

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

From Martí, Juárez, and Lincoln to Lenin and Fidel
— PAGES 8-11

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 73/NO. 43 NOVEMBER 9, 2009

Early union vote goes against cuts at Ford

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

October 28—As we go to press, a majority of United Auto Workers (UAW) members at six plants have voted against contract concessions demanded by Ford Motor Co. and recommended favorably by union officials. So far 33 percent of the 41,000 UAW members employed by Ford have cast ballots. Voting continues through November 2.

This is the third round of concessions demanded by Ford in the last two years. Ford workers are being asked to accept similar concessions that UAW members at General Motors and Chrysler approved this past spring, right before both GM and Chrysler filed for bankruptcy. Ford bosses insist that they must have these changes to “remain competitive.”

A council of UAW officials approved the agreement October 13. UAW president Ron Gettelfinger is urging workers to vote for the new pact, arguing that it’s needed to ensure Ford’s profitability. “This is a great agreement, and it protects our membership,” he stated October 27 on Detroit’s WJR-AM radio station.

The tentative agreement reached
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Pakistani army starts new assault on Taliban

BY DOUG NELSON

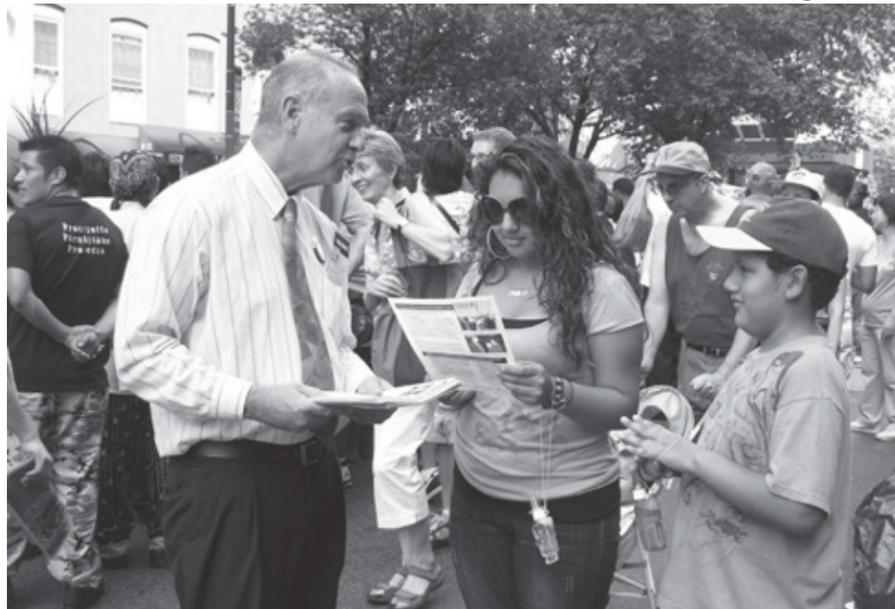
October 26—The impact on the toilers caught in the U.S.-backed Pakistani military offensive against the Taliban illustrates the propertied rulers’ universal contempt for working people.

Meanwhile, Washington has demonstratively backed the government, led by the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP), in its efforts to rein in the independent power of Pakistan’s military establishment. In backing the PPP, Washington seeks to remold Pakistan’s military into one that is more effective at conducting irregular warfare within the country and less focused on maintaining a military posture aimed at rival India.

The Pakistani army launched the second phase of operation “Path to Salvation” October 17, a ground offensive of some 30,000 troops against Taliban and allied Islamist forces based in the Mehsud tribal region of South Waziristan in western Pakistan. The assault was preceded by months of air strikes and shelling.

Pakistani officials said October 25 that the army had captured Kotkai, the hometown of Hakimullah Mehsud, top leader of the Taliban Movement
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Vote Socialist Workers Party!



Militant/Seth Galinsky

Dan Fein, left, Socialist Workers candidate for New York mayor at “Feria del Sol” Mexican street festival August 16. SWP candidates across country say that working people need to organize independently of twin capitalist parties in order to defend our interests against those of the bosses and their government—on road toward workers taking political power.

Working people do have a choice on November 3, election day. You can vote for the Socialist Workers Party candidates, who call for the working

cuts, speedup, foreclosures, and curtailment of democratic rights.

There are 21 SWP candidates running for public office in 10 states (see page 6). They and their supporters have worked with others to organize defense of abortion clinics under attack by rightists; marched against Washington’s wars in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq; rallied with thousands at demonstrations to demand

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EDITORIAL

class to take political power in face of the capitalist economic depression that is devastating tens of millions around the world with layoffs, wage

Mexico conference discusses Martí, Juárez, Lincoln legacy

BY STEVE WARSHALL AND RÓGER CALERO

MONTERREY, Mexico—Some 200 people, including students, teachers, and workers, gathered here October 15–17 for an international conference focused on the relevance for today of the political legacy of the

19th century popular revolutionary democratic struggles in Mexico, the United States, and Cuba.

Participants in the conference came from Mexico, Cuba, the United States, Canada, and Venezuela. The José Martí Cultural Society and the José
Continued on page 8

Mexico: thousands of electrical workers protest mass firings

BY SETH GALINSKY

Mexican president Felipe Calderón’s presidential decree, disbanding a state-owned electric company and firing 44,000 workers, could be just a prelude to more attacks on the wages and benefits of unionized workers.

As many as 5,000 Federal Police in riot gear surrounded the installations of electrical company Luz y Fuerza del Centro during midnight raids in Mexico City, Puebla, Morelos, and Hidalgo October 10 to carry out Calderón’s orders.

On October 15 more than 100,000
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PUBLIC MEETING — NEW YORK CITY

What Does the Dictatorship of Capital Have in Store for Working People?

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- The Working-Class Response

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Jack Barnes, Socialist Workers Party national secretary
Mary-Alice Waters, editor, New International magazine

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Activities the following day Sunday, November 8

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Sponsored by Socialist Workers Party, Young Socialists

N.Y. cops stop and frisk, thousands end up on list

BY BEN JOYCE

NEW YORK—Under its “stop-and-frisk” procedure the New York City Police Department (NYPD) searched more than half a million people on the streets in 2008. The vast majority of them were never charged with anything but were placed on a police database anyway. Several capitalist politicians who support the procedure have expressed concern about how far to go now in clamping down on workers’ rights.

“I support the ‘stop-and-frisk’ program,” said City Councilman Peter Vallone October 21, “but there doesn’t seem to be a reason to keep names and addresses of people stopped by police officers and let go.”

Cop harassment using this procedure has skyrocketed over recent years. According to the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) the NYPD stopped 531,159 people in 2008, up from 97,296 in 2002. Of the more than half million stopped last year, 88 percent had committed no crime.

This trend exists nationally. In Philadelphia, such stops nearly doubled to more than 200,000 from 2007 to 2008. Stops in Los Angeles have doubled in the past six years to 244,038 in 2008. The figures in Chicago are still unknown because the police department there denied the Associated Press access to them.

The NYPD’s “stop-and-frisk” procedure is also notoriously racist. Last year 51 percent of those stopped were Black, although African Americans make up only one quarter of the population. Thirty-two percent were La-

tino and 11 percent white.

The NYCLU filed a lawsuit in November 2007 demanding that the NYPD be ordered to make public the database of people who were stopped. In May 2008 a judge ordered the NYPD to turn over the database, but the cops have appealed the decision.

In response to criticisms against the “stop-and-frisk” procedure, the NYPD in April began giving pedestrians targeted by the program information cards that outline typical excuses cops use to stop people. The top of the card reads “Common Reasons Police Stop Individuals.” It lists reasons like “sights or sounds suggestive of criminal activity” and “report of suspicious or suspected criminal behavior.”

Both Mayor Michael Bloomberg and his leading capitalist opponent in the mayoral race, Democrat William Thompson, support the “stop-and-frisk” procedure, though Thompson says it is “overused.” Bloomberg has called it “an effective tool” to reduce crime.”

New French edition of ‘Communist Manifesto’

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE

MONTREAL—Pathfinder Press has just published *Le Manifeste communiste*, a new French-language edition of the Communist Manifesto by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. Published in 1848, on the very eve of a wave of bourgeois democratic revolutions across Western Europe, the founding document of the modern workers movement remains to this day the single best

Somalis discuss Burkina Faso revolution



Militant/ Dag Tirsén

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—Some 25 students and teachers at a Somali night school in the Rinkeby suburb of Stockholm participated in a video showing and discussion on the Burkina Faso revolution of 1983–87 led by Thomas Sankara. Catharina Tirsén of the Communist League in Sweden (at left) introduced the film. Standing next to her is teacher Mahamed Abdulle.

The revolution in the West African country was one of the most profound on the continent. Under Sankara’s leadership working people organized themselves to deal with infant mortality, vaccination, building of schools, and irrigation in a country not very different from Somalia.

Several of the participants in the meeting had taken part in a successful fight early last year to release two leaders of the Somali Peace and Development organization, who were framed up on terrorist charges by the Swedish government.

—DAG TIRSÉN

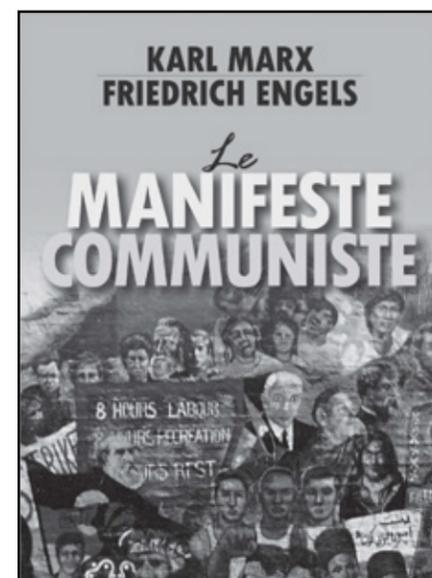
introduction to communism.

