resolution, titled "Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial and Financial Embargo Imposed by the United States Against Cuba," passed with 188 votes in favor. Only the governments of Israel and Palau voted with Washington against the resolution. Marshall Islands and Micronesia abstained.

In his speech before the vote Cuban Foreign Affairs Minister Bruno Rodríguez noted that under U.S. President Barack Obama the last four years have been "characterized by a persistent tightening of the economic, commercial and financial blockade" against Cuba.

The embargo began in October 1960, when the administration of President Dwight Eisenhower banned U.S. exports to Cuba, with the exception of some food and medicines, to punish the Cuban people for the 1959 socialist revolution, which brought the working class to power and an end

to U.S. domination.

In February 1962 President John F. Kennedy made it a total embargo, banning imports from Cuba and the export to Cuba of products from other countries that have any U.S. component. Every U.S. administration has maintained the embargo since then.

The Obama administration has especially tightened the extraterritorial restrictions of the U.S. economic war against the revolution, forcing corporations based in other countries to abide by the embargo. One way this is done is through fines imposed by the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control.

In June this year, a \$619 million fine was imposed on the Dutch bank ING for alleged violations of U.S. sanctions against Cuba and other countries, the highest fine ever imposed on a foreign bank.

So far the Obama administration has imposed fines totaling more than \$2 billion, Rodríguez said, "double the amount during both terms of George W. Bush."

Rodríguez also gave examples of

medicines and medical equipment that Washington prevented Cuba from purchasing, including Levosimendan, a medicine used to treat heart problems in small children, and Elspar, for treating leukemia.

"While we note and welcome Cuba's recent changes to allow greater self-employment and liberalize the real estate market, Cuba still has one of the most restrictive economic systems in the world," complained U.S. Ambassador Ronald Godard, prior to the vote. He demanded that the Cuban government open "state monopolies to private competition," fully empower Cuban entrepreneurs, and adopt "the sound macro-economic policies that have contributed to the economic success of many of Cuba's neighboring countries in Latin America."

"Nobody believes the U.S. government is interested in the freedom of the Cuban people after it stained it during a half century, backing bloody dictatorships in Cuba and the whole region," replied Rodríguez. "What it wants is a government in Cuba that is servile to U.S. interests and that is not going to happen."

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No return to ‘normal’ in areas hard hit by Hurricane Sandy

BY EMMA JOHNSON

NEW YORK—Almost a month after Hurricane Sandy hit the East Coast it is clear that for many working people in the hardest hit areas, things are not returning to “normal.”

Far Rockaway, a working-class neighborhood with a large proportion of African-American and immigrant residents, was one of the city’s hardest hit areas.

Blancarosa Escobar, 18, a high school student, told the *Militant* that her family lost everything in the basement and still doesn’t have electricity. “We lost our jobs, too. I worked at the supermarket in Breezy Point, mom is a house cleaner and my father worked in the bagel store.”

According to the Labor Department, the number of people who applied for unemployment compensation rose by 78,000 the week after Sandy, largely due to increases in states hit by the storm.

Across the street from Escobar’s house several houses had burnt down.

“It’s kind of hard. My school was damaged, so we’re bused a few towns away. I’m not complaining, we’re getting some help, but we can’t live a normal life,” she said.

Chris Newman, a student in New Paltz, told the *Militant* that his family’s house in Breezy Point, further out in the Rockaways, was flooded the night Sandy came ashore. His parents now live with his aunt in Brooklyn. “They don’t know when they’ll be able to move back. To get in we have to prove we’re residents, we have to show IDs.”

City officials confirmed Nov. 18 that 200 homes will be demolished in the worst hit areas of Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island. The Department of Buildings has so far ruled 891 homes unsafe to enter.

On an ordinary night more than 50,000 homeless people are quartered in the city’s municipal shelter system, among them 20,000 children. City Hall estimates that 40,000 additional people will now need to be relocated.



DNAinfo/Serena Solomon

Tenants in Knickerbocker Village, Manhattan, demand heaters, generators, rent break Nov. 10.

Thousands of people still have no heat as temperatures at night fall below 40 degrees. The slow response from the city government, utility companies and housing agencies have sparked several protests.

Residents in the Knickerbocker Village on Manhattan’s Lower East Side held a rally Nov. 10 demanding generators and heaters. They threatened a rent strike if they didn’t get a break in pay-

ments. The housing complex is owned by AREA Property Partners and home to more than 1,600 people.

Three days later building management conceded to a rent refund. Two of three boilers in the basement were fixed and all but 50 apartments had their electricity restored.

Ruth Robinett and Lea Sherman contributed to this article.

Puerto Rico referendum: ‘Impossible to have free vote under colonialism’

BY SETH GALINSKY

“Puerto Ricans favor statehood for first time,” was the headline on CNN’s website reporting the results of a Nov. 6 nonbinding referendum in Puerto Rico on the island’s colonial status. But a closer look shows that conclusion is false.

