

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuban 5 defended revolution against U.S.-backed attacks

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 72/NO. 41 OCTOBER 20, 2008

## Minnesota unionists defend fired steward

BY TOM FISKE

SOUTH ST. PAUL, Minnesota—Workers at Dakota Premium Foods called a special union meeting the day after the firing of Samuel Farley, a long-time shop steward and union fighter who has worked at the plant for more than nine years. Farley was a leader of the fight to win the union in 2000.

After two weeks of almost daily harassment, including being called to the office and told his work was substandard, Farley was suspended on October 3 and fired October 8.

The firing of Farley is part of a broader push against the union by the company in the plant.

After being told he was suspended, Farley notified fellow union members immediately. The next day 13 workers and two union supporters met with Rafael Espinosa, a union representative from United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789, which represents workers at the plant. The workers decided to immediately get out an issue of *Workers' Voice*, the newsletter put out by union supporters in the plant.

The newsletter, which was passed

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## Socialist Kennedy gets hearing in Seattle

BY EDWIN FRUIT

SEATTLE—The Socialist Workers Party election campaign is capturing attention as the capitalist financial crisis spreads worldwide.

An interview with SWP vice presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy appeared in the September 26 online edition of the *Seattle-Post Intelligencer*. “Kennedy, a former coal miner and long-time union activist, is the running mate of presidential hopeful Roger Calero,” the paper said. “The two are campaigning on the platform of abolishing the country’s current wage system and automatically legalizing undocumented workers.” It explained that Kennedy “feels the working class needs to form a viable political party.”

“She and Calero advocate creating a ‘public works’ program comprised of union-wage jobs to build the country’s infrastructure. They advocate an ‘immediate halt on home and farm foreclosures’ and a shorter work week.”

“The real problem is the wages system,” Kennedy told the *Post-Intel-*

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## World financial crisis rocks European banks

Highest U.S. monthly job loss in 5 years



AP Photo/Richard Drew

Above, Wall Street traders react to falling stock prices following passage of \$700 billion government “bailout.” Inset, Dow Jones Industrial Average from September 29 to October 7.



BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

October 8—Capitalist governments across Europe scrambled to pour billions into shoring up major banks threatened by the spreading credit crunch. Stock prices tumbled from Wall Street to Europe to Asia.

The British government announced October 8 that it’s putting \$87.5 billion into eight of the country’s leading banks, including Barclays, HSBC, and Lloyds.

The Fortis bank, a Dutch-Belgian banking and insurance giant once ranked among the world’s top 20 financial institutions, collapsed October 3. The Dutch government seized control of its operations in the Netherlands. In Belgium, government officials got the French bank BNP-Paribas to take over what was left of Fortis.

In Germany, the government put up

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NEW DATE

## The Crisis Has Barely Begun!

... and Workers’ Fight to End the Wages System Is Posed

Jack Barnes, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party

Reaching to the World:

Workers and Oppressed Nations Unite!

Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *New International* magazine and *Our History Is Still Being Written*, recently returned from Equatorial Guinea

Saturday, November 22 ↻ New York City

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- 10 a.m. Discussion on Saturday’s presentations with youth and workers interested in the program of the Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party
- 1 p.m. National meeting of the Young Socialists
- Noon Join *Militant* sales teams for final week of subscription campaign
- 8:30 a.m.—1 p.m. Meeting of supporters of the communist movement (Location to be announced)

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For more information: (212) 736-2540 or (973) 481-0077  
Spanish and French translation will be provided

## Mumia Abu-Jamal denied new trial by Supreme Court

BY JOHN STUDER

PHILADELPHIA—The U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear arguments October 6 for a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal, who has spent more than 25 years on death row after being framed up and sentenced to death on charges of killing a Philadelphia cop in 1981.

Abu-Jamal was a prominent fighter for Black rights, served as the president of the Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists, and had been a founding member of the local chapter of the Black Panther Party. While being held on death row, he has contin-

ued to write about politics and champion the defense of other frame-up victims, including American Indian Movement leader Leonard Peltier.

On the first day of its new session, the court refused to take up hundreds of cases appealed to it over the last year, including Abu-Jamal’s unjust conviction.

The rejected appeal challenged Abu-Jamal’s conviction because of evidence discovered after his trial that the cops and the prosecution pressured witnesses to lie in an effort to

Continued on page 8

## Campaign to win readers starts strong

BY ANGEL LARISCY

In the past week 361 people signed up to subscribe to the *Militant*, the socialist newsweekly, getting the campaign to win 2,400 readers off to a strong start!

Partisans of the *Militant* in the Twin  
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## Also Inside:

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Court halts Florida restrictions on Cuba travel 5

Marchers in Quebec defend abortion rights 5

# California train crash spotlights lack of rail safety

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

LOS ANGELES—Twenty-five people were killed and 135 injured when a Metrolink commuter train collided with a freight train here September 12. Officials from the National Transportation Safety Board and the Metrolink commuter rail company say the engineer was text messaging just before the crash and may have been distracted.

But rail workers say the accident puts a spotlight on the criminal lack of rail safety.

While the wreckage was still on the tracks, Metrolink officials were pinning the blame on the engineer, Robert Sanchez, who died in the crash. Metrolink officials say he ran through a red signal.

"It is a rush to judgment," said Ray Garcia, who until 2006 was a conductor on the same Metrolink 111 train. Garcia pointed to a situation where the central computer showed a signal was red, when on the tracks it was not. Garcia said he knew Sanchez for nine years and that he was a qualified worker.

Three people standing on the platform as the train departed the station, one of them a station guard, insist that the signal was green, and not red. Their reports would explain why the alarm at the Metrolink computer dispatch system in Pomona was not triggered when the train passed the signal.

Tim Smith, state chairman of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, said fatigue could have been a key factor. Sanchez worked back-to-back split shifts. He was alone in the engine with one conductor at the other end of the train. His day typically began before 6 a.m. and ended at almost 9:30 p.m. He took a four-and-a-half-hour break without proper facilities to rest before begin-

ning the second half of the shift. "When you whittle all that away, you're lucky to get three hours' sleep," said Smith. Sanchez had worked his shift five days in a row.

Metrolink officials defended the split shifts, saying that hiring extra engineers to cover the morning and evening rush hours would be too expensive.

Technology that could have helped prevent the crash or reduce its impact is not new. Equipment ranges from sen-

sors and automatic braking systems developed 90 years ago, to computer and digital radio communications, to positive train controls that stop a train automatically if an engineer goes through a red signal or there is another train on the track.

Metrolink officials claim such controls have not been perfected to the point where they can be installed throughout Southern California. The company said it will begin adding a second engineer

from its extra board, a pool of 15 workers who replace engineers who are sick or on vacation. No new hiring has been announced.

In the aftermath of the September 12 crash, the U.S. Congress passed legislation that would require main passenger lines and freight lines carrying hazardous material to install positive train controls—by 2015. Shortening the hours of rail workers from more than 400 to 276 hours a month is also under discussion.

## Pathfinder volunteers campaign to boost sales

BY THERESA KENDRICK

MIAMI—Supporters of Pathfinder Press are in the seventh week of a drive to make 200 visits to bookstores, libraries, and university professors in U.S. cities by December 15. Sixty-nine visits have already taken place and 21 orders have come in. The goal is to get at least 50 orders.