The new Pathfinder edition is the first ever translation into French of the 1888 English-language translation of the Manifesto. This English translation is the only edition of the Manifesto that Engels (or Marx) edited. The numerous edits by Engels significantly helped to make the text sharper and easier to understand. They were never incorporated however into the original German-language edition of the book, which has been the source of all the translations of the Communist Manifesto published in French until now.

The Pathfinder edition also contains an introduction by Leon Trotsky, a central leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution, which presents “both those ideas in the Manifesto which retain their full force today and those which require important alteration or amplification.” This introduction was written in 1937, in the middle of the Great Depression and on the eve of World War II. Today’s reader cannot but be struck by the timeliness of Trotsky’s remarks as,

once again, imperialism is marching working people worldwide into war and depression.

Le Manifeste communiste has a colorful cover, an index, and several pages of explanatory notes. It can be ordered online at www.pathfinderpress.com or from distributors listed on page 10.



THE MILITANT

U.S. hands off Iran!

Washington and its allies are stepping up the pressure on Tehran to halt enrichment of uranium, as part of trying to maintain the underdevelopment of semicolonial countries and their dependence on imperialist powers. Keep up with this in the ‘Militant.’



Nuclear power plant in Bushehr, Iran.

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U.S. gov't to put missile interceptors in Poland

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In a visit to Warsaw, Poland, October 21, U.S. vice president Joseph Biden announced plans to place mobile missile defense interceptors on Polish soil. The move comes a month after the Barack Obama administration suspended the building of a ground-based antimissile system there, which Washington said was aimed at targeting intercontinental missiles, possibly from Iran. Biden's announcement was warmly welcomed by Polish government leaders.

The Russian government had condemned Washington's plan to place a ground-based system in Poland as a threat to Moscow's security. The new system is aimed at countering short- and medium-range missiles that could be fired by Iran toward Europe. It would place SM-3 interceptor missiles on ships by 2011 and then afterward on land sites in Europe. In Poland the SM-3 interceptors would be put at a former air base in the town of Redzikowo near the Baltic Sea by 2018. This is the same site where U.S. missile interceptors in underground silos would have been placed.

UAW vote

Continued from front page

between Ford and UAW officials would freeze wages for entry-level workers, bar the union from striking over wages and benefits until 2012, and alter work rules so that employees would be required to perform a wider range of tasks, reported the *Washington Post*. In return, Ford bosses say they will give hourly workers a \$1,000 bonus in March and promises additional work for some plants.

At Ford's largest assembly plant in Kansas City, Missouri, where 4,000 workers build pickup trucks and small sport utility vehicles, 92 percent voted against the concessions, according to the UAW Local 249 Web site.

Workers at five plants in Michigan have also voted it down. This includes 80 percent of the 2,000 UAW Local 228 members at Ford's Sterling Heights axle plant; 73 percent at Ford's Mustang plant in Flat Rock; and 52 percent at Ford's Rawsonville plant in Ypsilanti. As of today, a majority of workers at four other plants have approved the contract.

About 40 percent of production workers at Ford voted against contract givebacks that went into effect earlier this year.

Washington will also provide Warsaw with ground-to-air Patriot missiles, as the George W. Bush administration had previously promised to do, Mariusz Handzlik, chief foreign policy adviser to Polish president Lech Kaczynski, told the *New York Times*.

The U.S. rulers' drive to establish a missile "shield" in Europe is part of achieving nuclear first-strike capacity. The U.S. government has 30 ground-based interceptors located on sites in Alaska and California. There are 21 Aegis-type warships capable of long-range surveillance, tracking, and missile interception deployed in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

The previous plan in Eastern Europe that the White House halted in September was to place 10 interceptor missiles in underground silos in Poland and a radar base in the Czech Republic.

Biden visited the Czech Republic October 23, where government leaders announced they will participate in the revamped missile "shield" program. Neither the U.S. vice president nor Czech prime minister Jan Fischer gave any further details about this.

The vice president also visited Romania, where a small U.S. base and training facility is located. The Romanian government has deployed 1,045 troops to Afghanistan.

London: 5,000 protest war in Afghanistan



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

LONDON—Five thousand people protested the war in Afghanistan here October 24 at a demonstration organized by the Stop the War Coalition. The protest marked the eighth anniversary of the war and demanded the withdrawal of British troops.

London first sent soldiers to Afghanistan in 2001 as part of the U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom invasion to overthrow the Taliban government. There are currently 9,000 British troops there, the vast bulk in Helmand Province. Some 70,000 British troops have served in Afghanistan over the course of the war. Prime Minister Gordon Brown announced October 14 that 500 more infantry soldiers will be deployed there in the coming weeks.

Over recent months a number of capitalist politicians have expressed reservations about Britain's involvement in the war.

—JONATHAN SILBERMAN

Collections for party-building fund rolling in

BY LAURA GARZA

With five weeks completed in the campaign to collect \$95,000 for the party-building fund of the Socialist Workers Party, the pace of collections and new pledges has stepped up.

Contributors in Washington, D.C., raised their goal by \$1,000 and supporters in Miami raised theirs by \$300. This brings the national total of pledges to \$93,900, leaving a gap of \$1,100 toward making the goal of \$95,000. A few raises from other areas can guarantee that goal is met and surpassed.

Contributions in Boston have ranged from \$5 to \$300, and from a variety of workers, reports Kevin Dwire, the fund director there. One contributor

stopped at an SWP literature table at the University of Massachusetts, Boston campus. He was glad to see the literature and wanted to talk about the need for a revolutionary party to organize people to fight for change. He made a donation of \$20 on the spot to the fund.

Deborah Liatos, fund director in Miami, wrote that the drive got a boost there from an October 24 meeting that featured SWP leader Ernest Mailhot speaking on "U.S. and World Capitalism: The Crisis Deepens, Imperialist Wars Spread."

Mailhot noted the huge increase in home foreclosures and the fact that more workers over the age of 65 years are working than previously, examples of the deepening capitalist crisis.

Mailhot had recently attended the resentencing hearing for Antonio Guerrero, one of five Cuban revolutionaries framed up on "conspiracy" charges and held in U.S. jails for 11 years. He encouraged those at the meeting to redouble their efforts to win freedom for the five.

Mailhot also described the wide-ranging discussions and debates at the international conference on the political legacies of José Martí, Benito Juárez, and Abraham Lincoln in Monterrey, Mexico. He had just attended the gathering and said the example of the Cuban Revolution was among the themes discussed there (see article on front page).

In the discussion period a worker originally from Haiti said that the same hurricane that had passed through Haiti and killed hundreds of people went on to hit Cuba, where only five people died. He said this showed the corruption of the government of Haiti.

Others asked about the current

presence of U.S. forces in Haiti. One person wanted to know whether any Puerto Ricans participated in the Monterrey conference, noting the strike in Puerto Rico that took place while the conference unfolded.

Mailhot said the Puerto Rico strike was all over the news in Monterrey. There was also a march of 100,000 workers in Mexico City against cutbacks and layoffs.

The purpose of the party-building fund is to aid the work of the Socialist Workers Party in bringing a revolutionary perspective to workers and young people. There was an enthusiastic response to the appeal to help make that possible, with \$1,010 collected and \$655 in new and increased pledges.

Deborah Liatos contributed to this article.

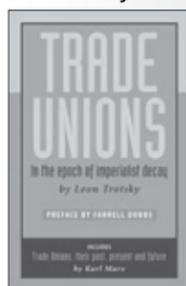
Party-building fund Fall 2009 ♦ Week 5 of 8

City	Quota	Paid	%
Seattle	\$7,000	\$6,409	92%
Des Moines, IA	\$2,400	\$1,759	73%
San Francisco*	\$13,500	\$9,566	71%
Boston*	\$3,200	\$2,238	70%
Newark, NJ	\$3,000	\$2,012	67%
New York	\$16,000	\$10,201	64%
Chicago	\$9,500	\$5,714	60%
Twin Cities, MN	\$6,600	\$3,950	60%
Atlanta	\$7,500	\$4,488	60%
Los Angeles	\$9,200	\$5,012	54%
Philadelphia	\$3,500	\$1,825	52%
Miami*	\$3,300	\$1,716	52%
Houston	\$2,700	\$1,358	50%
Washington, D.C.*	\$6,500	\$2,410	37%
Other		\$600	
TOTAL	\$93,900	\$59,258	62%
SHOULD BE	\$95,000	\$59,375	63%

*raised quota

Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay

by Leon Trotsky



"More food for thought (and action) than will be found in any book on the union question."

—Farrell Dobbs



Preface by Farrell Dobbs

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by Karl Marx

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CALENDAR

NEW JERSEY

Newark

The Troy Davis Case: The Constitutional Argument against Executing the Innocent. Speakers: Martina Correia, Troy Davis's sister; Dean John Farmer, Rutgers School of Law; Lawrence Hayes, former New York death row inmate and member of the Campaign to End the Death Penalty; and representative from Amnesty International. Tues., Nov. 10, 6 p.m. Rutgers University Law School, Baker Trial Court Room. 123 Washington Street. Sponsors include: The Eric Neisser Public Interest Program, Human Rights Forum, Amnesty International, and Criminal Law Society.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

NEW JERSEY

Newark

How the Working Class Can Fight for Jobs for All. Speaker: Sara Lobman, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Nov. 13, 8 p.m. 45 Academy St., Suite 309. Tel.: (973) 273-0075.

U.S.-Israeli antimissile exercise aimed at Iran

BY CINDY JAQUITH

The largest-ever U.S.-Israeli antimissile "exercise" began October 21 in Israel. Its clear target? Iran.

Roughly 1,000 U.S. troops and a similar number of Israeli soldiers are participating in the three-week maneuvers—"a scenario in which U.S. forces deploy to Israel to help defend the country against incoming missiles," reported the October 23 *Wall Street Journal*.