The referendum was an initiative of Gov. Luis Fortuño and the pro-statehood New Progressive Party. In the governor’s race, which took place at the same time as the referendum, Fortuño lost his reelection bid to Alejandro García Padilla of the Popular Democratic Party, which opposes both statehood and independence.

Long-time Puerto Rican independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda pointed out in a phone interview after the vote that it is impossible “to have a free vote of any kind under colonialism.”

Puerto Rico has been a U.S. colony since 1898 when U.S. troops occupied the island, taking over control from the Spanish government. Those who demanded independence were repressed, including Pedro Albizu Campos, a central leader of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party who spent years in U.S. prisons for his activities. In 1937 at least 20 people were killed and 200 wounded when cops under the orders of U.S. Gen. Blanton Winship opened fire on a Nationalist Party rally in the city of Ponce.

Washington directly appointed the island’s rulers without any pretense of democracy until 1948, when the first elections for the island’s governor were held. Washington continues to assert its absolute power to impose U.S. law on the island, including carrying the death penalty, controlling trade and tariffs, regulating the airwaves, and maintaining U.S. troops presence.

In the first part of the referendum, voters were asked, “Do you agree that Puerto Rico should continue to have its present form of territorial status?” Regardless of how they voted on the first question, they then had a choice of three alternatives: statehood, independence, or “sovereign free associated state”—a modified form of the current colonial status.

A number of groups urged a no vote on the first part of the referendum and leaving the ballot blank on the second part. These included several pro-independence groups, among them the National

Hostosiano Independence Movement, as well as the Popular Democratic Party, and others who favor a modification of the current “free associated state.” The Puerto Rican Independence Party, on the other hand, promoted participation in both the first and second parts of the referendum.

Some 1.7 million voted in the first part of the referendum, 54 percent against continuing the current status. There are 2.4 million registered voters on the island out of a voting population of about 3 million.

On the second section, 807,000 voted for statehood, 440,000 for the free associated state, and 73,000 for independence. More than 470,000 voters left the second part blank.

Statehood “win” is a farce

“After all the years of repression and massacres, it’s a miracle that so many voted for independence,” Cancel Miranda said. “And when you add up all

the votes for the options and the blank ballots, those who voted for sovereignty are many more than those who voted for statehood. It’s farcical to say that statehood won.”

Cancel Miranda pointed out that 300,000 people who did not vote in the previous election and did not “reactivate” their registration were denied the right to have their votes counted this year. In another example of the U.S. domination of the island, the ruling on their voting rights “was decided in the U.S. courts in Boston, not by the local courts in Puerto Rico,” he noted.

Regardless of the vote totals, Cancel Miranda said, “Independence and freedom are not questions of adding up votes. Anyway, the Yankee government won’t pay it any attention. U.S. imperialism only accepts votes that favor their interests.”

And the imperialists are perfectly happy with the current colonial set-up.

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Puerto Rico
independence is
a necessity

Rafael Cancel Miranda
on the fight
against U.S.
colonial rule

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Fernando González: ‘Angola was milestone’

Cuban revolutionary jailed in US recalls participation in international war

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS
AND MARTÍN KOPPEL

“The two years I was in Angola, from 1987 to 1989, were a milestone in my life,” wrote Fernando González. “They were of enormous importance for my development as a revolutionary and as a human being.”

This is how Fernando González Llort summarized what it meant for him to have been part of the massive effort by the men and women of Cuba to help that African country defend its independence and sovereignty, newly won from Portugal, against South Africa’s apartheid regime.

González wrote from his prison cell in Terre Haute, Ind., in response to questions the *Militant* had asked him about his experiences as an internationalist combatant in Angola.

Between 1975 and 1991, more than 375,000 Cubans volunteered to fight alongside Angolans against repeated invasions by what was then still the white supremacist regime in South Africa and its allied counterrevolutionary forces. Nearly 50,000 more Cubans offered their services as teachers, medical personnel, engineers and other sorely needed skills during those years.

The apartheid regime’s military forces were finally dealt a decisive defeat in 1988 at the great battle of Cuito Cuanavale. That victory also assured the end of South Africa’s colonial domination of Namibia and accelerated the massive popular mobilizations inside South Africa that soon shattered the apartheid regime itself.

South African leader Nelson Mandela eloquently described these historic contributions by the men and women of Cuba during a 1991 visit to that country to thank them for their unprecedented aid. “The Cuban internationalists have made a contribution to African inde-

pendence, freedom, and justice, unparalleled for its principled and selfless character,” Mandela told a crowd of tens of thousands in Matanzas on July 26 that year. “For the Cuban people internationalism is not merely a word but something that we have seen practiced to the benefit of large sections of humankind.”¹

Fernando González—along with Gerardo Hernández, René González, Ramón Labañino and Antonio Guerrero—is one of the five Cuban revolutionaries who in 1998 were arrested by the U.S. government, framed up on espionage conspiracy and other charges, and railroaded to prison with sentences of up to double life plus 15 years. Fernando González, who received the second most “lenient” sentence, was given 19 years, later reduced to 17 years and nine months. Currently at the federal prison at Safford, Ariz., he has now spent more than 14 years behind bars.