A special focus is getting orders for *New International* no. 14, whose lead article is "Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X," and its Spanish-language counterpart, *Nueva Internacional* no. 8. Orders have already come in from Texas, California, and Illinois.

Pathfinder volunteers are also taking advantage of the widespread discussion provoked by the capitalist financial crisis to show buyers "Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun" in *New International* no. 12, "Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War" in *New International* no. 10, and the book *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*.

Teams of volunteers have made trips



Militant/Nels J'Anthony

Pathfinder booth at "New York Is Book Country" street fair in Central Park September 21. Volunteers are introducing *New International* no. 14 and other titles taking up capitalist financial crisis as widely as possible, with goal of 50 orders by December 15.

to Portland, Oregon; Tallahassee and Tampa, Florida; and Santa Cruz, California, to expand visits and sales to even more cities and states. They have participated in book fairs and conferences, staffing booths at the "New York Is Book Country" fair, the Brooklyn Book Festival, and the Reforma library conference in El Paso, Texas.

On a trip to Portland, Oregon, volunteers met with four buyers, including one who orders backlist titles for Portland's largest bookstore and who asked for a "shortlist" of 25 titles published before 2006 that he could review.

The teams are soliciting library subscription orders for three Spanish-language periodicals published in Cuba and distributed by Pathfinder: *Granma International*, *La Gaceta de Cuba*, and *Cuba Socialista*. They are also promot-

ing several pamphlets about the case of the Cuban Five, five Cuban revolutionaries unjustly imprisoned in the United States.

Volunteers in Miami have been working with an African studies professor who ordered *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*, by Thomas Sankara, for one of his classes. Another Florida professor is using *By Any Means Necessary* by Malcolm X for a class. Three Miami university libraries recently ordered the video *Cuba and Angola: Response to the South African Escalation* to be used by African studies departments.

Pathfinder supporters will visit a number of stores over the Columbus Day holiday weekend, October 11–13.

## THE MILITANT

### Defend abortion rights!

From the United States, to Canada, Mexico, and around the world, women are standing up for the right to control their own bodies and against laws restricting abortion. Follow this important fight in the 'Militant.'



Hundreds of thousands joined 2004 March for Women's Lives in Washington, D.C.

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# 'Wall St. Journal' article features SWP campaign

BY CINDY JAQUITH

A front-page article in the October 4 *Wall Street Journal* featured Socialist Workers Party candidates' response to the capitalist financial crisis and the SWP's call for a workers and farmers government. Accompanying the article were drawings of Seth Dellinger, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in Washington, D.C., and Róger Calero, the party's candidate for U.S. president.

Staff writer Michael Phillips reported that in the first week of October, in the midst of the debate over a \$700 billion bailout for Wall Street banks, Calero released a statement saying the capitalist financial crisis "poses the urgent need for a revolution in this country, a socialist revolution that will throw the billionaire ruling families out of power and replace them with a workers and farmers government."

"Mr. Calero, a 39-year-old Nicaraguan meatpacker, is on the ballot in the five states that allow noncitizens to run for president, even though the Constitution bars them from serving," the article explained. "Mr. Calero said in an interview that should the party win, he is confident voters would approve a constitutional amendment allowing him to take office."

The *Journal* reporter joined Dellinger, who works as a meat packer, and another socialist worker as they set up a literature table to distribute campaign information, the *Militant* newspaper, and Pathfinder books at the University of Maryland in College Park. He wrote:

"Mr. Dellinger...taped up a few posters. 'U.S. Troops Out of Iraq and Afghanistan,' said one. 'For a Workers and Farmers Government,' said another.

"He carefully put books on a rack for easy viewing. 'Malcolm X Talks to

Young People,' 'Fascism: What It Is and How to Fight It,' and 'The Communist Manifesto'...

"Some ignored him. Some shunned him. Out of curiosity some picked up copies of *The Militant*."

The article went on to report that while still a student Dellinger had visited Cuba. "Two weeks on the island convinced him that Mr. Castro's brand of socialism met the needs of people in a way capitalism had not," Phillips wrote. "He was tempted to stay, but fellow American socialists told him he was needed in the fight at home."

Talking to students at the table, Dellinger "focused his pitch on the demise of capitalism," the article continued. "What do you think about the crisis on Wall Street?" he asked Jihan Asher, a 17-year-old freshman studying education.

"Ms. Asher responded: 'I still don't



Militant/Naomi Craine

SWP presidential candidate Róger Calero campaigning in MacArthur Park, Los Angeles, in April of this year. Capitalist financial crisis, he says, "poses urgent need for socialist revolution."

know quite how it's going to impact me personally."

"Ms. Asher is neither a Washington resident, nor old enough to vote for Mr. Dellinger. But she bought a \$5 subscription to *The Militant* and signed up to receive party email alerts. For Mr. Dellinger, that was victory enough."

The article also mentioned the Communist Party USA and the Socialist Party USA. It quoted CP national chair-

man Sam Webb stating that, "Bailing out the biggest financial corporations is a far cry from what we have in mind when we think about socialism."

It reported that the SP calls for "a nationwide moratorium on home foreclosures, a tax on every financial transaction in order to fund social services, a 6% additional tax on anyone with an income greater than \$5 million and a new national health-insurance program."

## Socialist candidate gets hearing in Seattle

**Continued from front page**  
*ligencer.* "We get back a little slice in the form of wages... they take the rest of it in the form of profits."

On September 24 Kennedy and Mary Martin, the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in the 7th District of Washington State, visited the picket lines and union hall of the International Association of Machinists, which is on strike against Boeing. Some 28,000 workers have joined the walkout against the company, which produces commercial and military aircraft.

Workers explained to the socialist candidates some of the issues behind the strike. "The company made billions in profit last year and now we want to get our fair share," one worker

said. Striker April Sweet explained that she had been working for Boeing for a year and a half and was making \$11.80 an hour. The union wants to upgrade the starting pay, which has not changed since 1992.

Another striker explained that it can take a decade or more to get through the "six-year" wage progression to top pay, due to frequent, extended layoffs.

Amy Lawrence said she had been working for the company for 12 years. "I think we need more alternatives in the elections," she said as she got a copy of the *Militant* and said she would read the SWP campaign brochure.

On September 25 Kennedy spoke before an ethnic and minorities studies class of 50 at Shorewood High School. "If revolutions have failed before because of a lack of leadership what is to say that it won't fail here?" a student asked after her talk.

"The Cuban Revolution is an example of a revolution that has thrived and that's because it has a leadership that bases itself on the workers and peasants," Kennedy replied. "That's the kind of revolutionary leadership we need to forge in this country."

"How can we go up against an all-powerful government with its media and army?" another student asked her.

"We have to prepare to defend ourselves," Kennedy answered. "We have the example of how Blacks defended themselves during the civil rights movement against the Ku Klux Klan, other right-wing forces, and the cops."

"How can the working class run the government without any political experience?" a third student wanted to know.