The maneuvers occur as Washington and other imperialist powers mount pressure on Tehran to agree to send its uranium abroad for enrichment, rather than continuing to process it at Iranian facilities. The U.S. government charges Tehran is developing nuclear energy in order to build a bomb, which requires highly enriched uranium. Tehran answers that its nuclear program is for peaceful energy use only.

Tel Aviv has repeatedly threatened to attack Iran's nuclear facilities with air strikes. Israel is the only Middle East power today with nuclear weapons.

The "Juniper Cobra" exercise is testing the operation of Israel's Arrow II antiballistic missile system with U.S. systems, Reuters reported, and establishing "procedures for the emergency U.S. 'enhancement' of Israeli forces." This is the fifth Juniper Cobra exercise since 2001.

The Israeli military said the exercise "is not in response to any world events." But Israel Radio quoted an anonymous Israeli commander who said the maneuvers were "to prepare for a nuclear Iran." The Israeli news agency JTA said the exercise "will simulate long-range missile attacks on Israel from Iran, Syria, and Lebanon." In September, Tehran test-fired Shabab-3 missiles it said had a range of 1,200 miles, enough to strike Israel and some U.S. military sites in the Middle East.

The October 23 *Stars and Stripes* reported that the exercise involves "some of the U.S. Army's most sophisticated weaponry." The exercise will deploy Washington's Patriot missiles, Theater High Altitude Area Defense, and naval Aegis systems, as well as the X-Band radar system, which Washington installed at the Nevatim Air Base southeast of Beersheba, Israel, in 2008. The deployment also permanently stations 120 U.S. military personnel there, establishing the first permanent U.S. mili-

tary presence in Israel.

The radar system, said to provide rapid detection when missiles are launched as far as 1,500 miles away, receives its data from the U.S. Joint Tactical Ground Station. The information is simultaneously fed to Israel's Arrow Weapon System. *Time* magazine noted in October 2008 that "Israel will have no direct access to the data collected by the radar. . . . It will only be fed intelligence second hand, on a need-to-know basis, from the Americans—unless the radar picks up an immediate, direct attack on Israel, Israeli sources claim."

Meanwhile, Moscow confirmed it has not yet approved Iran's request for S-300 missiles, which would make Iranian nuclear facilities much less vulnerable to Israeli air strikes. The Russian news agency Interfax quoted an unnamed Russian government source saying that the deal was frozen. "Much depends on an array of political circumstances," the official said, "since this



Reuters/Ziv Koren

U.S. officers at Patriot antimissile battery site during joint U.S.-Israeli military exercise "Juniper Cobra" in Tel Aviv, Israel, October 27.

contract has ceased to be simply a commercial deal." Washington and Israel in particular have pressured Moscow not to sell Iran the weapons.

Iran's Press TV reported October 23 that a new bill has been introduced into the U.S. House of Representatives to block non-U.S. telecommunica-

tions companies from doing business with Iran. Called the Accountability for Business Choices in Iran Act, the bill requires foreign firms seeking U.S. contracts to certify they are not doing business with Iran. Press TV said Nokia and Siemens would be affected if the bill passed.

Afghan president accedes to runoff election

BY DOUG NELSON

Under pressure from Washington, Afghan president Hamid Karzai agreed to a runoff election with rival presidential candidate Abdullah Abdullah. The U.S. rulers view an Afghan government that lacks credibility as an obstacle to winning support for sending more U.S. troops to the war.

An initial tally from the presidential elections in August showed Karzai as the winner with 55 percent of the vote. Karzai and the Afghan election commission refused to recognize a UN commission's findings of massive fraud. The commission put Karzai's vote below 50 percent and Abdullah's at about 28 percent. Washington dispatched Sen. John Kerry to convince Karzai that continued refusal would not be in his best interest.

After four days of discussion, Karzai announced October 20 he would accede to the runoff with Abdullah scheduled for November 7.

Both candidates come from different factions of the rightist Islamist Mujahideen forces that fought the Soviet invasion in the 1980s. In the 1990s both held posts in the unstable government that was cobbled together after the fall of the pro-Moscow regime.

Karzai is from a pro-monarchy Pashtun family, the dominant nationality in Afghanistan. Abdullah was a close advisor to Tajik Mujahideen commander Ahmed Shah Massoud.

Abdullah has said he would be open to a coalition government. According to the *Washington Post*, Arsalah Jamal, a Karzai campaign manager, said Abdullah representatives have raised the idea with Karzai. "I believe [Karzai] will be sitting at the same table as Abdullah," he said.

Troop increase

Currently there are 65,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan and the number is slated to reach 68,000 by the end of the year. With about 124,000 troops in Iraq, the combined force is at an all-time high.

President Barack Obama has ap-

proved the deployment of 13,000 more troops to Afghanistan, the *Washington Post* reported October 13. But Obama appears to be delaying a decision on Gen. Stanley McChrystal's request for 40,000 additional troops until after the runoff election.

Former vice president Richard Cheney criticized Obama on a number of foreign policy questions in a speech at the Center for Security Policy October 21. "It's time for Obama to

make good on his promise," he said. "Waffling, while our troops on the ground face an emboldened enemy, endangers them and hurts our cause."

McChrystal's counterinsurgency strategy, involving greater emphasis on ground troops, is expected to result in higher deaths for the occupying army. As of October 27, 55 U.S. soldiers had been killed, the highest number of U.S. deaths in one month since the war began in 2001.

'Militant' to print supplement on Black struggle in Spanish

BY NORTON SANDLER

Militant distributors will want to begin now to map out plans for using the Spanish-language version of the paper's special supplement containing the introduction to the forthcoming Pathfinder book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes. The supplement will be printed in Spanish in the issue of the *Militant* that comes off the press November 5.

Barnes is the Socialist Workers Party national secretary and author of several Pathfinder titles and feature articles in *New International* magazine.

The Spanish-language supplement, like the one in English that is being widely used now by our distributors, will contain an impressive selection of photos from the new book.

To take full advantage of both the English and Spanish supplements, the *Militant* has extended its fall subscription drive by one week. The drive now ends November 17. The extension will allow distributors of the *Militant* to build on

Continued on page 7

'Militant' Subscription Drive

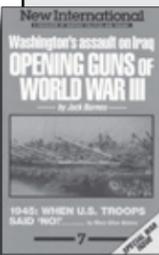
Sept. 12 – Nov. 17, 2009
Week 6

Country	Quota	Sold	%
UNITED STATES			
Seattle*	95	81	85%
Twin Cities, MN*	145	113	78%
New York	230	174	76%
Newark, NJ	75	56	75%
Chicago*	115	85	74%
Washington, D.C.	100	72	72%
Los Angeles*	105	72	69%
Boston*	65	44	68%
Miami	110	63	57%
San Francisco	150	85	57%
Des Moines, IA	110	61	55%
Atlanta	130	68	52%
Houston	90	47	52%
Philadelphia	75	38	51%
Other		3	
TOTAL	1595	1062	67%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London*	80	80	100%
Edinburgh	35	27	77%
TOTAL	115	107	93%
Canada	100	56	56%
New Zealand	65	39	60%
Australia	50	37	74%
Sweden*	30	24	80%
Total	1955	1325	66%
Should be	2000	1333	67%

*increased quota

NEW INTERNATIONAL NO. 7

OPENING GUNS OF WORLD WAR III Washington's assault on Iraq by Jack Barnes



The murderous assault on Iraq in 1990-91 heralded increasingly sharp conflicts among imperialist powers, growing instability of international capitalism, and more wars.

Also includes: "1945: When U.S. troops said 'no!'" by Mary-Alice Waters
"Lessons from Iran-Iraq war" by Samad Sharif—\$14

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Mexico electrical workers

Continued from front page

demonstrators in Mexico City, including unionists, peasants, and students, protested the union-busting move. A second demonstration a week later was much smaller.

In a televised speech Calderón said that Luz y Fuerza's expenses were double its income, requiring a \$3.2 billion subsidy last year. A third of the electricity the company distributed, he stated, was lost through "stealing, technical failures, corruption, or inefficiencies." The Mexican president blamed the workers, their union, and the union contract for the "unsustainable financial situation" and for frequent blackouts and poor service.

Calderón denied charges that this was a step to further privatize electrical distribution. Instead, he said, control of Luz y Fuerza facilities would be handed over to another government-owned utility, the Federal Electricity Commission (CFE). He demagogically claimed that money saved by firing the workers would be used to combat poverty and malnutrition.

Electrical workers who voluntarily agree to accept the firings will receive up to 33 months of wages in severance pay, Calderón said, and the 22,000 retirees would still get their pensions.

Under the union contract, workers at Luz y Fuerza also receive subsidies for transportation to school for their children and for libraries and sports and cultural activities for workers and their families, along with discounts on their electric bills.

Luz y Fuerza was formed in 1960 when the Mexican government bought out Canadian-owned Mexican Light & Power Company and other foreign-owned utilities. Eleven years earlier the government had set up CFE. About 40 percent of electric generation is privately owned, including by U.S. companies Enron, Intergen, and GE-Bechtel.

Union criticized government policies

Workers at Luz y Fuerza are organized by the Mexican Electrical Workers Union, which has a history of maintaining some independence from the Mexican government. It has been outspoken in criticizing the government's economic policies, including moves to privatize some state-owned companies.

Supporters of the union say that a large part of the company's deficit is from unpaid bills owed by large corporations and a lack of investment to modernize equipment.

Leaders of the union called on workers to reject the government's severance payments and continue to resist the dissolution of the company.

As part of its carrot and stick approach, the Mexican government said that workers who agree to accept the firings would have first priority on being hired by CFE when there are openings. According to the government, as of October 22 more than 10,000 workers signed the agreement and began to receive their severance checks.

CFE is organized by the Sole Union of Electrical Workers of the Mexican Republic (SUTERM), which is tied to the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), a former ruling party. Like many other unions it has given support to the government and offered la-

bor peace in return for some benefits, many of them similar to those at Luz y Fuerza.

