

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Harlem meeting: Fight to free Cuban 5 is 'near and dear to us'
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 78/NO. 21 JUNE 2, 2014

'Militant' welcomes new readers

BY EMMA JOHNSON

The *Militant* extends a warm welcome to the 1,772 readers who signed up for the socialist newsweekly during our spring subscription and books campaign. You will be receiving weekly news about the stakes for working people in key battles from

SOCIALIST WORKERS BUILD ACTIVE WORKERS CONFERENCE

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Ukraine to West Virginia. And regular reports on efforts to help win freedom for the Cuban Five, Cuban revolutionaries imprisoned in the U.S. for their efforts to defend their revolution.

In the final stretch supporters made a special effort to bring the drive home, selling 511 subscriptions in 10 days. "The highlight for us was

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Spring 'Militant' subscription campaign

April 5 - May 14 (final)

Country	quota	sold	%
UNITED STATES			1772
Seattle	100	113	113%
Des Moines	85	92	108%
Chicago	75	80	107%
Philadelphia	80	85	106%
Miami	65	69	106%
Houston	50	53	106%
San Francisco	110	116	105%
Omaha/Lincoln	120	126	105%
Los Angeles	115	120	104%
Twin Cities	100	104	104%
Atlanta*	100	103	103%
Boston	40	39	98%
Washington	75	67	89%
New York	300	240	80%
Total U.S.	1415	1407	99%
PRISONERS	10	20	200%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	100	104	104%
Manchester	65	66	102%
UK Total	165	170	103%
CANADA	65	72	111%
NEW ZEALAND	50	50	100%
AUSTRALIA	50	53	106%
Total	1755	1772	98%
Should be	1800	1800	100%

*Raised goal

Separatists' 'takeover' in east Ukraine unravels

BY JOHN STUDER

Miners, rail workers and other working people in Ukraine are organizing to push back armed separatists engaged in provocations, kidnappings, building seizures and attempts to close mines and other workplaces in the eastern provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk.

Simultaneous to these working-class actions, Rinat Akhmetov, Ukraine's wealthiest industrialist with an empire built on coal mines, steel mills and other factories, organized to defend his property and attempts to stabilize capitalist rule in Ukraine. He has been deploying hundreds of workers employed by his two steel mills in Mariupol to join police in routing secessionists from city buildings and patrolling city streets.

"This morning gunmen of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic captured the Donetsk railway administration building," said a May 19 statement by six union leaders, including Mikhailo Volynets of the Independent Trade Union of Coal Min-

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Turkish gov't contempt for miners fuels protests

More than 300 killed by bosses' profit drive



Reuters/Osman Orsal

May 16 march in Soma, Turkey, where more than 300 workers were killed in mining disaster. Sign reads, "No coal can warm the children of fathers who died in the mine."

BY SETH GALINSKY

Hundreds of thousands took to the streets across Turkey to protest the deaths of more than 300 coal miners in Soma, 150 miles south of Istanbul. "This was not an accident, it was murder," was the message of the demonstrations. The actions quickly grew into a show of popular opposition to the government of Prime Minister

Recep Tayyip Erdogan, which not only backed the mining bosses, but put its deep-seated contempt for working people on open display.

A fire broke out May 13 in the underground mine run by Soma Mining Inc. Mine shafts rapidly filled with smoke and carbon monoxide, asphyxiating miners in the middle of a shift change.

More than 1,300 miners in Turkey
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Tatars in Crimea take to streets, defy Moscow's ban on protests



Despite big police presence and protest ban by Moscow-installed Crimean government, thousands of Tatars join May 18 commemoration of their mass deportation by Stalin in 1944.

BY JOHN STUDER

Defying a ban by Russian authorities, more than 20,000 Crimean Tatars rallied in Simferopol May 18 to commemorate the day 70 years ago when the Tatar community — some 200,000 people — was deported en masse to Uzbekistan, Siberia and the Urals by the government of Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin. In the arduous journey some 40 percent died from starvation, disease, cold and other causes.

"People, homeland, Crimea," the crowd chanted. "We will only be respected if we are united," said Refat Chubarov, head of the Tatars' Mejlis assembly.

"They are watching us, they are afraid of us," said chief Mufti Emirali Ablav, pointing to Russian military helicopters circling overhead. The Crimean peninsula was seized by the Russian Federation from Ukraine in March.

Thousands more protested in other
Continued on page 9

Abduction of girls in Nigeria sparks outrage in Africa, world

BY EMMA JOHNSON

NEW YORK — The kidnapping of nearly 300 young women and girls from a school in northeastern Nigeria has sparked a public outcry throughout the country, across Africa and beyond. The protests are an indication of the worldwide character of the fight

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Ukraine separatists isolated

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ers, Vladymyr Kozelsky of the Free Trade Union of Railway Workers, and Peter Tuley of the Transport Workers Amalgamation.

“The separatists declared that they forbid transport of freight except goods to the Russian Federation,” the unionists said. “Such actions will definitely lead to the worsening of living conditions in the eastern parts of Ukraine and to economic collapse of the entire country. ... We call upon railway workers, miners, energy company workers, metallurgy workers and employees of other branches of the economy, as well as teachers and doctors, to bring together their efforts in order to rebuff the separatists’ activities aimed at destabilizing the region, leading to the loss of work and wages.”

At the same time, Moscow shows no interest in provoking a war or replicating in other parts of Ukraine its seizure of Crimea in March. Such a course would run counter to the interests of Russia’s capitalist rulers, who the Russian government serves, and would fuel unrest among the toiling masses they fear.

Since armed secessionists ignored a call by Russian President Vladimir Putin to put off their May 11 rump referendum to separate from Ukraine in some eastern towns, Russian government officials have declined to voice any support for the fraudulent “yes” votes or claim any mandate for further intervention.

Instead, Putin said May 19 he would begin withdrawing many of the 40,000 Russian troops deployed near Ukraine’s border. Russian Foreign

Minister Sergei Lavrov said Moscow views billionaire Petro Poroshenko, a candy manufacturing magnate and leading presidential candidate in the May 25 Ukrainian elections, as “someone it can do business with.”

The capitalist rulers of Russia and their government in Moscow want nothing to do with a self-proclaimed “Donetsk People’s Republic” or other so-called people’s republics declared by separatists in Ukraine that hark back to the Stalinist rule of the former Soviet Union. The propertied classes of Russia seek to build a stable capitalist regime and have no need to drape themselves in “communist” and “revolutionary” phrases — as did the privileged bureaucratic social caste that held power in the Soviet Union following the bloody counterrevolution led by Joseph Stalin against the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. The Russian bosses and their government have no need for a “red glow” to mask their anti-working-class character. They are embarrassed by it.

When Putin conjures images of the past it’s always to promote Great Russian domination, using references to Peter the Great and lamenting the fall of the Soviet Union for the loss of Russian power over other peoples. He explicitly attacks the revolutionary policies of the early Soviet Union under the leadership of V.I. Lenin, who led the fight for self-determination of Ukraine and other oppressed nationalities. “After the revolution, the Bolsheviks ... may God judge them, added large sections of the historical South of Russia to the Republic of Ukraine,” Putin said March 18 following the annexation of Crimea.

SWP builds Active Workers Conference June 19-21

The Socialist Workers Party is building an Active Workers Conference June 19-21 in Oberlin, Ohio. The gathering will draw together party members and supporters, readers and partisans of the *Militant* newspaper, those attracted to SWP campaigns across the country, and workers and youth who have been involved in fights to defend the conditions and rights of working people, expanding support for the defense of the Cuban Five revolutionaries, and other social and political protests.

The conference will feature reports, classes and discussion on the big political questions facing working people — from workers’ struggles in Ukraine to miners in Turkey; to the growing weight of the working class in Bangladesh, China and elsewhere; and how workers can chart a class-struggle road to confront today’s crisis of capitalism.

The three-day gathering will wind up with a Saturday evening panel featuring reports on recent political developments around the world and projections for the next steps in expanding the reach of the *Militant*, revolutionary books from Pathfinder Press, and the Socialist Workers Party.