"Let's take the energy companies," said Kennedy. "We should open up their books so working people can see what their real costs are and how much profit they're making. We should nationalize the energy industry and place it under workers' control. Then workers will be responsible for guaranteeing safety on the job, ending pollution, and providing safe and affordable energy."

**Socialist Workers on the ballot in:**

	<b>NEW YORK</b>
	<b>NEW JERSEY</b>
	<b>WASHINGTON</b>
	<b>VERMONT</b>
	<b>MINNESOTA</b>
	<b>LOUISIANA</b>
	<b>FLORIDA</b>
	<b>DELAWARE</b>
	<b>COLORADO</b>
	<b>IOWA</b>
	<b>GEORGIA</b> legal write-in status
	<b>CALIFORNIA</b> write-in status pending
	<b>CONNECTICUT</b> write-in status pending

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

**FLORIDA**  
**Miami**  
The Capitalist System Leads to Depression and War—Working People Must Take Power. Speaker: Alyson Kennedy, SWP candidate for U.S. vice president. Sat., Oct. 18. Reception, 4 p.m.; program, 5 p.m. Buffet dinner to follow. 6777 N.W. 7th Ave. Tel: (305) 757-8869.

## SWP presidential campaign tour schedule



Presidential candidate Róger Calero (foreground) at rally outside Georgia State capitol September 11 demanding freedom for Troy Davis, who faces death sentence.



Vice presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy (right) at May Day demonstration May 1 in Chicago demanding legalization for undocumented immigrants.

### Presidential candidate Róger Calero

Oct. 10–11 San Francisco  
Oct. 13, 15 Houston  
Oct. 14 Edinburg/Brownsville, TX  
Oct. 17–18 Seattle

Oct. 21–22 Boston  
Oct. 23–24 Philadelphia  
Oct. 25, 27–28 New York  
Oct. 26, 29–30 Newark, NJ

### Vice presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy

Oct. 10–14 Atlanta  
Oct. 15–18 Miami

Oct. 20–24 Washington, D.C.  
Oct. 25–30 San Francisco

# Obama, McCain debate economy, 'war on terror'

BY DOUG NELSON

The spreading financial crisis and Washington's "war on terrorism" were at the center of a round of debates between the candidates on the Democratic and Republican presidential tickets.

The debate with Democratic senator Barack Obama and Republican senator John McCain took place on October 7. Their running mates, Sen. Joseph Biden and Gov. Sarah Palin respectively, met October 2.

In their debate McCain and his Democratic Party rival voiced their support for the government's \$700 billion bailout of Wall Street banks, which they both voted for. They each put forward different plans to shift more of the responsibility for health care onto individuals and families. It was clear from the debate as well that the two candidates intend to go after both Social Security and Medicare.

Obama blamed the economic crisis entirely on the Bush administration's lifting of financial regulations and "letting the market run wild." He failed to mention, however, that it was former president William Clinton who eliminated the key financial regulations, which postponed and exacerbated the current crisis. This includes lifting the Glass-Steagall Act of 1933, which established a legal separation between commercial banks and insurance companies, stock brokerages, and investment banks.

McCain blamed the crisis on greed and corruption in Washington and on Wall Street. He pledged to cut government costs and implement a spending freeze on everything but defense and Veteran's Affairs. "We'll just have to have across-the-board freeze," he said.

The candidates jostled for who would be a stronger commander in chief

to lead U.S. forces in a protracted "war against terror" in the Middle East. Both strongly advocated sending more forces to Afghanistan.

Both cited Iran as posing a major threat to U.S. interests in the Middle East as well as growing tensions with Russia.

Many of the same themes were presented at the October 2 vice presidential debate.

Biden made clear he does not hesitate to employ military force to advance U.S. interests around the world. He proudly reminded the audience that he was the first politician to propose sending troops to Bosnia.

Biden emphasized his role in drafting the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, also known as the Biden Crime Bill. It put 100,000 more cops on the street, increased sentences, funded special "drug courts," and allocated funds to build more prisons and boot camps.

McCain's campaign was boosted last month with Palin's nomination as his running mate. She helps McCain secure a base of support among right-wing Re-



Left, Sen. John McCain (right) talks with U.S. soldiers in Mosul, Iraq, in March. Right, Sen. Barack Obama flying over Sadr City, a Baghdad district, with Gen. David Petraeus. Both say they would be the stronger war president and advocate sending more troops into Afghanistan and Pakistan.

publicans, many of whom had threatened not to back the Republican presidential candidate. McCain's choice of a woman is aimed at competing with Obama over whose campaign more represents "change." Following Palin's nomination, the economy has continued to deteriorate and Obama's lead has grown.

In the vice presidential debate, both candidates opposed legalizing same-sex marriage, while saying they would not eliminate recognition of joint-ownership of property and other legal rights of gay couples.

Palin has tried to portray herself as a Washington "outsider" who is closer

to the working class. In her September 3 acceptance speech, Palin said she grew up with "the ones who do some of the hardest work in America . . . who grow our food, run our factories, and fight our wars."

Palin's conservative views have earned her support from incipient fascist Patrick Buchanan. At the same time, statements and articles painting Palin as a backer of Buchanan's presidential campaign proved false. While she attended a fund-raiser for Buchanan in 1999, she says she did not contribute. In 2000 she was an official for the Stephen Forbes campaign.

## ICE sweeps target immigrants in 28 states

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Using the pretext of cracking down on "gangs," cops from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) arrested 1,759 people, the big majority Latin American workers, in a four-month-long drive called "Operation Community Shield." The roundups are the latest attempt by the government to stigmatize immigrants without papers as "criminals" and to undermine the fight for legalization of all undocumented workers.

The arrests took place in 53 cities and towns in 28

states. The largest numbers seized were 430 in California and 271 in Texas.

Teaming up with federal, state, and local cops, ICE has conducted Operation Community Shield sweeps since 2005, arresting more than 11,000 people. Although ICE claims the sweeps are aimed at "transnational street gangs," two-thirds of those taken into custody were charged only with violations of immigration law, with criminal charges filed against the rest. Detainees in both categories face deportation.

ICE chief Julie Myers criticized Houston officials for failing to fully par-

ticipate in the operation. There were 71 arrested in Houston in this year's sweep, Myers said, fewer than in smaller cities such as Boston.

Houston police chief Harold Hurtt replied that his cops do not routinely question individuals about their immigration status if they have not been arrested, saying they do not have "adequate resources" to act as immigration police. He noted, however, that Houston cops run the name of anyone arrested through two national databases, and if they discover the individual faces a deportation order or some other immigration restriction, they keep the person in jail for 24 hours so ICE can come get them.

The Center for Immigration Studies, an anti-immigrant group, released a "study" October 1 titled "Taking Back the Streets." Funded by the U.S. Justice Department, it urges greater cooperation between ICE and local police, prosecutors, and prison officials. The report makes it clear the main target is not "criminals" but immigrant workers. "Immigrant gang members rarely make a living as gangsters," it says. "They typically work by day in construction, auto repair, farming, landscaping, and other low-skill occupations."

In California, ICE cops also carried out a "Fugitive Operations" dragnet against workers facing deportation orders, arresting 1,157 people in the last three weeks of September. Agency officials said it was the largest such operation to date in the state. Similar squads arrested 76 immigrants in New Jersey in the last six days of September.

