

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

5 jailed Cuban revolutionaries:  
working-class fighters

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 72/NO. 46 NOVEMBER 24, 2008

## Washington escalates Afghan war

BY DOUG NELSON

Washington has been escalating its war in Afghanistan against al-Qaeda and Taliban forces, including with military strikes in Pakistani territory.

The new administration of Barack Obama, who takes the executive helm in January, is preparing to continue and intensify that course. Aides to Obama said he “is likely to deploy tens of thousands of additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan,” the *Wall Street Journal* reported November 7. They said he “also would devote more attention to neighboring Pakistan.”

Obama has said he supports a step-up in military operations in Afghanistan on a scale similar to the 36,000 troop increase in Iraq last year, dubbed the “surge.” This shift, already under way, has broad backing in the U.S. ruling class and its top military leadership.

The Pentagon has announced plans to devote more resources to training the Afghan army, as well as equipping and training various local warlords and tribal-based militias in Afghanistan. Washington is also exploiting divisions between Taliban forces and al-Qaeda

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## Meeting in Australia defends Cuban Five

BY BOB AIKEN  
AND JOANNE KUNIANSKY

SYDNEY, Australia—“This is a political trial,” María Eugenia Guerrero told a public meeting of 125 people here October 17. She was talking about the frame-up of five working-class fighters in the United States who have been kept in jail “because they are Cubans.”

The Cuban Five, as they are known, are paying the price for “defending the peace and sovereignty of their country,” she said. Guerrero—sister of Antonio Guerrero, one of the five prisoners—was the featured speaker at the event organized by the Free the Cuban Five Committee here.

The Cuban Five—Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, René González, and Antonio Guerrero—have been imprisoned for 10 years on charges including “conspiracy to commit espionage” and in one case, “conspiracy to commit murder.” When arrested, they were monitoring the activities of right-wing, Florida-based,

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## Unemployment rises as production slows

Cities, states plan to slash social services



William Farrington

Nearly 1,000 people line up for an interview for one of 200 jobs outside Pierre Hotel in Manhattan November 7. Official unemployment rose in October to 6.5 percent.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Hundreds of thousands of workers were thrown onto the unemployment rolls last month under the impact of declining production and trade, a feature of the worldwide financial crisis.

More than 18 million workers in the United States are without full-time jobs—10.1 million listed by the government as unemployed; 6.7 million who can only get part-time hours; and 1.6 million tagged as “marginally attached” or “discouraged” workers

who the government claims are not searching for employment.

In October, the official unemployment rate jumped to 6.5 percent—up from 6.1 percent in September—the highest level since 1994. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, bosses eliminated 240,000 jobs last month. This is the 10th consecutive monthly decline, bringing job cuts for the year to 1.2 million. More than half of jobs eliminated this year were lost in the

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**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22**

### The Crisis Has Barely Begun!

... and workers' fight to end the wages system is posed

Jack Barnes

National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party

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## Push needed in final 2 weeks of 'Militant' subscription drive

BY ANGEL LARISCY

With only two weeks to go in the international effort to sign up 2,400 new and long-term readers of the *Militant* newspaper, supporters of the socialist press are mapping out plans to get on schedule and complete the drive successfully. International totals show the subscription campaign just shy of the 75 percent needed to be on target.

In the face of the worldwide capitalist economic crisis and its mounting consequences for workers and farm-

ers, working people need the *Militant* more than ever.

Seattle *Militant* supporters have set a good example by their campaign to get on target after being behind schedule. In the past week they sold a total of 21 subscriptions—4 renewals and 17 new readers—reports Edwin Fruit.

“Highlights included five subscriptions at the monthly vigil at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma to protest the incarceration of immigrant

Continued on page 3

## Party-Building Fund boosted by new pledges

BY BEN JOYCE

The Party-Building Fund of the Socialist Workers Party fell behind this week as total funds collected now stand just under \$2,000 short of this week's \$50,000 target. With three weeks to go, several areas have raised their goals in response to increased

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# Colombian cane cutters strike, win pay increase

BY SETH GALINSKY

After nearly two months on strike, 18,000 cane cutters in the Cauca Valley near Colombia's Pacific Coast forced the owners of the main sugar refineries to agree to increases in pay and benefits.

The owners of six refineries, including the largest in the country, agreed November 8 to an 11.5 percent increase in payment per ton of sugar cane. They also agreed to provide more work tools to the cutters, set up a fund to help the workers build housing, and give out 1,000 scholarships to train cutters in preparation for increasing mechanization of the cane harvest.

Members of the National Cane Cutters Union had approved demands in June in meetings involving thousands of workers. They went on strike September 14 and blocked the entrances to many of the refineries.

The cane cutters, mostly Afro-Colombians, have a history of struggle. In 1976 a long strike at the Riopaila refinery helped strengthen the Central Union of Workers (CUT), one of Colombia's three main union federations. There was also a strike three years ago.

Colombian president Alvaro Uribe accused the strikers of carrying out plans of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia to destabilize the government. Four strikers were arrested on charges they were agents of the guerrillas, but were released after the union protested.

Before 2000, the refineries hired the cutters directly. Now most of the cutters are contracted through cooperatives, which deduct a large part of their paycheck for administrative expenses, transport to work, social security, and other expenses that the companies pay for employees hired directly.

Prior to the strike the companies paid



Family members of striking cane cutters march in Palmira, Colombia, September 22.

the cooperatives about 9,000 Colombian pesos per ton, but after deductions, workers only received about 5,700 pesos (US\$2.50).

According to a government study, the average pay for cutters is 595,000 pesos a month, about \$250 at current exchange rates.

One of the main demands of the strike was for the refineries to contract workers directly, not through cooperatives, Daniel Aguirre, president of the union, told the *Militant* in a phone interview November 12 from Cali, Colombia.

"We couldn't win that this time. The companies claimed it was out of their hands, because the cooperatives were set up under federal law," Aguirre said. The union is asking the Colombian legislature to overturn those laws.

At the start of the conflict, the government Social Protection Ministry claimed the cutters had no right to strike because

they are "owners" of the cooperatives, not workers.

"The cutters work all year round, 12 hours or more a day, with hardly any time off," Aguirre said. "It is difficult work. A worker can cut five tons of cane

in a day, there can be more than 11,000 movements with the machete."

As a result many cutters suffer from repetitive stress injuries. "The companies give each worker only four machetes, four files to sharpen the blades, and three pairs of boots a year, but they use up 20 machetes and six pairs of boots," Aguirre said, leaving workers no choice but to buy their own. The companies also don't provide sufficient amounts of gloves.

The companies must "resolve the problem of the more than 200 *compañeros* who are disabled every year and find them alternate jobs as well as those who are permanently disabled and have been denied pensions," the union's list of demands said.

The union also demanded that the sugar companies pay the first three days' wage when workers miss work due to on-the-job injuries. After three days government worker compensation kicks in.

As part of the agreement, the companies agreed to pay the first two days'

**Continued on page 4**

## Minnesota students protest erosion of right to abortion

BY ROLLANDE GIRARD

MINNEAPOLIS—Around 40 students held a lively pro-choice rally here on October 29. The participants chanted and waved at passersby, many of whom honked in support. Signs read "Defend *Roe v. Wade*—Abortion is my choice not the state's."