A proposal in the Mexican congress to revoke Calderón's decree was defeated not just by Calderón's National Action Party but also with the majority of votes from the PRI and the abstention of the majority of representatives of the Party of the Democratic Revolution, a major bourgeois opposition party that narrowly lost the presidential election in 2006.

Some big business papers in the United States were ecstatic with Calderón's union-busting decree.

The *Los Angeles Times* complained that the union had "considerable say" over how Luz y Fuerza was run. Citing a report from the Center of Research for Development, a Mexico City "think tank," the *Times* said that a carpenter at the company made \$350 a month—"more than twice the market rate."

A *Wall Street Journal* column by Mary Anastasia O'Grady gloated that the "net effect of the move is to dethrone 42,000 members of the Mexican Union of Electricians, which had won benefits over the decades to make Big Three auto workers in Detroit blush."

Rhode Island: immigrant worker dies in custody

BY KEVIN DWIRE

BOSTON, October 25—Chanting "What do we want? Legalization! When do we want it? Now!" two dozen activists marched outside the Suffolk County House of Correction today following the death of an immigrant in custody there.

The protest was called by the Massachusetts Resist the Raids Network.

Pedro Juan Tavarez, 49, was from the Dominican Republic and lived in Providence, Rhode Island, where he was working as a taxi driver. He had been in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody since April 2008, when he was stopped for speeding. The Rhode Island state police said Tavarez had an outstanding deportation warrant and turned him over to ICE.



bonpidebonoel.net

Demonstration in Mexico City October 15 to protest the firing of 44,000 workers at the Luz y Fuerza electrical distribution company.

She compared the action to "Ronald Reagan's firing of the air traffic controllers—only bigger."

In an article headlined "Mexico Knocks a Union's Lights Out," *Investor's Business Daily* said, "The union

is howling, but the shutdown is one of the best things to happen to Mexico." Adding, "Terminating the wasteful utility sends a message to all the unions strangling Mexico that it's no longer business as usual."

His lawyer told the *Providence Journal* Tavarez had a pending appeal of his deportation order.

In the week before his death, Tavarez was taken to three different hospitals. According to the *Journal* his daughter Judith and his former companion Maria Martes both said Tavarez had complained that he was not regularly receiving insulin he needed to control diabetes. By the time the relatives were notified of his hospitalization he was comatose and on life support.

The family is demanding an investigation, including into why they were not notified until he had been taken to the third hospital in four days. Tavarez died at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston October 19.

Prison officials say he was taken to

the hospital October 16 after prison medical staff thought he could have pneumonia. He was treated for heart and respiratory conditions, reported AP.

Sergio Reyes of the Boston May Day Committee told the protesters, "These prisoners should not be in jail. They are not criminals. They are being held for administrative violations, not crimes."

As the picketers marched to the side of the jail where immigration detainees are held, it was clear many inside were aware of Tavarez's death. Signs began to appear in the barred windows of the cells as the detained watched the pickets and waved. One said "Free Us," another said "Tavarez, my friend, a good man," and "Tavarez RIP," while another simply said "Thank You."

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



November 9, 1984

NEW YORK—Close to 1,000 people marched in Brooklyn October 27 to demand an end to U.S. occupation of Grenada and an end to U.S. military intervention in Central America and the Caribbean. The action protested the recent harassment of Desima Williams, former Grenadian ambassador to the Organization of American States.

Williams had been seized two days earlier in Washington, D.C., by immigration cops. She was dragged off after giving a speech to a conference supporting nonintervention in the Caribbean and Central America, held on the first anniversary of the invasion of Grenada.

The move against her was clearly aimed at intimidating those who are speaking out about the widening U.S. war against liberation fighters in Central America and the Caribbean.



November 9, 1959

An attempt by the Belgian imperialists to arrest a nationalist leader precipitated fierce fighting and a strike movement in Stanleyville, second largest city of the Belgian Congo. Though it was Belgian guns and hand grenades against Congolese spears, stones and bare fists, the freedom fighters held off the troops long enough for Patrice Lumumba, leader of the Congolese Nationalist Movement (MNC), to escape.

This battle took place the evening of October 30 when Belgian police and soldiers tried to storm the hall where MNC leaders were holding a conference preparatory to their annual convention. Apparently to protect the MNC leaders, some 3,000 rank-and-file supporters were standing ready outside the hall.

Fighting spread throughout the city and province and some 70 people—all natives—were killed and more than 200 wounded.



November 10, 1934

Rumblings of civil war are already audible in France.

The collapse of the Doumergue "truce" government has brought the issue of Fascism or proletarian revolution closer on the political horizon.

The government of Etienne Flandin, not quite so reactionary in appearance, but no less anti-working class in character will prove to be no better than a temporary stop-gap. The middle classes are being ruined by shrinking markets. Wages are sinking. The crisis in the ranks of the Radical Socialist party that caused the demise of the "truce" government is but a reflection of the vacillation of the petty bourgeoisie under the pressure of its economic difficulties.

What is the French working class to do if it is not to meet the fate of the German working class in its worst variant or of the Austrian or the Spanish at the best?

Iowa socialists 'stand with those resisting'

BY MAGGIE TROWE

DES MOINES, Iowa—"Rosenfeld wants the working class to take political power, resulting in 'the widespread transfer of wealth,'" wrote Des Moines *Register* columnist Marc Hansen. His interview with David Rosenfeld, Socialist Workers candidate for the city council at-large seat, was published in the paper October 15.

Rosenfeld, 47, and Rebecca Williamson, Socialist Workers candidate for the Ward 1 city council seat, have been getting media coverage and participating in an array of candidates' forums and debates, as well as campaigning in working-class communities around the city, at college and university campuses, and among meatpacking coworkers.

In another *Register* article reporter Jared Strong covered a candidates' forum organized by the Grays Lake Neighborhood Association. Strong said that Rosenfeld "didn't directly answer questions throughout much of the forum" and that he "would not specifically identify the ways he could 'empower the working class' if elected to municipal office." Rosenfeld sent a letter to the editor, which was published in its entirety, answering Strong's claims.

Rosenfeld wrote, "While my opponents spoke of dealing with waste and inefficiencies in dealing with city budget shortfalls, I explained that here and across the country, talk about balancing government budgets is, in fact, part of the opening skirmishes in a war on the working class—a war aimed at drastically driving down our standard of living in order to shore up a failing economic system. That is why workers must wage a political fight for unemployment benefits for *all* the jobless until they find jobs, and a massive, federally-funded public works program at union-scale wages. That is why the working class needs to take political power."

Williamson, who is 28, was interviewed on WHO Channel 13 October 22. Referring to the more than 15 million unemployed nationally, Williamson said the capitalist class is using this to make headway in driving down workers' standard of living. "I would stand with those who are resisting those attacks and work with unions and other organizations to build a mass movement, a fighting movement like we've seen before in this country, and I'm also confident that this would grow into a national movement and ultimately take power out of the hands of the capitalists

and make a socialist revolution in the U.S.," she said.

At an October 22 candidates' forum, Williamson condemned the call by 20-year Ward 1 incumbent Thomas Vlassis to reopen the city union contracts to extract concessions. "I oppose this," she said, adding that city workers need more pay and benefits, not less.

Hansen's column in the *Register*, entitled "Socialist—a real one—makes run for city council," took as its starting point that some are calling the Obama administration "socialist." He decided to interview Rosenfeld to find out his views.

"Rosenfeld isn't for bailing out the insurance companies and big banks like those phony socialists in Washington," Hansen wrote. "He's for taking them out completely, sending capitalism to history's trash heap. Rosenfeld believes the workers create the wealth but . . . the bosses steal almost all of it away. It's a



Militant photos by Lisa Rottach (left) and Bob Allen (right) Above, Jared Strong of Des Moines *Register* interviews socialist candidate David Rosenfeld. At right, Rebecca Williamson (standing on left) participates in Chicago antiwar march March 14.



morally bankrupt system."

Hansen also noted Rosenfeld's support for the Cuban Revolution, writing that "To Rosenfeld's way of thinking, Cuba is the only 'living revolution in which workers and peasants remain at the helm of society.'"

After having read the article a Teamster business agent who had met the candidates at a labor candidates' forum

earlier called the campaign headquarters asking to talk with Rosenfeld or Williamson. "I just want to thank you for what you two said today in the *Register*," he told Rosenfeld. The next morning one of Rosenfeld's coworkers who supports the socialist campaign brought the article out to the line as work was about to begin, calling out to the other meat packers, "Look at this—David's in the paper!"

2009 Socialist Workers Party candidates

The following are the Socialist Workers candidates for public office running in the November 3 elections.

Atlanta

Lisa Potash—mayor
Jacob Perasso—city council president

Boston

William Leonard—mayor (official write-in)
Laura Garza—city council, district 1 (official write-in)

Des Moines, Iowa—on ballot

David Rosenfeld—city council at-large
Rebecca Williamson—city council, Ward 1

Houston

Amanda Ulman—mayor
Steve Warshell—city controller

Minneapolis—on ballot

Tom Fiske—mayor

Newark, New Jersey

Angela Lariscy—governor
Michael Fitzsimmons—lieutenant governor
Sarah Robinett—state assembly, 29th district

New York City—on ballot

Dan Fein—mayor
Maura DeLuca—public advocate
Tom Baumann—Manhattan borough president

Philadelphia

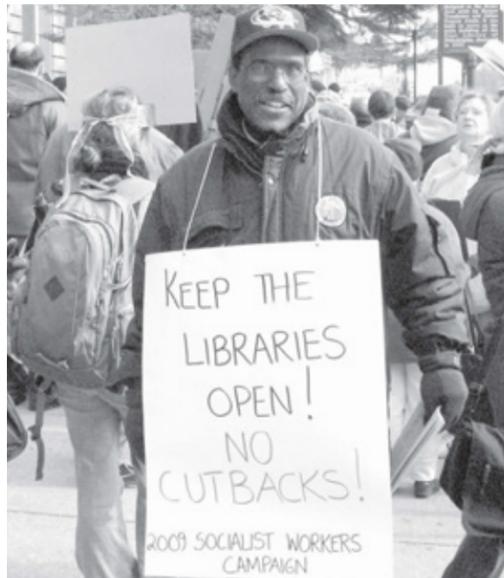
Osborne Hart—district attorney
Janet Post—city controller

San Francisco

Lea Sherman—city attorney
Gerardo Sánchez—city treasurer

Seattle

Mary Martin—mayor
Edwin Fruit—city council, position #6



Militant/John Studer Philadelphia district attorney candidate Osborne Hart at demonstration in January against closing of public libraries.



