

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Oppose imperialist sanctions, threats against Iran!
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 77/NO. 10 MARCH 18, 2013

300+ subscribe to 'Militant' last week, best pace so far

BY LOUIS MARTIN

The pace in week three was the best so far.

Over the last seven days, *Militant* supporters sold more than 300 subscriptions, along with dozens of books on revolutionary working-

EXPANDING READERSHIP DOOR TO DOOR

class politics, mainly going door to door in working-class neighborhoods from the U.S. and Canada to the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia.

The international goal is to sign up 1,950 readers to the socialist paper over five weeks. Standing at 977, the drive is 10 percent behind schedule. The success of the last week points the way forward to meet the goal in

Continued on page 3

US coal deaths jump: Need union to fight for mine safety

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Coal miners Jerry Watts, 52; Brandon Townsend, 34; Edward Finney, 43; Timothy Chamness, 28; Glen Clutter, 51; and John Myles, 44; were killed in six separate incidents in a span of 25 days in January and February.

The six deaths represent the highest number in such a short period since the disaster at the Upper Big Branch Mine in West Virginia took the lives of 29 workers in April 2010.

This takes place as bosses are pressing to squeeze more out of workers during a contraction in production and employment brought about by a shift in U.S. consumption toward natural gas and the worldwide slowdown in manufacture and trade. In January last year 89,300 worked in coal mining; a year later the figure is 82,000.

"There is a rush for production, which contributes to more unsafe work conditions," Phil Smith, communications director with the United Mine Workers of America, said in a phone interview Feb. 25. "We need more training and the pace needs to slow down."

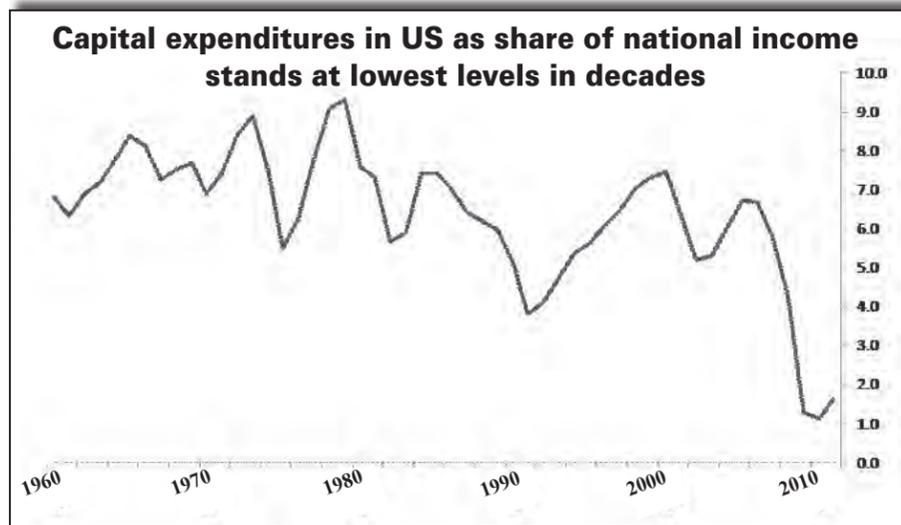
Pointing out that five of the six worked in nonunion mines, Smith said that one-third of coal miners today are members of the UMWA. "We have deaths in union mines, too," he said. "But records clearly show that they are safer than nonunion mines."

Four of the six miners killed

Continued on page 5

Gov't cuts, tax hikes put crisis on workers' backs

Part of US rulers' reaction to capitalist contraction



Sharp fall in capital expenditures in U.S. as percentage of gross domestic product reflects employers' shrinking investment in new buildings and equipment to expand production and hiring. Government cuts and tax hikes are among rulers' reactions to financial and fiscal crises precipitated by world capitalism's contraction in production, trade and jobs.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The so-called budget sequester cutting \$85 billion from federal expenditures took effect March 1. This starts a 10-year plan to reduce government spending by \$1.2 trillion, a course Congress set in motion in 2011.

The "automatic" budget cuts come just months after the government raised payroll taxes from 4.2 to 6.2 percent, back to the levels they were before 2011, a measure which cuts particularly deep into the income of workers. Meanwhile, cuts in social services and other items that above all affect working people are also being carried out at the state and local level across the country.

The propertied rulers' "fiscal crisis," like their banking and financial crises, are consequences of a con-

traction in production, employment and trade that is worldwide in scope and flows from the normal workings of capitalism. Despite record-low interest rates in the U.S. over the past several years, ostensibly designed to

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Winter 'Militant' subscription campaign Feb. 9 - March 18 (week 3)

Country	quota	sold	%	1,950
UNITED STATES				
Lincoln	15	12	80%	
Philadelphia	85	59	69%	
Des Moines	100	57	57%	
Los Angeles	120	67	56%	
Washington	65	36	55%	
New York	300	161	54%	
San Francisco	120	63	53%	
Omaha	50	25	50%	
Twin Cities	100	50	50%	
Miami	60	29	48%	
Houston	100	47	47%	
Chicago	130	58	45%	
Atlanta	115	51	44%	
Boston	65	26	40%	
Seattle	115	44	38%	
Total U.S.	1540	785	51%	
PRISONERS	15	14	93%	
UNITED KINGDOM				
London	100	47	47%	
Manchester*	60	42	70%	
UK Total	160	89	56%	
NEW ZEALAND	60	21	35%	
CANADA	70	42	60%	
AUSTRALIA	55	26	47%	
Total	1900	977	50%	
Should be	1950	1170	60%	

*raised goal

Socialists from US and UK meet with youth in Santiago province, cradle of Cuban Revolution



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Books on working-class politics sold quickly after University of Oriente event with speakers from U.S. and Cuba, Feb. 27. See articles on visit by socialists from U.S. and U.K. to Santiago province, pages 8-9; response to *Militant* and books during four-week trip to Cuba, page 10.

Seattle: Socialist candidates turn ballot restrictions into opportunity

BY CECELIA MORIARITY

SEATTLE—The Socialist Workers Party launched election campaigns for mayor, city council and port commissioner at a public meeting here

NY: SWP LAUNCHES CAMPAIGNS FOR MAYOR, COMPTROLLER

—page 4

March 2, announcing plans to get on the ballot by raising more than \$3,000 for filing fees through donations from working people who want to support

Continued on page 4

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Coffee farmers in Colombia protest squeeze of debt, costs

BY SETH GALINSKY

More than 100,000 farmers in Colombia have been blockading roads and joining protest marches as part of a strike that began Feb. 25 to demand the government make up the difference between the rising cost of production and the price farmers receive for the coffee beans they produce. Participating in the strike are both working peasants and a section of capitalist farmers.

The price paid to Colombian farmers for coffee has dropped 35 percent since last year, due to a combination of a decline in world market prices and the devaluation of the dollar compared to the Colombian peso. At the same time, the price of fertilizer, pesticides and fuel has skyrocketed, as have interest rates on agricultural loans.

"It is impossible for coffee growers to survive with the current price," Victor Javier Correa, spokesperson for the Coffee Growers Dignity Movement, said in a March 4 phone interview from Concordia in Antioquia province. The group organizes peasants as well as small and large capitalist growers.

Most coffee farmers in Colombia, and the majority of the protesters, are peasants who work just a few acres with the help of family members. Many also work for a wage for the big capitalist farmers. As part of the strike many capitalist farmers have been dismissing farmworkers. Those who work exclusively as farm labor for a wage are not part of the strike.

Farmworker unions have been decimated in Colombia over the last several decades, said Alirio García, general secretary of Fensuagro, a union federation that organizes small farmers and farmworkers, by phone from Bogota. "Our leaders have been murdered or forced to flee by paramilitary groups, but we are finally starting to reorganize."

On March 2, the government of President Juan Manuel Santos announced that it would increase the amount of a government subsidy from 60,000 pesos (\$33) per *carga* (a 275 lb. sack) to 115,000 (\$63). "But that doesn't even cover all the costs," Correa noted.

The National Coffee Growers Federation urged farmers to accept the increase and end the strike. But most refused. Although the federation claims to represent all the coffee farmers, "it's the big farmers that are represented there, not the small and medium size ones," said García. "But it's the small and medium farmers that are losing the most."