The rally was organized by the University Pro-Choice Coalition. Stephanie Taylor, one of the organizers of the rally, said, "I believe the South Dakota campaign to ban abortions will become national. It is an important issue not being talked about enough. Most people don't realize the implications behind the ban and the potential for *Roe v. Wade* to be overturned."

The 1973 *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court ruling decriminalized abortion nationwide. But since then women's access to abortion has been eroded. The most recent survey found that 88 percent of all counties in the United States have no health facilities or doctors that provide

abortions, according to the National Abortion Federation. Many states have restrictions, including parental consent laws, mandatory waiting times, and required "counseling."

Colorado, California, and South Dakota each had ballot measures in the November 4 elections that would have limited abortion rights. The South Dakota measure was the most restrictive. It would have banned abortion except in cases of incest, rape, or when a woman's health is seriously threatened. All three were defeated.

The South Dakota organization "Vote Yes for Life" collected more than 17,000 signatures in the spring to put the measure on the ballot.

In 2006 a state law signed by Governor Michael Rounds made it a felony for doctors to perform abortions except for cases when a woman's life is threatened. But the law was later struck down in a referendum when it was rejected by 56 percent of the voters.

## THE MILITANT

**End all U.S. military aid to Colombia!**

Washington gives more than \$500 million a year to the Colombian military, which is notorious for killing civilians. The 'Militant' covers the struggle of working people in Colombia for unions, indigenous rights, and dignity.

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Colombian troops in Pentagon-organized training exercise.

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

# Imperialist powers press for more troops in Congo

BY SAM MANUEL

Officials at the United Nations are taking advantage of the latest outbreak of fighting in the Democratic Republic of the Congo between government troops and those of a breakaway general to call for sending thousands more UN troops to the Central African nation. There are already 17,000 UN troops in Congo, the imperialist alliance's largest "peacekeeping" operation in the world.

The fighting in eastern Congo near the Rwandan border is part of the ongoing scramble for control of the country's mineral resources by the fractured alliance that overthrew the proimperialist regime of Mobutu Sese Seko in 1997, as well as by rival capitalist regimes in neighboring countries and imperialist mining interests. Congo is rich in cobalt, copper, gold, cadmium, and diamonds. In the eastern part of the country, where the fighting is centered, are the world's largest reserves of coltan, a mineral used in manufacturing cell phones.

Since August rebels of the National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP), led by Congolese general Laurent Nkunda, have routed Congo-

lese government troops. On October 8 the CNDP captured the Rumangabo military camp near Goma, the capital of North Kivu province.

The Congolese army, known more for its atrocities against civilians than its capacity for a real fight, put up little resistance. Tons of weapons and ammunition were captured, including rocket launchers, mortars, and anti-aircraft guns, according to press reports. Nkunda's forces were poised to capture Goma October 30 but instead called a cease-fire.

An emergency meeting of the Southern African Development Community November 9 decided to send advisers to aid the Congolese military and to send troops later if necessary. The 14-member body of African governments also called for a cease-fire and the opening of safe corridors to supply food and medicines to hundreds of thousands of civilians displaced by the fighting.

UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon called November 4 for sending 3,000 additional UN troops to Congo. A spokesman for MONUC, the French-language initials of the UN mission already in Congo, said the reinforcements



Reuters/Hereward Holland

UN forces patrol road linking Goma and Rutshuru in eastern Congo October 28, as refugees flee latest fighting. Imperialist mining interests and rival capitalist regimes in neighboring countries are seeking control of Congo's vast mineral wealth.

would include two infantry battalions, two Special Forces companies, and 18 helicopters.

Alan Doss, a British diplomat who is the UN special envoy to Congo, urged the Security Council to provide MONUC with "a surge capacity, some additional troops and air mobility assets," reported Agence France-Presse. French foreign minister Bernard Kouchner and Belgian foreign minister Karel De Gucht have urged the deployment of a European Union military force to Congo. Kouchner suggested perhaps a French and Belgian force. Belgium is the former colonial ruler in Congo.

In a 2005 UN investigation, MONUC officials and troops were found to be involved in rape and sexual abuse of Congolese women and girls as young as 12 or 13 years old. The investigation concluded that "peacekeeping" officials and soldiers took part in sexual abuse in 16 of its missions around the world.

Nkunda left the Congolese military in 2004. He says the CNDP is needed to protect the Tutsi ethnic minority from militias of the Hutu ethnic group that fled Rwanda in the mid-1990s. The capitalist media also portrays the conflict as rooted in decades of age-old "tribal rivalries." But the underlying cause of the conflict is Congo's legacy of colonial and imperialist domination and the fight between government forces and their opponents over land and mineral wealth since the overthrow of Mobutu.

In 1997 the Rwandan government backed the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire, led by Laurent Kabila, in overthrowing Mobutu. A year later Kabila ordered the mostly Tutsi Rwandan military forces that had helped overthrow Mobutu to leave the country.

The alliance fractured into an assortment of groupings along ethnic lines. The governments of neighboring Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi backed these forces, which they also relied on to defend their borders from opposition groups launching incursions against

them from eastern Congo.

By late 1998 rebel forces were on the verge of taking the Congolese capital but were turned back after troops from Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia intervened in support of Kabila's government. Kabila was killed by one of his bodyguards in January 2001. His son Joseph Kabila is now president.

In 1998 Ugandan troops invaded Congo. They aided ethnic militia opposing the Congolese government in exchange for help in looting Congo's gold, diamonds, and timber, according to a UN report. In 2004 the Bank of Uganda reported that its country's gold production was 1.4 tons, but gold exports were 7.3 tons. The difference is accounted for by gold taken from Congo, according to the UN report.

A UN report also names some 100 international corporations, among them Anglo-America, Standard Charter Bank, and De Beers, that are benefiting from gold, diamonds, and other minerals looted from Congo.

## Push needed in sub drive

Continued from front page

workers by Immigration and Customs Enforcement," said Fruit. "Two of the subscribers are students at Evergreen State College. A van load of people from Evergreen came to the action."

Campaigners have also staffed weekly tables at Seattle Central Community College, where three new readers

signed up this week for a total of nine in the past six weeks. Two coworkers at a grocery store and a member of the Machinists union at Boeing decided to purchase subscriptions. Supporters of the *Militant* also traveled one hour north of the city to Mt. Vernon, to sell in an agricultural region where many Latinos work and live. Four people subscribed.

Fruit says four people decided to get either *New International* no. 14 or *Nueva Internacional* no. 8 with their subscriptions this week. The magazine features articles on "The Clintons' Antilabor Legacy: Roots of the 2008 World Financial Crisis"; "Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X"; and "The Stewardship of Nature Also Falls to the Working Class: In Defense of Land and Labor." It is available for \$10 with a subscription, a \$4 savings. One hundred and fifty people have decided to take advantage of the offer over the past six weeks.

Campaigners in the Twin Cities have decided to raise their subscription quota again—to 155—because of the response they are receiving to the paper throughout the Upper Midwest.

This week three people who purchased an individual copy of the *Militant* later wrote in to get an introductory subscription.

If you would like to help bring the subscription drive to a successful conclusion, please urge others you know to subscribe or contact a distributor in your area to participate in sales teams (listed on page 8).

