

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuban workers, backed by their government, rebuild after Sandy  
— PAGE 9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 76/NO. 46 DECEMBER 17, 2012

## Last week of 'Militant' drive was best so far, 12 days to go!

BY LOUIS MARTIN

With two weeks to go in the international campaign to sell 3,500 *Militant* subscriptions by Dec. 16, we  
**Continued on page 3**

**ALL OUT IN FIGHT FOR GOAL!**  
— See editorial, page 11

### Fall 'Militant' subscription campaign Oct. 13 - Dec. 16 (week 7)

Country	quota	sold	%	3,500
UNITED STATES				
Claysville, PA**	10	12	120%	Should be ..... 2,232
Redding, CA**	10	12	120%	
Longview, WA**	12	12	100%	
Denver*	6	5	83%	
Yakima, WA**	15	12	80%	
Seattle	210	160	76%	
Twin Cities	175	125	71%	
Miami	120	81	68%	
New York	450	302	67%	
Washington	110	72	65%	
Houston	150	98	65%	
Chicago	230	142	62%	
Omaha, NE†	80	49	61%	
Des Moines	180	110	61%	
Los Angeles	200	121	61%	
Rio Grande V. TX†	25	15	60%	
Boston	110	65	59%	
San Francisco	225	124	55%	
Atlanta	185	97	52%	
Lincoln, NE	35	18	51%	
Philadelphia	150	65	43%	
Greensboro†	5	2	40%	
New Orleans†	5	2	40%	
Drayton, ND†	3	1	33%	
Tampa†	15	5	33%	
Albuquerque, NM	3	0	0%	
Muscoda, WI	5	0	0%	
Total U.S.	2724	1707	63%	
Prisoners**	13	10	77%	
UNITED KINGDOM				
Manchester	80	74	93%	
London	200	177	89%	
UK Total	280	251	90%	
CANADA*				
Montreal	133	110	83%	
Vancouver†	12	6	50%	
Canada Total	145	116	80%	
NEW ZEALAND				
	130	82	63%	
AUSTRALIA				
	90	66	73%	
Total	3382	2232	64%	
Should be	3500	2722	78%	

†New to scoreboard \*Raised goal

## Locked-out sugar workers reject contract 4th time by 55%

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

GRAND FORKS, N.D.—By a margin of 55 percent, members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union who work at American Crystal Sugar factories in Minnesota, North Dakota and Iowa rejected the company's contract offer for the fourth time.

After a long, drawn-out lockout—now entering its 17th month—everyone expected a close vote on Dec. 1.

"What this shows is that people are really pissed off at the company," Terry Holm, a retired sugar worker from the Hillsboro plant in North Dakota, told the *Militant*. "We have a degree of pride out here in the country, which they can't take away from us. We have dignity too," he added.

American Crystal Sugar Co. has refused to make any significant changes to its contract demands. These include outsourcing union work with nonunion contract workers, gutting the grievance procedure, eroding seniority rights, increasing health care costs at whim and eliminating health coverage at retirement for new hires.

The latest contract offer was essentially the same as the bosses' three earlier proposals, which were rejected by margins of 96, 90 and then this past June 63 percent.

**Continued on page 6**

## Actions across Egypt protest gov't anti-democratic moves

Islamists countermobilize, defend president's declared powers



Hossam el-Hamalawy

Tens of thousands march to presidential palace in Cairo Dec. 4 to protest decree by Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi that strengthen powers of executive office.

BY SETH GALINSKY

Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi's Nov. 22 decree that all his decisions are "final and binding and cannot be appealed" provoked a debate and protests around the country.

The size and scope of street actions illustrate the challenge facing the Muslim Brotherhood in its efforts to clamp down on rights and space for working people to organize, which were opened through the popular fight to overthrow the tyranny of Hosni Mubarak in February 2011.

Demonstrations against the de-

cre—and a draft constitution approved a week later by a Muslim Brotherhood-dominated constituent assembly—have taken place in Alexandria, Beni Suef, Beheira, Qena, Ismailia, Port Said, North Sinai, and Mahalla—a center of union fights  
**Continued on page 11**

## 'Workers need own party,' say socialist candidates in Omaha

BY JOE SWANSON

OMAHA, Neb.—Maura DeLuca, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Omaha, and Jacob Perasso, the party's candidate for City Council District 4, launched their campaign going door to door in working-class neighborhoods in North and South Omaha over the Dec. 1-2 weekend.

The primary election is scheduled for April. The top two vote getters for each office will face each other in the general election in May.

"Nothing has changed for working people as a result of the 2012 presidential and congressional elections," said DeLuca, who was the SWP candidate for U.S. vice president this year. "The Democrats and Republicans govern in the interests of the ruling capital-



Militant/Helen Meyers

Jacob Perasso, Socialist Workers Party candidate for City Council District 4 in Omaha, Neb., talks with Valerie Eure Dec. 2. Party there is also running Maura DeLuca, who was SWP candidate for vice president in 2012, for city mayor.

ist class, who are cranking up the exploitation of living labor in reaction to an historic worldwide crisis of capitalism. Workers need our own party, an independent working-class party,  
**Continued on page 4**

## Bangladesh factory fire sparks garment workers' fight for safety

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Thousands have demonstrated daily in Dhaka, Bangladesh, since a fire in a garment factory there Nov. 24 killed more than 120 workers.

While descriptions of conditions at the plant show a disaster waiting to happen, the predictable frame-up of workers for the fire has begun to take shape, with unspecified accusations of sabotage by government officials.

Workers were trapped inside the  
**Continued on page 7**

### Also Inside:

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SWP files to keep exemption from gov't 'disclosure' laws 8

UN votes 'observer state' status to occupied territories 10

# 'Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution'

Below are excerpts from *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos and Yolanda Ferrer. The book is one of four offered on special with a Militant subscription. (See ad on page 3.)

In the first excerpt, from a 1985 interview with New York Times correspondent Tad Szulc, Espín, a leader of the Cuban Revolution, describes how she became a Marxist in the course of the revolutionary struggle against the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista.

The second excerpt is from a 1966 speech by Fidel Castro, the revolution's central leader, at the fifth national meeting of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC). The third is from the main report Espín, then FMC president, gave to the Second Congress of the mass women's organization. Copyright © 2012 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

Something similar happened to the rest of us. I hadn't read the Communist Manifesto, but I expressed ideas about social justice that one can find in the Manifesto. Frank spoke in a similar vein. He had a very strong class consciousness. He came from a modest background and was outraged at the differences between classes. It angered him that there was a class of rich people and a class of poor people.

**SZULC:** You're saying, it seems, that many young people arrived independently at conclusions that later would be Marxist . . .

**ESPÍN:** Exactly, and in my case as well. I knew very little of the fundamentals of Marxism. But over time I began to realize that I agreed with Marxist ideas—especially as we found ourselves, through struggle, more in contact with the peasants of the Second Front.<sup>2</sup>

I'd say that for the big majority of us—those who came from the university as I did, and even those who were illiterate, as were many of the peasants—we gradually moved in that direction out of pure necessity.

**SZULC:** Due to a lack of alternatives?

**ESPÍN:** No, because it was the utter



Above, Editorial Verde Olivo; right, Council of State Office of Historical Affairs

Above, delegates at Congress of Peasants in Arms held in Second Front liberated area, September 1958. Right, Fidel Castro and Vilma Espín (right) at founding congress of Federation of Cuban Women, held in Havana, August 1960.



truth that things had to be changed. And even more so when I was in the Second Front, the last six months of the war, when we experienced even more harshly how people there lived. They had no medical care, no education. They lived in terrible conditions. The region was rich in coffee, but the peasants were tremendously poor. In addition, their land was taken. Their huts were burned. They were killed. And all this went unpunished.

As we learned more of this history, we increasingly came to realize that the changes would have to be very big. We found ourselves, little by little, on the road to Marxism without even discussing it.

Vilma Espín  
May 15, 1985

Arriving here this evening, I commented to a compañero that the phenomenon of women's participation in the revolution is a revolution within another revolution. If I were asked what is the most revolutionary thing the revolution is doing, I would answer that it is precisely this—the revolution that is occurring among the women of our country. . . .

If women in our country were doubly exploited, doubly humiliated in the past, then this simply means that women in a socialist revolution should be doubly revolutionary.

And perhaps this is the explanation, or at least the social basis, for the resolute, enthusiastic, firm, and loyal support given by Cuban women to this revolution.

Fidel Castro  
December 9, 1966

We had to change women's mentality—accustomed as they were to playing a secondary role in our society. Our women had endured years of discrimination. We had to show women their own possibilities, their ability to do all kinds of work. We had to make women feel the urgent needs of our revolution in the construction of a new life. We had to change both women's image of themselves and society's image of women.

We started our work by simple tasks that allowed us to reach out to women, to raise them beyond the narrow, limited horizons of their existence. To explain the revolution's purpose and the part they would have to play in the process.

From the very beginning, we pursued a double goal:

To raise consciousness through political education, so that new tasks could be performed.

To raise the political level through the tasks themselves.

Vilma Espín  
November 1974



## SUBSCRIPTION SPECIALS

**VILMA ESPÍN:** In terms of social questions, by 1957 Frank's<sup>1</sup> views had begun to change. He spoke of the need for major social changes, that without this there would be no revolution. Although he still didn't have a clear idea of what these changes would be, he raised ideas that, I would say, converged with Marxism.