"The agreement does NOT solve the crisis of the small- and medium-sized Colombian coffee growers," said a statement from Apemecafe, the Association of Small and Medium Coffee Farmers. They face "the problem of suffocating debts, the pressure from the banks, and government neglect that permits the financial sector to get hold of the land of the peasant producers."

The group calls for canceling farmers' debts, subsidizing fertilizers and



Hundreds of farmers march in Bolombolo in Antioquia province, Colombia, Feb. 25, first day of strike demanding government cover rising costs of producing coffee beans.

other agricultural supplies and freezing their prices, and for government loans at zero percent interest.

Police and army troops have attacked some of the peasant blockades in an attempt to reopen the roads. "They are using violence against the

peasants, to prevent them from living with dignity," García said.

Meanwhile, a strike by some 340,000 truck drivers that began March 2 ended three days later when the government agreed to lower the price of fuel for three months.

New York City Visit of Federation of Cuban Women

—FORUM ON NEW BOOKS—

Women in Cuba:

The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution

Sun., March 10, reception 2 p.m., program 3 p.m.

Riverside Church, 91 Claremont Ave.

(between 120th and 122nd), Room 9T

Panel features: **Maritzel González**, Federation of Cuban Women (FMC); **Mary-Alice Waters**, books' editor and leader of Socialist Workers Party; **Gail Walker**, IFCO; and *workers discussing how lessons from Cuban Revolution in the books set example for working people today.* Militant Labor Forum. For more information: (212) 629-6649.

Welcome the Federation of Cuban Women delegation

Wed., March 13, reception 6 p.m., program 7 p.m.

Casa de las Américas, 182 E. 111th St.

Speakers: **Maritzel González** and other members of FMC delegation Casa de las Américas and July 26th Coalition. Suggested donation: \$5-10

THE MILITANT

Working-class struggles in Africa

As Washington deepens its military and economic presence in Africa, capitalist production is expanding, along with the growing ranks of the working class and their struggles. The 'Militant' covers these developments. Don't miss a single issue.



Nyasa Times
Public workers in Malawi rally Feb. 20 during 2-week strike that won wage raise.

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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.

'Militant' subscription drive

Continued from front page full and on time.

Caroline Bellamy reports from Manchester, England, that supporters there have increased their quota to 60 after reaching the 42 mark toward their initial goal of 50.

"Militant supporters in Seattle are now starting to get some traction, selling 20 subscriptions this past week," John Naubert reported.

Four supporters from Seattle went to Longview, Wash., Feb. 26, to talk with people who helped sell subscriptions during the fall campaign, go door to door to meet workers who have not seen the paper before, and talk to subscribers about renewing.

"Good to see you all back again. How are things going with the paper?" asked Matt Holde as they entered the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 21 hall.

Holde was part of a successful eight-month fight by Local 21 in 2011-2012 against a concerted union-busting drive by EGT Development at its new grain terminal—a struggle that the *Militant* covered and supported.

"The *Militant* is a great paper," Holde said while renewing his subscription.

Also present at the hall was Byron Jacobs, former secretary-treasurer of Local 21. He has been reading the *Militant* for about a year and a half and said his favorites are the "On the Picket Line" column and articles about the Cuban Five, revolutionaries framed up and jailed in the U.S. since 1998. (See page 10.)

"The Cuban Five never give up. You have to believe in your cause to not give up. If we stand together, we could make serious change," he said.

Jacobs bought three books on special for subscribers: *Cuba and Angola*:

Fighting for Africa's Freedom and Our Own; Women and Revolution: The Living Example of the Cuban Revolution; and Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution. (See ad below.)

"People want to fight but we are too divided," said Roberto Pablo, a saw operator at one of the large cut and kill plants in South Omaha, Neb., when Jacob Perasso, Socialist Workers Party candidate for City Council, knocked on his door with other campaign supporters March 3. Pablo invited them in for food and discussion.

He said he bought a subscription to learn about the struggles of other working people and effectively fight for better working conditions, adding that he is going to support the socialist campaign.

"A new subscriber who got a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* also made sure to get a subscription for a friend who is in prison in Massachusetts who told her he would like to get the paper," Kevin Dwire wrote from Boston.

That subscription and a renewal by a long-time reader in a Washington State prison put us at 14 subscriptions to working people behind bars on the chart.

"The *Militant's* message hits close to home. I am about to get laid off or accept a crummy buyout. It is true what the paper says about the government doing nothing to put people to work," said Lillian Martinez when supporters knocked on her door March 3 in the Inwood neighborhood of Upper Manhattan.

Martinez works in the laundry department of a New York City hotel and is a member of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union Local 6. She was one of five workers in her building who signed up



Top, *Militant*/John Naubert; bottom, Gustavo Gallegos
Top, Mary Martin, SWP candidate for mayor of Seattle, speaks with Byron Jacobs, former secretary-treasurer of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 21 in Longview, Wash. Bottom, while selling *Militant* door to door in South Omaha, Neb., Jacob Perasso, left, SWP candidate for Omaha City Council, and campaign supporter Fredy Huinil, right, are invited inside into home of Roberto Pablo, meatpacking worker, for food and discussion.

that day.

Deborah Liatos reported that supporters sold 38 subscriptions during the March 2-3 weekend in the New York area. Since the beginning of the drive they have sold more than 100 books on working-class revolutionary politics.

"Capitalism seems to be centered around making the rich richer and the poor poorer," said Michel Carroll and Hannah Demers when asked why they bought a subscription.

The young couple told supporters who knocked on their door in a working-class neighborhood of Montreal that they had recently been discussing among themselves about capitalism.

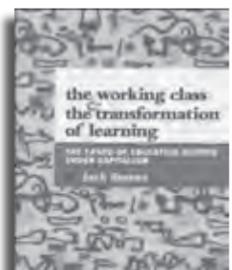
"Before going door to door March 2, I attended a meeting of the Nebraskans for Justice, a support group for Ed Poindexter and Mondo we Langa," wrote Joe Swanson from Lincoln, Neb.

"Poindexter and we Langa were leaders of the Black Panthers in Omaha in the late 1960s and became targets of the Omaha police and the FBI," Swanson explained. "They have been imprisoned for 42 years, serving life sentences on frame-up charges of killing an Omaha policeman.

"Nebraskans for Justice continue to work on public events to bring attention to the brothers' fight to be released from prison," Swanson said. Four meeting participants renewed their subscriptions to the *Militant*, including two who bought *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They were Framed, Why They Should Be Free*.

Join the campaign. Introduce the socialist newsweekly to new working people. You can call distributors in your area (see directory on page 6). Or order a bundle at themilitant@mac.com or (212) 244-4899.

Special offers with 'Militant' subscription



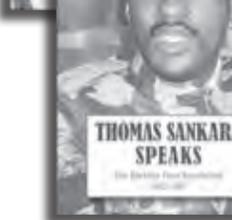
The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning
The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism
by Jack Barnes
\$2 with a subscription to the *Militant* (usually \$3)



Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power
by Jack Barnes
\$10 with subscription (usually \$20)



We Are Heirs of the World's Revolutions
Speeches from the Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87
by Thomas Sankara
\$5 with subscription (usually \$10)



Thomas Sankara Speaks
The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-1987
by Thomas Sankara
\$10 with subscription (usually \$24)

See distributors on page 6



Cuba and Angola
Fighting for Africa's Freedom and Our Own
by Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro; Cuban generals and combatants; Gabriel García Márquez
Publication offer: \$9 till March 31 \$6 with subscription (usually \$12)



Women in Cuba:
The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution
by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer
\$10 with subscription (usually \$20)



The Cuban Five
Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free
from pages of the *Militant*
\$3 with subscription (usually \$5)



Women and Revolution
The Living Example of the Cuban Revolution
by Asela de los Santos, Mary-Alice Waters and others
Publication offer: \$5 till March 31 \$3 with subscription (usually \$7)

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

MINNESOTA
Minneapolis
Class Struggle in Israel. Speaker: Tom Fiske, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., March 22, 7:30 p.m. 416 E. Hennepin Ave., Room 214. Tel.: (612) 729-1205.

WASHINGTON, D.C.
Cuba and Angola: 25th Anniversary of Cuban, Angolan and Namibian Victory Over South African Invasion. Speaker: Ned Measel, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., March 15, 7:30 p.m. 143 Kennedy St., NW. Tel.: (202) 536-5080.