### 'Militant' Subscription Drive

Fall 2008 ♦ Sept. 27 – Nov. 23

Week 6 of 8

Country	Quota	Sold	%
<b>UNITED STATES</b>			
<b>Houston*</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>92%</b>
<b>Twin Cities, MN**</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>85%</b>
<b>Miami</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>81%</b>
<b>Des Moines, IA</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>79%</b>
<b>Seattle</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>78%</b>
<b>San Francisco</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>77%</b>
Boston	60	44	73%
Newark, NJ	125	90	72%
Washington, D.C.	95	67	71%
New York	315	221	70%
Los Angeles	100	68	68%
Philadelphia	90	60	67%
Atlanta	250	156	62%
Chicago	100	56	56%
Other		8	
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>1,895</b>	<b>1,392</b>	<b>73%</b>
<b>CANADA</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>			
<b>Edinburgh</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>London</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>UK Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>91%</b>
<b>NEW ZEALAND*</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>AUSTRALIA*</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>SWEDEN*</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>77%</b>
<b>Int'l Totals</b>	<b>2,325</b>	<b>1,723</b>	<b>74%</b>
<b>Should be</b>	<b>2,400</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>75%</b>

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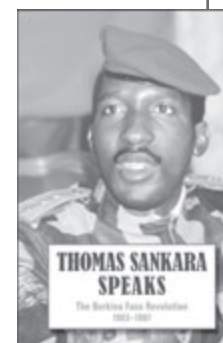
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by Dick Roberts  
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—\$14



# International book fair opens in Venezuela

## Workers' access to literature is highlight

BY MAGGIE TROWE

CARACAS, Venezuela—At the opening ceremony of the fourth Venezuela International Book Fair here November 7, minister of culture Héctor Soto outlined measures being taken by the Venezuelan government to increase book production and access by working people to books. The fair's theme is: "For a country of readers!" More than 400 writers and artists from 20 countries are participating.

Before the election of Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez in 1998, "there were four to six bookstores, all in Caracas," Soto said. "Now we have created 51 outlets of Librerías del Sur [Bookstores of the South] located across the country."

Ecuador is the honored country at the fair this year. At the inaugural ceremony Galo Mora, Ecuadoran minister of culture, told his Venezuelan hosts, "We appreciate that for the first time we are being invited as the honored country to an international book fair."

The book fair, which takes place outdoors in Parque los Caobos, attracts thousands of workers and youth. Throughout the nine-day event they can browse the more than 100 book stands, attend forums, films, and



Militant/Maggie Trowe

Participants at fourth Venezuela International Book Fair browse at Librerías del Sur stand.

## Cane cutters

Continued from page 2

wage and provide most of the work equipment, although not all, Aguirre said.

In 2007 more than 21 million tons of sugar cane was processed in the Cauca Valley, to produce 2.28 million metric tons of sugar and 275 million liters of ethanol.

At the beginning of November several companies announced they were laying off refinery workers who are employed directly by the companies and are not on strike, and blamed the layoffs on the cane cutters. Many of the refinery workers belong to another union federation, the Federation of Colombian Workers (CTC).

About 1,200 cutters for two refineries are still on strike, Aguirre said, but they hope to have a settlement soon.

Caracol television broadcast a video of hundreds of cutters cheering the settlement at the Cauca refinery. "We still need to put an end to the cooperative system," Cane cutter Alexander Cacedo told the station at the November 8 rally. "It's a system of slavery, it's the way they steal from us."

panel discussions, and listen to free concerts by a number of Ecuadoran groups featured this year.

The large tent complex of Librerías del Sur has been constantly crowded with people choosing from a selection of thousands of inexpensive books, including an array of small paperbacks for 50 cents. Young people staffing the stand hand out free copies of various magazines and reviews, including the latest issue of *A Plena Voz* (Speaking Out), a Venezuelan cultural review. It features articles on the theme of free Puerto Rico, including an interview with Filiberto Ojeda Ríos, a leader of the Puerto Rican independence movement, given shortly before he was killed by the FBI in September 2005.

Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press, will be joining Monte Avila publishers in a panel November 14 to launch the Monte Avila edi-

## Unemployment rises as production slows

Continued from front page past three months.

Included in the government statistics are revised figures that sharply boosted the number of jobs slashed by bosses in August and September. The August figure was adjusted to 127,000 from the previously reported 73,000. In September, an announced 159,000 job cuts is now 284,000.

Jobs eliminated included 90,000 in manufacturing, 49,000 in construction, 38,000 retail jobs, and 50,000 for those working as "temporaries." Only mining and health care showed job increases. The official unemployment rate for Hispanics was 8.8 percent, a 1 percent rise from the previous month; for Blacks it was 11.1 percent.

The so-called underemployment rate, which counts those the Department of Labor considers no longer looking for employment and those working part-time who can't get full-time jobs, rose to 11.8 percent, up from 8.4 percent a year earlier.

According to Labor Department statistics, the total number receiving unemployment benefits as of the week ending October 25 rose to 3.8 million, the highest level in 25 years. Only 32 percent of those listed by the government as being out of work receive state benefit checks. More than 22 percent of unemployed workers have been out of work for six months.

Workers' real wages continue to decline as prices rose for many basic necessities, especially food and fuel. In October average hourly wages increased by just 4 cents to \$18.21. Over the past year workers' weekly pay grew 2.9 percent, far below the official inflation rate of 4.9 percent, which doesn't include rising food and fuel prices.

Bosses are also reducing hours. There was a 2.7 percent drop, measured over the course of a year, in hours worked during the third quarter, reported the *Wall Street Journal*.

"U.S. manufacturing activity fell in October at the fastest pace since the 1982 recession," reported *Investor's*



Militant/Maggie Trowe

Crowd at November 7 inauguration of fourth Venezuela International Book Fair in Caracas. Inset: culture minister Héctor Soto describes steps by government to encourage working people to read.



tion of *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* The book is based on the theme of the debate at the central forum at last year's book fair. Pathfinder has a stand at the book fair for the fourth consecutive year.

In addition Pathfinder is sponsoring a

panel the following day to launch *Nueva Internacional* no. 8, a Marxist magazine of theory that features the articles "Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X" and "The Clintons' Antilabor Legacy: Roots of the 2008 World Financial Crisis."

*Business Daily*, noting also that it has "slowed sharply in China and hit a record low" among 15 European nations using the euro currency.

### Slashing production

ArcelorMittal, the world's largest steel company, announced November 5 that it is slashing production of flat carbon steel by more than 30 percent—more than double what the company announced in October. The company, with 326,000 employees in more than 60 countries, will temporarily idle 12 of its 28 European flat carbon blast furnaces with layoffs worldwide, said the company's London spokesperson, Haroon Hassan.

Steel orders for construction and car production have fallen sharply. Prices of hot-rolled steel have fallen from about \$800 a metric ton four weeks ago to around \$700. Chief Executive Lakshmi Mittal said the company was running at nearly full capacity into the first part of September, but that demand plunged after the credit markets seized up later that month, according to the *International Herald Tribune*.

The auto barons at General Motors are demanding billions in a federal bailout to stave off bankruptcy. A GM spokesperson announced November 7 that the company could run out of cash early next year. GM also halted talks on taking over Chrysler.

In October, GM sales fell 45 percent from a year earlier while Chrysler was down 35 percent, Ford by 30 percent, and Toyota, 23 percent. Production is being cut at 10 GM factories and 5,600 workers are being laid off in the United States and Canada.