The Pew Hispanic Center reported October 2 that the number of undocumented immigrants entering the United States had dropped to about 500,000 a year since 2005, from an average of 800,000 a year from 2000 to 2004. It attributed the decrease to worsening job prospects for foreign-born workers as well as record numbers of workplace raids and deportations.

### 'Militant' Subscription Drive

Fall 2008 ♦ Sept. 27 – Nov. 23

Week 1 of 8

Country	Quota	Sold	%
<b>UNITED STATES</b>			
<b>Twin Cities</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Newark</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>San Francisco</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Philadelphia</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>Washington, D.C.</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>Boston</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Des Moines</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Los Angeles</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Atlanta</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Miami</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>New York</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Seattle</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Houston</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Chicago</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>1,890</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>			
<b>Edinburgh</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>London</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>UK Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>CANADA</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>SWEDEN</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Int'l Totals</b>	<b>2,290</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Should be</b>	<b>2,400</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>13%</b>

## Sub drive starts strong

Continued from front page Cities, Minnesota, are at the top of the chart. "We went to Long Prairie and Melrose, Minnesota, to talk to meat packers and dairy farm workers about the unfolding financial crisis and the need for workers to take political power, presented in the statement by Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Róger Calero," reports Natalie Morrison. The towns are home to Long Prairie Packing and Jennie-O Foods turkey processing plants.

Seventeen people decided to subscribe, including one renewal, and 24 single copies were sold.

In Miami, Socialist Workers campaigners sold 17 subscriptions to the *Militant* in the first week, reports Deborah Liatos. They joined with some 400 people at a meeting to protest deportations and demand residency status for Haitians. Margaret Trowe, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in the 17th District,

spoke in West Palm Beach at a vigil of 100 against the deportations.

Supporters of the *Militant* are urging those who subscribe to purchase *New International* no. 14, containing the articles "Revolution, internationalism, and socialism: the last year of Malcolm X" and "The Clintons' antilabor legacy: roots of the 2008 world financial crisis" for only \$10.

Janice Lynn of Washington, D.C., said four copies of the magazine were sold with subscriptions at the Baltimore Book Fair. "Those who got the offer were not only interested in the political evolution of Malcolm X, but equally interested in the article on the roots of the financial crisis and the legacy of the Clintons."

The subscription effort coincides with intensified campaigning by SWP candidates and their supporters across the United States as well as Communist League candidates in other countries.

Join us in campaigning and help win new readers between now and November 23! Sign up a coworker, neighbor, or friend and contact a distributor (see directory on page 8) to find out about political events and activities in your area.

## ON THE PICKET LINE

### Thousands of striking teachers in Honduras rally for back pay

Thousands of teachers and their supporters rallied in Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras, September 29 to demand pay for some 5,000 teachers who have not received wages since February. They took over six bridges in the downtown area of the capital as well as blocking transit in several other cities to press their demands. The teachers are on strike demanding that the National Congress authorize payment of their wages. Some 2.5 million students in public schools are affected by the walkout.

Also in Honduras, some 400 doctors have been on strike for the past month to protest deteriorating conditions in the country's public hospitals. Some 800 nursing assistants have also vowed to join the action with demands for increased monthly pay from 3,229 lempiras (US\$170) to 5,800 lempiras (US\$307).

—Brian Williams

### Municipal workers carry out second day of strike action

EDINBURGH, Scotland—Some 150,000 municipal workers in Scotland carried out their second day of strike action September 23. Members of trade unions Unison; Unite; and the General, Municipal, Boilermakers and Allied Trade Union previously struck August 20 to protest a 2.5 percent pay raise each year for the next three years. In response, the bosses had revised their offer to a 2.5 percent increase for one year only.

At least 1,000 strikers and supporters marched through the center of Edinburgh to a rally. Glyn Hawker, head of bargaining at Unison, reported to that rally that bosses had reneged on their promise to “work at a settlement that takes account of the rate of inflation.” The official “retail price inflation” rate is 4.8 percent. “Our members are not the cause of inflation or the credit crunch and are looking to be treated fairly,” Hawker said. Unison Scotland secretary Mark Smith said, “Until Cosla [the government

employer] makes a better offer, strike action will continue.” Indeed the unions have set October 6 as the next strike day.

—Hugh Robertson

### California longshore workers help seafarers win strike

Solidarity actions by members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) helped striking seafarers docked on a ship in Long Beach, California, win their demands September 23. The seafarers called a strike that day against poor working conditions and pay. Upon seeing the crew members holding up signs saying, “On Strike” and “Low Wages and Conditions,” ILWU members ceased work and disembarked from the vessel. Later that day the bosses signed a new agreement that included giving the workers back pay.

“Longshoremen from the ILWU well know that solidarity between seafarers and dockworkers is the way to stamp out union busting on the docks and the ships that seafarers work on,” commented ILWU International Affairs Director Ray Familathe on the successful conclusion of the strike action.

—Brian Williams

### Marchers in Quebec defend abortion rights



Militant/Beverly Bernardo

MONTREAL—Chanting “Motherhood a choice, abortion a right” more than 2,000 people took to the streets here September 28 to defend abortion rights. The Quebec Women's Federation and Quebec Planned Parenthood called the action in collaboration with other women's organizations and Quebec's three main union federations.

The theme of the action was “No more C-484s, we don't play with the rights of women.” Law C-484 died on September 7 when Conservative prime minister Steven Harper called a federal election for October 14. The bill would have opened the door to giving legal rights to fetuses. Abortion was decriminalized by Canada's Supreme Court in 1988.

— BEVERLY BERNARDO

## Court halts Florida restrictions on Cuba travel

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

A federal judge in Miami has blocked enforcement of a Florida law that would impose new restrictions on travel to Cuba. In his October 1 injunction U.S. District Judge Alan Gold said that the law was unconstitutional because the federal government “has exclusive control over issues involving foreign affairs and foreign commerce.”

The law, which was passed July 1, would require travel agencies that book direct trips to Cuba to post a \$250,000 bond with the state—in addition to an existing \$25,000 federal bond. If enforced, travel agents would face prohibitively high expenses for arranging trips to the Caribbean island.

The judge's injunction extends a temporary restraining order issued the same day that the law was to take effect. A final trial on the law is not yet

scheduled.

Washington has restricted travel by U.S. residents to Cuba for decades, forcing any individual to first obtain a Treasury license to travel to the island. Journalists and government officials can go upon securing a “general license.” In 2004 Washington tightened restrictions on trips by Cuban Americans to the island, limiting visits to once every three years. Previously these visits were permitted once a year.

In another development, the U.S. government has denied re-entry visas to two Cuban journalists who are United Nations correspondents—Ilsa Rodríguez and Tomás Granados—after they spent their vacation in their homeland. Both individuals had covered events at the United Nations for Prensa Latina since 2005. They had been working with the news agency

for four decades, and currently had official accreditation from the United Nations until February 2009.

In a September 29 letter to the president of the UN Correspondents Association, Rodríguez and Granados wrote that this exclusion was “an outrageous and arbitrary act, which violates all standards regarding relations between the UN and the United States as the host country.”