Socialist ticket in Seattle

Continued from front page
an independent working-class political voice.

"The propertied rulers and their capitalist politicians have no solution to the crisis of capitalism. Their answers, like the so-called sequester, make its effects on working people worse," Mary Martin, SWP candidate for mayor, told the *Militant*. "We plan to speak as a tribune of the working class. We've just begun to campaign and we're getting a good response."

Twenty people attended the March dinner and program.

In face of the unemployment bred by the capitalist crisis, in which the size of the working class is actually beginning to contract, the candidates will be talking to workers about the need to fight for a massive government-funded public works program to put millions to work building roads, schools, hospitals, housing and others things workers need, Martin told participants at the campaign launching. "Working people need a productive life to stand on our own two feet and be in a stronger position to fight and forge solidarity"

Speaking on the panel, in addition to Martin, were John Naubert, SWP candidate for King County Port Commissioner; Edwin Fruit, the party's candidate for City Council District 6; and campaign supporter Bryce Phillips-Horvath, 22, a laid-off production worker.

Back port workers' fight

"My campaign for port commissioner stands with International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 4 workers in Vancouver, Wash., locked out by United Grain, and with workers at the SeaTac Airport and port truck drivers who have been fighting to organize unions," Naubert told meeting participants. "These workers should have control over their working conditions in dangerous jobs, not the billionaire owners of the shipping companies, grain conglomerates and airline industries."

The union fight by custodians and other workers in the airport terminal and the by the port truck drivers come under the jurisdiction of the Port of Seattle, Naubert said in an interview with the *Militant*.

"The port drivers, many of whom are immigrants from East Africa, are a good example of what the SWP campaign supports," he stated. "They went on strike last year over low return for transport of containerized cargo and discriminatory practices by operators and harassment by state police. As so-called owner-operators they are supposedly legally barred from organizing a union.

But last year they organized and went on strike anyway, and wrested concessions from the bosses on pay and other issues.

"Longshore workers throughout the country have been going through difficult contract negotiations with grain operators from Washington state to Newark, N.J.," Naubert continued. "The SWP campaign also stands with them as well as fellow workers on the docks around the world, like those who recently took to the streets in Port Said in Egypt. We distribute the *Militant* in the course of our campaigning, not merely to let workers know about each others' struggles, but to point a road forward how we can replace the capitalist system that exploits us."

"It's important to run a campaign like this," Phillips-Horvath told participants at the March 2 event. "I wasn't so sure of this until recently. I worked for a Democratic Party campaign a few years ago. I found you had to dumb yourself down and you had to ignore what you know is true in order to participate. I feel that the Republicans and Democrats are basically hostile to the working class."

"What do we have as opposed to those who tell you to participate in the game?" Phillips-Horvath continued. "We say revolution is possible through our creativity and hard work. The bourgeois candidates pay their filing fees in a second—\$1,000, \$2,000, it's nothing to them! For us the effort to organize and get on the ballot, it is a victory. We can't lose! Good luck to all our candidates!"

One participant asked about the candidates' position on plans for rail cars to transport coal from Wyoming to coal terminals in Washington state for shipment to China and elsewhere. "Some unions favor the coal trains and coal terminals as a way to create more jobs, but what about the environment?"

Under capitalism, the bosses' concern is maximizing profits, which can only be done at the expense of workers and the environment we live in, said city council candidate Edwin Fruit. "But we don't start with how to prevent pollu-



Militant/Clay Dennison

Bryce Phillips-Horvath speaks at Socialist Workers campaign forum in Seattle March 2. Left, John Naubert, SWP candidate for port commissioner; right, Mary Martin, candidate for mayor.

tion from coal dust in Seattle," he said. "Covers can be put on the coal trains, sprayers can be used to keep down dust in the coal terminals. Workers can fight for these things, which cut into profits. But our politics starts with the interests of workers worldwide."

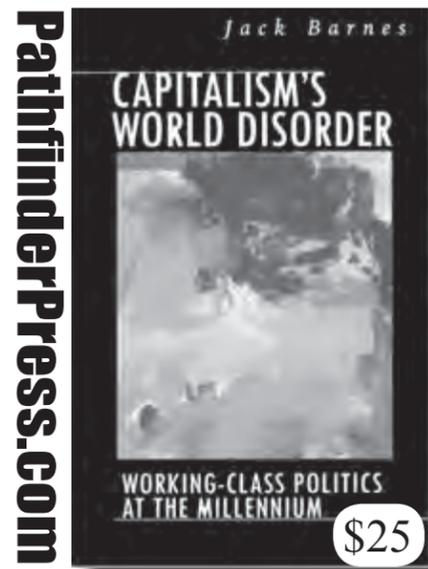
Communists never oppose energy production and the progress of modern industry, only the way it is organized under capitalism, which must be overthrown, the socialist candidates explain. Working people in the U.S. and other imperialist nations should champion and welcome the expansion of productive forces, the working class, and of cultural life to billions of fellow toilers in the less developed nations of Asia, Latin American and Africa, who confront the same enemy and are also more and more beginning to fight in their own interests.

Martin announced the candidates would seek ballot status in the August primary and explained that state regulations limit donations to \$25 per person per candidate, in order to not have to disclose names of contributors. Sixteen people responded to the appeal, raising the necessary \$100 filing fee to put Naubert on the ballot for port commissioner plus \$300 towards the \$1,200 filing fee for Fruit for city council and

\$400 for the \$1,800 filing fee for Martin for mayor.

"The fee and disclosure requirements mean that more than 72 workers will be contributing money to get the socialist candidates on the ballot," Martin told the *Militant*.

"Organizing to meet these regulations, designed to restrict working-class candidates access to the ballot, provide us with yet another opportunity to reach out broadly, to explain what the socialist campaign is about and how workers can be part of it," said Fruit.



SWP launches election campaigns in New York

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK—"I think it's a great idea," said Ebony Gamble after hearing John Studer, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor here, explain why working people need to fight for a massive government-funded public works program "to combat unemployment by building the things we need, including hospitals, housing, public transportation, day care centers."

Gamble was laid off from her job in data entry before Christmas. "I thought we needed something like that even before I met him, the way the economy's going," she said later. Gamble purchased a subscription to the *Militant*.

A couple of blocks away a woman who answered the door also liked the idea of a public works program. "But not for jails," she interjected. "We don't need jails."

Studer and his supporters were going door to door March 3 in East New York, a mostly African-American working-class neighborhood in Brooklyn, campaigning and selling subscriptions to the *Militant* and revolutionary literature. It was the first day of campaigning for the candidacies of Studer for mayor and Rebecca Williamson for New York City Comptroller.

"Going door to door we found that most workers today know that the bosses' parties, the Democrats and Republicans, have no solutions to the crisis we face. They are open to a discussion of what can be done, including about the example of the Cuban Revolution," Studer said.

The socialist candidate often pointed to articles in the latest issue of the

Militant about the role Cuban volunteers played in defeating the invasion of Angola by the white supremacist regime of South Africa in the 1970s and '80s. "Many working people realize that Cuba is different," Studer said. "And they are interested in the books we have that document the lessons of the revolution."

The Socialist Workers Party also announced this week its candidates in Seattle. (See article beginning on front page.) Last week the party won ballot status for Maura DeLuca and Jacob Perasso for mayor and city council respectively in Omaha, Neb. SWP candidates Maggie Trowe, Ellen Brickley and David Rosenfeld are running for city council in Des Moines, Iowa; John Hawkins in a special election in Illinois' Congressional District 2; Laura Garza in a special election for U.S. Senate in Massachusetts; Norton Sandler for mayor of Los Angeles and Eleanor Garcia for Los Angeles Unified School Board, District 2; and Tom Baumann for mayor of Miami. In Houston, Jacquie Henderson was the SWP write-in candidate in the election for Texas Senate District 6 that took place March 2.

Support Socialist Workers candidates!