1. Frank (1934-1957), central leader in Oriente province of July 26 Movement, main revolutionary force fighting Batista's dictatorship. Murdered in Santiago by regime's forces.

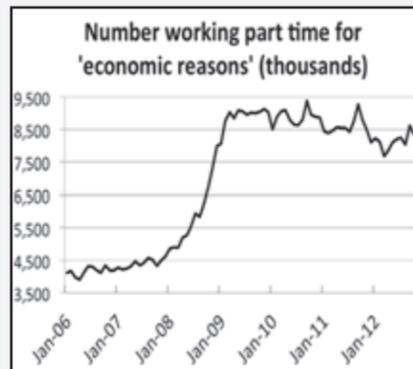
2. The Frank País Second Eastern Front, initiated March 1958, became liberated zone in northeastern Oriente province under command of Raúl Castro.

## THE MILITANT

### Millions forced into part-time jobs

The 'Militant' reports on the bosses' drive to boost profits and productivity in reaction to the world capitalist crisis, including how millions of workers are left jobless or forced into part-time work.

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CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT, 306 W. 37TH ST., 10TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018.

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Submissions to the Militant may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.

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

# 12 days to go in int'l drive

Continued from front page

now stand at 2,232. This past week was among the most successful, with 348 subscriptions sold. But a major challenge remains.

In many areas *Militant* readers and distributors have increased the pace of door-to-door sales in working-class neighborhoods, with good results.

This is how 47 subscriptions were sold in New York this past weekend, including four as part of a two-day regional effort in Omaha, Neb.

"I always had admiration for Cuba," Valery Smart, a social worker in the foster care system who lives in Laurelton, a Black neighborhood in Queens, said in response to the paper's coverage on the living revolution there as she bought a subscription.

"The aid they give to Jamaica and Haiti is selfless," she added. Smart also purchased *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning*, two books by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, offered at reduced prices with a subscription. (See ad on this page.)

Last weekend, *Militant* readers from Houston and the Rio Grande Valley in Texas sold nine subscriptions door to door in Houston.

The weekend activities included a Militant Labor Forum Dec. 1 as well as a class on *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* the following morning.

A few days earlier, *Militant* supporters

Jacque Henderson and Steve Warshell from Houston visited striking Teamster workers at the Pioneer flour mill in San Antonio. (See article on page 6.)

"People wanted to talk, more about what workers are facing around the world than about their strike," wrote Henderson. Seven of the 15 workers on the picket line signed up for the paper, including three renewals.

"This week *Militant* readers and distributors in Canada sold 17 subscriptions in Montreal, Vancouver and Holguín, Cuba," John Steele wrote from Montreal.

Beverly Bernardo sold five in Holguín to unionists from Canada participating in the 7th International Colloquium for the Liberation of the Cuban Five and Against Terrorism. The five are revolutionaries, jailed in the U.S. for more than 14 years on trumped-up conspiracy charges.

Bernardo was one of hundreds from around the world, including some from Canada, who attended the annual event.

Three regions raised their goal this week: Canada, from 140 to 145; Denver from five to six; and Longview, Wash., from eight to 12.

"The *Militant* tells the story of working-class people. It tells the truth," said Shelly Porter recounting to Mary Martin and John Naubert, *Militant* supporters from Seattle, her sales pitch to coworkers, friends and family members who have signed up for the socialist newsweekly.

"As I tell people about the *Militant*, I never take 'no' for an answer. I know

## Revolutionary books sell at conference on Mideast studies



Militant/Joel Britton

DENVER—Pathfinder Press, which publishes books on revolutionary working-class politics, had a booth here Nov. 17-20 at the annual conference of the Middle East Studies Association of North America. Participants bought more than three dozen books.

Translations of Pathfinder books by other publishers around the world included editions in Arabic and Farsi. *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* were among the top sellers.

—JIM ALTENBERG

these people!" she added.

Porter is a member of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 21 in Longview and was involved in a eight-month fight in 2011-2012 to even-

tually stop a union-busting drive at the EGT Development grain terminal there.

Join the international effort! You can order a bundle or subscriptions blanks at themilitant.com or (212) 244-4899.

## 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."

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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 10

## 'Pleased to learn about movement,' says first-time contributor in Omaha

BY SUSAN LAMONT

At the end of week five of the \$100,000 Socialist Workers Party fund, which ends Dec. 23, contributors around the country have sent in \$37,830.

Contributors in Des Moines continue to lead the effort, having sent in \$1,743—73 percent of their goal of \$2,400.

Workers in Omaha sent in their first contributions totaling \$71 this past week. This means every area with pledges has sent in some funds. With only four weeks left extra attention is needed in every area to bring the fund home, in full and on time.

One of the first-time contributors in Omaha is Maria Rosa Diaz, a worker who said she was making a \$33 "down payment" for the fund after purchasing a subscription to the *Militant* and six Pathfinder titles, including the four on special sale during the subscription drive. Diaz is originally from El Salvador and fought against the U.S.-backed military government there during the civil war of the 1980s.

"I was so pleased to learn about the *Militant* and the books and find out about this movement," Diaz said. "I learned about the Cuban Revolution when I was six. My father was a doctor who treated everyone, even if they didn't have money. He listened to a radio station that supported the Cuban Revolution."

New contributors are being won as part of the simultaneous effort to sell *Militant* subscriptions door to door in working-class communities. In New York, 20 people have contributed to the fund for the first time. Over the Dec. 1-2 weekend, a young woman in Far Rockaway, Queens—an area hit hard by Hurricane Sandy—gave \$20, and three other workers in the city contributed a

total of \$25.

In Houston, 25 workers and young people donated \$1,200 to the Party-Building Fund at a Dec. 1 Militant Labor Forum titled "Legalize Immigrant Workers Now" that drew half a dozen students from University of Texas-Pan American in the Rio Grande Valley, including two who contributed to the fund for the first time.

The Socialist Workers Party is a revolutionary workers party that depends on contributions from workers and young people to fund its work.

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

### Party-Building Fund Week 5 of 9

Area	Quota	Collected	%
Des Moines*	\$2,400	\$1,743	73%
Miami	\$3,000	\$1,650	55%
Seattle	\$8,500	\$4,490	53%
Twin Cities	\$6,000	\$3,040	51%
San Francisco	\$13,500	\$6,194	46%
Atlanta	\$8,600	\$3,095	36%
New York	\$20,000	\$6,703	34%
Los Angeles	\$8,500	\$2,795	33%
Chicago	\$9,500	\$2,949	31%
Boston	\$4,000	\$1,210	30%
Washington	\$7,500	\$2,145	29%
Lincoln	\$250	\$50	20%
Houston	\$3,500	\$630	18%
Philadelphia	\$4,200	\$665	16%
Omaha	\$600	\$71	12%
Other		\$400	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$100,050</b>	<b>\$37,830</b>	<b>38%</b>
<b>Should Be</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>\$55,556</b>	<b>56%</b>

\* Raised goal

# US-Australia summit discusses deepening alliance against China

BY RON POULSEN

SYDNEY—A top U.S. government delegation led by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta met their Australian counterparts led by Foreign Minister Robert Carr and Defence Minister Stephen Smith in Perth, Western Australia, Nov. 13-14. The annual bilateral summit was held to discuss the “consolidation” of deepening military ties between the U.S. and its imperialist ally flanked by the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

The meeting discussed steps first announced when President Barack Obama visited Australia a year ago. Some 250 U.S. Marines have been training at a military base in Darwin in the Northern Territory since April 4. This rotating force is yet to be expanded to the projected 2,500 over the next few years.

The boosted ties between Washington and Canberra are part of the U.S. government’s military and foreign policy “pivot” back to the Pacific and Asia, designed to counter the challenge to U.S. hegemony from the economic and military rise of China.

Smith affirmed future “enhanced access” by U.S. Air Force planes to airfields and bombing ranges in northern Australia and by U.S. warships to Australian naval facilities, especially the Stirling base near Perth, on the Indian Ocean.

But under pressure from the government of China, Australia’s largest trading partner, Canberra is proceeding more cautiously than Washington had hoped.

According to the Nov. 6 *NT News*, a U.S. proposal to triple eventual Marine numbers in Darwin to 7,500 in an “air

ground task force” has been shelved. Another option raised by a Pentagon report to the U.S. Congress in August to base a U.S. aircraft carrier battle group, including nuclear submarines, at the base south of Perth has been sidestepped by Canberra.

“Australia’s geography, political stability, and existing defense capabilities and infrastructure offer strategic depth and other significant military advantages to the United States in light of the growing range of Chinese weapons systems, US efforts to achieve a more distributed defense posture, and the increasing strategic importance of Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean,” noted the August report.

## Socialist campaign in Omaha

Continued from front page here in Omaha and around the world.”

The Omaha Socialist Workers ticket sparked interest as campaigners talked to workers from packinghouses and other factories, construction workers, housecleaners and unemployed and disabled workers. Many welcomed the opportunity to discuss the deteriorating work and living conditions they face, and what workers can do to address this.

“I used to think the Republicans were better, since President Reagan granted amnesty to immigrants, then I switched to Democrats because they seemed more for the workers, but it seems like they all make promises they don’t keep,” a meat packer at one of the many large plants here, who asked that his name not be used because of possible reprisals by his boss, said. “I feel like we’re modern day slaves in the factories.”

He bought a subscription to the *Militant*, the campaign newspaper, and a copy of *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution*.