In an October 2 news release, the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations said it “denounces this shameful event which clearly shows the disrespect of the United States for the practice of journalism.” The statement added, “Once again, the U.S. Government has acted in an irresponsible way and to the detriment of one of the most basic rights of the human being, which is the right to inform and be informed.”

### Abortion Is a Woman's Right

by Pat Grogan

Why abortion rights are central not only to the fight for the full emancipation of women, but to forging a united and fighting labor movement. \$5



### The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State

by Frederick Engels

How the emergence of class-divided society gave rise to repressive state bodies and family structures that protect the property of the ruling layers and enable them to pass along wealth and privilege. \$18



### Is Biology Women's Destiny?

by Evelyn Reed

Why it is not true that nature is responsible for the oppression of women. Answers the pseudoscientific propaganda on female inferiority that is offered in the name of biology. \$4.50

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## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

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**THE MILITANT**  
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

October 21, 1983

SAN FRANCISCO—On September 21 a rally was held here at the Bayview Opera House to protest the closing of Dr. Charles R. Drew Elementary School. Those who gathered also demanded that in addition to Black students, white children be bused to desegregate the city's schools. The meeting, which was attended by about 100 people, followed the release from jail of four activists who had been arrested for blocking school busses that take Black children to white schools.

Drew was closed following the settlement of a NAACP lawsuit against the San Francisco Unified School District. The suit was aimed at forcing the school board to desegregate the city's educational system.

**THE MILITANT**  
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE  
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

October 20, 1958

A standing army of unemployed has appeared once more as a prominent part of the American economic scene. According to Martin R. Gainsborough, chief economist for the National Industrial Conference board, recovery from the recession has almost reached its pre-recession peak. However he said, “The percentage of the labor force unemployed is uncomfortably close to the postwar peak and a hard core of continuing unemployment is to be found in the durable goods industry.”

In the previous recessions of 1949 and 1954 the subsequent pick-up absorbed virtually all the laid-off workers. Today, however, the most optimistic economists are unable to see full employment even if the present rate of recovery continues.

**THE MILITANT**  
Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

October 21, 1933

As our comrades and friends all over the country [are] in the sub drive the list of subs is shooting up. Add them up; that makes 49 new subs since the opening of the drive. And there are still a little less than four weeks to go.

We forgot to say in our previous announcements that wherever there is a tie on November 15 when the drive closes the prize for that place will be given to both the tying contestants. This makes it an even greater inducement. The prizes are: for first place—the three volumes of the History of the Russian Revolution by comrade Trotsky; for second place—two volumes; for third place—one volume. That is a prize worth shooting for.

# Cuban Five defended revolution against U.S.-backed attacks

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

(Third of a series)

Ten years ago last month, FBI agents arrested and framed up Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González, and René González. In a case marked by violations of basic constitutional rights, the U.S. government obtained convictions against them on false charges ranging from “conspiracy to commit espionage” to “conspiracy to commit murder.”

The *Militant* is running a series of articles on the growing international campaign to win the release of these five working-class fighters, known as the Cuban Five. The previous article, in the July 14 issue, explained how their frame-up and imprisonment is part of the broader assault by the U.S. capitalist rulers on the rights and living standards of working people in the United States over the past decade and a half.

The “crime” for which the five men were imprisoned was that they kept the Cuban government informed about the activities of U.S.-based counterrevolutionary groups that have a long record of launching attacks on Cuba.

The violent actions of those outfits are part of the nearly 50 years of economic and military aggression, under 10 Democratic and Republican administrations, through which the U.S. government has sought to overthrow the Cuban Revolution and reimpose capitalist rule.

Washington’s hostile policies against Cuba are neither irrational nor dictated by short-term goals. The billionaire families that rule the United States aim to punish workers and farmers in Cuba for having the audacity to take state power and make a socialist revolution. What they hate and fear above all is the political example this revolution sets for working people around the world, including right here in the United States.

## For further reading: The First and Second Declarations of Havana

Adopted by million-strong assemblies of the Cuban people in 1960 and ‘62, these uncompromising indictments of imperialist plunder and “the exploitation of man by man” continue to stand as manifestos of revolutionary struggle by working people the world over. \$10

## To Speak the Truth

Why Washington’s ‘Cold War’ Against Cuba Doesn’t End by Ernesto Che Guevara, Fidel Castro



In historic speeches before the UN General Assembly and other UN bodies, Guevara and Castro explain why the U.S. government fears the example of the socialist revolution in Cuba and why Washington’s effort to destroy it will fail. \$17

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“What is it that is hidden behind the Yankees’ hatred of the Cuban Revolution?” asked the Second Declaration of Havana, a manifesto adopted in February 1962 by a million-strong assembly of the Cuban people.

“What unifies them and incites them is fear,” was the answer. “Not fear of the Cuban Revolution, but fear of the Latin American revolution. . . . Fear that the plundered people of the continent will seize the arms from their oppressors and, like Cuba, declare themselves free peoples of the Americas.”

## Revolutionary measures

On Jan. 1, 1959, workers and farmers in Cuba, led by the Rebel Army and July 26 Movement, overthrew the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship. The revolutionary government immediately began taking steps to meet the needs of the majority. Within months it approved laws that reduced rents by 30–50 percent and slashed the onerous electricity and telephone service rates charged by the U.S.-owned monopolies. Racist discrimination in employment and public facilities was outlawed. Steps were taken to integrate women into the workforce, the unions, and political activity. In May 1959 a sweeping agrarian reform expropriated the largest landed estates and gave land titles to 100,000 landless peasants.

Public education and health care were expanded to all social layers. In 1961 more than 100,000 young teachers mobilized throughout the country to teach 1 million workers and peasants to read and write, wiping out illiteracy.

Workers mobilized to combat economic disruption by the capitalists and, by the end of 1960, major U.S. companies and virtually all large-scale Cuban-owned industry was nationalized. These and other measures established the socialist character of the revolution.

Cuba’s revolutionary leadership also extended its solidarity to anti-imperialist struggles around the world. As early as 1963 Cuban volunteer troops went to Algeria to defend the newly independent government there against an imperialist-backed assault. This proletarian internationalist course continues to this day, with thousands of Cuban volunteer medical personnel providing quality health care throughout Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

These deep-going measures infuriated the wealthy U.S. rulers and Cuban capitalists. Unlike other governments, Cuba’s revolutionary leadership was not beholden to their interests. Most alarming to them, revolutionary Cuba was setting a dangerous example to millions around the world—that it was possible for working people to overturn capitalist rule and make a socialist revolution.

In July 1960 Washington cut off virtually all sugar imports from Cuba. In January 1961 it broke diplomatic relations with Cuba and restricted travel by U.S. citizens to the island. By February 1962 the John F. Kennedy administration ordered a total embargo on U.S. trade with Cuba. In April 1961, the U.S.



Bohemia

August 1960 march in Havana with symbolic burial of coffins representing U.S.-owned companies nationalized by the revolution. U.S. capitalist rulers have waged 50 years of aggression against Cuba’s socialist revolution because they fear its example worldwide.

government launched a mercenary invasion of Cuba, which workers and farmers, organized through their popular militias, Revolutionary Armed Forces, and revolutionary police defeated at the Bay of Pigs. In October 1962 Kennedy ordered a naval blockade of the island and brought the world to the brink of a nuclear holocaust after Cuba accepted missiles from the Soviet Union in face of Washington’s preparations to invade Cuba.