For information on how to participate, contact *Militant* supporters in your area, listed on page 8, or write directly to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

— JOHN STUDER

Likewise, the Stalinist phrases of the separatist paramilitaries repulse most workers and farmers, whose only living memory of the Soviet Union is the Stalinist murder machine that, under the false banner of communism, brutalized them, kept them out of politics and blocked them off from fellow workers around the world. The armed separatist bands in the east and south never got a foothold or were quickly driven out of the largest cities, including Kharkiv and Dnepropetrovsk, as well as Odessa.

A May 18 YouTube posting by Igor Strelkov, a Russian commando proclaimed Commander-in-Chief of the “Donetsk People’s Republic,” provides striking confirmation of the separatists’ isolation. “I do not expect that even a thousand men from the region can be found,” he complained.

Most of his troops, he said, consist of men older than 40, and many of those who came to his forces for arms left, using them to “protect their homes from crime and criminals.”

At the same time, Russian capitalists face substantial economic and political challenges at home. The Russian economy is heavily dependent on exports of gas and oil, whose prices are falling. Life expectancy for a 15-year-old male, according to the World Health Organization, is lower

in Russia than in Haiti, Mali or Afghanistan. For women, life expectancy is lower than Cambodia.

“The main thing that [President Putin] is worried about is that what happened in Ukraine will happen in Russia,” Nadezhda Tolokonnikova told the *Washington Post* May 11. Tolokonnikova was one of two members of the group Pussy Riot who spent nearly two years in prison for demonstrations of political dissent against the Putin government.

Steel, mine boss defends empire

Meanwhile, Rinat Akhmetov deployed workers from his two steel plants in Mariupol May 14 to join city cops to patrol the city and oust separatist forces from local public buildings and organize street patrols. Thousands of workers signed up.

Akhmetov, whose net worth is estimated at \$12.2 billion, appropriated the most modern and profitable mines and mills in the gang wars over seizure of state property that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. He is the largest private employer in Donbass and was a central backer of former President Viktor Yanukovich, who was ousted in February as a result of popular mobilizations against his regime.

Akhmetov, who commands a pri-
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THE MILITANT

Socialist candidates advance workers’ struggles

The ‘Militant’ covers Socialist Workers Party candidates as they speak out in the interests of working people, building solidarity with labor battles and social struggles and charting a road toward the revolutionary conquest of political power by the working class in the U.S. and beyond.



Militant/Alyson Kennedy
Ilona Gersh, SWP candidate for governor of Illinois, addresses April 26 rally in south Chicago against Petcoke pollution.

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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.

Welcome, new readers!

Continued from front page

an intense nine days at the end of April, when we participated in actions called by union members here, combined with taking the paper to workers' doorsteps across the region," Bill Arth said May 20 from Los Angeles.

On Thurs., April 24 postal workers protested against the move of postal services to Staples. On Saturday workers at Greyhound held a rally against the bus company's demands for a concession contract. On Monday and Tuesday port truckers picketed, demanding to be recognized as wage workers instead of so-called independent contractors and to win a union.

Fifteen union members signed up to get the *Militant* at these actions. Another eight were sold May Day at a union-sponsored rally against deportations of immigrant workers. Fifteen more were sold going door to door.

"Workers were interested to hear what we had to say about the actions they had heard and read about in the media," Arth said. "It boosted our confidence and we got better at talking about everything the paper writes about."

Had New York made its quota of 300, the international campaign would have gone way over the top. As it is, we ended up 28 short of our 1,800 goal.

"We signed up 80 readers in the last 10 days, 33 on the last Sunday," Tony Lane, organizer of the N.Y. effort, told the *Militant*. "If we had done that throughout the drive we wouldn't have come up 60 short. Next time we have to make sure we're ready from the get-go."

During the drive more than half a

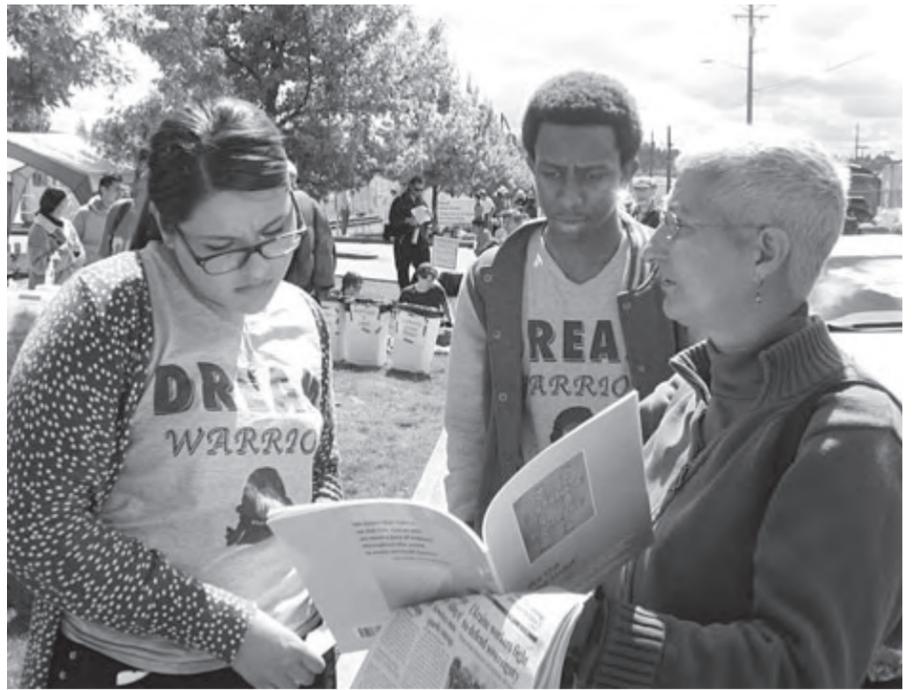
dozen showings of Antonio Guerrero's prison paintings "I Will Die the Way I've Lived" have taken place in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the U.S. Many visitors decided to sign up for a subscription to follow the campaign. Nearly 400 copies of two recently published Pathfinder books to aid the fight, *I Will Die the Way I've Lived* and *Voices From Prison: The Cuban Five*, were sold.

Supporters of the paper also sold more than 300 copies of 11 Pathfinder books on special offer — still available — with a subscription (see ad below). *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* together accounted for more than 100 of them.

Militant stalwarts are looking forward to continuing to expand the paper's circulation — in working-class neighborhoods, on the job and at upcoming events. These include the Latin American Studies Association conference in Chicago May 21-24, further showings of "I Will Die the Way I've Lived" and "5 Days for the Cuban 5" activities in Washington, D.C., June 4-11.

We're also looking forward to the Active Workers Conference in Ohio in June, hosted by the Socialist Workers Party, which offers the opportunity to come together for a few days of political discussions on the central questions working people face in today's crisis-ridden capitalist world.

If you are a partisan of the *Militant*, the conference is for you.



Militant/Jeanne FitzMaurice

Mary Martin, right, Socialist Workers Party candidate for 9th Congressional District in Washington, shows *Militant* and books to Larissa Reza-Garcia and John Warrior at May 10 vigil protesting jailing of immigrant workers at Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma.

Appreciation for 'Militant' is reflected in fund contributions

BY LEA SHERMAN

Supporters of the *Militant* Fighting Fund have sent in almost \$75,000 towards the \$115,000 goal of the annual international drive. This leaves \$40,000 to be sent into the *Militant* by June 3.

The fund complements the just-completed subscription drive. Both efforts are key to extending the reach of the socialist newsweekly.

Contributions are used for the operating expenses of the paper and reporting trips like the recent firsthand

coverage from Ukraine, Egypt, Cuba, Lebanon, Mali and Burkina Faso.

On top of the chart this week is San Francisco. "Seventy readers of the *Militant* have made pledges toward going over our quota of \$13,500," said Willie Cotton, organizer of the fund in the Bay Area.