In 1998 the five had been living and working in South Florida for some time, gathering information for the Cuban government on the operations of U.S.-based Cuban counterrevolutionary groups. With Washington’s knowledge and backing, these outfits have a long history of carrying out deadly operations against supporters of the Cuban

1. *How Far We Slaves Have Come*, Nelson Mandela and Fidel Castro, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1991, pp. 20, 22.



Cuban and Angolan soldiers on captured South African tank, March 23, 1988, at Cuito Cuanavale, southern Angola, where invading forces of white supremacist regime were dealt decisive defeat. Fernando González was stationed in south at that time. More than 375,000 Cuban volunteers fought South African invasions between 1975 and 1991.

Revolution—inside Cuba as well as the U.S. and elsewhere.

Three of the Cuban Five, as they are known around the world, were volunteer combatants in Angola. René González was a gunner in a tank battalion in 1977-79, and Gerardo Hernández led a Cuban-Angolan scouting platoon in 1989-90. Both served in the northern province of Cabinda. Their stories are told in *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, and Why They Should Be Free*.

Fernando González was stationed in southern Angola during the final stage of the protracted war against the U.S.-backed South African invaders.

‘We left for Angola enthusiastically’

In the summer of 1987 González graduated with honors from Cuba’s Higher Institute of International Relations (ISRI), which trains students for diplomatic service abroad.

“Part of the curriculum,” he wrote, “was military training, including practical work in reconnaissance. I graduated with an academic degree and the rank of lieutenant in the reserves of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR).” He was also an active member of the Union of Young Communists (UJC).

“Soon after finishing school almost our entire graduating class was called for active duty in the FAR. We all volunteered for internationalist missions in Angola and left enthusiastically.

“Cuban military collaboration in Angola, which had begun 12 years earlier, was by then legendary for its heroism and selfless internationalism,” González continued. “It was hard to find a Cuban who didn’t know someone who had carried out a mission and talked of the experiences they’d lived through there. It was an honor for a young revolutionary to go to Angola and to be part of that effort.”

“A few members of my graduating class who, for health reasons, weren’t allowed to join the group of us going to Angola appealed the decisions of the medical commission and fought to be accepted. They moved heaven and earth, and eventually were allowed to join.

“It’s an example of the importance we gave to being part of the experience in Angola and the enthusiasm with which we welcomed the opportunity.”

Battle of Cuito Cuanavale

Once in Angola, González wrote, “I spent the first six months in a unit stationed in the city of Lubango, in the south. There we received training in reconnaissance before we were assigned to different units. We were a relatively small group of about 35, so all knew each other by name.

“In Angola I learned more than I did from all the books I studied or could have studied.”

“During the time we were in Lubango, we read the intelligence reports about the events taking place in Cuito Cuanavale,” he said.

Toward the end of 1987, the apartheid regime’s forces launched a new invasion of Angola, backed by its allies, the Angolan counterrevolutionary group UNITA, based among the Ovimbundu people in the south. The invasion rapidly created a critical situation. Enemy forces encircled the town of Cuito Cuanavale in the southeast and threatened to inflict a major defeat on the Angolan army, the People’s Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (FAPLA). Cuba’s revolutionary leadership responded to appeals from the Angolan government by massively reinforcing its Angolan mission. “We even ran the risk of weakening our own defenses,” Cuban President Fidel Castro noted in 1991, “and we did so.”

For the first time since the war began, Cuban troops swept south toward the Angola-Namibia border in a powerful flanking operation while simultaneously fighting their way toward Cuito Cuanavale (see map on this page).

By March 1988 the combined forces of Cuban volunteers,

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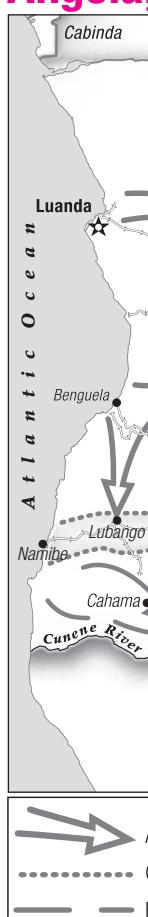
The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution

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Angola



'e in my life' alist mission

FAPLA troops, and Namibian liberation fighters had dealt the South African army a resounding defeat. The apartheid forces began retreating and sued for peace. A series of tripartite negotiating sessions, involving Angola, South Africa and Cuba, led to a December 1988 agreement, signed at the United Nations in New York. The South African government withdrew completely from Angola and ceded independence to Namibia. With Angola's independence assured, Cuban forces withdrew. The final units returned to Cuba between January and May 1991.

"Around the fourth month of training," González recounted, "officers from general headquarters visited our unit and met with all the officers and soldiers there to explain in detail the decision of the FAR high command and the leadership of the revolution that our troops would advance toward the border with Namibia."