Campaigners found interest among many workers about the history of revolutionary working-class battles—experiences that show how through the course of struggle workers are capable of transforming themselves to lead the fight for working-class political power and to reorganize society in the interests of the toiling majority.

Eighteen subscriptions to the *Militant* were sold over the weekend along with two copies of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and one copy of the Spanish edition of *Women in Cuba*.



Cpl. Jacob D. Barber

U.S. Marines and Australian soldiers gather around Australian tank for debriefing after joint exercise at Mount Bundy Training Area in Australia’s Northern Territory, Sept. 5.

### SWP LA mayoral candidate on ballot

As we go to press, the *Militant* has learned that Norton Sandler, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Los Angeles, has been certified for the ballot by authorities there. The Los Angeles City Clerk’s office claimed Eleanor García, SWP candidate for city School Board in District 2, did not submit enough valid signatures to be placed on the ballot.

“This changes nothing about my campaign,” García told the *Militant*. “Norton and I will be joining workers wherever they fight and going door to door, presenting a fighting program to meet the attacks the bosses and their government are pressing down on us. Adelante!”

## Supreme Court hears challenge to Texas affirmative action program

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The U.S. Supreme Court in early October heard arguments on whether one aspect of affirmative action in admissions should remain in place at the University of Texas. The decision will affect public and private universities nationwide.

The case involves a lawsuit filed by Abigail Fisher, a 22-year-old Caucasian, who was turned down for admission to the University of Texas at Austin four years ago. Fisher has since graduated from Louisiana State University.

Supporters of the university’s “pursuit of diversity” program range from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to the U.S. military.

University of Texas schools, under state law, guarantee admission to stu-

dents graduating in the top 10 percent of their high school class, which accounts for three-quarters of university admissions. Because Texas schools are highly segregated, the plan has resulted in admission for a higher percentage of students from schools whose student body is overwhelmingly Black and Latino.

This system is not being challenged in this case. At issue is a separate program under which the university considers race as a factor for admission. The Supreme Court is revisiting this issue nine years after it upheld a similar program at the University of Michigan, ruling that universities can take race into account as part of a “holistic review.” At the time the court said it expected this law to remain in place for at least the next 25 years.

In defending its program, the University of Texas argues that just admitting the top 10 percent of high school graduates leaves out some “elite” students. The university said this excludes “the African-American or Hispanic child of successful professionals in Dallas who has strong SAT scores ... but falls in the second decile of his or her high school class (or attend an elite private school that does not rank),” reported the *New York Times*.

More than 70 briefs have been  
Continued on page 11

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### FLORIDA

#### Miami

**The Working-Class Fight for Political Space in the Mideast.** Speaker: Tom Baumann, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m. 7100 Biscayne Blvd, Suite 306A. Tel.: (305) 757-8869.

### IOWA

#### Des Moines

**The Class Struggle in South Africa.** Speaker: Maggie Trowe, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m. 3707 Douglas Ave. Tel.: (515) 707-1779.

### TEXAS

#### Houston

**The Federal Budget, Capitalist Crisis and the Working Class.** Speaker: Steve Warshell, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m. 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-50L. Tel.: (713) 688-4919.

### WASHINGTON

#### Seattle

**No Worker Has to Die on the Job!** Fri., Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m. 5418 Rainier Ave. S. Tel.: (206) 323-1755.

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Auckland

**Education Is a Right! ‘Charter Schools’ and ‘Efficiencies’: Gov’t Deepens Class Inequality in Education.** Speaker: Annalucia Vermont, Communist League. Fri., Dec. 14, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5 waged, \$2 unwaged. 4/125 Grafton Road. Tel.: (09) 369-1223.

### The Working-Class Alternative in the Omaha Election

Hear:

**Maura DeLuca,**

Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Omaha

**Jacob Perasso**

SWP candidate for Omaha City Council, District 4

**Saturday, Dec. 8**

**30th and Q, South Omaha YMCA**

Dinner: 6:30 p.m. Program: 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5 for program, \$5 for dinner

Information: 402-217-4906  
or swpomaha@fastmail.net

# Chicago cop torture victims 'should be out of jail already'

BY JOHN HAWKINS

CHICAGO—More than 100 Illinois inmates, whose convictions are based at least in part on confessions elicited from them by cop torture, came one step closer to getting another day in court here Nov. 14.

Appearing before Cook County Criminal Court Chief Judge Paul Biebel, lawyers filed a class-action petition seeking new hearings for the incarcerated victims.

In June 2010, police Lt. Jon Burge was convicted on federal charges of perjury and obstruction of justice for lying about the torture in a civil lawsuit. In January 2011 he was sentenced to four and a half years in prison.

In the original trials or appeals of the more than 100 inmates subjected to cop torture and coercion, attempts to have their confessions thrown out were rejected.

The class-action petition argues that new trials, which include another look at the use of defendants' statements to convict them, is legally warranted in light of court rulings that show cops systematically tortured African-American men during interrogations.

About 20 demonstrators greeted attorneys as they made their way into the Cook County Criminal Court Building. Among them was Jeanette Plummer, the mother of Johnnie Plummer, one of the plaintiffs named in the petition. "My son was 15 years old at the time of his arrest and he's been in jail for 21 years," she said. "Jon Burge beat and tortured him. Anyone connected with Burge should be out of jail already."

"Four and a half years is not long enough for what Burge did," Tiffany Johnson, whose brother Stanley Howard is among the 100 prisoners, told the *Militant* before going into the hearing. "In fact all the officers working with Burge should be prosecuted. My brother's out date is 2023. While he was on death row Governor Ryan pardoned him, but he's still in prison. He needs to be out now."

At the brief hearing Judge Biebel set a court date for Jan. 15.

Following the hearing, protesters gathered in the hallway outside the courtroom where Joey Mogul, a plaintiff attorney, thanked them for coming out to show their support.

"Cook County should do what other jurisdictions have done when faced with overwhelming proof of systematic falsification of evidence or coerced confessions and deal with this in its totality," Mogul said. "Mayor Emanuel says he wants to put this shameful episode in Chicago's history behind us. The way to do that is to grant all the Burge-era torture survivors new hearings."



Nov. 14 demonstration outside Cook County courthouse in Chicago backing class-action lawsuit demanding new hearings for more than 100 prisoners sent to jail on confessions extracted from torture by cops in city under direction of police Lt. Jon Burge.

## Australia protests denounce use of Tasers by cops

BY JOANNE KUNIANSKY AND BOB AIKEN

SYDNEY, Australia—Sixty people attended a public meeting here Nov. 16 organized by the Indigenous Social Justice Association to protest cops' increasing use of Tasers.

Two days earlier more than 100 people marched on the police station in Kempsey, a country town some 260 miles north of Sydney, to protest the use of Tasers on a 14-year-old Aboriginal youth by police in January 2011.

In a story aired Nov. 14 on *Four Corners*, an ABC TV program, Kevin Henshaw from Kempsey Aboriginal Legal Service said the youth's treatment was "akin to torture." Footage showed police administering Taser shocks while he was on his knees. As he struggled to breathe and begged for help, cops can be heard threatening, "Keep up the language and I'll zap you again. Understood? So shut your mouth."

The outcome of an inquest into the death of 21-year-old Brazilian student Roberto Laudisio Curti at the hands of the New South Wales police was also released Nov. 14. Laudisio died March 18

after police used a Taser on him 14 times and sprayed capicum (pepper spray) in his face. Police continued to Taser him after he was on the ground, handcuffed, with cops kneeling on his chest.

New South Wales Coroner Mary Jerram said the officers responsible for Laudisio's death used excessive force in abuse of police powers and were "in some instances even thuggish." Despite these findings, she recommended only that the five police who attacked Laudisio be subject to internal discipline, without having to face any criminal charges.

Speakers at the Sydney meeting included Ray Jackson from the Indigenous Social Justice Association, Dr. Thalia Anthony, law lecturer at the University of Technology Sydney; David Shoebridge, Greens member of NSW Parliament; and Dr. Carl Hughes, an independent forensic pathologist.

The panelists demanded police be charged and punished for their actions and called for an investigation independent of the police department. At the same time, they put forward the view that better training could help

change "police culture."

Several speakers pointed to an October 2012 report by the NSW Ombudsman. The report said almost 30 percent of police Taser victims are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples, who make up only 2.5 percent of the state's population, and 41 youth aged 15 or under had Tasers used against them by NSW police over the last four years.

Jackson read a statement sent to the meeting by the Laudisio family from Brazil calling for the five police involved to be charged with manslaughter and pointing out that Laudisio was tortured with drawn-out Taser shots while handcuffed. The coroner's "recommendations are too little and too light for what has really happened. Little justice has been done," the statement concluded.

**Contribute to the Militant Prisoners' Fund**

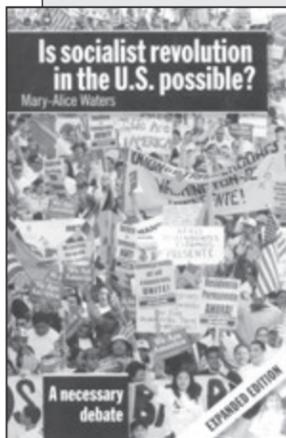
Send contributions to the Militant, 306 W. 37th St., 10th Floor, NY, NY 10018

### Recommended reading

#### Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?

A necessary debate

By Mary-Alice Waters



"To think that a socialist revolution in the U.S. is not possible you would have to believe not only that the ruling families of the imperialist countries and their economic w i z a r d s have found a way to

'manage' capitalism. You would also have to close your eyes to the spreading imperialist wars, civil wars, and economic, financial, and social crises we are in the midst of."