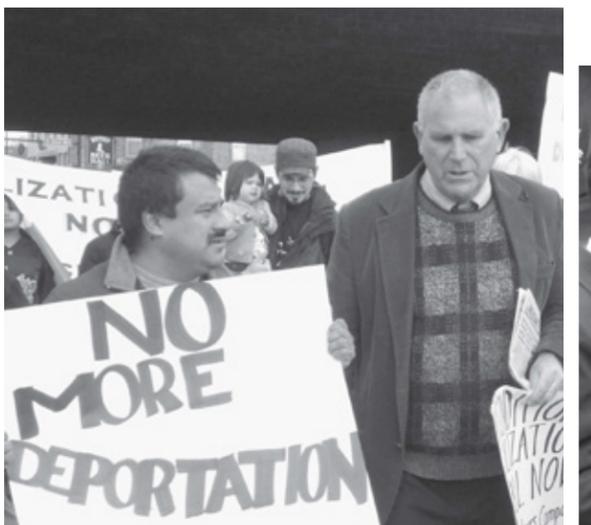
Militant/Rachele Fruit Lisa Potash, candidate for Atlanta mayor, at January 19 Martin Luther King Day parade.



Militant/Sarah Ullman Boston city council candidate Laura Garza joins protest June 3 against school cutbacks.



Militant/Carol Lesnick San Francisco city treasurer candidate Gerardo Sánchez at Labor Day hotel workers' rally for union contract.



Militant/Natalie Morrison Tom Fiske (right), candidate for mayor of Minneapolis, at May 1 march there for legalization of all undocumented immigrants.



Militant/Clay Dennison Seattle socialist mayoral candidate Mary Martin at teachers' strike rally in Kent, Washington, in September.

The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning

The fraud of education reform under capitalism by Jack Barnes
\$1.50 with Militant subscription (regular price \$3)

Problems of Women's Liberation

by Evelyn Reed
Explores the social and economic roots of women's oppression from prehistoric society to modern capitalism
\$7.50 with Militant subscription (regular price \$15)

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Socialist outlines views at N.Y. mayoral debate

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK—“They say the recession is ending, there’s light at the end of the tunnel,” said Socialist Workers Party mayoral candidate Dan Fein at a candidates’ meeting here at the Hudson Guild October 26. “The truth is that the capitalist system is in crisis and we are living through only the beginning of a worldwide depression.”

“Officially there are 15 million unemployed in the United States,” the socialist candidate said. “But the real number is much higher.”

“The only solution is to take power and organize society to meet the needs of working people, not the profits of corporations,” he explained.

“At the same time, we raise immediate demands,” Fein added. “I am for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan.”

“The minimum wage should be raised to union scale and everyone who is unemployed should receive unemployment compensation until they find another job, no matter how long it takes.”

One of the most important questions for the working class today, Fein said, is the fight for legalization of undocumented workers. This is necessary, he added, to prevent the bosses from dividing working people.

Also on the panel were the mayoral candidates for the Conservative, Libertarian, Green, and the Rent is Too High parties, the Party for Socialism and Liberation, and supporters of the Michael Bloomberg and William Thompson campaigns. Bloomberg is the Republican candidate and Thompson is the Democrat.

Thompson and Bloomberg have appeared in debates, but the SWP and other parties have been excluded from these on the pretext that they have not raised enough money.

After Conservative Party candidate Stephen Christopher said he was for the “rights to the unborn to live a full

life,” Fein took the floor and defended a woman’s right to choose abortion. “Women must have the right to control their own bodies,” he said to applause.

None of the other candidates said a word about the right to abortion. With the exception of Fein all of the candidates presented proposals to solve what they described as “New York City” issues.

Fein explained that his campaign presents proposals for working people in the city as part of the fight of an international class. “Working people have to see ourselves as citizens of the world,” Fein said. “Growing unemployment, the crisis of capitalism—these aren’t problems that just face working people in New York, but workers all over the world.

“That’s why we need to see ourselves as part of a worldwide fight of the working class,” Fein said.

Montreal Communist League candidates



Militant/John Steele

MONTREAL, October 28—The Communist League will wrap up its campaign with the November 1 election here. Running for Montreal mayor is Michel Prairie, shown at left at municipal workers demonstration October 7. Beverly Bernardo is the league’s candidate for mayor of the borough of Villeray–St-Michel–Parc-Extension, shown at right addressing September 12 rally of Tamils.

The Communist League campaign calls for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Canadian and all other imperialist troops from Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. At home, the Canadian government is conducting trials of immigrants as part of its “war in terror” and using “security certificates” to detain people without charges, threatening all workers’ rights, the campaign states.

“The working class needs to answer this war on our class by organizing a revolutionary struggle to take state power out of the hands of the rulers,” the candidates explain.

UK postal workers strike against layoffs, speedup

BY PAMELA HOLMES

EDINBURGH, Scotland—Some 120,000 postal workers, members of the Communication Workers Union (CWU) took strike action across the United Kingdom October 22–23. The two-day work stoppage was in response to Royal Mail’s “modernization” plans that include layoffs and speedup.

“This is not about pay but about the way we’re treated in there,” said workers on the picket line at the Edinburgh Sighthill sorting office. Support for the strike is solid here. Only one worker out of about 900 crossed the line over the three shifts, David Anderson, CWU representative on the late shift, told the *Militant*.

Graham Steedman explained how Royal Mail has imposed walking speeds of four miles per hour for deliveries. Routes will now count one tenement (apartment building) as one delivery regardless of how many apartments are in the building. (In the United Kingdom



More than 100,000 workers took part in October 22–23 strike across United Kingdom to oppose antiworker “modernization” plans of Royal Mail.

most postal deliveries are made to the door not to post boxes in a common hallway.) These timings are “nonnegotiable” and Royal Mail has refused any independent review, workers said. “A basic worker’s wage is £343 [\$560] for 40 hours before tax,” said Anderson.

On the picket line at Nine Elms depot in London, Patrick Paryag told the *Militant* that several weeks ago management changed the working pattern from four days per week to five without agreement from the union. “In the delivery we are now expected to complete the same 10-hour ‘walks’ in eight hours,” he said.

At Royal Mail’s main distribution center in Peterborough, CWU branch chairman Andy Beeby told the *Telegraph*, “Recently we had three staff suspended for refusing to sign a document relating to work standards. The document didn’t say what the standards were but they were then suspended for not working to them. That’s the way we are treated.”

Despite Royal Mail using local managers and temporary workers, estimates are that between 30 million and 45 million postal items are backlogged as a result of the 48-hour strike.

At the Leeds mail center, Pauline Bell, a packet sorter who has worked at Royal Mail for 15 years, told the *London Times*, “We’re not standing here over pay but because . . . week after week they’re cutting the staff, cutting the hours, and expecting the same work to be done.” Sixty thousand jobs have been elimi-

nated over the last five years, Steedman at Sighthill told the *Militant*.

Citing a projected decline in mail volume by up to 40 percent over the next three to four years, Royal Mail chief executive Adam Crozier in an October 26 BBC interview said there would be further cuts but declined to put a figure on it.

For more than a decade, workers at government-owned Royal Mail have acted to defend their jobs and working conditions in the face of repeated assaults in the name of “modernization.” The national strike follows numerous local walkouts that have taken place since June.

According to a December 2008 Hooper report, a government-commissioned review of postal services, strike actions by postal workers “represented 60% of days lost to strikes across the whole of the UK economy in 2007.”

Earlier this year CWU general secretary Billy Hayes told the *Telegraph*, “The CWU will work with the Government, the management and the public to ensure that Royal Mail is modernized as a public organization to serve the nation’s interest.” At the same time, top union officials have had to support the actions taken by workers to defend themselves.

Caroline Bellamy, John Fegan, and Ólöf Andra Proppé contributed to this article.

‘Militant’ subscription drive

Continued from page 4

the many successes registered in the current drive.

Using the supplement on street tables, on door-to-door sales in working-class neighborhoods, and on the job is helping to win new readers. In both Chicago and New York, seven subscribers to the paper have already preordered copies of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, at the special pre-publication price of \$10 for subscribers. In Chicago, in the first two days of the *Militant*’s special target week, distributors sold 15 subscriptions—13 of them in that city’s South Side Black community.

In many areas of the country supporters of the paper who work in industry are winning new readers. So far this drive 24 new readers have been signed up in United Food and

Commercial Workers Local 789 in South St. Paul, Minnesota. That local organizes the Dakota Premium Foods meatpacking plant and butchers and clerks in area grocery stores. At the JBS Swift packing plant in Marshalltown, Iowa, supporters of the *Militant* have sold 10 subscriptions to coworkers and raised their goal for the drive to 15.

Across the country socialist workers and young socialists are selling the press regularly at college campuses. This has been a boon to the current subscription campaign. Twelve subscribers have been won during this drive at the Dominguez Hills campus of California State University. In New York, 17 subscriptions have been sold over the past four weeks on regular Friday afternoon sales to students at Hunter College, Borough of Manhattan Community College, and City College of New York.

Reporting from London, distributor Jonathan Silberman said that 14 new subscribers signed up at the youthful October 24 protest in that city against the Iraq and Afghanistan war.