"We understood the strategic importance of moving our units to the south of Angola, and the decision the Commander in Chief [Fidel Castro] had made to send to Angola units with great combat experience, such as the 50th

"No matter how much training you receive, certain things are more important to a revolutionary: development of character, sensitivity as a human being, a spirit of solidarity."

"Baraguá" Division. Even with our limited knowledge of military questions, we saw the decisive character of this historic moment.

"At that time," González continued, "the southernmost line of Cuban troops was along an axis that went from the port of Namibe in the west, passed through Lubango, and ended at Menongue in the east. Cuito Cuanavale was a ways past Menongue."

"As we had not finished our training, we remained in the rearguard of the Cuban forces, in Lubango, when the Southern Troop Grouping (ATS) moved south and headed for Cahama, Tchipa,



Right, Fernando González in Angola. Left, González (center, seated) and other Cuban soldiers in Angola, during moment of rest between military operations.

and other towns to occupy positions just a few kilometers from the border with Namibia."

Near the Namibian border

"When our training was over," González said, "a group of us were sent to ATS headquarters in Cahama, where we were assigned by the Intelligence Section to different locations. Most of our group went on the next day to find their designated units. I remained in Cahama, in the Intelligence Section, where I served as an officer of the com-

take command of a group of soldiers and go to the area where the attack took place to determine the needs of our comrades there."

Returning to Lubango, González said, "I joined the general staff of the ATS and participated as a translator in one of the meetings related to the tripartite negotiations between Angola, Cuba and South Africa."

Writing about this assignment, González commented, "I had studied English at ISRI. They put a lot of emphasis on languages there. But we were never trained as translators. Furthermore, the focus, at least back then, was not on communication so much as reading and expressing oneself verbally or in writing.

"I didn't participate as a translator because I was qualified to do it. It was a matter of necessity. In fact, after almost two years in Angola without practicing a language that I had learned only in school, my English was very rusty."

Experience I draw on in prison

Looking back on his experience in Angola, González said, "I learned a lot from the Cubans and Angolans around me. I learned from their spirit of camaraderie and solidarity under difficult conditions. From the modesty of so many. From the collective, team effort that prevailed despite cultural differences between the Cuban and Angolan combatants, and from the richness those very differences brought us. We learned from each other. Everyone felt a sense of responsibility."

"At the time I was 24-25 years old. The majority of the Cuban soldiers were younger, and many of the Angolans I met were only 16 or 17. During those two years I saw many Cubans who arrived in Angola as recruits with the physical and psychological traits of adolescents, and who transformed themselves into young men steeled by discipline and responsibility, with the capacity to confront difficulties, and with revolutionary consciousness."

"I myself was no stranger to this process of maturing under the impact of these conditions. I had barely graduated from the university. In Angola I learned—from both Angolans and Cubans—that no matter how much training

you may have received, certain things are more important for a revolutionary: the development of character, sensitivity as a human being, a spirit of solidarity.

"I learned more by seeing with my own eyes the effects of colonialism, and its consequences for a people—in this case the Angolan people—than I did from all the books I had studied or could have studied.

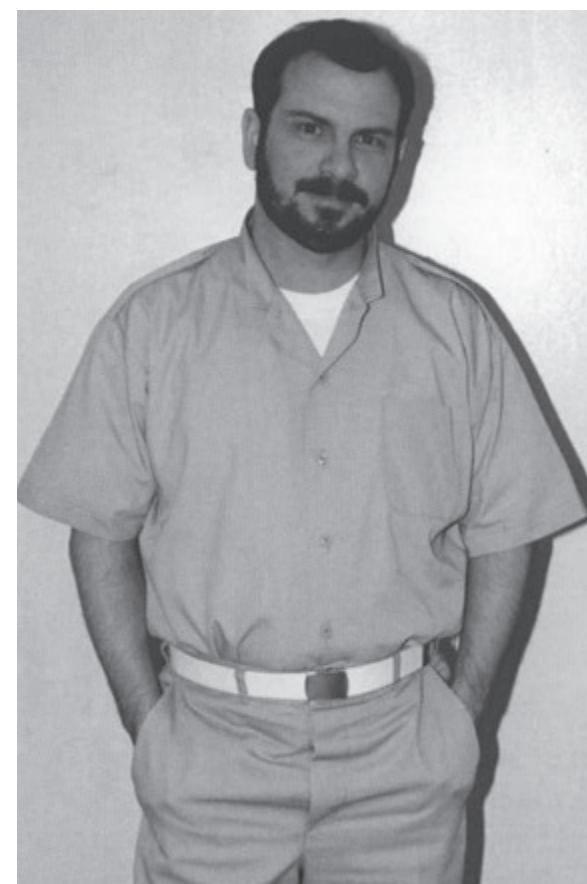
"I saw the fighting spirit of that people and their determination to overcome the past, their efforts to repel foreign aggression and defeat the foreign-backed counterrevolutionaries.

"That was a lesson I always draw on. Including here, notwithstanding conditions of prolonged imprisonment.