California

Norton Sandler, Mayor of Los Angeles
Eleanor Garcia, L.A. School Board, Dist. 2

Florida

Tom Baumann, Mayor of Miami

Illinois

John Hawkins, Congress, 2nd CD

Des Moines, Iowa

David Rosenfeld, City Council, Ward 3
Ellen Brickley, City Council, Ward 1
Margaret Trowe, City Council At-Large

Massachusetts

Laura Garza, U.S. Senate

Nebraska

Maura DeLuca, Mayor of Omaha
Jacob Perasso, Omaha City Council District 4

New York

John Studer, Mayor of New York
Rebecca Williamson, City Comptroller

Texas

Jacquie Henderson, State Senate Dist. 6

Washington

Mary Martin, Mayor of Seattle
Edwin Fruit, Seattle City Council District 6
John Naubert, King County Port Commissioner

Wash. longshore workers fight United Grain lockout

BY EDWIN FRUIT

VANCOUVER, Wash.—Members of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 4 have been picketing around the clock in front of the United Grain Corp.'s grain terminal here since the company locked them out Feb. 27 on the pretext of equipment sabotage.

United Grain, a subsidiary of Mitsui & Co. Ltd., a Japanese-based multinational conglomerate, is among three grain-handling companies that imposed contract terms opposed by the ILWU. An agreement with four companies covered by the Pacific Northwest Handler's Agreement expired Sept. 29. Only TEMCO, LLC., a joint venture of Cargill and CHS Inc., which operates three grain terminals in the region, has signed an agreement with the union.

"Mitsui-United Grain has fabricated a story as an excuse to do what they've wanted to do all along, which is lock workers out instead of reach a fair agreement with them," Leal Sundet, ILWU co-negotiating chairman, said in a Feb. 27 statement. "For the past two months Mitsui's hired security guards have been shadowing and harassing our members every day at the United Grain elevator. This shows they've been itching to lock us all out."

"We received a report from a former FBI forensic investigator we hired that a member of the union bargaining committee" was responsible for sabotaging equipment in December, United Grain spokesman Pat McCormick told the *Militant* March 4. Since the union refused to collaborate with the investigation, he said, "we determined it was necessary to lock out the union members."

Although the lockout has "no direct relationship" to the contract negotiations, United Grain would bring back the workers, McCormick said, if the union agrees to the same terms as two other companies not covered under the Pacific Northwest Handler's Agreement—Export Grain Terminal (EGT) in Longview and Kalama Export Co. in Kalama.

"There is a spirit of solidarity on the picket line," ILWU spokesperson Jennifer Sargent said in a March 1 phone interview. According to workers on the picket line, members of ILWU Local 21 in Longview and Local 8 in Portland, Ore., have joined them in front of the United Grain ter-

minal.

Members of Local 21 waged a successful eight-month battle against EGT that ended in January last year after the company was forced to back down from its refusal to hire ILWU labor.

In a related development, the union's lawsuit charging civil rights violations by Longview city cops and the Cowlitz County Sheriffs department during the EGT fight was thrown out Feb. 22 by a federal district judge.



ILWU Local 4 members locked out by United Grain in Vancouver, Wash., picket plant March 1. Militant/Mary Martin

Bosses' profit drive kills 6 coal miners in 25 days

Continued from front page

worked in West Virginia, part of the Appalachian region where the coal industry is contracting the most. The UMWA estimates 3,000 miners in this state alone have been laid off over the past year.

Brandon Townsend was killed Feb. 6 in a Midland Trail Energy mine in Kanawha County, W.Va., when a hydraulic cylinder failed and struck him. Glen Clutter died Feb. 14 after being hit by a slate bar two days earlier while trying to lift a set of four derailed shield carriers back on track. He was employed at a Consolidation Coal Company mine in Marion County, W.Va.

Edward Finney was killed Feb. 7 and John Myles Feb. 19. Both were crushed after being hit by scoops at Metinvest's Affinity Mine in Raleigh County, W.Va.

State inspectors cited the Affinity Mine numerous times in the weeks leading up to the deaths for having shuttle car sideboards so high as to block drivers' visibility. Equipment brought in after Finney's death was neither properly installed nor maintained, according to a Feb. 19 inspector's report.

"The company was pushing production. They don't want you to worry about safety," coal miner Moses Meade, 40, told the *Militant* in a March 2 phone interview from Oceania, W.Va. "Just look at the Upper Big Branch Mine. Massey pays the fines and doesn't fix the problems."

"When you are a member of a union you can stop working in unsafe condi-

tions," Meade said. "We look out for each other. Safety was a big thing that started the union. In a nonunion job you are not protected. We call that being job scared."

Meade is laid off from the Black Oak Mine, owned by Patriot Coal Corp. In 2007 Peabody Energy Corp. spun off most of its union mines to form Patriot Coal. Then last summer Patriot, employing some 4,300, filed for bankruptcy. As part of its filing, Patriot is seeking to cut off more than 20,000 active and retired miners and their families from health benefits and pension plans and to tear up union contracts.

In addition to the four workers killed in West Virginia, Jerry Watts died Jan. 26 at T&T Energy's Begley Resources mine in Leslie County, Ky., when a hydraulic jack slipped during repair of a bulldozer. Timothy Chamness was crushed operating a continuous mining machine Feb. 13 in the Prairie Eagle South Mine in Perry County, Ill. In November last year Chad Myers, 30, was killed the same way in the Willow Lake Portal in nearby Saline County, Ill.

Continuous miners are massive low-slung machines with a spinning drum to grind into coal seams. They are used in half of the underground coal mined today. Between 1984 and 2010, 30 miners were killed and 220 injured involving continuous mining machines.

Installing sensors that shut down the machine when workers are detected nearby would remove this fatal risk. The government Mine Safety and Health

Administration had considered issuing a regulation requiring sensors be installed in 2011. But when mine bosses protested the time frame for the costly upgrade, MSHA backed off. The rule is now scheduled to go into effect this May.

"MSHA intends to take whatever action is necessary to ensure that all miners remain safe," said a Feb. 20 fatal alert issued by MSHA Assistant Secretary Joseph Main.

Asked what kind of actions this would entail, MSHA spokesperson Amy Louviere responded by email Feb. 25 saying, "That would include enhanced enforcement initiatives, such as impact inspections and pattern of violations notifications."

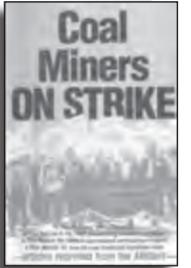
Alyson Kennedy contributed to this article.

COAL MINERS ON STRIKE

By Andy Rose, Nancy Cole

Articles on the 111-day 1977-78 miners' strike, the 1981 strike and contract rejection vote, the fight for health benefits and compensation to black lung victims, and more.—\$7

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25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



March 18, 1988

LEBANON, Va.—The heat was turned up on Pittston Coal Group as 3,000 miners, their families and pensioners rallied here March 6 at the high school gym.

The protesters had come from mining areas in West Virginia, Kentucky and Virginia to demand that this obstinate coal operator negotiate a contract with the union.

On January 31, the contract between the company and the United Mine Workers of America expired. Pittston has refused to sign an agreement modeled along the lines of the contract the union recently signed with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association.

The company has also refused to pay pension and health benefits to retirees since the contract expired.



March 18, 1963

PARIS—In face of steadily rising prices, the wages of state employees have remained stationary for some time. France's miners asked the government to bring their wages back into line with living costs. This required an increase of 11 percent. The de Gaulle regime responded by offering 5.77 percent—not at once but spread over the next year. This irritated the miners.

Talk about strike action spread rapidly through the coal fields. The response of the government was to announce a decree "requisitioning" the miners; that is, making it obligatory to show up on the job and to work as usual under threat of heavy fines and jail sentences. Strike action began in the Lorraine area and spread to the Nord and Pas-de-Calais.

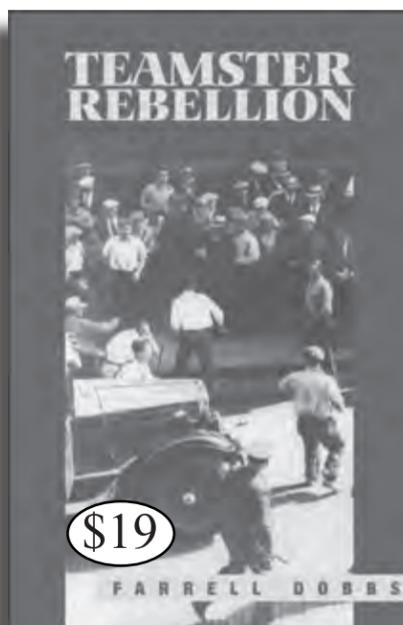


March 19, 1938

HATBORO, Pa.—Despite a brutal attack by vigilantes, armed with tear gas, guns and clubs, C.I.O. workers of the Roberts and Mander Stove Co. won a decisive victory, when, after a five-week sit-down strike, officials of the company agreed to recognize the Steel Workers Organization Committee as the sole bargaining agency for the 800 employees.