—\$7

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## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



December 18, 1987

PRICE, Utah—Nineteen union coal miners and eight company personnel were killed on Dec. 19, 1984, in a fire at the Wilberg mine near here.

Recently, the U.S. appeals court in San Francisco ruled that the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration "overstepped its bounds" by allowing only two-entry mining in the Wilberg and Deer Creek mines prior to the 1984 disaster.

In their push for higher profits, the operators have been trying to reduce the number of entries used to set up a longwall mining section.

Under federal law, two-entry mining is only allowed in mines constructed prior to 1969, or if MSHA grants a "variance."

The court said MSHA violated the Federal Mine Safety Act by disregarding the rights of United Mine Workers of America members when it did not include them in decision making on two-entry mining at Wilberg.



December 17, 1962

On December 11 in Washington, D.C., the trial of the Communist Party under the McCarran Act began. For the first time in U.S. history, a political party was brought into criminal court and placed on trial.

This trial is part of the drive of the Kennedy administration—carried over from previous administrations, both Democratic and Republican—to outlaw the Communist Party.

The drive is aimed at the entire workers' movement. The purpose is to maintain a witch-hunt atmosphere in which persecution of unpopular political ideas becomes customary and to establish precedents for subsequent use against other sections of the workers' movement.

Differences with the ideas of the Communist Party should not deter anyone sincerely concerned with the defense of civil liberties from defending the Communist Party against this attack.



December 18, 1937

All our sympathy and support go to the valiant Chinese people who are fighting against such terrific odds to preserve their independence from Japan's attempt to convert the country into a colony. In China, it is the elementary duty of every man and woman to fight to the bitter end against the monstrous invasion by Japan. In Japan, it is the elementary duty of every working man, every peasant, to promote the defeat of his ruling class, to overturn its despotic sway by revolution. In the United States it is the duty of every worker, especially everyone in the maritime industry, to refuse to load any ships destined for Japan and to speed all ships destined for China.

We haven't the slightest iota of confidence in the capitalist government of the United States. Any fight it undertakes with Japan is not for aiding China, but for extending American imperialist interests against Japanese imperialist interests.

# Texas flour mill strikers solid after 19 months on picket line

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON AND STEVE WARSHELL

SAN ANTONIO—"We're here to stay," declared Mary Lou Vela, who has worked at the C.H. Guenther & Sons Pioneer Flour Mill here for 15 years, as she walked the picket line outside the plant Nov. 28.

The flour mill workers, members of Teamsters Local 657, have been on strike since April 25, 2011, when the company reopened their three-year contract after one year with demands for a steep increase in workers' health care costs.

Spirits on the picket line remain high, in spite of the fact that Guenther has been using nonunion workers to run the mill, has refused to talk with the union and has convinced a few union members to cross the line.

From early morning to late in the evening, groups of strikers picket each weekday.

"Some people have had to get temporary jobs to survive," Alex Garcia said. "After working here more than 40 years you can sure say this is my strike too. I am retired now, so I help those who have to work other jobs by picketing every afternoon. So does Eladio," he said pointing to Eladio Alvarado, another veteran on the line.

"Those who are working come here in the early mornings and evenings," Alvarado told the *Militant*.

"Picketing every day isn't easy," added Jesse Hernandez, who has worked for Pioneer for more than 15

years. "But we are glad to do it."

"Since I've been on strike I've had to work a bunch of temporary jobs," said Maria Eva Martinez, as she joined the line. "The pay is terrible and the contractors are crooks. It makes me think about how important it is that we are standing up for our rights."

"We get lots of honks of support as people pass by in cars, trucks and even buses," said Vela, as passing motorists honked. "I think people look to us because we are standing up to Pioneer."

"This is a big company. They made a lot of money off us," added striker Rogelio Ramirez.

"One reason we went on strike was we had enough of this company trying to keep us down," said mill worker Johnny Davila who, together with his wife Alice, joined the pickets in the evening. "We are now looking more to how workers at other companies are also getting no respect. We want to be more informed."

University of Texas-Pan American



Militant/Jacquie Henderson

Johnny and Alice Davila join the picket line outside Pioneer Flour Mill in San Antonio Nov. 28. Members of Teamsters Local 657 have been on strike since April 2011.

student Freddy Gonzalez told the *Militant* that he and three others from the Edinburg, Texas, campus visited the picket line to bring solidarity to the strikers Nov. 30.

"It was my first visit to a strike picket line," he said. "The flour workers told us they have been on strike for over a year and a half. They are

so confident, so strong. We will make sure we tell people on campus and throughout the Rio Grande Valley to support their strike."

The Teamsters have set up a General Assistance Fund to aid the strikers. Checks can be sent to Teamsters Local 657, 8214 Roughrider Dr., San Antonio, TX 78239.

## ILWU clerks in Calif. sign pact after 8-day strike

BY ELLIE GARCÍA

SAN PEDRO, Calif.—Local 63 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Office Clerical Unit agreed Dec. 4 to a new contract with 14 employers at the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, ending an eight-day strike by hundreds of

clerical workers who track ship cargo and route it to ground transport.

The strike shut down terminals at ports throughout Los Angeles and Long Beach. Details of the new agreement have not been released as of Dec. 5.

Clerical workers at Pier 400 in Long Beach walked off the job Nov. 27 in protest against terminal bosses' refusal to negotiate a new contract. The following day union clerks at other terminals struck, ultimately shutting down 10 out of 14 cargo container terminals.

The ILWU clerks union has 800 members. The affected ports are the busiest in the U.S., handling 14 million containers per year.

Picket lines were honored by the 10,000-member ILWU Local 63, who work the struck docks. This included those who work for shipping lines as

well as longshore workers, some of whom had been walking the picket lines with the clerks.

Total losses were estimated at \$1 billion a day. Many ships bound for Los Angeles and Long Beach had sailed to other ports, where some cargo was unloaded.

Dottie Gogue, a striking clerk, explained to the *Militant* why they walked out. "Because of retirement and job loss, they have not replaced 52 positions," she said. "We're short-staffed. We don't have enough bodies. Most clerks started out as temps."

Further issues in dispute included "attrition of jobs," and "control over floaters," Gogue added. "I could come in one day and be sent to a job I know nothing about."

She said temp workers can join the union after 30 days even though they don't receive benefits or holiday pay.

## Locked-out metal workers in Quebec reject company's latest contract offer

AMÉLIE LANTEIGNE AND KATY LEROUGETEL

BOUCHERVILLE, Quebec—Union members locked out since Sept. 10 by steel distributor Acier Leroux, a division of Russel Metals, unanimously rejected the company's latest offer Nov. 14.

"It's subcontracting that's the issue. It's not monetary," local union President Lucien Dallaire told the *Militant*. Workers are trying to stop Acier Leroux's effort to increasingly hire outside the union.

Company officials consider the union's demands as encroaching on management rights. "At some point, we have to run the company," Marion Britton, vice president and chief financial officer, said Nov. 2 in a phone interview.

The 94 members of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN) picket around the clock here outside Acier Leroux's largest plant.

"This is for everybody. I'm picketing because they fought for the past 25 years, and I'm not going to be the one to throw it all away," Francis Lefort said at the picket line Oct. 26.

"Solidarity among the guys is still excellent," said Martin Saulnier on the picket line Nov. 19. He was among those who went to Quebec City Nov. 15 to "show our employer we're still alive and that we're not alone," he said.

In Quebec City unionists demonstrated in front of an Acier Leroux plant and attended the union federation's federal council meeting, where they received financial support.

Jacques Tricot, CSN business agent, told the *Militant* the company has plants in other Quebec locations and "is managing to get by."

Pickets describe trucks entering and leaving the plant with work destined for other locations. They said some truckers turn around in solidarity when confronted with the picket line.

## Sugar workers vote contract down for 4th time

Continued from front page

John Risky, president of BCTGM Local 167G, said the vote reflected the union's strength and called for "real give-and-take negotiations."

"Everyone hates this company," said Clayton Bronson, a retired sugar worker from Drayton, when asked why he thought the contract was turned down. "I can't explain it any other way. Many were motivated by hatred."

Scott Ripplinger, a locked-out worker from the East Grand Forks plant in Minnesota, said, "The rejection of the contract for a fourth time shows we are not willing to give up what our forefathers fought and even died for. We must escalate this fight to a new level. The owners and management must realize they will not be able to beat us. We will fight until we get a fair contract."

The vote was not an easy decision for many workers.

Randy Anderson, a locked-out worker from Drayton, told the *Militant* he changed how he was going to vote "at least five times."

"I had planned to vote for the contract this time, as I had in the previous vote in June," he said. "But when it came time to mark the vote my gut told me to vote no."

"I think there is still a basis to fight for a better contract," said Anderson. "Even if the contract passed, there would be nothing to be ashamed of. It's the same contract, but we aren't the same. We put up a fight and it changed us. We made waves. We made the company hurt."

In a statement on its website, American Crystal Sugar responded to the vote, saying it offered a "solid and generous package," similar to what it offers the scabs who replaced union workers. These workers, according to the company, are "creating a productive and successful new workforce for our company."

Each side presents a different picture of how the company is doing.

"Last year was still a very good year for us," company spokesman Brian Ingulsrud told the *Grand Forks Herald* Dec. 1.