A study by the Center for Automotive Research said that if the Big Three U.S. auto makers—GM, Ford, and Chrysler—cut output by 50 percent, some 2.5 million jobs could also be cut in 2009.

Meanwhile, the federal government has expanded its bailout of insurance giant American International Group to \$150 billion—nearly double the \$85 billion given to the company in

September. Fannie Mae, which together with Freddie Mac, was given a \$200 billion government bailout in August, said it lost \$29 billion in the third quarter and was nearly out of cash.

Circuit City, the country's second largest electronics chain, filed for bankruptcy November 10, one week after announcing it would close 155 U.S. stores and lay off more than 7,000 employees—nearly 20 percent of its workforce. DHL is eliminating 9,500 jobs, discontinuing its U.S. domestic service.

New York governor David Paterson in his efforts to lower a reported \$12.5 billion budget deficit, stated November 9 that cuts for education and health care programs will "unquestionably" be in the billions of dollars over the coming year. New York mayor Michael Bloomberg vowed to eliminate 3,000 city jobs and called for a 6 cents tax on each plastic bag shoppers need to carry their goods. Philadelphia mayor Michael Nutter is eliminating more than 2,500 full or part-time jobs and closing 11 libraries and 62 swimming pools.

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

"To think that a socialist revolution in the U.S. is not possible, you would have to believe not only that the ruling families of the imperialist countries and their economic wizards have found



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

—Mary-Alice Waters  
CARACAS, NOVEMBER 2007

Pathfinderpress.com: \$5

## ON THE PICKET LINE

### Germany: IG Metall unionists walk out, demand wage raise

More than 45,000 metal and electronics workers went on strike across Germany November 3 to demand an 8 percent pay raise. The following day workers at the Siemens company walked off the job for several hours, while employees at about 300 companies in the western state of North Rhine-Westphalia staged work stoppages. Since the strikes started November 1, some 150,000 workers at 500 companies have participated in these short walkouts, the *Wall Street Journal* reported. The actions are being organized by the IG Metall union, which rejected the employers' offer for a 2.9 percent wage increase over 14 months.

—Brian Williams

### Machinists at Boeing ratify four-year contract, end strike

SEATTLE—Members of the International Association of Machinists began returning to work after ratifying a new four-year contract on November 1 by a 74 percent vote in favor. They were on strike for eight weeks.

The contract was similar in many respects to the initial company proposal. The union blocked a few concessions sought by the company. It won some limits on outsourcing of factory work to nonunion contractors, and held off demands for increased payments by workers for medical benefits.

Machinists will receive pay raises of 5 percent, 3 percent, 3 percent, and 4 percent in successive years. They will receive lump-sum payments of

## Sales of Marx's 'Capital' jump in Germany

BY SAM MANUEL

Sales of *Capital* by Karl Marx are on the rise in Germany, according to a German academic publisher that produces an annotated version of the work.

In *Capital*, first printed in 1867, Marx explains the workings of the capitalist system and how it produces the insoluble contradictions that breed class struggle. He demonstrates the inevitability of the revolutionary transformation of society into one ruled for the first time by the producing majority, the working class. Marx was the co-founder, along with Frederick Engels, of the modern communist movement.

The publisher Karl-Dietz Verlag said it had sold 1,500 copies of *Capital* this year. Of those, 200 were sold in September, as many as the company used to sell in a year.

The publisher's director, Joern Schuettrumpf, said that *Capital* "is in vogue right now" and that the financial crisis may be the cause of the sharp rise in sales. "There's a younger generation of academics tackling hard questions and looking to Marx for answers," Schuettrumpf added.

Actual sales of the work may be even higher. Karl-Dietz Verlag is not the only German-language publisher of *Capital*. Bookstores across Germany report a 300 percent increase in sales of the work.

about \$5,000 this year, plus \$1,500 in each of the next two years.

—Edwin Fruit

### Two-month strike holds at Louisiana chemical plant

WESTLAKE, Louisiana—Seventy-three union members have been striking here since September 4 to win an improved union contract at BioLab, a division of Chemtura Corp. The plant makes chemical products for swimming pools and bathroom cleansers.

Ken Fugatt of the Lake Charles Metal Trades Council, the union organization that bargains for workers at the facility, reported that union members rejected the first two company proposals. These included demands for steep cuts in pay and increased probation



Militant/Jacque Henderson

Workers picket outside BioLab chemical company in Westlake, Louisiana.

for new hires, elimination of guaranteed show-up pay, ending holiday pay for plant operators, a \$100 increase in monthly health-care costs for many

workers, freezing pension coverage, and replacing pensions with a 401(k) program.

—Steve Warshell

## Case of Cuban 5 wins support in Australia

Continued from front page

Cuban exile organizations backed by Washington that have carried out terrorist actions against Cuba.

"We need a jury of millions" to win their release, Guerrero declared, quoting a message that Gerardo Hernández sent to supporters on the 10th anniversary of their incarceration. She appealed for "thousands of letters" from around the world directed to authorities in the United States to win justice for the five.

Guerrero's two-week visit to Australia included stops in Sydney, Perth, and Melbourne. She explained that family members of the five are traveling around the world to campaign for their freedom.

Veteran Aboriginal rights campaigner Pat Eatock opened the meeting with a traditional "welcome to country." She told of the long history of cop brutalization of indigenous people in Australia, pointing to the case of Lex Wotton, an Aboriginal leader from north

Queensland. Wotton faces prison over charges of "rioting," stemming from protests in Palm Island four years ago against the police killing of an Aboriginal man, Mulrunji Doomadgee.

Meredith Burgmann, former Labor Party president of the New South Wales (NSW) legislative council, introduced Guerrero. Burgmann described Washington's refusal to issue visas to the wives of two of the five as "an absolute abrogation of human rights."

The meeting featured a broad panel of prominent supporters of the Cuban Five. Among them were Paul Lynch, NSW Labor minister for aging, disability services, and Aboriginal affairs; NSW Greens parliamentarian John Kaye; Andrew Ferguson, NSW state secretary of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union; Paul McAleer, assistant secretary, Sydney branch of the Maritime Union of Australia; Osama Yousif of the Sudanese Communist Party; and Gil Boehringer, a retired public law lecturer at Macquarie University.

Supporters of the Cuban Five here are preparing for a tour next February by Leonard Weinglass, a prominent U.S. civil liberties lawyer involved in the defense of the five.



Militant/Ron Poulsen

Speakers at October 17 Free the Cuban Five event in Sydney, Australia. The featured speaker was María Eugenia Guerrero, third from right, who is sister of prisoner Antonio Guerrero.

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



November 25, 1983

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is facing the most concerted attempt in its history to splinter and destroy it as an independent, united organization fighting for the national self-determination of the Palestinian people.

The military assaults launched at the end of October against refugee camps in northern Lebanon are the latest blows in a sustained offensive against the Palestinian movement from several different quarters.

This onslaught began with the U.S.-backed Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982. It continued with attempts by Washington to force the PLO to capitulate politically.

It is now marked by the Syrian regime's attempt to shatter the PLO as a cohesive force and falsely present a rump group under Syrian influence as the true representative of the Palestinian people.