The agreement was signed after an unsuccessful attempt by the company to break the strike by ousting the sit-downers, who had occupied the plant since early in February.

A mob of 500, protected by over 100 local and state police, bombarded the plant with bricks and tear gas. The workers replied with flint pebbles and the jet of a fire hose.



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'Need to learn to think socially and act politically'

Below is an excerpt from *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. This *Books of the Month* excerpt is from "Prospects for Socialism in America," a resolution adopted by the 27th national convention of the SWP in August 1975. Copyright © 1981 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

In the United States, as elsewhere, the revolutionists constitute a relatively small nucleus grappling with two central problems:

- How to help the masses, through their own experiences of struggle, to cross the bridge from general dissatisfaction and demands that stem from their immediate problems, to revolutionary socialist solutions.

- How, in this process, to gather fresh forces and train the cadres who, in the course of their experiences in the class struggle, can build a mass revolutionary party capable of leading millions of working people to victory. ...

Several points must be borne in mind in relation to the method of our program. ...

- We begin from the *objective* contradictions of the capitalist system and the



Militant/Dennis Scarla

Tens of thousands march in demonstration for jobs April 26, 1975, in Washington D.C.

direction in which these are moving. On that basis we derive our demands, and we formulate them in terms that are, as much as possible, understandable to the masses at their given level of consciousness and readiness for action.

- We do not begin by demanding that the masses understand what "the system" is or that they reject any particular aspects of it. Instead we chart a course, raise demands, and propose actions aimed at shifting the burden of all the inequities and breakdowns of capitalism from the shoulders of the working people onto the employers and their government, where it properly belongs.

- We champion the progressive demands and support the struggles of all sectors of the oppressed, regardless of the origin and level of these actions.

- We recognize the pervasiveness of the deep divisions within the American working class bred by imperialism and class society, and we press for revolutionary unity based on support for the demands of the most oppressed. We press the working class to give clear and concrete answers to the problems faced by its allies. And we unconditionally reject any concept that the oppressed should "wait" for the labor movement to support them before entering into their own struggles.

- We raise demands that challenge the "rights" of capitalist property and prerogatives claimed by the government to control the lives of the working masses and the wealth they create. We do not

stop with the necessary struggle to defend and extend all democratic rights. We carry the fight for democracy into the organization of the economy and the process of making decisions over the standard of living of the working class. This is the dynamic leading to control by the workers over the institutions and policies that determine the character of their work and life, the dynamic of direct democracy through councils or committees of action, and the dynamic leading to a workers government.

- Our method is one of class-struggle action leading to deeper and clearer class consciousness. We promote the utilization of proletarian methods of struggle where the workers can make their weight count advantageously in direct mass actions in the streets and in the workplaces. In this perspective united-front-type tactics are central. Our goal of mass independent political action by the working class precludes any subordination to the needs of bourgeois parties, figures, or institutions. It necessitates the workers building their own political instrument, a mass party of the working class capable of leading their struggles to their revolutionary conclusion, the establishment of a workers government.

Think socially; act politically

To meet this revolutionary perspective the American workers will have to learn to think socially and act politically. They must see the big social and politi-

cal questions facing all the exploited and oppressed of the United States as issues of direct concern to them. They must stop placing their hopes in "individual solutions" to capitalism's blows and begin moving toward collective political action independent of the employers and their Democratic and Republican hirelings.

Defensive struggles against the bosses and their government will generate the nuclei for a class-struggle left wing in the unions. Striving to defend themselves against the squeeze on jobs, real income, social welfare, and on-the-job conditions, the workers will come into direct confrontation with the entrenched labor bureaucracy and its class-collaborationist perspective. A class-struggle left wing will begin along these lines—a wing that stands for the transformation of the unions into instruments of revolutionary struggle whose independent power will be used on every level in the interests of the whole working class, organized and unorganized, and its allies.

Labor's next giant step will be to break the stranglehold of the bourgeois two-party system to which it is tied and through which it vainly tries to find solutions to capitalism's breakdowns. With a labor party based on the organized power of the unions, all the interrelated social, political, and economic interests of labor and its allies can be encompassed and fought for. This will reinforce the independent mobilizations of all sectors of the oppressed and help aim their force at the common enemy. And the workers can effectively counter the efforts of the rulers to diffuse and co-opt independent struggles of the masses by using their two-party monopoly.

The precise slogans and demands that will be raised, and the order in which they will appear, will depend on the development of the crises faced by American imperialism and the intensity of the pressures generated by the spontaneous struggles of the oppressed and exploited. But it is along this line of march that the politicization of American labor will take place. The role of independent political action will begin to become clear to millions, placing on the agenda the decisive question of which class shall govern—the workers or the employers.

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March BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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US Congress prepares new trade sanctions against Iran

BY LOUIS MARTIN

In a display of bipartisan unity, Congress is preparing to further expand U.S. sanctions against Iran to what would amount to “a commercial trade embargo if fully carried out,” according to the *New York Times*.

For years, Washington has waged a campaign to force Tehran to abandon its program of nuclear research, which the U.S. government and its allies say is geared toward making nuclear weapons. The Iranian government maintains its program is for power generation and medical purposes.

Republican Rep. Ed Royce from California, who is chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and Rep. Eliot Engel from New York, the committee’s ranking Democrat, jointly introduced legislation Feb. 27 “intended to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons ability,” the *Times* reported.

The measure would expand the list of blacklisted Iranian companies to all those under government management and potentially freeze Iran’s foreign bank assets held in euros, one of its few remaining ways to repatriate profits from foreign trade.

Two days later, Senators Lindsey Graham, a Republican, and Democrat Roberto Menendez, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, introduced a resolution stating, “The United States government should stand with Israel and provide diplomatic, military and economic support” in the event Tel Aviv takes military action against

Iran. President Barack Obama is expected to visit Israel for the first time as president later this month.

At the same time, talks on Iran’s nuclear program resumed Feb. 26-27 between Tehran and representatives of the U.N. Security Council—China, France, Russia, the U.K. and the U.S.—and Germany. Held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, Central Asia, these were the first such talks since June last year.

“Threatening Iran is not going to work,” Mohammad Khazaei, Iran’s ambassador to the U.N., told CNN March 3. “As soon as you say, ‘We are ready to talk to you and work with you, but at the same time, we punish you and put pressure on you and your people’—Iran cannot accept that.”

Meanwhile, another set of sanctions adopted in July by Congress kicked in Feb. 6, blocking Iran from direct access to revenue from oil sales to nine countries. Instead, it can only receive credit to purchase goods from those countries, which include Iran’s biggest oil customers, among them China, India and Turkey. The measures add to earlier sanctions that have increasingly forced Iran into oil-for-goods barter deals with its trading partners.

According to a *New York Times* Feb. 26 report, the six government representatives at the Almaty talks were planning to offer Iran an easing of sanctions on trade in precious metals in exchange for Tehran’s agreement to stop enrichment of uranium to 20 percent purity, shut down its Fordo underground en-



Reuters/Raheb Homavandi

Sanctions hit hardest on Iran’s working people as national currency loses value and prices rise steeply, especially for food staples. Price of rice rose 37 percent in last two weeks of January.

richment facility, and ship abroad its stockpile of 20 percent enriched uranium for conversion to nuclear fuel.

Sanctions on Iran’s trade in gold and other precious metals were signed into law by President Barack Obama at the beginning of January, aimed at preventing countries from trading these metals for Iranian oil and gas.

Tehran has insisted that before any agreement could be reached, all sanctions be lifted and Iran’s “right to enrich uranium” be recognized as a signatory of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Workers resist economic squeeze

Years of imperialist sanctions appear to have their intended effects, which include not only damaging Iran’s economy, but imposing hardship on working people there and feeding factional tensions among the country’s rulers.