## U.S.-organized terror campaign

Between 1959 and 1965, nearly 4,000 counterrevolutionary bandits—armed, trained, and financed by the U.S. government—waged a campaign of sabotage and terror in Cuba, especially in the Escambray mountains. They tortured and killed hundreds of people, including literacy volunteers and peasants benefiting from the land reform. Cuban working people organized to defeat the bandits, succeeding by the mid-1960s.

Over the years U.S.-backed counterrevolutionaries burned sugarcane fields, bombed Havana department stores, and carried out hundreds of attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro. Cuban authorities have offered evidence that Washington has carried out biological warfare against the Caribbean nation, including outbreaks of African swine fever in 1971 and hemorrhagic dengue fever in 1981.

The U.S. government has tightened its economic embargo against Cuba, including through the 1992 Torricelli Act and the 1996 Helms-Burton Act, which among other things penalize companies abroad that do business with Cuba.

CIA-trained counterrevolutionaries also carried out murderous attacks on U.S. soil and in the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico. Eulalio Negrín, a Cuban American businessman who favored moves to normalize U.S.-Cuban relations, was killed on Nov. 25, 1979, in Union City, New Jersey. Félix García Rodríguez, a diplomat at the Cuban mission to the United Nations, was killed on a New York street on Sept. 11, 1980. Carlos Muñoz Varela, a leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, an organization of young Cuban supporters of the revolution, was killed in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on April 28, 1979.

In October 1976, CIA-trained counterrevolutionaries blew up a Cuban airliner over Barbados, killing all 73 people aboard, many of them teenage members of the Cuban fencing

team. Among those implicated in the horrendous crime were Orlando Bosch and Luis Posada Carriles, who were arrested in Venezuela. Posada Carriles, formerly a mercenary at the Bay of Pigs, had worked as chief of operations for the Venezuelan secret police. Although convicted for the bombing of the airliner, he was allowed to escape from prison in 1985.

In a 1998 *New York Times* interview, Posada Carriles bragged about his involvement in a series of bombings of Havana hotels in 1997, including one that killed an Italian tourist, Fabio Di Celmo, at the Hotel Copacabana. Posada Carriles was also implicated in a November 2000 failed assassination attempt in Panama against Fidel Castro. Today both Posada Carriles and Bosch walk freely in the streets of Miami. Washington has refused the Venezuelan government’s request for the extradition of Posada Carriles.

## Brothers to the Rescue

One of the U.S.-based Cuban American counterrevolutionary groups is Brothers to the Rescue, an outfit that has falsely portrayed itself as a “humanitarian” group rescuing Cubans who leave the island on rafts. Its leader, José Basulto, is a CIA-trained Bay of Pigs invader with a history of armed attacks on Cuba.

Brothers to the Rescue repeatedly violated Cuba’s airspace, provocatively sending small planes over the island and dropping flyers calling on the Cuban people to revolt against the government. Cuban authorities report that Brothers to the Rescue conducted 25 such illegal incursions between mid-1994 and February 1996, and on numerous occasions Havana filed protests over these provocations. The protests were ignored.

On Feb. 24, 1996, Basulto led three Cessna planes into Cuban airspace heading toward Havana. The pilots ignored unambiguous warnings by Cuban air traffic controllers to turn back. Cu-

Continued on page 9



Juventud Rebelde

Cuban women’s anti-aircraft and anti-tank unit in Angola, 1988, helped defeat racist invasion by apartheid regime.

# The 1930s Minneapolis Teamsters rebellion

## Revolutionary class-conscious leadership and the lessons for today's militants

BY BEN JOYCE

In the 1930s a sweeping transformation of the U.S. labor movement took place. The unions, which had been on the decline for much of the 1920s and early '30s, began to swell in size and combativity.

In Minneapolis, only a few small shops were organized at the opening of the '30s. The officialdom that dominated these unions had a narrow craft outlook and sought to collaborate with the bosses in hopes of securing a few jobs for a handful of privileged skilled and semiskilled laborers.

In the face of the Great Depression-era crisis, these unions increasingly came under attack by the most powerful local capitalists in Minneapolis. The main employers' organization, the Citizens Alliance, rigorously pursued anti-union policies.

### Revolutionary leadership central

In this context, members of the Communist League of America in Minneapolis took on the challenge of transforming the local union movement. The Communist League leadership carefully drew up a battle plan and decided to set their sights on the coal yards. Given Minnesota's harsh winters and the severe economic depression, the city depended on small, frequent deliveries of coal for heat, making the coal industry a strategic target to begin the fight. Hundreds of workers in the coal yards were unorganized.

Going up against both the bosses and the conservative local officialdom in Teamsters Local 574, the communists along with other fight-minded unionists formed a voluntary organizing committee in the open-shop coal yards and began to mobilize support for an industry-wide organizing drive. Demands for union recognition were refused by the coal bosses and the workers struck in February 1934.

The leaders of the strike realized that the first task was to win union recognition, which would get the workers' foot in the door for the next stage. After the



Members of Teamsters Local 574 during the mid-May 1934 strike in Minneapolis defend themselves against attacks by cops and hired thugs. "There was a war in Minneapolis," wrote Farrell Dobbs, longtime leader of the Socialist Workers Party, "a conflict of poverty against wealth, of labor against capital."

moving of coal was shut down for three days, the bosses gave in and recognized the union. Registering the first union victory in Minneapolis in several years, the union had set the stage for a wider and deeper struggle.

After the first victory the organizing committee won official union status and began to open up a broader struggle to strengthen the union along the lines of deepening the class-consciousness of the ranks and strengthening their control over the union. Further organizing efforts continued and culminated in a mid-April mass rally where the membership declared its demands on the general trucking employers and voted to strike if they were not met. A large strike committee was elected to prepare for this next stage of the battle.

As a strike became more imminent, both sides geared up. The Citizens Alliance helped reinforce the cops with private goon squads and special deputies.

Meanwhile, Local 574 was also making necessary preparations. A strike headquarters was set up, fashioned with a commissary to feed the strikers, a hospital to treat unionists wounded in battle, and a repair shop for the vehicles used by cruising picket squads.

On May 16, 1934, the second strike began. After several days in which the union successfully fended off scab operations, the employers stepped up their offensive. Police and hired thugs launched brutal attacks on the pickets, as the bosses attempted to get their trucks going again. Confronted with these violent assaults the workers maintained the pickets, defending themselves with clubs. After two days of fighting, not one truck moved. A truce was called.

Negotiations resulted in a settlement in which the trucking bosses were forced to recognize the union and meet initial demands on wage raises. The settlement terms were accepted by the union membership, ending the 10-day walkout.

However, shortly after the settlement, the employers said they would deal with the union only for drivers, helpers, and platform workers, and not inside workers. Meanwhile, the bosses began to cut wages and fire a number of unionists. Given the new attacks, a July 16 membership meeting decided by unanimous vote to resume the strike against the

trucking companies.