"I appreciate the articles on the struggle of working people in Ukraine and the paper's ongoing support for a woman's right to choose," Bob Atwood from Redding, California, told San Francisco *Militant* supporters. He sent in a contribution when he renewed his subscription for a year.

To pitch in, contact distributors on page 8 or send a check or money order to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018-2482.

Special offers with 'Militant' subscription



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

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

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

Women and Revolution
The Living Example of the Cuban Revolution
by Arela de los Santos, Mary-Alice Waters and others
\$3 with subscription (regular \$7)

Los cosméticos, las modas, y la explotación de la mujer
(Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women)
by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, Mary-Alice Waters
\$10 with subscription (regular \$15)

See distributors on page 8



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

Cuba and Angola
Fighting for Africa's Freedom and Our Own
by Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro, Gabriel García Márquez
\$6 with subscription (regular \$12)

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics
Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions
by Jack Barnes
\$10 with subscription (regular \$24)

Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?
A Necessary Debate
by Mary-Alice Waters
\$5 with subscription (regular \$7)

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

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

Militant Fighting Fund

April 5 - May 27 (week 5)

Country	Quota	Paid	%
UNITED STATES			
San Francisco	\$13,500	\$11,181	83%
Los Angeles	\$8,000	\$6,422	80%
Atlanta	\$8,600	\$6,867	80%
Twin Cities	\$6,500	\$4,665	72%
Boston	\$3,500	\$2,430	69%
Des Moines	\$2,800	\$1,795	64%
Miami	\$2,800	\$1,757	63%
Omaha/Lincoln	\$2,700	\$1,690	63%
Philadelphia	\$3,800	\$2,316	61%
Chicago	\$9,500	\$5,125	54%
New York	\$19,000	\$9,080	48%
Seattle	\$8,400	\$3,965	47%
Washington	\$7,800	\$3,105	40%
Houston	\$3,500	\$1,015	29%
Other		\$1,250	
Total U.S.	\$100,400	\$62,663	62%
CANADA	\$7,000	\$4,560	65%
NEW ZEALAND	\$5,000	\$4,033	81%
AUSTRALIA	\$1,500	\$1,440	96%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	\$2,000	\$1,300	65%
Manchester	\$750	\$780	104%
Total UK	\$2,750	\$2,080	76%
France	\$400	\$200	50%
Total	\$117,050	\$74,976	65%
Should be	\$115,000	\$82,143	71%

Abduction of girls in Nigeria

Continued from front page

for women's rights and changing social attitudes on the question in Africa and much of the semicolonial world, given impetus by the rapid development of capitalist production and modern forms of class struggle.

At the same time, the kidnappings have drawn attention to the uneven character of economic development in Africa; growing disparities between city and countryside; and to the persistence of polygamy and centuries-old tribal conflicts, even as such remnants of pre-capitalist society are breaking down.

On April 14, armed members of the Sunni Group for Preaching and Jihad, commonly referred to as Boko Haram, ordered girls residing at a school in the town of Chibok, home to the Christian Chibok tribe, into trucks and drove away. The 276 captured students are between the ages of 12 and 17. As of May 18, 223 are still in captivity.

Boko Haram, which loosely translates as "Western education is sin," has offered to release their captives in exchange for imprisoned members of the group and threatens to sell the girls into slavery or marriage.

Many are angry at the Nigerian government for failing to protect the schoolgirls, despite the fact that government forces received information on the impending raid four hours before it happened. Relatives told the *London Telegraph* May 11 that the students had been held in a camp just 20 miles from Chibok for 11 days without any government attempts to free them.

"Nothing happened until people spoke out in Chibok, in Abuja, in Lagos and around the whole world," Miamah Richards, a leader of Kechie's Project, which provides scholarships to girls in Nigeria, told the *Militant* at a rally of some 200 outside the Nigerian Consulate here May 10. "The government could have stopped this from happening."

While less common and tolerated

than in the past, abduction of women persists in parts of Africa, fostered by continuing tribal conflicts and the practice of polygamy. "Kidnappings are a daily occurrence in Nigeria, four, five, maybe 10, but to abduct almost 300 girls — that's unprecedented," Richards said.

Family members demonstrate continuously in Chibok, and protests have taken place in cities in Nigeria, including Abuja, the capital. Other actions have been organized in dozens of cities in Africa and around the world.

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country with 170 million people. While English is the official language, there are hundreds of indigenous languages, tribes and ethnicities. The northern part of the country is predominantly Muslim, the south mostly Christian.

The country recently surpassed South Africa to become the continent's largest economy with large foreign investment from the United States, United Kingdom and China. Gross domestic product growth has averaged 7 percent a year over the past decade.

This process is rapidly expanding the ranks of the working class. Women made up 43 percent of Nigeria's 51 million-strong labor force in 2011, up from 34 percent 20 years earlier.

Industrial and other economic development has been concentrated in the south, with the oil industry in the southeast. Meanwhile, disparities have grown between the south and north.

Malnutrition and child mortality is twice as high in the north, less than 10 percent of 1-year-olds in the north receive basic vaccinations compared to more than 30 percent in the south. Most of the north lacks electricity, while most of the south is electrified. The north has much fewer roads, health clinics or other modern infrastructure. Lake Chad, a key resource in the northeast, has shrunk by 90 percent in the past 40 years, devastating fishing and farming. Spreading deserts claim more than 770 square miles of cropland every year.

Origins of Boko Haram

Boko Haram was founded by the Salafist preacher Mohammed Yusuf in 2002. Backed by a layer of propertied individuals in the Muslim north, it was formed a few years after the end of military rule and the strengthening of political power by capitalists in the predominantly Christian south. Yusuf set up a mosque and an Islamic school in Maiduguri, the capital in the northeast state of Borno where the Muslim Kanuri tribes are dominant. Echoing populist demagoguery of a layer of northern politicians, Boko Haram advocated a return to the past: Islamicisation of law and all aspects of society.

In 2009, Boko Haram led a rebellion in Borno, fueled by resentments over government corruption, growing poverty and social dislocations brought by capitalist development. The uprising was met by a brutal government crackdown. Yusuf, as well as hundreds of other Boko Haram members and civilians were killed. Wives and children of alleged Boko Haram members were kidnapped and Boko Haram was driven out of Maiduguri into the Sambisa Forest. From this base, the reactionary group lashed out against Christian churches, schools and villages, mainly in the northeast, but also in other parts of the country.



Reuters/Afolabi Sotunde

Protest in Abuja, Nigeria, May 13 demands return of young women kidnapped by Boko Haram.

Since 2009, Boko Haram has killed at least 2,300 people, 1,500 in the first three months of this year alone. Government forces have since carried out retribution against Muslim civilians, fueling resentment and creating fertile ground for recruitment to Boko Haram.

Governments and religious figures throughout the Muslim world denounced the kidnappings in Chibok. The Iranian vice president for Women and Family Affairs issued a statement May 9. The same day Saudi Arabia's grand mufti, the country's top religious authority, condemned the abductions. The previous day the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, with 57 member governments, did the same.

'Too late to restrict women'

"Nigeria can't stand still, they can't restrict women from education, they can't restrict women at all, too late in history for that," Franca Okeya told the *Militant* at the New York rally. A New York City government employee, she is originally from Nigeria. "This is not a Nigerian problem, this is a world problem," she said. "Women are standing up, getting involved, from France to China, from Brooklyn to Nigeria, we can't be kept out."

The changing attitudes toward women in Nigeria are one part of a broad sea change rooted in capitalist penetration throughout the semicolonial world, which has drawn women into the labor force and workers' struggles by the millions. This is true in Bangladesh and Cambodia, for example, which in recent decades have emerged as new centers of world garment production.

The social consequences can be seen in the public outrage sparked in India when a young woman was raped and killed in December 2012 in New Delhi. And it can be seen in the determination and confidence of Malala Yousafzai, who was shot by Taliban in October 2012 for condemning the Taliban campaign against women's education in the Swat region of Pakistan.