November 24, 1958

The socialist vote in 1958 is slow in being reported. In Minnesota and Pennsylvania there are indications of modest increases over 1956.

But it was not only to the vote that socialist campaigners looked for the measure of their achievements this year. It was also to the scope of their campaigning as measured by amounts of radio and TV time, number of union meetings at which they spoke, size of audiences at street meetings, and to a greater interest in socialist ideas they saw manifested this year.

In New York State the Independent-Socialists now have over 41,000 votes for Corliss Lamont, candidate for U.S. Senate, and nearly 27,000 for John T. McManus, candidate for Governor.

In Minnesota, where the Socialist Workers Party ran William Curran for the U.S. Senate, the final SWP vote was 5,407.



November 25, 1933

In an atmosphere charged with the electricity of mob violence, with the white hooded Ku Kluxers riding every night and burning the fiery cross on the highways and hilltops, terrorizing the entire Negro population, the Southern bourbons are bringing the nine Negro boys to trial on the notorious railroading charge of the supposed rape of Ruby Bates and Virginia Price.

The facts and evidence in the famous Scottsboro case, in which the star witness for the prosecution, Ruby Bates, has vindicated the defendants, are clear beyond a doubt. But the class laws of the lily-white south are undaunted by the truth. Innocence or guilt is determined by the callousness of the pallor of the hand and the color of the skin.

The Negroes have been so terrorized they go far out of the way to avoid stating any opinion on the trial.

# Cuban Five are example for world working class

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

(Fourth in a series)

Five Cuban revolutionaries—Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, René González, and Fernando González—are fighting for their release from U.S. jails, where they have been unjustly held for 10 years. They have defeated attempts by their jailers to break their spirit and have been telling the truth about their frame-up by the U.S. government. They continue to defend the Cuban Revolution and to champion other struggles for justice in the United States and worldwide.

The previous article in this series described Washington's 50-year-long record of aggression against the Cuban Revolution, from military assaults to an ongoing trade embargo (see October 20 *Militant*). It was in face of this unrelenting U.S. hostility that these five men accepted assignments to keep the Cuban government informed about plans of counterrevolutionary groups in the United States that have carried out attacks on Cuba with Washington's backing.

For this they were arrested by the FBI and convicted on false charges, ranging from "conspiracy to commit espionage" to "conspiracy to commit murder." They



Gerardo Hernández, in Angola. Cuban volunteers helped Angolan people defeat invasions by South African apartheid regime in the 1970s and '80s.

were given long sentences and sent to federal prisons across the country, far from friends and family.

In Cuba the five are widely regarded as heroes for carrying out this volunteer mission and for continuing today to act as revolutionaries from behind U.S. prison walls.

In the United States, growing numbers of working people and youth are finding out about the Cuban Five, and many see them as an example for all working-class fighters.

Who are these men and what have they accomplished?

All five are exemplary products of Cuba's socialist revolution. Here they have remained true to their records, serving on the front lines of the class struggle in the United States.

Growing up in Cuba they became active as student leaders and revolutionary cadres. Three of them volunteered as internationalist combatants in Angola in the 1970s or '80s—along with hundreds of thousands of other Cubans—helping the Angolan people defeat invasions by the South African apartheid regime. The five took on their assignments in the United States knowing it would mean separation from their loved ones and the risk of victimization by the U.S. government. Today they remain politically active behind bars.

## Gerardo Hernández Nordelo

Hernández, 43, was born in Havana on June 4, 1965. As a teenager he became a leader of the Federation of High School Students, joining the Union of Young Communists in the 11th grade. In 1989 he graduated from the Higher Institute of International Relations, where he had been active in the Federation of University Students. While in college he married Adriana Pérez O'Connor, who worked at the Food Industry Research Institute.

In 1989 Hernández volunteered to serve in Angola, departing Cuba the day before his first wedding anniversary. A lieutenant, he headed a scouting platoon in a tank brigade that helped defend Cabinda, a strategically important oil-rich region, from counterrevolutionary assaults. He distinguished himself in 54 combat missions, and was awarded medals of honor for his outstanding role.



Protest demanding freedom for the Cuban Five outside August 2008 Democratic Party national convention in Denver, Colorado.

In 1993 he was admitted into the ranks of the Cuban Communist Party.

In a 2002 interview in the Cuban paper *Juventud Rebelde*, Urbano Bouza Suriz, who fought in Angola under Hernández's command, described his leadership qualities. "Twelve Cubans slept [in a small bivouac], and the fact that he, as an officer, shared both the good and the bad with his subordinates won him respect," Bouza noted. "We would scout almost every day. Sometimes at night we took part in ambushes around our unit." In his spare moments "he read a lot, especially books by Che [Guevara]."

Hernández, Bouza said, "was prepared from a political, human, and psychological point of view" for the U.S. mission he subsequently undertook in the mid-1990s. "A scout must be an excellent observer, show confidence in face of danger, be discreet, courageous. I can see those qualities in Nordelo," as Hernández was called by his fellow combatants. When he read in the press about Hernández's arrest and frame-up trial, Bouza said he told his neighbors with pride, "That was my leader in Cabinda!"

Hernández is an accomplished cartoonist. His humorous drawings have been published since 1982, and in 2002 a book of his work was published in Cuba, *El amor y el humor todo lo pueden* (Love and humor can achieve anything).

Hernández is serving a double life sentence plus 15 years at the Victorville federal prison, located in the Mojave Desert in southern California. The U.S. government has repeatedly denied his wife Adriana Pérez a visa to visit him.

## Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez

Guerrero, 50, was born into a working-class family in Miami on Oct. 16, 1958. His father, who moved to the United States seeking work as a professional baseball player, helped raise funds in Miami for the July 26 Movement and Rebel Army during the revolutionary struggle to overthrow the Batista regime. The family returned to Cuba for a visit in November 1958, and decided to stay after the revolutionary victory in January 1959.

In a July 2004 interview, Guerrero's sister María Eugenia said that, influenced by the example of their parents, "my brother and I had an active life in the student organizations. Early on in school we became leaders of the Pioneers, the FEEM, and the UJC," refer-

ring to the José Martí Pioneers Organization of children, the Federation of High School Students, and the Union of Young Communists.

After finishing high school Guerrero—known better as Tony—won a scholarship to study at the University of Kiev in Ukraine. He graduated there with top honors in civil engineering in 1983. On his return he worked on a major project to expand the runway at the Antonio Maceo International Airport in Santiago de Cuba.

In 1989 Guerrero gained membership in the Cuban Communist Party. He worked for the national airline, Cubana de Aviación, as an airport construction specialist. He married a Panamanian citizen and lived in that country for a few years. Later he moved to Miami, working maintenance jobs at the Boca Chica naval air base in Key West.

Guerrero has two sons, 23-year-old Antonio and Gabriel, 16.

An artist and a poet, Guerrero has penned numerous poems in prison, a selection of which was published in English and Spanish under the title *From My Altitude*.

He is serving a life sentence plus 10 years at the "supermax" federal penitentiary in Florence, Colorado.

Guerrero told the federal courtroom at his sentencing in December 2001, "If I were asked once again to cooper-



Antonio Guerrero (left), with his mother Mirta Rodríguez and son Antonio during prison visit.

ate in this task, I would again do it with honor."