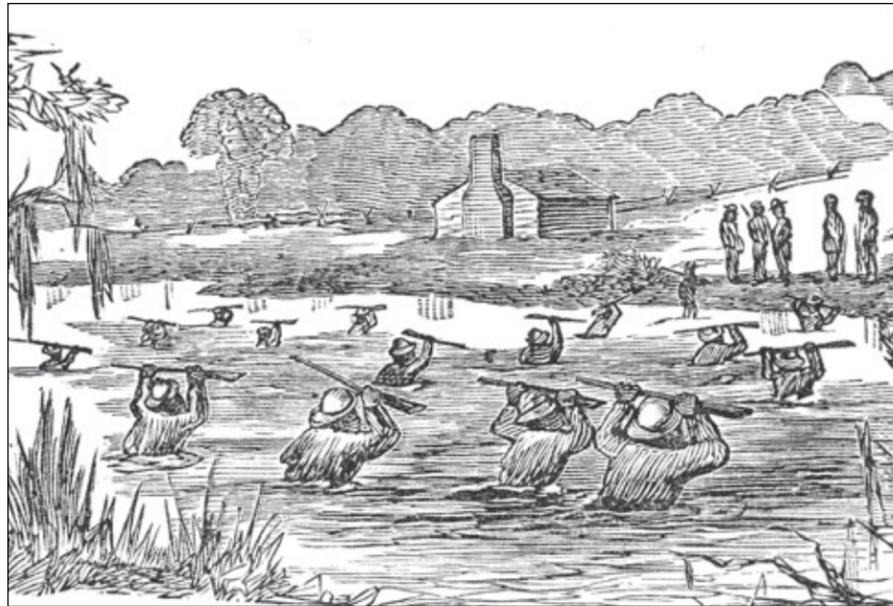
From Martí, Juárez, and Lincoln to Lenin and U.S. Civil War, rise and defeat of Radical Reconstruction, and working-class fight

The following presentation was given by Mary-Alice Waters at the International Conference on Martí, Juárez, and Lincoln in the Heart of Our America, held October 15–17 in Monterrey, Mexico (see front-page news article on conference). Waters is the editor of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* and president of Pathfinder Press. Copyright © 2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the Militant.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

The decisive battles waged in the second half of the nineteenth century by popular forces under bourgeois leadership, which Juárez, Lincoln, and Martí exemplified, ended the reactionary colonial ambitions of the European monarchies in Mexico, Cuba, and the United States and abolished the institutions of chattel slavery and indentured labor. These were no small accomplishments. They were, in fact, historic, sweeping away the greatest obstacles not only to the expansion of industrial capital but also, along with it, to the development of a fighting, class-conscious proletarian movement.

In all three countries, however, the plebeian masses, who had paid dearly



New York Public Library

Post-Civil War drawing shows recently enfranchised Blacks in Georgia fording creek on way to polls, with rifles in hand to ensure they can exercise the right to vote. History of Radical Reconstruction shows vanguard role of toilers who are Black and potential to forge fighting alliance of working people, Black and white, Waters said.

the lasting consequences of Reconstruction's bloody defeat.

What they don't teach us ... and why

Radical Reconstruction was born in the revolutionary war that was necessary to abolish slavery and the system of production based on it across the states

This is something they don't teach us in school, and you won't find in many books either. That's because history is written by the winners, and the Reconstruction state governments went down to defeat by 1877, betrayed by the northern industrial bourgeoisie and its political parties. That still rising class feared above all the potential that was developing for an expanding alliance of free working farmers with a united working class—artisans and industrial workers alike, urban and rural, Black and white. Their fears were not without foundation. They saw their gravedigger being born—something that had been precluded, to paraphrase Marx, as long as labor in a Black skin was in chains.

The crushing of these popular revolutionary regimes that arose in parts of the South was facilitated, above all, by the refusal of the ruling families of the North to countenance any broadside attack on private property beyond the abolition of slavery. This was the course implemented by their appointed Federal Army commanders in the occupied South, who exercised veto power over legislation adopted by state legislatures during Reconstruction. In particular, the capitalist rulers opposed any sweeping intrusion on the landholdings of southern property owners. Land reform—"forty acres and a mule" for former slaves, and land for the rural poor—was blocked. As a result, former slaves were forced into conditions of virtual peonage throughout the South. The value of labor power was driven down, and the toilers were forcefully divided along race lines for nearly a century to come.

The U.S. rulers and their apologists, in the press, pulpit, and academy, do all they can to hide the truth about Radical Reconstruction because that history explodes every racist and anti-working-class notion they try to instill in us. It shows the opposite—the vanguard role in the U.S. class struggle of toilers who are Black, the potential to forge a fighting alliance between working people who are Black and white, and much more.

Reconstruction state governments

The elected Reconstruction legislatures—especially those of South Carolina (with a sizeable Black majority), and Mississippi and Louisiana (both, for

a time, with large numbers of legislators who were Black)—established what with substantial accuracy can be called popular revolutionary dictatorships. Backed by the power of well-organized local militias, drawing their troops from working people who were white as well as Black, as well as by the Federal Army, these governments adopted and implemented broad programs of immediate and democratic demands in the interests of working people.

These measures included abolition of the infamous Black Codes former slave owners had imposed in the immediate aftermath of the war; the barring of racial discrimination; universal suffrage for males regardless of race; property taxes that fell heaviest on plantation owners and the moneyed classes; the first free public schools in the South (including desegregated and free university enrollment in South Carolina); public hospitals and medical care for the poor; public-relief systems; the elimination of whipping and other cruel and inhuman punishments; expanded grounds on which women could sue for divorce and

Mexico conference

Continued from front page

Martí Institute for Higher Education in Monterrey organized the event, together with the Center for Martí Studies in Havana, Cuba. It was sponsored by numerous academic institutions, including the Autonomous University of Nuevo León, the University of Havana, and the Latin American Studies Program at the University of Houston.

Of the 60 U.S. participants, more than half were students and professors from Texas who came from the University of Texas in Austin, the University of Texas–Pan American and South Texas College in the Rio Grande Valley, and the University of Houston. Many of the students from the border area—just three hours from Monterrey by bus—had family living in northern Mexico.

The International Conference on Martí, Juárez, Lincoln in the Heart of Our America was named after three great figures in the history of the Americas. José Martí was the central organizer of Cuba's final independence war against Spanish colonial rule in 1895–98. As the imperialist epoch began, he anticipated



Militant/Ben O'Shaughnessy

Mary-Alice Waters speaking October 16 at conference in Monterrey, Mexico. Also on panel, from left: Edna Ochoa from University of Texas–Pan-American; Hilda Puerta from University of Havana; and David Carlson from Pan-American.

for these revolutionary conquests, soon found their victories drowned in blood.

Others participating in this conference have addressed some of these same questions, concentrating on the history of the class struggle in Mexico and Cuba. My remarks will focus on what we in the United States often refer to as the Second American Revolution—the Civil War of 1861–65 and the postwar decade of Radical Reconstruction—and

of the South and to prevent its expansion into the territories, including those that are now the U.S. Southwest, lands taken from Mexico in the 1846–48 Mexican-American War. What I want to emphasize here is that *Radical Reconstruction remains to this day the best example in U.S. history of the kind of fighting alliance of rural toilers and the working class that we must build if there is to be a future for humanity.*

For further reading

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power by Jack Barnes
Includes "Radical Reconstruction: Its Conquests and the Consequences of Its Defeat" \$10 with subscription to the *Militant* (cover price \$20). Offer good through November 10. See a distributor listed on page 10.

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution by Jack Barnes
\$5 with subscription to the *Militant* (cover price \$10)

New Internationalist magazine, no. 14
Includes "Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X" by Jack Barnes. \$10 with subscription to the *Militant* (cover price \$14)

Available online or from a distributor listed on page 10

PathfinderPress.com



Militant photos by B

Conference panel: (from left) Ana Sánchez of Havana, Quintanilla of Monterrey, and Gilberto López y Rivas of Mexico. Inset, Cuban leader Armando Hart at opening

Fidel: The Revolutionary Struggle Redeemed

ght for power: talk by Mary-Alice Waters at international conference in Mexico

enactment of other measures to advance women's equality. And more.

Such measures were popular with working people of all skin colors.

None of the Reconstruction governments, however, had the power or the will to enforce an expropriation of the big plantation owners, the measure that could have made possible a radical land reform. It was too late in history for the ascending industrial bourgeoisie in the United States to lead such a revolutionary struggle. Inroads on private ownership of the means of production threatened the foundations of its own class domination. At the same time, the U.S. working class and its organizations were too weak and too politically inexperienced to provide leadership for the kind of class-struggle social movement that could have waged an effective battle to expropriate and redistribute land to the freed slaves, rural toilers, and urban poor.

Necessary alliance of class forces

As the Federal Army was withdrawn state by state from the South a decade after the end of the Civil War,

and Radical Reconstruction governments were crushed by spreading counterrevolutionary terror, the first great labor struggles of the post-Civil War years exploded. In 1877 a battle against wage cuts by West Virginia rail workers turned into the first nationwide general strike in the history of the United States—spreading from there to Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, Missouri, Indiana, and Illinois.

In a letter to Frederick Engels, Karl Marx underscored the significance of that development, pointing to the alliance of class forces whose foundations had been laid over the previous decade.

“What do you think of the workers of the United States?” Marx asked Engels. “This, the first outbreak against the associated oligarchy of capital that has arisen since the Civil War, will, of course, be suppressed,” he noted. Then, referring to the withdrawal of Federal troops from the South and the bourgeoisie's betrayal of the Reconstruction regimes, Marx added



Militant/Seth Galinsky

Only conquest and exercise of power by working class can lay foundations for world based on solidarity, regardless of sex, national origin, or skin color, Waters said. Above, May 19 rally in New York protests frame-up of Troy Davis, Black man on death row accused of killing a white Georgia cop.

that “the policy of the new President [Rutherford Hayes] will turn the Negroes . . . into militant allies of the workers,” just as “the big expropriations of land (exactly of the fertile land) for the benefit of the railway,

mining, etc., companies” (which was accelerating rapidly across the western territories) will bring free farmers in the West to their side.