According to a Feb. 24 *Financial*

Times article, Iran’s national currency, the rial, fell by about 60 percent last year under the combined impact of U.S. and European Union sanctions.

Inflation is officially at 28.7 percent and youth unemployment at 28.6 percent. In the last two weeks of January, prices of chicken, eggs and rice have increased 23 percent, 30 percent and 37 percent respectively.

Bosses in Iran are taking aim at working people, who in some cases are fighting back.

For example, the Free Labor Union of Iran website and other dispatches reported that the 1,200 workers at the Safa Pipe Rolling factory in Saveh ended a five-day strike Feb. 7 after the employer finally paid their September wages. This was the second strike by these workers in two months over outstanding wages.

The Iranian parliament approved a plan Feb. 24 to subsidize basic food staples like rice, vegetable oil and meat, the *Financial Times* reported.

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s supporters in parliament voted against the food subsidy plan, the *Times* said, claiming “there was no economic crisis in Iran.” Politicians backing Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who pressed for the subsidies, have been blaming Iran’s economic problems on Ahmadinejad’s policies. Ahmadinejad’s second and final term will end with elections in June.

Gov’t cuts, tax hikes put crisis on workers’ backs

Continued from front page

“stimulate” economic growth, companies are investing less and less in production-expanding equipment and hiring (see chart on front page).

With no way to reverse the contraction, bosses are going after our wages and working conditions on the job as they cut social services and implement regressive tax measures, all aimed at foisting maximum burden for the crisis of capitalism on the backs of working people.

Nearly four years into the “recovery” since the last recession, workers face persistently high unemployment and declining real wages. Compared to five years ago there are 3.5 million fewer construction and manufacturing jobs, and those forced to accept part-time hours has jumped by more than 3 million to 7.8 million workers.

In countries hardest hit by the economic contraction, such as Greece, Spain and Portugal, government austerity measures targeting working people have gone the furthest.

In response to the 2 percent increase in payroll taxes that took effect Jan. 1, restaurants, including major chains from Burger King to McDonalds and major retailers like Walmart have been “lowering forecasts and adjusting sales and marketing strategies, expecting consumers with smaller paychecks to dine out less and trade down to less expensive purchases,” reported the *Wall Street Journal*.

“During the recession, we saw people trading down from Wal-Mart to the dollar stores,” Brian Yarbrough of the Edward Jones investment firm told the

Journal. “That hasn’t reversed; people haven’t traded back up and have stayed with the dollar stores.”

Prior to the March 1 “sequestration” deadline, Obama in a public media blitz warned about dire consequences if this agreement goes through. In an appearance at the Newport News Shipbuilding Company in Virginia Feb. 26 he said this is “a dumb way of doing things” that will “weaken the economy and military readiness.”

During his election campaign, the president blamed Republican obstruction in Congress for the approaching March 1 deadline for the budget cuts, asserting it’s not something he proposed. But it was in fact initiated by the White House in the final deal reached with Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell in 2011.

The White House proposed that part of the cuts be replaced with tax increases, which Senate Republicans Feb. 28 voted against. An alternative Republican proposal to keep the cuts in place but give Obama more flexibility to decide where to slash was also voted down. Then, when Congress left town for the weekend Obama signed the sequestration deal as it stood into law.

With the law now in effect rhetoric has cooled in the White House and Congress on the plan’s catastrophic impact. Over the coming months, however, growing numbers of workers will feel its effect.

Unpaid furloughs of federal workers could begin in April. Those unemployed for more than six months could see their payments cut by as much as 11 percent. “Texas expects to see its education aid

slashed hundreds of millions of dollars, which could force local school districts to fire teachers,” reports the *New York Times*.

Targets Medicare

The \$85 billion in cuts includes \$42.67 billion from military spending, \$31.32 billion from nondefense programs, and \$11.35 billion from Medicare payments to doctors and hospitals.

Budget cuts are also in store for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and the National Institutes of Health, reports Medscape Medical News. This will affect the availability of drug addiction services and HIV testing.

Both Democratic and Republican legislators have in their sights substantial cuts to Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—won through social struggles by working people in the 1930s and ’60s. There’s “a long-term problem in terms of our health care costs and programs like Medicare,” stated Obama the day he signed the sequestration law. “I’m prepared to take on the problem where it exists on entitlements, and do some things that my own party really doesn’t like.”

One immediate proposal under discussion is to cut annual cost-of-living adjustments to Social Security payments through using a different inflation index, the “chained CPI.” This “translates into a cut in benefits of 3 percent for those who have been retired 10 years, 6 percent after 20 years, and 9 percent after 30 years,” reported the Huffington Post website.

New International no. 12

‘Capitalism’s Long Hot Winter Has Begun’

by Jack Barnes



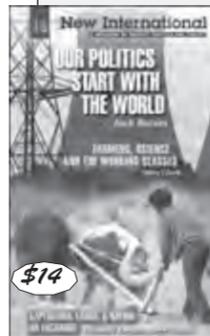
\$16

Today’s accelerating global capitalist slump accompanies the most far-reaching shift in Washington’s military policy since the U.S. buildup toward World War II. Class-struggle-minded working people must face this turning point for imperialism, and chart a revolutionary course to confront it.

New International no. 13

‘Our Politics Start with the World’

by Jack Barnes



\$14

The economic and cultural inequalities between imperialist and semicolonial countries, and among classes within almost every country, are produced and accentuated by the workings of capitalism. For vanguard workers to build parties able to lead a revolutionary struggle for power, our activity must be guided by a strategy to close this gap.

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Socialists from US, UK talk with youth

A welcome visit to cradle of Cuban Revolution by communists

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL AND TOM BAUMANN

SEGUNDO FRENTE, Santiago de Cuba province, Cuba—An enthusiastic welcome from 120 students assembled at a high school in this mountainous area of eastern Cuba greeted the arrival of six guests from the United States and United Kingdom.

The March 1 visit was a first for the school. Both students and teachers became more and more interested in exchanging experiences as they learned that the visitors, involved in editing, using, and distributing books published by Pathfinder Press, were communists building revolutionary working-class parties in their own countries.

Several students performed songs, dances, and skits, after which Elena Rivera, municipal director of education, welcomed the guests. A brief presentation of three recently published books and of the socialist newsweekly, the *Militant*, explaining how they are used by workers carrying out communist political work in the United States and other countries, was followed by a lively exchange of questions and comments.

After more music and dance performances, students and teachers massed around the literature table to buy the featured books and other Pathfinder titles.

The meeting was part of a three-day tour in Santiago province organized by the national leadership of the Union of Young Communists (UJC). The visit included several events in the city of Santiago de Cuba: an exchange with students at the University of Oriente, a meeting with the provincial UJC leadership, and a book presentation at what was once the family home of Vilma Espín. Espín was a central leader of the July 26 Revolutionary Movement and a Rebel Army combatant in the revolutionary war, commanded by Fidel Castro, that



Militant photos: above, Jonathan Silberman; inset, Martín Koppel
Above: After talks by visiting socialists from U.S., high school student at March 1 event in mountain area of eastern Cuba joins discussion. **Right:** Later, students buy copies of *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free*. “What are your experiences taking the fight to free the five to the American people?” a student asked after hearing about door-to-door sales of that book and others to workers in U.S.



overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in January 1959. Her home was the general headquarters of the underground struggle in Santiago for a period of time.

The visitors also toured two historic sites—the family home of Frank País, a central leader of the July 26 Movement, murdered by Batista’s henchmen in 1957, and the Museum of the Underground Struggle, which recounts the work of the July 26 Movement in Santiago.

Visit to mountainous district

The trip to Segundo Frente (Second Front), north of Santiago in the foothills of the Sierra Cristal mountains, had particular significance. That’s

where the Rebel Army’s “Frank País” Second Eastern Front, a vast liberated territory under the command of Raúl Castro, established its general headquarters in the town of Mayarí Arriba in 1958.

The story of how the Second Front was established, and of the social revolution that deepened throughout the region as the war accelerated, is told by Vilma Espín and Asela de los Santos, two combatants who helped lead it, in *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution*, one of the books featured in the panel presentations.