"Although I did not take part directly in combat I had the good fortune and feel proud to have been a member of the Southern Troop Grouping, especially during the decisive moments for the Cuban mission that led to the final victory."

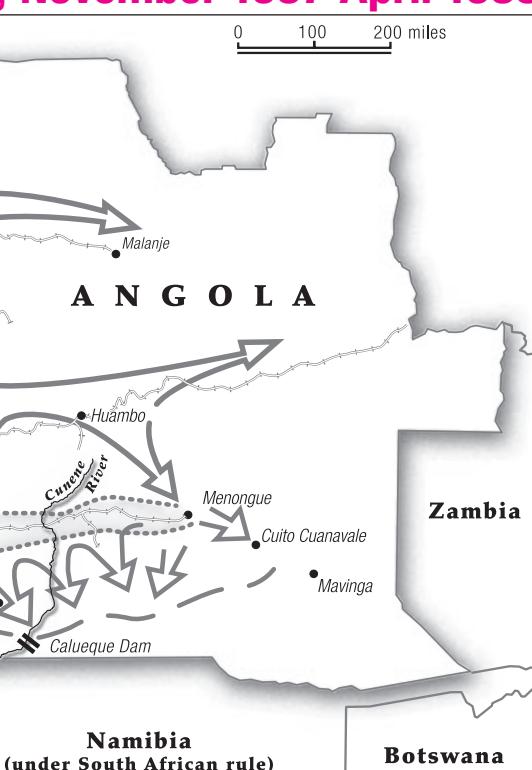
While in Angola, González was taken into membership in the Cuban Communist Party. He was also awarded two medals for his service. After his return to Cuba, González was released from active duty and began graduate studies in international relations at ISRI.

A few years later he began a new internationalist mission. This time in the United States.



Drawing on experiences in Angola, González says, has helped him "withstand conditions of prolonged imprisonment." Above, González at U.S. prison in Terre Haute, Ind. He is currently locked up at federal prison in Safford, Ariz.

, November 1987-April 1988



Arrows denote movement of Cuban-Angolan-SWAPO forces.

Cuban troop positions, November 1987.

Forward position of Cuban-Angolan-SWAPO troops, April 1988.

N. Chicago: 1 year since death from cops' Taser and beating

BY JOHN HAWKINS

NORTH CHICAGO, Ill.—More than 100 people joined a march and motorcade here Nov. 10, marking the first anniversary of the death of Darrin Hanna, 45, at the hands of local cops.

Hanna, an African-American, was brutally beaten by six police officers Nov. 6, 2011, and repeatedly shocked with a Taser during a 20-minute arrest for allegedly attacking his pregnant girlfriend. He died a week later.

Sponsored by a number of organizations, including Operation PUSH and the Far-South Suburban branch of the NAACP, the demonstration received a warm response from onlookers. Some residents joined the march as it made its way from the site where Hanna was beaten to City Hall. Some carried hand-lettered signs reading, "Prosecute killer cops," "Get killer cops off the streets," and "Fight police brutality."

"My son was beaten beyond recognition. There were seven men involved,

not one. We cannot stop now," Gloria Carr, Hanna's mother, said at the rally.

Opening the rally at City Hall, Illinois state Representative Rita Mayfield, a cousin of Hanna, thanked North Chicago Mayor Leon Rockingham, who also spoke at the rally, for granting a permit for the action.

"Only one of the seven officers who were there was fired. Not one of the other six intervened to stop it. That's depraved indifference," Mayfield said.

Family members of other police brutality victims were among the speakers. They included Wayne Watts, the uncle of Stephon Watts, a 15-year-old autistic youth killed by Calumet City cops in February; Margaret Rollins, mother of 17-year-old Jeffrey Lewis, gunned down by Waukegan cops in August 2008; and Rosalind Morgan, the wife of Howard Morgan, shot 28 times by Chicago cops in 2005.

Other speakers included Bishop Tavis Grant, Operation PUSH national



Militant/Laura Anderson

Protesters march in North Chicago Nov. 10 demanding end to killings and brutality by police. With bullhorn is Mark Clements, who had been tortured by cops and imprisoned for 28 years.

field director; Hanna family attorney Kevin O'Connor; Lake County Coroner Thomas Rudd; and attorney Stephen Potts. Potts filed a suit in federal court Nov. 5 against North Chicago police on behalf of Clarice Stingley for abuse of her 11-year-old son, Keywan Little.

"Mayor Rockingham and Chief [James] Jackson appear to be trying to

do something about police brutality," Ralph Peterson, Hanna's cousin and a principal organizer of the action, told participants. "But there's a virus in the North Chicago Police Department and we've got to get rid of it. At the very least those cops who were involved in Darrin's death should not work there anymore."

FBI and 'Petraeus scandal': right to privacy key issue for workers

BY LOUIS MARTIN

The right to privacy against cop spying is one of the central issues posed for working people by the ongoing scandal surrounding the recent resignation of former Gen. David Petraeus as head of the CIA, and in the Pentagon's investigation of "inappropriate emails" by Gen. John Allen, head of the U.S. and NATO troops in Afghanistan.