In an interview published in the September 2 issue of the Cuban magazine *Bohemia*, Guerrero said the Cuban Five should not be "viewed in a different dimension from millions of compatriots who each day give everything for the Revolution and who could have been in our place and would have acted in exactly the same way. We are nothing more than Cubans of these times, revolutionaries of these times."

To be continued

## Write the five Cuban revolutionaries:

**Gerardo Hernández**, #58739-004, U.S.P. Victorville, P.O. Box 5500, Adelanto, CA 92301

**Antonio Guerrero**, #58741-004, U.S.P. Florence, P.O. Box 7000, Florence CO 81226

**Luis Medina (Ramón Labañino)**, #58734-004, U.S.P. McCreary, P.O. Box 3000, Pine Knot, KY 42635  
(NOTE: the envelope must be addressed to "Luis Medina," but address the letter inside to Ramón)

**Rubén Campa (Fernando González)**, #58733-004, FCI Terre Haute, P.O. Box 33, Terre Haute, IN 47808  
(NOTE: the envelope must be addressed to "Rubén Campa," but address the letter inside to Fernando)

**René González**, #58738-004, FCI Marianna, P.O. Box 7007, Marianna, FL 32447-7007

# Cuba and the class struggle in the United States

## Living example of Cuba's socialist revolution decisive for U.S. revolutionists

BY BEN JOYCE

The victory of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 opened up the first socialist revolution in the Americas, sending waves of inspiration out to workers and their allies around the world. The revolution showed that with the right leadership the toilers can go up against U.S. imperialism and the propertied rulers in their own countries and take political power, wielding it to advance the interests of workers and farmers.

### COMMUNIST CONTINUITY

As the new revolutionary government tried to implement land redistribution and other pressing programs demanded by the masses of working people, it was time and again confronted with opposition by local capitalists and U.S. imperialism. This, in addition to mounting economic and political pressures from Washington, led the government to increasingly challenge the prerogatives of the capi-



Left: Fidel Castro, central leader of the Cuban Revolution, addresses 1 million people in Havana Sept. 2, 1960. Upper right: Picket line outside the United Nations in New York City Nov. 26, 1960, organized by Fair Play for Cuba Committee. Lower right: Presentation of the book *Our History Is Still Being Written* at the University of California, Los Angeles in 2006.



talist class. They first expropriated large land holdings and eventually the sugar refineries and other industries, as well as establishing a monopoly on foreign trade and a planned economy.

As Cuban workers and farmers extended these popular measures, the capitalist press in the United States published more and more slanders against the revolution. To get a first-

hand view of the process unfolding in Cuba, two leaders of the Socialist Workers Party, Farrell Dobbs and Joseph Hansen, went to the island in April 1960. They spent nearly a month visiting various parts of the country and learning about what had changed in the lives of workers and farmers.

The trip by the SWP leaders revealed a great deal about the character of the Cuban Revolution and the caliber of its leadership. Dobbs and Hansen reported on the popular mobilizations that took place to carry out programs to combat unemployment, illiteracy, and the high cost of food and housing. They observed a massive expansion of access to health care and education. They witnessed the agrarian reform program in which millions of acres were redistributed to hundreds of thousands of previously landless peasants.

#### Importance for U.S. class struggle

Upon Dobbs's and Hansen's return from Cuba, the SWP worked to get the truth out about the revolution. Dobbs, then the party's candidate for U.S. president, defended the Cuban Revolution in campaign talks and interviews in the media, explaining it showed what was possible for workers and farmers in the United States to do. Hansen wrote a series of articles for the *Militant*, which were later published as a pamphlet called *The Truth About Cuba*, which is today contained in the Pathfinder book *Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution*.

Members of the SWP were active builders of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, which held public meetings across the United States about Cuba and opposed U.S. military intervention. The committee organized tours of the island so that people could see the revolution for themselves, until Washington banned travel by U.S. citizens to Cuba.

In April 1961, the U.S. government organized Cuban counterrevolutionaries into a mercenary invasion of the island at Playa Girón on the Bay

of Pigs, with the intention of toppling the revolutionary government and installing a client regime.

Despite Washington's military might, however, the invasion was defeated in less than 72 hours by the mobilized workers and farmers of Cuba, registering the first military defeat of U.S. imperialism in the Americas.

The SWP denounced the attack and helped organize picket lines against the invasion. The *Militant* featured a front-page statement by the SWP Political Committee headlined "Stop the crime against Cuba!"

The Young Socialist Alliance, a communist youth organization, played an important role in these protests. The YSA won new adherents among young people who saw the Cuban Revolution as an example of what they wanted to see happen in the United States. In January 1969, a YSA delegation attended the 10th anniversary celebration of the revolution in Havana.

#### Cuba's internationalism

Over the course of the following decades, the Cuban Revolution played a decisive role in revolutionary movements throughout Latin America. Popular revolutions in 1979, supported by Cuba, brought governments of workers and farmers to power in Nicaragua and Grenada, both long exploited by the imperialist powers and ruled by despots.

In addition to supporting revolutionary movements in Latin America, Cuba provided internationalist assistance to toilers around the world. From 1975 to 1989, an internationalist mission of 375,000 volunteer Cuban troops went to Angola to help defend that newly independent African nation from invasions by the apartheid army of South Africa. Today Cuba continues to provide international aid to toilers throughout Africa, Asia, and Latin America with volunteer medical brigades, literacy programs, and other forms of solidarity.

After the collapse of the Stalinist regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the early 1990s, which resulted in the loss of 85 percent of

Continued on page 9

## New pledges boost SWP fund

Continued from front page  
pledges from contributors, responding to the successful work of the party today and the opportunities ahead to build the communist movement.

Steady weekly contributions from supporters of the communist movement will be needed to close the gap and make this fund a success.

Fund organizers in Los Angeles raised their goal by \$700 in response to a new round of pledges. The Twin Cities branch has increased its quota a second time. Nationally, total goals now stand \$600 above the \$90,000 target.

Meetings celebrating the party's unbroken continuity took place in Boston; Newark, New Jersey; and Los Angeles this week to celebrate the party's his-

tory and to raise more of the necessary funds needed to respond to the revolutionary opportunities ahead.

In Newark, John Studer, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party in Philadelphia, spoke on "Confronting Today's Economic Crisis: Lessons from 80 years of building a revolutionary party." Willie Campoverde, of the Newark Laborers Association and president of the Residents of Naranjal in New Jersey, and Moses Williams, retired member of National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees Local 1199J, both gave remarks to the meeting.

Greetings were read from Moisés Mory, a unionist and former president of United Steelworkers of America Local 13742 in New Jersey. Mory, who has been jailed since 2004, is fighting deportation. "I salute the Socialist Workers Party on its 80th anniversary of tireless working-class struggle in this country," he wrote. "At all times keeping within the working-class framework, the total victory gets closer and closer. . . . This is our opportunity, and we have to take advantage of it until the final victory."

Readers of the *Militant* are encouraged to contribute to the SWP Party-Building Fund. For information on how to contribute, contact a local office on page 8.