### Ruling class lashes out

Taking to the streets with the same militancy as before, the union shut down the trucking industry the day after the vote. Then, after trucks had been halted for four days, police opened fire on a picket line, wounding 65 and killing two. Mass indignation spread throughout the working class in Minneapolis. The strikers continued their struggle with stronger determination to beat the bosses.

A settlement proposal was soon drafted by federal mediators and endorsed by Minnesota governor Floyd Olson. It called for a pay raise just short of union demands and threatened to impose martial law if the settlement was not accepted. The union decided to accept the terms, but the employers rejected it. Martial law was imposed on the city on July 26 and in the following days troops were ordered to seize the strike headquarters and arrest union leaders, including Communist League leaders Vincent Dunne and Miles Dunne.

Despite the presence of troops however, mass support for the union came to the fore and militant picketing exploded upon the city. Other local unions and supporters of labor condemned the move by Olson and mass pressure forced him to release the union leaders and return the headquarters to the union.

### Local 574 wins

A few weeks went by without advance by either side. Soon a new federal mediator issued a settlement proposal, which included representation for inside workers and a decision on wages to be made through arbitration. The proposal was accepted on August 21, ending the strike and opening up the possibility of union representation to the majority of workers in the general trucking industry. Immediate wage raises were agreed upon with automatic increases every year.

The victory of Local 574

opened the door to a broader campaign to organize the Midwest general trucking industry. Over the next few years, the leadership of Local 544 (the new designation for Local 574 in Minneapolis) and other locals in the region spearheaded an effort to carry the successful organizing drive across several states. In March 1938, an 11-state campaign to organize over-the-road truckers was launched and drew tens of thousands into the union.

Over the course of the transformation of the Teamsters union in the Upper Midwest, revolutionary leadership was decisive in helping make the union an instrument that could defend workers' interests in the political field as well. Local 544 mobilized union defense against fascist attacks, combated FBI frame-ups, and mobilized labor opposition to U.S. imperialism's entry into World War II.

The steadfast determination and discipline of the ranks was guided by the highest caliber of proletarian leadership. Carl Skoglund and Vincent Dunne were among the veteran members of the Communist League to work in the Minneapolis coal yards and open up the historic struggle. Many of the best militants were recruited to the communist movement. Farrell Dobbs, a central organizer of the over-the-road campaign later on, emerged from the ranks in the 1934 Minneapolis strikes as a union leader. He later became national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party from 1953 to 1972. He authored a four-volume series on the Teamster battles.

The course of conduct followed by communist unionists served as an example for trade union militants throughout the country. The lessons learned from this historic fight, which are documented in Dobbs's four-volume series, continues to offer guidance to working-class fighters in the class battles unfolding today.

## Communist continuity

**Teamster Rebellion** is the first of four books on the 1930s strikes, organizing drives, and political campaigns that transformed the Teamsters union in much of the Midwest into a fighting social movement. \$19.

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Also available: *Rebelión Teamster* and *Poder Teamster* in Spanish

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# Building a political party on Marxist foundations

Printed below are excerpts from Letters from Prison by James P. Cannon, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month in October. In 1944-45 Cannon and 17 other leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and the Minnesota truck drivers union were imprisoned for opposing Washington's imperialist aims in World War II, after being convicted under the thought-control Smith Act. In two letters written in May 1944 as part of this prison journal, Cannon addressed the importance of educating the members and leadership of a communist party in preparation for the explosive working-class battles that would follow World War II. Copyright © 1968 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Fifteen of 18 members of Socialist Workers Party convicted in Smith Act trial march from SWP headquarters in Minneapolis to federal courthouse, Dec. 31, 1943, to surrender to U.S. marshalls. In first four rows left to right are Vincent Dunne, James P. Cannon, Oscar Coover, Carl Skoglund, Farrell Dobbs, Albert Goldman, Felix Morrow and Carlos Hudson.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JAMES P. CANNON

The pioneers and outstanding militants of American Communism were mainly self-educated, that is, half-educated, workers who lacked adequate formal schooling and had only as much Marxism as they had managed to pick up on the fly in all-too-infrequent hours of leisure and

freedom from duties and responsibilities. There was nobody to teach them; there were no schools where they might learn what to study, and how to study systematically; and they had very little time to learn for themselves, the hard way.

They were thrust into positions of leadership and overwhelmed with responsibilities without having previously acquired the necessary theoretical training and political experience to lead the party properly. As a consequence the early Communist Party made many egregious errors, devoured its energies in factional struggles which it was unable to resolve and finally, with the exception of a small nucleus, succumbed to the Stalinist degeneration.

The pioneers of American Trotskyism, standing on the shoulders of the antecedent movement, and aided and guided by [Russian Revolution leader Leon] Trotsky, did far better, and for the first time in the United States, built a political organization on solid Marxist foundations. The work of the pioneer American Trotskyists, however, while qualitatively superior to that of their immediate predecessors, was sadly deficient in some respects.

They made Marxist *politics* their study and did not do badly in this field, as results have shown. They developed the Leninist concepts of party organization and of the role of the party, and it may be said, made not unimportant contributions to the Leninist theory and practice of party organization.

Marxian *economic theories*, in contrast, have not had their due, either

in study or in application. And the *philosophic method* of Marxism was regarded with such indifference that neo-revisionist attacks against Marxism, marching at first under the flag of philosophy, remained unanswered over a long period of years. Prancing intellectuals and academic tinhorns, preparing their migration to the imperialist camp, held the center of the stage. The sneering renunciation and belittlement of dialectical materialism was allowed to become the fashion. The party paid for this indifference with the factional explosion of the petty-bourgeois opposition which brought the party to the brink of disruption.

Moralistic quackery, another cloak under which desertion to the class enemy was prepared, long remained unnoticed and unexposed, and was even permitted to infect our ranks. The degeneration of the Soviet Union and the Comintern had produced a great wave of disillusionment, especially in intellectualistic circles. This took the form of a flight from Marxism. Revisionism, the first stage of class renegacy, was long on the offensive on the theoretical front. It remained for Trotsky to lead the defensive struggle of Marxism, first in *Their Morals and Ours* and, finally, in the great anti-Burnham polemics (*In Defense of Marxism*).

## Court refuses Abu-Jamal trial

Continued from front page

drive their frame-up effort through.

Abu-Jamal won an important victory earlier this year, when a federal court here overturned his death sentence on the basis that the jury had been incorrectly instructed. But that court also upheld his conviction. The state continues to hold him on death row.

The fight to win a new trial for Abu-Jamal has won support around the world, from Nelson Mandela to Sister Helen Prejean, author of *Dead Man Walking*, to the national NAACP.

Robert Bryan, Abu-Jamal's lawyer, said that the defense will go before the Supreme Court again later this year, presenting evidence that African

Americans were improperly excluded from the jury. Ten clearly qualified Blacks were barred from the jury by prosecutors, leaving a jury of 10 whites and two Blacks in a city that is nearly half Black.

"I will not rest until Mumia is free," Bryan said. "That he remains in prison and on death row is a travesty of justice and an affront to civilized standards. We must all continue to fight for what is right, and not lose hope. Free Mumia."

For more information or to get involved in defense efforts, contact International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal at [www.mumia.org](http://www.mumia.org).