COMMENTARY

On Nov. 9, CIA Director Petraeus abruptly announced he was resigning after the FBI found he had an extramarital affair with Paula Broadwell, his biographer.

The media jumped on the story like piranhas on a piece of meat, taking part in the scurry to dig up details about the private lives of the generals. This worthless drivel, of no direct interest to the working class, is of a piece with the deepening factionalism, demagogic and degradation of political discourse that characterizes bourgeois politics in the U.S. today—between and within their two parties, in their armed forces and among their "intelligence community."

If the FBI has no problem spying on Washington's highest-ranking military and intelligence officials, much less so do they blink at spying, disrupting,

framing-up and victimizing working-class militants and others whom they deem threat to the interests of the capitalist rulers.

According to media reports, the FBI initiated an investigation after Jill Kelley, an acquaintance of both Petraeus and Allen, complained in June she had received threatening emails ultimately traced to Broadwell. While prying into Broadwell's communications, federal cops discovered her affair with Petraeus.

But as snoops were also poking into Kelley's emails, they found she had received thousands of communications from Allen. The Pentagon announced Nov. 13 that Allen was under investigation and his nomination to be the next commander of U.S. European Com-

mand and the commander of NATO forces in Europe was put on hold.

The events have prompted a spurt of media attention on the accelerated expansion of government spying on electronic communications. This is of direct interest to the working class.

"Authorized snooping has quietly but rapidly reached an unprecedented level in the United States," wrote Joseph Menn Nov. 17 in a Reuters dispatch. The FBI "can gather technical information about private citizens' email accounts with only a subpoena," which "do not require a judge's approval."

"The government has search and subpoena powers that can be used to get any and all information, whether it is stored on your computer or, as is more likely

these days, stored in the cloud," i.e. Internet providers' computers, Nicole Perlroth wrote Nov. 16 in the *New York Times*.

Under the 1986 Electronic Communications Privacy Act, not even a rubber-stamped warrant is required for emails six months old or older. "Even if e-mails are more recent, the federal government needs a search warrant only for 'unopened' e-mail," Perlroth reported. "The rest requires only a subpoena."

Internet provider Google reported Nov. 13 it received requests by U.S. government agencies for data on more than 16,000 accounts in the first half of the year, up from 12,000 in the prior half-year. It complied with 90 percent of them.

Thousands of Papuans rally for rights in Indonesia

BY LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY—Demonstrations in support of Papuan national rights took place Oct. 23 in West Papua and Papua, Indonesia's easternmost provinces.

Protests were held in Jayapura, provincial capital of Papua, nearby Sentani and also Wamena, the largest town in the Papua highlands. Several hundred Papuans also joined an action in Manado, the capital of North Sulawesi. Indonesian police opened fire on a rally in Manokwari, capital of West Papua, injuring five protesters.

Some 300 had joined the Manokwari rally, sponsored by the West Papua National Committee (KNPB), and attempted to march from the State University of Papua when police and the Indonesian military blocked their path. Eleven people were arrested.

The *Jakarta Globe* reported that police attempted to shut the rally down because the organizers didn't have the proper permit.

"Any kind of rally linked to human rights violations in Papua could never get a permit from the police," activist Markus Haluk told the *Globe*.

Formerly a Dutch colony like Indonesia, Papua was occupied by the Indonesian military in 1963 and formally incorporated into the country in

1969. The territory, with a population of more than 3.6 million, is currently administered as two provinces—Papua and West Papua.

Papuan struggles center around dispossession, marginalization and government repression. Last October the Papuan People's Congress in Jayapura drew some 5,000 participants from more than 200 tribes.

Indonesian government forces broke up the congress and arrested hundreds of delegates after participants raised the banned *Morning Star* flag and issued a declaration in support of independence. Five of the Papuan leaders were convicted of treason and sentenced to three years in prison.

"Prison conditions are very bad," Sam Awom from National Papua Solidarity told the *Militant* in a Sept. 28 interview in Jakarta. "Friends and family are not permitted to visit. Most political prisoners are in very bad health."

The People's Congress took place as thousands of miners, both Indonesian and Papuan, were on strike at the Freeport gold and copper mine in Indonesian Papua. Papuan tribes in the area supported the strike and raised their own demands over land rights and distribution of the mine's profits.

The day following the congress, six

participants were found dead behind a nearby military post. A report pointing to evidence that an Indonesian counter-terrorism unit, known as Detachment 88, is operating in Papua and has been involved in targeting and killing independence leaders was aired on ABC's "7.30 Report" Aug. 27.

Between May and August this year five KNPB activists, including the group's leader Mako Tabuni, were killed by government forces. Witnesses say that Detachment 88 was responsible.

ABC radio reported Nov. 6 that Paul Horis, another leader of the KNPB, was killed.