After reviewing recent financial reports of the company, the union said "net proceeds fell more than 30 percent in fiscal 2012 to \$555 million, compared to \$811 million for the fiscal year that ended August 31, 2011."

The amount growers receive per ton of beets fell more than \$14 to \$58.67. This stands in contrast to beet farmers at Minn-Dak Farmers Cooperative, who are projected to receive an average \$74.05 per ton this year. Farmers from Western Sugar—based in Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming and Montana—expect \$82.70 per ton and Michigan Sugar expects \$87.74 per ton.

"This should be embarrassing to them," said Holm. "Keep in mind that the Red River Valley is the most profitable sugar beet farmland in the U.S. They always made the most profits here."

More than 500 of the 1,300 locked-out workers have either retired or moved to new jobs. This number may now grow, but the desire of union members to continue the fight is still there.

# Bangladesh factory fire

Continued from front page

eight-story building when the fire broke out in the Tazreen Fashions Ltd. factory in Ashulia on the outskirts of Dhaka. There were only three staircases and they all led to the same exit on the ground floor.

According to survivors, the exit was locked, fire extinguishers didn't work and highly flammable stacks of yarn and clothes blocked parts of the stairs. Managers ordered them back to work, saying it was just a routine fire drill.

As of Nov. 26 the death toll is reported to be 124. More than 200 were injured, many after jumping from upper floors. The factory employed close to 1,700 workers, 70 percent of them women.

"We've been demonstrating every day since the fire," said Nazma Akter, president of the Bangladesh Combined Garment Workers Federation, in a phone interview from Dhaka. "We demand safe working conditions, trade union rights, full compensation to the families of the workers who died and the arrest of the factory owner."

According to Akter there was no union in the Tazreen factory. She says among the handful of union garment plants in the country none has a negotiated contract with the company. Unions are not illegal, but whenever workers try to organize they are harassed by the police, security forces and company-hired goons.

Bangladesh has some 4,500 garment factories and is the world's second biggest exporter of clothing after China. The industry makes up 80 percent of the country's \$24 billion annual exports and employs 3.6 million workers, most of whom are women.

The minimum wage is 3,000 takas (\$37) a month. It was raised from \$20 after large protests in 2010. By comparison, in some provinces in China the minimum wage is \$200. McKinsey, a well-known consultant firm, predicts garment exports from Bangladesh could triple by 2020.

During the past two years, double-digit inflation has eroded workers' earnings. Protests and violent clashes with the police have become increasingly common. In June more than 300 factories in Ashulia shut down for almost a week as workers demanded higher wages and better conditions.

"We are always protesting," Akter said. "The workday is 10 to 12 hours, often seven days a week. Rent takes more than half the wage. There is no child care, so the women have to leave their children in the villages. Working conditions are very dangerous."

Since 2005 more than 500 workers, some sources say as many as 700, have died in fires. The majority are caused by

electrical circuit shortages. Exit doors and windows are frequently blocked. No owner has ever been prosecuted.

"We have come to the conclusion that it was an act of sabotage," Interior Minister Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir said to the *India Times* Nov. 27. The day before Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina claimed the fire was "planned arson," reported CNN. At the same time, three mid-level managers have been arrested, suspected of locking the main gate.

The factory was making clothes for Walmart and Sears. Representatives for both companies have said they didn't know they got clothing from the factory.

Meanwhile, 14 workers were killed in a garment factory fire in Shantou city in southern China, Dec. 4, reported Xinhua news agency.



Reuters/Andrew Biraj

Protest Nov. 30 at Tazreen Fashions factory, near Dhaka, Bangladesh, where 124 workers were killed and 200 injured in Nov. 24 fire. Bosses had exit locked and obstructed with clothes.

## Texas protests slam cop killing of 2 immigrants

BY CHRISTY MENDOZA

EDINBURG, Texas—Public outrage continues to surround the shooting of unarmed Guatemalan workers from a Texas Department of Public Safety helicopter in rural Hidalgo County near the Mexico border.

On Oct. 25 trooper Miguel Avila shot and killed José Leonardo Coj Cumar, 32, and Marcos Antonio Castro Estrada, 29, and critically injured another using a high-powered sniper rifle.

According to the DPS, two state game wardens patrolling near McAllen tried to pull over a red pickup truck on an unpaved road. They contacted DPS for backup after the driver sped away.

The helicopter arrived after a nearly

seven-mile pursuit by the wardens. A DPS report said officers suspected the vehicle might be transporting drugs, which as it turned out was not the case.

Coj and Castro were from the town of San Martín Jilotepeque in Guatemala. Coj had come to the U.S. to earn money to pay for surgery for his 11-year-old son's injured arm, Guatemalan officials told the *New York Times*.

Representatives from more than half a dozen organizations turned out for a news conference and protest Nov. 1 near La Joya, Texas, close to where the shooting took place.

They were protesting the fact that the initial investigation was being carried out by the Texas Rangers, an elite unit

within the DPS itself.

"The Texas Rangers and DPS are part of the same thing, making the investigation totally biased," John-Michael Torres, communications coordinator for La Union del Pueblo Entero, who attended the protest, said in a Nov. 18 phone interview. "The Texas Rangers have a long history of abusing people and of racism," he said.

"It was a single pickup truck, driven by a 14 year old," Michael Seifert of the Equal Voice Network told the *Militant* Nov. 27. "I have seen kids out drinking and speeding down country roads. And they do not stop for a game warden. They would do just as this kid did; they would speed up."

"I can't find any place or anywhere protocol wasn't followed," Rep. Sid Miller, chairman of the state Committee on Homeland Security and Public Safety, which oversees the DPS, told the Associated Press Nov. 2. "Looks like everything was done according to DPS policy. It's unfortunate some people died, but I guess the lesson is: don't be running from the law. So there will be no hearing."

In a statement later the same day, DPS director Steve McCraw said he had asked the FBI and U.S. Justice Department's Civil Rights Division to investigate the incident, reported AP.

"One has to think that law enforcement agencies have no respect for human life," Terri Burke, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Texas, told the *Times* Nov. 2. "I don't care what was in that truck. If they weren't shooting at that helicopter, how in God's name can you justify firing on what appears to be unarmed folks?"

"Over the past two years, more than 20 individuals have been killed by border patrol agents," Seifert told the *Militant*. "Several were teenagers who were shot for allegedly throwing rocks. One was an American citizen who was shot in the back while climbing the border wall. And another was beaten and Tased while bound hand and foot and surrounded by 10 agents—allegedly for resisting arrest. To this day not a single one of those events has been clarified."

Officer Avila has returned to work, but remains on administrative duty, pending the outcome of the investigation, reported the AP.

Christina Alvarez in Edinburg and Steve Warshell in Houston contributed to this article.

## Actions announced to back fight to free Puerto Rican political prisoner

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK—Supporters of Puerto Rican independence fighter Oscar López Rivera, jailed in the U.S. since 1981, announced at a news conference here Nov. 30 that they will be stepping up actions this year to win his freedom.

As part of increasing the pressure, a delegation of elected officials, including New York state Sen. Gustavo Rivera, New York state Assemblyman José Rivera, New York City Council member Melissa Mark Viverito and U.S. Congressman Luis Gutiérrez from Illinois had planned to visit López at the federal prison in Terre Haute, Ind., Dec. 2.

But prison officials denied permission to all but Gutiérrez, National Boricua Human Rights Network spokesperson Alejandro Molina told the *Militant*, claiming the request was made too late and the officials were not on López's list of 10 permitted visitors.

López was born in San Sebastián, Puerto Rico, and grew up in the U.S. He participated in struggles in the Puerto Rican community in Chicago and helped form the Committee for the Freedom of the Five Puerto Rican nationalist prisoners, jailed in 1954 after carrying out an armed pro-independence demonstration in the U.S. Congress.

In 1981 López was arrested, accused of being a member of the Armed Forces for Puerto Rican Liberation and convicted on frame-up charges of "seditious conspiracy." He was sentenced to 55 years in prison. In 1988, 15 more years

were added to his sentence on trumped-up charges of conspiring to escape.

"For 12 years starting in 1985, my father was kept in isolation," his daughter Clarisa López, who attended the event here, told the *Militant*. "He was kept in his cell 23 hours a day for 12 years. All our visits took place separated by a glass partition."

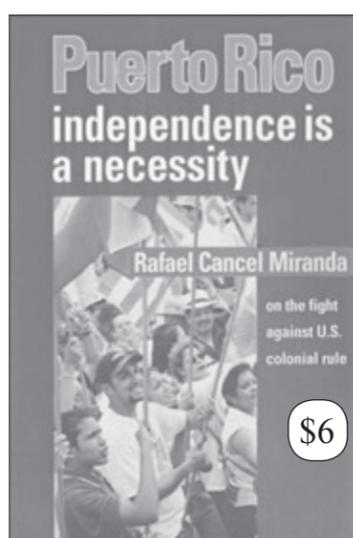
"Oscar has never been convicted or accused of carrying out any act that resulted in injury" or physical harm to anyone, noted Héctor Figueroa, president of building service workers union 32BJ SEIU, in a statement read to the press conference.

"Oscar has no regrets" on his activities in support of the struggle of the Puerto Rican people, Gutiérrez told the meeting. The congressman said that they would reapply for the other elected officials to be able to make the prison visit.

In 1999 López was offered parole along with other Puerto Rican political prisoners by then-President William Clinton. He refused, mostly because Clinton did not include two prisoners, Carlos Alberto Torres and Haydée Beltrán, in the offer. If López had accepted, he would have been released in 2009.