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# Uniting workers in fight for jobs

In the midst of the beginning of the capitalist financial crisis more and more workers are being battered by factory closings, rising unemployment, and declining real wages. Millions are working part-time because they cannot find full-time jobs.

One consequence of this crisis and rising unemployment is deepening competition among individual workers, which is inherent under capitalism. That's why we need solidarity among our class today.

When workers complain about speedup on the job, unsafe working conditions, and declining wages, the bosses openly say: "If you don't like it, there's a thousand people waiting to take your job."

This division between employed and unemployed is the biggest division working people face. To combat it we need to demand: Cut the workweek with no cut in pay to spread around the available work. In addition, millions should be put to work on a massive public works program at union-scale wages.

There are other ways the bosses seek to divide us.

Last hired, first fired has been the reality for workers who are Black in the United States.

That's why affirmative action is a class and union question. By fighting for affirmative action both in hiring and in any layoffs, we can strengthen the unions and block the capitalists from forcing the brunt of layoffs onto Blacks, Latinos, and other oppressed nationalities on the job.

The U.S. government will try to scapegoat immigrant workers for the economic crisis. We need to stand together and demand an immediate end to immigration raids and deportations. Legalize immigrants now!

Unemployment in much of Africa, Asia, and Latin America is even higher than in the United States. We need to reach out to workers the world over. We can start by demanding: Cancel the foreign debt, which accelerates the plunder of the semicolonial world.

The capitalists want us to believe that our future is tied to saving capitalism. But our future is tied to fighting to unite working people internationally to take power out of the hands of the ruling rich.

# Financial crisis

Continued from front page

\$68 billion to bail out of Hypo Real Estate Holding, one of the country's biggest lenders. In Germany, Denmark, Ireland, Greece, Sweden, and Austria officials have expanded guarantees that deposits in consumer bank accounts will be safe. The Dow Jones Industrial Average declined 1,400 points—nearly 13 percent—over the five trading sessions ending October 7. Japan's Nikkei 225 stock average fell more than 9 percent October 8, the biggest decline in 20 years.

The capitalist rulers around the world hope that handing massive amounts of money to the banks and other financial institutions will unclog the credit freeze gripping U.S. banks and the world financial system. However, confidence that this will stave off a deep international recession is not taking hold.

The U.S. Congress approved a \$700 billion bailout package for Wall Street banks October 3.

"The bailout plan is focused on buttressing U.S. financial institutions," the *Washington Post* said October 7. "But it was global markets that plunged yesterday, as investors sold off commodities in Brazil, currency in Mexico, bank stocks in Russia and the short-term debt of the state of California."

Reports released by the U.S. government in early October point to the deepening impact that the capitalist financial crisis is beginning to have on working people.

In September U.S. bosses cut 159,000 jobs, the highest monthly loss in more than five years. This is the ninth consecutive monthly decline, bringing job losses for the year to 760,000.

In spite of the jump in those without jobs, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) said the official unemployment rate remained steady at 6.1 percent. The BLS manipulates the statistics by excluding workers it claims are "marginally attached" to the labor force—1.6 million people in September. This includes "discouraged" workers and workers who did not make "specific efforts" to find work in the month prior to the agency's survey.

Official unemployment figures for Black workers rose to 11.4 percent. Of the 9.5 million workers officially listed as being unemployed, 2 million have been jobless for more than six months. The number of part-time workers also shot up by 337,000, rising to 6.1 million in September, an increase of 1.6 million over the past year.

A report on the so-called underemployment rate, which counts workers categorized as no longer looking for employment as well as part-time workers who want full-time jobs, rose to 11 percent in mid-September.

Average wages for 80 percent of the U.S. workforce rose by only 2.8 percent over the past year, far below price increases, especially for food and fuel. The average hourly workweek has also declined to 33.6 hours.

New orders at U.S. factories slid 4 percent in August, the sharpest drop in nearly two years. Leading the way was a 10.6 percent decline in motor vehicle orders.

General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler are getting a \$25 billion bailout in government loan guarantees. Those eligible for the funds are automobile plants that have been in operation for at least 20 years. This is the largest federal bailout of the automotive industry since 1979, when Washington granted \$1.5 billion in loans to Chrysler to stave off bankruptcy.

New York governor David Paterson announced October 3 that he is calling another emergency legislative session next month to cut \$2 billion from the current state budget. A previous special session in August slashed \$427 million from this year's budget. The *New York Times* cited Medicaid and education as likely targets.

Invoking Depression-era emergency powers, the Federal Reserve announced October 7 that it will begin to fund U.S. businesses and state and local governments that regularly rely on short-term loans to pay workers and cover day-to-day expenses. The credit freeze has been blocking these companies and governments from getting these loans.

An unnamed federal official told Associated Press that this could amount to an expenditure of around \$1.3 trillion between now and the projected termination of the program in April.

# Unionists fight firing in Minnesota

Continued from front page

out at work the next day, states: "After 9 years at Dakota management says Samuel can't do his job. This is the latest and most serious attack on all the workers at Dakota. . . . They want to fire Samuel because ever since 2000, when he was one of the leaders of the fight to win the union, he has always fought for the union and his coworkers. With the union leadership and other union fighters Samuel has helped fired workers get their jobs back, has exposed unsafe working conditions." The *Workers' Voice* goes on to describe

how in a two-day period one shop steward alone had to represent 16 workers facing discipline, almost all for supposedly not doing their jobs.

Dave Vasquez, a shop steward at Dakota, explained the importance of fighting to win Farley's job back. "Earlier this year, after many months fighting for the union and a contract we won more than the company wanted to give us. Now they're trying to take as much back as they can. They're back to their old tactics."

"With the union we will fight this firing and all other attacks on us," said Farley.

# Cuban Five defended revolution

Continued from page 6

ban air force jets then shot down two of the planes with four Brothers to the Rescue members, while Basulto's plane got away. After that decisive action by Cuba to defend its sovereignty, all provocative flights from the United States stopped.

In response to the shutdown, the Clinton administration stepped up its hostile actions against the Cuban Revolution. That included passage of the Helms-Burton Act as well as the arrest and frame-up of the Cuban Five in 1998.

The U.S. government targeted one of the five, Gerardo Hernández, for particular retribution. Hernández was sentenced to a double life term on charges of "conspiracy to commit murder," on the outrageous claim that he was responsible for the shutdown of the Brothers to the Rescue planes.

In justifying their violent actions against Cuba, outfits like Brothers to the Rescue claim to speak

for all Cuban Americans. But the Cuban population in the United States is class-divided. The right-wing groups represent only the interests of a small handful of wealthy businessmen, including the former capitalists and their henchmen who after 1959 were deprived of their ability to exploit the working people of Cuba.

The large majority of Cuban Americans are workers. Today, many if not most—especially among those who immigrated in recent decades, as well as the new generations born here—oppose the U.S. embargo and travel ban, especially the restrictions on the right to visit their families on the island.

Some Cuban American organizations, such as the Alianza Martiana in Miami, speak out against the embargo and in favor of the release of the Cuban Five.

The next article in this series will tell the stories of each of the five imprisoned Cubans and what they have accomplished.

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