"There are over 10 million children of primary school age [in Nigeria] out of school," Yousafzai, who began speaking out for women's education in 2008 when she was 11 years old, said in a statement May 9. "In other words, one out of every six children out of school [worldwide] lives in Nigeria. The Nigerian government needs to step up and deliver protection to its people and education to all its children."

Miami rally opposes anti-Haitian law in the Dominican Republic

BY NAOMI CRAINE

MIAMI — Nearly 100 people rallied here May 16 to demand the government of the Dominican Republic restore residency and citizenship rights to Dominicans of Haitian descent.

A new constitution adopted in 2010 denied Dominican citizenship to children whose parents were not legal permanent residents of the country. Last September the Constitutional Court issued a ruling making the change retroactive to 1929, stripping citizenship rights from more than 200,000 people. As many as 1 million Haitians live and work in the Dominican Republic.

The Dominican capitalist class and their government treat Haitians much the same way the U.S. government and bosses treat immigrants in the United States — as a source of cheap labor and a scapegoat for high unemployment and other social problems.

"In Haiti there's not enough work, so people go to the Dominican Republic to look for jobs," said Jean Sylvain, a retired worker of Haitian descent who used to live in the Dominican Republic. Roger Biamby, a leader of the Haitian

League for Human Rights, which called the protest, said he's heard from people in the Dominican Republic that "the military has already deported truckloads of people. Many of them are people who have never lived in Haiti and don't even speak Creole."

Speakers at the rally included State Rep. Daphne Campbell and several current and former local politicians who are Haitian, as well as representatives from the Florida Immigrant Coalition, Haitian community group Veye-Yo, Socialist Workers Party and others.

"What's happening in the Dominican Republic reminds me of the situation of Black people here before the civil rights movement," Ernst Rosemond, a retired language instructor, told the *Militant*. "It's a political issue, and it's racist."

In the Dominican capital Santo Domingo young people affected by the denial of citizenship have rallied in front of the National Palace.

The lower house of the legislature passed a bill May 16 that would grant citizenship to children born to foreign parents, if they have government papers, which many working people lack.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

IOWA

Des Moines

Working Class in Canada Stronger as Quebec Oppression Is Pushed Back. Speaker: David Rosenfeld, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Iowa. Fri., May 30, 7:30 p.m. 3707 Douglas Ave. Tel.: (515) 707-1779.

TEXAS

Houston

What Energy Policy for Workers? The Fight for Electrification Across the Globe and Workers Control on the Job. Fri., May 30, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 4800 W. 34 St., Suite C-50L. Tel.: (713) 476-0733.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

New Openings for the Communist Movement in North America: How Gains in Struggle Against Quebec Oppression Strengthens the Working Class in Canada. Sat., May 31. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Dinner \$7, program \$10. 6230 Beacon Ave. S. Tel.: (206) 323-1755.

CANADA

Montreal

Security Certificates: An Attack on All Workers. Speakers: François Bradette and John Steele, Communist League. Fri., May 30, 7:30 p.m. 7107 St. Denis, Room 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

ON THE PICKET LINE

Hospital workers in Baltimore rally for higher wages

BALTIMORE — More than 2,000 hospital workers and their supporters took part in a “Mothers’ March and Rally for Justice” at Johns Hopkins Hospital here May 10. Housekeepers, cooks, surgical technicians, plumbers, painters, electricians and other workers employed by Hopkins are demanding higher wages.

Organized by 1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, they struck the hospital for three days, April 9-11, demanding a \$15-an-hour wage standard over the life of the contract. Their contract expired on March 31.

“We get treated like the trash we pull,” Chonnieste Scales, a floor technician, told the *Militant* at the May 10 rally. “I’ve been here 15 years, and I don’t make \$12 an hour. My co-workers with 30 to 40 years don’t make \$15 an hour.”

Several dozen busloads of union hospital workers from New York, New Jersey and Washington, D.C., joined the rally in solidarity. Armando Gonzalez, a dietary aide at Lutheran Medical Center in Brooklyn, said conditions there are similar. “Workers give health care, but when it comes to us, it’s a fight.”

Three veterans of the Hopkins organizing drive 45 years ago — Annie Henry, Carrie Hiers and Laura Pugh — spoke at the rally. “History has a way of repeating itself,” said Henry, who still works at the hospital. “Hopkins is number one in everything but the wages. They are double-dipping, taking billions in donations and forcing workers onto welfare.”

“What they are offering — 15- and 20-cent raises — is like what I got in the ’70s,” said Bob Domulevich, who has worked at the hospital for 19 years as a maintenance mechanic.

Representatives of Johns Hopkins Hospital did not return calls requesting comment.

— Arlene Rubinstein

China shoe workers end strike, win back social security payments

After 11 days of strikes and protest marches in April workers at the world’s largest shoe factory in Dongguan in southern China forced the bosses to make social security payments they had been withholding for years.

A worker who retired after 18 years at Yue Yuen Industrial Holdings discovered that the company had made contributions to the social security fund based on the minimum wage of \$294 a month, instead of on actual pay. With overtime

and bonuses the average wage is \$487.

After factory management said the company wouldn’t make any back pay to the fund, workers went on strike April 5. By the middle of the month some 80 percent of the 45,000 workers employed in the 10-story factory had walked out.

Li Zhong, spokesman for the Chinese Ministry of Labor and Social Security, said at an April 25 press conference that Yue Yuen had paid insufficient social welfare contributions and that “the department has ordered the factory to rectify the wrongdoings” as of that day.

In response, Yue Yuen Executive Director George Liu said the company intended to pay social security based on full wages starting May 1 and make back payments totaling \$30 million to cover arrears for Jan. 1-April 30.

— Emma Johnson

Fast-food workers worldwide demand pay raise, union

NEW YORK — “Minimum wage just doesn’t cut it,” McDonald’s worker José Carrillo, 81, said at a demonstration of 350 here May 15, one of similar actions in 150 U.S. cities and 33 countries demanding a raise in the minimum wage and the right to unionize.

Carrillo attended his first protest two years ago. “I go to them all now.



Militant/Janice Lynn

Fast-food workers rally in Atlanta May 15 demanding raise to \$15 an hour and a union. Demonstration was one of many held in 159 U.S. cities and worldwide that day.

Once McDonald’s suspended me for a week,” Carrillo said. “They claimed I was propagandizing during work hours, but how could I? They watch you all the time. But now they show me more respect.”

“I can’t live on it,” McDonald’s worker Michael Gonzalez, 27, told the *Militant* about his wage of \$8 an hour. “A lot of weeks you have to choose between buying a [subway] Metrocard or food, between paying part of the rent or all the rent. That’s ‘the way it is.’”

“It’s not just the low pay,” Domino’s

pizza worker Alfredo Franco, 40, said. “It’s also the abusive treatment by the bosses.” Franco said that 20 of the 40 workers at the location where he works stayed off the job for the day to join the global day of action.

Many workers said that just one or two people at the stores they work at joined the protest. “Some people are scared to join, they might lose their jobs,” Burger King worker Elvis Guerrero, 31, said. “I tell them that it’s our constitutional right.”

The key slogan of actions across the U.S. was \$15 an hour and a union. The New York protest — built by the Service Employees International Union, New York Communities for Change, Fast Food Forward, Make the Road New York, New York Workers Rising and other groups — called on Gov. Anthony Cuomo and the state legislature to allow the New York City government to set its own, higher minimum wage.

Some 60 people joined the protest in Atlanta.

“I barely get 30 hours a week at \$7.50 an hour,” Long John Silver’s worker Antwon Brown told the *Militant* there. “The bosses tell us, ‘Go get food stamps.’ But why should I have to get food stamps when I have all my limbs and am able to work?”

— Seth Galinsky in New York and Janice Lynn in Atlanta



Militant/Arlene Rubinstein

Rally at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore May 10 demands higher wages.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



June 2, 1989

The coming days and weeks are important ones for the nearly 18,000 strikers at Eastern Airlines, and for growing numbers of working people who count themselves in on the Eastern workers’ battle to defend themselves and their unions.