After Torres was released in July 2010, López applied for parole, but was denied. His current release date is set for 2023.

Write Oscar López Rivera in prison: #87651-024, FCI Terre Haute, PO Box 33, Terre Haute, IN 47808.



pathfinderpress.com

# SWP files to keep exemption from gov't 'disclosure' laws

BY JOHN STUDER

The Socialist Workers Party and the Socialist Workers National Campaign Committee filed a request with the Federal Election Commission Nov. 7 to renew their exemption from requirements to turn the names of campaign financial contributors over to the government.

The party's decades-long successful efforts to maintain this exemption is part of the fight for workers and working-class organizations to engage in political activity—including election campaigns—free from spying and disruption by government cops, the bosses and other enemies of the working class.

The request was filed on the party's behalf by Michael Krinsky and Lindsey Frank of the prominent civil liberties law firm Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky & Lieberman.

The SWP first won exemption from so-called "disclosure" laws by a court decree in 1979. The FEC voted to extend it in 1990, 1996, 2003 and 2009.

Based on the FEC ruling, similar exemptions have been granted to SWP campaigns by state and local governments. Without the exemption, the party would be legally required to hand over to the government the names, addresses and occupations of contributors giving more than \$200 to its candidates, as well as the names of businesses that do work for the campaign. This would have a chilling effect on potential contributors and would be a blow to workers' rights.

The party expects a tougher fight this time around. In 2009, two of the FEC's six commissioners—three Democrats and three Republicans—argued that the party's exemption shouldn't last forever.

In the face of extensive evidence of harassment and attacks against the party, including the firebombing of the SWP campaign office in Hazleton, Pa., Ellen Weintraub and then commission chair Steven Walther, both Democrats, declared that political spying and disruption was a thing of the past.

The commission voted to shorten the time when it would review the party's exemption from six years to four.

In the new filing, the SWP presents 45 documented examples of "threats of violence on SWP campaign supporters both in person and by mail and telephone, job firings and discrimination, and harassment of SWP supporters and campaign efforts by local law enforce-

ment as well as private individuals" in addition to "evidence of the federal government's continued information gathering concerning the SWP and its candidates and supporters."

## Landmark 15-year legal battle

One key argument for the exemption is the decades-long campaign carried out against the party by the FBI and other political police agencies, which was revealed in a landmark 15-year legal battle against the government, won by the SWP in 1986.

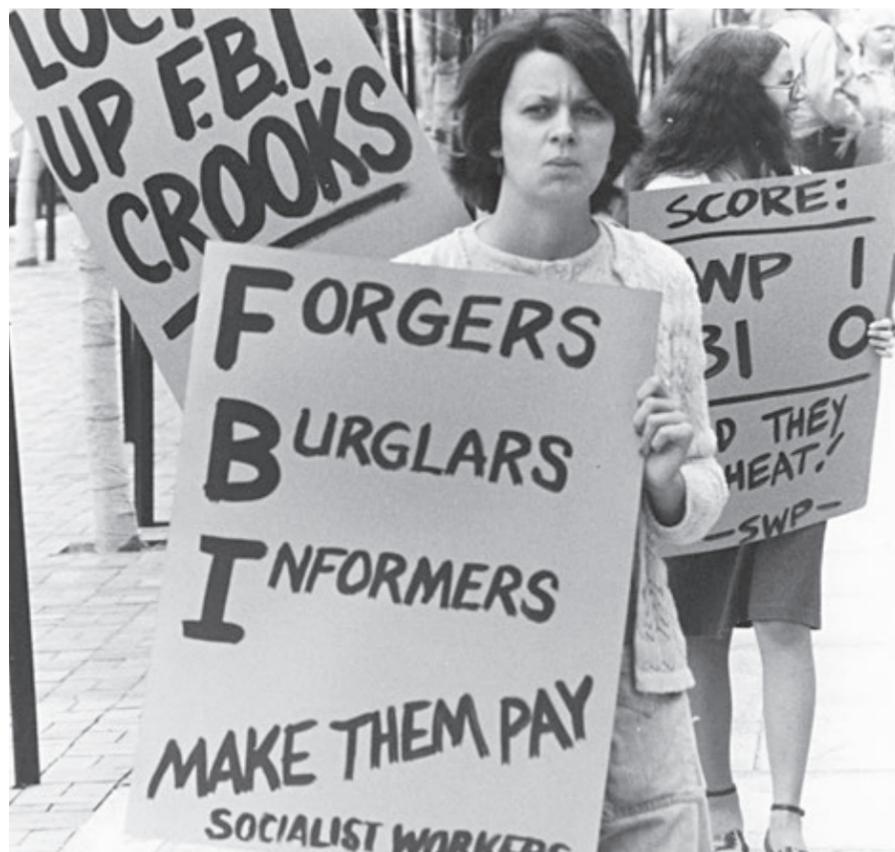
The FBI was forced to admit in court that between 1960 and 1976 it carried out at least 204 "black bag jobs"—burglaries of party offices—deployed 1,300 undercover informers against the SWP, and collected more than 8 million documents on the party and the organization's members and supporters.

Under the Cointelpro program of the 1960s and '70s, dozens of disruption operations were carried out. These included attempts to embarrass SWP candidates, cause their arrest, and foment racial strife within the party and between it and other groups.

The ability of the FBI to target the SWP and other groups was pushed back by the mass proletarian struggle for Black rights, the fight against the Vietnam War and for the rights of women. In this context, the SWP lawsuit helped expose and deal blows to the government's political police.

But they never accepted limits on their spying and began immediately to seek avenues to reestablish free rein.

Less than a year after the party's victory in its lawsuit, the government submitted affidavits to the court "asserting a continuing need to access information about the SWP, its members, and sup-



Militant/Glen Campbell

Picket Sept. 17, 1976, against FBI spying by supporters of SWP suit against the government.

porters," the application said.

They turned more and more to the pretext of "combating terrorism" to justify political spying and harassment, an argument that gathered steam after the Sept. 11, 2001, attack on the Pentagon and World Trade Center.

The SWP's attorneys submitted a series of government reports, private studies and news articles documenting the explosion of new government spy programs and the extensive network of federal spy collaboration with other agencies and city "red squads."

Much of the stepped-up use of informers, electronic surveillance, and other violations of political rights, the request points out, is aimed at political activity where the SWP is involved, including "labor rights, the political rights of Muslims, and criticism of U.S. military policy."

Maura DeLuca, the 2012 SWP can-

didate for vice president, submitted a declaration documenting a "harassing and intrusive interrogation" where a Canadian border-crossing agent drew up on her computer extensive information on DeLuca's political activity, including the fact that she had made a reporting trip to Cuba for the *Militant*. This information could only have come from the FBI or other U.S. authorities, the lawyers state.

"There is reasonable probability that the compelled disclosure of the Socialist Workers Party's contributors and recipients will subject them to threats, harassment or reprisals by private persons and organizations and by government officials," the party's filing concludes.

The FEC will review the party's request, issue a preliminary report on whether to accept or reject continued exemption, and schedule a public hearing.

## Ohio anarchists framed up on 'terrorist' charges

BY JOHN STUDER

U.S. District Judge David Dowd Jr. sentenced three self-proclaimed anarchists to federal prison Nov. 20 on frame-up charges of participating in a failed plot to bomb a bridge over the Cuyahoga Valley National Park outside Cleveland in April.

The three had been active in Cleveland Occupy Wall Street activities. Douglas Wright, 27, was sentenced to 11 years and six months in federal prison, Brandon Baxter, 20, to nine years and nine months, and Connor Stevens, 20, to eight years and one month.

In addition, Dowd sentenced all three to lifelong probation after their release.

"That is a product of 'terrorist enhancement,'" Terry Gilbert, attorney for Connor Stevens, told the *Militant*. This refers to harsh sentencing guidelines applied in cases the government contends, and the court agrees, are instances of terrorism. "Had these guidelines not been applied by the judge, Connor would have been liable for no more than five years supervised release."

A total of five anarchists have been charged in the case.

One, Anthony Hayne, copped a plea earlier and turned state's evidence, offering to testify against the others. This led Wright, Baxter and Stevens to enter

into a noncooperating plea agreement in September, forgoing their right to a trial.

A fifth, Joshua Stafford, is still being screened to determine his mental competence to stand trial.

A number of news articles, including one in the Sept. 17 *Rolling Stone*, "The Plot Against Occupy: How the government turned five stoner misfits into the world's most hapless terrorist cell," provide a picture of the government frame-up. They were targeted by a paid government informer, identified in the press as Shaquille Azir, who had been employed by the FBI while enmeshed in a series of charges for passing bad checks. He had previously been convicted on charges of drug possession, theft and robbery.

The FBI sent Azir into the Cleveland Occupy group, ostensibly after receiving a report from another informer of "potential criminal activity and threats involving anarchists."

Azir met Wright and the others, got them jobs, provided them with alcohol, marijuana and amphetamines, pushed them to take more serious action, introduced them to undercover FBI agents posing as weapons salesmen, and gave them money to buy some government-doctored nonexplosive C-4 bombs. Over months, he badgered them into finally

agreeing to target the bridge.

Azir drove them to the bridge, stood watch while they lay the fake C-4 near it, and then drove them to an Applebee's restaurant where they attempted to detonate the mock bombs with government-supplied cellphones, and were arrested.