Marx and Engels could not have
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nce discusses revolutionary legacy of Martí, Juárez, Lincoln

and wrote about growing U.S. domination of Latin America and the struggle against it.

Benito Juárez led Mexico's 1858–61 bourgeois democratic revolution and the 1862–67 war to defeat a French invasion backed by other European monarchies.

Abraham Lincoln, elected U.S. president in 1860, marshaled the forces that assured victory in what became the revolutionary war to abolish slavery in the United States.

Papers presented in the panel discussions explored the many interconnections between these revolutionary struggles and the three leaders whose names are associated with them. For example, Mexican writer Alfonso Herrera Franyutti described the impact of Mexico's bourgeois democratic revolutions on Martí during his stay in Mexico in the 1870s. Mario Alberto Nájera of the University of Guadalajara, Mexico, spoke about Juárez's 1853 stay in Havana on his way to New Orleans, where he was in exile for two years. Nájera described how Juárez's experiences in Cuba led him to collaborate with Cuban independence fighters in subsequent years.

The conference came out of a successful April 2008 speaking tour in Monterrey and Zacatecas, Mexico, by Armando Hart, who today is the director of the Havana-based Office of the Martí Program. Hart, a leader of the July 26 Movement in the 1953–58 revolutionary struggle that overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in Cuba, served as the socialist revolution's first minister of education—overseeing the mass mobilization of volunteer teachers in 1961 that eliminated illiteracy in Cuba. He later served as minister of culture for some 20 years.

Speaking at the opening session and in panel discussions, Hart explained that the leadership of the 1959 Cuban Revolution, headed by Fidel Castro, drew on the revolutionary democratic and anti-imperialist traditions of José Martí. To meet “the challenge of carrying out the unpostponable revolutionary transformations that these times demand,” he said, it is necessary to draw on the political and cultural legacy of previous revolutionary struggles, from Martí's contributions to those of Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, and V.I. Lenin.

Hart told conference participants that the collapse of the Soviet Union nearly two decades ago came about because its leadership “rejected the ideas of Che [Guevara], Fidel, and other revolutionaries and fighters who advanced the paths of socialist revolution.”

Also speaking at the opening session and on other panels was Miguel D'Escoto, a prominent international proponent of liberation theology who was Nicaragua's foreign minister during the Sandinista-led government in the 1980s and recently served a term as president of the United Nations General Assembly. Gilberto Lopez y Rivas, a well-known anthropologist and columnist for the Mexican daily *La Jornada*, also addressed the opening plenary, speaking on “The impact of the Cuban Revolution in Latin America.”

Multiple panel discussions took place

over two days, with nearly 50 papers presented by speakers from Mexico, Cuba, the United States, Venezuela, and Canada on a wide mix of topics. These included the role of women in the 1961 Cuban literacy campaign; opposition to the U.S. government's growing militarization of the border with Mexico; politi-

cal themes in the literature of William Faulkner of the United States, Rubén Darío of Nicaragua, and other writers; the history of leftist Mexican guerrilla groups that emerged in the 1960s and '70s; and the Venezuelan-led trade alliance called ALBA (Bolivarian Alterna-

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'Yes, socialist revolution in U.S. is possible'

The following are excerpts from an article in the October 17 issue of the daily *El Regio* of Monterrey, Mexico, titled, “Yes, a socialist revolution in the U.S. is possible.” Translation from Spanish is by the Militant.

BY RAÚL A. RUBIO CANO

Because of the impact of the economic crisis on the American people, today more than ever, the conditions are being created in the United States of America that make it possible to say that a socialist revolution is possible there, stated Mary-Alice Waters, author of the book *Is a Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* published by Pathfinder Press (New York, 2009). She is participating in the Martí, Juárez, Lincoln International Conference that is taking place in our city. . . .

Waters, a member of the National Committee of the [Socialist] Workers Party, editor of *New International*, and president of Pathfinder Press, pointed out that the important thing for working people in the United States—and we don't mean from the United States, because they come from all over the world—is that the accelerating capitalist crisis which we are now experiencing, is actually a crisis that for us dates from the 1970s, when an enormous change took place as a growing economy began to decline. . . .

“The time is coming when there will be resistance that will grow and become more conscious and organized on the part of a growing vanguard of workers, pushed to the wall by the insistence of the bosses in cutting wages and increasing what they call productivity.

“The coming years will be marked by battles in the streets with ultrarightist movements that target militant union activists, revolutionary socialists, Blacks, immigrants, Jews and others . . . even in the most ‘stable’ bourgeois democracies.

“In the United States, we are beginning to see the shape of these coming battles. . . .”

She pointed to the mass mobilizations, like those of May Day in 2006 and 2007, when not only did migrant workers demand legalization, but also U.S. workers participated in these struggles, showing class solidarity and resistance against the assaults of the capitalists. . . .

“It is also important to understand that the Civil Rights struggles of the 1960s for Blacks, Chicanos, and women have strengthened the working class, and that it is more difficult to divide us now than before. It's more difficult to use racism to divide us or sexism. The experiences of workers who come from all over the world make us stronger and makes it possible to unite.”



en O'Shaughnessy
María de la Paz
of Cuernavaca,
of conference.

Revolutionary Struggle

Continued from page 9

been more correct about the alliance of class forces that would have to stand at the center of any revolutionary struggle in the United States from that day forward. But with the bloody defeat of Radical Reconstruction, it was soon clear that not only African Americans but the entire U.S. working class had suffered what would be its worst setback to this day. The consequences have shaped the course of the class struggle in the United States ever since.

Jim Crow and Uncle Sam

Contrary to widespread misconceptions in the United States, legislation imposing the most extreme Jim Crow segregation was not adopted in the immediate aftermath of this defeat. Codification of the U.S. form of institutionalized segregation (on which South Africa's 1948 apartheid

laws were later modeled) was intertwined with the growing dominance of finance capital in the final decades of the 1800s and the emergence of the United States as an imperialist power.

Anti-Black race riots, pogroms, and lynchings expanded murderously throughout the 1870s and 1880s, reaching their highest point in the opening years of the 1890s. The wave of anti-Black terror surged again at the close of World War I and into the postwar economic crisis of the 1920s.

Jim Crow and Uncle Sam advanced hand in hand. Institutionalized segregation and discrimination dividing the toilers at home was the domestic face of Washington's expansionist course the world over. The racist poison against the black-, brown-, and "yellow"-skinned peoples of Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Philippines,



Participants at October 15 opening session of conference on Martí, Juárez, and Lincoln.

and Hawaii—ideological rationalizations for U.S. imperial designs—reinforced the spreading reign of bigotry and terror within the United States. United action by the oppressed and exploited was crippled. And development of the class alliance pointed to

by the founders of the modern working-class movement was postponed for decades.

These were the conditions that gave birth to the first war of the imperialist epoch. Known to Washington as the

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Mexico conference discusses legacy of Martí, Juárez, Lincoln

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tive for the Peoples of Our America).

Throughout the conference a lively exchange of views took place on a number of important political questions. These included the character and roots of the unfolding capitalist world economic crisis, a historical materialist understanding of capitalism and the rise of imperialism, whether the working class is an agent for revolutionary change, and whether the overthrow of slavery in the United States entailed a revolutionary war.

Lively debate

Mexican economist Arturo Huerta, in a plenary talk on the opening day, argued that the current economic crisis is the result of "failed neoliberal" government policies. He advocated an alternative "economic model" for capitalist governments in countries oppressed by imperialism, including greater trade collaboration among Latin American countries to counter U.S.-promoted trade pacts.

López y Rivas, in one of his panel presentations, criticized those who attempt to organize revolutionary working-class parties as "workerist" and "elitist." He argued that the working class in the United States has its own "corporate interests" and has become "an aristocracy that serves as a pillar of support for imperialism." Those who seek "revolution, not reform" should look not to the working class but to indigenous and peasant movements, such as the Zapatistas in southern Mexico, he stated.

The views advanced by López y Rivas were answered directly and indirectly by a number of participants. Gerardo Sánchez, a worker in the San Francisco Bay Area, described the working-class resistance and struggles that are increasing today under the impact of the capitalist economic and social crisis. Several students and teachers from the Rio Grande Valley in Texas, including professor Nick Braune from South Texas College, explained the impact on U.S. politics of struggles by working people, both immigrants and the U.S.-born, against attacks by the bosses and the U.S. government. They noted the May Day mobilizations for legalization of undocumented workers in 2006 and 2007, and protests against factory raids and deportations.

August Nimtz from the University of Minnesota took on the arguments of historians like Howard Zinn who deny that the U.S. Civil War became, by necessity, a revolutionary war to destroy the slave system. Nimtz counterposed the writings of Marx and Engels to Zinn's *A People's History of the United States*, which portrays the Civil War as a squabble between two wings of the bourgeoisie and not a revolution.

Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* and president of Pathfinder Press, gave a presentation titled "From Lincoln, Juárez, and Martí to Lenin and Fidel—the Revolutionary Struggle Redeemed." She focused on the popular revolutionary character of Radical Reconstruction, which together with the Civil War victory became the Second American Revolution—and the lasting consequences of its bloody defeat registered by the withdrawal of federal troops from the South in 1877. Reconstruction, Waters emphasized, "remains to this day the best example in U.S. history of the kind of fighting alliance of rural toilers and the working class that we must build

if there is to be a future for humanity."

Waters pointed to the coming revolutionary battles in Mexico and the United States, saying that "the goals of the unfinished revolutionary struggles inherited from the times of Juárez, Lincoln, and Martí are yet to be redeemed as they have been by the working people of Cuba" through their socialist revolution. (See Waters's talk on page 8.)

The presentations by Nimtz and Waters sparked informal comments by a number of participants who disagreed, as well as discussions with others who said they had changed their previously held opinions and were now convinced that there indeed had been a Second American Revolution.