With the bankruptcy court’s approved sale of Eastern’s New York-Boston-Washington shuttle to financial speculator Donald Trump, the first major step toward carving up the airline is being taken. Striking Machinists, union members, flight attendants, and pilots are thinking through what the next stages will be in their fight, and how to advance their struggle as these moves unfold.

The way forward in the strikers’ fight to defend themselves against Eastern’s union-busting drive lies in continuing along the same road they’ve been on since the strike started: maintaining strong visible picket lines and reaching out for wider solidarity.



June 1, 1964

Malcolm X returned from Africa yesterday and held a press conference at Harlem’s Hotel Theresa. His very brief opening statement and his answers to the many questions asked by reporters showed that the trip had not changed his views about situation of Negroes in America.

Commenting on the civil rights bill, Malcolm X said that he did not think any of the politicians were really for civil rights and that they were being hypocritical. He singled out President Johnson on this question and pointed out that his good friend Richard Russell, was leading the Senate fight against the bill.

When challenged by a reporter about the connection between Johnson’s friendship with Russell and his views on civil rights, Malcolm X replied:

“If you tell me you’re against robbing banks and your best friend is Jesse James, I have grounds to doubt your sincerity.”



June 2, 1939

A fresh breeze of progressive maritime unionism hit the East Coast as the Seafarer’s International Union completely tied up the 14 vessels of the Eastern Steamship Company, in what the boss press correctly describes as the “most thorough strike action of this year,” on Friday, May 26.

Failing to get their demands for improvement in overtime and hours, and in wage increases of \$10 to \$15 for the deck, engine and stewards department, the S.I.U. after a strike vote, ordered the 1,000 seamen from the company’s vessels and left the ships motionless in ports from Portland, Maine to Richmond, Virginia. The strike was called at the strategic time when the company’s operations were nearing the peak of activity.

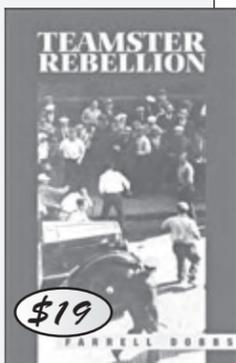
The strike strengthens the organized power of militant, class-struggle unionism.

Teamster Rebellion by Farrell Dobbs

The story of the 1934 strikes that built the industrial unions in Minneapolis and helped pave the way for the CIO as a fighting social movement, recounted by a central leader of that battle.

First of 4-volume series: *Teamster Power*, *Teamster Politics* and *Teamster Bureaucracy*. Also available in Spanish, Swedish, Farsi, French.

PathfinderPress.com



\$19

Harlem meeting: Fight to free Cuban 5 'near and dear to us'

BY LEA SHERMAN

NEW YORK — Some 40 people participated in the May 3 opening reception of the Cuban Five art exhibit "I Will Die the Way I've Lived," 15 watercolors for 15 years by Antonio Guerrero at the Jackie Robinson Center in Harlem.

Guerrero's paintings portray the first 17 months that he and his four comrades, known as the Cuban Five, spent in isolation after their arrest, frame-up and incarceration in Miami. (See "Who Are the Cuban Five" on page 7.)

Located in a public housing complex, the center offers an after-school program, dance classes, activities for teenagers, a basketball clinic and other activities.

Thirteen members of the Jackie Robinson Tenant's Association toured the exhibit after their monthly meeting May 15.

Those attending the opening included neighborhood residents, friends and relatives of the center's staff, and others who have been following the fight to

free the Five.

"I love it. I can relate to every single picture," said Nyema Lopez, who came to see the prison paintings with her two children. "My husband has been incarcerated for 14 years and he knows about these kinds of experiences."

"They were trying to help. Like a lot of people, they were wrongly convicted," said Donna Dennis, who lives in the neighborhood and was just learning about the Five. "I was really impressed by how they made the dice and chess board from what they had on hand."

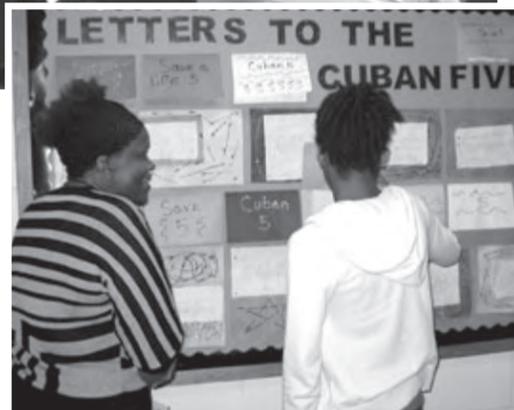
"With every painting you put your own perspective on it," said Leroy Erick Williams, a maintenance worker who lives in the apartments above the center. "You have a rose outside the vent," he said, pointing to "The Air Vent," one of the watercolors. "Life and beauty are not taken from him, because his mind is not captive, there is life beyond the walls."

In a description of the painting, Guerrero recalls how he would stand on the toilet to talk through the vent to those held in the adjoining cell. "This is how I read my new poems to my brothers," he said. Similar descriptions by Guerrero were posted next to each painting.

Also participating in the opening were Juyeon Rhee and Soobok Kim, supporters of the fight for democratic rights in South Korea and Korean reunification. "The vent reminds me of how political prisoners in South Korea communicated



Above, Soobok Kim; inset, Militant/Sara Lobman "In Cuba the Five are heroes because they were preventing attacks against the revolution," said Ariel Hernández, first secretary of Cuba's Mission to U.N., right, at May 3 opening of Antonio Guerrero's paintings at Jackie Robinson Community Center in New York. Inset, participants view letters written to Five by children from center's after-school program.



with each other," said Rhee.

"We have had 500 Koreans imprisoned in the South for their political beliefs," Kim said. "Like the Cuban Five, despite torture and other horrendous prison conditions, they did not change their beliefs."

The exhibit also featured a bulletin board with photos and biographies of each of the Five and another that featured letters decorated with glitter that children who attend the center's after-school program had written to them.

"I wish there was something I could do to get you out of jail," a 10-year-old boy wrote. "But I am just a kid, and the only thing I can do is tell your story to other kids."

Shakiema Dixon of the Jackie Robin-

son Center, who organized the showing with help from staff members, chaired the brief program. "We did not know anything about the Cuban Five, but once I looked into it I realized that the exhibit is an issue near and dear to my heart and to the community," she said.

Aaliyah Smalls, 12, who attends the after-school program and whose mother works at the center, read "Nephew," one of Guerrero's poems.

"The exhibit is not only about Cuba and the Cuban Five. It is about us, because of the millions of families like us who experience the prison system," said Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and the editor of *I Will Die the Way I've Lived*, which includes reprints of the paintings and descriptions by Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández and Ramón Labañino — the three of the Five who remain in prison. "When we fight for them, we fight for ourselves and for those in our community."

Ariel Hernández, a first secretary at Cuba's Permanent Mission to the United Nations, was the final speaker. "In Cuba, the Five are our heroes because they were trying to prevent terrorist acts against the Cuban Revolution," he said.

"Harlem is very important to the people of Cuba," Hernández said. He recounted how in 1960 Fidel Castro, who was in New York to address the United Nations, led the Cuban delegation out of a Midtown hotel following management's insulting insistence of a \$10,000 cash deposit. In an act of solidarity with the Black struggle in the U.S., Castro and the rest of the Cuban delegation went to the Hotel Theresa in Harlem, where they stayed for the rest of their visit. Thousands of Harlem residents poured into the streets to welcome them, as did Malcolm X, who visited briefly with Castro.

The spread for the reception included pies, cakes and cobblers baked by staff members and members of the tenants' association.

Visitors to the two-week exhibit bought 15 books on the Cuban Five published by Pathfinder Press, as well as three subscriptions to the *Militant* newspaper, a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power and Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution*. Thirty participated in the May 17 closing event.