<b>\$90,000 Socialist Workers Party Party-Building Fund</b>			
Fall 2008 ♦ Week 5 of 9			
CITY	QUOTA	PAID	%
Des Moines, IA*	\$2,000	\$1,376	69%
Twin Cities, MN**	\$6,600	\$4,535	69%
Houston	\$2,500	\$1,595	64%
Seattle*	\$7,000	\$4,458	64%
Chicago*	\$9,000	\$5,496	61%
San Francisco	\$13,000	\$7,937	61%
Newark, NJ	\$3,500	\$1,940	55%
Miami	\$3,200	\$1,707	53%
Atlanta	\$8,500	\$4,381	52%
Washington, D.C.	\$4,300	\$2,220	52%
New York	\$15,500	\$6,741	43%
Los Angeles*	\$9,200	\$3,437	37%
Boston	\$2,800	\$925	33%
Philadelphia	\$3,500	\$1,037	30%
Other		\$550	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$90,600</b>	<b>\$48,334</b>	<b>53%</b>
<b>Should be</b>	<b>\$90,000</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>56%</b>
*raised goal, **raised goal twice			

### Communist continuity

#### *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*

by Jack Barnes

A book about the class struggle in the United States and the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary, but it can be made. —\$10

#### *Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution*

by Joseph Hansen

What the true record reveals about the proletarian internationalist character of the Cuban Revolution and the caliber of its leadership. —\$22.95

#### *The First and Second Declarations of Havana*

Two declarations adopted by million-strong assemblies of the Cuban people that indict U.S. imperialist plunder throughout the world and present an uncompromising strategy for working people, pledging firm adherence to revolutionary struggle. —\$10

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# 'It's useless to stay in Democratic or Republican parties'

Below is an excerpt from Independent Black Political Action 1954-78, an Education for Socialists booklet that is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for November. The piece here describes the struggles waged by Black farmers and workers leading to the formation of the Lowndes County Freedom Organization (LCFO) in Alabama in 1966. It is from a speech by John Hullet, the group's chairman, to an anti-Vietnam War rally in Los Angeles in May of that year. Convinced that the Democratic Party could not serve the interests of Blacks, the LCFO launched an electoral campaign to win control of county offices in the November 1966 elections, garnering more than 40 percent of the vote. Copyright © 1982 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Participants in Lowndes County Freedom Organization in Alabama in mid-1960s. The group, whose emblem was the Black Panther, organized to fight racist treatment and ran candidates against both Democrats and Republicans.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JOHN HULLET

Last year, we started a group in Lowndes County known as the Lowndes County Christian Movement for Human Rights. This was a civil rights group. We fought for integration in this county. We fought that Negroes might have a right to get registered to vote. We protested at the school so that

all the people could have education—and for this we got nothing.

We sat down together and discussed our problems. We thought about what we were going to do with these 2,500 registered voters in the county, whether or not we were going to join Lyndon Baines Johnson's party. Then we thought about the other people in the state of Alabama who were working in this party. We thought of the city commissioner of Birmingham, Eugene Bull Conner; George Wallace, who is now the governor of the state of Alabama; Al Lingo, who gave orders to those who beat the people when they got ready to make the march from Selma to Montgomery; the sheriff of Dallas County, known as Jim Clark—these people control the Democratic Party in the state of Alabama.

So the Negroes in Lowndes County decided that it's useless to stay in the Democratic Party or the Republican Party in the state of Alabama. Through the years, these are the people who kept Negroes from voting in the South and in the state of Alabama. Why join the Democratic Party?

### A Political Group of Our Own

Some time ago, we organized a political group of our own known as the Lowndes County Freedom Organization, whose emblem is the Black Panther.

We were criticized, we were called

communists, we were called everything else, black nationalists and what not, because we did this. Any group which starts at a time like this to speak out for what is right—they are going to be ridiculed. The people of Lowndes County realized this. Today we are moving further.

Too long Negroes have been begging, especially in the South, for things they should be working for. So the people in Lowndes County decided to organize themselves—to go out and work for the things we wanted in life—not only for the people in Lowndes County, but for every county in the state of Alabama, in the Southern states, and even in California.

You cannot become free in California while there are slaves in Lowndes County. And no person can be free while other people are still slaves, nobody.

In Lowndes County, there is a committee in the Democratic Party. This committee not only controls the courthouse, it controls the entire county. When they found out that the Negroes were going to run candidates in the primary of the Democratic Party on May 3, they assembled themselves together and began to talk about what they were going to do. Knowing this is one of the poorest counties in the nation, what they decided to do was change the registration fees in the county.

Two years ago, if a person wanted to run for sheriff, tax collector or tax

assessor, all he had to do was pay \$50 and then he qualified to be the candidate. This year, the entrance fee is about \$900. If a person wants to run, he has to pay \$500 to run for office. In the primary, when they get through cheating and stealing, then the candidate is eliminated. So we decided that we wouldn't get into such a primary because we were tired of being tricked by the Southern whites. After forming our own political group today, we feel real strong. We feel that we are doing the right thing in Lowndes County.

We have listened to everybody who wanted to talk, we listened to them speak, but one thing we had to learn for ourselves. As a group of people, we must think for ourselves and act on our own accord. And this we have done.

Through the years, Negroes in the South have been going for the bones while whites have been going for the meat. The Negroes of Lowndes County today are tired of the bones—we are going to have some of the meat too.

### Fighting the 'Tricks' of the Racists

At the present time, we have our own candidates which have been nominated by the Lowndes County Freedom Organization. And we fear that this might not be enough to avoid the tricks that are going to be used in Lowndes County against us.

In Lowndes County, the sheriff is the custodian of the courthouse. This is a liberal sheriff, too, who is "integrated," who walks around and pats you on the shoulder, who does not carry a gun. But at the same time in the county where there are only 800 white men, there are 550 of them who walk around with a gun on them. They are deputies. This is true; it might sound like a fairy tale to most people, but this is true.

After talking to the sheriff about having the use of the courthouse lawn for our mass nominating meeting, not the courthouse but just the lawn, he refused to give the Negroes permission. We reminded him that last year in August, that one of the biggest Klan rallies that has ever been held in the state of Alabama was held on this lawn of this courthouse. And he gave them permission.

November BOOKS OF THE MONTH

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS

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Independent Black Political Action 1954-78:

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Includes material on the Freedom Now Party, the Lowndes County Freedom Organization, and the Black Panther Party.  
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# Imperialist troops out of Congo!

Working people around the world should condemn the proposal to send more UN “peacekeeping” troops to Congo in response to the sharpened fighting there. Far from being motivated by “humanitarian” concerns, Washington, Paris, Brussels, and the other imperialist powers want to restore stability in Congo so they can continue to plunder that country’s mineral riches.

The imperialists portray the conflict in Congo as one rooted in “tribal rivalries” that can only be resolved by outside intervention. But the conflicts between the Tutsi and Hutu ethnic groups in Congo were originally fostered by the Belgian colonialists who once ruled that Central African nation. This method applied by the colonial powers throughout the African continent served to keep working people divided and unable to resist.

The United Nations has a long and bloody history in Congo. The Central African country won independence from Belgium in June 1960. Patrice Lumumba, leader of the independence struggle, became Congo’s prime minister. Brussels immediately organized an antigovernment rebellion in Katanga, the region where U.S., British, and Belgian mining companies had major investments. When Lumumba appealed to the United Nations for help, UN “peacekeepers” arrived and disarmed Lumumba’s troops, not the Belgian-backed insurgents.