At the closing session, participants adopted resolutions demanding the release of five Cuban revolutionaries held in U.S. prisons and the immediate lifting of the U.S. embargo on Cuba.

Conference organizers announced a second conference to be held next year in Nicaragua.

Throughout the three days, many participants stopped by the various literature displays to pick up copies of

conference presentations and books by panelists and others. Students from the Autonomous University of Nuevo León, where one day of the sessions was held, were among the enthusiastic visitors to the Pathfinder Press table.

More than 200 books and pamphlets on revolutionary working-class politics published by Pathfinder were purchased during the event. Among the most popular titles were *Aldabonazo*, Armando Hart's account of the clandestine struggle in Cuba's cities and countryside against the Batista dictatorship; *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* by Mary-Alice Waters, and *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* by Jack Barnes.

At the conclusion of the conference, Hart invited the students from Texas to meet him for an informal exchange. They accepted with pleasure. In their hour-long discussion, several of the students told Hart they had previously known little about the Cuban Revolution and appreciated beginning to learn about it in the course of the conference. They said they looked forward to more discussions about "What is socialism?"

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Vote Socialist Workers Party!

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legalization of undocumented workers; walked the picket line with striking bakery workers at Stella D'oro foods in Bronx, New York, and with Teamsters at SK Hand Tools in Chicago; joined rallies to win a new trial for framed-up death-row inmate Troy Davis; fought against police brutality from Oakland, California, to Rockford, Illinois; joined demonstrations against deep cuts in funding for education and health care in California; and participated in the international campaign to win freedom for the Cuban Five, Cuban revolutionaries framed up and held in U.S. jails for more than a decade by the U.S. government.

These candidates have challenged undemocratic restrictions on ballot access that are aimed at preventing a working-class voice from being heard. They and their supporters collected thousands of signatures to place socialist candidates on the ballot. The candidates have fought for the right to speak at public debates in opposition to the candidates of the employing class.

The socialist candidates put forward immediate demands to protect working people in the face of the devastation the capitalist system is causing and to unify the working class in struggle. They call for guaranteed unemployment compensation at union scale for all workers until they find a job; increasing

the federal minimum wage to union scale; a federally funded crash public works program to put millions to work building schools, hospitals, roads, and public transportation; guaranteed lifetime medical care and retiree pensions for all; immediate, unconditional legalization of all undocumented workers; and an end to all income taxes on workers.

At the same time they explain to fellow workers that while by fighting we can win concessions from the ruling class, these cannot alter the laws underlying the operations of the capitalist system. Only the conquest and exercise of state power by the working class and the expropriation of the wealthy minority can lay the basis for a world based on solidarity among working people, instead of class exploitation, war, and race and sex discrimination. With state power, working people have the most powerful tool possible to uproot these conditions and reorganize society in the interests of workers and farmers.

If you like what the Socialist Workers candidates are saying, we urge you to attend the public meeting in New York City November 7 on "What Does the Dictatorship of Capital Have in Store for Working People? The Truth behind 'Financial Crisis' and 'War'; The Working-Class Response." There we can discuss with fellow workers and youth a fighting course for the next 365 days.

Revolutionary Struggle Redeemed

Continued from page 10

"Spanish-American War," U.S. military forces dispatched to Cuba in 1898 not only stole from the Cuban people the independence they had conquered in thirty bitter years of war. They established the battle lines of the class struggle in the Americas for the coming century and beyond.

From bourgeois to proletarian leadership

As the interests of the ever-expanding power of industrial and banking capital came more and more into conflict with the Second American Revolution, in 1877 Washington's counterrevolutionary course accelerated. With that turning point, revolutionary leadership in the Americas could no longer be exercised by any force other than the working class—which wrested its first decisive triumph some eight decades later with the taking of state power in Cuba. That was the opening in our hemisphere of the trail first blazed in October 1917 by the toilers of tsarist Russia, under the leadership of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party. The unfinished struggle of Martí was redeemed in 1959 by this revolutionary act of the workers and farmers of Cuba. Even more, the unparalleled steadfastness of the Cuban people in face of Washington's half century of imperialist aggression has transformed the Americas for all time.

For us today, that unparalleled steadfastness is demonstrated to the world by the dignity and unwavering convictions of our five Cuban brothers and comrades unjustly imprisoned for more than eleven years now in the United States. They are being held hostage by Washington to the refusal of the people of Cuba who

conquered the first free territory of the Americas to surrender to the U.S. rulers' imperial demands.

The capitalist depression and social crises that are unfolding worldwide are today bringing home to growing numbers of working people an understanding of where we will sooner or later end up so long as we live under the dictatorship of capital. We have watched as the U.S. ruling families, using their state, have cranked out literally trillions of dollars to save the moguls of finance capital from ruin, at the same time that tens of millions of workers and their families are thrown onto the streets and expelled across borders, with accumulating plant closings, home foreclosures, and bankruptcies. The overstuffed prisons of the United States are becoming ever more dehumanizing. And imperialism's wars, today focused in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq, continue to expand.

In Mexico and the United States, the goals of the unfinished revolutionary struggles inherited from the times of Juárez, Lincoln, and Martí are yet to be redeemed as they have been by the working people of Cuba.

As we are being taught anew with each morning's breaking news, however, only the conquest, and exercise, of state power by the working class and its allies, and the expropriation of finance capital, can lay the foundations for a different kind of world. A world based not on exploitation, violence, racial discrimination, and dog-eat-dog competition, but on solidarity among working people worldwide that encourages the creativity and recognition of the worth of every individual, regardless of sex, national origin, or skin color.

The class alliance pointed to more than 130 years ago by Marx and Engels, together with the living example of Cuba's socialist revolution, shows the road for the Americas and the world. The line of march is clear. What's more, this class alliance has today been strengthened in the United States and Mexico by the tens of millions of workers from Mexico who are part of the fighting vanguard of the labor movement north of the border. We have witnessed the manifestation of that power in the millions-strong mobilizations demanding "Legalization, now!" that swept cities and towns across the United States in the May Day demonstrations of 2006 and 2007, and the broad working-class resistance that has met factory raids and deportations by the immigration police.

The exploration of that class line of march is the most lasting and fruitful contribution this conference is making to struggling humanity.

Pakistani offensive

Continued from front page

of Pakistan (TTP). Some 300 houses have been razed by air strikes and artillery fire in and around the city of about 5,000 people, according sources cited by *Dawn*, a Pakistani English-language daily.

All roads and communications to the area are cut off. The Red Cross has warned of mounting civilian casualties in South Waziristan, which relief workers and journalists are prevented from entering.

More than 200,000 people have reportedly fled the area. Many others remain trapped in the battlegrounds due to blockaded roads and intense fighting. "A large number of poor people" can't afford transit fees to leave the area, reported *Dawn*.

"They are bombing our houses and when people try to move out they are not letting them go," Mohammad Khan told the paper after he and 11 other family members successfully fled the offensive.

The government has provided some displaced families with a \$60-per-month stipend, but has thus far provided no housing.

In a number of areas where people have fled, residents have taken upon themselves to establish relief committees, collect donations, provide transportation, set up camps, and open their homes.

Role of U.S. aerial drones

According to the *Los Angeles Times*, U.S. aerial drones have been providing the Pakistani military with surveillance footage to aid the assault. At the same time, according to the *Washington Post*, Pakistani officials have asked Washington to refrain from drone strikes in the area of operations.

A U.S. drone strike October 24 targeting a senior TTP leader killed 33 in Bajaur Agency north of Waziristan. Al-Qaeda commander Abu Ayyub al-Masri was reportedly killed in an explosion in North Waziristan October 21. Pakistani intelligence officials initially reported that al-Masri was killed by a U.S. drone strike, but government officials later changed the story, attributing his death to an improvised bomb accident.

The TTP and its allies have lashed out with suicide bombings and other attacks outside the Taliban's base of operations, including in the capital, Islamabad, and the populous province of Punjab in the east. More than 190 were killed in such attacks October 5–23.

A number of attacks have targeted civilians at crowded markets and schools, increasing anti-Taliban sentiment in the country. A handful of others, including an October 10–11 siege of army headquarters in Rawalpindi and a suicide attack October 23 at a major air force base in Kamra, near the capital, have exposed some weaknesses of the Pakistani military.

After a brigadier general was assassinated on his way to work near an Afghan neighborhood in Islamabad, Interior Minister Rehman Malik ordered all "illegal" Afghan immigrants to leave the city within 72 hours.

Meanwhile, Washington dispatched Gen. David Petraeus and Sen. John Kerry to Islamabad to meet with Pakistan's top generals and politicians two days after Pakistan's army launched its assault. Four days earlier President Barack Obama signed the "Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act," commonly referred to as the Kerry-Lugar bill.

The bill triples U.S. aid to Pakistan, but includes a number of provisions opposed by Pakistan's military, including insistence that the military submit to greater control by the civilian government. The bill also stipulates that Islamabad expand its war against the Taliban and other Islamist militias and terrorist groups in the country. While the PPP-led government supported the bill, Washington's arrogant disregard for the country's sovereignty was not popular in Pakistan and sparked protest by opposition parties in parliament.

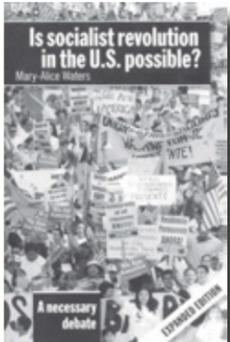
Last year Prime Minister Yusuf Gilani attempted unsuccessfully to bring Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency under the civilian control of the Interior Ministry and to send the spy agency's chief, Shuja Pasha, to India on New Delhi's request in connection with a probe into the terrorist attack on Mumbai in November 2008.

In an unprecedented joint appearance on U.S. television October 23, the UN ambassadors to Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan told CNN they share a common goal to "defeat terrorism" and called on Washington to send more troops to Afghanistan.

Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?

by Mary-Alice Waters

"To think that 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 crises we are in the midst of."



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