"The government is still trying to keep the informant's name a secret," Gilbert told the *Militant*. "And that's the real story—his despicable behavior with the approval and acquiescence of the FBI trying to make a case that would never have happened without him."

The sentences handed down by Judge Dowd were substantially less than demanded by the U.S. Justice Department. After the hearing, the judge told the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* that the government's demands were "grotesque."

Dowd, an appointee of President Ronald Reagan, came under fire from columnist Phillip Morris in the Nov. 28 *Plain Dealer* for his ruling. "It's one thing for a federal judge to be soft on crime," Morris wrote. "It's quite another to be soft on treason."

On Nov. 30 Hayne, who had turned snitch on his cohorts, was sentenced to six years in prison plus lifelong probation.

Wright, Baxter and Stevens are appealing their sentences.



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# Cuban workers, backed by their government, rebuild after Sandy

Workers power ensures no one left to fend for themselves

BY RÓGER CALERO  
AND MARTÍN KOPPEL

SANTIAGO DE CUBA—In the wake of destruction wreaked by Hurricane Sandy in this eastern city during the early morning of Oct. 25, working people have joined forces and organized—rapidly and on a massive scale—to clear roads, restore basic services, and repair damaged homes and schools.

They have mobilized through their mass organizations and received active backing from their government, a working-class government, at all levels. The Eastern Army of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba has played a major part in this collective effort, especially in the heavy work of clearing the many tons of debris.

Just one month later, most of the rubble has been removed and electrical power fully restored. Schools and offices are open, normal commerce is returning, and an organized, collective effort is under way to repair and rebuild housing. No one has been left on their own.

On Nov. 25, a 3,000-strong brigade of electrical workers from across the island was able to leave Santiago, its mission accomplished. They had worked 12-hour shifts or longer, day after day, until power was restored.

“We’ve seen a tremendous expression of solidarity here,” said Pedro Miranda, president of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP), who arranged for *Militant* reporters to visit some storm-damaged areas of the city on Nov. 27.

## Storm devastates Santiago

The hurricane devastated eastern Cuba and particularly Santiago, which with a population of half a million is the second-largest city after Havana. Some 133,000 homes were damaged here, many beyond repair, especially in flooded coastal communities such as Siboney, according to Miranda.



Militant/Róger Calero

Center in San Pedrito neighborhood of Santiago de Cuba, where residents report damage and receive help to get building materials, food and other aid.

Parts of the provinces of Holguín and Guantánamo also suffered heavy damage.

Nine people were killed in Santiago and two in Guantánamo, 50 miles east of here, Miranda said. The orderly evacuation of tens of thousands before the hurricane saved many more lives. But for Cuba the number of casualties was relatively high. This is widely attributed to the fact that there is no living memory of a storm of this severity hitting Santiago directly; many people underestimated what was coming.

In the working-class neighborhood of San Pedrito, one of the hardest hit, the recovery effort was evident everywhere, from buildings being repaired to telephone work brigades restoring service. At the entrance to every public facility, a worker makes sure you disinfect your hands and wash the soles of your shoes in a chlorine solution as a preventive measure against outbreaks of disease, especially cholera. Community leaders in San Pedrito reported there have been 16 deaths from cholera in Santiago since the storm.

We visited the local office of the Popular Council, a government-coordinated body that includes representatives of mass organizations. The office has been turned into a command center where community residents go to report damage and secure help to get materials for housing reconstruction, food and other necessities. Madelin Mendoza, president of the Popular Council, told us all but 22 of the roughly 3,000 homes in San Pedrito suffered damage in the hurricane; more than 550 were totally destroyed.

Inside the center residents moved from one work station to the next as they applied for construction materials and help with repairs. At one station they registered. At another, a government employee helped them figure out supplies they needed and the cost. At a third station, a social worker discussed with them their financial situation and how much they could afford. At a fourth, a bank representative issued credit.

All construction materials in storm-damaged areas are being sold at half price, subsidized by the government, Mendoza reported. Anyone without cash to pay for the materials can obtain a loan on the spot, payable in 10 years. Households with the least economic resources are issued all materials free of charge.

## Working-class solidarity

Neighborhood teams visit homes to evaluate the needs. Residents receive a response the next day and can pick up their supplies at a nearby



Top, Militant/Martín Koppel; bottom, Cuban News Agency/Miguel Rubiera Justiz

Above, telephone workers restoring service in Santiago de Cuba. Below, destruction in city after storm. Led through their mass organizations, with backing by government and mobilization of military, working people organized collectively to restore essential services and rebuild.

warehouse. “We’ve gone house to house and visited 2,600 homes,” said Antonio Benítez, who works at the command center.

The council also organizes volunteer brigades of workers with construction skills to help residents repair damaged roofs, plumbing, walls and other structures.

“People came to help us from other neighborhoods and provinces,” said Mendoza. “Residents of San Pedrito have offered them coffee and food.”

“Neighbors helped each other from the very first day,” said Laudelina Ramos, a schoolteacher who was one of those applying at the center for help to repair her storm-damaged house.

Describing the reconstruction work across the city, Pedro Miranda noted that Cuban President Raúl Castro arrived in Santiago soon after the hurricane and remained here for days to help lead the recovery effort. Vice President José Ramón Machado Ventura visited hard-hit areas in Santiago and Holguín provinces. This had a big impact in reinforcing the morale and confidence among the population, he said.

In Cuba, the pledge that “no one is left to fend for themselves” has been made real by the collective efforts of millions of working people, organized and led by their national, provincial and local government bodies.



Granma/Juan Pablo Carreras

Cuban Vice President José Ramón Machado Ventura visits hurricane-ravaged Holguín province, Oct. 29. President Raúl Castro spent days in Santiago de Cuba to help lead recovery.

# Another round of sanctions on Iran moves through Congress

BY LOUIS MARTIN

The U.S. Senate unanimously approved Nov. 30 new economic sanctions aimed at further crippling energy, shipping and port sectors of Iran's economy.

The House of Representatives had adopted a variant of the bill. Both bodies will have to approve a final version before it is sent to President Barack Obama to sign into law—the third round of sanctions against Iran to be enacted this year.

These measures are part of a yearslong squeeze by Washington and its allies aimed at forcing the Iranian government to stop its program of nuclear research, which the U.S. government claims is aimed at producing nuclear weapons. Tehran maintains the program is intended for generating electric power and medical research.

One of the main targets of the new sanctions is Turkey's purchase in gold of Iranian natural gas, which is necessary given U.S. and European Union banking sanctions ban payments in U.S. dollars or euros. According to the *Financial Times*, direct Turkish gold exports to Iran reached \$1.8 billion in July.

Turkey produces most of its electricity from natural gas and "takes more than 90 percent of Iran's gas exports," according to a Dec. 3 Reuters dispatch.

"Sanctions have reduced Iranian oil output to a 32-year low," reported the Nov. 29 *Financial Times*. In 2011 Iran exported 2 million barrels a day on average, compared to 900,000 today. The value of the Iranian currency, the rial, has dropped more than 50 percent against the dollar since the beginning of the year.

"Iran is paying millions of dollars in higher costs for import of agricultural commodities, including wheat," the *Financial Times* added. What traders call the Iranian premium amounts to extra costs of 5 to 10 percent above prevailing prices in the international market. As a result, prices for basic food have risen sharply since last year, hitting above all working people in the country.

Meanwhile, Tehran announced Dec. 4 it had captured a U.S. spy drone in its airspace over the Arab-Persian Gulf. The U.S. military immediately denied the report.

This followed an article in the *Wall Street Journal* the day before about Washington's increased drone flights over Iran's Bushehr nuclear reactor after fuel rods had been unexpectedly discharged in October.

In a letter to the U.N. last month Tehran formally protested at least eight violations of its airspace by U.S. planes.

## Nurses in Israel strike over wages, work conditions



Yehoshua Yosef/Flash 90/Redux

Nurses across Israel went on strike Dec. 3, demanding wage raises and improved working conditions. The strike, organized by the Israel Nurses Union, affects public hospitals and most health clinics.

The government had promised to begin contract negotiations in September. Instead, it asked the union to wait until after the parliamentary elections at the end of January. But the nurses, whose contract expires that month, said they were unwilling to wait, reported the *Jerusalem Post*.

The nurses are protesting both inadequate wages and a too-heavy workload. "We need to increase the number of nurses. They're only at half the number that is required," Uri Fleischmann, director general of the Israel Nurses Union, told the *Militant* in a phone interview Dec. 4 right after a negotiating session with the government. "We're also seeking to increase basic wages of nurses to attract more young people to the occupation."

There are about 30,000 nurses on strike at over 40 hospitals across Israel, Fleischmann said. "In every hospital we have an exceptional committee that decides which treatments need to be made and which can be postponed."

—BRIAN WILLIAMS

## UN votes 'observer state' status to occupied territories

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The U.N. General Assembly Nov. 29 changed the status of Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories from nonmember "observer" to "observer state," making representatives of the Palestinian Authority eligible to participate in U.N. bodies. The vote took place days after the end of the eight-day Israeli attack on Gaza in response to provocative rocket launchings by Hamas into civilian areas of Israel.

The U.N. resolution, which was presented by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, was adopted by a 138-9 vote with 41 absten-

tions. The governments of the U.S., Israel, Canada, Panama and the Czech Republic were among those voting no. At least 17 governments in Europe voted in favor, including from France, Italy, Portugal and Spain. The United Kingdom and Germany abstained.

The resolution does nothing to alter the conditions Palestinian workers and farmers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip confront under Tel Aviv's tight control over trade, borders and the economies there.