Five people bought bus tickets for the June 7 rally in Washington, D.C., that is part of "5 Days for the Cuban 5."

Exhibits of paintings by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five

I Will Die the Way I've Lived

Omaha, Nebraska
June 4-7

Gallery 72, 1806 Vinton St. Reception, Wed., June 4, 7PM. Gallery Talk, Sat., June 7, 1PM

June 8-14

McFoster's Natural Kind Café, 302 S. 38th St.

Philadelphia

May 30-June 30

Opening reception: Fri., May 30, 5:30PM; program, 7PM. Exhibit hours: Wed., Thurs. 11AM-1PM. Sun., June 1, 1-5PM. Christ & St. Ambrose Episcopal Church, 3454 N. 6th St. Tel: (215) 226-1444 or (215) 848-2922.

Montreal

May 5-24

Exhibit hours: Mon. 8AM-4PM, Tues., Wed. 8AM-7PM, Thurs., Fri. 8AM-8PM, Sat. 10AM-8PM. Café l'Artère, 7000 Ave. Du Parc Tel: (514) 232-1917.

Auckland, New Zealand
May 17-mid-June

Exhibit hours: Tues.-Sat. 10AM-4PM. Tivoli, 2/118 Ocean View Road, Pen-dragon Mall, Oneroa, Waiheke Island. Tel.: (09) 372 3361.

Manchester, England

May 17-31

Exhibit hours: Mon.-Sat. 9AM-5PM. Moston Miners Community Arts and Music Centre, Teddington Road, Moston. Tel.: 0161 682 6253.

London

June 15-July 13

Bernie Grant Arts Centre. Town Hall Approach Road, Tottenham.

Greece event: 'The 5 represent fighting spirit of Cuban people'

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

ATHENS, Greece — Some 60 people attended the inauguration of a tour of Antonio Guerrero's watercolors at the Ernesto Art Café here May 7.

Guerrero is one of the Cuban Five arrested in Miami in 1998 on trumped-up charges of espionage. The paintings were created as part of the commemoration of 15 years of incarceration.

"In Cuba you discover that the Five are representative of the fighting spirit of a whole people," said Loukia Konstantinou, who was in Havana for the inaugural exhibit of Guerrero's prison paintings at the National Museum of

Fine Arts in April.

"With this exhibit we want to get the case of the Cuban Five known more widely in Greece," Konstantinou said, speaking on behalf of the two Cuban solidarity committees organizing the tour here, the José Martí Cultural Association and Hasta La Victoria Siempre.

The Greek Solidarity Network; Soy Cubano, a Cuban residents association; the publishing house Diethnes Vima; and the Ernesto Art Café are also supporting the exhibit.

"The detention of the Five is an assault not only on them, but on Cuba as a whole, said Cuban Ambassador Os-

valdo Cobacho Martínez, who was the featured speaker. "The frame-up of the Five and continued imprisonment of Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino and Antonio Guerrero, together with the U.S. blockade and other ongoing hostile acts by Washington, are part of a pattern of aggression that has continued since the victory of the Cuban Revolution in 1959."

"We consider the Five heroes for all of Latin America," said Venezuelan Ambassador Frederic Farid Fernandez in a message sent to the

Voices From Prison: The Cuban Five



The Cuban Five have won the respect of thousands around the world as well as fellow prisoners. Here three who have known them behind bars speak out. Includes accounts of prison life and resistance by Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Elizabeth Palmeiro and Rafael Cancel Miranda. Also in Spanish.

\$7. Special publication offer \$5

'I Will Die the Way I've Lived'



Fifteen watercolors by Antonio Guerrero for the 15th anniversary of the imprisonment of the Cuban Five. With text by Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino. Also in Spanish.

\$7. Special publication offer \$5

pathfinderpress.com

Continued on page 7

Black lung disease on rise among coal miners in US

Union power needed to fight for job safety worldwide

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Coal miners in the U.S., like fellow miners around the world from Ukraine to Turkey, face a profit-driven assault on safety that threatens life and limb and can only be effectively combated by the organized and collective power of workers themselves.

On May 14 William Payne, 25, was crushed while moving a roof-bolting machine at the Sugar Camp Energy complex in Thompsonville, Illinois — the second death at the mine in six months. Two days before, Eric Legg, 48, and Gary Hensley, 46, were killed at Patriot Coal Corp.'s Brody Mine No. 1 near Wharton, West Virginia, as a result of dangerous retreat mining operations to extract every last bit of coal from the remaining pillars of coal holding up the mine roof.

The three recent deaths bring the number of coal miner fatalities on the job so far this year to six — 18 when other miners are included.

These deaths are dwarfed by the number of miners with black lung disease, caused by inhaling coal and rock dust. New cases of the irreversible, debilitating and often fatal disease have doubled in the last decade, even as the number of miners has shrunk. Severe black lung is “like a screw being slowly tightened across your throat,” Dr. Edward Petsonk, who treats patients with the disease, told the Center for Public Integrity. “It is really almost a diabolical torture.”

The previous decline in prevalence of black lung was won through big union battles of the late 1960s and '70s, including a three-week strike by tens of thousands of miners organized by the United Mine Workers union in West Virginia in 1969. In the face of the miners' growing militancy and confidence, Congress passed the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety

Act that year, which established standards for dust limits and air flow.

Union miners and their safety committees enforced the regulations, at times by shutting down production. Incidents of black lung declined more than 90 percent from the 1970s to the mid-1990s. But an anti-labor offensive that has not been met by a corresponding fightback has reversed those gains and pushed back the union.

Today mining companies routinely take advantage of deliberate loopholes in the coal act's provisions or ignore them altogether.

Between 1998 and 2008 black lung killed more than 10,000 miners, according to government figures. The number of miners with the most severe form of the disease has tripled since the 1980s.

“We're seeing a very distinct increase in advanced cases that we hadn't seen in quite a long time,” Donald Rasmussen, a doctor who runs a clinic in Beckley, West Virginia, that specializes in the disease, told the *Militant* in a phone interview May 19. “We began seeing this about 15 years ago and it's been increasing in numbers since.”

“Mining machines have become more powerful. They can cut through rock,” Rasmussen said. In the process “this creates silica dust, which is more toxic than coal dust itself.”

“We're seeing this disease rapidly progress among miners in their 40s,” Rasmussen said. “They're too young to be developing this disease.”

Speedup and longer hours

“By the time I was 40 years old, I had mined more coal than most miners have seen in a lifetime,” Mark McCowan, a miner diagnosed with severe black lung in 2005, told National Public Radio in a July 2012 interview. The mine companies



Above, Militant/Stu Singer

Fight by miners for job safety forced coal companies and government to take measures to lower dust and increase air flow in mines. Above, March 9, 1981, demonstration in Washington, D.C., organized by United Mine Workers union. Inset, miner being tested for black lung disease.



brought in newer machinery, lengthened the workday and stretched the workweek to six or seven days.

Today just trying to mow the lawn or hold his grandson leaves him gasping for air, McCowan said.

In April the Mine Safety and Health Administration announced new rules, including lowering limits for coal mine dust from 2 milligrams of dust per cubic meter set in the 1969 coal act to 1.5 milligram. In deference to the coal bosses, the plan offers a two-year “phase-in” period, to take effect Aug. 1, 2016. The regulations also narrow some of the loopholes in accurately reporting dust levels.

“Coal dust level reductions should have been implemented 20 years ago,” said Rasmussen. “I don't know that this new rule will change the level of silica. Some of us are less than optimistic.”

When MSHA first published the proposed rules in October 2010, it

called for lowering dust levels by 50 percent to 1 milligram. But after coal bosses' complaints that this could adversely affect production, the agency set it at 1.5 milligram.

The rule “requires immediate action when dust levels are high instead of allowing days or weeks of miners' exposure to unhealthy dust,” said the Department of Labor in an April 23 news release. But it's mine bosses who will “identify areas” to “prevent miners from being overexposed” under the rules — not the mine workers, their unions or their safety committees.