The tour of the area included a visit to the memorial honoring Rebel Army combatants and to the Museum of the Second Front, originally a few wood cabins used by Raúl Castro, Espín and other rebel leaders when they weren’t on the move throughout the region.

The meeting in the Segundo Frente district was held at the Rolando Matos Ferié Pre-University Institute. Students aged 15-18 had come from several nearby schools. Most were children of workers in Mayarí Arriba and surrounding towns. The grandparents of many of the students had been landless peasants under the Batista dictatorship. Facing the permanent threat of eviction and brutal reprisals from the tyranny’s troops and thugs, many peasants had aided the Rebel Army.

“Before the revolution, there were

few schools and a lot of illiteracy here,” noted assistant school director Inés Maturell. The Rebel Army’s Education Department, headed by Asela de los Santos, opened some 400 rural schools throughout the Second Front with the help of peasant families. “Today, in the Segundo Frente municipality alone, we have 74 schools and even a university,” Maturell said. Segundo Frente has a population of about 40,000.

The students were all eyes and ears as Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and a member of the Socialist Workers Party’s National Committee, gave a brief picture of the political work carried out by communists in the United States and other countries.

Going door to door in working-class neighborhoods and using the *Militant* and Pathfinder books, “we are part of the wide-ranging discussion among

working people who are trying to understand the deepening world capitalist crisis and how they and other workers can effectively respond,” Waters said.

Today, she noted, working people in the U.S. are confronting high levels of prolonged unemployment, wages that are being slashed, and the loss of homes, savings and access to health care.

“And we’re only in the opening stages of the capitalist contraction,” Waters said. “Decades of political and social convulsions, as well as open-ended wars, lie ahead of us.”

As a result, growing numbers of working people are becoming more open to learning about the example of the Cuban Revolution, Waters said.

Fight to free Cuban Five

Workers are discovering the truth about the frame-up and imprisonment in the U.S. of five Cuban revolutionaries who were monitoring violent plans by counterrevolutionary groups with a decades-long record of deadly attacks on Cuba, operating with impunity from U.S. soil. As they learn of the integrity and dignity of these five fighters, workers become attracted to the political example they are setting and to the struggle to win their freedom.

Following the remarks by Waters, Róger Calero presented *Cuba and Angola: Fighting for Africa’s Freedom and Our Own*, and Martín Koppel talk-

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes

The Cuban Revolution of 1959 had a worldwide political impact, including on workers and youth in the imperialist heartland.

As the proletarian-based struggle for Black rights was advancing in the U.S., the social transformations fought for and won by Cuban toilers set an example that socialist revolution is not only necessary—it can be made and defended.

“A book about the present and future.”

—Pedro Tejera Escull
Acting rector, University of Oriente
Santiago, Cuba

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h in eastern Cuba's Santiago province s building revolutionary workers parties in their own countries

ed about *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free*. Calero and Koppel described how hundreds of these and other books, along with several thousand subscriptions to the paper, have been sold as *Militant* readers go house to house, apartment to apartment talking with fellow workers.

Several students took the floor during the discussion. Marlén Sánchez, a 12th grader, commented on the importance for them of the fight to free the Five Heroes, as they are known here in Cuba. Beatriz Miniet, also in 12th grade, asked, "What are your experiences taking the fight to free the five to the American people, especially when the media blocks the truth?" She also asked, "What possibilities do young people in the United States have to get an education?"

In response, Koppel said the fight of the Cuban Five "strikes a chord among workers in the U.S. Many have first-hand experience with the capitalist cops, courts, and prisons."

Calero noted the difference between education in the United States and Cuba. Schools in the U.S. reinforce class divisions and bourgeois values, he said. The socialist revolution in Cuba enables working people to continue expanding their access to culture and learning throughout their lives.

Afterwards students surrounded the display table, buying dozens of books, pamphlets, and copies of the *Militant*, while peppering their guests with more questions. In addition to the speakers, the visitors included Tom Baumann from the United States and Jonathan Silberman and Olivia Pallister from the Communist League in the United Kingdom.

By the end, virtually all books were gone. The rest were donated to the school library, to the pleasure of teachers and students alike.

While visiting Segundo Frente, the delegation also met and talked with two municipal UJC leaders, First Secretary Yunia Machuca and Noriel Almenares. Machuca, 34, was previously a teacher,



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

At University of Oriente meeting in Santiago Feb. 27, acting rector Pedro Tejera Escull (left) recalled that at conference in Cuba where he first met Socialist Workers Party members years earlier, "while others talked about 'social movements' in the U.S., they were the only ones who talked about the working class." Also on panel (right to left) were Róger Calero, Mary-Alice Waters, and Martín Koppel—SWP cadres and Pathfinder Press editors—and Liuba Barthelemi, local leader of Union of Young Communists.

and Almenares, 28, had served five years in the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba, where he had responsibilities for political work among young soldiers.

The heart of the UJC's efforts in this coffee-growing area is political work with young workers and farmers, Machuca and Almenares explained. After the destruction wreaked by Hurricane Sandy, the UJC in Segundo Frente organized a brigade of some 50 local youth to join farmers in helping salvage storm-battered coffee plants.

The UJC leaders also described how they work with young people interested in farming by organizing clubs at elementary and high schools, and involving students in tending vegetable gardens that supply their schools.

University of Oriente event

At the University of Oriente in the city of Santiago de Cuba, the socialists took part in a Feb. 27 seminar and related events around the study of the revolutionary legacy of José Martí, Cuba's national hero. Held at the agricultural sciences campus, the one-day event drew students and teachers from throughout the university.

One of the organizers, Esperanza Aguilera, a professor at the univer-

sity, had visited the Pathfinder stand at the Havana book fair the week before. When she learned about the planned trip to Santiago, she arranged for a Pathfinder presentation to be part of the day's program.

An audience of 80 attended the presentation, which was followed by 45 minutes of questions and discussion.

Acting university rector Pedro Tejera Escull concluded the session. He expressed appreciation for the *Militant* and for the political activity the Socialist Workers Party carries out in the working class in the United States. Noting that the university library has a number of Pathfinder titles, he pointed to *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes and *My Life* by Leon Trotsky.

After reading *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, Tejera said, he was surprised to find out the book wasn't about a revolution that had never taken place, but about the present and future. When he met Socialist Workers Party members at an international conference in Cuba several years ago, Tejera recalled, he'd been struck that "while others talked about 'social movements' today, they were the only ones who talked about the working class."

The probing questions and discussions continued around the book sale table outside the meeting room.

One of the most sought-after titles was the issue of *Nueva Internacional* magazine featuring the article "Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun."

"I need to read this," a student remarked. "I want to understand more about the economic crisis. I've been following the news about the crisis in Spain."

At the seminar's closing session, prizes were handed out to winners of a José Martí essay contest. Rosa María Reyes, dean of the School of Social Sciences, thanked the guests from the U.S. and U.K. for participating. One reason Cubans are often unaware the economic problems they face today are sharply intensified by the global capitalist crisis, she said, is "that we're protected by our government." As a result of our socialist revolution, Reyes said, workers in Cuba don't face the threat of unemployment or losing their homes, as in capitalist countries.

In discussions with the provincial UJC leadership Feb. 28, the SWP and CL members heard First Secretary Jorge Suárez explain the UJC's work in boosting agricultural and industrial production in Cuba.

Response to Hurricane Sandy

This has become even more important in Santiago, where Hurricane Sandy wreaked havoc last October. Suárez and other UJC leaders described how the organization mobilized brigades of youth who joined with others to help with the heavy cleanup and reconstruction work.

In response to the heightened danger of dengue fever outbreaks, the UJC also organized youth from Santiago and across the island into brigades that went house to house to work with local residents to eliminate breeding grounds for the mosquito that transmits the disease. Young people who want to continue working on such public health efforts are offered the opportunity to do so.

While everyday activity is largely back to normal in Santiago, the longer-term effort to repair and rebuild damaged housing and infrastructure is still under way.

Suárez was asked about the challenge

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Militant/Jonathan Silberman

High school student Roxana Robert speaks at Feb. 28 meeting on two books on women and Cuban Revolution, held at Vilma Espín Memorial in Santiago de Cuba. Espín, a central leader of revolutionary movement in Cuba from early 1950s until her death in 2007, is an author of one of the books. Also speaking (right to left) were Margiola Sánchez, director of the Espín center; Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the books; and Surina Acosta, general secretary of Federation of Cuban Women in Santiago province.