In September 1960 Washington instigated a coup led by Mobutu Sese Seko. The UN “peace-

keepers” stood back and watched. Lumumba was arrested and murdered a few months later. When his followers attempted to lead an uprising against the Mobutu dictatorship in November 1964, U.S. planes bombed the villages they controlled and ferried Belgian and mercenary troops into combat against them. Thousands of Congolese working people were killed in that bloodbath.

In a pointed speech to the UN General Assembly in December 1964, Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara denounced the “hyenas and jackals” of “Western civilization.” That is the only name, he said, “that can be applied to those who have gone to fulfill such ‘humanitarian’ tasks in the Congo.”

Since the 1960s many more Central African toilers have died in fighting between rival capitalist regimes and factions over mineral resources. The frequent presence of UN and other “peacekeepers” has offered no protection. Rather, it has prevented working people from charting a course to win genuine political independence and social and economic development.

Working people should demand the withdrawal of all the UN troops from Congo and oppose the deployment of any more “peacekeepers.” That is the only solution that gives the workers and peasants of that country the political space they need to organize a fight against their exploitation by both local capitalists and the imperialist powers.

## Cuba and the U.S. class struggle

Continued from page 7

its foreign trade, Cuba entered a deep economic crisis. Though the crisis had a deep impact on Cuban society, the revolutionary leadership did not abandon its socialist course. The Cuban government mobilized millions of working people in the cities and countryside to confront the economic challenges in industrial and agricultural production.

Since 1998 the communist movement has been actively involved in the fight to free five working-class fighters framed up by the FBI on “conspiracy” charges and jailed in the United States for the past 10 years. The Cuban Five, as they are known, were defending Cuba against counterrevolutionary groups operating from within the United States to carry out violent attacks on Cuba. (See article on page 6.)

In recent years, members and supporters of the communist movement have set out on a special effort to organize broadly sponsored meetings to discuss the book *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*. The book presents several chapters of the revolution through the eyes of three

generals of Cuba’s armed forces who are of Chinese ancestry. They describe the social injustices they set out to combat when they joined the revolutionary movement as teenagers and how they discovered that socialist revolution was the only viable way forward. Meetings to discuss the book across the United States and throughout the world have featured academics, political activists, artists, and others, presenting Cuba’s example to thousands of people, many of them youth.

Today the communist movement keeps in print a series of 18 books on the Cuban Revolution in its arsenal of revolutionary literature, and works to distribute them widely among fighting workers, youth, and others. Each of the 18 titles presents a piece of Cuba’s revolutionary example and its impact throughout the world.

Cuba’s socialist revolution is a living example of what is possible when workers and farmers take political power out of the hands of the exploiters and reorganize society based on human solidarity. Its lessons remain key to the building of a communist party in the United States today.

## LETTERS

### Thanks

Many thanks for providing such a quality newspaper to workers and activists. I’m always happy to see the *Militant* in my mailbox, and I haven’t recycled a single copy since my subscription started last spring.

Tim Gauger  
Iowa City, Iowa

### Colombian army

Four years ago I met a young Colombian doctor and his wife. He told me his reason for leaving Colombia. I couldn’t make sense of it until the recent news stories about the resignation of the commander of the Colombian army.

The doctor said that army people would bring in dead teenagers,

dressed in combat fatigues, for him to certify. He was sickened by it, the number of them, but obeyed orders. I didn’t understand his main point then, that the killed were not FARC or ELN guerrillas, but innocent civilians.

Jim Lambrecht  
By e-mail

### ‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

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

### Attack on Syria

The October 26 attack on Syria is an act of War. How does a helicopter attack on citizens inside their border differ from an airplane attack on citizens in the World Trade Center?

Especially a terrorist attack by a sovereign country (the U.S.) against another sovereign country (Syria) with which the United States is not at war.

H. Allan Pump  
By e-mail

**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.**

# Afghanistan

Continued from front page and within the Taliban.

The CIA has increased its strikes on Pakistani soil in pursuit of al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders. In early November, U.S. and allied forces killed 37 civilians and wounded 35 in a strike on a wedding party in a village in Kandahar province. Most of the civilian victims were women and children. Afghan officials said 26 Taliban members were also killed in the attack.

More than 5,300 people have been killed in Afghanistan this year, including Taliban and allied forces as well as civilians, the Associated Press reported. A total of 151 U.S. soldiers and 107 non-U.S. NATO troops have been killed.

Washington has more than 31,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, while in Iraq it has about 150,000. NATO’s total force in Afghanistan is about 50,000 from 41 nations, including the United States. Some 20,000 U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan fight under NATO command, the rest under direct U.S. command.

In the last two years Washington has carried out what President George Bush described as a “quiet surge” in Afghanistan. During this time U.S. troop levels there have risen by 10,000 and Afghan military forces have more than doubled. Gen. David McKiernan, top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, has requested 20,000 additional troops be deployed in 2009. A combat brigade—between 3,500 and 4,000 troops—is scheduled to arrive in January.

### U.S. troops redeployed from Iraq

Gen. David Petraeus, head of U.S. Central Command, has decided to withdraw the 101st Airborne Division brigade from Iraq about six weeks ahead of schedule. In that country the U.S. military has made enough progress in weakening its enemies and consolidating a pro-U.S. regime that it can free up more troops for the war in Afghanistan. The brigade that had been slated to replace the 101st Airborne Division, for example, is now being redeployed to Afghanistan.

On November 10 Washington handed over responsibility to the Iraqi government for paying salaries to 54,000 members of Sunni Awakening militia groups. These militias, which had previously opposed the occupying forces, are paid to continue fighting al-Qaeda in the predominantly Sunni areas.

As part of closer collaboration between the U.S. and Pakistani military, Lt. Gen. Ahmed Shuja Pasha, head of Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence agency, met in Washington with CIA Director Michael Hayden in late October. The visit coincided with a meeting in Islamabad between Petraeus and top Pakistani generals.

Despite the Pakistani government’s public condemnations of U.S. strikes on its territory, it is collaborating with Washington to coordinate drone missile attacks targeting Taliban and al-Qaeda leaders. According to the *Washington Post*, a joint list of approved targets was established following a September visit to Washington by Pakistani president Asif Ali Zardari.

The latest strike killed 14 people in North Waziristan, including seven al-Qaeda members and one Taliban commander, according to Agence France-Presse. Of the 38 reported U.S. attacks in Pakistan since 2006, 21, including one ground incursion, have been carried out since August 31.

Islamabad continues to intensify its war against al-Qaeda and Taliban forces in parts of the country’s North-West Frontier Province and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). It increasingly used air strikes. As a result, more than 200,000 people have fled these areas over the last two months. People have recently been fleeing the Mohmand Agency district in the FATA, and indications are the Pakistani military is preparing a new offensive there, where Taliban forces control three of five districts, reported *Dawn*, an English-language Pakistani newspaper. A curfew has been decreed in Mohmand Agency and government offices and schools have been closed. Major roads have been shut down, contributing to a food shortage.

The *New York Times* reported November 10 that, according to unnamed top U.S. officials, Washington has since 2004 used “broad, secret authority to carry out nearly a dozen previously undisclosed attacks against Al Qaeda and other militants in Syria, Pakistan, and elsewhere,” mostly using Special Operations forces. It noted that “the recent raid into Syria was not the first time that Special Operations forces had operated in that country.”