Meanwhile, a cap on federal health care funding is expected to cut funds to black lung clinics by 40 percent in the Appalachian coalfields of West Virginia, one of the main “hot spots” of the disease's resurgence. This will affect the availability of medical care for some 8,500 coal miners diagnosed with the disease.

More than a dozen coal companies, including Murray Energy and Patriot Coal, filed suit in the U.S. Court of Appeals in Cincinnati May 1 asking that the rule lowering dust limits be overturned. It's “technologically and economically unachievable,” Murray Energy said in a statement in April.

Event for Cuban 5 in Greece

Continued from page 6

meeting. “They are an example of resistance against the imperialist system of economic and political oppression.”

“This exhibit has traveled to many countries and to many states of the USA,” said Natasha Terlexi of the José Martí Cultural Association. “It has been shown at schools, libraries, cultural centers and union halls. There they touch people who experience exploitation, racism, police violence and imprisonment. By bringing the fight of the Cuban Five to working people we are gathering our own jurors to free them.”

The exhibit will go next to the town of Volos where the local chapter of the Greek Cuban Friendship Society is organizing a soccer match for the Five at a local stadium June 2. Then it will be shown at the town hall in the industrial town of Elefsina, the center of a nine-month steel strike in 2011-2012.

Chilean poet Jaime Svart and Kostas Sanidas, member of Hasta La Vic-

toria Siempre and of the José Martí Cultural Association, read poetry by Guerrero and Labañino. Music by Cuban singer and guitar player Remy Mailan closed the event.

'5 Days for the Cuban 5' Washington, D.C.

Thurs.-Fri., June 5-6

Conference: A New Era of US/Cuba Relations. Speakers, movies, panels, video messages from René González and Fernando González. Calvary Baptist Church 755 8th St. NW, Shallenberger Hall.

Fri., June 6, 9 p.m.

Concert with hip-hop duo Dead Prez and local musicians.

Auditorium, Columbia Heights Educational Campus, 3101 16th St NW (corner of 16th and Irving). \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door.

Sat., June 7, 1 p.m.

'Free the Cuban Five' rally at the White House.

Mon.-Tues., June 9-10

Lobbying and closing event.

For more info and complete schedule visit: www.5daysforthecuban5.com

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 operations and plans of Cuban-American paramilitary groups based in southern Florida. These rightist outfits, organizing on U.S. soil with virtual impunity, have a long record of carrying out bombings, assassinations and other 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 shoot-down of two Brothers to the Rescue aircraft that had invaded Cuban airspace in disregard of Havana's repeated warnings. He is serving two life terms plus 15 years. His wife Adriana Pérez is barred from entering the United States.

René González returned to Cuba in May 2013. Fernando González returned Feb. 28.

Capitalist development in Africa strengthens working class

Below is an excerpt from *Capitalism and the Transformation of Africa*, one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month for May*. Based on trips to the country in 2005 and 2008, authors Mary-Alice Waters and Martín Koppel describe the social transformations unfolding there as offshore oil production and accompanying infrastructure brings into being both a capitalist class and modern proletariat. The excerpt is from the introduction. Copyright ©2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

What draws one's attention above all in Equatorial Guinea today is not the expanding exploitation of the country's natural resources, as striking as that is. Far more pervasive, and far more important historically, is the evidence that as the people of Equatorial Guinea are drawn inexorably into the world market — and as the legacy of colonial domination, which thwarted such a development for centuries, recedes — a modern capitalist class structure is emerging.

More than 160 years ago, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the young founders of the modern working-class movement, who gave voice to its line of march, charted the birth of capitalism in Europe with unmatched insight and eloquence, as they lived through its heady expansion across the globe. Capital comes into



Militant/Martín Koppel

Contingents of oil workers and women's associations in 2005 Independence Day parade in Evinayong, Equatorial Guinea, reflect new confidence accompanying industrial development.

the world, Marx wrote, "dripping from head to toe, from every pore, with blood and filth." The constant revolutionizing of the instruments of production that drives its never-ending search for profits is attained at the expense of the lives, limbs, and livelihoods of the class of propertyless laborers it creates.

Throughout each stage of class society, from slavery to feudalism to capitalism, Engels wrote, "every advance in production is at the same time a retrogression in the condition of the oppressed class, that is, of the great majority."

But Marx and Engels were the last to decry the tremendous advances in the productivity of social labor engendered by the rise of capitalism. To the contrary, they had nothing but contempt for those they dubbed "reactionary socialists" who wailed against the inhumanity of the factory system in order to sentimentalize the harsh, life stifling, mind-deadening backwardness of precapitalist society. Globalization, far from an evil to be condemned and resisted, was recognized as the lifeblood of the international working class.

"The bourgeoisie has, through its exploitation of the world market, given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption within every country," the Communist Manifesto proclaimed. "In place of the old wants, satisfied by the productions of the country, we find

new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal interdependence of nations. And as in the material, so also in intellectual production. . . . National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible."

"The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarce one hundred years," the Manifesto continued, "has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalization of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground — what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labor?"

To see even elements of such a transformation unfolding in parts of Africa today, "dripping from every pore with blood and filth," is not cause for hand-wringing despair. It is further evidence of the growing size and strength of the working class internationally. "In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e., capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed — a class of laborers

who live only so long as they find work and who find work only so long as their labor increases capital."

And wherever on earth this process unfolds, the Manifesto says, this "organization of the proletarians into a class" also gives rise over time to the independent social and political organization of a proletariat that has started to become conscious of itself — to the "self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interests of the immense majority."

Today the working class in more and more parts of Africa is expanding, as is the migration of working people from one country to another within Africa, as well as to Africa from Asia, the Middle East, and beyond. At the same time, growing numbers of African immigrants are strengthening the working classes of more and more imperialist countries.

The intertwining of all these experiences is of even greater importance today as the most devastating global contraction of capitalist production in some three-quarters of a century accelerates worldwide. The toll already being felt by toilers in the imperialist countries will be worse for those of the semicolonial world, and more destructive than during the last great world capitalist depression of the 1920s and 1930s. Eighty years ago the large majority of the people of Africa, still dominated by European colonial masters, lived on the margins of the world market, at best, where the vicissitudes of capitalist production touched them less directly. Today, as the soaring cost of food and plunging raw materials prices attest — to take but the most obvious examples — that is no longer the case.

Decades of wars, economic, social, and political crises, explosive class battles, and revolutionary struggles lie ahead of us. The international strength, self-consciousness, and political independence of the working class — and the clarity, discipline, and courage of its vanguard — will be decisive to the outcome. As the beginning transformation of Equatorial Guinea helps underscore, the toilers of Africa will have greater weight in shaping that future than ever before.

May BOOKS OF THE MONTH

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS

25% DISCOUNT

El capitalismo y la transformación de África

(Capitalism and the Transformation of Africa)

by Mary-Alice Waters, Martín Koppel

Social transformations unfolding in Equatorial Guinea with growth of offshore oil extraction are leading to development of working class. Also accounts work of volunteer Cuban medical brigades there.

\$10. Special price: \$7.50



My Life

by Leon Trotsky

\$35. Special price: \$26.25

Samizdat

Voices of the Soviet Opposition

by George Saunders

\$25. Special price: \$18.75

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by Malcolm X

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Protests in Turkey against miners' deaths

Continued from front page

have been sacrificed on the altar of profit since 2000.

"These accidents are things which are always happening," Erdogan said in a May 14 press conference in Soma. "Death is the destiny of coal miners."

In response, thousands of miners and other local residents surrounded Erdogan's car caravan, many demanding the prime minister resign.

Erdogan physically confronted protesters and challenged those jeering him to "come and boo me here to my face." Video footage shows Erdogan and his entourage briefly taking refuge in a supermarket where he struck a miner.

Protests rapidly spread across the country as four union federations — Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey, Confederation of Public Workers' Trade Unions, Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects, and Turkish Medical Association — called for strikes in solidarity with the miners.