Oppose imperialist squeeze on Iran!

Working people the world over should oppose the new sanctions Washington is organizing to impose on Iran and demand an immediate, unconditional halt to all existing measures aimed at imposing hardships on the Iranian people and forcing Tehran to abandon its program of nuclear research.

Expanding electrification, including through the use of nuclear power, is a necessary step for any underdeveloped, semicolonial country like Iran to advance industry, agriculture, medicine and culture.

The hypocrisy of U.S. imperialism knows no bounds! As it selectively dictates to nations it has oppressed and threatened for decades—from Iran to North Korea—what weapons they can and cannot possess, Washington stands as the only power to have unleashed nuclear holocaust, incinerating hundreds of thousands of working people in the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II.

Nuclear weapons have only one use: to kill masses of innocent people. No government stands

on higher moral ground on this question than that of Cuba. The rejection of military tactics that could lead to the slaughter of innocent people is a matter of proletarian morality, which has distinguished the Cuban Revolution from its inception.

“We have never considered producing nuclear weapons because we don’t need them,” Fidel Castro said in 2005. For more than five decades, revolutionary Cuba has defended itself from Washington’s unremitting hostility with the mobilization, political consciousness and military preparedness of millions of workers and farmers.

“We have a different type of nuclear weapon,” Castro added. “It’s our ideas. We possess a weapon as powerful as nuclear ones and it is the magnitude of the justice we are fighting for. Our nuclear weapons is the invincible power of moral weapons. That is why we have never considered producing them, nor has it crossed our mind to seek biological weapons, what for? Weapons to combat death, to combat AIDS, to combat diseases, to fight against cancer, that’s what we dedicate our resources to.”

Cuban workers and youth look for books on US class struggle and capitalist crisis

BY OLIVIA PALLISTER

HAVANA—Among the books in Spanish most sought after by workers and youth here in Cuba during a four-week visit by an international team participating in the Havana International Book Fair, as well as in related activities in Havana and Santiago de Cuba province, were titles on the class struggle and revolutionary working-class politics in the United States.

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power by Jack Barnes sold 135 copies in Spanish. Forty-six copies of *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* by Mary-Alice Waters were bought at events here, as well.

Some 500 copies of this working-class newsweekly, the *Militant*, were sold for a peso each, with 15 people getting subscriptions—far more than during any previous book fair.

Titles presenting a Marxist explanation of the roots of today’s global contraction of capitalist production, trade and employment—and a working-class road to combat the exploiters’ assaults—were very popular. This was shown by interest in “Capitalism’s Long Hot Winter Has Begun” in issue no. 6 of *Nueva Internacional* (70 copies sold) and “What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold” in issue no. 4 of that magazine (40 sold).

The largest number of Pathfinder books sold or donated were new titles available this year at book

presentations in Havana and Santiago de Cuba. This included:

- more than 1,000 copies of the most recent edition (in Spanish and English) of *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free*;

- 550 copies of *Cuba and Angola: Fighting For Africa’s Freedom and Our Own*; and

- 620 copies of the new booklet *Women and Revolution: The Living Example of the Cuban Revolution*, a companion to a book launched at last year’s fair, *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* (270 more of which were sold here this year).

Of special interest were 27 copies sold—in English—of *Problems of Women’s Liberation* by Evelyn Reed. Few books in English sell in large quantities here, but sales of this title not available in Spanish registered the thirst for works on the origins of women’s oppression and a revolutionary course to fight for emancipation.

In addition, 80 copies were sold of *Lenin’s Final Fight*—one of the most sought-after titles here since Pathfinder first published it in Spanish in 1997—as well as 32 copies of *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

All told, more than 6,000 Pathfinder books were sold or donated during the activities here.

Eastern Cuba visit

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of winning youth who are neither in school nor working a job to the revolution. He noted that the UJC, along with the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) and other mass organizations, goes house to house to work with these young people and draw them into productive activity.

UJC members Marianela Castañeda and Rocío Nápoles described a related UJC-led effort—the José Martí Brigades of art instructors, of which they are the president and vice president. The brigades go to local communities to give art classes and involve young people in music, drama and other cultural activities.

Event sponsored by FMC

A highlight of the Santiago visit was a presentation, sponsored by the Federation of Cuban Women, of two related Pathfinder titles: *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, and Yolanda Ferrer; and its companion booklet *Women and Revolution: The Living Example of the Cuban Revolution* by Asela de los Santos and Mary-Alice Waters.

The presentation was held at Espín’s family home, now a museum that exhibits photos and other materials illustrating chapters in the Cuban Revolution in which Espín took part.

More than 100 people attended, among them some two dozen students, mostly young women, from a nearby high school. Also present were a dozen veterans of the Santiago underground and Rebel Army who had worked with Espín and de los Santos, along with cadres of the FMC and representatives of other mass organizations.

Margiola Sánchez, director of the Vilma Espín memorial, chaired the meeting, which featured remarks by Waters and Surina Acosta, FMC general secretary in Santiago province. Acosta, who was trained as a livestock specialist and worked for a number of years on a cattle-raising cooperative, is a deputy in Cuba’s National Assembly and just completed a five-year term on the country’s 31-member Council of State. The event was widely reported in the Santiago press and featured in the national TV newscast.

A fuller report on this event and a similar book presentation a week earlier at the FMC training center in Havana will appear in a coming issue of the *Militant*.

Who are the Cuban Five?

Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González are Cuban revolutionaries who during the 1990s accepted assignments from the Cuban government to gather information on the activities of Cuban-American counterrevolutionary groups operating in southern Florida. These paramilitary outfits, organizing on U.S. soil with virtual impunity, have a long record of carrying out bombings, assassinations and other deadly attacks, both against targets in Cuba and supporters of the Cuban Revolution in the United States, Puerto Rico and elsewhere.

On Sept. 12, 1998, the five were arrested by the FBI. They were framed up and convicted on a variety of charges, which included acting as unregistered agents of the Cuban government and possession of false identity documents. Without a shred of evidence, three were charged with “conspiracy to gather and transmit national defense information.”

Hernández was also convicted of conspiracy to commit murder based on the pretext that he bore responsibility for the Cuban government’s 1996 shutdown of two aircraft flown by the counterrevolutionary group Brothers to the Rescue that had invaded Cuban airspace in disregard of Havana’s repeated warnings. He is serving two life terms plus 15 years.

All but René González remain in prison. Since October 2011 he has been serving a three-year “supervised release.” On the pretext of his dual citizenship, his request to return to Cuba has been denied. His wife, Olga Salanueva, is barred from entering the United States, as is Adriana Pérez, the wife of Hernández.

LETTERS

‘Give mine to Hernández’

Every week I await my name to be called at mail call, always excited to receive the latest *Militant*. I devour it from the first page immediately, reading everything.

Then I pass it on to the like-minded and I make sure it circulates to others until it is sent to the other yard for distribution. Thus my friends get it, then their friends.

I wish I could help financially with the *Militant*. But sadly I am very indigent with a government in-house prison job in the recreation center for a whole \$6 a month!

If you could by any chance extend a subscription for this prisoner, I will continue passing on the paper to help awake the mass of workers inside who love to hear a message from people like the Socialist Workers Party.

Also give mine to Cuban 5 [Gerardo] Hernández. I was with him in 2007-2009 in USP Victorville, Calif., living in the same unit. We had many great talks. He gets a lot of support and deserves it for his sacrifice. Though I may never read the book on them you sell, I at least was a friend. Thank you for all you do.

A prisoner
West Virginia

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

The Prisoners’ Fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. To donate, send a check or money order payable to the *Militant* and earmarked “Prisoners’ Fund” to 306 W. 37th St., 10th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

Editor’s note: Pathfinder Press offers working-class revolutionary books to prisoners at a 50 percent discount. There is a flat rate of \$2.75 for shipping per order.

Prisoners can mail their prepaid orders to: Pathfinder Press, PO Box 162767, Atlanta, GA 30321-2767.

Relatives and friends can order online for a prisoner at www.pathfinderpress.com. The discount is applied once it is confirmed the books are being shipped to a prison address.

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.