In Gaza and the West Bank, the two noncontiguous areas of the Palestinian "state," Palestinian trade and travel with

other countries depends on Israeli ports and Israeli-controlled border crossings. A naval blockade remains in effect on Gaza and Israeli military checkpoints are located throughout the West Bank.

Hamas, the bourgeois ruling party of Gaza and rival of Abbas' Fatah, came out in favor of the U.N. statehood bid prior to the vote, a reversal of its previous position.

The positions of Hamas and the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority that controls the West Bank are consistent with their goals to strengthen control over their respective domains as they press, each in

Continued on page 11

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## All out in int'l effort to win new readers!

The *Militant* calls on readers to step up their efforts for the last two weeks of the paper's nine-week subscription drive and fight for the international goal.

Distributors of the socialist newsweekly are getting the best response in decades from workers to the *Militant* and books on revolutionary working-class politics, which together make sense of the unfolding worldwide crisis of capitalism and chart a revolutionary fighting course to confront it.

The bosses and their government are reacting to the crisis by cutting job hours, wages and benefits of working people; and by jacking up productivity on the job as they simultaneously go after our rights, our unions and very dignity.

Resistance to these assaults remains episodic and limited in scope. But changing attitudes among a growing layer of workers is marked not by the outcome of these fights, but by a growing awareness of their interests as part of a class. And those directly engaged in struggles today more often than not come out with a stronger sense of working-class solidarity and determination to fight again, regardless of outcome.

Practically every issue of the paper provides evidence of this. This week includes a number of examples from the 19-month-long strike at Pioneer Flour and the 16-month fight by locked-out sugar

workers to social struggles against police brutality from Chicago to Australia.

Working people in U.S. mines and factories today increasingly identify with and support battles by our class around the world covered in the paper—from fights to protect life and limb on the job like that being waged by garment workers in Bangladesh to struggles by toilers for political space to organize, from Egypt to Israel and the occupied territories.

Thinking workers today need the *Militant*. They need to understand what capitalism has in store for working people worldwide and what can be done about it. They need to know about the living example of workers power in Cuba and the fight against the frame-up and ongoing imprisonment of the Cuban Five by Washington.

Thinking workers today also need access to the lessons from past revolutionary struggles around the world in order to fight effectively, prepare for the big class battles to come and to build a revolutionary movement that can wrest political power from the capitalist exploiters. This is where the *Militant's* promotion of the four books on special helps strengthen the paper's striking power.

Join a concerted and collective effort over the next two weeks to distribute these powerful weapons far and wide.

## Protests across Egypt against decree

**Continued from front page**

by textile workers—as well as in Cairo. In many cities there were clashes with Morsi supporters.

The Muslim Brotherhood, the largest and best-organized party in the country, is mobilizing to defend Morsi. Tens of thousands backed by various Islamist forces demonstrated at Cairo University Dec. 1.

The protests against Morsi's decree reveal a heterogeneous opposition to the Muslim Brotherhood and its move to strengthen executive powers under its rule, as well as divisions within the country's ruling class. The opposition ranges from competing factions among the capitalist rulers, including remnants of the Mubarak regime, to petty-bourgeois centrist and social democratic parties, to organized labor.

To garner support for his move, Morsi included in the decree the removal of the attorney general, a disliked holdover from the Mubarak government. One pretext for the decree—issued soon after he was lauded by Washington for his role in brokering a cease-fire between Tel Aviv and Hamas in Gaza—was the pledge to use his powers to reopen cases of repression during Mubarak's rule.

As opposition grew, Morsi declared Nov. 26 that his new powers were only temporary, until the draft constitution was voted on in a referendum now set for Dec. 15 and elections for a new legislature take place.

The government-owned *Ahram* newspaper reported that Morsi intervened “to contain the anger of some worshippers during Friday prayers in an upscale district of Cairo, when the mosque's preacher dedicated his sermon to defending Morsi's latest decisions.” Morsi invited hecklers there to “talk for a few minutes,” the paper said.

To protest against the decree, 11 big-business newspapers did not go to press Dec. 4. The Supreme Judicial Council, made up of judges appointed by Mubarak, also condemned the decree.

### Heterogeneous opposition

More than 100,000 demonstrators filled Cairo's Tahrir Square Nov. 27, the site of many large demonstrations against Mubarak and the military regime that took his place. Another large opposition demonstration took place Nov. 30.

Among the participants at the Nov. 30 rally were Mohamed El Baradei, former head of the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency and leader of the bourgeois Constitution Party; Amr Moussa, former Arab League head and Mubarak's foreign minister; supporters of Mubarak's former Prime Minister Ahmed Shafiq, who came in second to Morsi in the

presidential elections; Al-Sayed al-Badawy, head of the liberal capitalist Wafd Party; and a variety of social democratic and left groups.

The participation of Mubarak supporters, referred to by their opponents as *felool* [remnants of the old regime], is a contentious issue within the opposition. “There are definitely people within the opposition camp who are willing to coordinate with them,” Hossam al-Hamlawy, from the social democratic Egyptian Revolutionary Socialists, told al-Jazeera. “This has created an unease with others.”

Protesters have criticized the draft constitution, which promises some freedoms, only to nullify them with contradictory stipulations.

While the draft says “freedom of thought and opinion shall be guaranteed,” it prohibits “insults or abuse of all religious messengers and prophets” and “insulting or showing contempt toward any human being.”

Among the controversial sections of the draft's 236 clauses is one that prohibits “military trials for civilians, unless for crimes that affect the armed forces,” widely seen as a green light for the military to continue arresting civilians. Union federation protests decree

The Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Unions, with nearly 2.5 million members, issued a statement Nov. 25 calling on workers to mobilize against the decree.

“How can the president issue laws, and work to implement them, without any one of us having the right to go to the judiciary to challenge them?” asked the union federation. “What if he issued a decree banning all the unions which have been set up since the revolution?”

Attempts to quell strikes, sit-ins and demonstrations by the military regime that immediately replaced Mubarak and the Muslim Brotherhood government that followed it have been unsuccessful.

The union federation also criticized the draft constitution. “All of the drafts which came out of the Constituent Assembly have been completely empty of rights for workers, peasants, fishermen, workers in informal jobs,” the statement notes. “At the same time, the drafts protect the interests of factory owners and company directors.”

The Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Unions was formed in the fight against Mubarak, bringing together workers organizing independently of the government-sponsored union federation. The first law issued by Morsi after his decree gives him the power to replace board members of the old federation, which still claims 4.5 million members.

## Affirmative action

**Continued from page 4**

filed supporting the University of Texas program. Included among them are 57 Fortune 500 companies, dozens of universities and colleges, a number of members of Congress, the NAACP, National Education Association, and more than three dozen prominent retired military officers.

In an Oct. 9 article in *Time* magazine titled “Why Diversity Counts in National Security,” retired Adm. Bobby Inman, former director of the National Security Agency and deputy director of the CIA, wrote, “The national security interest in officer corps diversity must not be threatened by a broad ruling against race-conscious admission.” The brief he and other military officers submitted argues this “would seriously disrupt the military's efforts to maintain military cohesion and effectiveness.”

A decision is not expected until late June.

### Affirmative action and working class

The challenge to the law is an attack on what is left of affirmative action.

Programs like the one at the University of Texas today reflect the dilution and transformation of affirmative action over time from its original purpose to combat systematic discrimination against African-Americans, other oppressed national minorities and women—which strengthened the unity of the working class. In its original form, transparent quotas helped batter down a century of racial and sexual discrimination that blocked millions from certain industries, jobs and colleges.

In 1974 the United Steelworkers union, after a fight led by steelworkers who were Black, won a contract with Kaiser Aluminum targeting longstanding discrimination. It established a quota that half of the places in new job-training programs would be reserved for Blacks and women. A challenge by Brian Weber, a Caucasian worker at Kaiser's plant in Gramercy, La., was rejected by the U.S. Supreme Court five years later.

As these battles receded, the capitalist rulers began backtracking on quotas. In its 1978 *University of California Regents v. Bakke* ruling, the Supreme Court declared racial quotas unconstitutional for admission to colleges and universities. This has been in place ever since.

What is called affirmative action today has been more and more perverted into “diversity” programs aimed at advancing a “chosen few” into bourgeois-minded professional social layers, including the military officer corps, as part of advancing the maintenance and reproduction of stable social relations under capitalism.

## Occupied territories

**Continued from page 10**

their own way, to seek accommodation with Tel Aviv on more favorable terms than the Israeli rulers have in mind.

The Israeli government's response made clear the capitalist rulers there also want a “two-state” future in the region, but on their own terms.

The day after the U.N. vote Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced plans to construct 3,000 new housing units for settlers in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. He also approved “planning work” for a new Israeli settlement that could virtually divide the West Bank in two, but no actual construction.

On Dec. 2 Tel Aviv said it's withholding more than \$100 million in funds it transfers to the Palestinian Authority each month. The money comes from taxes and customs duties Israel collects for goods entering the Palestinian territories.

The Palestinian Authority is dependent upon these funds to pay wages of tens of thousands of public workers and the cops. Israeli military officials expressed opposition to the freeze, saying the money is essential to maintain stability and security in the West Bank, reported the *Wall Street Journal*.

Among issues affecting “stability” are growing opposition to rising fuel and commodity prices and the decision by the Palestinian Authority in October to set the minimum wage at one-third of the amount paid in Israel.