On May 15, 10,000 miners held a one-day solidarity strike at state-run Turkish Hard Coal Enterprises in the Black Sea city of Zonguldak, where 263 coal miners were killed in 1992.

Workers from the Tuzla shipyards of Istanbul marched May 16 carrying banners and chanting, "The workers in Soma are not alone."

"We are the people who can understand the situation of the workers in Soma because tens of friends have also died in these shipyards," Kamber Saygili, president of the Port, Dockyard and Shipbuilding-Repairs Workers' Union, told the crowd.

According to Today's Zaman, a website that brings together news from Turkish media, some 200 workers have died in Tuzla's 40 shipyards since 1985. The number of shipyard workers there has grown from 3,000 in 2004 to 25,000 today.

"No coal can warm the children of fathers who died in the mine," read a handwritten banner at the head of the May 16 march in Soma. Police attacked the march with water cannon and rubber bullets, touching off a running battle through the streets between cops and demonstrators. Police have since set up checkpoints on roads around Soma to prevent people from entering the town to join protests.

There were also protests of tens of thousands in Diyarbakir, the largest city in the Kurdish area of southeastern Turkey. Actions also took place in Samsun, Ankara, Izmir, Yozgat, Edirne, Kirlareli, Tekirdag, Istanbul and Mugla, Bursa and Antalya provinces.

"I just came from a demonstration near Taksim Square," Samil Altan, Istanbul co-chair of the Democratic Party of the Peoples, told the *Militant* by phone May 17. "But we were not able to hold the demonstration. It was chaos. The police attacked us with water cannons, gas canisters and rubber bullets."

On May 1 thousands defied a government ban on demonstrations and gathered at Taksim Square, where they were assaulted by cops. More than 140 were arrested and 90 people injured. Taksim Square was also

the center of anti-government protests last summer demanding political and democratic rights for religious and national minorities, women and unions. Cops killed seven people during those protests.

According to Altan, there have been demonstrations in support of the miners in many towns throughout the Kurdish areas. "This is important, because we are trying to unite the struggle of Kurdish people with the struggle of workers," he said.

Turkey is home to an estimated 13.4 million Kurds, an oppressed nationality in the region with a long history of struggle. In June last year, thousands of Kurds marched in Istanbul to protest the death of Medeni Yildirim, who was shot by police during a protest in Diyarbakir. In an unprecedented show of sympathy with the Kurdish struggle, they were joined by Turkish workers, students and others, many of whom had participated in the earlier anti-government actions.

Prior to the disaster, Soma Mining said it was one of the safest in the country. At a May 16 press conference, Soma Chairman Alp Gurkan said, "It was an unforeseeable accident."

No safe room in the mine

When asked why the mine did not have a safe room stocked with oxygen masks, Gurkan said the company had planned to complete one in the next few months, but that it wasn't legally obliged to do so and "it wouldn't have mattered."

"The mine has been thoroughly inspected 11 times since 2009," said Huseyin Celik, spokesman for Erdogan's ruling Justice and Development Party. "There's no negligence with respect to this incident."

The mine in Soma is government-owned, but privately run by Soma Mining since 2005. In an interview printed in *Hurriyet* daily two years ago, Gurkan boasted that his company had reduced the costs of extracting coal from \$130 per ton in 2005 to \$23.80.

"Since the privatization of the company, they more easily violate safety regulations," Cafer Alp, an electrician and leader of the Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions in Izmir, a couple hours from Soma, told the *Militant* May 18. Alp went to Soma and spoke to miners after the disaster. "The bosses run the mine with their own rules to maximize profit," he said.

After the fire started, "the miners created their own rescue crews because they know the tunnels," Alp said. "But the company didn't have adequate equipment."

Most of the miners live in Soma, Alp said. But many are small tobacco and cotton farmers who live in rural villages, where they have also joined protests.

Mine bosses know when inspectors are coming, and clean up in preparation, Bicak, 24, one of the surviving Soma miners, told the Associated Press May 17.

"The company is guilty," Bicak said, noting that supervisors had devices to test methane levels in the mine. "The new gas levels had gotten too high and they didn't tell us in time."

Yasemin Aydinoglu in Elmira, New York, contributed to this article.

Crimea Tatars rally

Continued from front page

Crimean cities, as well as in the Ukrainian capital Kiev and in Turkey, home to many Tatars who came in waves fleeing czarist and Stalinist persecution.

On May 16, Moscow-appointed Crimean Prime Minister Sergei Aksyonov announced a ban on all public meetings through June 6. The next day riot police began mass training exercises in the square where the Tatar rally was set to take place.

"The Crimean capital of Simferopol looked like a city prepared for mass riots on May 18," the *Kiev Post* reported. Tatars and others from across Ukraine gathered outside a mosque in Akmechet, a suburb of Simferopol, that was built on wasteland by Tatars who returned to Crimea in the early 1990s. "Thousands carrying the Crimean Tatar flag marched past parked buses full of armed police," the *Post* said.

"How could we not gather?" Elina Asanova, who runs a nursery school in Simferopol, told the paper. "We held this meeting every year for 23 years and nothing ever happened: no provocations, no clashes, nothing."

More than 32,000 Russian intelligence forces descended on Crimea in 1944, giving Tatars 30 minutes to gather their belongings and then loading some 194,000 into cattle cars for summary deportation. Tatars in the Red Army fighting German troops were demobilized and sent to forced labor camps in Siberia and the Urals.

Tatars were barred from returning to Crimea until the late 1980s and those who went back found that their homes and farms had been seized.

The May 18 rally also protested the Russian government's annexation of Crimea. Tatars, who now make up some 12 percent of the peninsula's population, backed the massive mobilizations across Ukraine that overthrew the pro-Moscow regime of President Viktor Yanukovich.

Another chant at the rally was "Mustafa!" Mustafa Dzhemilev is the long-standing leader of the Crimean Tatar national struggle. He was jailed repeatedly in Russia in the 1960s, '70s and '80s. Dzhemilev, who was banned from Crimea by Russian authorities May 3, participated in the protest in Kiev.

Separatists in Ukraine

Continued from page 2

vate company army of more than 3,000, including former elite Ukrainian commandos, was making "a business decision to keep Donbas in Ukraine," as the *Kiev Post* put it. He launched the patrols in a meeting he called that brought together cops, representatives of the union at his mills and representatives of separatist forces holding city hall. The union leadership signed off on the deal, but has no responsibility for the operation.

"By making it look like political confrontations, some people are pushing our city to chaos but in reality it is pure banditry and crime," Igor Kurganov, a worker in the mechanical testing shop at Azovstal plant, said, explaining why he joined the patrol in comments posted by the company on its website. "I would not want to live in a city ruled by wolves or by a wolf pack!"

The corporatist-style patrols of cops and workers, dressed in company jackets, began to clear separatists out. Pro-Russian-government forces melted away, along with signs of the self-declared people's republic. Workers driving company backhoes dismantled their barricades.

Correction

The article "Working Class in Canada Strengthened as Decades of Struggle Push Back Oppression of Quebecois" in the May 26 issue incorrectly gave the years of the rebellion against British colonial domination by farmers and other working people in Ontario and Quebec. That rebellion took place 1837-38, not 1937-38.

LETTERS

William Worthy

William Worthy, the pioneering Black journalist who was indicted for traveling to and reporting from Cuba in 1961, died May 4 at age 92.

Worthy's case drew worldwide attention and was covered by the *Militant*. An appellate court eventually overturned his conviction.

During his career he defied travel bans to report from Beijing, Moscow and other locales frowned upon by federal authorities.

Worthy was a strong supporter of the civil rights movement and Malcolm X.

*Baxter Smith
Baltimore, Maryland*

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*A prisoner
California*

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Since I'm interested in journalism, I find the topics featured very useful to broaden my knowledge of underground struggles, or events that go unheard of in mainstream media. I have many a time shared the newspaper with colleagues, friends and mentors, and they've always reacted positively; the initiative is inspiring, and the execution is even better.

*Laila Sherif Said
Cairo, Egypt*

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.