In a Sept. 28 interview at the office of the Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence (KontraS) in Jakarta, Sinung Kartu, head of the Division, Advocacy and Human Rights at KontraS, told the *Militant*, "We investigate cases of forced disappearance of human rights activists and protest military oppression in West Papua."

"People have paid more attention [to the struggle in West Papua] since the three-month Freeport strike," Feri Kusuma, chair of Network for Law in Central West Papua, said.

"There was more attention from the unions here. It makes organizing [solidarity] easier," she added.

In New International no. 6

Washington's Fifty-Year Domestic Contra Operation

by Larry Seigle

New International
The second assassination of Maurice Bishop
by Steve Clark

CUBA'S RECTIFICATION PROCESS
Two speeches by Fidel Castro

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Addresses the fight against attacks on democratic rights and political freedoms by the FBI, CIA and other U.S. government police agencies.

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Oppose Israeli assault on Gaza!

Working people worldwide should demand an immediate end to the Israeli assault on Gaza, where workers are not only getting caught in the crossfire, but are left to deal with the economic, social and political consequences, including destruction of residences, power, communications and other infrastructure; and loss of jobs and food supplies.

Workers worldwide should also champion the struggle of the Palestinian people against national oppression by the government of Israel, established on their dispossession. The Palestinian fight for rights and against discrimination takes place on many fronts: for land and water rights, the ability to live and work where they choose, the fight for jobs, release of political prisoners, and against repression by Israeli cops and military assaults.

The Israeli rulers' assault was provoked by Hamas, the ruling bourgeois political party in Gaza. Apparently under the false impression that the rise of Islamist regimes in the area from Egypt to Libya would strengthen their hand, Hamas' leaders decided to step up missile strikes into southern Israel.

Hamas' terrorist "strategy"—indiscriminate killing, hostage taking, etc.—is a dead end and po-

litical obstacle that continues to disorient, demobilize and weaken the Palestinian struggle. The only possible results are those playing out today—punishing military reprisals that fall disproportionately on toilers there.

Bourgeois misleaderships from Hamas to Fatah have dealt one setback after another to the political gains registered by the popular Intifada of the 1980s and '90s—mass uprisings that won sympathy around the world, including among Jews in Israel. Hamas' actions are designed to keep the masses out of politics. And they help the Israeli rulers garner support among working people in Israel for Tel Aviv's violent repression.

The just and necessary struggles of the Palestinian people won't go away, but will sharpen as the world crisis of capitalism deepens. Their fight for liberation is an integral part of the working-class struggle in the region.

The road forward in this fight is along the line of march to build a working-class revolutionary movement that can unite the toilers across national lines—Arabs, Jews and others—and fight to wrest power from the capitalist exploiters in what is now Israel, Gaza and the West Bank.

S. African farmworkers strike 'not over'

Continued from front page

as much as 63.9 percent. But the minimum wage went up only 5 rand.

After the strike began Nov. 5, farm owners offered to raise the minimum wage to 80 rand, claiming any more would force them out of business.

"The wages are far too little. The prices of milk, of mealie meal, of sugar are going up," Banga Behane, a pseudonym for a Zimbabwean immigrant who asked that his real name not be used for fear of reprisals, said in a phone interview Nov. 18. "This farm grows lemons, oranges and persimmons for export. The farmers drive the latest model cars, expensive cars. Look at the type of houses they live in. They can afford to pay."

Behane, a supervisor at a farm in De Doorns, earns 70 rand a day. Behane said he joined the strike because "if you cannot help the people you work with, you must join them."

Estimates on the number of farmworkers in the Western Cape range from 120,000 to 200,000. While most are South African natives, there are also thousands of immigrants from Zimbabwe and Lesotho. The heart of the strike has been in the grape vineyards, but the province is also a major producer of peaches, citrus and wheat.

"One of the biggest challenges the workers face is labor brokering," Mercia Andrews, a spokesperson for Mawubuye, a group that works with small farmers and farmworkers, told the *Militant*. "The brokers bring in workers who don't get housing and probably earn 50 or 60 rand a day because the labor broker takes his cut. They live in the informal settlements."

"The worker who lives on the farm is dependent on the farmer for housing and for transport into town to buy food as there's no public transport in many rural areas," Andrews said. "They buy food from the farmer's small shop. The farmer sometimes deducts all this from the workers' pay."

"The farmers try to exploit the situation of many of the foreign-born workers," said Anthony Muteti, a community organizer with People Against Suffering, Oppression and Poverty, a group that works with immigrant workers. "They try to get them to accept any kind of work at any kind of wages. By paying different wages they try to divide the farmworkers by nationality."

After the strike started a coalition of unions, farmworker committees, and nongovernmental organizations joined together to support the workers' demands. The coalition includes the Congress of South African Trade Unions, which is allied with the African National Congress government; the Commercial, Stevedoring, Agricultural and

Allied Workers' Union, which is allied with the Democratic Left Front, an opposition coalition; Women on Farms Project; Mawubuye and other organizations.

About a week into the strike, COSATU and some coalition members called for a suspension of the walkout for two weeks while the government reviews the minimum wage. Mawubuye and other coalition members opposed the suspension.

"Very few workers are in the unions. Of all these workers that we managed to address as part of getting them to understand the need to go back to work, some have gone back but the majority have rejected the plea," Katishi Masemola, general secretary of the Food and Allied Workers Union, a COSATU-member union, told the *Militant*. He also noted the impact of strikes by 100,000 mine workers across the country that peaked in October.

"Let me say that the spark that gave rise to the widespread strikes in the mining sector found its expression in De Doorns and then spread like wildfire throughout the Western Cape," Masemola said.

The strike is a "wake-up call," he stated. "De Doorns, where this strike started, is the same farming town where four years ago there were xenophobic attacks by local South Africans on foreign nationals, accusing them of working cheap or taking jobs that undercut wages. Now local as well as foreign workers from Zimbabwe and Lesotho have joined forces and united and sustained this strike action."

"Never before has there been a strike in the farming industry of this nature," Carmen Louw, a spokesperson for Women on Farms Project, said in a phone interview. "The farming industry will never be the same."

Platinum miners end strike

Meanwhile, 28,000 miners at Anglo American Platinum (Amplats) in the North West province returned to work Nov. 15 after a two-month strike.

After repeatedly stating it had dismissed the strikers, Amplats finally agreed to a one-time payment of 4,500 rand to each miner, a pretax wage increase of 400 rand a month and to take no reprisals against returning strikers.

While this is far short of the 8,000 rand a month increase that strikers had demanded, "every worker is happy because this is the first time since a 1996 strike that we won something at Amplats," miner and strike committee member Evans Ramokga said in a phone interview. "In 1996 the strikers were dismissed, some of them jailed."

"We must retreat to organize more, to bring up more strategies. We still have a lot of work to do."

Ireland: abortion rights

Continued from front page

refused her several requests for an abortion and told them Ireland "was a Catholic country," BBC reported. When asked if he thought his wife would still be alive if she had been given an abortion, Halappanavar told BBC, "Of course, no doubt about it."

"The doctors' concern should not be the religion of the country, but the safety of their patients. If a woman's life is threatened it should be the woman's choice," Kayleigh Spier, 24, told the *Militant* at the demonstration.

Protesters here marched behind a banner that read, "Never Again" and chanted "legislate now!" Placards included, "This Does Not Happen in a Civilised Country," and "Dáil Dithers, Women Die," referring to Dáil Éireann, the lower house of the Irish parliament.

"A new law is the least that needs to be done—it can be a stepping stone to widening access to abortion," said Roisin Mooney, 20, an art student who helped make banners and came with others from the National College of Art and Design.

"The government does not need to hold a referendum," Mooney said. Prime Minister Enda Kenny can sign a law tomorrow implementing the previous decision that abortion can take place if a woman's life is threatened."

Abortion in Ireland is illegal except in cases where doctors assess there is a threat to the woman's life. At the same time, doctors face possible imprisonment for performing an abortion if their decision to do so is found to conflict with Ireland's constitutional protection of "the life of the unborn." Consequently, many women travel to the U.K. for an abortion.

It is illegal for Irish doctors to advocate an abortion or make an appointment for a woman to have an abortion abroad.

"Tonight's rally is another step in a long struggle to protect women's lives and their choices," Sinéad Ahern from the Irish Choice Network told demonstrators. "Twenty years have passed since the X case and nothing has been done," he said, referring to an attempt in 1992 to prevent a pregnant 14-year-old from traveling to the U.K. to have an abortion. The Supreme Court eventually overturned a High Court decision to stop the woman, who had been raped. Successive governments have refused to legislate on the basis of that ruling, leaving decisions in the hands of individual doctors.

"We only know about Halappanavar's death, because her husband went to the press. How many other cases like this have there been?" Ahern said.

"Halappanavar should not have died but it is not necessary to change the law—pro-choice forces are just using this to push their own views," said Marina Vazhun, an assistant accountant originally from Belarus who was watching the march as it made its way down O'Connell Street.

"Halappanavar should not have had to die for the law to be changed, and it should be," Ashling Donahue, a 19-year-old shop worker, who was also watching the action, told the *Militant*. "I support abortion in some cases—if a woman's life is threatened, if she has been raped or is too young to raise a child."

Doing nothing on this issue "is not an option," Eamon Gilmore, minister for foreign affairs and trade, told reporters Nov. 16, after talks with the Indian ambassador, according to the *Irish Times*.

A Nov. 18 article in the *Sunday Independent* predicted there would be a majority in the Dáil to legalize the 1992 Supreme Court ruling on the X case, even if such legislation didn't include a clause ruling out abortion on demand.

"There has been a change in attitudes over generations on this question," Mooney told the *Militant* at the march. "My mother is religious and she is pro-choice and she would not have got that from her background growing up in a rural area."

Pamela Holmes and Hugo Wils contributed to this article.

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